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ARTS

THEATRE AND FILM

THE NEXT TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

by

JENŐ FOCK

PRIME MINISTER OF THE HUNGARIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

A historic event, the 25th anniversary of Hungary's liberation from fascism will be celebrated throughout the Hungarian People's Republic in April 1970. It gives me much pleasure to address the readers of *The New Hungarian Quarterly* on this festive occasion. I shall use this opportunity to outline what these twenty-five years have meant to the Hungarian people, and with what sort of expectations Hungarians face the coming years.

All those familiar with the history of this area know that the Hungarian state has existed for more than a thousand years; they can rightly ask therefore whether it is proper to give so much emphasis to the anniversary of 1945; twenty-five years are a comparatively short period in the history of a nation with such a long and distinguished past. However it is a historic fact that the Hungarian nation and the Hungarian people were not always identical. We Hungarians are proud of our past, of the many battles fought by the people, but not even this pride can conceal the truth. A true turning-point was only reached on April 4, 1945. The Soviet Union took on the decisive role in the destruction of fascism, and in the liberation of the Hungarian people. It allowed the people to make the country truly theirs, and finally established a real and unreserved identity between the political nation and the working people. This is the reason why of all national holidays, we rightly specially honour this anniversary. The nation, the people—making use of the opportunities offered, realizing the dreams and plans of the centuries and the objectives of the nation's best—made significant progress in these twenty-five years.

An attempt to summarize all that happened to Hungarians since 1945 would not fit into the framework of a short article. Nor will I try to outline a detailed programme for the time which lies ahead. Instead, I offer a few thoughts in the spirit of this anniversary which we, the workers,

peasants, intellectuals, and responsible officials of Hungary who continuously work for our common cause, have together formulated, learning from achievements and mistakes, concentrating our attention primarily on the future.

The country's liberation brought much-desired peace and the chance for social progress. The economic position was catastrophic. The Second World War cost more than half a million Hungarian lives. This is a staggering figure for a people of barely ten million. Hundreds of thousands had lost their homes, and the losses suffered by the economy amounted to the total national income of five pre-war years. The withdrawing Nazi hordes acted like vandals destroying and pillaging. Transport was paralysed, they carried off entire factories and plants, they drove off most of our livestock, and took our valuables, including the entire gold reserves of the National Bank.

Starting from Scratch

We had to start from scratch twenty-five years ago. In the summer of 1945, a member of parliament belonging to a major political party announced without any hesitation that there would be no reconstruction, nor any national rebirth possible in this country within the next forty years, unless Hungary was granted a large dollar loan. Such a loan could not be expected without political strings, and what is more, instead of help the West at that time offered Hungary the artificial division of Europe, and a whole chain of acts of economic discrimination which were part of the cold war. And yet it did not take forty years to climb out of the trough. In roughly five years the damage caused by the war was repaired, the country was rebuilt, industrial output and national income reached the pre-war level. This concretely expressed the whole strength, will and creative force of working people in Hungary. The social system, which set out to build socialism, liberated the energies latent in the people, and enlisted them in the service of overall development. But we could not have done without the disinterested help of those friendly nations who share our aims and principles. These twenty-five free years are evidence that the world communist movement and the progressive movements which include the major part of the humanity, support the existence and the growth of the Hungarian People's Republic. Hungary's membership of the community of socialist nations, of their joint defensive system and their organization of economic co-operation is a pledge of the country's progress. These factors mean that the basic international conditions of the present, past and future progress of the country

are secure. Such ties linking up the community must therefore be nursed and developed.

Neither the political, nor the economic development of Hungary can be regarded as an uninterrupted, rising straight line. There were times of great impetus, but there were also breaks. Since the defeat of the counter-revolutionary attempt of 1956, the country's progress can be said to have been uninterrupted. One may state with a certain satisfaction that working-class rule which was threatened was successfully reinforced and made firm, that the peasantry was persuaded to move in the direction of agricultural co-operatives, and that a period of faster and more efficient economic growth was initiated. In carrying out all three of these objectives the country could count on the active participation, approval and support of the working masses, and it was entitled to do so. This creative impetus, the unity of people and nation, which is the driving force of development, must be emphasized on the occasion of this anniversary.

Per Capita National Income

Twenty-five years of hard work by the Hungarian people produced a seven and a half fold increase in industrial output, a three and a half fold increase in national income, compared with the pre-war position, in fact a present per capita annual income of approximately $7–800. This is the basis of a continuing systematic rise in the standard of living, and of the establishment of a socialist Hungary possessing a fully developed industry, and a fully industrialized, large-scale agriculture.

I should like to say a few words about Hungary's educational system, cultural life, social welfare, and health service. Before the war, even the six years of compulsory primary education were not completed by all children, nowadays every child, almost without exception, passes through the eight-year course of basic general education introduced in 1945. It is enough to say of the increase in higher education that the number of university students has risen from 11,747 in 1937–38 to 78,727 in 1968–69. This is a secure foundation for advanced scientific development.

Following thorough preparation and discussion by a wide circle of specialists and others interested in the matter certain ideas for the further encouragement of scientific research work were worked out.

I should like to emphasise at this stage that the Hungarian government favours freedom of scientific research, and that this is a basic feature of our ideas on the subject. We encourage and support activity that discovers

scientific truths. The discovery of truths serves the public interest, the realisation of the aims of socialism and the progress of the people. We ensure that scientists can argue their opinions in the appropriate places. They must on the other hand bear the resources of the country in mind, and also know the demands of society.

The role of scientific bodies, in the first place that of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences will be strengthened. We emphatically wish to support all international scientific relationships that are not in conflict with the national interest, and we wish to widen the scope of exchanges with other countries, as regards intellectual products. All this will certainly speed up and widen the progress of research in Hungary.

Literature, Theatre, and the Arts

The rising level of cultural life can likewise be indicated by statistical evidence. Several times as many books are published as before the war. According to 1964 UN figures, Hungary leads among European countries with 52 publications a year for every 100,000 inhabitants. The numbers of those attending theatrical performances or visiting museums is increasing all the time parallel with the rapid spread of radio and television.

The far from commonplace talent and creativity of the Hungarian people was indicated even before liberation by great figures such as Bartók, Kodály and Gyula Derkovits; or Ady, Babits, Móricz, Attila József and Radnóti in literature. One may say without inmodesty that their importance was not circumscribed by the country's boundaries. However, this culture did not reach those for whom it was primarily intended. Today, we can talk of a genuine mass-culture in Hungary. The number of those who enjoy art and literature has grown to many times its earlier size.

Interest in the classics is particularly high. In the last twenty-five years, the works of Dickens, Balzac, Tolstoy and Thomas Mann have appeared in such large editions, the plays of Shakespeare and Molière have been performed so frequently, that, bearing in mind the country's population, the figures compare favourably with the writers' own countries. I read in *The Times* that Shakespeare has always been one of the greatest Hungarian playwrights. *The Times* was right: since 1945 there have been 4,012 performances of the immortal bard's works and more than 2 million people were able to see them. In the atmosphere of this heightened interest on the part of mass-audiences, the creative energy of artists has also increased and is still growing.

There has been a revolutionary change in public health. Before the war, tuberculosis was a widely spread and serious illness in Hungary: it was even called "morbus hungaricus." Today, it is virtually extinct. Medical care is assured for every Hungarian citizen. All medical services are free for those who work and their families and for pensioners. The number of doctors per head of population is one of the highest in Europe. In addition to social welfare, everybody who works is entitled to a pension—peasants working in co-operatives are included. By such means, socialism in Hungary has contributed a great deal to lightening the cares of the old and the ill.

The Reform of the Economic Mechanism

Life is becoming more complex, primarily owing to technological progress; in present Hungarian circumstances it cannot be considered right to make central decisions in matters concerning day-to-day details of economic life, or to direct from above each phase of the work of factories and other economic units. This is linked with a natural requirement of progress, socialist democracy must be continuously strengthened and widened. It is in the interest of the management and the workers in each plant, as well as of the whole of society, to make sure that they participate as directly as possible in making decisions which affect their work. Circumstances have made it necessary, and the high degree of development of productive forces has made it possible, to change methods employed in previous years in directing a progressively growing planned economy.

The recognition of this state of affairs led to those reforms in the system of management of the economy which were introduced on January 1, 1968, and which we have been applied ever since.

The new economic mechanism is in the first place meant to serve a sound scientific perfection of economic planning, it is not based purely and simply on commodity and money relations, i.e. on economic regulators. But subjective factors also have great significance, such as rational activity by executives on various levels and in different areas and their greater political and economic responsibility. Without this, the advantages of the reform cannot make themselves felt to the desired extent or at the desired rate, nor could technological progress or the tapping of the reserves made available by modernization, or for that matter profitable management that is to the advantage of the economy as a whole, shape adequately.

The functioning and development of the new system of directing the economy are kept under close observation. It is essential that all those

concerned with economic affairs should quickly and effectively change the way they think and act. Independence and initiative must be increased, as must the efficiency of industrial organization. The energy latent in democracy ought to be exploited.

It is understandable that in the first year of the new economic mechanism, while earlier economic directives had not yet lost their effect, those responsible proceeded with caution. They were still trying to find out how the new regulators worked, they concentrated their efforts on solving problems that were inherent in the change-over. Experience is available now which allows a system of management to take shape which is appropriate to the spirit of the new economic mechanism.

A free Hungary embarking on the second quarter century of its history engaged in constructing socialism aims to continue systematically what was begun twenty-five years ago. The state must be strengthened further, therefore democratic ways must be given more room in every field, economic policy must be systematically made effective in the first place, in order to raise the standard of living of all those who work; and progress in the direction of complete socialism must be confident and at a rate consistent with the realities.

Socialist Democracy in Practice

The meaning of democracy is discussed all over the world. Politicians, philosophers and economists all contribute their opinions. The people of Hungary demand a socialist democracy in their own free country. This means that Hungary does not look on democracy as an aim in itself, but as something that is in the interests of the community of those who work. In practice this shows itself in the participation of public opinion in the widest sense in solving all important questions. This is what happened during 1966–67 in laying the groundwork for the economic reform; more recently, a large number of scientists and others concerned with the organization of research were engaged in preparing a new policy for the sciences. All those involved have the right to say their piece when the affairs of a working or social collective unit are discussed and every decision ripens in the heat of debate. But when a decision is finally born in harmony with the interests of a society engaged in building socialism, every citizen conscious of his position must do his best in the interests of the common aim.

Two major tasks await us on the threshold of the coming period. The first is to draw up the fourth, 1971–75 five-year plan. Its guide-lines have

already been established following complex analytical and synthetizing work. Parallel with this, long-range economic forecasts for the years 1971–85 are being worked out. Governmental institutions will have reached a position by the late 1970s where they can assess the proposed plan for each five-year period in terms of long-range developmental notions.

Housing and Urbanization

The aim of the fourth five-year plan is to raise the standard of living of the population, and to further increase raising real wages and real incomes. The most important factor in improving living conditions is the construction of housing. Everything is done to increase the rate of building. This is a most serious problem which in spite of determined efforts can only be solved partially by the end of the period of the five-year plan. By then the one million new dwellings which make up the fifteen-year building programme (1961–75) will be built. Although this is a very impressive number in view of the circumstances, the housing shortage will, according to present calculations, continue nevertheless. In the first place, the standard demanded is rising, and secondly urbanization is proceeding faster than had been expected. Circumstances demand that the capacity for building 80–90,000 dwellings a year should be available as soon as possible. This will very likely be the case after about 1975.

Urbanization is leaving its ineradicable mark on the society of the future. This process is a natural consequence of the speedy growth of the forces of production and of the structural changes in the economy. During the past twenty-five years the number of those employed in agriculture has dropped from 2 million to 1.4 million, while the number of those engaged in industry has risen from about 670,000 to 1,750,000. This is the main reason why the population of towns and cities has increased by one million between 1949 and 1969. Before the Second World War, less than a third, while today roughly half the country's population live in towns.

The process of urbanization is taken into account by the national economy's long-range plans for regional development. It takes into account the fact that the structural changes which can be expected to take place in the economy will further reduce the numbers of those employed in agriculture and exploitative industries, and that at the same time the development of secondary industries and services will be speeded up.

The Application of Variants in Planning

A variety of schemes of improving the rate of development of the economy and for improving the efficiency of production are being examined. It is desirable that the rate of economic development should be realistically fast, stable and free of fluctuations and that the quantity of accumulation should correspond to the rate of increase of the national income. Final decisions and details of the plan will be worked out in full knowledge of the variants. The state will determine certain general index numbers that will ensure and direct planned development, but the only ones approved and given the force of law are those which provide the barest necessary direction to executive instrumentalities when working out their own plans.

When working out the broad outlines of the 1971–85 long-range plan, in the course of elaborating a number of working hypotheses, it became more and more obvious that all those economic, technical, social and natural processes which are part of economic life had to be analysed in a novel and scientific manner. A number of variants are worked out for the long-range plan also, and the final choice will be made after complex and detailed analysis.

Long-range Planning Notions

A number of most important questions must be borne in mind. One is the proportion of national income devoted to accumulation (investment). Some consider this too high, others are of the contrary opinion. In my view the current 25 per cent is desirable and conforms to the conditions prevailing in the country. It is true that a high rate of accumulation generally produces faster economic growth. But a high rate of accumulation is neither the only, nor a necessary factor of speedy growth. Concentrated well-timed investment activity can lead to a speeded up growth of production, distribution and exchange, and to a considerable increase in the quantity of goods necessary for economic activity and an improvement in the conditions of life.

In many cases, a most efficient use of existing equipment could achieve better results even with smaller investment. The only way is first to improve the effectiveness of investment, and secondly to better exploit existing equipment.

The objectives sketched above must be achieved in such a way that by the end of the fourth five-year plan technological development and the increase of productivity can be just about the only source of economic growth in the country. After all, one of the major factors in improving

living standards should be the further shortening of working hours which means that the hours of work at the disposal of the economy cannot increase fast in spite of the growth of the numbers employed. Gradually the agricultural reserves of labour will become exhausted, while the employment of women otherwise engaged in housework is also a gradually decreasing source. The need for speeding up development in fields outside industry, especially in services and in social welfare, draws attention to the fact that to develop the most dynamic industrial sources of economic growth, a level of technology is needed which is considerably higher than the present one.

Peace and Security

Twenty-five years ago Hungary was a backward country, today it is a moderately developed one which is making up for the effect of hundreds of years of neglect. I am convinced that in the coming period every working Hungarian will concentrate his efforts so that this socialist country will be reckoned among the highly developed ones. This naturally cannot be done without world peace.

The people and the government of the Hungarian People's Republic do not merely desire peace but are prepared to do everything within their power to bring it about and secure it. Hungary is particularly concerned in European affairs. For this reason we consistently work for the realization of the ideas published as the "Budapest Appeal" in the interest of European peace and security. The strengthening of our alliance with the Soviet Union and with other socialist countries is a determining factor of our foreign policy, which fights for peace among men and for the peaceful co-existence of nations living under differing social systems. The further development of economic co-operation between socialist countries, and the raising of socialist integration to a higher level both help to establish even more varied relations with all countries which serve the interests of peace in as many different ways as possible.

EUROPEAN SECURITY AND COOPERATION

by

TIBOR PETHŐ

I

The balance of power has been the cornerstone of British policy for centuries. One might say that it proved to be the most effective diplomatic, political, and if necessary military weapon when Britain's position as a world power was established. The balance of power adequately expressed British interests well into the 20th century, until the destruction of the Berlin *Reichskanzlei* finally buried the notion under its ruins. Anglo-American political commentators have frequently since then complained of a European power vacuum, the idea behind NATO was the creation of a new sort of balance.

Due to nuclear weapons, and later thermonuclear ballistic missiles not only Europe but the whole of the globe was subjected to the balance of terror and found itself in a condition that is hardly likely to produce calm and serenity all round. I am starting with this since I want to quote M. Lucien Radoux, a member of the Belgian parliament*. He argues that we must change from a balance of terror to a balance of good sense. That sort of finely wrought aphorism, highly suitable for political speeches and leading articles sometimes has too great a fascination for those who hear or read it. Sound common sense is obviously a great gift of nature, but let me add that stubborn stupidity goes with it as shade goes with light. Voltaire rightly said that stupidity is an even greater menace than wickedness, since wickedness sometimes rests, but stupidity does not. To speak of a balance of good sense is to set up a high aim, and it is a happy formulation, but there is nothing much in the present state of the world, or of Europe in particular that could be called sensible.

On November 1st 1969 the Prague meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Warsaw Pact countries tabled a new document inviting the attention of Europe. No doubt European, and not only European chancelleries have

* "Sécurité Européenne Globale" in *Synthèses*, Brussels, March 1969

since then closely studied the communiqué issued. There is no doubt that public opinion in various countries, and not only official circles submitted the words and statements of the Prague document to close scrutiny, after all the Budapest appeal seven and a half months ago* created a lively East-West current in the European political atmosphere which aroused the interest of European public opinion, and placed the possibility of a European conference at the centre of questions requiring urgent attention.

"The Budapest Appeal"

The effects of the Budapest meeting and of other changes that have taken place since then have produced encouraging results. Both the appeal, and also the valuable initiative of the government of Finland elicited a largely positive response from the majority of European governments, the dialogue, though only on a limited scale so far, has started, and the rearrangement of the West German political scene has produced circumstances more favourable for initiative in foreign policy.

It is therefore not surprising that the suggestions contained in the Prague document opened the gates wider and wider for a variety of different types of action connected with European security. The document emphasises the usefullness of preparatory bilateral or multilateral consultations, and it appeals to all countries to take steps, either alone or in cooperation, that might ease tension in Europe. This also means that the countries represented at Prague intend to do their best independently in addition to their common efforts, to carry on the fight for European security in all possible fields. The two points of the agenda at the same time express what must be emphasised: Security and Cooperation.

The communiqué states that the success of an All-European Security Conference would be an event of historical significance, and that it would also make it possible later to discuss other problems of interest to European countries. This shows realism, immediate agreement on all problems is not urged, but it also implies an understanding of the correct priorities as far as security and cooperation are concerned. It is part of the overtures made, and of the strengthening of confidence that the document clearly asserts that all other proposals will be examined.

Very likely a number of individual European countries will, in the near future, respond in one way or another. NATO Deputy Foreign Ministers met on November 5th. The Budapest and Prague communiqués were the

* This article was written on and before Nov. 6th 1969

central subject under discussion. The Ministerial Council of NATO, the chief body designed to harmonise the individual points of view of NATO member countries is meeting in December 1969 likewise to consider the question of a European Security Conference.

As regards the immediate Western response, one might say in general that considerable interest was shown. The first official and semi-official reaction in western countries must be reckoned to be positive. Following Ottawa and Helsinki, Vienna also expressed a point of view which was like theirs in essentials. Dr. Waldheim, the Austrian Foreign Minister stated on November 3rd that three main problems would have to be cleared up in the interests of holding a European Security Conference, namely who should participate, when it should meet, and what should be on the agenda. As regards the first question in Dr. Waldheim's view nothing should stand in the way of the participation of the United States, Canada or the German Democratic Republic. As regards the timing of the Conference Western opinion is that bilateral talks could already start in 1969, there is no clear response yet to the proposal of the Foreign Ministers of the Socialist countries that the Conference should already be convened during the first half of 1970. It is the aim of a neutral Austria, Dr. Waldheim emphasised, that differing opinions regarding the agenda should be brought to a common denominator. As is known the Socialist countries wish to discuss more general questions, whereas the West is more interested in details.*

According to the November 3rd issue of *Combat* Western countries were interested in the Prague plans for a European Security Conference. The proposal to hold it already in the first half of 1970 opened up new perspectives for easing East–Western tension. Associated Press, quoting Washington sources, said that the NATO ministers would insist that the Conference be convened in 1971, or towards the end of 1970 at the earliest.** The West-German press has so far been restrained in its comments. The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* on Nov. 3rd emphasised that the Prague Communiqué anticipated the West. The *Frankfurter Rundschau* of the same date states that a first reading of the proposals suggests that there is nothing in them that might be unacceptable to the German Federal Government, that the Socialist governments had obviously done their best to avoid saying anything that might prove an obstacle to the easing of tension. Let me also draw attention to a statement by Klaus Schütz, the burgomaster of West Berlin. The way he sees things is that the German Federal Government will take the initiative in Moscow and Warsaw, but that some points would still

* *Magyar Nemzet* Nov. 4th 1969
** *Magyar Nemzet* Nov. 4th 1969

have to be clarified as regards Czechoslovakia and the GDR. In his opinion both public and secret talks between the German Federal Government and various Socialist countries would take place in the coming months.*

In Prague the Socialist countries took a significant step forward towards bringing about a European Security Conference and towards generally improving the atmosphere. One can draw the conclusion from successive statements issued by Willy Brandt, the German Federal Chancellor, that the new German Federal Government is getting ready to take the initiative on a number of matters in the near future. There isn't a sane person in Europe who is unaware that certain realities exist on this continent which cannot be changed, and which at the same time offer a firm basis for a collective system of security.

Preparing the Atmosphere

Preparations for a European Security Conference are taking place on two distinct levels whose outlines can already be clearly distinguished. One is the level of high diplomacy the stages of which are indicated by Budapest, Helsinki, Prague and Vienna. The other is the sphere of public opinion which is perhaps even more active in the preparation of the atmosphere, the working over of the ground, and perhaps even in finding new directions in which a rapprochement may take place.

Towards the end of 1967 Maurice Lambilliotte, the Editor of *Synthèses* and *Chanoine* Gore, both Belgians, together with a number of prominent Poles took the initiative towards calling a meeting which was given the official title of Conference for European Security and Cooperation. It was in session in Vienna between Nov 29th and Dec 3rd 1969. The author of these lines took part in the preparatory work right from the start. Following bilateral talks, a preparatory meeting could already be held in Vienna in December 1968. Personalities from various areas of political and cultural life of nineteen countries, some representing international organizations, took part. A second preparatory meeting was also held in Vienna, in April 1969, the organizing committee there elected then met in Poland during October 1969, in the summer residence of Stanislaw Poniatowski the last King of Poland at Jablonna near Warsaw. It is now used as the Recreation Home of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The representatives of organizations in twenty-one European countries and of nine international ones deliberated on ways of changing the balance of terror into one of good sense.

* *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Nov. 4th 1969

This Conference in which well known personalities who represented national and international organisations took part, must not be confused with the Security Conference on a governmental level which was proposed by the Budapest appeal, and to which the Finnish Government, suggesting Helsinki as a suitable site, kindly offered to act as hosts. Both the proposed Helsinki Conference, and the one which took place in Vienna fit into the vertical structure of meetings designed to further European security, and the latter played a useful part in the preparation of what is necessarilly the major and more important one.

The programme of the Vienna Conference already appeared in definite outline in the *château* at Jablonna. Four committees were formed to discuss various special aspects and questions connected with European security. Separate committees discussed the two Germanies, European frontiers, basic questions from the aspect of the two military blocks, such as general and European problems of disarmement, and finally the desirable and possible areas of cooperation.

The reports of delegates drawn from many countries and representing a variety of organizations made it clear that the idea of European security had gained ground since the Budapest appeal, and that the political barometer of Europe indicated favourable changes. This also appeared from the attitude taken by governments, after all twenty-two countries answered the invitiation extended by the Government of Finland, and not one of them rejected the appeal to attend the Conference. The well-known politicians, scholars, scientists and representatives of various organizations on the other hand, who met near Warsaw, and then at Vienna, did not represent governments, they interpreted the views of certain sections of public opinion. Processes going on in society therefore had to be most carefully considered. Work done in the interests of the Conference took place within a given social context, and the true value of statements made by heads of government or foreign ministers is largely determined by the extent to which they reflect changes in the political and economic features of their countries.

Special attention was concentrated on the German Federal Republic and on Austria, the country where the Vienna Conference took place which are in a key position as regards European security. One was able to tell from the way Willy Brandt, the Federal Chancellor, opened the debate on his Government's programme, in which aspects European realities exercise a greater, and which a lesser influence on the new Government's policy. Hungarian public opinion has reacted with a well-intentioned wait and see. Without weighing each of the Federal Chancellor's statements on apothecary's scales, one can nevertheless establish one point, that the Vienna

Conference provided a first class opportunity for looking at words in the light of facts. The conference was not at government level, therefore, naturally, what was said was not binding on any government. But a great deal can be deduced about real intentions, about the true meaning of words in statements issued by governments when it is considered whether it truly symphatizes with European security, even if only implicitly, or whether it raises obstacles behind the scenes, which then prove to be in the way when it comes to establishing a European security system.

The Legal Aspects

The legal aspects of a collective security system should also be borne in mind. The League of Nations, founded after the First World War, aimed to establish a collective system of security on a world scale. It carried the seeds of dissolution right from its birth. What it in fact aimed at was to put on a permanent basis the situation created by the Dictatorial Peace Treaties that concluded the First World War and to ensure that the booty of war would be secure. Those responsible naturally used high-sounding phrases which tried to cover this up.

After the Second World War the Powers apparently drew the right consequences from the preceding period and established the United Nations Organization on the sound principle that world peace must be built on an understanding between the Great Powers. The Cold War soon led to the disappearance of this understanding and at the same time a number of points of armed conflict appeared in various parts of the globe. The United Nations proved to be far from insignificant from the point of view of keeping the peace, but events proved that the security of nations could not be built on the UN alone.

It became apparent that the final objective, an effective security system that covered the whole globe, was a most difficult task for the nations of the world, and that it would perhaps be possible to approach it by building up regional security systems. Indeed the latter appeared to be the most suitable way.

It also became clear that in view of the unstable nature of a world collective security system, it would have to be underpinned by complementary security systems. Regional security systems do not mean that the security of this or that continent can be considered apart from the problem of the security of the whole world. Establishing a security system in this or that continent will nevertheless, particularly when the area concerned is Europe,

contribute to the cause of universal peace, since it would make it easier to arrange conflicts between states which are part of the same continent within a narrower framework that would permit dealing with special obstacles and that would allow the most directly interested countries to act jointly against an aggressor. A regional system establishing the security of a continent would be a part of a universal peace system and a valuable contribution towards establishing peace and security throughout the world.

This is the way the United Nations Charter looks at things. Its VIIIth Chapter explicitly permits regional agreements and organisations which are meant to concern themselves with questions that can suitably be dealt with on a regional basis, providing of course that such agreements and organisations, and their activities, prove to be in harmony with the principles and aims of the United Nations.

Amongst such the European system of security would play a special role. For some years now the European socialist countries have made considerable efforts to establish such a system.

Manysided cooperation between European countries which includes everyone must come about in terms of the proposals made by the European socialist countries. These are based on the principle of peaceful coexistence, and those other principles which are implied by the former such as the outlawing of violence and threats of violence, sovereignity and territorial integrity, that is respect for existing frontiers, the recognition of the right to national self-determination, equality between nations, the prohibition of interference in each other's internal affairs, compulsory peaceful arbitration in case of conflicts and economic cooperation based on mutual advantage. These principles must be the foundation of any All-European system of security.

Certain voices emanating from NATO countries have been heard to argue that there is no need for a European regional security system based on such principles, since the Charter of the United Nations already contains them all.

No doubt most of the principles enumerated above are to be found in the United Nations Charter. But it is not only neither useless nor damaging to repeat them in regional security agreements, it is downright necessary. It is necessary first of all since experience shows that the condensed and terse points made by the Charter are in need of amplification and a European security agreement would also allow them to be expressed in concrete terms, as they apply to European conditions. One must also show oneself aware of the fact that international agreements are subject to the ravages of time, and that the effectiveness of the agreement becomes

questionable once changes have reached a certain stage. There is of course no question of any state today doubting the effectiveness of the United Nations Charter on such a basis, nevertheless one must bear in mind that just about a quarter of a century has passed since the Charter was formulated and that significant changes have taken place in the world in that time. Under such circumstances it would certainly be desirable to repeat these principles in a new, European document that would amplify them and concretely apply them to current European conditions.

Common Economic Interests

Serious economic interests are linked to East–West economic cooperation that would flower on the basis of a European security system. Economic research has shown that the growth in foreign trade and economic growth as such are closely interconnected. Plants on a scale which demands markets that outgrow the frontiers of a country have proved themselves as the most economical as regards the organisation of production. That is why the importance of specialisation in production and of industrial cooperation is growing.

Three important economic groupings are operating in Europe at the moment: CMEA, the Common Market and EFTA. The framework of these has here and there already proved too narrow for the fast growing productive forces. The chemical, machine and electronics industries, the three branches of industry that have developed particularly fast, require large investment, wide and secure markets, and considerable scientific and research facilities.

If these developments were to take place in Europe without cooperation between the two halves, they would take significantly longer and would tie down more capital than would happen if there were cooperation between the economic groupings in this field. Joint investment would prevent parallel investment and industrial cooperation would considerably widen the market for both sides. Specialization by research institutes and the exchange of information between them would mean maximum exploitation of the existing capacity. Industrial and scientific cooperation would lead to fruitful results throughout industry, and not only in the three sectors described above.

Experience has already shown that not only countries with identical or similar social systems are capable of economic and scientific cooperation. Economic self-interest is the basis of this sort of cooperation, and that is

capable of establishing connections between countries of widely differing social systems.

It is of course in the common economic interest that plants of a size which permits them to operate economically should be established throughout Europe. Investment on an all-European scale is necessary to bring this about. Plants of such a size need a secure continent-wide market and only East–West cooperation can ensure that. Last but not least large-scale technological development has to be prepared by research. Scientific cooperation is needed in order to ensure that available research capacity is used in the most economic way.

These days research demands considerable investment and also a large number of highly qualified specialists. Only carefully harmonized research avoids the waste of men and materials that must occur if the same work is carried on independently in various places.

Cooperation agreements between the three economic groupings could play an important part in the organisation of cooperation in production and research and in furthering an exchange of goods and services on a Europe-wide scale. It would be rational to establish the sort of institutions within the framework of these agreements whose purpose is the organisation of European economic and scientific cooperation, or rather the carrying out of concrete tasks. Such institutions would include a bank which would offer short-, middle- and longterm credits which would further East–West trade and economic cooperation, common research institutes covering particularily important fields, such as protein production, medical biology, cybernetics, petrochemistry etc., and institutions that organise the exchange of "know-how" etc.

Cooperation between economic integrations naturally does not exclude a growth in bilateral relationships between countries, on the contrary, it presupposes them. Economic integrations on the other hand offer particular advantages to small European countries, since they permit them to enjoy the fruits of modern technological progress, which they could never do if they attempted to rely on their own restricted home markets, and with methods of production that are aimed to create conditions of autarchy.

It is of economic importance that aid given to developing countries should be integrated on a European scale. This does not mean that all national aid funds be combined, nor that individual countries should give up their own aid policy, but the carrying out of certain complex programmes with the participation of enterprises from various countries. The developing countries are an important factor in European economic growth, both as a market and as suppliers. Present aid is insufficient to ensure that the potential

supply as determined by European industrial capacity is properly balanced by the developing countries' ability to pay. The sum concerned can only be raised as a result of savings on defence expenditure that would follow from disarmament based on a European security agreement. If the aid given is properly integrated, the results achieved would be several times the present ones. An integrated aid policy would also be in the interests of those to whom the aid is given since this would prevent the establishment of parallel redundant and competing economic units in the developing world. An integrated aid policy would further regional integrations in Asia, Africa and Latin America instead.

The UN European Economic Commission would appear to offer the right framework within which negotiations concerning economic cooperation and the organisation of that cooperation could be carried out. The specialised instrumentalities that would have to be established could become the focal points around which cooperation could be realised concretely. Carrying out such a programme would naturally demand considerable time and a real political struggle against financial interests that oppose cooperation. One would also have to mobilise that section of society which is interested in economic and scientific cooperation.

The Balance of Good Sense

The Hungarian public opinion is vitally interested in European security on a firm and lasting basis. The two world wars were immensily destructive of Hungarian lives and material goods, they decimated the youth of the country, demolished industry and communications and pillaged agriculture. For years on end after the Liberation a large part of the country's strength and resources had to be concentrated on the healing of wounds, on clearing up the rubble left by mental and material destruction, and on reconstruction.

Hungary is therefore particularily interested in every attempt to establish a collective European security system. Hungary joined the Warsaw Pact in the interests of peace and security, and for the same reason Hungary joins in every action that serves European security. Hungarian activity on a government level is informed by this common European calling and interest in the question of European security occupies a central place in all negotiations that took place between Hungary and countries in western Europe. This was as true of Dr Klaus, the Austrian Chancellor's stay in Budapest in 1967 as of Mr Jenő Fock, the Hungarian Prime Minister's,

trip to France in 1968 or to Austria in 1969. It was an honour for our capital and for the country that it was at its Budapest meeting in March 1969 that the Political Advisory Body of the Warsaw Pact chose to address an appeal to the governments of Europe, suggesting the holding of a security conference. That proposal has since become known as the Budapest appeal.

European security is vital to every nation in Europe. Much divides us, but much more unites us. The times, the security of the present and of the future, demand courage, resourcefulness and initiative. The situation has become more unambiguous, and therefore ripe for a constructive European solution. We must take a step forward. It is the decided view of Hungarian public opinion that the active unity of the peoples of Europe can produce that tremendous power which will be capable of dealing with the task of establishing peace and security in Europe, and which will thus create the Balance of Good Sense.

INITIATIVE AND EQUILIBRIUM

Major political and economic issues in Hungary

by

JÓZSEF BOGNÁR

It gives me great pleasure to be able to welcome you* to this country and to have the opportunity for an informal exchange of ideas with American political scientists.

I propose to give you a brief outline of the structure of ideas and actions in the spirit of which we are trying to deal with the major political and economic issues in Hungary.

In Hungary—as you are presumably aware—a far reaching economic reform was introduced on January 1, 1968; a resolution regarding the reform of our national science policy was lately adopted by the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, and a reform of the administrative apparatus is in preparation.

The economic reform is more than an economic issue. Economic decisions are known to be deeply influenced by social and political factors. The system of economic values relies on rationality but the notion and content of rationality cannot be separated from the existing social and political conditions and from the way of thinking it reflects. This means, on the one hand, that every new social and political system introduces new elements into the concept of economic rationality and, on the other, that the structure, progress and problems of the economy have a considerable impact on existing political and social conditions. It logically follows from this that changes in the manner of thinking about public issues were a precondition of the economic reform. That economic processes and actions contributed to the changes in public opinion is another question. Also that the economic reform as a functioning system reacts on both thinking on public questions and political and social conditions.

* A short talk given in Budapest to a group of visiting American political scientists, on the 16th of July 1969.

In the last analysis the reform tries to establish the most feasible harmony between the fundamental ideas and achievements of a socialist society and economic rationality (that is, efficiency). What are, in this respect, considered to be the achievements of a socialist society? One of them is full employment at a relatively low level of economic development. Full employment or quasi-full employment is known to exist in most of the present advanced capitalist countries but to achieve this capitalist society needed four to five generations and a high per capita national income ($1,500 to 2,000 a year). Further achievements are a fairer and more equal distribution of incomes (the maximum difference being a 1 to 6 or 1 to 7 ratio), free education and health services, the low cost of commodities and services connected with culture, etc. Viewed from another angle, these achievements have led to a relative scarcity of material resources for stimulating economic and technological development in a socialist society. The objective now is to preserve these achievements and at the same time to allot more of the newly created material resources to incentives stimulating economic enterprise (the profit motive) also on an individual level.

We are trying to find an equilibrium between national planning and initiative taken by enterprises. A socialist society, in which the state is the owner of the overwhelming majority of forces of production on the one hand, and is an action centre responsible for public welfare on the other, can obviously not exist and progress without some planning. Experience also shows that economic undertakings and their management must be given the opportunity freely to display their creative energies, faculties, initiatives in decisions taken after a careful assessment of the situation. How can these two requirements be dovetailed in a society where material resources are scarce and one cannot afford to waste energies? The new economic mechanism answers this in practice by, for instance, permitting enterprises to decide on the allocation of their profit after having fulfilled their obligations towards the state. The economic reform shows a new attitude also in questions regarding the relationship between social interest and group interest. According to earlier notions, the national economic interest had priority over group interests, therefore enterprises in the course of their activities had to adapt themselves continuously to the social interest. Today enterprises must follow their own interests (including, of course, their long-term interests), while the state is meant to create—by means of economic regulators—an environment where rational enterprise activities become as identical as possible with the social interest.

The relationship between the domestic economy and the world economy also assumes new forms in the reform. The old economic mechanism con-

sidered it rational to satisfy constantly changing demand in the first place (at any rate irrespective of production costs) by developing domestic capacities. The new economic mechanism prompts us to exploit our comparative advantages to the maximum, that is, to use available material resources for developing capacities which are also capable of export activity and to resort to imports in those sectors in which Hungary is at a disadvantage.

The economic reform—I have described only a few of its characteristics—proves that socialist society has adopted a new approach to thinking about economics, about the possibilities of guidance and its limitations, as well as about power.

The point today is not only to respect the internal laws of motion of economic life but also to consider the changed distribution of economic power as between enterprises and government authorities. But the new distribution of power is not due to changes in power relations but is the result of the judgement, the greater experience and foresight of government authorities. The general view is that the economy can be more efficiently influenced by these new methods, which means not only that progress is accelerated but that the results achieved are closer to the original objectives.

I want to briefly refer to the fact that with the evolution of the reform good results can be achieved, as is shown by available data for the past year and a half. There is no need to prove to an audience familiar with economic and social questions that success is the result of slow and gradual processes. Nevertheless the usual growth rate (an annual 5 per cent) could be achieved under substantially better equilibrium conditions than before. The equilibrium of the foreign-trade balance and that of the balance of payments have improved, and domestic demand could be satisfied to a greater extent than in previous years. There is intensive progress in agriculture, industrial exports have risen (to both socialist and capitalist countries) though contradictions between the production pattern and market demand have become apparent with some intensity during recent months. Earlier this was dealt with by stockpiling unmarketable goods. This is no longer possible, and though the rate of growth in industrial production *seems* to slow down, it is this slowing down that enforces changes in the structure and a gradual adaptation to market demands.

I hope I have made it clear that the reform is proving successful although many problems have to be faced that would seem—at a superficial glance—to be the consequences of the reform. This is not really true, though people exist who believe this and they exert some influence. That is why the Hungarian economy must endeavour to change the production pattern within a relatively short time.

The reform of the Hungarian national science policy also proves that what we are tackling are not simply economic problems but a new way of thinking, and new methods of approach. A scientific-technological revolution is going on throughout the world whose subject, objectives, instruments and results are inseparable from the economy. Hence all the rational requirements and principles mankind associates with economic development must prevail also in the progress of science.

The new principles completely discard the notion of scientific autarchy which existed in Hungary not as a theoretical demand but as a result of mechanisms affecting the progress and concrete activities of science. It is no longer feasible for small countries to develop all sciences on all levels (pure, applied and technological). It follows that it is necessary to join the flow of international research by exchanging research experience, by joining forces (co-operation and joint research) and by purchasing patents and licences. This will permit the growth of scientific activities better co-ordinated with the needs of the economy and of society, bearing in mind that utility is the ultimate goal, and using more elastic methods. The financial interest of research workers in results achieved and their economic application will be substantially increased. Scientific and economic co-operation has been established and will be furthered not only with the socialist countries of Europe but also with advanced capitalist countries.

What is needed is, of course, not only growth in the natural sciences and in technology but also rapid progress in the social sciences. Such disciplines as economics, sociology, jurisprudence and political science investigate, in the first place, the internal problems of a living and growing socialist society. The adopted principles also refer to the freedom of scientific research and to the responsibility of research workers.

In the preparation of the reform of the administrative structure the starting-point is the fact that both the style and the methods of administrative work have changed substantially in the recent past. These changes could be summed up briefly as follows:

(a) The notion that the solution of any one problem may be achieved by a variety of methods has found general acceptance. When the government has a choice it should select the alternative that seems the most favourable. Preparatory work must be concentrated on the correct formulation of alternatives.

(b) Besides traditional administrative methods regulations covering this or that type of social activity in the widest possible sense are also being studied from the point of view of their reform. This is work in which a great number of scientists and other experts participate in addition to party and state authorities.

(c) When taking decisions the government pays increased attention to the interests of groups affected by them. The general intention is to co-ordinate the social optimum with the various group interests to avoid contradictions arising from the implementation of these decisions.

(d) The anticipated reaction of public opinion to the decisions to be made is given increased consideration. In practice this means that the social optimum established theoretically is often modified in content by group interests and in time by the expected reaction of public opinion. It follows that influencing public opinion (by the press, television, radio, publications, scientific discussions, etc.) has acquired added importance.

(e) Legislation exercises a growing control over government activities. This influence is exerted in particular by Parliamentary committees.

As can be seen from the foregoing, democracy—under the conditions of a socialist system—has been considerably strengthened. Alternatives and different interests are taken into account before making important decisions, these are prepared with the participation of a wide spectrum of the best specialists, and the legislative is able to keep an eye on the executive. In the United States lively discussions are taking place—mainly in connection with issues of foreign policy—about the limits of power. How far should the power of government extend? What are the methods and instruments power may or must use and how can this activity be co-ordinated with the interests of the citizens and with public opinion? These are questions we also try to answer while building and developing a socialist society.

There is another question waiting to be answered: what kind of a government do we consider a good government? Should it be conceived as a power factor acting as an initiator, a generator feeding new ideas into society with due regard to the changes that are taking place in the world and in society? Or should the government be considered rather as a balancing power helping to produce compromise permitting the confrontation of conflicting interests —achieving agreement eventually by arbitration? There is no consensus on this question in the capitalist countries either. In France strong governments (if and when such governments exist) have always been the generators of a new spirit, whereas in the United States governments bent on producing compromise solutions have been more popular (F. D. Roosevelt and J. F. Kennedy, of course, represented a different style).

The former type of government serves development in the first place, the second type ensures equilibrium. The present Hungarian government combines these types. It lays equal stress on initiative and on equilibrium.

This is the basis of a firm political equilibrium which could and can stay firm also in a period when extensive and intensive reforms were carried out.

THE HUNGARIAN ECONOMY

1945–1969

by

EGON KEMENES

An economic survey can only give an incomplete picture of the changes that took place in the life of Hungarians during the past quarter century. It would be just as futile to measure the development of a nation merely by economic indexes, as if we were to measure a child's development by its height only—however welcome development in either case might be.

Economic analyses can give answers to questions such as the extent to which the country has utilized its economic resources during the last quarter of a century, or how society has made use of the work done, or how much more is used to satisfy individual needs. But economic analyses can only give indirect information about many other changes or their effect on the life of society or individuals such as the extent to which individual choice in respect to social status, employment, mode of life and alternatives regarding the satisfaction of needs has increased as a result of a higher standard of living and the end of a class society, as well as to what extent security and human dignity are more general and worry and humilation rarer. Yet, these are, when all is said and done, the final ends and aims of every kind of economic development.

Besides, even the most exhaustive and detailed data about the present economic situation would only allow the drawing of indirect inferences as regards pressing question that arise in every country with a developed economy, including Hungary. How will people—freed from the restrictions of poverty—avail themselves of their increasing leisure, what will they do with more money and more time on their hands.

Yet, within its own limited field economic analysis can give answers to some questions of decisive importance from the aspect of the nation as such and the life of individuals forming the nation. A reader interested in problems of world-wide importance might wish to obtain information

about Hungary's present economic situation as such as well as compare it with countries of a similar character. Economists might also be interested in the details of the process of growth that produced the present situation as well as in the internal factors and interconnections of Hungary's economy.

Both aspects raise a number of further questions. If the economic situation is to be regarded as the outcome of growth, the level from which development started is of considerable importance. One might also ask how the economy would have developed without errors, and without being misdirected. What sacrifices had to be made in order to obtain the actual progress made.

Level and Growth of National Income

The most frequently applied fundamental index of economic development is per capita national income or gross national product (GNP). In Hungary —and in other socialist countries—economic growth is measured by national income, whereas Western countries as a rule use gross national product* as the standard of measurement.

In Hungary in 1969, per capita national income was some $720. This sum is—if the difference between the two concepts, i.e. national income and gross national product is taken into account—by and large in conformity with data supplied by the World Bank.** Thus, as regards per capita national income Hungary's place is at the lower limit of that group of European countries to which Austria, Czechoslovakia, Italy and so on belong at a somewhat higher level. Therefore, Hungary belongs to the group of medium-developed European countries.

The development of the country's per capita national income in the immediate past permits the assumption that Hungary's position will improve in this respect, in other words, it is to be expected that the difference in level between Hungary and the more developed West European countries will decrease. In 1969, the national income per head was about two-and-a-half times higher than that in 1950 (1950 is the basis year used by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office for long-range comparison of indexes). This corresponds to an annual average growth rate of about 5 per cent, slightly surpassing that of most European countries. Between 1950 and 1966 the growth rate of the per capita GNP was 4.5 per cent per annum

* The gross national product surpasses national income by the value of services and amortization.

** See *Finance and Development*, a monthly of the World Bank, 1969, No. 1, p. 40. According to it Hungary's per capita GNP was $800 in 1966. If besides the difference between the two concepts, the difference in time is also taken into account, approximately the above value is obtained.

in the Common Market countries, 2 per cent in the EFTA countries, 3.8 per cent in France, 4.9 per cent in Italy and 2.2 per cent in Britain.* In view of Hungary's progress, particularly after 1958, it is hoped that its position will further improve. Between 1958 and 1969, the annual increase per head was 5.7 per cent on an average, whereas that of sixteen West European countries was 4.4 per cent per annum during an approximately identical period (1960–1967).

In order to appreciate the position Hungary takes in respect to per capita national income the level from whence the country's development started 25 years ago must be known.

During the Second World War 40 per cent of Hungary's improved assets were destroyed, and a considerable proportion of skilled people of working age were war victims. War damage in Hungary amounted to about $4,000–5,000 million. Due to losses in productive capacity, stores and manpower, the national income in 1945–46 amounted to only 45 per cent of that in 1938–39. Ten per cent of the national income was spent on reparations and another 6 per cent on the most urgent reconstruction works. After the war Hungary went through a severe inflation.

Due to enormous efforts economic reconstruction was successful so that the pre-war level was reached by 1949. At that time, per capita national income amounted to about $240.

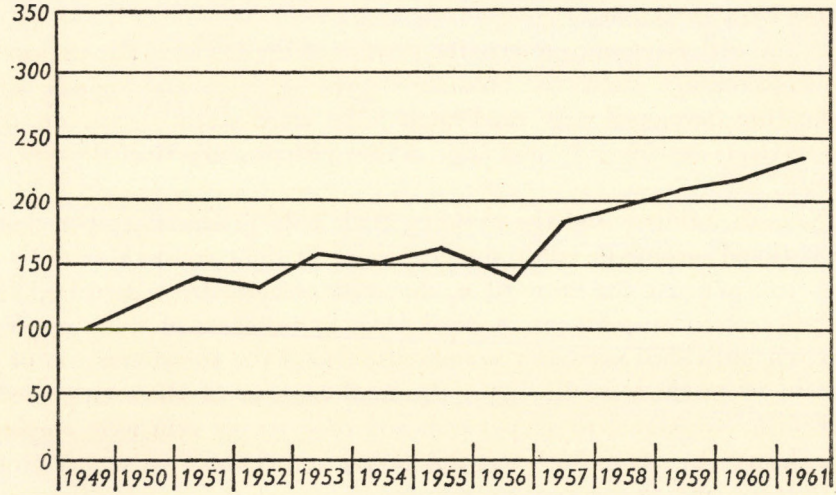
From the end of the reconstruction period Hungary's national income developed as follows:

National Income Index Numbers
(at comparable prices)
1949 = 100

1949	100	1959	204
1950	121	1960	225
1951	141	1961	239
1952	139	1962	250
1953	157	1963	263
1954	150	1964	276
1955	164	1965	279
1956	146	1966	301
1957	180	1967	322
1958	191	1968	338
		1969	359

* In this study, Hungarian data are taken from publications of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office; data concerning other countries are taken from UN and OECD publications. Please note: the Hungarian Statistical Yearbook is issued in English as well.

The following diagram shows the development of national income:



The diagram clearly shows the process as a result of which Hungary's national income grew from $2,100 million in 1949 to $7,400 million in 1969. According to the calculation below, the latter sum corresponds to a gross national product of $8,700 million:

national income	$7,400 million
national income + services = *net national product*	$8,100 million
net national product + amortization = *gross national product*	$8,700 million

Taking the period as a whole, the annual average increase was 5.7 per cent, that is, it was far higher than the average growth rate of 2 per cent per annum in the inter-war period.

It appears from the diagram that the development process of the national economy can be divided into two phases. After the spectacular upswing in some of the years between 1949 and 1958, growth slowed down, and a certain recession set in. Accordingly, in this period the overall increase was slower than in the second phase, from 1958 to 1969, during which fluctuation decreased and development became more steady. The difference is not due, or not only due to economic causes, but also and mainly to

political ones. The steady development after 1958 indicates not only a realistic national economic policy but also that this policy rested on consistent basic principles.

In line with economic growth, the *structure* of the economy also underwent a transformation. Industrial production grew by leaps and bounds, while agriculture developed only moderately. The third sector (transport, trade and services) developed by and large in line with the growth of the economy as such.

Whereas industry and the building trade only produced 45 per cent of the national income in 1950, the proportion of these sectors rose to 67 per cent, in 1969. At the same time, the share of agriculture decreased from 37 per cent to 20 per cent. A breakdown by numbers of those employed between individual economic sectors also shows the transformation of the pattern of production. In 1950, the total number of those employed in agriculture amounted to 52 per cent and only 19 per cent were employed in industry; by 1969, however, this proportion changed to 30 per cent in agriculture, and 35 per cent in industry.

The decrease in the share of agriculture was only partly due to the fast growth of industrial production. Another cause was that agriculture only slightly developed during the past twenty-five years. This also manifests itself by the fact that in spite of the relatively fast decrease in the number of those employed in agriculture, a relatively large proportion of all those in employment is still working in agriculture as compared to other countries. The table below shows the percentage of agricultural workers in some European countries on the basis of 1965 data:

United Kingdom	3.5	France	18.2
Belgium	5.7	Austria	20.3
Netherlands	8.0	Czechoslovakia	21.1
German Federal Republic	11.1	Italy	26.1
Denmark	17.0	Hungary	34.0

It should, however, be noted that in the past few years agricultural production rose faster. While the annual increase was 1.8 per cent in 1961–1965, it amounted to an average 2.7 per cent int 1966–1968.

There is no doubt that the developed modern character of the structure of the entire Hungarian economy is due to the speedy increase of the share of industry. It was precisely industrial development (more machines and artificial fertilizer) that produced the conditions for a quicker increase of agricultural production the results of which started to show in the last few years.

The changing proportion between investments and consumption also pertains to the question of structure. The relationship between accumulation, the source of investments and national income indicates the kind of growth on the one hand, and shows, on the other, at the price of what sacrifices society has achieved the actual economic development.

In the light of the aforesaid it appears that a high rate of accumulation was characteristic of the allocation of national income in Hungary over the past 25 years. In 1938, the rate of accumulation amounted to around 7 per cent, in 1949 it already reached 21.3 per cent and, at the beginning of the fifties 25 per cent. The rate of accumulation fluctuated between 1954 and 1959; it was about 20 per cent in 1959, and rose—not steadily, though—to the present 25 per cent. In the past 7 to 8 years, it amounted to an average 25–26 per cent. Recently only some of the developed capitalist countries (the Federal German Republic and Japan) have reached a similarly high investment ratio. In Hungary the accumulation ratio is higher than in most of the developed capitalist countries. Detailed international comparative data are only available concerning the years 1961–1965. In this period gross accumulation as a percentage of the gross national product was the following:

Hungary	32
German Federal Republic	27
Austria	26
Sweden	24
Italy	23
France	22
United Kingdom	18

However, the efficiency of this considerable accumulation activity was not always high if it is measured by the effect it exerted on the growth of national income. In Hungary, the incremental capital output ratio (that shows the per cent increase of investments needed for one per cent increase of the national income) developed as follows:

1950–55	3.14
1955–60	2.18
1960–65	4.43
1965–69	2.10

Striving after spectacular successes, the economic policy in the years 1950–1955 neglected important investments, indispensable for a well-founded economy. These omissions were remedied and the high incremental

capital output from 1960 to 1965 is due to a number of investments effectuated in the field of infrastructure and agriculture. Owing to their character, the effect of these investments did not manifest itself till a later point in time. The more favourable average index in 1965–1969 is due, among others, to the investments made in from 1960 to 65.

If the origin of national income is viewed through a breakdown by sectors it appears that almost the entire economic activity takes place within the state and co-operative sectors, in accordance with the socialist character of the Hungarian economy.

Origin of National Income by Social Sectors in 1969

State sector	77 per cent
Co-operative sector	20 per cent
Private sector	3 per cent
Total	100 per cent

Some Important Fields of Economic Activity

During the past 25 years, industry was the fastest developing sector of the Hungarian economy. In 1969, net industrial production amounted to more than four times that in 1950 (index = 425). In the first half of this period the average increase was an annual 10 per cent whereas it was about 7 per cent after 1958. The rate of growth of industrial production surpassed that of most developed capitalist countries. A comparison of international data available up to 1965 shows the following:

Average Rate of Growth of Industrial Production per annum (per cent)

	1950–55	1955–60	1960–65
Hungary	13.8	7.6	7.3
Common Market countries	9.4	6.7	5.6
EFTA countries	4.0	3.3	2.2

In line with the fast increase of industrial production, the pattern of production also changed. The production of some sectors of industry that were particularly important for the development of the Hungarian economy increased to their eighteen to twentyfold in the course of 25 years.

The following table shows this process on the basis of gross production indexes:

Industrial sector	Index of gross production in 1969 (1950 = 100)
Heavy industry total	620
within it:	
chemical industry	1,210
telecommunication and vacuum technical industry	1,810
precision engineering	2,120
Light industry total	492
within it:	
textile clothing industry	765
wood-working industry	782

The production of some materials and products of basic importance developed as follows:

Name of basic materials	Unit	Production in		
		1938	1949	1968
Electric power	million kWh	1,399	2,520	13,155
Coal	thousand tons	9,360	11,838	27,213
Crude oil	thousand tons	43	506	1,807
Natural gas	million cu.metres	8	372	2,691
Steel	thousand tons	647	860	2,903

With respect to coal production it should be noted that the maximum output—31,548 tons—was reached in 1964. In view of the fact that the economic efficiency of Hungarian coal mining is declining since some mines are unfavourably sited, while other fuels—oil and natural gas—are used in increasing quantities, it did not seem advisable to develop coal mining, moreover the production by some mines working under adverse conditions was discontinued.

The economically unsatisfactory nature of coal mining was one of the factors due to which the productivity of industral labour did not increase as rapidly as industrial production itself. Up to and including 1968, the average rate of growth of productivity was about 4 per cent per annum.

Although this surpasses the corresponding data of some countries with old-established industries (e.g. Britain 2.7 per cent and Belgium 3.8 per cent), yet it is lower than that of Austria (5.2 per cent), and France (5.3 per cent), or of some recently industrialized countries such as Italy (6.5 per cent) and Rumania (8.7 per cent).

The breakdown by sector of industrial production shows that the socialist (state and co-operative) sector produced 98 per cent of the industrial output in 1969 and that 96 per cent of all persons employed in industry worked in the socialist sector (4 per cent were employed in the private sector). In the state sector, that produced 93 per cent of the gross in the sixties, considerable industrial concentration took place. As a result of merging smaller firms into large industrial units, the number of state industrial enterprises decreased from 1,368 in 1960 to 811 by the end of 1968. At the same time the number of employees and workers working in state industrial enterprises increased from 1,144,000 in 1960 to 1,470,000 by the end of 1968.

The new economic reform, that came into force on January 1, 1968, brought about considerable changes in the functioning of state industrial enterprises. The scope of entrepreneurial decisions—including a large proportion of investment decisions—was considerably extended; in the future, enterprises will have to draw on their own resources and bank loans to finance investments to a far greater extent than hitherto.

For various socio-political, economic and within the latter, investment policy reasons, agriculture developed at an only moderate rate during the same period. Ideas concerning the development of agriculture that rested on sound socio-political foundations on the one hand, and took into consideration the importance of agriculture in Hungarian economic life on the other, only became current after 1958.

Net agricultural production increased by only 28 per cent between 1949 and 1969 and grew steadily at the new, higher level since the beginning of the sixties only. It considerably fluctuated in the earlier years. Animal husbandry grew at a faster rate than agriculture in the strict sense.

The question of the ownership of land and the structure of enterprises was finally settled by the beginning of the sixties; the sectoral division of cultivated land developed at that time; in 1969 it was the following:

Arable Land Area by Social Sectors

State farms	14
Co-operative sector	81
Private farms	5
Total	100

After the sectoral division had finally established itself, a concentration process took place in both the state and the co-operative sector of agriculture, as a result of which larger production units were formed. However, the larger dimensions of the new co-operative units still permit supervision by the membership and do not hinder co-operative democracy. The data below indicate the extent of the concentration process:

Agricultural Units of Management
(mid-year data)

	1960	1968
State farm	333	208
Agricultural producers' co-operatives	4,265	2,846

Hungarian agricultural production only started to grow at a faster rate in the mid-sixties. The average yield of wheat, the country's most important cereal, reached 27 quintals per hectar (= 2,471 acres) in 1969 as against 13.7 quintals per hectare in 1931–1940 and 14.6 quintals per hectare in 1951–1955. This speeded-up growth—the result of which will manifest itself in the seventies only—is due, among others, to the fact that agricultural investments (and industrial ones related to agriculture) considerably increased since the beginning of the sixties. The higher level of mechanization made it possible to machine-harvest 93 per cent of the corn crops. The increase in the stock of tractors expresses best the development of the level of mechanization:

Number and Density of Tractors

Year	Number of tractors	Arable land per tractors, hectare
1935	7,014	799
1950	13,377	413
1960	41,015	129
1965	64,231	79
1969	70,000*	72*

* = preliminary data

Land under irrigation—in 1939 only 14,000 hectares, and even in 1950 not more than 33,000 hectares—reached 205,000 hectares in 1967. Due to progress in the chemical industry, artificial fertilizer production reached a high level by the end of the sixties leading to increased average yields.

Fertilizer Consumption (phosphorous, nitrogenous, potassic) by Hungarian Agriculture

Year	Total fertilizer consumption (1,000 tons)	Fertilizer consumption in quantities of active substance	
		Total (1,000 tons)	Per hectare of arable land (kg)
1938	73	13	2.3
1950	185	34	6.4
1960	748	141	31.4
1967	1,876	370	96.6
1968	2,277	450	124.0

Foreign trade

Apart from its considerable bauxite resources, Hungary is poor in raw materials. Hence, the growth of industrial production inevitably goes together with an increase of imports. In addition, Hungary is a small country with only ten million inhabitants. The restricted nature of the home market does not allow the mass production of many articles, this is only possible if export markets are available. Thus, it was obvious from the very first that the growth of the national economy is inconceivable without a simultaneous increase in foreign trade. At present, Hungary's foreign trade amounts to 40 per cent of national income.

Higher import needs—due to post-1949 industrialization and the necessity to pay for them by exports—gave the impulse to the development of foreign trade. In the years 1950–1955, an increase of the national income by 1 per cent went together with an 1.25 per cent increase in foreign trade. In the period of growth after 1958—referred to by Prof. József Bognár as the "intensive phase" of Hungary's economic growth*—foreign trade was of similar importance. Between 1960 and 1965, a 1 per cent growth in national income was accompanied by an 1.84 per cent increase in foreign trade.

* See the chapter "Economy" in the book: *Information Hungary*. Budapest, 1968, published jointly by Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, and Pergamon Press, Oxford. (Published as Volume 2 of the Information Series "Countries of the World".)

Hence, it was a matter of course that foreign trade increased at a faster rate than national income. The foreign trade index (1950 = 100) increased to 635 by 1969.

According to preliminary data obtained from official Hungarian sources, Hungarian imports amounted to $1,960 million and exports to $2,120 million in 1969. This means that foreign trade amounted to approximately $400 per capita as against only twenty dollars per capita in 1938. As regards the magnitude of per capita foreign trade Hungary is roughly on the level of Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic and Italy. However, Hungary's per capita foreign trade falls short of that of Austria which is about $600, not to mention Switzerland and Holland with a per capita foreign trade of some $1,300.

Of course, this rapid increase in foreign trade led to considerable changes in the assortment of goods within foreign trade. Before the war, the overwhelming part of Hungarian imports consisted of raw materials and semi-finished goods, and that of exports of agricultural products. By the end of the sixties, the share of machines and equipment increased in Hungary's imports. Agricultural production fell behind and machines and consumer goods took the first place in exports. The table below shows the changes:

Pattern of Foreign Trade by Commodity Groups
(percentage)

Commodity groups	1938	1950	1960	1968
Imports:				
Machines and equipment	10.6	22.0	27.8	29.6
Industrial consumer goods	8.8	1.5	5.0	7.6
Raw materials and semi-finished goods	73.1	72.7	58.9	54.0
Foodstuffs and raw materials for the food processing industry	7.5	3.8	8.3	8.8
Exports:				
Machines and equipment	9.3	23.0	38.0	27.4
Industrial consumer goods	10.2	20.3	17.8	24.4
Raw materials and semi-finished goods	23.5	17.5	23.6	27.0
Foodstuffs and raw materials for the food processing industry	57.0	39.2	20.6	21.2

It should be noted that the socialist countries are Hungary's main commercial partners, providing a large and stable market. By and large 75 per cent of Hungary's total foreign trade is transacted with socialist countries. However, trade with other countries is also increasing; the auspicious growth of East–West trade is appropriately represented by the territorial structure of Hungary's foreign trade:

Development of the Hungarian Foreign Trade Broken Down by Groups of Countries
(in percentages)

Groups of countries	1960	1967	1968
Socialist countries	74	71	70
Developed capitalist countries	22	24	25
Developing countries	4	5	5
Foreign trade total	100	100	100

This short survey of the development of the Hungarian foreign trade would be incomplete if we were to disregard two new features which emerged since the economic reform was introduced in 1968. First, Hungary's exports to developed capitalist countries considerably increased in the first half of 1969 and surpassed by 25 per cent the exports of the same period in the previous year. This is due to two factors: in the first place, as a result of the reform, a number of industrial enterprises were authorized to establish direct contacts with customers abroad. In the past, foreign trade enterprises held a monopolistic position in this field, now, however, large industrial enterprises are increasingly active on foreign markets. In the second place, together with the economic reform, new and more realistic foreign exchange rates were established as a result of which production for export—that, as is well known, requires higher standards and more careful execution—became more profitable, so that enterprises are now more interested in exploring new markets.

Another new feature is that in addition to merely commercial deals, production co-operation agreements are being concluded more and more frequently, providing the opportunity for further commodity exports to third countries.

In the last analysis, the yardstick of every kind of economic development is the degree society's standard of living—and within the latter that of the individual—improved.

Hungarian society became more urbanized as compared to the past. In line with this industrialization process, a considerable part of the rural population migrated into towns. In 1949, only 36 per cent of the population lived in towns, in 1969, however, the proportion of town-dwellers amounted to 45 per cent. The number of working women increased too: in 1969, 40 out of every 100 in employment were women. These two factors, to mention no others, considerably influence consumer behaviour and the pattern of consumption.

Hungarian society grows younger and older simultaneously. It grows younger because the proportion of young people as compared to able-bodied adults is large. In addition, infant mortality has decreased considerably: deaths under one year of age per 1,000 live births decreased from 1.31 in 1938 to 0.37 in 1967. On the other hand, live births which was at its lowest (1.2 per thousand) in 1962, is on the increase and has reached 1.5 per thousand in 1968. At the same time, improved public health conditions have lengthened the average life span and the proportion of the aged is continually increasing. 12 per cent were 60 and above in 1949, by 1967 they were 16 per cent. The proportion of pensioners amounted to 13 per cent of the total population at the beginning of 1968, although it was only 6 per cent in 1952 (in Hungary, peasants are also entitled to pension). Only 2 per cent in 1952 of the national income was spent on pensions whereas by 1967 it was 5 per cent.

The character of employment also influences consumption and the allocation of incomes. The breakdown of those in employment by occupations was the following on January 1, 1968:

workers and employees	72.3 per cent
co-operative members and helping family members	27.7 per cent
self-employed and helping family members	3.0 per cent
Total	100.0 per cent

By the middle of 1969—when the total population amounted to 10,250,000—the number of those in employment was 5,000,000. At present, there are only 106 dependents per 100 earners, a remarkable proportion by international standards. There are more than 2,000,000 women at work.

Real income has increased almost two-and-a-half-fold since 1950:

	Per Capita Personal Real Income
1950	100
1967	219
1968	230
1969	240

One of the main factors in the favourable growth of real wages was the stability of consumer prices. Since 1951, the latter have not changed substantially, from 1965 to 1969 the price index shows a slight upward tendency amounting to an annual 1 per cent. Between 1960 and 1967, consumer prices rose by 29 per cent in Austria, by 27 per cent in Britain, by 35 per cent in Italy, and by 29 per cent in the Netherlands. The stable price level was convenient and secure for the consumer, but acted, to a certain degree, as a brake in the development of industrial production, i.e. from the point of view of the efficiency of enterprises. In view of this the economic reform did away with some of the price restrictions in 1968. This decision did not bring about considerable changes in the price index while it favourably affected the assortment and prices of the industrial production and stimulated enterprises to compete with each other.

In the retail trade in 1968, 67 per cent of which was in state ownership, 32 per cent were co-operative shops and 1 per cent were privately owned; the turnover in industrial products increased at a faster rate than that of foodstuffs; within industrial products durable consumer goods were in great demand. However, the fastest increase took place in the field of services. While the commodity consumption of the population grew by an annual average of 4.3 per cent between 1950 and 1966, the population's demand for services increased by 5.2 per cent p.a. during the same period. However, the service industries are limited for the time being and are at present the bottleneck in the Hungarian standard of life. 17 out of a hundred of those in employment worked in one or another section of the service industry in 1967, while 27 per cent did in Britain, in Belgium 24 per cent and in Norway 19 per cent.

The demand for services is partly due to the increase in the stock of consumer goods. For example, there were only 13,000 motor-cars in 1950 whereas their number amounted to 145,000 by the end of 1967. By 1969 their number had grown to 200,000. Today, practically every family has one or more radios and there were 114 television sets per 1,000 inhabitants by the end of 1967 (117 in Austria, 181 in Czechoslovakia, 151 in France, 132 in Italy, 125 in Switzerland and 254 in Britain).

On the whole, consumption developed favourably in Hungary. The annual average increase was 4.2 per cent between 1957 and 1967; this is higher than in Britain (3.3 per cent) between 1955 and 1964, but less than in France (5.0 per cent) or Italy (5.4 per cent) during the same period.

The growth in incomes enables the population to save considerable sums of money over and above the sums spent on consumption. The table below shows the growth of the National Savings Bank's stock of deposits during the past ten years:

Savings Deposits by the Population
(at the end of the year)

1958	2,300 million forints
1960	5,500 million forints
1966	23,000 million forints
1968	29,000 million forints
1969	35,000* million forints

* preliminary data

The supply and wider assortment of durable consumer goods as well as the building of privately owned apartment and one-family houses, and the possibility of making trips abroad, etc. has led to the spread of the habit of saving.

Since Hungary joined more intensively in international travel at the beginning of the sixties, travelling abroad has become a favourite way of spending money.

Year	Foreigners visiting Hungary	Hungarians travelling abroad
	(thousands)	
1937	383	220
1960	247	299
1968	2,403	929

In 1968, 2,030,000 visited Hungary from socialist countries and 373,000 from non-socialist ones. In the same year 778,000 Hungarians visited socialist countries while 151,000 travelled to non-socialist countries. The extent of the social security and public health system in Hungary covers the entire population. The number of medical practitioners gives some indication of the standard of the service provided.

Number of Medical Practitioners
(at the end of the year)

Year	Number of medical practitioners, total	Medical practitioners per 10,000 inhabitants
1938	10,590	11.6
1950	10,229	11.0
1960	15,698	15.7
1968	21,865	21.3

These figures are good by European standards if it is taken into account that the number of physicians per 10,000 inhabitants was 18.3 in the German Federal Republic (in 1966), 18.0 in Austria (in 1966), 14.9 in France (in 1965), 14.1 in Holland (in 1965) and 10.9 in Britain (in 1965).

The above data give some indication of the increased standard of living of the man in the street as compared to the situation in Hungary a quarter of a century ago. Well-being is not spectacular and does not reach the heights of some developed West European countries, but it is sound, well-founded and reaches the broad masses of the people. Hungary is not an "affluent society" but it is already a modern industrial society, a "consumer society"—together with the comfort and advantages of the present and the many problems the future holds in store.

The coming into being of a consumer society is not some kind of tolerated by-product of socialism, but the consciously realized result of Hungary's socialist economic policy. The Hungarian way of thinking is alien to the idyllic conditions described in Huxley's illusory *Island*, Hungarians are aware of the fact that in a modern world economy every "island" that takes no notice of technical and economic progress is doomed. At the same time, Hungarians are also aware of the danger of a consumer society as described in Huxley's other Utopia, *Brave New World*. This means that Hungarians neither reject the consumer society nor do they consider it an end in itself. In the Hungarian view, it is a means (although an indispensable one) by dint of which the life of man—freed from the worries of keeping body and soul together—obtains broader and fairer prospects and, thus, is able to show his better self. To search for the means and ways to reach this and to familiarize the members of society with these aims is a pressing need in view of the increasing abudance of material goods.

A NEW RELATION BETWEEN CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY

by

IVÁN BOLDIZSÁR

There is no need to conduct a public opinion survey to establish that almost everybody associates culture with democracy.* Both notions have a positive content, and both point towards something higher. In Teilhard de Chardin's words, everything that leads to something higher meets at a point. This philosophic, or shall I say stylistic, variation of the notion that parallel lines meet in infinity is particularily valid for democracy and culture.

The two notions are associated with each other but they are indivisible only in one direction. Their relationship is somewhat odd and paradoxical. Culture exists without democracy, there is no democracy without culture.

There is no need to prove the first half of the proposition, nor is it worthwhile. There was no lack of culture in the Rome of Augustus, but nobody would call it a democracy. There are plenty of examples, both earlier and later, from Ramses II to Louis XIV and Napoleon. I won't mention any more recent examples, first of all because they are obvious, and secondly because they might be controversial, and they are not what I am discussing at this stage of the argument.

The essence is that literature, art, science and scholarship, civilisation as such are possible without democracy, which is regrettable, but democracy is not possible—and this is admirable and fortunate—without culture. The emphasis is on possible. Reversing the proposition puts a keener edge on its truth and excludes any possible misunderstanding or distortion. Culture is a precondition of democracy, but democracy is not a precondition of culture. Culture may be possible without democracy but it cannot flower in an atmosphere of arbitrariness, or paranoid tyranny, or even under an oligarchy.

* An extended version of this article was originally written for *Comprendre*, the review of the *Société Européenne de Culture*, Venice.

The second half of my introductory proposition, that there is no democracy without culture, is both more interesting and more important. Democracy is the oxygen and the nitrogen of culture, but as we well know, there can be life without air. The interrelated evolutionary process of culture and democracy means that as soon as culture climbs out of the seas onto the shore, it needs a certain mixture of oxygen and nitrogen, air—democracy. What I also want to say when speaking of interrelated evolution is that culture is not only a necessary condition of democracy, it is also that which calls democracy into existence. At the same time that created democracy provides the constitution and the social and political form within which culture has the possibility to develop to the fullest extent.

I won't deny that when I reached this stage of the argument I felt that certain thrill that is involved in adventure and in taking a risk. After all many philosophers, sociologists, historians of culture, constitutional and other lawyers and political scientists, who are better qualified that I are discussing the notions of culture and democracy. Do they use them in the same sense as the author of these lines, who is a writer and who only reflects on the interrelationship of democracy and culture to the extent that the literary traditions of his country demand this. This tradition is renewed by every generation. Its essence and meaning is that writers or poets in Hungary have never been, and cannot be mere acolytes of the beautiful, or mere private individuals, they always had to take part in public life and declare their position in the affairs of the nation. I am well aware that this sounds full of pathos in English, and some might doubt what I say and imagine that committed literature has only recently become the rule in Hungary, that it is only as old as the process of the socialist transformation of society. This is not so. Right at the beginning of Hungarian literature, in the 16th century, Bálint Balassa, the first poet, was a patriot and soldier. Miklós Zrínyi, the essayist, he was called a pamphleteer in his time, and author of the first great Hungarian epic poem, was a military commander and one of the leaders of the country. And let me add, now that I ventured from abstract subjects into historical reality, that Balassa was killed by the Turks at the siege of Esztergom, and that Miklós Zrínyi was killed by a wild boar during a hunt. For four centuries it has been an open secret in Hungary that the "wild boar" was a killer hired by the Vienna Court Camarilla. I cannot believe that there is another history of literature whose greatest figures all passed through the prisons of the oppressors, and where the number of poets who were killed in action is as high as that in the history

of a cavalry regiment in other, happier countries. Interest in and reflection on the progress of society and the contradictions within it, that is thinking about democracy and culture, is a literary tradition in Hungary, and it is that tradition which I wish to serve right now.

Two cultures in Hungary

The argument expressed in the introduction is supported by the experiences and development of Hungary in the past half century but particularly in the last twenty five years. In Hungary there was culture but not democracy between the end of the First World War and that of the Second. I do not want to get into the labirinth of definitions of culture, I am much too afraid of Minotaurs, all I'd like to say, by way of a working hypothesis as it were, is that there were two kinds of culture in semi-feudal, semi-capitalist, very rural indeed and here and there urban between-the-wars Hungary. One culture was that of intellectual artists and their public, this was concentrated in Budapest and one or two provincial towns. Fortunately there is no need to prove the existence and the standards of this culture, it is enough to mention Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály, but I could also refer to those scientists, principally physicists and chemists, who were forced to leave Hungary precisely because a culture existed which produced them, but there was no democracy in which their activity, development and talent could flower to the fullest possible extent. Von Neumann, Szilárd, Wigner, Dennis Gabor, Békássy, Teller: there is no need for more names or for any commentary. I ought to add those of great musicians and conductors, Szigeti, Széll, Ormándy and Solti. Those writers who did not leave the country, who with their works and actions did their best to prepare the necessary conditions for democracy, occupy an equal place in the Hungarian consciousness.

The reason I am not speaking of a high culture is that the opposite of high is low, and the other culture was not low, but deep. This other culture which flourished in undemocratic Hungary was that of the people, more precisely that of the peasantry. I am not in the first place thinking of folklore, of colourful embroidery, of the superb craftsmanship shown in carvings, of the whole family of peasant pottery, not even of that folk music, those peasant songs which became known outside the borders of the country precisely thanks to Bartók and Kodály's research and compositions, what I have in mind is peasant culture as a whole.

This culture existed amongst Hungarian peasants as a complete, closed, self-sufficient way of life, a structure of customs and habits, rituals, ways

of thinking and communication which was able to create beauty in objects, in music, and in narrative, and which at the same time provided its own public. The two poles of culture, producer and consumer, sender and receiver which are so frequently discussed by sociologists and theoreticians of culture today, had not yet, or hardly, parted right in the centre of Europe only a generation ago. At the same time the members of this closed cultural circle—"circle" and "member" express a much narrower concept than that indicated by the figures, after all it included half the population, 4 to $4^1/_2$ million—already lived in a civilisation that was becoming industrialised, they used machines, they rode bicycles and trains, and 90 per cent of them were literate.

An anti-model

In order to be able to further analyze this model of the relationship of Hungarian culture and democracy one has to take a good look at the predecessor of this model, which was a model of an anachronistic situation, in other words an antimodel. The two cultures existed as it were independent of each other. Those who created the relatively modern urban culture which was keeping up with developments in the rest of Europe and their public knew little of life in villages 30 kms from Budapest, they were better informed about the Vienna music season, the latest Paris plays, or Aldous Huxley's current book. No aspect of the cultural life of the capital filtered through into the world of peasant culture and vice versa. The world of peasant culture was not only little known, it was also misunderstood. Gypsy music which had nothing to do with peasant music, but is in fact totally alien to it was accepted as folk music. Peasants were thought of as uneducated stupid and lacking in culture, they were not only exploited but also despised. When early this century Bartók and Kodály brought the world of Hungarian folk song up to the surface, like a treasure that had been buried at the bottom of the sea, they were met with indifference, lack of understanding and sarcasm, thus showing that when a society is not democratic even culture that appears to be modern is mutilated. When at the beginning of the 1930s the generation to which the writer of these lines belongs set out to "discover" the Hungarian village, that is to study it using the methods of sociology and to make it known by using the techniques of literary expression, those "higher-up" reacted with gendarme terror, trials and imprisonment, at the same time those "below" felt suspicious and showed a lack of understanding, culture thus being exposed to a double mutilation.

It is quite obvious that when a new chapter in the history of Hungary

started after 1945 the problems of democracy and culture were not the same as those of societies that had industrialized earlier. Even well-informed intellectual circles in Western Europe tend to subscribe to the mistaken belief that those forces which began to transform society in a socialist direction in Hungary usurped the place of a democratic society on the Western pattern. This is of course an error, if that is the way things had been one could analyze a very different model today. What the country had to learn in the years following 1945 was to change anachronistic social and cultural conditions in such a way that the relationship of democracy and culture should satisfy the demands of the second half of the 20th century as regards social relationships, while bearing in mind the scientific and technological revolution. This task was certainly not made easier to accomplish by those doctrinaire ideas which took another model of the relationship of Marxism and society and the relationship of Marxism and culture and tried to employ it as an integral whole in the Hungarian situation. That is why the process which is described below, that is the model itself, could not establish itself without relapses, contradictions, difficulties and fresh starts.

A centripetal step

The first and most important objective for a society that was reconstructing itself was to create opportunities for the great masses to learn and to educate themselves. What I mean here is no longer merely that peasant culture which I mentioned earlier, but both the working class and the peasants. Creating this opportunity presumed an initial centripetal step, which right at the start to some extent succeeded too well. On the one hand an understandable but unhealthy flow towards the capital was initiated, on the other selection was frequently mechanical, owing to the well-known dogmatism of the fifties and other exaggerations. Nevertheless, and this is what counts, the democratization of learning and education was carried out.

This was true of Europe as a whole, more precisely of the Northern Hemisphere, from Vladivostok, through Tokyo to San Diego, Boston and Liverpool, from there to Debrecen and up to Helsinki, and on through Novgorod and Novosibirsk to the Sea of Japan not to mention Australia and New Zealand which do not fit in geographically but all the more so sociologically. I included this remark and these geographical details for two reasons. First of all because I wanted to indicate at least in one sentence that there is a North-South antinomy in addition to the usual East-West opposition and contradiction, which cannot be neglected particularily in the relationship of democracy and culture. Secondly it is clear that the democ-

ratization of learning and education was undertaken also in different economic and social circumstances. It cannot therefore be looked on as a Hungarian, or socialist, achievement or special feature. All the same it is worth drawing attention to the Hungarian experience, its starting point was the double culture which I discussed above, therefore it might well, as a model, have something to say to developing societies.

A centrifugal step

The second objective for a society that wished to democratize itself was centrifugal: the highest values of European and Hungarian culture, and the eternal treasures of the human spirit had to be made available to the masses. This essay does not aim to describe cultural development in Hungary, therefore I shall merely indicate the avenues and tools which centrifugal cultural policy used in the past and still uses. The starting point was the traditional trinity of every cultural policy: library, museum, theatre. It must be pointed out in this connection that this traditional basis proved to be too narrow in the recent past, both as regards culture as such, and also the process of its democratization. The revolution in mass communications has changed the relationship of democracy and culture, and it keeps on changing it from day to day. The model whose analysis I am here attempting has changed as the instruments of telecommunication developed, in fact there is no longer a single model, the structure now ressembles that of twin crystals.

Thus the carrying out of the second objective of democratisation started out from the traditional basis, with libraries, with books in general and their publication. The price of books was radically lowered by the government of the people's democracy, and the low price of books became an important precondition of a favourable relationship between democracy and culture. The price of hard-cover first editions in Hungary corresponds to that of paper-backs in western countries. I want to note at this stage that a series of paper-backs, the *Olcsó Könyvtár* (Inexpensive Library) was started in Hungary already in the late forties, at a price which compared favourably with that of the German Reclam Bibliothek—which had inspired its predecessor, the pre-liberation *Olcsó Könyvtár*—or that of the early Penguins, a mere fraction of the current price of Penguins or other *cheap* paper-back series.

The success of the new *Olcsó Könyvtár*, more precisely the demand for books shown by the large masses surprised even that generation of authors which had set out in the 1930s to discover what life in the villages was like.

I am mentioning this not merely as a fact relevant to the sociology of the reading public, nor am I reminiscing. What I want to do is to indicate a further aspect of the relationship between democracy and culture, that is the monetary one. What became clear was that those who lived within a closed peasant culture had long felt a need for the products of a larger culture, but they had lacked the means to satisfy it. To put it in plain terms they lacked the few pence that might have been enough to buy a cheap book. New social developments improved the lot of the working-class and that of the peasantry, so they grabbed at the chance to read.

Intellectual need and financial resources are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the reading of books. There is a third, the political one. The sort of social and political conditions must prevail where the state considers it important that the most important classic and modern works should reach a wider reading public, and that these should therefore be produced in truly cheap editions. That's how it could happen that 400 000 copies of the *Olcsó Könyvtár* edition of Shakespeare's *Midsummer-Night's Dream* and 192 000 copies of Hemingway's *Selected Short Stories* in the same series should be sold in the course of a single year. Another example: fifty-, eighty-, a hundred thousand copies of the works of Attila József, the greatest literary figure of the between the wars period, whose verse is an amalgam of Marxism and psychology, who expressed Hungarian misery and the suffering of the oppressed classes and at the same time the social and sexual anxieties of modern man, a poet who can be placed both next to Federico García Lorca and T. S. Eliot, in other words certainly not light reading, were sold every year after 1946. Ten million people live in Hungary and one million copies of Attila József's *Collected Poems* have been published.

(I should like to add a personal observation: In the 1930s the publisher for whom Attila József worked employed me as a reader. Thus I was able to establish by direct personal observation that altogether one hundred copies of *Nagyon fáj* (It hurts very much), József's last volume of verse, were sold. Today it is reckoned a classic.)

The library network was considerably extended at the same time, and naturally enough, all charges were abolished. This too is pretty general in the northern hemisphere, the question is to what extent libraries are used, and by whom. The picture here is less favourable. Statistics show that following the upswing, or rather the blaze, of the early years neither the cheapness of books, nor the systematically spread network of libraries were enough to get everyone accustomed to reading books.

There was a time when the increase in both library facilities and the size of editions—when compared with the pre-liberation situation—was such

that Hungarian writers were prone to imagine that the whole of the Hungarian people read their works. A survey carried out in 1968 and 1969 on the other hand proved that though there is a growing interest in the reading of good books, "literary democracy" is still a long way from being an established fact in Hungary.

According to the survey 15 to 20 per cent of the adult population are in the habit of reading good books, 25 to 30 per cent read one every now and then, the remaining 55–60 per cent don't read good books at all. Some readers might be surprised that I add "good" in each case. What this means is that many more read illustrated or pulp magazines. What remains unsatisfactory is the proportion of those who regularily read serious literature. That is why writers themselves have started a movement which was given the name *"Olvasó Népért"* (Books for the people). The help of teachers, students and boys and girls at school was enlisted to help get books to members of those sections of society who are not in the habit of reading. It was discovered that there were blank spaces on the cultural map of Hungary, more precisely the reading map. Such as those parts of the Great Plain where the normal mode of settlement was that of isolated homesteads and not villages, or the outskirts of big cities where the first generation of peasants turned urban workers live, and more surprisingly those residential areas in Budapest and other large cities where other types of entertainment attracted people who used to read.

The *Olvasó Népért* movement has no wish to substitute for librarians or booksellers, it wants to help them, in the first place in spreading the works of contemporary Hungarian writers. Writers themselves visit these "blank spaces" and there, making use of the help of local librarians and teachers, attempt to arouse the interest of those who can read but do not.

I merely want to indicate the extension of the museum network throughout the country, and the sort of policy which looks on museums not merely as passive institutions but, in accord with the general line of progress, as a dynamic force in the education of the public. This or that provincial museum became the cultural centre of a region, displaying the heritage of the past, preserving that which is valuable, and making it available to everybody, collecting and popularising the art of the past and the present. What they did over and above this was to make conscious that the past and the present of a region, a town, or a village are interconnected, and that the culture of such a unit is an integral part of life as it is lived today.

I should also like to touch on another institution which true enough has parallels elsewhere in Europe but whose success and uninterrupted existence is peculiar to Hungary. This is the Village Theatre which operates in

addition to sixteen permanent companies in Budapest, and ten in the provinces. The Village Theatre Company is like the travelling players of old, except that they move by bus and use amplifying equipment. They literally go from village to village and perform Molière or Tennessee Williams in schools, houses of culture, libraries, if necessary in the open air or in barns.

The democratization of culture

All this serves the democratization of culture, though having said this I ought to add that the expression is not one I am fond of. "Democratization" expresses that undemocratic attitude which argues that there is such a thing as a high culture which belongs to the chosen few, the intellectuals, and that this has to be taken to the masses, who according to this way of thinking have no culture of their own. Right at the beginning of this article, arguing against this attitude, I pointed to the existence side by side of the two cultures. If the term is used nevertheless, I should like to add that the democratization of culture is at the same time a deepening of democracy. We have known since Plato, or at least we ought to have known that there cannot be any democracy without men whose character is democratic.

The third objective concerned the preservation and partial revival of the traditional culture. The danger threatened that the democratization of culture might at the same time mean the end of urban working class and of rural culture. The effect of a wider culture and of a rising standard of living on the rural masses is that they turn away from the ancient liturgical life, and that they thus also abandon the practice of peasant arts. One naturally cannot stop this process, what is more bearing in mind social and economic progress one must not try and stop it. A proper relationship between democracy and culture on the other hand demands that the values of a popular culture should not be lost. Human progress would be odd indeed if democracy of all things destroyed artistic values and impoverished a people's culture, and therefore that of the whole of humanity. It is common knowledge that the preservation of peasant culture is linked with a number of romantic elements, and that all this is supported by the revolutionary growth of foreign travel. Many a townsman would like thatched roofs, carved furniture, homespuns, multiple skirts and shiny boots to go on forever. Tihany is one of the oldest Hungarian villages, there are many old peasant houses there, it is by the way a village well known to visitors from abroad who have been to see Lake Balaton. A peasant family recently moved out of its old house built of volcanic rock, with a high thatched roof and

a pillared porch. I have known the family for a long time, since the thirties, Tihany was the subject of my first piece of village research, at the time of the writers' village discovery movement which I mentioned earlier. I told them how sorry I was for the old beautiful house. Why must they leave it? All the thirty-five year old young mother said was: "Try and live in a house like this, then you would not ask anymore." She was very young then, therefore she did not remember how often I used to spend the night precisely in their house. The small rooms had an earthen floor, tiles and jugs were hanging from the walls, every morning we washed in a hundred year old earthenware basin, naturally out on the porch or in the yard, even the well-curb was hand-carved. There is running water in the new house, they have a bath-room, an electric stove in the kitchen, and mattresses on their bed, not paillaisses, not to mention the fact that they have four comfortable rooms instead of two small ones, and large wide windows, not small square ones. One must not reverse this progress, but one must find a way to stop the villages turning away from the old culture altogether.

This cultural policy is carried on in three ways right to this day. Those are collection, preservation and development.

Collection is directed by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and other high level scientific instrumentalities, but village folk themselves take part. The Folkmusic Research Group of the Musicology Institute of the Academy may serve as an example. Zoltán Kodály was its head, right to his death. Members of this group collect Hungarian folk music, and arrange it for publication with a full scientific apparatus. Kodály and Bartók, half a century ago, went to the villages using a rudimentary phonograph. Today the tunes and their variants are recorded on tape. Members of another institute, that of Folk Arts, photograph folk dances with both still and movie cameras.

New features in the relationship of democracy and culture

The fact that these tunes and dances are reinjected into the bloodstream of traditional popular culture is a new feature in the relationship of democracy and culture. Choral and dancing ensembles are formed in village houses of culture. Girls take the peasant dresses their mothers and grandmothers had worn before they were married out of mothballs, and learn or revive the old songs and dances. Thanks to the fact that the best choral and dancing ensembles are given prizes and are invited to perform in the county seats, perhaps in Budapest, lately even on television, traditional folk culture is once again receiving proper recognition, and a new kind of ritual is coming into being within the scope of the houses of culture.

Folk art and cottage industry cooperatives were formed to help preserve and revive the making of traditional objects. The state supports and decorates carvers, potters and embroiderers. The recognition they receive makes it possible for at least the best of them to survive and hand on their skills and the secrets of their craft. Talent seems to run in families, veritable dynasties of craftsmen have come into being.

The appropriate political and financial support are not enough to preserve and revive the values of a peasant culture. The widespread vulgar-Marxist point of view which considers traditional, popular peasant culture to be backward must be overcome, and those who themselves live within this peasant culture must recognise its worth, they must not think it something of a lower order, useless, superfluous and a waste of time. They must become aware of the functional significance of their work. Within the earlier closed peasant culture weaving, embroidery, carving and pottery in the first place served utilitarian aims. The decorative element and the expression of artistic feeling was that little extra which is one of the essential determinants of culture. Man is able to step out of his own self, he wants to and can look critically at that which he created. Modern life and industrialization has naturalized different kinds of household goods in the Hungarian village. That is why various kinds of organisations, producers and consumers co-operatives were needed in order to sell the work of village craftsmen, and at the same time satisfy another interest, that of townspeople who wished to acquire traditionally made objects.

The importance of this latter process is only superficially smaller. In fact it serves two most important objectives. It helps a people to recognise its indentity and those features in which it differs from others and, in this age of alienation, it offers ways and means of connecting up more and more men and women with the period before alienation took place.

Finally it allows what are usually called educated men to become familiar with the values of a peasant culture. What is in fact taking place is the osmosis of the two kinds of culture.

When examining the Hungarian model one must also bear in mind the historical fact that in the twenty-five years which have passed since Liberation culture has flourished, that is significant works were created in all the arts, and significant scientific work was done, and most people enjoyed works of art and proved receptive to culture, at a time when the socialist state considered democratic progress to be important. When democracy was given a secondary role, culture also stagnated.

PAST AND PRESENT OF A VILLAGE

by

LÁSZLÓ KARDOS

Bakonycsernye* is a village in western Hungary, at the north-eastern foot of the Bakony Mountains, in the northernmost corner of Veszprém County, where the Counties of Veszprém, Fejér and Komárom meet. (For the last ten years it has belonged to Mór District in Fejér County.)

The history of the village in modern times began with its re-settlement at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In one and a half centuries of Turkish occupation, which ended in the 1680s, the village had become depopulated. For a century it had been wasteland, woods and meadows, until its owner, the Count Zichy family of Várpalota, began with the re-settlement in 1724. This re-settlement was a small part of the huge population movement through which the forest-covered mountains of Veszprém County, especially the Bakony Mountains, were settled with mostly German and to a smaller extent Slovak and mixed German–Slovakian–Hungarian villages, which then gave this region its peculiar ethnic character for the next centuries. The settlers of Bakonycsernye were Slovak serfs of the Lutheran confession, recruited from western Slovakia, mostly from estates in Nyitra County. The settlers kept their contacts with their homeland alive, called in part of the new settlers from there, and married from there. These links can be traced in parish registers for over a century. It is partly due to this fact that the original language and customs survived in these villages, including Bakonycsernye. Another important factor was that the population lived in these villages through an entire century without mixing; settlements of identical nationality and confession formed each others' quarries for marrying. However, as can be seen from the settlement-patent and from the church registers already mentioned, Hungarian families

* A shortened chapter from the author's book "Church and Religious Life in a Contemporary Village." (Kossuth Publishing House, Budapest, 1969, 292 pp.)—Ed.

continued to move in together with the original Slovak inhabitants. But the original Slovak character remained undisturbed until the First World War, and with certain modifications, until our days. Many Hungarian families became Slovakianized, until in the second half of the last century, the whole village began to become Magyarized, became bilingual, and later the Magyar became the sole mother tongue of the local formerly Slovak population. The farmhands on the outskirts were Roman Catholic and Hungarian originally, as were the inhabitants of Újtelep, which was subdivided and joined to the village between the two wars, and most of those who lived in other outlying areas.

The new settlers were able to start life in favourable conditions. As serfs of the Count Zichy family, agriculture was their main occupation. In addition to their existing lands, they leased further ploughland and meadows, bred livestock on the latter, and pigs in the oak forests. The landlord prohibited hunting and trading in timber, but permitted forest-clearing and the planting of vineyards. By the mid-eighteenth century they had obtained further benefits through repeated renewals of their agreement, and they already approached the status of lease-holder serfs. The population grew, and reached 2,250 in 1785, a figure which it surpassed only between the two world wars. Artisans and peddlars and merchants settled permanently in the village, which developed beautifully, and its Lutheran church and school were built as early as 1726 to 1736. By 1785 it was the largest village in Veszprém County, and the census found there "one clergyman, nine noblemen, 37 commoners, 165 peasants, 193 heirs of commoners and peasants, 234 cotters, 67 others, 475 boys, 1,069 females." In 1828 the village had 152 serfs, 153 cotters with houses, 38 cotters without houses (893 taxpayers).

In the nineteenth century, the size of the population of the village stagnated, and mid-century it dropped conspicuously. The reason was most probably the distance of the village from markets and later from the railway. A fundamental cause was the large estate offering few chances of employment. The land held by the village community covered has an area of about 1,200 acres and of this relatively little was ploughland (42.9 per cent) in 1850. Much of it was forested. Only at the turn of the century and later in the 1930s did the situation change, when agriculture became more intensive, and the ploughland increased (to 64 per cent) at the expense of the forests and pastures. The end of the century brought a certain boom for the landed peasants, their farming became more intensive, they began to produce for the market, and they were especially successful in carting timber. Between 1885 and 1911 the number of horses increased by about 50 pairs. Neverthe-

less, the large estate continued to restrict the livelihood of the local population. In 1897, Count Antal Sztáray and three tenants shared more than one half of the village's area, while the village, almost the entire population of which (85.2 per cent) was engaged exclusively in agriculture, had to make do with the other half. According to the 1910 statistics, among the primary producers, 66 were landholders or tenants with 5 to 30 acres, 149 with 1/2 to 5 acres; in the latter category, those with less than 3 acres were in the majority. These had to work as agricultural labourers during most of the year. At the same time, 291 were agricultural workers and day-labourers. The local large and medium estates were able to employ them permanently or seasonally but many of the local proletarians or half-proletarians, the majority, were forced to seek work on the neighbouring church and state estates, went to work as labourers, croppers, threshers, forest-workers, charcoal-burners, wooden-tool makers, wood-vendors, basket-weavers, and basket-sellers.

This picture of the proletarization of the Bakonycsernye Slovaks, with their large and proliferating families, was already an acute phenomenon towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the employment offered by the coal-mine at the neighbouring Szápár for a short time in the 1850s and 1860s made little difference. Although the mine was reopened in 1908, due to bad working conditions it did not survive the First World War. It offered employment to fifty Bakonycsernye families at the most. It is unlikely that at that time the sight of the company horsetram in the main street of the village carrying coal from the Szápár mine to the Bodajk railway station might have given people of Bakonycsernye the idea that within a couple of decades it would be the mine that would lead them out of their miserable lot and bring about a radical change in their way of life. Around the turn of the century, the poor peasants of Bakonycsernye sought a way out of this constricted livelihood through emigration; they left the village and migrated to other parts of the country, or overseas. From 1869 to 1910 the population was reduced through emigration by 15 to 20 per cent in the villages of the Zirc District, including Bakonycsernye. Many became miners or factory workers in France, but most of them went to the United States. Some of them got as far as Brazil. The main period of emigration was the twenty years that preceded the First World War. The emigration affected more than half of the original families. The 1910 statistics mention 126 persons living abroad, almost exclusively in America; up to the First World War their number continued to increase.

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After the First World War, the Bakonycsernye people returning from America brought some life to the village; they rented and bought land, although this was less important than their purchasing building sites and building homes; one part of the village, where they built 20 to 25 houses, is still called Dollar Street in popular parlance. Several of those who returned had exchanged their dollars for crowns, which was then the Hungarian currency, but lost their money during the inflation. Today's professional people of Bakonycsernye remember the erstwhile home-comers ironically; "They brought dollars, trachoma and the sect from America. Their dollars were spent, their trachoma was cured, only the sect is left."

The subdivision of the district across the Gaja brook in the twenties affected the proletarian inhabitants of the village more intimately and was more important. In the course of the Nagyatádi land reform in 1921, the lowland along the Gaja brook, which forms the border of Fejér County, was surrendered for the purpose of the land reform by the land-owning Klosterneuburg monastery. It surrendered its more outlying and marshy lands, and the purchase price was quite a good bargain for the order. This land was subdivided for home sites. There were many claimants for the sites, not all of whom could be satisfied. Approximately 100 sites were sold with an average size of $^1/_4$—$^1/_2$ acres. This was how the new district of Bakonycsernye, the Újtelep (279 inhabitants on 124 cadastral yokes*) began to develop; the owners of the new houses were mostly mine-workers. Újtelep was joined to the village in 1932. The growing population reached 3,000 at that time.

The village kept its proletarian character until 1945.

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In the Horthy era, land tenure did not change much. Gentry estates over 100 cadastral yokes continued to occupy more than 2,500 cadastral yokes, and the military alone 1,612 cadastral yokes. The total area of the land farmed by landed peasants with more than five cadastral yokes each, was not more than that of the few gentry families. Poor peasants with less than five cadastral yokes and the landless agricultural workers continued to make up 50 per cent of the primary producer population; the latter began in these decades to change over to a qualitatively different way of life with greater perspectives, a combination of agricultural and industrial work. Although the basic form of livelihood of the agrarian poor between the two wars remained seasonal farm-work within the village and outside, in the twenties the

* 1 cadastral yoke equals 1.42 acres

mining industry beginning to develop locally and in the vicinity created a gradual transition to mining and industrial work.

In the early twenties, a coal-mine was opened in the neighbouring village of Kisgyón. After the exploratory work, regular production was begun in 1924 by the Kisgyóni Kőszénbánya rt. (Kisgyón Coal Mine Ltd.) owned by the Wolfner family of Újpest. Between the two wars, mining was carried on only seasonally. The miners were hired in September and most of them were laid off in February. This went on year after year. Labour was provided by the agrarian poor of Bakonycsernye and its immediate surroundings, many of whom had already gained experience in the Szápár mines. The work force numbered 80 to 100 at the start; in the years of the Depression it rose to a mere 150, towards the end of the slump it reached 200 to 220, and from the transition to war production to the end of the war it increased to 350, then to 400, and these constituted already a permanent body of miners. Seasonal mining had meant a double life. The miners laid off were forced to return to their one or two yokes, or to find employment as croppers and small tenants, or to continue the traditional supplementary forest-work, wood-cutting, wooden-tool making, basket-weaving, charcoal-burning, or limestone quarrying.

The Depression brought the lowest ebb in the material deterioration of the agricultural population of Bakonycsernye. A considerable number of landed peasants also became debt-ridden, their produce and animals had no price, they had great difficulties in meeting their obligations, and for peasants with smaller holdings, the bailiff became a frequent visitor. The poor peasants and the landless found very little work, or none at all. They became destitute. The agrarian poor besieged all jobs. The greatest pushing and shoving took place around the coal-mine. Many more applied for work than the comparatively few who could be hired. And at what wages! The occasional bias of the authorities and of the mine management who made the selection are still painful memories to the Bakonycsernye miners. Finally, the wartime boom of the country drawn into the German orbit mitigated somewhat the misery of the inhabitants. In the period of wartime production, laying-off ceased, the demand for labour increased, and in addition to the landless and to the poor peasantry the men of small-holding families also found work in industry. As a result of all this, the population of Bakonycsernye took, towards the end of the Horthy era, an important step towards the mine-worker and industrial worker way of life. As early as 1941 40 per cent of the wage-earners, that is 50 per cent of the total population, earned their livelihood in mining and in secondary industry.

Centred on Kisgyón, a new focal point of village life developed.

On the one hand, there was the old agricultural village with its traditional stratification, with its agricultural workers and small-holders, most of whom where of Slovak Lutheran extraction; its relatively small upper stratum of land-holders provided the leadership of the village's self-government, the members of the municipal council, the elders of the Lutheran congregation, the managers and board members of the mutual loan society, the local "Hangya" consumers' and producer's cooperative, the leaders of the social organizations and associations, and of the local branches of the political parties. This upper stratum, together with the majority of the professional people, were, in the first two decades of the Horthy era, a firm basis for the regime's policies, headed by the pro-government member for the Zirc constituency, the squire of the neighbouring village, Csetény; the opposition, the Smallholders Party, never gained any importance there.

On the other hand, there was the mine, which was itself built up as a small settlement, which established a school, a church, a reading circle, made a few miner-families settle locally, and drew the majority of the village's agrarian poor into its own sphere of interest, influenced their thinking and attitude, though not, of course, in the direction of political progress. Local miners who had any socialist bent, or organized their labour, formed only a small fraction of the local workers. The mine management and the municipal authorities who attended to hiring, and who incidentally thought it advisable to have the gendarmerie from Csetény stationed in the village in good time, took plenty of care that only "reliable" workers should be hired by the mine. It was not by chance that they managed to defeat in 1931 the only movement of the local miners for increased wages, and were able to dismiss the leaders of the strike. The failure of a strike attempted in an atmosphere of misery engendered by world depression, had an adverse effect on the political thinking and attitudes of the peasant-miners of Bakonycsernye. Its suppression—in which some contemporaries believe the opportunism of the local trade union to have played a part—brought about general disappointment and contributed to the workers' loss of faith in the Social Democratic leadership and to their seeking to protect their interests, to improve their individual condition in uncertain and dubious ways. This disappointment played its part in the process which gradually distorted the political life of the village and turned its inhabitants into the tools and victims of National Socialist agitation. This distortion was brought about in equal measure by the destitution of the local miners and poor peasants waiting in vain for a solution and was exploited by the demagogy of the Arrow-Cross Fascists. The latter agitated with the promise of land distribution and improved wages, exploiting the social destitution, the spiritual and moral limitations of the majority

of the population, their traditional—not the least, religious—constraints, their administrative intimidation. Here at Bakonycsernye, the Arrow-Cross political movement offered to ease all this. Towards the end of the thirties—encouraged more and more aggressively by the influence in Hungary of the advance of Nazism—it seemed to offer a legal opportunity for organization against, and opposition to, the government. It should not be forgotten either that the immediate surroundings of Bakonycsernye were full of villages and mining settlements which were German-speaking or of German extraction, the artificially stirred up *Völkisch* nationalism struck deep among the workers and miners there, and had a peculiar effect on the Hungarians of Bakonycsernye who had been assimilated relatively recently and therefore were particularly sensitive about their national identity. The attitude of a large section of the Lutheran population may be mentioned as another motivating factor; at the end of the thirties, they still had some illusions about the Lutheran Germans of the Reich, and these illusions probably had a part in the belated recognition of the real face of Fascism by local workers and peasants. As a result of these factors—and not least through the presence and role of the numerous artisan-merchant petit-bourgeois elements in the village—an extensive Arrow-Cross organization was founded at Bakonycsernye. A party organization with several hundred members was established, which was led mostly by artisans. Its membership included miners as well as poor peasants. In the 1939 elections 60 per cent of the 1,800 voters voted for the Arrow-Cross and sent to Parliament a National Socialist deputy. During the war, the right-wing influence grew even stronger. After October 1944, the local Arrow-Cross took over the leadership of the village. An Arrow-Crossist government-commissioner managed the mine. At that time, several workers known to be Socialists were deported from the mine.

The war took its toll of the village. It was politically debased, its men decimated, its youth carried into dubious adventures, eventually drifting to the West, its economy ruined.

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In those circumstances, Liberation raised the village from its lowest ebb, and brought an entirely new and promising social and economic development. It became possible to end the destitution of the poor peasantry, through a more just regulation of land tenure, as well as to provide full employment for the many redundant workers—through the intensification of local and regional mining. In perspective, a substantial improvement became possible in the standard of living of mine-workers and agricultural workers—through the introduction of socialist conditions of production. The cultural level of the

population could also be raised through educational reform, the nationalization of the schools and the establishing of socialist foundations for education. The establishment of political democracy became possible through assuring democratic civil rights.

In the course of realizing these possibilities—in the first decade of the people's democracy—Bakonycsernye, like many other villages, made a rather wide detour. The population joined socialist democracy with difficulty and rather late; the favourable development of its economy, especially of its agriculture, was—after the short prosperity of the first years of liberation —hampered for a long time by mistakes of local and of nation-wide origin; the material progress of the miners and peasants proceeded slowly; the new spirit of education fought for a long time against the traditional mentality and customs; and public life had difficulties in finding democratic leaders. Nevertheless, at Bakonycsernye too this was the time when the foundations of the socialist economy and democracy were laid and of socialist education indispensable for the more unambiguous political, material and cultural progress of the next ten years.

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At Bakonycsernye, too, land distribution was the first phase of liberation in the atmosphere of a public life that had become free and democratic. This first of all improved the situation of the poorest agricultural workers, landless labourers and the holders of minute plots. Nevertheless, in this village the land reform did not have the importance that could have been anticipated. There were two main reasons for this: first, relatively little land was distributed, and second, the mining industry which developed fast in the village and in the neighbourhood, sucked in the agrarian poor of the village practically at once, and so people were less keen to take land. Following the temporary distribution of 1945, near to 400 cadastral yokes were distributed in 1946. The distribution affected 80 families, the average allocated was five cadastral yokes; 12 families received land ranging from 5 to 12 cadastral yokes, the majority were allocated a supplement of one or two cadastral yokes to their existing holding, or home sites. On the other large estates state farms were established, and part of the agricultural population obtained permanent employment there. Especially the forestry increased in area, partly through changing methods of cultivation; today it possesses 1,267 cadastral yokes.

A smaller change in land tenure was brought about in 1948 by the emigration of the local Slovaks, a political action which, incidentally, caused considerable upset in the village. By virtue of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak

population exchange agreement, for over two years strong agitation for emigration went on in the village. The repatriation committee made efforts to convince the population of Bakonycsernye who had become Magyarized and were even proud of being Hungarians (between the world wars only the old were still able to speak Slovak), to move to Slovakia, by appealing to their Slovak national pride and by promising considerable material benefits. The material arguments had a strong effect on the villagers, several hundred applied to emigrate; finally, about fifty families with many children, mainly holders of little or no land, left for Slovakia, leaving behind their farms which hardly exceeded 200 cadastral yokes. Only ten Hungarian families from Slovakia came in their place, and their claim on land did not exceed 100 cadastral yokes.

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The agriculture of Bakonycsernye lived through the first years of socialist democracy in a boom, both new and old land-holders enjoyed the advantages of a lively exchange of goods, they settled down and flourished. This progress slowed down and came to a halt at the beginning of the fifties. In this the over-centralization of economic guidance, the oversized burdens placed on agriculture, and the well-known bias of the policy towards the peasantry played their role. But the quick development of the mining industry was a positive contributory factor, as the rush of this employed not only the agrarian poor but also the smaller land-holders from the area of agricultural production, which thus became difficult.

Since Liberation, the main force strengthening the economy of the village, and—related to this—of the movement of the population, the exchange, growth, well-being and culture of the inhabitants, has been the development of local mining. In this respect, the nationalization of mines, the development of the socialist mining industry, brought about a radical—beneficial—change in the life of the village. In the conditions of socialist industrialization, the state insisted on maximum production from the mines. As early as 1946, Kisgyón was worked continuously. Around 1947–48, the work force reached more than 400, and there was even a shortage of workers. Through recruiting, the number increased to 550, but this did not last. A prison-camp of 200, and after 1953, the army, temporarily helped to satify the demand for labour. Finally, after 1956, the organized redirection of labour, easier access to places of work, development of Kisgyón, the increase in home building, the rise in wages of miners, all contributed to forming a permanently employed work force; by 1960 this amounted to 850, and in 1965 to 950.

Balinkabánya, also near the village, was opened up in 1945. In 1951 Kisgyón and Balinkabánya were united, and the first trained pitmen in Balinka came from Kisgyón. By 1964, the work-force increased to 1200–1300 men. 600 to 650 miners from Bakonycsernye worked in the two mines.

This growth in the numbers of the work-force illustrates how the dynamism of socialist industrialization transformed agricultural regions, such as Bakonycsernye, into industrial settlements; how it re-stratified their social structure, and at the same time re-formed their ethnic character. Through immigration since Liberation, but also as a result of natural population growth, the number of the inhabitants of the village has increased, and this was not reversed even between 1950 and 1960 when approximately 100 miners of Bakonycsernye moved with their families to the mining settlement at the neighbouring Mecsér-puszta. The 1960 census found that in the new social structure of the population, 66.4 per cent of Bakonycsernye were employed in mining and industry, and only 22.6 per cent in agriculture. The increase of "other occupations" to 11 per cent likewise arose from the transformation described above; the number of commercial employees, white-collar workers, professional people and such also increased in the village.

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The social structure of the village was transformed in a context of the changing circumstances in local politics during the twenty years after Liberation. In the 1945 elections, the Smallholders Party had an overwhelming majority here, it received 80 per cent of the vote. The National Peasant Party had no base in Bakonycsernye. The rest of the votes were divided between the Social Democrats and the Communists. In the 1947 elections, the Communist vote was strengthened, through the mines and the miners, but municipal policy continued to be dominated by the Smallholders Party and by the bourgeois parties. The reason for this must be sought in past social conditions, and in the weakness of the local workers' movement, as described above. The local mine-workers were a relatively new social formation, bound to the local peasantry by thousands of threads. They had hardly any experience of workers' movement or leaders. The latter, as well as local participants in the 1919 dictatorship of the proletariat had been worn down and hunted down by local right-wing pressures before Liberation. In 1945, the local Communist Party organization stared with only a few experienced leaders, and a small membership. Under the influence of land reform and of the 1947 elections it began to develop, mainly among miners, and reached its highest membership figure of 280 members, but soon after it

began to lose members, and at the time of the amalgamation of the Communist and the Social Democratic Parties it was reduced to 82, a figure which was halved by 1953. The situation was the same in the other social and political organizations which transmitted the policy of the party, such as the youth association and the women's association. In the end, the achievements in national and county politics, and to a large extent, the increase of the significance of the miners' party organizations established in the fifties, made it possible for the influence of the Communist Party to assert itself more forcefully in the leadership of the village and in its public life after 1950. But here, too, policies of the period of the personality cult did not favour winning over the population, especially the peasantry. The "kulak-list," the oversized burdens weighing on the peasantry, the enforcing of compulsory deliveries, the frequent application of administrative measures against the population alienated agricultural producers. It was partly due to this that the attempt to form a local agricultural producers' cooperative failed both in 1949 and in 1950; only twelve or thirteen farmers applied for membership, and even these did not dispose of the required amount of land. Collectivization in Bakonycsernye had to wait for another decade. It was due to mistakes in local policy, but also to the favourable conditions provided by the mines that—although the conditions for agricultural production were better after 1953, with increasing numbers of horses—the peasants still fled from the land and neglected production; before 1953, 250 cadastral yokes, between 1953 and 1956 approximately 700 cadastral yokes were abandoned.

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October 1956 brought a critical moment for socialism at Bakonycsernye too. There were no excesses, but the size and character of the unrest, the demonstrations and protests of the miners, the burning of documents concerning crop deliveries, insults to the party secretary, and some phenomena after the events, as e.g. the surprising rise in religious education during 1957 demonstrated that in the last ten years, democratic public life and the Communist management of the village were based on a relatively narrow section of society at Bakonycsernye, and that political mistakes had been committed.

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After 1956, a new period in the history of the village began. The new socialist policy which nationally and locally overcame the autumn crisis threatening the socialist order, now began to make itself felt more inten-

sively and set in motion a beneficial development (although the number of local Communists is still under one hundred in the village and the two miners' party organizations together, and the number of youths united in the Communist Youth Association is rather small, especially in the village). It improved the political atmosphere in the public life of the village furthered the development of the municipality, assured an increase in mining output, a rise in the miner's income, reduced the burdens of the peasants, and made collectivization of agriculture in the village feasible and practicable.

The small-holdings in the village were transformed into a producers' cooperative in 1959, at the initative of the local party organizations, and with the active assistance of the miners. The better-off small-holders presented the most difficulties, the poorer ones and those who had received their land at the time of the land reform joined first. In the beginning, two co-operatives were formed which were united later, involving 405 members, approximately 360 families. The total area of the co-operative is 2,817 cadastral yokes, of which 1,884 cadastral yokes are ploughland. The mine was not just a reason for delaying the co-operative, but left its imprint on the development of the co-operative from the very beginning, particularly as regards the availability of labour. In view of the twofold occupation in families, only older men and women were able to work in the co-operative. In 1965, the co-operative had 342 members, and of these 217 were women; of 258 working members 170 were women; that is women held a 63 or 66 per cent share. Sometimes even neavy agricultural work, such as loading, is done by women. The number of pensioners and those who receive rent from the co-operative is 63. While the number of families in the co-operative living exclusively by agriculture is 25, including contract employees, families whose members are partly co-operative members and partly miners number 300 to 350. This division of labour within families deriving an income from sources has degraded the income from the co-operative to a supplement of the income from the mine. The men, husbands and grown-up sons, work in the mine, wives in the co-operative, and of course the latter receive the household plot, and payment for the work-units performed. In 1965, 152 of the above-mentioned working members, almost 60 per cent, performed only between 1 and 100 work-units, and these were almost exclusively women; this too proves that in these families, the income from the co-operative was supplementary. The shortage of labour for the agricultural co-operative is overcome by the management with the help of miners, especially those belonging to "dual" families. For instance, in 1965, harvesting in the co-operative was done entirely by miners as sharecroppers, the threshers were miners, the cultivation of maize was also undertaken for a share by miner families.

This "second shift" of the miners provides a further supplement to the income of such families. All this is caused partly by the low degree of mechanization of the Bakonycsernye co-operative; it has only two tractors, so that the bulk of the work is done by hand and using horses. This is only partially justified by the difficulty of the terrain. The co-operative belongs among the weak co-operatives of the district. It is subsidized by the state, and only its cattle-breeding produces an income. The state subsidy has decreased in recent years, due to some improvements in production; the net assets of the co-operative amount to approximately 5.5 million forints and show a mild rise. The forint value of a work-unit has developed in the past six years: 18.40; 12.42; 15.40; 28.37; 29.56; 32.02. To sum up, the co-operative is a weak link in the economy of Bakonycsernye for the time being, and still has to struggle to be in the black, yet—together with the good opportunities for earning provided by the surrounding mines—it has contributed to the recent economic advancement of the village people.

Besides the land worked by the co-operative, there are approximately 500 cadastral yokes of agricultural land in the village owned as small-holdings by individual peasants, as well as auxiliary and supplementary farms owned by miners and by people of other occupations. This is a further differentiating factor in Bakonycsernye society. Of the small-holders, 15 families live exclusively by agriculture; an additional forty families live by agriculture and forestry, employed the state farm and the forest within the boundaries of Bakonycsernye. Approximately 80 families of superannuated miners own approximately one cadastral yoke of land each, and about 300 miner families have land of under one cadastral yoke each. To complete the picture, it should be mentioned that there are less than twenty "pure" miner families, those without agricultural land; the registers kept at the mine put the miner families having less than one cadastral yoke also in this category, and they constitute 40 to 45 per cent of all Bakonycsernye miner families, while the other 55 to 60 per cent are put into the category of "dual" income families.

In addition to the miner and worker families, 35 families live in the village; its wage-earners work partly in administration, commerce, skilled trades, and as professionals (teachers, doctors, veterinary surgeons, and so on).

The number of inhabitants today is 3,800, forming 950 families; there are 923 dwellings.

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The socialist development of the local mining industry and the social transformation brought about by the collectivization of agriculture have

improved the life of the population of Bakonycsernye in many respects, and have also improved the look of the village. This is explained mainly by the increase in family incomes, especially among the mining families, who make up two-thirds of the village. In the majority of those, the high wages of miners are supplemented by agricultural income, derived from agricultural work or ownership. Three-quarters of the miners in the village are pitmen or auxiliary pitmen. The average monthly wage of a pitman was —before the last adjustment of the norm, which reduced it somewhat— 2,000 to 2,300 forints, to which a bonus of 300 to 600 forints is to be added, and 30 per cent of the basic wage as underground supplement, as well as 64 quintals of coal due to the heads of families. In addition, those working underground receive clothes, underwear and shoes. In addition to what is received in kind, the average monetary income amounts to about 3,000 forints monthly. In many groups the income is even higher. The wages of an auxiliary pitman are about 5 per cent lower, those of the party trammer about 20 per cent lower. The average income of auxiliary personnel is 1,600 forints monthly, plus 20 per cent underground supplement, plus a 5 to 10 per cent bonus, plus dues in kind. The wages of those working on the surface are 1,500 to 1,600 forints, plus some bonus, plus perquisites in kind. The free coal benefit is enjoyed by almost all categories, including the superannuated, 20 quintals annually. There are other social benefits provided by the mine, such as transport to the mines: since 1952 buses have transported the workers to their distant jobs and back home. The two-to-three hour, but at least one-and-a-half-hour walks in rain and mud, in winter and in glaring sunshine, which had affected the health of the older generation of miners, are no longer necessary.

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Increased incomes have made it possible to satisfy the higher needs of the population. Since Liberation, 200 new houses have been built in the village, mostly modern, two-roomed houses with all conveniences, which provide the prototype of homes in the new village, and 150 houses have been completely rebuilt on their former sites. The old dwellings are being renovated everywhere, or at least re-decorated, and their courtyards are fenced. A variety of iron railings and iron gates have appeared at the cost of many thousands of forints, interiors are likewise renewed, it would be difficult to estimate the value of new furniture, and household appliances, or the increased consumption of clothing and victuals, for this is only partly reflected by the turnover of the local network of shops (hardware and drug store, textile and clothing store, several grocery shops and delicatessen, a confectioner's

shop) established since liberation; many purchases are made in the nearby towns.

The substantial but often exaggerated liquor consumption, a nation-wide phenomenon, is also true of the miners of the village; consumption in pubs is supplemented by the wine grown in the small vineyards owned by the miners. The shift to such demands is also related to the fact that there are no more opportunities to acquire small land-holdings, which used to be the dream and aim of every miner family. All savings today are spent on building homes, on furniture and household appliances. This trend of rising consumption is illustrated by the following figures: the villagers own 300 motor-cycles of over 150 cubic centimetres, 22 cars, of which 18 belong to miners and the rest to employees and professional people. There are more than 800 radio receivers and 262 television sets in the village. 719 persons have savings accounts, most of them miners, with the total of deposits exceeding three million forints.

The village authorities have endeavoured to keep pace with the increasing demands of the population through furthering urbanization and the development of municipal institutions. In the village, which is dispersed over a large area, the improvement of public transport has been of prime importance; buses ply more frequently, and in addition to the transportation of the miners to and from work, which has already been mentioned, the regular transport of school-children to and from school has been an important achievement. The provision of a water-supply and sewage system is a task for the future, but much has been done for modern street lighting and for better roads. 65 per cent of the annual municipal budget of one million forints is devoted to social and cultural objectives. More important financial efforts and investments in the past decades include the improvement of public hygiene, a municipal kindergarten, the addition of an extra storey to the central school, the support for adult education, and the establishment of a permanent municipal public library.

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In the domain of public health the new municipal pharmacy, the appointment of a mine doctor in addition to the earlier position of district doctor, and the establishment of separate dental surgeries are major new achievements. The medical records of a half century show that infant mortality has been reduced gradually, life expectancy has been extended, the favourable natural growth rate has been lasting, contagious diseases are on the vane, tuberculosis has been eliminated almost completely, and the vital statistics

index has tended to increase, due to the improving living conditions, better homes, better nutrition, and not least to better medical care. Nevertheless, one has to take into account the increase of occupational diseases, especially the rheumatic ailments caused by unfavourable natural conditions in the Kisgyón mine, which affect miners from a relatively early age.

The kindergarten, with two teachers, was established fifteen years ago. It operates in several groups, but has already become too small for the children of the village.

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It is the question of the school which deserves most attention, because the cultural requirements of the population have turned it into a matter of public concern. In the place of the erstwhile small church school there is a central school today with 14 classrooms and 30 teachers. In addition, there are district schools. There are more than one thousand school-children in the village, of whom 750 go to the central school. Of the 1,600 pupils who had finished the eighth class of general (primary) school in the past 20 years, 160–180 went on to secondary school, an average of twenty-five a year for the past three years, ten a year for the seven before that, and three or four a year in the first ten years. Villagers estimate the number of those who matriculated in the same period at around a hundred and fifty, and those who completed or were about to complete a university course or some other form of tertiary education at about a quarter of that number. Out of the balance of 1,100, about 700 girls remained in the village, and their great majority became miners' wives, while the other 400 found work in the mines. A very small fraction, perhaps 30 altogether, stayed in agriculture. The achievements of the last fifteen years display an outstanding result within the general picture of popular education, especially if they are compared to the situation which prevailed before Liberation, or even to the first decade after Liberation. Attending a secondary or tertiary educational institution used to be exceptional among peasants and workers, and the schooling of the majority of the population ended with the fourth or fifth year of primary school. Training in trades used to be limited almost exclusively to apprentices required by village artisans. In this respect the expansion was wrought mainly by the mine, but here too the better-organized conditions after Liberation made it possible for the majority of the miners living in the village, approximately 400, to become skilled mineworkers, and this was important for the educational level of the village population. After 1949, adult education, connected with the school, enabled almost 300 persons to make up for what they had missed in their primary education.

Besides ensuring the schooling of the population, the finest efforts in the village are those made to develop general education and up-to-date entertainment, although this is far from being complete. From the documentation of social activities and from the present condition of what is generally understood as adult education, one gets a picture which illuminates both by its negative and its positive points.

Before Liberation this manifold activity was directed by the diligence of an occasional teacher, by the zeal of the churches and by the very unequivocal educational intentions of the regime, which had considerable effect in such a village, stuck in misery and lack of culture. Its level did not rise above the contemporary conventional patriotic and religious make-believe education and literary societies. Even this affected only an infinitesimal part of the village population.

After Liberation, the situation did not change for some time; the church school and the religious associations continued their activities, but the local branches of the coalition parties, especially their youth organizations, the new social organizations, and state organs for adult education joined in. The activities of the latter were in fact limited to spreading political education, knowledge about democracy, mostly subordinated to the political struggles of the moment; its results and influence are said to have been important, though difficult to measure today. There was no serious adult education in this village for some time even after the hegemony of the socialist regime had been consolidated. This was due mainly to the lack of facilities: there was only the school-house, and the largest hall held only 150 people in a village of well over 3,000 inhabitants. Nor did the mine, or the miners' trade union, spend enough on the education and entertainment of the miners. All that can be called adult education rested on the school and on local professional people. The educational activities of the Communist Party, of the youth association, of the women's association, and of the trade union, were very narrow. The art-groups recruited from the young acted in an amateur level: educational lectures were seldom organized and poorly attended, there were few specialized courses; the primary school education of adults still carried most weight and attraction. Experts in adult education believe that in this village the consciousness-forming influence of all branches of adult education affected only 3 to 4 per cent of the population over primary school age during the first ten years of the socialist democracy.

The following ten years presented a picture that was not yet completely satisfactory; but adult education was continually being extended and standards were improving. In 1957–1958 an old building was transformed into a house of culture; this is the temporary centre of adult education. It cannot be

heated in winter and needs rebuilding, but it has contributed considerably to organized educational work. Until quite recently it was operated by the miners' union, which supported it financially, and used it to educate and entertain its members. Its programme was drawn up in co-operation with the educational authorities of the village. It was a home from home for young people who had finished school, and for young miners. Their drama society sometimes had 120 to 130 busy members, their dance group and orchestra functioned well. When educational lectures began, an average of 20 to 25 lectures were held in a winter season, and specialized courses were instituted. Film projection, television and radio were also used. The youth organization was likewise temporarily housed there, and it also contributed to the education and the entertainment of its members. Occasional concerts and frequent dances were also held there. Hikes, visits to the theatre and other cultural occasions were arranged. The cinema too, having ceased to be in private hands, served entertainment and education with a more careful programme policy. It is still well frequented, but is only partially suited to the needs of the growing industrial-agricultural settlement.

Around 1960, there was a setback in the growth of cultural activity. The house of culture could hardly be used any longer, and most of the work was transferred again to the school hall, with its smaller capacity, and there is still no better solution. The attendance at lectures could not be raised above a small group, the work of the drama society slackened, and so on.

The past five years have been characterized by some improvement in local cultural life, adult education and higher standards in entertainment; there have been more opportunities and they were better suited to the living conditions of the population. The municipal council has paid more attention to culture and education, to problems affecting the consciousness and sentiments of the population. It has discussed these regularly and checked the execution of its resolutions more consistently. Its agenda has included year after year the cultural activities of the Pioneers, the youth association, the women's association, the Patriotic People's Front, the trade union and, of course, of the municipal education committee, the problems of entertainment, the development of the municipal picture theatre, the plan for a proper house of culture, the development of local sports, the functioning of the municipal library, and so on, as well as questions affecting the way of life, traditions and mental world of the people.

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The best things can be reported about the young people concerning their education outside school. Pioneer activity encompasses 80 to 85 per cent

of the four upper classes of local school-children, and supplements the work of teachers in the state school. The specialized study circles, sports clubs, choirs, orchestras, programmes of the Pioneers, their summer camps, as well as intensive borrowing from the one-thousand-volume school library and the four-thousand-volume municipal library, the reading of four hundred copies of youth periodicals, all contribute to the new generation's escape from barren family traditions and prejudices. The cultural productions of the Pioneers also assist the process of village education, as they form part of social and family programmes. In addition, one cannot overestimate the influence that young students in socialist schools and in the Pioneer movement willy-nilly exert on their parents and generally on grown-up society by their mere presence, way of thinking and attitudes. The studies and future of the children, the formation of their mental world is certainly an important formative factor in Bakonycsernye society, in attuning the way of thinking, feeling and attitudes of the middle-aged towards understanding the problems and supporting the efforts of socialist society.

The cause of the general social education of young people who leave school cannot be evaluated so simply. The organization of teenagers and of young adults into a progressive social framework has always presented a problem in the village. In the first decade of socialist democracy, the religious associations and the youth organizations of the coalition created considerable tensions in these age-groups. Later, in the slowly developing political world of the village, it was likewise difficult to unite young people, especially the children of agricultural families. It was somewhat easier with young mineworkers and apprentices. In the mid-fifties, the activity of the youth organization and most of the cultural work associated with it was based on them. But in the last ten years the large-scale departure of the young from the village (into trades, factories, secondary schools) made local organization more difficult again. Nevertheless, club-afternoons recently introduced by the youth organization are well attended, the standard of their programmes is acceptable, their orchestra is good, their artistic and sporting activities satisfactory. The members' meetings and lectures of the youth organization are less well attended, only a quarter of the membership participates in courses that have been started under the name of social studies.

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Of those who finish primary school, 20 per cent remain in the village each year. The majority of these are girls; they long for a community and for quality entertainment, more and more turn to the clubs organized by the youth organization, and some of them also seek opportunities for further

education. They do this all the more, as the agricultural school established for the young who have left school does not offer them much, they feel that they have been left behind by their former classmates who have chosen a trade or study in secondary schools. To this constraint is added that there are few jobs locally, especially for girls; for the lack of something better, many of them hang around the family, or do occasional jobs. The demand for entertainment and education by the young is indicated by the fact that the majority of those who attend cultural programmes, lectures, courses in the village, and of movie-goers, of the users of the municipal public library, of theatre season-ticket holders, all belong to the younger generation. Much depends on the local branch of the Communist Youth Association. Well-organized and attractive youth-organization activities—as shown by some local examples—have a beneficial effect even on the children of the most conservative and most tradition-minded families, and help them to become emancipated, modern men and women.

Adult education organized by the miners' union and by the municipal education committee—adult education in the strict sense—was carried out in the past five years in a variety of forms, but with mixed results. The greater emphasis has lately been on cultural entertainments. The miners' clubs, began five years ago at Kisgyón and in the village itself, have been successful, they serve the purpose of mixing socially, but may also be used for educational purposes. The drama society produces a new play every year, a folk dancing group is organized occasionally. There is an orchestra and a men's choir. The latter perform at parties, dances and social evenings. Most of the members, between 50 and 100 persons, are of course recruited from young miners, the members of the Communist Youth Association. It is within this framework that successful excursions and visits to the theatre are organized. The lively work of the art groups is now threatened by a financial crisis; their patron, the miners' union, has withdrawn its support, and the municipal council is not yet ready to step in. As against the livelier entertainments and artistic activity, education in the strict sense has remained a problem; 20 to 25 lectures have been organized annually on varied political, ideological, scientific, economic, health, moral and other subjects. Local as well as outside lecturers from the Scientific Educational Society were invited, the lectures were enlivened with films, and yet attendances—with a majority of women—never exceeded 40 to 70, and even less. This is conspicuously small in such a large village. The courses find a better response; they include two miners' or workers' academies introduced in these years, an agricultural co-operative academy, a women's academy; these are shorter (8–10) or longer (20) series of lectures on topics of immediate inter-

est, and are held for small groups of 20 or 30 people; the participants are adults, including some from the older age-groups. It is interesting that 60 to 80 women attend the well-chosen lectures of the women's academy organized by the women's association. From time to time there is a course for parents, with an attendance of 20 to 30. Occasionally specialized courses are held (on hygiene, the training of miners, civil defence, agriculture, adult education) for small, closed groups. The meetings between writers and readers also deserve mention; these are held once a year with attendances of 100 to 120, and help both library policy and educational publicity.

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The strictly political-ideological activity of the miners' union and the local party branches, which has proceeded continuously since Liberation should also be mentioned. Lacking figures, one can draw conclusions only from the views of those concerned: education has been a less well-dealt with aspect of local political activity in the past, many participants were registered year after year in the seminars and lower-grade schools, but two-thirds, half, or at least one-third dropped out before the course ended. It is thought that about a quarter of the Bakonycsernye miners have enrolled for various political-ideological courses. The standard they reach approaches the lower levels of ideological education.

The activities of the women's association should be likewise evaluated within the context of adult education and cultural life, and these have been especially effective in the producers' co-operative; the women's association does much to intensify production and generate community life among women. The agricultural co-operative academy and the women's academy are both organized by the women's association. The latter also guides the activity of the parents' association. It does much to publicize educational periodicals among women. It has also held some practical courses, on subjects such as dressmaking.

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This then is the panorama of education in the village, in its widest sense. Weighing the data at our disposal, and the views of local experts, it appears that this activity extends—leaving aside the cultural activity of the Pioneers —to a maximum of 15 per cent of the population past primary-school age. This figure is far higher than in the preceding decade, and certainly marks progress. Nevertheless, the value of this progress is relative, because emphasis—however welcome this activity may be—is on entertainment and culture, as opposed to the formation of consciousness and education. It is also relative,

because it is based on young adults and on women, so that grown men and the older age-groups are almost entirely left out. It is relative, because it contains little that is permanent, few forms that have proved successful; it is relative, because the standard of these productions, lectures and social occasions is still rather low; it is relative, because its influence on the population does not run deep enough.

In sounding out the reasons for these provisos, the technical and financial difficulties are only partially convincing. There is a basic condition which influences the interests of the population and the changed conditions of educational activity. For the people of Bakonycsernye it was Liberation that opened up vistas of material progress; hence, they have thrown themselves into the exploitation of these material opportunities with such passion that acquisitive activities have claimed, and still claim, all their free time and energy. This passionate effort directed at material advancement is also behind the "dual" way of life. The free time that the adults have left over barely suffices for entertainment, there is hardly any left for culture—for the culture presented by education in the village. "The double engagement weighs people down, this is why they are not accessible to education," said a representative of the local miners. This is one side of the matter. The other side is its reverse: as a result of material progress, in addition to the daily press, radio and television have entered the homes of miners and lately also of co-operative peasants who earn more. There is hardly any family which is not able to satisfy its demand for entertainment and culture at home, in comfort, and at a higher level than the standard presented by adult education in the village. The favourable transport conditions and the increasing private ownership of vehicles have long since widened the range of the entertainment, education and social contacts of the population, especially of the young, to beyond the boundaries of the village. It is these instruments of mass communication that offer the greatest competition to educational activities within the village. Television is the greatest experience of the population today, it overwhelms all other interests, all age-groups watch it, listen to it, whatever the programme. Here too entertaining programmes attract the greatest audiences; films, theatrical performances, comedies, the variety shows, light music, quiz programmes, music festivals, sporting events, spectacular newsreels. Science, education and politics attract a smaller audience. Local education tries today to reconquer interest partly by using television in its lectures and in its club programmes, in the form of group-viewing with comments. It tries to use radio and films in the same way. It seems that in addition to television, radio and film culture that dominates the village—which has mostly a positive effect—all kinds of

club activities, courses collecting a smaller audience and covering a tighter range of topics, and specialized study circles hold the most promise for the future of adult education.

More than two-thirds of the families in the village subscribe to altogether 16 different newspapers and periodicals, mostly to dailies and illustrated weeklies; in practice, this figure encompasses the entire population with the exception of a well-definable section, the majority of the members of the Protestant sects and religious groups.

In 1965, the local cinema showed 158 films to 36,000 viewers, at 435 performances. Each visitor attended an average of 10 performances. On Mondays and Thursdays the cinema is used almost exclusively by young people, while the older age-groups tend to go on Sundays.

An important basis in satisfying one particular cultural demand is the municipal library, which was established a few years ago, with a full-time librarian, a specially equipped building, a reading room, newspapers, periodicals, and a branch at Újtelep. There are almost 4,000 volumes at the disposal of readers. The number of registered members and borrowers has been growing steadily. Three-quarters of the steady readers are students and young people, a quarter are adults, mainly industrial workers and miners, and a very few people engaged in agriculture. In 1964, 14,000 volumes were borrowed, divided equally between childrens' and juvenile literature and fiction; 1,500 volumes of educational works were also borrowed. All this is an undeniable achievement, but it far from covers the majority of the village—particularly on account of the absence of the adults. This finding is somewhat modified by the fact that an occasional survey made among the miners of Újtelep found family libraries of over one hundred volumes in several homes, and libraries of 20 to 40 volumes in miner families living in the village.

The greatest changes in the mental and psychological make-up of Bakonycsernye have been wrought—as a sequence to the economic and social transformation—by the educational activities which fit into the concept of local schooling and extra-curricular education. The lead undoubtedly belongs to the school, which has made available a fundamentally new kind of knowledge to the under-thirty years old generation, and has partly instilled a new social attitude in them. Through their parents, this generation have exerted a most profound influence on the way of thinking and the sentiments of the older age-groups. According to the teachers, as a result of twenty years of education within and outside the school, the school has contributed eight to nine times as much to the new mental and psychological make-up of the village than all kinds of adult education taken together.

Our data do not enable us to trace, let alone to qualify, the economic and social transformation and its influence on life in all its aspects, especially, as we can only compare the present condition of the village to its past. But it is beyond doubt that the development of this agricultural society into one of industrial production may be termed progress, accompanied as it was by the material and spiritual advancement of the population. This finding is not contradicted by the fact that the agricultural population of the village has not yet reached the level of the mineworkers. Due to the thousands of links binding the two social strata together, and due to the fact that for a few years now local agriculture has been looking for more economic and more profitable production within a collective framework—even though this search has been difficult—the peasant population was also included in this progress.

Our data on the economic and social development of Bakonycsernye provide lessons for ethnographic social research; they indicate the extent of the dissolution of the old petty-bourgeois village-peasant way of life and its traditional culture, and show that this process rooted in the historical-social past has reached a decisive stage even in this village. This refers primarily to the area of "traditional material culture," which—in the stream of modern industrial civilization—is the first to be affected by the formative forces of changed socio-economic conditions; and refers only in the second or the umpteenth place to matters of the spirit, consciousness, taste, to the norms of moral behaviour, and so on, all of which follow in the wake of a transformed socio-economic world. An investigation exploring and analysing religious life is important in this respect. One has to take into account factors which delay changes in the way of life, in the transformation of culture, in the formations of consciousness, and these are caused here primarily by an equivocal, industrial-agricultural social structure. Today's miners are first-generation industrial workers, their majority were previously agricultural workers and small-holders; the transformation of the social structure has happened and is happening within the village environment itself; the settlements of the miners and of the peasants are not separated, on the contrary. The "dual nature" of mixed families also preserves and prolongs earlier peasant traditions. Up to 1959 the small peasant farms existed relatively undisturbed in the village, and some survive even today. The transforming influence of the producers' co-operative has only been felt recently.

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The peasant family of the old type is in a state of transformation at Bakonycsernye too, in a fairly advanced stage of transformation. Both among

miners and among peasants the number of three-generation families is being reduced, and parallel to this, the number of two-generation and one-generation families is increasing. In this village, where there are large families and many children, this process is accompanied by a rather rapid internal dispersal, and it often loosens family ties. This has certainly been brought about—together with the transformation of the social structure—by the improvements in the housing situation, the large-scale building of homes, made possible by earning opportunities in the mining industry. Through the stabilization of the mixed miner-peasant type of family—which has received a new impetus through the collectivization of the peasant farms—the family has definitively ceased to function as a production unit and the role of the members of the family has been readjusted. The family organization of work has survived only in household chores and in cultivating the household plot, or the minute piece of land belonging to the household, such as the vineyard and the vegetable patch, the latter still being worked with the participation of the husband, wife, grown-up children and the old people. The new situation within the family is created by the fact that in addition to the head of the family, who is a mineworker in this case—but the same applies where he is a co-operative member or an agricultural worker—the wife and the grown-up children become increasingly independent earners, often in different fields of work; the wife may herself become a co-operative member or the employee of the co-operative, the grown-up sons, miners or other industrial workers, less often agricultural workers; the grown-up daughters work in the co-operative or in industry. All of them become independent earners who are valued for skills in their places of employment and enjoy social esteem. Through their contribution to the common family income, their independence and authority grow within the family and this obviously influences, balances and sometimes reduces the earlier central position of the head of the family. In the husband-wife relation, the wife—who is no longer only the mother who looks after the household and the chores—has more say in the organization of family life, in the use of their income, in planning the children's future. The changes in the relationship between parents and children are not only shown by the pronounced cult of children, which crops up here and there, and by the greater freedom enjoyed by the children within the family, but rather by the shouldering of greater parental responsibility and material sacrifices for their education and future. The respect for children learning a trade, or attending secondary or tertiary education grows; parents no longer object to their daughter learning a trade either and they also let her enter outside employment although the situation is far from satisfactory, due to the shortage of local jobs.

The transformation of the peasant family, which has been described here, did not happen without conflicts; the reconciliation of the independent earning activity outside the family with the new order of the division of work within the family does not always succeed without friction. For instance, in the mixed families, the undoubted over-burdening of the miners' wives who do the traditional house work and are forced to undertake work in the co-operative as well, often causes tension. New relationships within the family and changes in the internal hierarchy of the family are also sources of tension. As a general phenomenon, the early independence of the grown-up children causes the greatest number of problems, they tolerate less interference with their lives, they wish to spend their free time and their own earnings unchecked. They also often disregard the wishes of the head of the family and go their own way in the choice of their career or spouse. This tension between the generations within the family is much sharper than it has been before, because its cause, here in the village too, is not simply the age difference, but the radical transformation of the structure of society and of production. With it comes the penetration of the new industrial way of life and mentality, which is much closer to the young; they grow into it with the process of growing up. The village peasant family of the old type, which was once the guardian and passer-on of traditions, which radiated universally valid, unequivocal spiritual and moral attitudes and mediated compulsory social norms, has lost, here at Bakonycsernye too this regulative function and its cohesive force which used to determine the life of the young generation. One can say this without exaggerating or claiming exclusive validity for the picture here presented.

Apart from family relationships the young generation at Bakonycsernye also represent a new social structure, a new social attitude. It has practically abandoned agricultural work and found employment in industry, and in mining. Agricultural work has little attraction for them; the difficult problems o local agriculture for fifteen years, the practical difficulties of the local co-operative, the vacillations of its management, its moderate profitability over the last five years repel them. On the other hand, the fixed working hours in secondary industry and in mining, the income calculable in advance, the organization of work free of the subjective vacillations of the management, and not least, the good wages have attracted them. Their respect has grown for education and for skilled work, and they are more inclined to study. Compared to their fathers, a higher and more easily acquired basic education is noticeable in this generation. Some of them demand more education, they respect and appreciate culture. The majority accept the socialist order as something given, consider it their own, feel at home in it; although they

are more self-conscious than any earlier generation, they do not muse over its existence and development and measure its value by the amount of goods that can be acquired through work, and by their own opportunities for advancement. In rural society they are the primary carriers of the increased demand for urbanization and civilization. Through their early independence and independent income, they want to acquire everything possible; fashionable city clothes, new industrial products, better vehicles, and above all, they wish to spend their leisure freely, they long for more experience, they want to have more entertainment, travel, and sport. They want to become entirely independent, to start a family at an earlier age. They are more free and easy, more impatient, less respectful, and sometimes more aggressive. They are more easy-going in their contacts between the sexes, they make friends more easily, there are more early marriages, though these marriages often end in divorce. The above—naturally there are exceptions—must be considered as basic trends in the social behaviour of the younger generation at Bakonycsernye. This corresponds to the social changes that have taken place, to the way of life that fits secondary industry and large-scale agriculture and that has taken root, and to the rising cultural level, and is diametrically opposed to the peasant world and to the earlier village life.

SOCIAL MOBILITY AND THE OPEN CHARACTER OF SOCIETY

by

ZSUZSA FERGE

The revolutionary social and economic changes of the past 25 years led to considerable inter-generational mobility in Hungary.* This was predominantly upward mobility, which naturally followed from the fact that the number of work-places with better objective conditions (which were also higher esteemed socially) grew in the first place. Upward mobility is a process taking place all over the world, since in the course of industrialization the number of those employed in agriculture generally becomes smaller, and the number and proportion of professional people, office workers and skilled tradesmen goes up. What distinguishes mobility in Hungary (and very likely in socialist countries generally) from the process taking place in non-socialist countries is partly its *rapidity* (the fundamental changes took place within five to ten years) and, on the other hand, the frequency of leaping upward mobility (there was mobility between groups which were placed well apart). Both follow from the fact that the structural change was of a *revolutionary* character. And, conversely, these processes illustrate the revolutionary character of the changes.

A consequence or an indicator of these fast and radical changes is that in Hungary today *two-thirds* of heads of households who are in executive positions or in professional employment are of worker or peasant origin, and that *half* of the fathers of workers were peasants. A change in social position is naturally somewhat more difficult, if definite professional qualifications are necessary. Therefore more executives (political and personality considerations at the time of change were relevant in their case) are of worker or peasant origin than professional people either on the technical or the arts side where a degree is almost a necessary condition of

* See also Sándor Szalai's "Restratification of a Society" in No. 23 of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*.

employment. Many more skilled tradesmen belong to established working-class families and fewer of them are of peasant origin than among semi-skilled and unskilled workers.

The Distribution of Heads of Households According to Father's Social Position

The occupational group of the head of household	The father of the head of household					
	Executives and those in professional employment	Other white-collar	Workers*	Peasants**	Altogether	
					per cent	number of people in the group studied
Executives and those in professional employment	14.9	20.3	39.0	25.8	100.0	951
Those in responsible administrative or economic positions (incl. in the group above)	8.3	14.5	47.1	30.1	100.0	273
Other white-collar	6.0	18.0	49.3	26.7	100.0	1,235
Skilled tradesmen	0.8	4.5	58.4	36.3	100.0	2,735
Semi-skilled workers	0.8	2.5	37.1	59.6	100.0	2,153
Unskilled workers, clerical assistants, etc.	0.6	2.9	28.9	67.6	100.0	1,676
Agricultural labourers	0.1	0.6	8.7	90.6	100.0	3,050
The number of people in the group studied	268	658	4,126	6,748	—	11,800

* Manual workers outside agriculture
** Agricultural labourers

These data show one aspect only of the process of mobility: *where* the present members of various sections *have come from*, i.e. inflow mobility. The attitudes of different sections towards mobility and the social evaluation

of the possibilities for mobility become more apparent when it is examined *where* people with the same start *have got to* (i.e. outflow-mobility).

Large-scale mobility in Hungary does not only mean that 70 per cent of all the white-collar household heads are of worker and peasant origin now. This in itself does not mean that there are real possibilities of promotion for the whole of the working class and the peasantry. Only few white-collar positions may be available. But the fact that every fourth household head of working-class origin became a white-collar worker, and every second one of peasant origin became a worker and every eleventh a white-collar worker, makes plans presuming change more realistic. The mathematical probability of mobility, that of leaving a section of society and climbing into a higher one is so great that it reacts upon the whole section affecting its outlook. Belonging to a certain section no longer means a given station for life in the consciuousness of the people concerned.

Destination of Heads of Households

The household head's occupation	The occupational group of the household head's father				
	Executives and professional people	Other white-collar	Workers	Peasants	Total
Executives and professional people	53.0	20.3	9.0	3.6	8.1
Other white-collar	27.6	33.7	14.8	4.9	10.5
Manual workers outside agriculture	18.6	34.3	69.8	50.5	55.6
Agricultural labourers	0.8	2.7	6.4	41.0	25.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number in the group studied	268	658	4,126	6,748	11,800

The above data refer only to Hungary and it is therefore impossible to ascertain on this basis the characteristics of Hungarian mobility in the last decades, that is its rapidity, the frequency of leaping upward mobility, and the significance of the latter in bringing closer the social composition of various sections (that is the high level of inflow-mobility).

Older Hungarian data or comparative international studies might help. Unfortunately the first more or less complete survey of social mobility was carried out as late as 1963. Data concerning other countries are available but their use for comparative purposes is limited (because of problems of time-points, of the unit of observation, of definitions of social and other categories, etc.). However, there are some studies whose authors made considerable efforts to render the very diversified national statistics comparable.

Occupation of sons	Percentage distribution of sons according to whether the father's occupation was			
	Non-manual	Manual (other than agri-cultural)	Agri-cultural	Total
West Germany				
Non-manual	63	26	11	100
Manual (other than agr.)	22	61	17	100
Agricultural	6	14	80	100
Sweden				
Non-manual	46	32	22	100
Manual (other than agr.)	11	57	32	100
Agricultural	4	18	78	100
USA				
Non-manual	48	32	20	100
Manual (other than agr.)	16	52	32	100
Agricultural	7	9	84	100
Japan				
Non-manual	57	16	27	100
Manual (other than agr.)	24	44	32	100
Agricultural	7	7	86	100
France				
Non-manual	66	18	17	100
Manual (other than agr.)	28	48	24	100
Agricultural	9	6	85	100
Hungary				
Non-manual	29	45	26	100
Manual (other than agr.)	4	44	52	100
Agricultural	1	9	90	100

Thus, relying on data gathered by S. M. Miller relating to eighteen countries one might say that the structural differences between two compared generations (father and sons) are never as great as in Hungary, not even in some very rapidly developing countries, such as Brazil, Japan or Puerto Rico. Comparing the occupational structures of different countries at different time-points leads to the same conclusion.

The evidence for the unusually high level of inflow-mobility is quite unambiguous. A table (p. 86) put together by István Kemény makes the point.

This table may be completed by making use of Miller's somewhat differently arranged data, by the inflow-mobility rates of the upper segment of the non-manual section, that is the executives and those in professional employment in the Hungarian terminology or the "élite" in S. M. Miller's.* The latter is quite a vague concept and it was not possible for Miller to eliminate differences arising from definitions. The percentage ratio of those who were classified as "élite" in different countries is therefore indicated by Miller—and in this study.

Inflow-mobility data for the "elite"
(Higher officials, professional people, factory-owners, executives, etc.)

Country	Percentage distribution of sons belonging to the "élite" according to whether the father's occupation was				
	"élite"	Other non-manual occupations	Manual workers	Total	Percentage of "élite" in total
Brazil	47	36	17	100	17
Denmark	23	59	18	100	3
Great Britain	50	32	18	100	8
USA	29	43	28	100	16
Hungary	15	20	65	100	8

The rapidity of changes is obviously closely interconnected with the high level of inflow-mobility. Since the number of places in non-manual occupations in Hungary trebled between 1930 and 1960, growing from 250,000

* S. M. Miller: Comparative Social Mobility. *Current Sociology*, Vol. IX. No. 1, 1960.

to 790,000, it is only natural that an important section of non-manual workers should be of worker or peasant origin. Similarly, since the number of manual workers outside agriculture went up by 50 per cent (from 1.5 to 2.3 millions), a part of that extra labour force had to come from "outside," some of course were women, whose *employment* increased in that period.

What remains to be proved is that chances for sons of workers and peasants in Hungary to move upwards were higher than elsewhere.

All the sources show that *outflow-mobility in general* was not greater in Hungary than elsewhere, at least in the majority of countries. Thus, e.g., the manual—non-manual mobility, i.e. the percentage of non-agricultural workers whose sons worked in a non-manual occupation was 35 in the USA, 29 in Sweden, 26 both in Norway and West Germany and 24 in Hungary. (There are, however, lower figures, e.g. for Puerto-Rico, Belgium, etc.) What is more, although the outflow-mobility of peasants is not greater in Hungary than elsewhere, in fact, peasants's sons were less likely to move into the non-manual section, than in other countries, and more likely to become workers. This, again, has to be interpreted in the light of the relative size of these sections. If, as in Hungary, peasants are relatively numerous as compared to non-manual workers, then outflow-mobility rates in this direction have to be relatively low.

It is, then, especially interesting that bearing in mind the relatively low overall outflow-mobility, the outflow towards the "élite" is significantly higher than in the majority of countries. Again, this rate—as Miller showed —depends somewhat on the relative size of "élites" in different nations. If the "élite" is larger, then—all other things being equal—it is easier to get into it. Therefore, following Miller, nations are grouped according to the size of the "élite." In some cases only figures for the "upper slice" of the "élite" of a country are mentioned if it seems that the country concerned used too wide an "élite" definition. (See Table on p. 89.)

Thus it is clear that the Hungarian figures are unusually high for countries with a similar sized "élite." This is not as a direct and necessary a consequence of economic changes as, e.g., the high rates of inflow-mobility in general. When summing up the aforesaid, it can be stated that in the last two decades, Hungarian society became extremely mobile, the large number of newly established work-places and the social revolution together disrupted the former, more rigid social limits.

The large-scale movements outlined were of great consequence in all respects. Partly, as it is shown, e.g. by the aspirations of various sections concerning their children (the figures are not given here owing to lack of space), they changed the attitudes of the sections concerned in relation to

Movement of Manual Workers into the "élite" *
(Percentage of sons of fathers in agricultural and non-agricultural manual occupations entering the "élite")

Size of "élite"	Occupation of fathers (in percentages)			
	Manual workers (non-agricultural)	Independent farmers	Farm workers	Total manuals
A. Under 4.6				
Belgium (one town)	0.0		0.0	0.0
Denmark	**		**	1.1
India (one town)	**		**	1.4
West Germany	1.6	2.1	0.6	1.5
B. 6 to 8.5				
Brazil (one town) (only the upper slice of the "élite")	**		**	1.0
France (Besard's figures)	4.2	1.9	2.0	3.5
France (Desabiés' figures)	2.0		1.3	1.6
Great Britain	**		**	2.2
Italy	**		**	1.5
Japan (only the upper slice of the "élite")	**		**	3.9
Sweden	4.4	2.6	1.0	3.5
USA (only the upper slice of the "élite")	**		**	3.4
Hungary	9.0		3.6	5.6
C. 10 to 15				
Japan (the whole of the "élite")	**		**	7.0
Netherlands	**		**	6.6
Puerto-Rico	11.4		13.1	8.6
D. Over 15				
Brazil (the whole of the "élite")	**		**	5.3
USA (the whole of the "élite")	**		**	7.8

* Except for Hungary, all data are taken from Miller, op. cit., pp. 38 and 43
** Data not available

available opportunities. On the other hand, the considerable individual mobility affected the distances between sections and groups: they got closer to each other, not only neighbouring groups but those situated at relatively distant ends of the social hierarchy—e.g. workers and intellectuals, or peasants and administrators. Family relations embrace almost the whole of society. This is shown very clearly by an examination of family relations in the present generation of adults. This examination is based on data referring to the social situation of the household head's and his wife's sisters and brothers. The synchronic and diachronic aspects are again brought into a synthesis. The heterogeneity in the brothers' and sisters' status is undoubtedly a consequence of large-scale mobility, at the same time it indicates that things are still in a state of flux. The most conspicuous sign of this state of flux is that of *all* families only 5 to 6 per cent are "purely non-manual" (that is, the household head, his brothers, sisters and brother-in-laws are all professional people or white-collar workers), and some 10 per cent consist of "peasants only," also in the sense described above.

What Social Groups Do Brothers and Sisters of the Heads of Households and Their Wives Belong to?

The work-group of the head of the household	The work-group of brothers and sisters							
	Only non-manual workers	Of these only professional people	Only workers	Workers and peasants	Only peasants	Non-manual and some manual workers	Altogether	Number of households studied
Executives and professional people	38	9	16	6	3	37	100	797
Others in white-collar employment	28	5	24	9	4	35	100	1,055
Skilled tradesmen	7	1	38	17	5	33	100	2,497
Semi-skilled workers	5	1	35	28	9	23	100	1,974
Unskilled workers, etc.	3	0	32	32	13	20	100	1,482
Agricultural labourers	9	1	14	36	36	13	100	2,712
Altogether	9	2	28	24	15	24	100	10,517

Thus relations of individual families in a broader sense encompass almost the whole of society. (If not only one generation had been considered, but also relatives in descending and ascending lines the picture would be even more multicoloured.) Of course, to be able to evaluate this variety, and mainly, to be able to measure its effects, one would have to know, how close the contact between these relatives is. But even without knowing that, it can be supposed that such family relations cannot be without social effects.

There are also definite endeavours to ensure *social homogeneity within* the narrower family communities living together. In the choice of a spouse, the initial environment does not seem to be an "essential condition." 45 per cent of the husbands of professional (or executive) origin and 65 per cent of husbands of white-collar origin have wives of working-class or peasant origin, and 35 per cent of the men coming from working-class families marry girls belonging to peasant families. But a classification of the present occupation of spouses shows that 72 per cent of professional people and 60 per cent of the others in white-collar employment have wives in non-manual occupations. This similarity is to be expected, as people generally marry those who move in the same circles and have similar interests. Obviously conscious efforts are made in some cases to bring the social situations of the husband an wife closer to each other. Often the occupations of the spouses "become similar" *after* marriage, and there are a number of the cases, where the "upward" movement of one of the spouses, usually the husband, is followed by the break-up of the marriage.

Households show considerable homogeneity even if not only the spouses but all the wage-earners in the family are considered. In some two-thirds of households there are two or more earners. If these are classified according to the seven main work-groups, the majority of households—63 per cent—are homogeneous, that is there are only professional people, only unskilled workers, etc. in the family. Even in the other 37 per cent two earners who belong to very "distant" groups are rare cases indeed.

In 569 of 5,000 "heterogeneous" households, i.e. in 4 per cent of all the households with active earners there are only white-collar workers; in 519 (4 per cent) only skilled tradesmen and semi-skilled workers; in 735 (5 per cent) only manual workers in trade and industry; in 582 (4 per cent) unskilled workers and agricultural labourers; in 1,283 (10 per cent) manual workers of all kinds; in altogether 1,297 households (10 per cent) both non-manual and manual workers can be found, among these only 330 households include executives or professional people.

Social homogeneity does not only appear in marriages or in family structure, but also in other chosen reations. The efforts towards social

segregation that came to light in urban sociological studies point to this as well as the still sparse information available on the way referring to friendships are formed.

The Connection between the Work-group of the Husband and that of the Wife (percentage)

The husband's work-group	The wife's work-group						
	Executives and professional people	Other white-collar workers	Manual workers in trade and industry	Skilled tradesmen (incl. manual workers)	Agricultural labourers	Per cent	Total
Executives and professional people	16	57	16	4	11	100	592
Other white-collar workers	4	53	32	8	11	100	634
Manual workers in trade and industry	1	10	50	9	39	100	2,886
Skilled tradesmen (incl. manual workers)	1	16	61	14	22	100	1,287
Agricultural labourers	—	0	3	0	97	100	1,825
Number in group studied	135	1,009	1,794	336	2,999	—	5,937

Efforts to set limits to social mobility undoubtedly exist in Hungary. Movement between generations is relatively easy. Though the initial station exists it is relatively easily outgrown. At the same time it is difficult for sections of society which have become established on the basis of the present situation to enter into contact with each other.

This indicates that mobility cannot be a "painless" process without tensions. Since there are significant differences between sections of society, they are difficult to overcome within a life-time. More exactly, certain attitudes, dispositions and behaviour patterns are formed and get fixed very early, and the differences in these, determined by the initial environment, disappear very slowly. At the present we know very little about the attitudes

and behaviour patterns involved, we have only a few superficial indications at our disposal. One of these, not insignificant in its consequences, is the knowledge of languages. Here we have detailed data only about a group of intellectuals, that of research workers. Knowing at least one foreign language is essential for research workers, therefore the differences become apparent only in the case of more than one language.

The Research Workers' Knowledge of Languages*
(percentage)

How many foreign languages the research worker knows	The research worker's father					
	Profes-sional man	Other non-manual	Crafts-man	Worker	Peasant	Total
None	1	0	0	1	2	1
One	4	10	6	14	9	9
Two	22	27	26	31	40	27
Three	41	35	35	37	30	37
Four or more	32	28	33	17	19	26
Altogether	100	100	100	100	100	100
The number of people in the group	262	247	49	181	67	806

* Based on an unpublished survey conducted in the research institutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Certain problems may easily derive from the fact that people occupying a similar position have a differing origin. It is not that individuals evaluate each other, think much or little of each other in terms of social origin. Superficial reactions of this type may appear but they are so much in opposition to the whole system of norms operating in society that they cannot be regarded as general. The tensions are hidden much deeper, they are much more covert, and often they do not become conscious as such. Unfortunately no data about the whole of society are available. Here, too, the only indicators relate to research workers.

The research workers had to locate themselves on a seven-rung ladder, representing social prestige. According to the preliminary hypothesis there ought to have been a connection between mobility and self-location in the

sense that the research workers coming from worker and peasant families were expected to place themselves higher than the others, since for them the situation of "being intellectuals" is not only an accustomed one, they also feel the favourable change in their own position more directly, etc. The results, however, show an opposite picture: *Those coming from professional or clerical families* (and also the sons of craftsmen) *placed themselves significantly higher than newcomers.*

This can be explained in different ways. One might maintain the hypothesis that children of working-class or peasant parents do not evaluate their own work much higher than the work done by their parents. It is also possible that they had expected more from scientific work than what they actually got, and this disappointment is expressed in their answers. Finally, and from the point of view of the topic discussed, they may feel that in their environment they do not rank quite as equals. The figures do not indicate which hypothesis is the right one, or more precisely, to what degree each is true. Following personal interviews with a number of research workers, I am inclined to argue that the third motive is the dominant one.

Self-location of Research Workers on the Prestige Ladder According to Social Origin*

The social origin of the research worker	He places himself (percentage)			
	Lower than average**	Average***	Higher than average****	Altogether
Professional	34	35	31	100
Clerical	36	32	32	100
Craftsman	35	34	31	100
Working-class	41	39	20	100
Peasant	44	37	19	100
Total	37	35	28	100

* Previously unpublished
** The 1st, 2nd and 3rd rungs of the ladder
*** The 4th rung of the ladder
**** 5th, 6th and 7th rungs of the ladder

Even less information on other consequences of the process of mobility is available. It is not known, for instance, what relations are like between those who rose socially and their environment of origin (in today's Hungarian society they need not deny or be ashamed of their origin yet, regardless

of this, this relationship may be better or worse, natural or awkward, etc.); how they affect the group they left, etc. It is certain that the study of the social effects of social mobility deserves more attention than it has been given so far. Progress never takes place smoothly and painlessly. That this is progress, steps taken in the direction of a fuller social equality cannot be doubted. Most of what has been described here acts in the direction of narrowing the gap between various sections of society. But society has endeavoured to make sure that this progress should have as few undesirable side-effects as possible.

A further question is whether the mobile character of Hungarian society will remain after these changes, which are in some sense linked to a single event since they are connected with a revolutionary situation, have been completed.

The 1963 figures allow one to make certain predictions related to the *near future*. The age-group then between 30 and 39 was the most mobile, mobility in the 20 to 29 age-group was smaller. (It must not be forgotten that few reach the platform of their career before 30.) The mobility of this young group was greater even so than that of people over 60, who were about to retire, greater moreover than that of the age-group between 50 and 60. It is therefore likely that the mobility of society as a whole will not decline even if the mobility of the young decreases a little. The decrease partly naturally follows from a more settled, steady development, and the fact that in the future the decline in employment opportunities in unskilled agricultural work will be less rapid, and the number of clerical and administrative jobs will very likely increase at a slower rate than recently. A probable consequence of the same normalization is that of the various channels of *individual mobility* (promotion, marriage, education) the role of education will become more and more important. Certain hypothetical conclusions that apply to the long-term situation may be drawn from this.

The framework of education—mainly that of secondary education, but that of higher education even more so—is fixed, and it cannot be expected to be considerably widened in the near future. Differentiating according to social origin when alloting places does not appear to be practicable. From the point of view of social efficiency its value is doubtful; in several cases it would work against the new professional class, the immediate and long-term effects of this are both undesirable. Besides such a policy frequently hurts those whom it is meant to favour. It can be presumed that the chances of receiving further education which are socially differentiated at present, will stay as they are, and this means that the rate of individual social mobility will decrease in comparison with the past ten or twenty years.

Even the maintenance of the present structure of those who continue their studies may meet with difficulties. One of the most important conditions of ensuring a favourable social situation is education, the efforts to acquire it will increase within every section of society. Those whose cultural and social starting-point is the best will remain in the most favourable situation, and their number is steadily increasing. The number of executives and that of professional people will go up in comparison with the past, even if no more university places will become available. The older generation, where the proportion of university graduates was 1 to 3 per cent, retire and their place will be taken by recent graduates where the proportion is between 7 to 10 per cent. Since one can hardly count on a differentiated fertility, the number of children of this group aspiring to further education will also grow.

Thus the chance for individual mobility—at least on the basis of a "normal" education—will be smaller than before. The situation will be improved somewhat by evening and correspondence courses, and even more by the fact that the whole of education beginning with nursery schools aims to counteract initial differences. But it is especially important that individual mobility should not mean *upward* mobility exclusively. Conditions must be gradually created for individual "downward" mobility not to mean a real "decline" in the present sense of the word, that is a deterioration of the previous situation either from the point of view of objective conditions or from that of social prestige. If this tendency does not prevail, the negative side-effects of insisting on educational qualifications will be difficult to avoid. The precondition of a situation where "downward" individual mobility can become socially tolerable and acceptable, is a proper development of *group mobility*.

Group mobility means that the relative situation of social groups changes within the whole structure. Group mobility may mean a "change-over," (if, for instance, the situation of social groups changes suddenly in relation to each other) but it may also mean that the groups "get nearer" to each other. Getting nearer means that objective conditions become more similar in the first place, but this is necessarily followed by interrelationships becoming easier, and by a greater similarity in attitudes. Considerable individual mobility necessarily produces similarities between various sections, the greater the similarity between the members, the greater must be that between the groups to which they belong. As groups come closer, connections between the groups become easier, this provides further possibilitites for individual mobility.

Another aspect of the question is what possibilities there are or can be

for group mobility once the opportunities for mass individual mobility decline.

The roots of social differentiation are to be found in the general conditions of the division of labour, principally in the preconditions, such as education, and the effects, such as income. It follows logically from this that one can speak of group mobility once the top and the bottom of the educational, power and income hierarchies get closer to each other. This is not the equivalent of a position where the situation of every section of society improves together.

In fact, the claim that the "situation of every section should improve continuously and simultaneously" includes an element which is never clearly thought out. The improvement in the situation of a given section is a real improvement only if its members feel it. A logical consequence, which can be also proved by a series of (Hungarian and foreign) sociological examinations is that different sections consider greater or smaller increases of income as significantly better. The "threshold of perceptible growth" can be fairly high for those earning a good income. This means that if a general improvement is meant to elicit subjective approval, the standard of living (or at least that part of it which is covered by income) must be raised in a differentiated way, which automatically entails a *widening* of the gap between different sections. On the other hand it can again not be doubted (supposing progress is normal) that it is not reasonable to change the situation of a section by jumps (or, perhaps, haphazardly). This deprives them of their feeling of security and of their belief that the future of their situation is in their hands, that the most effective factor of improvement is constituted by their own efforts. Besides, a change by jumps (let me repeat, disregarding revolutionary situations) usually does not solve the problem. It is mostly the result of administrative action, and permeates the totality of existence only after a longer period.

How greater equality between sections of society can be produced without taking administrative action (which would certainly create tension) is an extremely thorny, almost unanswerable question at the moment. It is likely though that the raising of the general professional, educational and cultural level will help. This would to a certain extent justify a greater equality of incomes. It would also make possible a certain devolution of responsibility and with this a decrease of the distances between the steps of the "power" hierarchy.

Another possibility for group mobility, which is more long-range, and, if you like, more utopian than the former one, is that the *socially determining importance* of the place occupied in the social division of labour *decreases*,

that other aspects of life will get a greater role in establishing the social situation of an individual. The other aspects of life should of course also be connected with some kind of activity, but with activities which fall outside the boundaries of the "traditional" division of labour, and having a direct effect on incomes. It is inconsistent with the essence of socialism that any quality, which is linked with birth or origin, should have an essential, socially determining role.

The growth in importance of non-economic activities naturally has a number of preconditions. One is more leisure, a decrease in the need for economically rewarded activity, etc. The most important is a raising in the level of culture in the widest sense of the term.

All these are long-term prospects indeed. But the social mechanisms discussed as means instrumental in solving the present tensions, also have an effect only in the long run. This is why these problems are topical. The tendencies can already be discerned, and so can ways of influencing them.

GYULA ILLYÉS

THE WONDER CASTLE

I'd arrived the previous night from the country.
Next morning, my eyes were casting about anxiously
for (like an old coat
the body feels easy in) the run-down countryside
where I'd lately been on a four-week visit,
so familiar and roomy, floating in sunshine,
where I feel at home, where in the rag-fluttering dust
man and beast lick parched lips;
but enough said
on that subject
—why go on about my home in the country?

In a word, I'd only been back in Budapest
a day, still feeling a trifle
awkward like one just
come up to town on his first trip
—a little awed, not yet used
to the everywhere apparent more-of-everything.
I wore it uneasily like a newly starched shirt
next to the skin, when
I had to go out visiting
—or, let's say, up the Rácz Hill on an excursion.

Then home and its memories
would buzz in my ears, get in my eyes,
so that I felt I was climbing
up the Hill straight from the puszta's
evening fields, where many times
I'd written out day-labourers' schedules.

I'll tell you why I thought that way,
looking at the ticket in my hand
in my seat on the Cog-wheel Railway:
for should a peasant have a mind
to take the self-same ride,
he'd dig for his ticket an entire working day.
At home seventy fillérs is a whole day's pay.

There we were, some hundred or more
in comfort, legs crossed, for the full
price of a vineyard worker's labour
gliding up the back of the Hill.

A villa, a flower garden
floated past; on a sand-strewn
flat roof two young women taking sun;
further off in the shade of a walnut
someone dealt cards on a green table;
somewhere a radio was humming.
The higher we got
the cooler the air, the less dust;
faces were a carefully even tan.
It was as if, from the hell of the plain below us,
we were borne up from circle to circle
into some present-day Turkish heaven.
Or, with the old look-out tower
it was like a magic castle,
the terrifying or happy
seat of some Asiatic deity
found only in Hungarian and Vogul folk-tale,
called Castle Spinning on a Duck's Leg: Wonder Castle.

Over a hedge flew tennis balls
and as though in competition after
them, like invisible flights of birds,
balls of happy girlish laughter,
laughter that rose the higher.

—And this no weekend, but a working day.
The afternoon was half-way to summer sunset

in a blue sky with faint silver streaked,
heat glowed only in the green light
of the tree-tops' dying lamp, smokily.
It was a weekday, but suffused with peace
and brimming with luminous grace
such as no religion ever gave in a week of Sundays.
Across lamplit leaves
to faint music, where trees afforded shelter,
glimmering like a dream
a knot of girls circled, pirouetted, weaving
the spell of an unattainable, tender future
over the hearts of rapacious nomads,
like Dul's daughters once in Meotian marshes.

Paper lanterns flashed on in a plane-tree
setting another scene—a gent in pyjamas,
somewhat paunchy, leaning back with cigar
in the wine-tinged light—a figure
reclining in the ease of Property
like some cartoon for the Communist Party.

By then the whole Hill
sparkled with lights, and still
it rose every minute higher.
I alone recalled the landscape's flat table
far below, perhaps now underground even, the people,
the country
which just might have heard some story
about it, yet
like a blind plodding horse still drives the mill
—this modish sleek curvature,
this real live Eden of a Hill
where electricity flames more lavishly,
for instance, than in all of Tolna County.

I looked about me. A hill further
off lit up, and then another
like brother beacons.
Soon, will o'the wisp-like hundreds beckon
shrieking, dancing; they all spun

around upon swamps of blindest misery
in each of the universe's regions.

Very beautiful, I thought; but I am too tired
to join the choir
providing this glittering merry-go-round's music.

The outdoor restaurant's
seventy or more tables of idly chattering
diners will consume at one sitting
as much as, even at a rough count
—such were my thoughts, grinding underfoot
the stubbornly unyielding material, as in my poetry
I'd always grappled with raw reality
in the hope that someday it would fuse and shine.
Supper here would cost a week's wages
I reckoned, expertly; almost enthusiastically
I pictured to myself the pumps,
delicate piping, capillaries
sucking all this up, for there's no surplus
well-kneaded, boiled,
mashed, several times cooled,
over for those
who swallow their spittle at home with us.

Outside the garden—where daily
a crunched bridge and hospital
melt on the tongues of this charmingly
cavorting throng, not to mention thirty thousand
stillborn infants—
a parade was on: the milling casual
lookers-on applauded, laughed.

In the moon-shading bushes
were silent couples making love on benches,
dreamily (spooningly, I'm inclined to call it)
in pastry-shops others chatted,
and whatever cares they had
were triple-distilled,
delicate as angels' wings.

Oh poet! Be on the look out
for wonder, for the unusual
that delights the eye and heart
just because someone points a finger at it:
a swineherd among this happy lot, for example,
a reaper, a shepherd
nonchalantly sipping iced pineapple
in a reclining chair, or leisurely
picking broken straw from between his toes
—some new colour, some new face amid this uniformity
that for a millennium has bored us, heaven knows!
A potter, a miner, a baker
who, I'm sure, would like to see just what
his creations are up to out in the world, like a mother
wonders about her children who are far from her
—but I saw not one of those I sought.

The monotonous crowd reclined, stretched, ambled;
like moon-blazed foreheads in a herd of horses
here and there went revered personages
well-known to all,
as among us the count, the priest and judge.

And others hard at their heels:
with such dignified mien newspaper hacks,
squeamish mass-circulation tycoons
who pay hard-working loyal goons
to do their blackmail behind their backs.
With a girl on each arm, an employment
agency boss erect, with smiling face
strutted with a paper in his pocket
certifying he was a mental case.

There, with face pensive and woebegone
lifted towards the moon
(as if to take a swig from it)
having polished off a large chicken,
sat the celebrated playwright;
you'd swear that in no time at all
he might say something original.

Under a sunshade (much like a market woman's)
a very proper gentleman, noted for this,
was offering his wife for sale
—discreetly covered with a veil—
we nibbled at her apricot smile
as if we'd been offered a bowl of fruit.
However, no one fancied the deal.
And... why go on? The faces were so alike,
as I've said, that being unable to tell them apart
is quite disturbing for a lover of art.

As they talked, marriagable maidens
fluttered the whitest of hands
whose long nails seemed to indicate
that they had never cleaned a grate.

So I took a good look
at God's chosen ones, these fairy folk
in suits and shirts of silk
that permitted glimpses of hairy arms and chests,
and meekly
—with heart so long barred from feeling passionately,
only humbly, and with a servant's wisdom—
for my spirit was above
envy or incitement;
mine was a reputation for being peaceable, quiet
and so patient that I blush for it
(I do not judge, I merely watch, the world)

not to mention being rich,
or regarded as such
with regular meals and a bed to sleep in.

Well—like a scout surveying new territory
lately emerged from archetypal slime,
during that glistening evening
I was thinking about just this one thing
as I looked about me, quietly:

Once the marsh rises
—were it ever to rise—to topple
the myriad towers and huge axle
of this glittering miracle
all coming to pass as in the old tale,
that "grass grow not, nor stone remain on stone"

I would even then
stand aside, still play the quiet man,
so that when all came tumbling down
order might be kept,
and calmly, impartially, I should
be able to give account
of how life was before the flood
in this pre-historic period.

(1936)

Translated by
Kenneth McRobbie

LÁSZLÓ NAGY

THE BLISS OF SUNDAY

Many worship you, Sunday, throw into you feverishly
six days and themselves: you the seventh, you the free.
In crowds we flock to you, you our good shaman who
need no consulting-room yet heal us sweet and sure.
Our stifling rose-grove lungs groan for you to arrive,
dark stars of soot have burst in them like butterflies.
We come to you with heart tremors and chilled kidneys,
high blood-pressure, toxins, rages, stitches.
Scare off these goblins, rout the microbe-gangsters,
organize peevish organs into peace with a mum's stare.
We come for our quietness to melt our raw nerves,
your dear cool hand to pillow half-crazed heads.
You are the best go-between, the brightest-minded,
you are the violin where dance and kiss are kindled.
You are also the goal, the nearest: the island where
fabulous clangor strikes from the loved workshops of pleasure...
The blue wheezing night-ship creaks against you—
what breaking radiance, what ruby hullabaloo!
The red gangway of dawn is lowered—but it's still
only the silent old folks who step ashore: the song, the din
lie sleeping in labourers' hearts, dead done like them;
wrestlers with iron and air stay to draw out their dreams.
Grannies trot about like toys, may they know long days!
they mutter anxiously, set the kettle on the gas,
the milk bubbles up, hop-pop, it's almost over,
the malt-coffee's boiling, fizz-frothing, golden,
the bread-cubes dance as they redden in the fat,

to drop their fragrance on the brown soup steaming in the pot.
A rainbow throbs on the vapoury mist and falls on the heart,
it urges me to get up and wash, I whistle in good part.
The lather puffs out my face, the razor walks round
to show how sometimes suffering pares you down.
Oh, let fate keep that strange razor from your cheek:
you grow pale and thin, the stubble cringes, bunches up thick.
My ancient pair of shoes has filched the morning star,—
nylon socks on the line, two tiny shining sacks
flutter, and under fine soles will steal a fine day again,
the ironed shirt winks mother-of-pearl, teases your brain.
Clean shirt: your clean world, this is the bliss you want,
pray for it if the branch of your good smile is cut.
Mirrors, soften your truth for kindly vanity,
let them look and still say: I'm pretty, I'm happy.
If her face twisted up, oh, what would become of her!
Let the women dance, hawk-brown hair or starling-black or
blonde exploding with hydrogen peroxide
or long-dead Titian's dream of a redhead.
I love them all when I look through the window and admire
their earnest iron will—imprisoned in humming driers,
with tropical heat floating on the waves of their hair
and alpine-brilliant ice-white mirrors everywhere.
She drives me crazy, the girl who stands in the snow
against the wall in her lunchbreak to be burned by the glow;
eyes closed, tempting a sky of ice to tan her slowly,
she spellbinds sun-rays into kisses, ultraviolet only...
White-gold-handed Sunday, you scoop out small boys
with their bullet heads from bed like well-shelled peas,
they roll and tumble like mad, bump heads together,
they are pothooks like the letters in a jotter.
Bees drone in swarms, bells clang their songs at me,
the rushing windstream sets imagination free.
My villages, yellow, white, watchers along the road-dust,
I see you tip your roof-caps to disaster.
To number your names is music: Vid, Nagyalásony, Doba,
Egeralja, Káld and Berzseny, Kispirit, Csögle, Boba.
A universe you were, now you are its mica-flash,
frighteningly huge this life, frightening to confess.
I was a millet-seed in you, now you are that seed,

the memory pushes out a tear and it mists all that scene.
Then memories peal like bells and ringing years leave sleep,
the boy I was is here, the pond-murmur, the day-dream.
No desire to be Peter Pan but no desire to die,
the flash on the fine silver poplar-leaves his reverie.
The student I was is here, splitting skies are above,
Sunday, the bombs lash your light into blood,
butterflies panic and flap in his hair, his head
nettle-stung like his mind life-stung, he lies on his side.
Well, I throw down a horse-rug under the silent stars,
I throw my troubles open to the mercies of flowers.
You bud-bright peonies, cover me in pity,
tight baby bombs, blow up into flowers on my heart.
And let my whole being be irradiated with new colours, new rays,
let the frescoes of horror and tribulation be wiped away,
the terror-born figures smeared teeming on my soul's wall
be banished with Neros and popes, fell Crescent and yataghan, all
needles in fingernails, Haynau's icy pupils, heads awry
in living-death nid-nodding agony.
And blood-soaked earth, soot-sky lit by a skull,
let burning phantoms of sea and air go dead and dull.
What am I that I should endure what makes my flesh creep?
I can wait,—no moments of magic waken that bad sleep.
Many pleasures move me, yet cannot break the spell,
bringing only strength to defy, to bear a great shame well.
You who sink down on the horse-rug beside me, Hope
my edelweiss-eyed angel, you know I am no fool, I grip
you, whirl you about like a green branch, Jacob
was not more diligent in flooring God's angel.
Yet stay by me, don't cry; I have to stamp on the monsters;
whisper to me that the road I go is not monstrous.
I am desperate fighting for beauty, I want to know the sun
dazzling, the singing green-gold forests, bright winds that stun
the leaves, tall flower-stems shaking tiny dewdrop earrings,
petals and veins like girls in love, trembling even in breathing.
Being shouts out: no no! It doesn't want to be dead yet.
The wasp drones off at a tangent, spins out the moment.
Highest, deepest teats are sucked by emerald heads:
cherry and morello, emerald aching for red.
The golden oriole calls out its glorious Sunday,

and father brushes chaff from his hat, walks away
to see the world: silver-blue sea of rye,
copper-ruddy carrots, maize standing straight and high.
Blind love wraps the crop-gazer as he pads on his way,
a hundred disappointments dissolve in his love of this day,
sweet-pea in his hat, even that makes him rich,
he flicks his boots with a flame-red willow-switch.
Oh, all those paunches to be taut as drums, the draught animal
champs and stuffs itself with grass after six days' toil,
the belly of the hill, the boneyard broods in hunger,
full now of nothing but sunlight and acacia-flower.
The blessed meadow, it wants happiness,
goodbye now to memories of pain and sharp distress.
The telegraph wire chirps half-asleep, no news or orders
whiz over it, the post-office girl writes a letter:
Come, I'm dying for you—and the wonder seizes her heart:
she is clasped from behind with a kiss by her soldier at last.
Bicycles, look: modern reindeers, lilac, yellow,
the wheels purr feverishly with a student and his girl to the valley,
motorbikes roar by, meteor lapping meteor,
zhee, zhoo, a woman's hair streams in comet-eaten air.
To vanish in the green night of the woods is marvellously good,
twin spheres of wild cherry suit the ear grown red.
For blood, like soul, goes thirsty for a storm,
a hot and forcing wind springs up, beats down the stems
of rose and lily thrown in each other's arms, love's way
is blessed, love's bed is blessed, and you, the day.
Sunday, you are here, we see the feast-day of the workworn,
the bent backs straighten in your majestic dawn.
Children at a mother's apron: they play on your barn floor
after the bucking tractor-seat and shouldered sacks galore.
The miner looks up at the sky, his crows'-feet glisten,
the grimy machinist marvels at a blackbird: listen!
The navvy who has pushed his squealing barrow countrywide
is at home, admires and makes much of his darling child.
The blacksmith's in fine fettle, the postman drops
the tiredness of a hundred storeys down, laughs and can't stop.
The seamstress heals her heartache with gleams of pleasures,
a myriad tiny daggers glint on heart-shaped cushions.
The workshops are empty, the stitched jacket on the dummy

holds up in one arm the pain and point of creativity.
The blue dynamo squats stiff, cut off from savage energy,
the belt wilts, the transmission is silent and weary.
Nothing and nobody runs, the turning lathe is asleep,
a rainbow strip of peeled steel in its teeth.
Dour mouths of iron vices gape, the quietness is a sea,
rasps doze like fish, scales glimmering fitfully.
Beer froths in the brewery, matures, hums a wild dream,
horses' harness flashes its moons on pegs, they lean
to the manger, those magic beer-horses, rank with hops,
and stamp in happiness with tumbling bells of hoofs.
I swim past riveting images, I see the blood-spattered
abattoir and angels walking in white there, scattering
jasmine-flowers,—my heart gambols and foals
something fantastic-impossible from what is truly-real;
the poleaxe forgets to degrade and lay low the gloomy bull,
or crack the star on the horse's trembling skull.
Blood for six days, but see the shrieks fly on the blade,
renew your smile, parables of blood.
You kill yourself too, to be reborn from death,
you are a Sunday phoenix, to drink and break bread.
Oh how often you have to die for one small Sunday,
how often for one far-off thought-out joy!
The victim, the dead, was always you, humanity,
no workshop, no workshop of delight this earth and sky.
Thunder? Uncouth belching, that's how they live up there,
hiding forever behind the law of the unsated banqueter.
What I sing again and again is not those loose-mouthed brutes
with their jovial riot, but all men's modest delights.
Oh it is frustratingly minute, no home for my heart,
Sunday: doused spark, dust of an imagined star.
Imagined ravishing star, that's where I'd be,
with gaiety ineradicable—oh never to see
that distant beauty!—entrance me, draw my heart out
of the dust, save me from Psalmus Hungaricus and jeremiad.
You are the goal, it is there life lies indivisible,
nothing else makes me cry out haunting the butcher's table.
It is for this that vision and holy rage are sizzling in me,
the melancholy temple of my sight falls down to make it be.
I have been gentle, it is time I was an activist,

even if you get it from hell you need joy, it is tonic, it
is rations for the voyage, how else bear the bloodstained
relay-race, without it you jackknife, stagger, sprain.
Come now, come now, set up the feast, unwind,
slice the fish, cast its scale-coins to the whistling wind,
close your eyes and wring the panting pigeon's neck,
laugh with the pot of horseflesh-soup all sweet with mignonette,
stew potted head, shred radish, and if there's nothing else
pluck at the sky, fry the red kestrel's eggs.
Eat from a striped cloth or on the grass, but sit
as an august great power, in the smile of space you are bright.
You should know that only you can kill pain and original sin,
only you have the right to feast; rifle the larder and bread-bin,
you may eat, there is no curse, drink too; drinking,
recharge your soul at the tumbled shadows of living.
Sunday today, Sunday, the sun is a frantic sultan,
his swordblade splits the earth, tears fences down.
How to hide from its fury, it extorts sharp sweat-tribute,
a dream of plunging in snow to escape the churning heat.
Softly rounded hips strip off at the water's edge,
they put on wavy green-cool skirts for dancing. Foliage
opens and beckons so fresh and cave-like below,
shades of the beer-garden come to life, beer foams
as tap-copper turns, jugs clink weighty and cold,
hats and caps are cocked jaunty on every head.
The ice-cream freezes, its tent floats like another heaven,
the cones are tucked up in towers, high and even,
towers to be annihilated by an army of children,—
at last rebuilt no more as cold winds freshen.
The summer is a breast-pierced bull on the frost-pinched sand,
the leaves are blood-drenched, the gossamers fly around.
The hawthorn shivers, shakes its blood-red pearls,
and don't think it's the sunset-embers of the flames that fell.
The fevered stags begin to butt each other's brows,
they bell, the steam fans out like storm-blown boughs.
The setting sun paints fire on the windows of the city,
Sunday, your tempo quickens, drives us crazy for beauty.
Hundreds of thousands throng the streets, din fills the air,
they march with their furled flags of desire and power.
And the funfair bangs out, its daft delights come cheap,

a dream-orbit round the earth—we bucket and leap,
and shame on us, we monopolize the toys of our sons,
the scarlet-feathered whistle-cock crows smartly in our hands,
paper-trumpets blare,—vermilion-nosed horses
carrousel their sexy-seated women-riders forward...
The earth whirls with time and sky like a star-wheel,
this is beyond play, it roars round your head, you reel.
Insane fragrances invade you, the wine fizzes,
meteors plunge and plunge, hearts take their bruises.
The instincts flower, fear of mortality bids
revelry and bids it quick, sit in the midst of it!
Whisper and sigh: you, thin violins, weep it out,
and you, lumpish drums, take joy and beat it about.
Roll drums, cry violins, we must have a dance,
the spurs of your music make me rear and prance.
You can see through this intoxication everywhere,
your feet itch to trample king, president, emperor,
your sly fate too, which covers you with wing and claw
and lifts you up only to dash you like a griffin's prey.
You drink deep, clink your glass, you need this spirit, this fever,
this is for loosening your tongue and see how it sobs, how it reasons!
Your fingers spread into the skies, watch-towers of your truth,
would that no tomorrow saw them shaken and ruined!
I sing and sing of the great joy of the many, now
darkness is theirs, furrowed by the star-plough.
The crop of dreams is murmuring, the ear of corn is harder,
men cut it now, the reaping-song strange pearly laughter.
Strange cables these, the cemetery telephones,
from the wisdom of death some send messages:
leave no stalk of delight uncut, someday you will be sorry,
enjoy yourselves my daughter, little son, little grandson, my orphans!
Huger the hunger, the thirst, wilder the music,
it rings and wrestles with the dear dead message.
Light-power, teeming current charges the muscle-springs
prone to dance, the bones with their live ball-bearings.
He who kisses today tastes lava, he himself breaks
into flame and his whispered words are crested flames.
A spark-shower hits the icefield, between damnation and salvation
even the border can be on fire, now the mind is in its passion.
Night: life in space, its obscure laws welling,

bodies: saturns rolling in their erotic rings...
Here comes the end of our star-being, the end is here, goodnight!
The heart is orphaned, Sunday's flowers—gone in what flight!
Cooled stones, snow-drifted stubble, alien wind-song,
snow-curtain dances—and man sleeps deep and long.
Sky, like mind, must want again to lighten,
and soon on the unhidden breasts a dawn whitens.
The world that was all glow and flame's now white, my dear.
Wake up, wake up, it's morning, the winter is here.

(1954) *Translated by Edwin Morgan*

OTTÓ ORBÁN

TO BE POOR

To be poor, even just relatively poor, means that a man lacks the brashness to decorate his speech with Christmas-tree baubles and hold forth to the fighters of a war on the whistling wings of gorse. To be poor is to have an irresistible wish to answer yes or no if we are questioned. To be poor is to wade barefoot through the splintered-glass sea of technology and hand-feed a lion equipped with every modern convenience. To learn an upside-down ethics, to discover everything about the concealed dungeons of a sky-bound earthscraper; to crawl backwards along the narrowing corridors of the cavern of history into that primordial workshop where blood and wretchedness are pounded into the enchanted form of humanity. To be poor in a world where Romeo is a car and Juliet a cosmetic may be an embarrassing merit but it is also a happy embarrassment, for the poor man lives in the besieged stronghold of thought without relying on any possible safe-conduct, and instead he gallops bareback on an earth with its mane flying and he uses his patient anger to spur it on its way.

Translated by Edwin Morgan

DAYS IN THE CELLAR

by

LAJOS NAGY

Lajos Nagy [1883–1954] was one of the greatest Hungarian short-story writers [see his short story "May 1919" in The N.H.Q., No. 33]. His strong left-wing tendencies made it impossible for him to live by writing during the war, and he opened a small bookshop. He and his wife lived through the siege of Budapest in the cellar of a typical Budapest block of flats. During the weeks of the siege, in hiding from a call-up order, in his helplessness and out of habit, he kept a diary which was published in book-form later that year. Like his short stories, his entries in his diary are detached observations and detailed descriptions. We are printing the first and last two days of the diary. —The Editor

Budapest, 1945, Tuesday, January 2

I slept in the cellar. I slept well, alone in our bed; my wife went to bed in the caretaker's groundfloor flat. She's got a cold, maybe even a slight temperature. The caretaker and his wife are now frightened of the planes, they too have moved down to the cellar and they allowed my wife to sleep in their bed.

Last night was boring. I've been living in the cellar now for a week. The lighting is poor because the electricity doesn't work, it's cold, I can't get down to anything. I can't even read, and there's no one for playing games, cards or chess. However, last night I did manage to find a partner for dominoes. We played in the dimly-lit shelter, my dominoes being lit by a candle, and my partners' by a hurricane lamp. The caretaker has six hurricane lamps and Merk gave us five litres of kerosene.

I went to bed at ten, I fell asleep quickly, I slept well. It worried me somewhat that my wife hadn't come down to the cellar. But I insisted in vain, she was stubborn, she argued that the cellar was worse for her than upstairs.

After getting up, I went to see her. I sat down on a chair beside the bed and we talked. She too had slept very well. She still had her cold. I took

her pulse, it read eighty. For her, that means a slight temperature, as her usual morning count is between sixty and sixty-six.

Ilonka came in too. She lived in the same flat as us. Last night she had slept upstairs on the second floor. She's Jewish, hiding with false papers. She started to complain about her troubles. She is frightened of the K.'s. Mrs. K. happened to recognize her and started blabbing straight away: "But she is Jewish, I knew her very well in Pécs!" Now Ilonka is tormented by fear. Her face is quite upset and pale.

"We'll do something," I tried to reassure her. My wife knew just how to handle her: "Her husband is a deserter!"

Suddenly we heard a tremendous explosion. An explosion, clatter, the various sounds caused by the falling of tiles, glass and other things. The air became cloudy, and it seemed as if the whole house had collapsed. Perhaps we too had died and were bringing only the memory of the last moments of our lives with us into the next world. At the sound of the explosion I immediately threw myself flat on the ground, but I would probably have been too late with this had I really had to protect myself. Ilonka had thrown herself down next to me. After the explosion I felt something hit my head, behind my right ear. I fingered the place. I didn't find a wound and I didn't get blood on the tip of my finger. I got up and came back to my senses. According to Ilonka's description later, the first words I said to my wife were: "You see, you idiot! Haven't I always said that you should come down to the cellar!" My wife got up without any protest—that's quite something!—and started to dress. I hurried her along. Get dressed and come down to the cellar!

I wasn't frightened. Not as far as I know. But a quarter of an hour after the incident I felt I wanted to cry. I didn't cry, but perhaps just because it would have been unnecessary. I would have been crying for my belief that I was unwoundable, which was now dispelled.

On my head a bump the size of half a walnut appeared. A bomb had struck our house, cutting off a corner of the roof. Most of the windows were broken, the courtyard was full of tiles, plaster, bits of drainpipe and wood, but most of all with glass. The thick frosted-glass windows in the workshop above the cellar were smashed too.

I went up to our flat to see if it was still there. It was largely undamaged, just the kitchen and hall windows were broken, and there were holes in the windows which faced the street, that is, the windows of the living rooms. The bomb which hit our house must have been a small one, and we've that to thank for staying alive.

Towards evening my hand started to hurt. I had a look at it and then

I realized there was also a cut on my hand. I became the first wounded man in the building, with a microscopic cut on my hand and a bump on my head.

It appears that the Russians are no longer just shelling us, they are bombing us too. I gathered from people who went outside that yesterday, too, bombs had fallen on the city.

I reckoned on two to three days of siege. But it isn't going quickly. And by now it's getting hard to bear. It's not the fear: that's minimal. It's the amount of stifled anger. I get so annoyed at the people I see around me. I think they are almost all the war's accomplices. They're so patient. They still wish for German victory. I've tried talking to one or two. Very carefully, of course. But it's no use. Even if they listen, or accept some of my arguments, they're still only pretending. When they talk to one another, they sing a different tune. Their behaviour is fatally predestined. They are not just the victims of a few years of propaganda, they have had a lifetime to become what they are.

Thursday, January 4

I went to bed last night at ten o'clock. I didn't get down to writing all day. All the conditions were lacking. I had nowhere to sit and no light. I could also say that I had no time to write.

I don't know myself why I make these notes. Maybe it's to give myself something to do. Having no partner for talking—for the sort of talking I like—at least, let me scribble away. And then, when I write, I think of friends and acquaintances abroad. As if I was writing letters to them. In particular to L. J. in Buenos Aires, or to V. A. I imagine how alarmed they must be when they read about Hungary. As if I wanted to tell then what this siege is like. I think the fear is far milder than they would think. On the other hand, it is far more terrible. Those who are not in trouble, and haven't lost anyone they love, can cope almost easily with hardships. But there is one thing my good friends far away can't even begin to imagine, and that is the degree of human stupidity which is ravaging our city.

In the evening they had high jinks in the workshop of the shelter. Mr. T. arrived drunk as usual. He has to leave the cellar occasionally and for that he needs a pick-me-up. But he's a pleasant drunk. He went on drinking after he arrived, he sought out drinking companions, he sang and joked. The whole company sang. Mr. T. recited poems and monologues, rather cleverly. I was in a bad mood, I watched the fun at a distance. I was feeling

sad. 28 Nagymező utca has been badly bombed, and that's where my shop is.

It is a three-storey house, and the bomb hit the part of roof towards the street. There's a huge V-shaped gash in the building, the tip of which reaches exactly to my shop. From the outside, it looks as though the shop itself were not damaged. I went to look at it yesterday afternoon. I went out into Nagymező utca, but I only dared to go as far as Andrássy út as planes kept wheeling overhead.

The corpse has been lying around for all this week along the wall of the house next door. Those who leave the cellar say that there are corpses elsewhere too. This one is the body of a Jew. Apparently he was hiding in the hotel next door, without a star of course, and with false papers. The Arrow-Cross people were raiding the district, and the news reached the hotel. The Jew in hiding grew scared, so he crept out of the hotel. Into the dark, cold street, without any hope of shelter. He knocked on the door of the house opposite, but no one opened it. He knocked at our door, too. Some people heard the knocking, but they didn't open the door. They didn't know who was knocking or what he wanted, but it would have been fatally dangerous to let in a Jew on the run. An Arrow-Cross car turned into our street. On discovering the Jew one of the pursuers jumped from the car and shot him from close up. Two little red-lined holes can be seen behind his left ear. The wounds bled heavily. The man's shoulder is bloody and as he bent forward, the blood trickled from his shoulder to his breast into his lap and down to the pavement. There is an irregular pool of frozen clotted blood on the pavement, and a frozen cake of blood covers his lap. The face looks tired, as if some sort of bitterness emanated from it. It seems to be shrinking slowly, though this might be just an illusion. His head has tipped to the right as if resting on his shoulder, his worn hat is also tilted to the right, as if he was showing his wounds. His suit is badly worn, but he is wearing a very good pair of shoes.

Most people avoid the body, crossing to the other side. The weaker ones daren't even look at it, others blink, and even turn back for more. Perhaps they are weighed down by thoughts of human mortality. By the fourth day, the good shoes were no longer on the corpse's feet. They say that a woman came along, stopped by the body, then knelt down and carefully searched the pockets. She didn't find a thing, but she took off his shoes. By the time she had finished her diligent task, a little cluster of people had gathered around her. Someone asked what she wanted and what she was doing. The woman replied calmly: "I'm his wife." It was obvious from her entire behaviour, however, that she was a stranger.

The shoulders, chest and knees of the corpse are covered in broken glass. The street, too, is full of glass. In places there are whole mounds of glass. On the body the dark red cake of blood looks as if it had been lavishly sprinkled with sugar.

T. said that in Vilmos császár út people fell on the carcass of a horse, and within minutes they hacked it into pieces, and carried off the meat. Another occupant of the cellar told of a similar case: the same thing had happened with two horses in Józsefváros. Just eight legs, two heads and the innards were left on the street.

Yesterday morning I was sitting in the cellar when I heard a tremendous explosions. It was as if the whole world had collapsed. The cellar reeled, and the air grew cloudy. I thought our end has come, now the house is falling down, the cellar, the ruins will choke us. A bomb fell very near at the corner, in the middle of the road.

Wednesday, January 17

I'm impatient. Now they're fighting above our heads. In the workshop, whose windows are cut from the pavement, we can hear the rattle of machine-guns.

Again it's almost impossible to find a place and some light for myself. I'm sick of this diary, too, I'd like to finish it. Even now, I can write only because the T.'s are having their lunch at the big table in the workshop and for this operation, they light their lamp. They've still got an ounce or two of kerosene. Their lunch: soup and jam flaps. Jam flaps have been popular for some days now. One can potter around for a long time making them.

Just now one of those rogues reported his observations to us: A German soldier with a submachine-gun is standing at the street corner, but he waits till five or six Russians get together, then he lets them have it. What a nice surprise for the Russians! So, according to this rascal, the German soldier is still letting them have it. And that's a nice surprise for the Russians. In short, for this rogue, the Germans are still winning. And the rogue doesn't tremble, he grins in drunken joy.

Today, we went up to the flat. But we left in a hurry, rushing downstairs again, as we heard such loud explosions that we thought the building was collapsing.

Some still insist on making jokes. But people are quiet, sighing at most.

Z. reckons that even if the Russians occupy this part of the town where

we are, we still won't be able to leave the cellar for the Germans will start bombing Pest from Buda. But even after the whole of Budapest is occupied, if that ever happens, there'll still be a few trifles to come. They'll shoot up the city with doodlebugs, for instance. We can rest assured, he says with a sneer, that we'll be living in the cellar for months yet.

A woman asked another: "Well, what's your temperature?" The other answered: "I don't know, I never take it now." Conclusion: that's the wisest policy.

The women were squabbling this morning. It's funny that they still got the time and the spirit. Though squabbling in the cellar has so far not grown into anything serious.

Once again, one or two things have turned up from the reserves. I can see jam, liver paste, gherkins, rice, even unopened bottles of beer. There are some matches, too.

By now I really darent' stick my head outside the building, or even the cellar.

Our decent air-raid warden went out into the street yesterday and received a head-wound. The fragment of a shell whirled right to his head. Now they're changing his bandage. And they are washing the wound and quite needlessly messing around with it. The warden says he doesn't feel well, he thinks he's some temperature. I took his pulse, it was a little fast, probably because of his fright. The warden's dead tired, he works a lot, the tenants give him plenty of trouble. One must admit he has a tough job and up till now he has done it well. He's a decent man.

I had bean soup and *strapachka* for lunch today. Beans, chick-peas, beans, chick-peas, that's roughly the menu. But I don't mind, I haven't got sick of either of them yet. Though sometimes, for some strange reason, there is a build-up of one or the other. Yesterday, for instance, my wife cooked bean soup for supper, making sure that there'd be some left over. So we had bean soup for supper, bean soup for today's breakfast, lunch, and there'll be some for supper too.

The people who live in the workshop can hear the noise of the fighting more clearly. They say that they couldn't sleep all night because shooting and explosions went on incessantly. Even Mr. M. has promised to spend the next night in the cellar.

In the street, in front of our door, there is a huge wooden beam. We wanted to requisition it for ourselves, but it was impossible. Four men put all their weight against it and tried to drag it inside, but it proved heavy for them. Just as they managed to shift it, they had to make a sudden dash for the doorways for the shooting broke out again.

Not long ago I was given a box of phosphorous matches by T. and for half a day, I was saved from darkness.

K. and our assistant-caretaker hadn't been home for three days. Mrs. K. cried and Mrs. Assistant-caretaker hadn't slept for two days with worrying. Then towards evening our assistant-caretaker arrived. I saw him from the front door as he came along the street, very slowly, and calmly. He's a factory worker. His nervous system is quite different from mine, for instance.

At five o'clock, practically in the evening, two German soldiers turned up in the workshop. They had come from the house next door, moving along the fire escape from the direction of the square. They had broken through the other fire escape which goes on from us. It was only then that I learned that we had three fire escapes, and not two. Before the Germans got down to work they had a little chat with the tenants. They were fine, tall boys, sooty and dusty. Their features were full of fear; they were like hunted animals. Their faces were distorted with exhaustion and worry. If one had no brains, one could feel sorry for these two monsters. For I could tell they were sentenced to die. They stood there in the workshop, staring round uncertainly, and gabbling away. Not with vitality, not with authority, but with a deep melancholy. I didn't understand what they said: I merely watched the devotion with which the occupants of the cellar gazed at them. Yes; to my companions, they still appeared as heroes. Instead of rushing at them and beating them to death, with bits of wood, brooms, saucepans, or whatever was to hand.

I kept questioning the others but I couldn't discover very easily what the Germans were saying. In any case, they made out that the Germans weren't retreating, but just going for ammunition; so they are still and once again winning.

In the evening I played cards with M. I ran out of cigarettes, Mrs. T. gave me a packet.

Thursday, January 18

Last night there was great excitement in the cellar. We learnt that the Russians were some hundred and fifty steps away, in the nearby square. The excitement had been started by the two German soldiers breaking through the wall.

In the evening I played cards till late. I felt we should sleep upstairs, in the flat. Because there might be fighting and shooting in the cellar. How-

ever, my wife and I took such a long time making up our minds, that in the end we stayed downstairs.

Towards eleven, the Germans, coming from the direction of the square, marched across our cellar through the broken walls. They reached the workshop and went on from there. I didn't see them because I was already in bed in the shelter. They say there were some twenty of them.

I got up in the night and went out to the lavatory. From there, I could see that everything was quite still, no shelling, no shooting.

I got up early, at eight o'clock; I couldn't get back to sleep. People were saying around that the Russians were here in our street. Mrs. M., who had looked out through the glass window of the front door, was the first to see them. She ran down to the shelter bringing us the news: The Russians are here!" A man wasn't convinced: "How do you know?" Mrs. M. answered: "I saw some Russian soldiers." "Where?" "Here, in our street." The man was still unconvinced: "What were they like?" Mrs. M. described their uniforms. Then she came to her senses: "But why am I bothering about their uniforms? They were speaking Russian." The man said grudgingly: "So, they're here."

I got dressed hurriedly and went out into the street in front of the gate. Four Russian soldiers were running past our house on the other side of the road. Others came and stood beside me. We greeted them. The one in front returned our greeting. He was a good-looking young man with a black moustache, a Caucasian type. And all four of them ran on. I stood awkwardly in the gate. I was happy. But for a long time now I'd imagined that at this first meeting, we'd fall on each other and embrace. The embrace was left out, as it needs two people. Though it would have been a fine thing.

Oh well, it doesn't matter. It's all over! The end of the war, the end of the cellar, of silence, of hiding. What else has come to an end, I wonder? The world as it was for the last thousand years should also come to an end.

We survived. By chance. Through a thousand dangers. And now I've a suspicion that there won't be a carnival to follow, but we must get ready for a new fight. It's just that from now on, we'll be fighting in more favourable conditions. The spirit and the devilish will which caused all our suffering is still alive. It's still living on and functioning. How do I know? I'll give you an example right away. A newcomer arrived in our cellar three days ago. For a time we hardly noticed him. Somewhere or other his own flat was in ruins, and our house took him in. He seemed to be a quiet, withdrawn gentleman. Then he spoke up and said to those near him: "Yesterday the Germans didn't go for ammunition; they marched through Buda towards the west. One of the two Germans said: 'We are going now,

I believe we'll be back!' And knowing the sort of fellow they are, I believe them, too."

Apart from this, the atmosphere in the shelter is marvellous. The few Jews who were hiding in the cellar and one or two of the decent people walk up and down undecidedly, keeping their mouths shut in cowardice. They are shy, obliging, patient. The counter-revolutionaries, however, have no inhibitions. They make scathing remarks about everything that goes on, about everything they see. Their mocking criticism has begun. They can, and do, throw their weight around.

And I said peace isn't coming yet, only more fighting. We have to be alert, always. For a long time yet, perhaps for the rest of our lives.

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

THE TIME-BOMB
Endre Vészi

ARTIST SPEAKING—LAJOS SZALAY
Bertha Gaster

THE VISITOR
György Konrád

YOU, THE HEAVEN'S DOMED HIGHT
Bálint Balassi

PEST ELEGY
István Vas

CROWN OF HATRED AND LOVE
Ferenc Juhász

IF GOD LOVES ME
József Tornai

THE AGE OF THE COFFEE-HOUSE
George E. Lang

THE BULLET

(An autobiographical story)

by

ERZSÉBET GALGÓCZI

We only had one sheet and it was put on the bed only when father was ill or mother was about to deliver a baby. Mother gave birth to nine children; father was ill nine times. In thirty years, there was a death for every new life.

My first experience of life was when the horses stampeded and broke away. We were standing somewhere by the edge of the plain, and I was clinging to an apron, perhaps not even my mother's. The scared face of a small child was suddenly seen in the dust. All eyes were focused on the child—no one could help, no one could rush to him; everyone was gripped by the terror which precedes a cry—and then the stallion in the lead swerved round the child at play in the dust, and so did all the other horses.

A sobbing woman grabbed the child from the dust; everyone was sobbing.

"Can you remember that?" asked my elder brother, surprised when I told him the story one day.

"That was me."

We worked out that at the time I was two.

My second experience of life was father's illness. (I was three.) Mother was sitting on the edge of his bed—it was covered with the sheet—with both her hands pressed to his forehead and father kept saying in a gentle whisper: "How nice and cold your hands are, Annuska. How cold your hands are!" My eldest sister, a big girl by then, rubbed her palms in a bucket of snow in the corner behind father, so that he would not see her. And then she took mother's place by the sick-bed. Then it was mother's turn to use the bucket of snow.

When the doctor left, she saw him out. And in front of the doorstep, in the yard, the doctor whispered to her:

"All I can say, Mrs. Köteles, all I can say is that he'll survive once the bleeding begins."

We never prayed, but at that, mother sighed:

"Oh, My Lord, let the bleeding start!"

And the bleeding began. Suddenly, blood began to stream from father's mouth and nose. He had half fallen out of bed, with mother holding his forehead, and the blood gushed from his mouth and his nose. Whenever the attack eased a little, my sister took the tin bucket outside and poured the blood on the snow.

Father vomited blood for three days.

We had only the one room and I watched it all from the corner, terrified. What was more frightening—to see father's helplessness, when I'd always believed him to be so big and strong, or the sight of the blood? Twenty years later I read this in the diary of Mednyánszky the painter: "There is a kind of rusty red, a brownish, dusty red which excites the nerves most intensely. There is something threatening in this colour. . ." Father's blood was like that. And as if I had already known that blood is precious, I felt sorry for every drop he spat out that had to be poured away in the snow. How did I come by this feeling? For I heard that bleeding would cure him. And yet. . .

The lamp was on all night, I could not sleep. I clung to Suri, trembling.

"What's wrong with father?"

He whispered it as if it was a very great secret:

"There's a bullet in his lungs."

I was three. I did not know what bullet meant or what lungs meant and what the two had to do or had not to do with one another. I only came to realize it much later, when I was at school, but accurate knowledge did not alter the essentials. Since the age of three I regarded father as a chosen man. He was different from others. My father had a bullet in his lungs.

When he was healthy, that is when he moved about and worked like other people, the healthy ones, and there was nothing apparently wrong with him, deep in my heart, I was proud that my father was not like others, after all. When I saw his blood gushing out, I felt sorry for every drop and was filled with anxiety. But in my pride and anxiety I also felt its weight—as one can sense the weight of fate. And it was our fate that my father had a bullet in his lungs.

Father had been taken prisoner by the Russians during the First World War. The Communists had issued an appeal in the prison camp, saying that they would let go anyone who was willing to fight in the revolution. My father volunteered, too. His knee was injured during the war, and his lungs during the revolution. The bullet was left in his lungs. He was given a certificate with Lenin's signature that he had taken part in the October Revolu-

tion and he kept it in a little box all his life. We took to calling it Father's little box. It was not all that little; over three feet long and more than two feet wide, made of wood with iron straps and a padlock.

When he came home, he took this document to the authorities and became a Red Guard in our 1919 revolution. He was practically beaten to death by Rumanian counter-revolutionaries somewhere in Transylvania. He stayed in bed for a long time after that.

When he recovered, he married my mother, a she-wolf with more heart, understanding and courage than anyone I have ever met.

As far back as I can remember, we lived in Csongrád County on Count Gyula Károlyi's estates, in different parts, living as cotters. We moved about often whenever the landlord's interests required—father was a sick man, he could only do light jobs, usually with livestock—and it was important to find work for as many of us children as possible. There were eight of us—one had died as a baby—but I do not remember that all of us were ever at home at the same time, not even at Christmas. Only the little ones stayed home, until they reached ten or twelve, while they were too young to be sent out even as under-servants. I was the seventh child, I had only one younger sister, seven years younger: we stayed home longer than the others, practically all the time.

We had three meals a day: breakfast, dinner and supper. Our breakfast consisted of thick brown soup without bread, and dinner was slices of sugar beet cooked in dough; we liked it very much. It was made of sugar beet, grated and sieved, browned in lard, folded in dough and baked in the oven. I still remember one of my brothers' gestures as he took one long sugar-beet bread from the baking pan, held it up to his stomach to say, "Mother, I must fill up right from here to here!" For supper, we had a special soup; it was made of malt-coffee but without milk and sugar.

One summer morning—we lived on the Letőgy estate at the time, we had just moved there—we saw a little boy, a stranger, who was eating a slice of bread sprinkled with salt and paprika. All of us stood around him, wondering: it was neither breakfast time, nor time yet for dinner or supper. Why was this child eating? Could there be a meal other than breakfast, dinner and supper? Mother came out of the servant-quarters, and looked at us; then she suddenly turned round and hurried back, but we could see that she raised a corner of her apron to her eyes.

At Christmas my uncle from the village came to see us, and he brought a black pudding. Mother cut it into exactly even pieces, so that everyone should have the same and no one should feel cheated. Suri, my brother, kept making up to me, muttering, "Zsika, let me have yours!" "No fear!"

I retorted, "do you want me to stay hungry?" But a moment later I snuggled up to him and said, "You can have it!" For I was smaller, and I could not eat as much as grown-ups anyway. We always gave a bit of our share to the bigger ones and that was how both the younger and older children had enough in the end. But mother always portioned out food equally, so that no one should feel cheated.

One winter we ate an awful lot of stewed sparrow. Suri and Bandi—both were in their teens—caught the sparrows in the roof of the cowshed. Sometimes they brought home as many as fifty sparrows, caught in the landlord's butterfly net, used to catch harmful kinds of moths in the summer. They tasted somewhat like young pigeons.

There was one year when we lived well, because the Count was away in Paris and the bailiff would let the servants steal... When the Count was at home, he obviously could not allow it, in case the Count noticed. There were very few bailiffs of this kind, for most of them usually stole what they could themselves. In ten years or so they misappropriated the worth of an estate of a hundred acres or so, and they became their own masters and farmed their own land. This one was different. If anyone went to him to complain that he could not keep his family, that there was nothing to eat and asked him to help, he would yell so loud that it could be heard across the whole estate:

"Get out of here! I never keep an eye on anyone! If anyone starves to death here, it serves him right!"

He practically spelt it out for his people that they were welcome to pinch as much as they could.

(I can't understand to this day how we failed to pick up even an acre's worth or so. Perhaps we did not want to.)

Recently my brother Suri, who is now called István and is a philosopher by profession, said to me:

"You know, Zsika, now that I have all the food, drink, women, success and power I could want, I often think how lovely that miserable old life of ours really was! I wouldn't change it for anyone's childhood!"

What made that miserable old life of ours so lovely?

I read it in a psychology book that families with many children have a surprising wealth of experience. Why does a psychologist consider this to be surprising? When someone lives with eight or ten others in one family, or even in a single room, as we did, it is like living with eight or ten copies. One shares everything that happens to the others, it becomes one's own experience; what any of them discovers becomes one's own knowledge, and what even any of them reads, hears, finds out or finds names for is also

one's own, the common property of the family. It's like a swarm of bees, or a band of robbers: all the accessible honey and gold of the world is piled up in the beehive and any of us could take as much as our heart and memory could bear.

We were fundamentally cheerful: today I know that cheerfulness is fundamental to anyone who can cope with life. Father strutted about—or marched?—in the kitchen singing some Russian march: all we could understand of it was: march, march, march! We sang a great deal, most evenings from autumn to spring. We started in the yard when it was time for husking the corn and continued throughout the winter while we shelled it. Sometimes there was no supper, not even the malt-coffee, and then we had songs for our supper. Sometimes there was no paraffin for the lamp and then we sat in the dark, shelled the corn and sang. People passing our house thought to themselves: "How come the Köteles family is always singing? Are they so well off, then?"

Father's favourite song was "By the pinewoods, on the river Maros. . ."

We children kept changing our favourites according to the rise and fall of some song's popularity. By now I realize that except for the classics, every kind of music reached us, remote as we were, on whatever farm we happened to live.

We were crowded with visitors every evening; where there are lots of children, others are drawn to come. Boys came who courted my older sisters, my brothers' friends, father's mates from work—and there were endless stories about experiences in the army, during navvying, and at the vintage festivals. And why Bözsi Farkas drank caustic soda, and whether the knife which stabbed Máté Baksa was in fact the property of Ferkó Horváth or not, for he denied it, of course. . .

We were dismissed at ten. Mother finished shelling and stood up, saying:

"The women should go to undress, the girls should go to bed, and our mates might as well go home too."

We only had one room, but there were four beds, with two boxes full of straw under the beds; at night these were pushed to the middle of the room. Only the small children were made to share beds, the bigger ones, those who went out to work were given their own beds, for father believed that when a "child" didn't have enough room to stretch, he would not rest properly. (Father had the habit of calling even his grown bachelor son a "child.") And one can't work if one is tired.

In addition to the beds, there were a cooking stove, a chest of drawers, father's little box, and two or three stools. We sat on the beds, or on upturned dough-baskets, if we had too many guests. We had no wardrobes.

In 1950, when mother moved to Budapest, to follow her children, we still had no wardrobe and we were rather ashamed of this towards our city neighbours... It's no use asking where we kept our clothes; we had no clothes other than those we happened to be wearing. If there was another rag or two, they had plenty of room in the chest.

As a matter of fact, we did not miss them. We did not live by collecting things, like the peasants. We hated the peasants the most, far more than our landlord, the bailiff or the gendarmes.

Suri is four years older than me. He was called the "Turkish cock" in his childhood; he was probably a contrary, proud youngster. When he was twelve, he was sent to be an under-servant so that he "should earn at least what he eats." But he earned more than that; his yearly wages consisted of a suit of clothes, a pair of boots and a piglet. László Hazuga had the lease of some twenty acres in the Árpád district, quite some distance from us. Hazuga was a "soldierly" man, the worst type of peasant, the kind who owns nothing as yet, but is set on owning something. His wife was a shy, scared, weak little soul. Whenever she was pregnant, her husband made her do exercises—down! up! down! up! down! up!—until she had a miscarriage. Hazuga could not afford to keep a pregnant woman, she would not work well enough.

He was the same with his servant. Once Suri fell asleep, leaving to stray the animals he herded. And as poor Suri was suffering from "sleepiness," always feeling sleepy, he was considered to be sick. It did not even occur to anyone that a boy of twelve who got up at three in the morning and went to bed at eleven at night was always short of sleep. To punish him for falling asleep, his master made him do a duck walk, until the boy fainted away, and then he left him where he was. The threshers picked him up and carried him back to the stable where his pallet was. All the meanness the master had suffered in Horthy's army was passed on to those around him.

Suri slept in a manger in the stable, and he had a young calf which he called Zebulon. Zebulon was his only companion. "I had to talk to someone, otherwise I would forget how to speak." The master's wife was soft-hearted, she liked the little servant—perhaps she did not even have a Zebulon—but she was scared of her husband, and would only dare to stroke the boy's head or put a piece of bread in his hand in secret.

My brother starved. His master would go out at noon, taking him a piece of bread, asking: "Want it? Don't want it?" And if the child was slow to reach for it, he immediately put it back in his bag. "If you don't want it, I won't force you." He was always hungry, for even when he got his piece of bread, it was too small to fill him.

Once a week he attended the military youth movement. One day he was the first to be slapped by the instructor. What were his reasons? No one knew—in those days, a slap in the face wasn't such a weighty matter that it would need an explanation. That evening he was very upset on his way home from training, and near the farm he saw his master on horseback chasing Zebulon through the corn. Obviously, Zebulon had strayed and the master wanted to drive it back to the stable. But he could not get the lively calf under control. He must have been trying for some time, for he was angrier and more fiendish than usual. Suri stopped in the road, calling the calf by name. The calf reacted to the familiar voice, quietened down and ran to Suri, and they walked back to the stable together. What on earth could the master think? He took his axe and split the calf's head in two, there in the stable, right in front of the child.

For the first time in Suri's life, he could not sleep all night. He was crying and taking vows: that he would run away; that he would grow up; that he would join the army; that the would be Ferenc Rákóczi II! And he would pay his master back in kind!

When he came home for some holiday, mother kept asking him: "Are they rough with you? Or aren't they?" How he would have liked to tell everything that weighed on his heart! But a boy of twelve is already a "man," he must not complain. "It's all right. I'm all right." Why should he sadden his mother? She had enough trouble and anguish as it was.

From another servant on a near-by farm, mother came to know how badly they treated her son; that he was beaten, driven and was not fed properly. At that time mother was like a she-wolf, ready to face anyone or anything for father or for us; she was not afraid of the landlord or even of the gendarmes. Why should she be afraid of László Hazuga, that greedy louse?

She trudged across to his farm in no time, and quarrelled with the master. "I'll take my son this minute!" "Take him! But I won't give you his wages! He hasn't served his year." "He will not stay to the end of the year! And you shall give us his wages! Do you refuse? I'll teach you a lesson, I will! This child suffered more here than he would anywhere else in a whole year." "What do you mean you'll teach me a lesson? Who do you think you are? You can't teach me any lessons! I won't pay his wages!" "I'll make you pay his wages! How come you are still here, instead of fighting in the trenches? Men with families had to go to the front" (one of mother's sons and two of her sons-in-law were at the front). "Why are you at home?"

Suri was squatting in front of the house, and he heard every word. He was deeply impressed by his mother: can one behave like this, too? can one stand up and fight—not just suffer and endure?

A patrol of gendarmes was just riding past the farm. They stopped to ask about the row.

The sergeant-major dismounted and went inside. The sergeant-major was a decent man, and he held the Köteles family in high esteem. He knew that father was a Communist, but he thought well of us all the same. He said my mother was right. Suri was brought home, we had his wages, and on top of all, László Hazuga was ordered to the front. His wife who had to obey his orders for so long—down! up!—until she miscarried, came to thank mother for ridding her of that wild beast. Later, the husband was killed at the front.

I was two years younger than my brother Bandi. When he was at school, he was called Cowboy-pants, on account of his clothes. His outfit included laced boots, leggings and tight velvet trousers; a bag was hanging at his side with a cowboy story in it. He was suffering from incurable ulcers in the mouth; his saliva dripped all the time, so much so that the front of his jacket rotted away. (The incurable ulcer in his mouth was cured immediately when some years later, after the 1945 liberation, we acquired a cow, and had milk to drink.) Bandi was a flat-footed, ugly little boy, but even at that early age he was rent by ungovernable passions. This got him into a lot of trouble later. In 1950 he was a flying officer in the air force and he flew under the twenty-foot arch of a bridge. Just out of defiance and bravado. He was placed in solitary confinement for eight days, and they nearly stopped him from flying again. Even in childhood, when he was hurt or upset by grown-ups, or his older sisters or brothers, when it was impossible to retaliate, he took his pocket-knife and attacked a tree-trunk. He went on stabbing and whittling the tree-trunk, muttering to himself in a low voice. Father would smile: "Bandi's killing the tree. Bandi's at the tree again."

We used to wander about, just the three of us: Suri, Bandi and I. Sometimes the boys wanted to get rid of me, not because I was a girl, nor because I was smaller but they were afraid I would tell mother. "No, I won't." "Come on, then."

When the noonday bells rang out, we rushed home, no matter where we were, for father was sure to be sitting at the table, with the sugar-beet pie already served. They were not strict parents, but they insisted on this one thing.

We lived at Sopa when I reached school age. The word "sopa" is used for a round pen to hold sheep. There was a house next to the "sopa" for the servants, which included us. Three families lived there all in all.

In early autumn, Zoltán Arnold, a slim young man hired to teach the

servant-children, and who wore high boots even in summer, came to see us.

"Of course, she does not have to come to school, for she is not seven yet; but I thought I'd ask whether you want to send her to school."

Mother was peeling potatoes. "Well, Zsuska, do you want to go to school?"

I turned away and said shyly:

"Kati Béres goes, too."

Distances in farming country were not measured in miles but by "pieces." For instance, Bojtártelek was ten pieces away from us. How far was it? I do not recall ever having found it too far, even though we covered the distance daily.

The landowner's school was at Bojtártelek. It was truly the landowner's as the teacher received payment in kind, just as we did. All the costs of our schooling were covered by the landowner: we were given a slate, a reader, and a pair of shoes each year.

One of my most dominant memories is that my hands and feet were always cold. It seems as if my shoes had been soaking wet all the time. This was probably true of the winter. I recall typical scenes; in the evenings the cooking-stove was always surrounded by wet shoes (they hardened bone dry by the morning), and wet stockings were hanging around it. There was always someone to put his feet in the riddle, in order of the seriousness of blisters. My hands were always cold. Mother put hot-baked potatoes in our pockets in the mornings, on our way to school. As long as it was hot, the potato kept our hands warm: when it cooled we could eat it. Once father made a muff from a rabbit-skin.

At the age of nine I decided to be an actress or a whore. As I said, we lived on the estates of Count Gyula Károlyi, the younger brother of Count Mihály Károlyi, the first President of the Hungarian Republic, who was simply called Count Miska by the servants in those parts—and I often heard the grown-ups say, and saw it myself more than once, that the Count was bringing his whore again, in a coach, and she wore a big hat. (Obviously, he called for her at the railway station.) Of course, I wanted to have nice dresses, I wanted a hat and I wanted to travel by coach—only a whore seemed to afford such things in the world around me. So I wanted to become a whore.

The idea of my becoming an actress came from a film. There was a House of Youth, called Horthy House, in the town of Szentes along the river Kurca. One day Suri took me there to see a film, as two children were allowed in with one ticket. First, *Queen Elizabeth* was shown; she was followed

by a long film in which there were actresses. I was completely overwhelmed by their beauty, the wonderful dresses and hats they wore, the size of their palace, their coaches, motor-cars and white telephone. . . In one scene a train was photographed coming head on. The scene was probably shot by a camera-man in a hole dug under the rails, and he filmed the train passing overhead. I was terrified: I screamed and ran from the place, for I did not want to be knocked under the train. For a long time, even after 1945, I kept refusing invitations to the cinema, for fear of being knocked down by a train.

Later, I read in Béla Balázs's book on film aesthetics, *The Visible Man*, that when the Lumière brothers first presented a moving picture in Paris, it caused panic in the audience, for people were incapable of following the action, and they saw hands and heads cut off, and people cut in half on the screen. This made me think about my experience in my childhood: the Hungarian provinces were exactly thirty years behind the West at that time.

Once, in school, the teacher asked what we wanted to be when we grew up, and I said I wanted to be either an actress or a whore. The teacher did not say anything, but he gave me a queer look. I do not remember whether the other children laughed or not: probably their ideas about the meaning of the word whore were no clearer than mine. The teacher came to see us the same evening. I did not hear what he said to mother as I was playing in the yard, but afterwards, the teacher came out and said:

"Listen, my girl, you must never again say that you want to be a whore, because it is not a nice thing at all. It is the same as the girl the soldiers visit. The only difference is that she is visited by counts, instead of soldiers."

The teacher was very clever to explain the matter like this, for I did not have the faintest idea what the girl visited by soldiers meant, either. But I obeyed him. After this, if anyone asked me what I wanted to be, I replied: an actress; but to myself, I would add silently: or a whore.

At that time we lived at Árpádhalom, near Pusztaszer. There were seven hillocks nearby, each of the seven a little lower than the last, and they were named after the seven tribal chiefs who had settled the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. Legend had it that the chiefs raised their tents on the sites marked by the humps when the nation assembled at Pusztaszer.

I was always the one to recite the poems, to sing and play a part on every special occasion, at whatever school I attended. This was the case at Árpádhalom, too. No special ability was needed, only an ear for music, a good voice and a good memory; and stage fright on seeing a crowd was forbidden. (When I was nineteen, and sat for the entrance examination at the Academy of Dramatic Arts, I thought this would be enough to make an actress. Perhaps the examiners thought the same, because I was admitted. Only

later, and through torments that I would not wish on anyone else, did I learn that artistic talent begins somewhere else.) But when I was a school-girl, I found unmixed happiness in appearing in public. After the celebration of a national holiday, when I again recited a poem, the steward came up to my mother, saying:

"Mrs. Köteles, I envy you this little girl."

The steward was a slim, elderly man with a goatee beard; he carried a walking stick and wore a top hat. He had three grown-up daughters, one of them was studying to be a doctor, and the other two idled around at home. The steward took pleasure in scolding his daughters at great length, even with other people present, as, for instance, my mother; he excepted the one wanting to be a doctor. "The other two," he would say, "are like snakes, they just lie on the sofa, they will get nowhere, God have mercy on the men who will marry them..." The steward was a very peculiar and rather funny man. Before leaving home, he kissed his walking-stick, his top-hat, the table and the door-handle... I do not remember in what order; but he did this on every occasion, and when he arrived home, he kissed the same objects again. He taught me the "Credo," the famous irredentist poem by Mrs. Papp-Váry:

> I believe in one God, I believe in one land,
> I believe in God's one eternal justice,
> I believe in the resurrection of Hungary...

During my summer vacation I had to report daily at eight o'clock to the steward's office to recite the "Credo". Then the steward took his top-hat and his walking-stick, kissed them, and the table, the door-handle, and so on, and then he would set out on his usual rounds of supervision. He was in charge of the livestock; I think today this work is performed by an expert in animal husbandry or a veterinary surgeon. We went from stable to stable, from one flock or herd to another. He took my hand; and on the way I had to recite the "Credo". And only the "Credo". When I came to the end of the poem, I had to begin all over again. When we stopped by a shepherd or herdsman and the steward asked questions or gave his instructions, I naturally stopped the recital. At times like that he tugged my hand, "Carry on!" And while he was talking to the shepherd, I continued the poem. Towards midday, when we returned to the manor—where the steward's family lived—he put two pengős in my hand—it was quite a sum in those days—and he dismissed me until next morning. The following morning I had to report again with the "Credo"... and it went on like this throughout the summer, until the new schoolyear started.

Many years later, it occurred to me that this whim of his might have had a humanitarian motive: a sensitive man, prone to mysticism, wanted to ease the miserable lot of a large family.

Life at Árpádhalom was more cheerful and colourful for another reason, too. Count Gyula Károlyi had a daughter called Krisztina who was called the "crazy countess" by the whole district, irrespective of social position. Why? because she often visited the Kalász girls in the village and taught them songs, poems and folk dancing, brought apples for the children, and would not allow anyone to kiss her hand. "She is as mad as her uncle, Count Miska," who, as I mentioned, was the first President of the Hungarian Republic. There were very few who, like my father, were of the opinion that the countess "was a decent person and very sensible." I know now that she was "crazy" not quite the same way as her uncle; but it cannot be denied that she was well-intentioned and determined to help. I wonder, where is she now?

I remember an evening, with paper lanterns in the garden of the manor-house. The garden of the manor was enormous: the fish-pond alone spread over at least eighty acres. A "Bridge of Roses" crossed the fish-pond: that is, roses were trained to grow along the balustrades of the bridge from both banks, so that the roses completely covered the balustrades, and only the greenery and the flowers showed. The stage was also decorated with green branches, it looked like an arbour, and I sang there at the age of nine or ten, and the crazy countess accompanied me on a guitar.

There was a kind of democracy at these concerts: the audience included the Count's guests from Budapest, but his servants were also sitting in the back rows. I wonder whether these occasions meant as much to them as to me? At nine, I had decided to become an actress (or a whore), and within a month or two and for several years to come I had a share of the essential part of acting: public performance, and success. Just think: at home we only had beds, a chest of drawers and father's little box in a single room, while here there was a wonderful "stage set," the garden of the manor-house, century-old trees of strange shapes; a Bridge of Roses, swans... At home, there wasn't even kerosene for the lamp; we shelled the maize and sang our songs in the dark, but here, there were coloured lanterns. All children are fascinated by light, especially light reflected in water: the fish-pond dissolved and multiplied the many colours of the lanterns into a mysterious glimmer. I even had a "costume," just like real actors. The countess had a Hungarian costume made for me for the occasion. I had a white blouse, a red waist, a white skirt with red, white and green stripes—Hungary's national colours—forming a wide band round the hem, a green apron and

black shoes... And above all, applause! No subsequent, real contest gave me as much joy as these first ones. I felt the same unspoilt delight, the same complete fulfilment of life on some occasions even when I grew up—but I had known the feeling in childhood, and I have not felt more than that even as a writer. How can I explain it?

Perhaps it is not the scale of success which is decisive, but one's intensity of feeling it. And the intensity, the "density of the soul" does not change much in the course of living.

An old countess lived in the manor-house, perhaps the grandmother, or perhaps a poor relation; it was her duty to distribute the curd and cream to the servants on Saturdays: this was a part of their wages. Once I was sent to collect it, and the old countess held out her hand to be kissed. But father had always taught us:

"You should only kiss the hand of your father, your mother and your teacher, and no one else!"

I refused to kiss the countess's hand.

"You're a rebel," she muttered in hatred, and she set Hattyú, the dog, on me. He was a huge dog, white as a swan, far bigger than I was and he bit me on the shoulder. The scar is still there.

In 1942, a hundred homes were built at Fábiánsebestyén for families with many children. We were given one, with a room and a kitchen, and we left the farm to move into it. The house was very hygienic, the floor of the room was boarded, and there was a large garden where we planted fruit trees in the very first week. No less a personage than the Prime Minister came to be present at the inauguration of the estate, but all I remember is a cavalcade of limousines, dark suits, silks and jewels. The radio made a live broadcast of the opening ceremony. Following the Prime Minister's speech, I was chosen—who else?—to recite the "Credo" again, the most popular poem of the time. But there was more than that. Father had written a poem—or had he copied it from somewhere? I am sorry that I never asked him—for the occasion, and gave it to me to learn the day before the celebration. "Listen," he said, "you will recite this poem after the 'Credo.' Don't say a word about it to anyone. I want it to be a surprise."

After the "Credo," I waited for the applause to die down and then I began my father's poem; which compared the reality of a working-class child's life to the life of the rich.

When I reached the end of the first verse, I was pulled away from the microphone. It was so unexpected, and I was so frightened that I forgot the rest of the poem at once, and I have never been able to recall it.

Two days later the gendarmes showed up in our house and searched the

place. They did not find anything, in spite of ordering us to empty all the straw pallets; yet father was detained for two years and deported to Transylvania to a village with a funny name which would read in English: Kiskereki-woman-sale. Mother filed petitions, went to see anyone and everyone, but in vain did she cite father's being wounded in the war, with a bullet in his lungs which led to pneumonia in every second or third year as the bullet wandered in his lungs, always destroying another part, and if he was to fall ill in the camp, he would not be properly treated and he would die. It was all useless, and my father was not released.

The gendarmes failed to find "father's little box"; if it had been found, he would have been interned for much longer. The gendarmes only searched the chest of drawers and the straw pallets, while the box stood by the wall as usual, with odds and ends piled on it as usual. I was very fond of prying, and once when I was left alone at home I found the key to the box and opened it. A real treasury opened up for me. A compass, a flint stone, a revolver, different kinds of medicinal herbs and a lot of books with coloured covers were in the box, I do not remember their titles, but I remember that after the liberation they reappeared in the windows of bookshops, so my father probably had the publications of the 1919 Republic of Councils. I deduce this from also seeing a 1919 poster "Take up arms," and a certificate with Lenin's signature—which father used to mention as "Lenin's letter." I also found a hand-written note-book. I read through it with a thumping heart. It was a diary. Father had kept it in the prison-camp before he volunteered to join the Communists in the revolution. From this I learned how his younger brother who had been taken prisoner together with my father, had died, of which he never spoke. There was some trouble in the camp and as it was impossible to find the culprits, the prisoners were decimated. Father was the ninth, with his brother standing beside him and as they counted to ten, he was shot dead on the spot.

Our life was very hard in the village of Fábiánsebestyén. The village consisted of the old and the new settlements, and in the latter, there were no furniture, no savings; yet there were a host of hungry children; but there was no work to be found. The old inhabitants of Fábiánsebestyén had their "own" place where they were employed as day-labourers; they would not be dismissed in favour of newcomers; and there was no other work anywhere. My sisters and brothers were forced to find jobs very far away: they only came home once or twice a year. Bandi was nearer than the others, he worked on the Riméli farm some six miles from the village. Of all our large family only three of us were left at home: mother, myself and my four-year-old sister Mancika, a child who was clinging to her mother so much that she

even clutched her apron when she went out to hoe by the day; she held a corner of the apron and trudged along by her side. I remember, I sat by the ditch all that year, watching the windmill go round.

Life had been more cheerful on the farm at Árpádhalom.

It was characteristic of father's stature and ingenuity that he managed to feed us even from the detention camp. He sent us enormous quantities of pressed malt-coffee cubes; I remember that the top drawer of the chest was quite full of them. With these, we made the usual malt-coffee soup, but better than the old kind as it was sweetened. However, we starved a lot of the time.

One day, as winter was drawing near, mother drew me to her side.

"A gendarme-officer is looking for a housemaid at Szentes. Wouldn't you like to go there, Zsuska? You'd be well fed. And you'd also get some money..."

I was twelve. I had learnt from my elder sisters that a housemaid could get along quite well, she was better off than a servant working in the fields, a jobber or a reaper paid in kind. She was given good food, she did clean work and learnt things she had not had heard of before, such as using a knife and fork when eating. I did not at all feel like leaving home but, "if mother sends me I'll go and help the family, no matter how little I can do."

I hardly saw the gendarme-officer, for he was either on duty or out drinking somewhere; his wife hardly ever left her room, she spent the day lying on a sofa in her dressing-gown reading—like Málinkó Kóczán, the daughter of the decent steward—two of us worked, the grandmother and I. We did a wash every day. What we could have washed so much I cannot even imagine by now. We began the day by washing a huge tubful of clothes every morning. When ever did they have the time to dirty them? And then the usual housework, until late into the night. But this wouldn't have mattered.

I slept in the kitchen. A smaller room opened from the kitchen where the grandmother slept. More exactly, the grandmother kept her vigil. She was terribly afraid of death and she was obsessed with the idea that she would die in her sleep. "If I am awake," she explained to me, "I can take care of myself." And so she was awake all night, and took care of herself. But she would not let me sleep either. Not because she was bored, or ill-natured, just that something occurred to her every half hour.

"Zsuzsika, did you lock the gate?"

And it was not enough for me to say that I had; I had to get up and check, otherwise she kept asking until I did.

"Zsuzsika, did you close the window in the master's room?"

"Zsuzsika, didn't you leave the basket in the loft?"

"Zsuzsika, what is that creaking in the passage?"

"Zsuzsika, did you feed Tisza?"

And that's how it went, all through the night. As soon as I fell asleep, she thought of something and she kept calling me until I woke. Then I would fall asleep again—but she would think of something else. I lost weight, and staggered about all day for lack of sleep. I suffered from "sleepiness" as my brother had on László Hazuga's farm.

I could only stand it for one month. Then one day, at daybreak, when I had just fallen asleep, she began again:

"Zsuzsika, do get up and start soaking the clothes."

I got out of bed, and I wrote on a piece of paper with a red pencil:

"My lady, I haven't taken anything with me, take a good look, I didn't even take my wages, buy yourself some coffin nails for my money."

I put the slip of paper on the kitchen table, sneaked out of the house and ran all the way home. I covered the distance of almost eight miles without stopping, and arrived home by breakfast-time.

Father was released from detention in the summer of 1944. But we could not enjoy his presence for long, for in spite of the bullet in his lungs, he had to go to a labour camp and we were left alone again. The front was moving nearer. More and more people fled from the village: the gendarmes, the notary, the miller, and some of the better-off farmers. Those who stayed at home left the village for the farms, hoping that it would be safer there. My brother Bandi served as farmhand on the Riméli farm, six miles from the village, on a kulak's estate of more than a hundred acres. In early October, after his master had gone, he sent a cart to load up our belongings and come to the farm. The thunder of the guns came at fairly close range and an increasing number of fighter-planes were cruising overhead.

We loaded the cart with our eiderdowns, pillows, blankets, a pot of lard and as much food as we could manage, and then mother climbed up, together with my little sister, and left. We planned that the cart would come back again for me and for more food, preserves and for Mrs. Jakab, our neighbour, whose husband was also in a labour camp. She had been left with her five children, the oldest of which was seven while the youngest was only a few months old.

Mother left early in the morning and we waited for the cart to come back. Hours passed. The thunder of the guns was getting nearer—more and more planes were cruising overhead and Mrs. Jakab and I began to feel frightened. There wasn't another soul left in the village except us. What will happen if we are trapped here by the front?

As we learned later, the cart was on its way back, but the Germans took the two horses and harnessed them to their guns, and old Miska, the driver, Bandi's fellow-servant, lacked the courage to walk to the village.

We put Mrs. Jakab's baby in the pram, and the next one in a push-chair and then we set out on foot down the avenue, with every child carrying a pack on its back. Mrs. Jakab, whom we called Aunt Panni, was probably still young, but she was a terribly thin, weak-chested, hysterical, pious, much-swearing creature. "Csöpi, Panni, Rózsi, Tibi and Mari, damn you!" she would shout at her children when they were naughty or if she could not find them. A miserable procession of one grown-up, a teenage girl and five small children started walking along the road. It was the avenue of trees that saved our lives. All that the cruising German planes could see was that there was some movement between the trees, they kept flying overhead and strafing the avenue. Aunt Panni had a rosary round her neck and in her hand a bronze crucifix which she had taken from the wall. As a fighter-plane showed up overhead, all of us jumped into the ditch and into the scrub, and Aunt Panni went down on her knees, protecting the baby in the pram with her body, praying jabberingly:

Blessed Virgin, help us now,
Your mercy will tell you how,
For you have the power to dissolve
Our troubles and grief resolve.
Where human might's of no avail,
Your blessed powers still prevail...

I did not kneel down, I did not pray, I had never before heard this prayer, I knew no prayers at all, for we never prayed. I watched the planes, whether they would leave or come back after circling round. Aunt Panni shouted at me: "Pray! Pray, you damned creature, or else we'll die here because of you!" and she hit me hard on the head with the bronze crucifix.

"Pray! Blessed Virgin, help us now!"

We reached the farm at five o'clock and by that time I had lumps all over my head but I had also learnt to say the prayer.

That was on the 5th October. The village authorities must have been taken by surprise, for the next day I was to have recited a poem for the anniversary of the generals executed by the Habsburgs at Arad in 1849. The poem was an exhortation to young and old, to remember the day.

It would be impossible to forget that day ever.

When we reached the farm, I found mother sitting on the pot of lard and hiding it completely with her skirt, to prevent it being stolen.

The next day, on 6th October, the Russian troops took the farm.

Mother sat on the pot of lard, to keep it safe.

She was no longer the same she-wolf who had disposed of the peasant who had tormented her son Suri. The troubles she had suffered in the last few years, father's detention, her sons-in-law and own son being at the front, two years of hardships on the estate and the approach of the fighting had broken her. If a fresh blow fell on the family, she no longer made arrangements, she no longer fought back, she sat, helplessly crying. She no longer looked after us—we had to look after her.

In our village a thirteen-year-old boy was the town crier. When the Soviet troops arrived and found no other responsible official in the village, they asked him to go round the streets and announce that the Soviet troops had not come to punish, nor to take revenge for the massacres in the Ukraine, but they had come to liberate the people; they should return to their homes, carry on with their civilian professions, and no harm would come to anyone.

There was some contradiction between the contents and the method of the proclamation, for the little town-crier was escorted round the streets by two Soviet soldiers with tommy-guns.

Some days later we moved back to the village. We found that our house was not damaged, and by that time two of my sisters and Suri came home from where they were in service. The family was almost complete.

Two Soviet soldiers were billeted on us, one was called Vasil Ivan Strakhov and the other was Alexander Bekovay. They brought us an incredible amount of flour and other food, it was enough for the whole family. And, of course, they courted my sisters. One of the soldiers kept tearing the buttons off his tunic in secret so that Margit should sew them back for him. How starved they must have been for family life, for tenderness and care, if such a small substitute as sewing on a button gave them pleasure!

Gradually, the Soviet soldiers came to be part and parcel of daily life in the village, as if they had been born there.

Towards the end of January, while the heavy fighting still went on in Transdanubia, the western part of Hungary, a travelling circus turned up in the village. There was a thin, very clever dark young man among them; he and my oldest sister fell head over heels in love. They were married three weeks later. Mother's tears were of no avail: "Father is not at home! You should wait at least until he comes home!" We planned a quiet and very intimate wedding, as was decent in hard times. But the people in the village, and the Soviet soldiers stationed there, had different ideas. They snowballed us into a large-scale wedding. Whether they were relatives or not, neighbours or not, everyone managed to be invited; everyone brought

a spoonful of lard, a cup of flour, a pinch of salt, or two eggs, and those who were better off even brought a hen. Wine also turned up from somewhere; surprisingly, as grapes do not grow in our district. We had an army of women cooking and baking in our house for several days, and the Soviet soldiers looted country houses and mansions in the neighhourhood for furniture—from the bourgeoisie—as wedding presents for the newly-weds, enough to furnish a room. The wedding was held on the 11th February in Mrs. Rózsa's inn—that was the only large room in the village, big enough for the whole village and the Soviet troops. It was the first party to happen after the war, and I have never again seen such a stormy gaiety and unhindered pleasure to this day. People were celebrating the peace as much as the happiness of the young couple. The anxiety of the dark years and distressing months was over: were we alive again? Were we free to live again? Did we survive the war?

Father came home on the 5th April. He made his escape from the Arrow-Cross troops in November and was hidden by distant acquaintances in Transdanubia throughout the winter. He had lost very much weight, and he had grown grey and old. I have his photo of that time; he looked a sad, tired old man, though only fifty-two.

When the large estates were cut up, we were given ten acres of land, and nothing else; neither a horse, nor a cow, nor seed for sowing. The two armies had taken all the livestock, and emptied every barn, mill and granary. When it was certain that land distribution would take place, that land would be expropriated, the rich peasant farmers and the smaller landlords who had not fled to the West, the village clerks and mill-owners embarked on a programme of destruction: they set fire to their own country houses and farms, so that if they couldn't keep it, no one else should have it; not those beggars and have-nots. Once again, we were unable to make a living. My sister went to be a housemaid; Suri worked as a navvy at rebuilding a Tisza bridge, and father, mother (with little Manci clinging to her apron), Bandi and I went to a kulak, Márton Bagi, all autumn to plant the corn, to harvest sugar beet and potatoes, so that we could have his horse for our plough for a few days next spring. The old farmers exploited the situation to the full: they gave their draught animals for three days, in exchange for forty days of day-labour. This was called plough-usury at that time.

When the Soviet troops were drawing near, Fascist propaganda had done everything in its power to rouse horror and hatred against the Russians in the Hungarian population. I remember leaflets and posters saying that the Russians would cut off an arm for a wrist-watch, or the whole finger for a ring, and this frightened even such people who never had a wrist-watch

or ring. After seeing a naturalistic leaflet, with the dripping blood, I cuddled to father, trembling:

"Father, the Russians are coming!"

Father whispered to me, encouragingly:

"Don't be scared! Our lot will be better then!"

It occurred to me all too often in 1945 an 1946 that the Russians had come, yet our lot was no better!

There were other troubles, too. Men who never liked work had made their way into the Communist Party; they had no respect whatever in the village. Even if they had done some work, it was no more than they needed to buy drinks, and they drank; they did not care how their wives and innumerable ragged children would fill their stomach. These ragamuffins not only worked their way into the party, but gradually they seized the leadership, and the upper party echelons relied on them. In 1946, for example, M. the wet-eyed became the party secretary in the village. His nickname came from his eyes being always gummed up. His clothes were dirty rags, perhaps he had never washed since he was bathed by the midwife; and if he doffed his greasy cap once in a while, the grease knotted his thin hair.

Once he convened the members of the youth organization at the inn, to teach us the art of "reccittattion." The instruction went like this: "Put a jug of water in front of you on the table," and he put it there. "This is the most important thing, for if ever you get stuck and nothing comes to you, pour some water into your glass," and he did as he said, "drink it," and he drank it, "and this will give you time to think of something. And if you can't think of anything even after this, take a handkerchief," and he took a piece of rag whose colour was undescribable, "and wipe your eyes. . ." and he wiped his.

At that stage an impertinent voice rang out from our ranks:

"Do you think everyone has gum in his eyes?"

The party secretary carried on as though nothing had happened:

". . . . . and if you cannot remember anything now, blow your nose. . . ."

At this point we were unable to hold ourselves and burst out laughing and all of us filed from the hall.

But that man was the party secretary, after all, and not everyone dismissed this as lightly as we, the young people did. One of them was my father. One day in 1946 he came home gloomily from a meeting and said,

"This is not what Lenin wanted."

And he never went to a party meeting again.

He fell ill again that winter. That was the ninth time he had pneumonia since 1917. We took him to the town of Szentes to be examined. The X-ray

picture showed that the bullet had moved. The doctors flung up their arms in helplessness.

Father had a high fever, but he did not like to have compresses; instead, he asked us to cool his forehead and his face with our hands. He would sigh, in a weak voice: "How cool your hand is, Annuska! How cool your hand is, Zsika!"

Our hands were cold because we kept cooling them in a bucketful of snow, hidden from father, and we took turns cooling father's forehead.

A week later the bleeding started.

Father spewed blood for three days. In the evening of the third day something knocked against the bottom of the bucket; he had just brought up the bullet.

He was relieved. It seemed as though he had rid himself of the past. The past thirty years.

We began to hope that the would live. But father knew that he was dying. He had no lungs left. He lived for two more days; for two days he made arrangements about our only piglet; how we should save the straw so that it could last throughout the winter, what we should tell Suri, and what we should tell Bandi.

He died in the night, while my little sister and I were sleeping.

"What will happen to the two little girls, Annuska?" he whispered to mother. After a long silence he added: "Do not stay in the village. All of you have the brains to study. That's what you ought to do now that you have the chance."

(1964)

AMERIGO TOT

by

MÁTÉ MAJOR

Many Hungarian artists who left Hungary and gained fame abroad have recently revisited their country, willing or even happy to exhibit their works here, and even to leave some works behind as donations. This development is both heartening and useful. The rather close-knit world of Hungarian art can only benefit from such gestures, whose only motive is an inescapable affection for one's former country and its culture. To accept such gestures and to return them (organizing exhibitions, acknowledging donations as the treasures for our museums, publishing books, and so on) can give considerable stimulus to the arts in Hungary, both on account of the universal value represented by such gifts, and the debates which they provoke.

Amerigo Tot, the outstanding Hungarian sculptor living in Italy, was among the first to return and put up a large exhibition of his works in Budapest, and at one of the loveliest places on Lake Balaton, Tihany. For years Tot's studio in Rome's Via Margutta has been a place of pilgrimage for Hungarian visitors interested in the arts, especially for young Hungarian artists who were invariably met with a friendly welcome and—sometimes active support as well. This may be why Amerigo Tot has had an extremely favourable "press" in Hungary, perhaps better than any other Hungarian artist living abroad. This in turn has served as a useful "build-up" for his exhibition in Hungary.

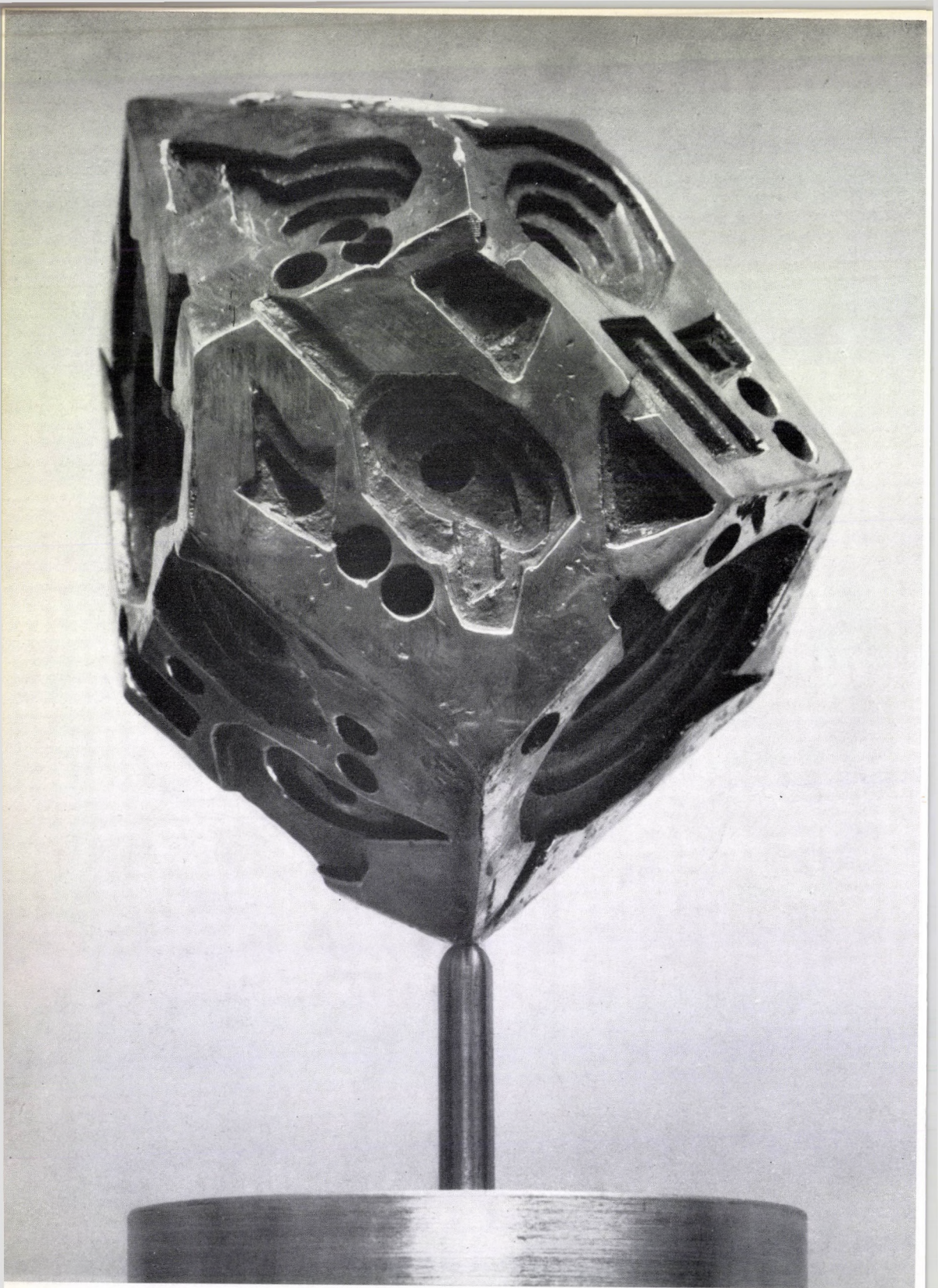
Amerigo Tot was born as Imre Tóth on September 27, 1909 in Fehérvárcsurgó, a small village in the south-west, roughly in the centre of the former Pannonia, near Székesfehérvár, which was the ceremonial seat of the Árpád dynasty's coronations and burials. It is near the Bakony mountains—the former hide-out of the "betyárs," the Hungarian equivalents of Robin Hood's men—and it is also near Lake Balaton. His father, Imre Tóth senior, was an agricultural worker, and fought in the First World War as a hussar, changing his uniform afterwards to become a mounted policeman in Buda-

Amerigo Tot: The Beautiful Parthenopea

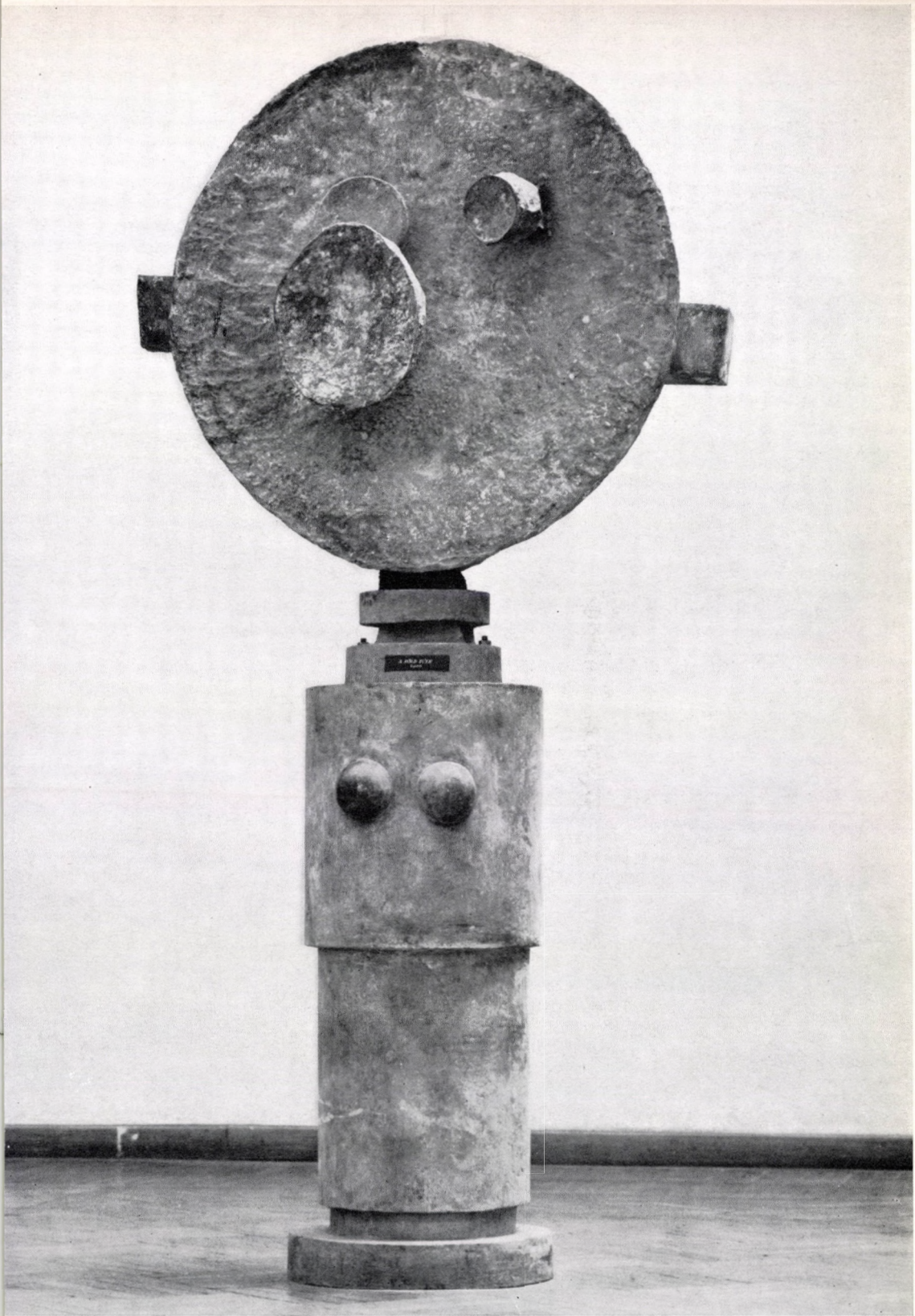
Photos: János W

AMERIGO TOT: THE SOMNAMBULIST *(Bronze, 56 cms, 1947)*

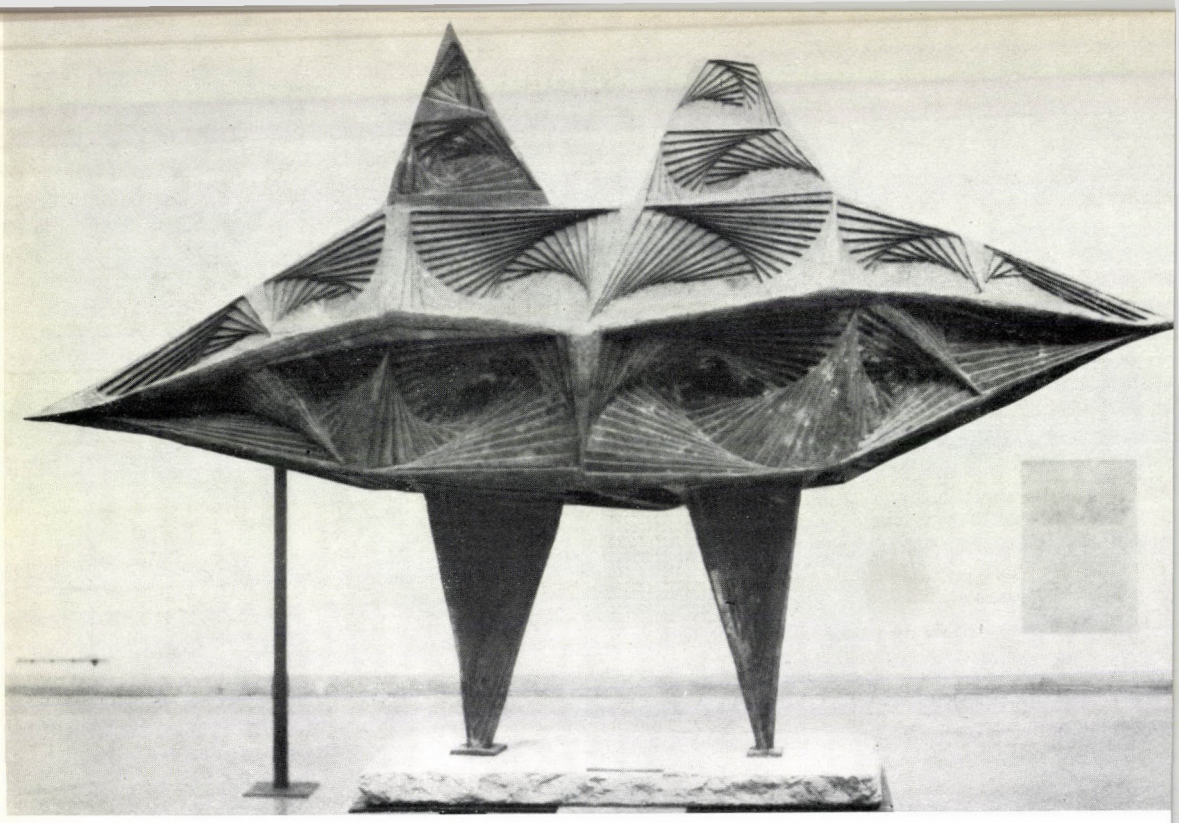
AMERIGO TOT: THE PEBBLE-WOMAN *(Bronze, 36 cms, 1946)*



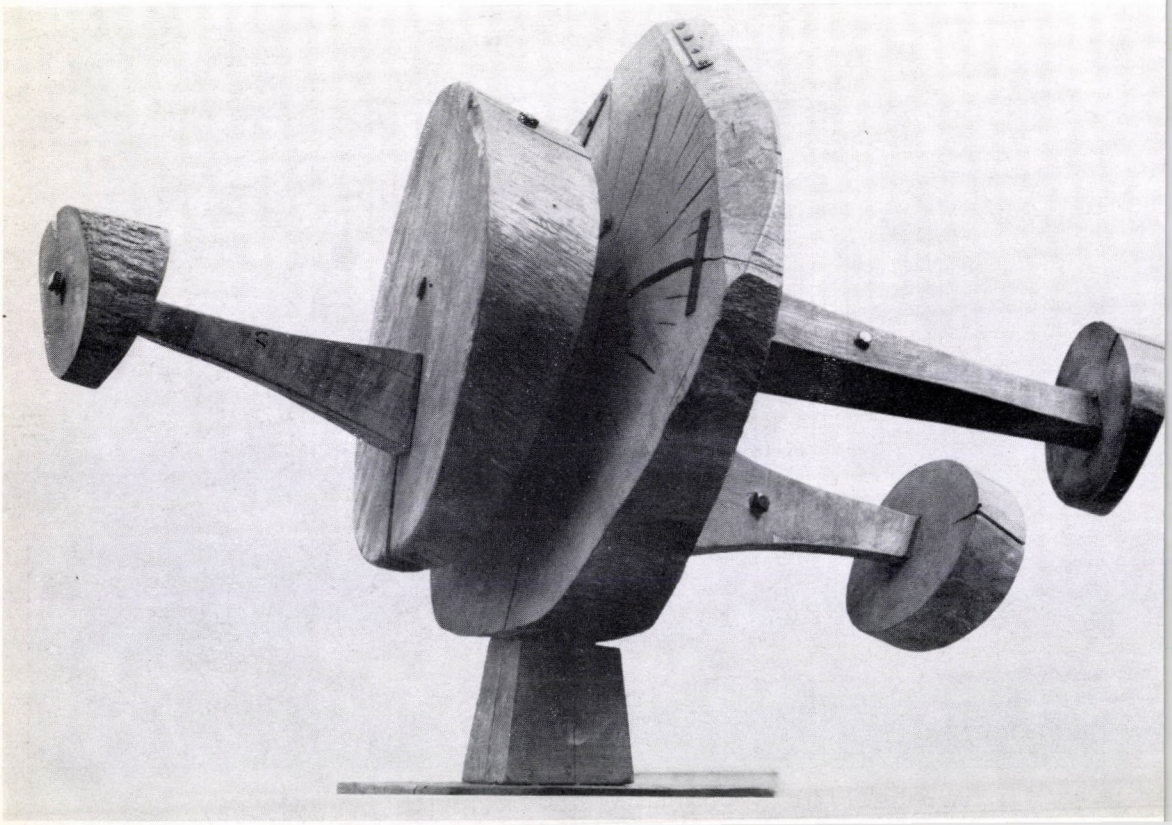
AMERIGO TOT: THE GEOMETRICAL METEOR *(Bronze, 38 cms, 1969)*



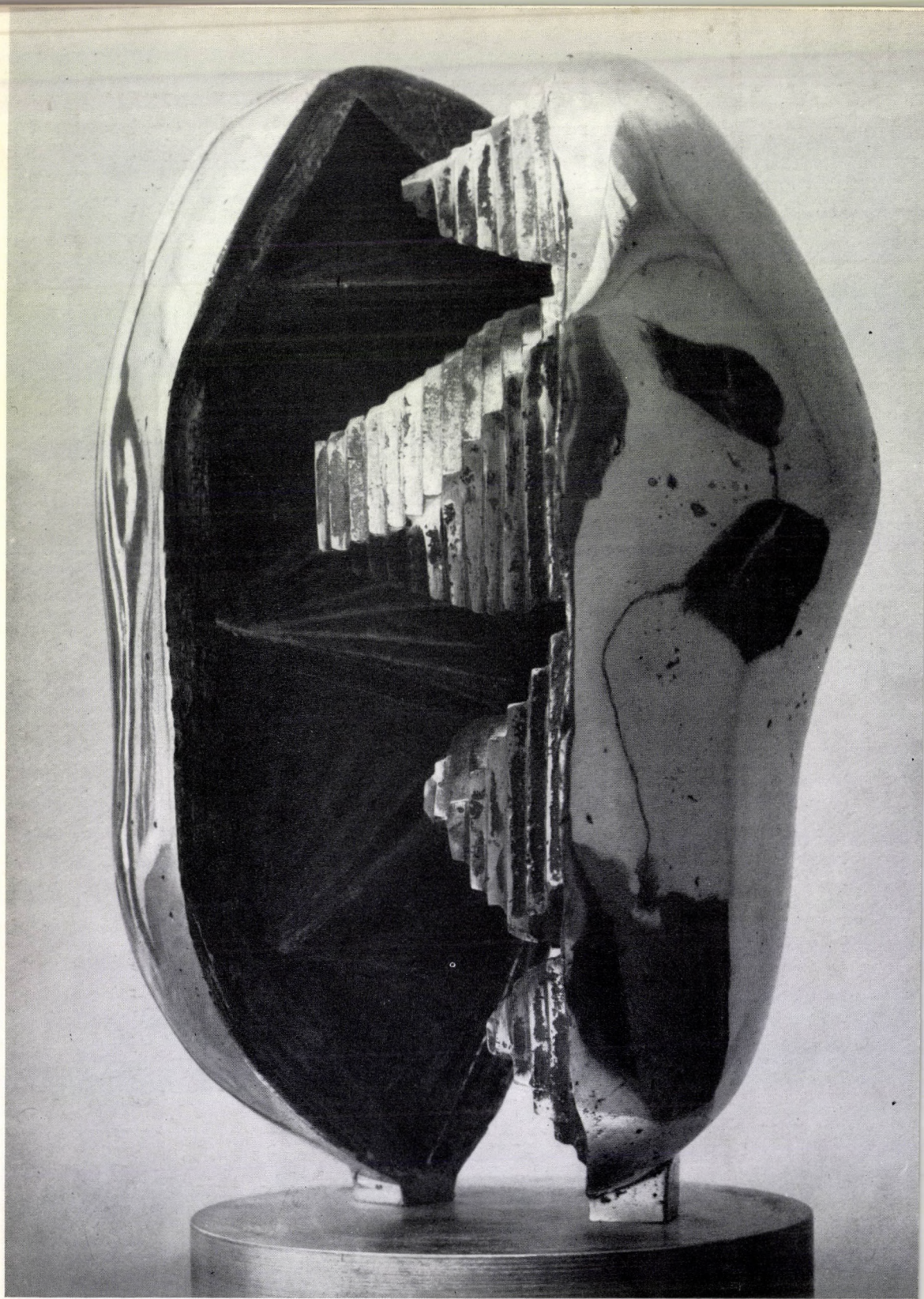
AMERIGO TOT: THE EAR OF THE EARTH *(Bronze, 226 cms, 1961–62)*



AMERIGO TOT: ASPROMONTE *(Bronze, 118 × 186 × 50 cms, 1962)*



AMERIGO TOT: WOUNDED WARRIOR *(Bronze, 33 cms, 1954)*



Amerigo Tot: Hommage a Karinthy and Olivecrona

pest. His mother, Zsófia Naszályi, was a descendant of Italian stonemasons who settled in Hungary at the turn of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries. Imre Tóth junior probably inherited his sturdy peasant build as well as a pair of strong, sculptor's hands (for which even Picasso came to envy him) from his father, while he owes to his mother his Italianate gestures, and perhaps his nostalgia for Italy.

Imre Tóth came to Budapest when he was twelve. He finished the "gimnázium" there without taking the matriculation examinations. Since he had loved to shape birds, fish and "pebbles" ever since he was a small child, he went to the Academy of Design to study drawing. He abandoned his studies after three years when he applied for a student-membership of the Bauhaus in Dessau, which he won in January 1931. A few months before his first term was due to start, in August 1930 he went to Paris. Here, as he recalled in an interview, he divided his time between eating, the Seine, Mademoiselle Dupont and Maillol. He probably starved now and again—most great artists do, before their careers begin—but the mademoiselles were always favourably inclined towards him. It is probable that most of the inspiration of Tóth's art until now came from women, and from his attachment to them. At this time, however, Maillol was more important than any woman. He took up at least a quarter of Tóth's life in Paris. The art of Maillol can be the best possible stimulus at the start of a sculptor's career.

Imre Tóth spent almost two years at the Bauhaus in Dessau, from January 1931 to October 1932. Walter Gropius was no longer the leader of the famous school at this time, it was run by another great German architect, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Nor was Paul Klee there by then, but his spirit still lingered on. The Hungarian László Moholy-Nagy—as Imre Tóth informs us—travelled to Dessau twice a week to give lectures and direct sessions there. However Wasily Kandinsky was there, until the school closed and he—together with those mentioned above—had an undeniable impact on the development of the young artist's technique and approach. The small Dessau drawings by him—shown at his exhibitions in Hungary—as well as his architectural and lyrical-abstract compositions go a long way to prove it. They also prove that Imre Tóth, even at that early stage, did not only absorb influences, but he was already able to transform them to match his own outlook. He could also reach to the essence behind the surface with a highly refined sensitivity.

After leaving the Bauhaus he travelled around the Baltic as a cabin boy, he learned to be a sailor and made occasional brief soujours at various ports. In Kronstadt he met women whom he "liked," in Helsinki he lit street-

lamps at nightfall, and so on. He learnt skin diving, a skill which proved useful later on, both during the war and afterwards.

After this naval interlude he returned to Germany, first to Berlin, then to Dresden. Otto Dix, teacher at the Dresdner Akademie, introduced him to a left-wing circle of artists. This was when Hitler came to power. With a few of his friends, he was arrested but he made his escape, and straight as the crow flies, he walked to Italy, eventually to Rome. He arrived in Rome in the summer of 1933, poor as a new-born baby. His arrival and his settling in Rome was a new life for him. He spent his first night in the shrubs of the Gianicolo; and he was re-born when he could wash off the grime of his long walk in the basin of the Acqua Paolo.

At the beginning he lived in a paupers' shelter but already in the autumn of the same year he moved into the Hungarian Academy, to "the room of Leo XIII with a pregnant woman," perhaps the first version of a subject he has modelled again and again. He tried his hand at many things. He painted the Venetian blinds of a hotel near the Pantheon, he worked as a blockmaker for a newspaper, at night he visited taverns drawing portraits and caricatures—just to keep the wolf from the door. In the meantime he was preparing to fulfil his vocation as a sculptor.

In Rome, Imre Tóth found a mediocre spate of sculpture, a mixture of neo-Baroque, neo-Classical and late-Impressionist elements. Mussolini's Italy was fertile soil for this kind of art, in an atmosphere made intolerable by the pathetic gestures and lies of Fascism. No significant sculptors contemporary with Tóth, such as Marino Marini or Giacomo Manzù had appeared as yet in public with their truly great works. Yet, it was then that Tóth first came across the great works of the Italian Renaissance: he was completely ravished for a time, by their magic, by the power they radiate, which could be utilized against the overwhelming forces of mediocrity.

In 1936 he moved into the famous street full of artists under the Pincio where he lives and works to this day. At this time he first met Renato Guttuso, and through him he joined the activities (not only the artistic ones) of a left-wing group of artists. His talent likewise acquired its momentum at this time and his first significant works roused the interest of the public. This was largely due to a competition (dedicated to Skanderbeg) set in 1937, in which he won the first prize among a large group of competitors from many nations. (The memorial projected was never erected; and Tóth's model and the sketches were lost during the war.)

Having achieved a modicum of fame, he visited Hungary in 1937 and 1938. After a long absence he met his family and his friends, who sensed the promise of his future. He entered a competition for a memorial of the

great Hungarian playwright, Imre Madách; he was awarded the second prize. (This was another project to remain unrealized.)

During these uneasy years preceding the Second World War, the drive of Tóth's creativity was unbroken. In swift succession, he created "Bulls" (1936)—an animal sculpture, which has become rare in his later work—the first version of a relief, "The Last Supper" (1938), "Judith," "Salome," the dancing "Bacchantes" (all in 1938)—splendid girl figures modelled in ones and twos; also, some of his brilliant series of portraits, such as "Portrait of Celestine" (1939). But even the war stopped Tóth's work only temporarily. He made his first version of a sensuously refined, reclining, nude with hat (1940–45) bearing the name of "The Beautiful Parthenopea." All these works bear the marks of an undoubtedly Renaissance inspiration, but this can only be seen in the details, as the composition employs contemporary methods and ideas. It is through this apparent contradiction that these works reflect the age of their creation.

Italy declared war in 1940. Through his left-wing contacts, Imre Tóth established closer ties with the Italian resistance. Its leading organization, the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale, sent him to the South, as a parachute communications officer. Tóth established links with an Italian military unit stationed in Yugoslavia which—under the name Garibaldi—turned against the Nazis. Later, until the Germans were expelled from Italian territory, he secured communications for partisan groups in the Veneto province.

After the war he found it rather difficult to return to his former way of life and to creative work. However, he soon resumed his momentum. Before the horrors of the war prompted him to different themes he made a few small pieces which sealed, as it were, his former, lyrical period. We know four such pieces: "Gossip," "Quarrel," "Village Hail Mary" and "A Visit to Town" (all in 1946), representing a transition to a new creative period. His figures became heavier, plumper, more feminine—in twos, threes and fives—rather like the female figures of Maillol. In the last two works, there is a wall between the figures, opened by windows and doors, which signalled a new departure in Tóth's art.

Another, briefer, period of modelling followed, still in the figurative vein. A period in which—undoubtedly influenced by the war—he sought new, dramatic possibilities of expression in powerful, deformed modelling. During these years (1946 to 1948) he made a series of "Pebble-Women," two "Somnambulists," two "Pregnant Women," two "Sitting Women," and "The Primordial Mother." The creative force no longer stems from the poetic beauty of a female body. The curves of the body swell and break

like waves and they intertwine into a grandiose shape of a pebble (or a stone) as an all-embracing form. This is true especially of the pebble-women. In the other compositions, the waves break through the contours and they establish their shapes according to their own laws.

The change became even more definite in the portraits he modelled during these years. Naturalistic presentation is displaced by a grotesque one, which suggests a deeper reality. Some of these portraits are those of actual *people* whereas others represent *types* in whom the grotesque has a definite role of social criticism. "Professor Birnbaum" and "The Foreign Correspondent" belong to the former category whereas "The Count" (all three in 1946), "The Retired Wrestler" and "The General" (both in 1947) fall into the latter.

This is how by 1948 Imre Tóth arrived at the realm of non-figurative presentation, through the necessary change and deepening of his artistic approach. He also arrived at wider possibilities of creating reality. This does not mean that his break with figurative sculpture was final, for in the elementary impulsiveness of his expression he felt and—as his confessions testify—he also knew that choosing one or another mode of expression cannot be explained by any one-sided, rigid resolution: it is always the task to be tackled, and an unbiased way of tackling it, which decides what mode of expression one is to choose.

His most outstanding works, as well as their chronological order proves the foregoing.

The "invasion" of abstraction into Tóth's art is probably related to the commissions he received to model large memorials, especially sculpted details on buildings. Among these, his solution of the relief-frieze of the Termini railway-station's façade in Rome was decisive. The size—128 by $2^1/_2$ metres—is enormous. The frieze called "The Railway" (1949–1953) conveyes effectively the dynamic sense of speed in the abstract, with the help of aluminium-plates "glued" on one another.

This "abstract" work was followed by the bronze gate of the Bari Savings Bank (1955–1956) whose ten reliefs picture the seasons of the fertile Apulian plains (hence its title: "Il tavoliere")—clearly influenced by Renaissance three-figure solutions. He makes a bronze panel—3 by 6 metres large—for the palace of the Ministry of Mountains and Forestry (1956–1959) where the seven reliefs, treated similarly, are embedded in an abstract sculpted framework.

At the 1958 Brussels World Exhibition, his "Locomotive Monstre" was exhibited in front of the pavilion of European transport. He enriched the surfaces of this standing geometrical mass with similarly geometrical,

fanning-out and intertwining forms. To these sculptures belong "Aspromonte" (1952) and even "Geometrical Gordian Knot" (1969)—also included in the Hungarian exhibition.

In 1954 Tóth began a new series, with a new surface-treatment: the method of his sculptures in concrete and his reliefs was to make the positive geometrical form the lower part of a mould and he pours the concrete over it. A negative comes into being, protruding into the plane of the sculpture or relief. Such a work is "Meteor" (1954) which was set up in 1960 in front of Nervi's Palazzetto dello Sport. And this is how he creates his 10 by 3 metres relief for the Presidential Room of the Automobile Club in Rome (1959). A bronze version of the same solution is "Geometrical Meteor" (1966), also shown in Hungary.

We know only one great ceramic work by Tóth so far. In Nervi's Palazzo dello Sport, on the curved parapet of the boxes, an abstract relief of his can be found in all shades of blue and green, named by him "Geometrical Muscles" (1959–1960).

Brilliant illustrations of Imre Tóth's left-wing views and of the possibility of expressing one's political ideas in art are the pieces of his "Protest" series (1960–1962). Here we get figures reminiscent of people, but with a massing together of forms, the expressive stress on their heaviness and monstrosity under such titles as "Racist," "Royalty," "Nazism," "Man into Machine," etc.—aimed at inspiring the emotions of protest.

Following this series, but closely related in form and content, came "His Majesty, the Kilowatt" or "Minotauromacchina." From the atmosphere of this series "The Ear of the World" evolved (1962).

In 1964 Tóth modelled "Things Found and Made," to prove that he can always master new methods, that he can create ever-new effects. To juxtapose a "found" machine-part that resembles a person with a "made" person that resembles a machine is a surprising and thought-inspiring composition. The same solution reoccurs in an even later work by Tóth, "The Eye of the World" (1969), which is made up of a "found," corroded iron-plate and a "made," brilliantly polished bronze "eye"-ball.

In an age of space research, spacecraft, astronauts and technological achievements in general became Tóth's subjects. He often connects such subjects with the themes of art and the great masters to evoke particular associations. This is how some of his later pieces came into being, including "Black Piano in the Spacecraft" (1966)—probably partly also a tribute to the memory of the Hungarian poet, Ady—of "Microcosm in Macrocosm" (1967)—one of the designs for a Bartók memorial to be erected in New York—or "Homage to the Astronauts" (1969), and "In Memory of Ko-

marov" (1969). These sculptures can present a theme sensuously by virtue of their complete "abstractness."

One of his latest works that he brought to Hungary is "The Madonna of Csurgó." Again, this is a Renaissance vision in a contemporary effective transposition of the subject. The sculpture was set up in the small Gothic parish-church of the artist's birthplace, Fehérvárcsurgó, on his sixtieth birthday. A Protestant, Tóth suited the modelling of this piece, designed for the sanctuary of a Catholic church, to the particular task in hand, in the only way the Madonna could be presented as an everyday sight for a small village community which is only now in the process of being transformed.

Having said all this, it would only remain to draw my conclusions—which I refuse to do. Tóth's oeuvre is far from being complete as yet, and perhaps it will be that one will be able to give an evaluation of its merit only in the future—one can not yet undertake measuring the greatness or significance of Amerigo Tot—Imre Tóth. Nevertheless it is a fact that hundreds of thousands have admired and criticized his works at exhibitions in Budapest and Tihany, which in itself is an unprecedented attendance-figure in Hungary. Imre Tóth's art—attracting viewers by its newness, originality and excitement—has performed such a "breakthrough" in his former country which may contribute a forceful impetus to the advance of Hungarian art.

SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY AND CONTEMPORARY HUNGARIAN CULTURE

Answers by György Aczél to questions put by Literaturnaya Gazeta

Y. Surovtzev, Special Correspondent of Literaturnaya Gazeta, Moscow, interviewed György Aczél, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, concerning contemporary Hungarian cultural life and the cultural policy of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. The interview was also published by *Társadalmi Szemle*, the theoretical monthly of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. Because of the importance of the subject and the questions of principle discussed we are republishing it in full.

QUESTION: May I start by asking you to sum up the situation of Hungarian cultural life in recent years?

ANSWER: It is the constant aim of Hungarian cultural policy to create and to cultivate new forms of socialist culture, and national education, a culture which continues national and general human traditions which are supplemented organically by new socialist values. This culture—as Lenin predicted—does not serve "some world-weary heroine", or "the bored flabby upper ten-thousand", but "toiling millions". Culture has never before in Hungary been the common property of such large numbers as it is today, although we are still far from satisfied with the rate of progress or the depth penetrated by culture.

We are aware that in, for instance, the rate of cars per one thousand we are unlikely to overtake the leading developed capitalist countries in the near future. But we are overtaking and have overtaken the West in education, in the humanistic richness and above all the democracy of culture, in the forging of links between culture, the arts and the masses. These achievements of ours are second to none, and undoubtedly display socialist progress.

The progress which we have made in recent years in the development of the culture of the masses, is of primary significance. Our achievements are worth noting in almost all aspects of the arts and literature, whether we examine the products of poets and novelists, the works of playwrights and theatrical performances, the revival of Hungarian operatic and ballet art, chamber music and concerts, or Hungarian films which have in recent years earned serious recognition all over the world. Progress is of course not uniform here either, and from time to time there have been signs of decline in some of the arts. The standard of theatrical performance is at present somewhat below that of films or—to mention another example—the television programme is not yet satisfactory though it has achieved much. I could refer also to successes in various aspects of the fine arts. It is worthy of notice that Hungarian literature and other works of art are becoming known beyond the frontiers of the country to an unprecedented extent. Which gives me an opportunity to express thanks to our friends, poets and translators, and other artists, who in the Soviet Union and in the other Socialist countries, but also in Italy, France, England, and elsewhere work hard to make Hungarian culture and its values known and liked by their own people.

QUESTION: The idea of socialism—as Lenin wrote in a visionary manner more than sixty years ago—will gather artists behind the standards of really free art. Today this principle gives wings to the thousands of Soviet creative artists; for us real liberty means the struggle fought for the realization of this idea. It is obvious that the Marxist–Leninist interpretation of freedom is also linked with the achievements which mark the progress of Hungarian literature and art. What is your opinion of this?

ANSWER: After the suppression of the counter-revolution, at the beginning of the period of consolidation, the principal objective was what the interests of the country then urgently demanded, to put an end to chaos, and to restore political order. "Freedom, come" Attila József, the greatest poet of the Hungarian proletariat said—"And give birth to order for me." There will be fortunate peoples in the future, in whose history order and liberty, which presuppose each other, will come into being in harmony with each other. After 1956 order had to be stabilized, first of all socialist order, to make it possible for socialist freedom to flourish in social and artistic life. What did this freedom mean to us then and now?

It is clear to everybody—friend and foe alike—that in Hungarian artistic life, in what we call workshops of creative activity that is, publishing

houses, editorial offices, periodicals, theatres and film studios creative freedom has much more scope than ever before; correspondingly, choice is much wider and less drab, so are the programmes, and exhibitions are richer. To interpret this correctly, to draw the proper conclusions, one must realize that the first commandment and cardinal point of our interpretation of freedom is greater freedom that serves socialism. Or I may put it this way: full freedom for the pure, honest efforts and experiments aimed at enriching and renewing socialist art. We do not see the justification of our interpretation of freedom primarily in the fact that in Hungary authors also write and artists also create who have in essence kept their bourgeois-humanistic point of view. Their voice is also important, on the one hand because they create values that may become part of socialist culture, and on the other, because it is impossible to struggle ideologically against silent tendencies. What is more important is that the new conditions gave birth to such frank, profound, and convincing novels as *Rozsdatemető* (Scrap Iron Yard), *Húsz óra* (Twenty hours), *Hideg napok* (Cold Days) and the plays and films made from them, and important films like *Walls*, *The Round Up*—to mention but a few. I might mention Hungarian poets also; the renewal of great talents and the flowering of new ones. Thus, when we speak of greater creative freedom, we mean in the first place more elbow-room for socialist art and greater freedom for artistic efforts in the direction of socialism. In Hungary most support is given to socialist realism. This is how we have interpreted freedom in culture, and this is how we shall continue to interpret it.

QUESTION: Each Socialist country has its own history; in each the general laws of the construction of socialism are asserted in a particular way. It is always important to understand this "general" and "particular." What can you tell us of the characteristic traits of cultural life in people's Hungary?

ANSWER: Cultural activities are based on the socialist social relations that prevail in Hungary; in the domain of culture also we maintain the principle and practice of the leading role of the party, and of the working class; our cultural policy is characterized by the requirement of a socialist public life and a socialist national consciousness, their principal objective is to raise the culture of the masses to a higher level; we endeavour to develop Hungarian national culture in harmony with the progressive spiritual forces of the world, primarily with the socialist ones. But it has become obvious in the course of theoretical and practical work that as regards ideology and

culture Marxism is not in a monopoly position in Hungary. What does this mean? This factual statement expresses that in Hungary there are still religious people and there are sections whose view of the world cannot be called Marxist. There are also sections in whose thinking the new, Marxist elements mingle with old, bourgeois attitudes. The transitional character of the present stage of history (i.e. the fact that we live in a period of transition from capitalism to socialism) is reflected also in minds and the way they think. It is our task today to secure and strengthen the existing hegemony of Marxism, the capacity for leadership and the leading role of Marxist ideology. But whether Marxism holds a monopoly or not, is not a question for subjective decision, but of objective fact. It is well to remember earlier declarations that proclaimed that Hungarian intellectuals had already adopted the Marxist–Leninist ideology. (Incidentally, this sort of statement was made precisely on the eve of the 1956 counter-revolution by the dogmatic-sectarian side.) Proclamations of this kind derive from a mistaken voluntaristic viewpoint and make further political and ideological work difficult.

Declaring that Marxism was in an ideological monopoly position in Hungary was mistaken since it led to illusions, delusions, self-deception, and a cessation of vigilance. But it was wrong also, because it necessarily brought with it the application of administrative measures in cases where other methods would have been needed. We take the chance for an exchange of views seriously, and on our part wish to assure healthy conditions for a discussion. We insist on the principle that we answer words with words, ideas with ideas, views with views, arguments with arguments. But I don't have to say that if somebody should undertake political organization or other actions violating the social rules—under the pretext of carrying on a discussion—our answer would be in accordance with the laws of the country. If somebody throws stones, we do not throw back bread. Consciously hostile intentions can and must be answered by administrative measures. It often happened in the past that the declared but in reality unachieved monopoly of Marxism was also "created" by a silence which was the result of the application of administrative measures. On the other hand—inseparably from this—a sort of peculiar quotation-Marxism was born, the use of Marxism as an external mask. The representative of every bourgeois or petty bourgeois view felt dutybound to take cover behind a Marxist terminology and Marxist quotations. As a result the dividing lines became tangled, in questions of ideology and Aesopian idiom and the wearing of masks became the rule. Exaggerated haste and the striving after a monopolistic position were disadvantageous for Marxist thinking itself

and retarded its progress. The absence of competition produces laziness and a lack of vigilance. Many people are enticed to inaction by the feeling that in a position of power they have not got to strain their mental faculties and energies, there is "no urgency" for them to answer questions fast, arguments and initiatives can wait. In our world, which is in a transitional period, it was too early to speak of the monopolistic position of Marxism, and it was mistaken also because in many cases it resulted in the establishment of a monopoly position by various scientific and artistic groups. This could happen, because in such conditions it was easy for one cultural-scientific school to silence another by sticking the label "anti-Marxist" on it.

QUESTION: One of the central questions in current Hungarian discussion is socialist democracy, its interpretation, and the problems of its development. In recent years, bourgeois ideologists, rightist revisionists and "leftist" radicals have made no little efforts to contrast socialism and democracy, especially in connection with the practical experience gathered in the construction of a new society, and a new, socialist culture in the countries of socialism.

ANSWER: As the principal document of the Moscow conference of Communist and Workers' Parties emphasized, socialism alone is able to assure the social and political rights of people who work and to create the conditions for a genuine democracy, for the actual participation of the broad masses in the administration of society, for a many-sided development of personality and for equality and friendship between nations. In the course of the realization of this continuing objective, there is—in my view—an interaction between the unfolding of socialist democracy and the development of culture. Socialist cultural works of a high standard are effective contributions to the development of a socialist democratic public spirit.

At the same time, genuine socialist democracy is a condition for the creation of such works. In cultural life, as also elsewhere, there are attempts to eliminate socialism from socialist democracy, reducing the concept to a general, and in this sense bourgeois democracy. Such attempts were powerful in the past, but can sometimes be experienced in the present also.

Our view, of course, is that socialism must be strengthened through democracy, and not bourgeois democracy against socialism. On the other hand, we reject the views of those who consider socialist democracy a loosening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and we try to dispel the well-intentioned anxieties of those who are afraid that socialist democracy will endanger our system.

The essence of our endeavours is to produce a consciousness of the unity and indivisibility of freedom and responsibility, wherever creative work is done the socialist formation of public opinion and the formation of culture through public opinion are treated as a dialectic process. The practical assertion of socialist democracy demands clearly outlined, definite principles. It is for this reason that we have tried to define clearly the characteristics of the style of cultural work, the principles of direction, mediation, criticism, support, toleration, and prohibition, which provide a foundation and limits for the discussion within the workshops of creative activity and in the context of nation-wide publicity.

In a socialist democracy, discussion and the exchange of views belong of the essence of spiritual existence. I ought to add that it is not the proliferation of wanton, self-centred arguments that is considered healthy, it is not empty talk and "outbursts" that we wish to encourage. We are not in favour of sensationalist spurious debates. What is needed is that Marxists should raise the really essential issues of our times, that in the discussion of important questions they should adopt a high level position and assist public opinion in the right direction. Public opinion pays attention to those who discuss real questions, who treat questions thought to be delicate in a principled manner, whose authority is derived from their ability to formulate their views creatively; essentially, those who speak and act in the spirit of Marxism.

Contrary views of course appear in cultural or ideological questions; it happens that sectarian, or dogmatic, or liberal, or revisionist views are expressed. I have to stress that the argument is conducted primarily not against persons but against views. In the majority of cases we discuss things not only to avert a mistaken view, but to convince those who express wrong views that we are right; we therefore do not consider the mental work involved in discussion to be a waste of energy. True, evolution is often contradictory, we have experienced more than once that those who were earlier sectarians, now profess liberal views, or the other way round; they pass from one extreme to the other. Apart from this, the changing of one's views as a result of being convinced of the contrary is a necessary part of progress, and we oppose the sort of bourgeois, revisionist, or sectarian moralizing which threatens those who have understood their earlier mistakes and now adopt a correct view in one question or another. We Communists, cannot give up our faith in the educability of men.

Speaking of discussion and of exchanges of views, it should also be pointed out that, on some questions, the correct answers demanded by Marxism can only be discovered after prolonged debate. This is a further

reason for carrying on discussing things right to the end. All this does not mean relativism, it does not mean that there is no correct answer, or that there are several kinds of Marxism, or that—as some allege—Marxism has become a mere method of approach. There are people in Hungary also who proclaim the pluralism of Marxism, we oppose them, as we do those who want to transform Marxism into epistemological methodology and forget that Marxism is also a theory.

QUESTION: Real democracy in art is contrary to the so-called "mass culture" of the West, it is contrary to primitivism, to vulgar simplification. What are your views on this question?

ANSWER: If we do not look at individual works but at socialist culture as a whole then a part of its being socialist is that it incessantly looks for the opportunity to develop those methods thanks to which culture can exercise an influence on the masses. We've come a long way since things had to be simplified in order to be understood by all! Today everybody considers it natural that art and literature, when they deal with contemporary problems, must also dwell on complicated issues. Today the main ambition of artists is to convey discovered truth and beauty, to as broad masses as possible. Can anybody be a genuine creative artist if he is not excited by this task?

It was part of the tragedy of the progressive avant-garde of the first quarter of this century that those for whom their works were meant, did not understand them, and that writers and artists often reacted with impatient aggressiveness to their lack of understanding; thus ending up opposing those for whom and to whom they had wanted to speak.

We reject that variant of the bourgeois view of two cultures, which divides the arts into an elite culture and a mass culture.

In Hungary, the 300 performances of *Hamlet* by the Madách Theatre, the millions who went to see *Cold Days*, *The Round Up*, or *Twenty Hours* in the cinema, and frequent editions of forty to fifty thousand copies of the classics or of books by outstanding contemporary authors prove what progress was made in this direction. In the case of backwardness, tenacious and selfless work is called for, and not complaints. There are examples that should be followed. To mention but one, the great Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály did not blame the great masses of the Hungarian people for their backward taste, but devoted the creative years of his life to teaching them to adopt and to enjoy the values of music. He has proved through

his work that somebody who addresses himself to tens and hundreds of thousands, can be a world-famous artist. He declared that if we did not educate the masses to accept high art, tomorrow or the day after every creative artist would have to wake up to the fact that he had no public any longer. Today in Budapest and in the country there are often long queues in front of concert hall box-offices and it is often difficult to get tickets even using one's connections, and the number of those who understand and enjoy music has increased to an extent never seen before. This is the unfading merit of Kodály's work, which was encouraged and supported by socialist society.

It has to be emphasized that important changes have taken place to make the structure of our artistic life a democratic one. This is not a new ambition in Hungary, we started this work in a difficult period, and we continue it unabated. Today we seek new forms and new methods of the democracy of culture.

The first requirement is that the circle of those who accept culture and who enjoy culture should gradually be made active and be drawn into the process of creation. Active artistic creative work (but not exhibitionist dilettantism that wishes to compete against professional art), Hungarian choral traditions, creative groups of painters and sculptors, and other forms too of active cultural creative work have to be encouraged. The requirement of a socialist use of leisure in a way worthy of man also demands this.

But beyond this, the democracy of cultural life requires also that more attention be payed to finding out the opinion of the readers, viewers, theatre- and picture-goers, and the important changes that occur in this respect. Without this the taste of the viewing and reading public cannot make progress. This is a complicated dialectic process: art exerts an influence on the person who accepts it, the latter forms art further, and it is in this way that our socialist culture also has to make further progress. This permanent interaction assists in the creation of a socialist realist art which is indeed up to contemporary standards, which speaks to the multitudes, is modern through and through and popular in the best sense of the word.

QUESTION: The achievements of realist art in Hungary are well-known. Does this mean that Hungarian artists show no signs of a decadent mentality?

ANSWER: Some people—and in general not the most talented creative artists—treat decadence and nihilism not only as a fashion but as a sort of

spiritual and intellectual rank. According to them, all those who are convinced followers of progressive political ideas and create works that show this, are people of a primitive, idyllic mentality, "conformists" who avoid the deep problems, who cannot be original in their art either. They are not disturbed in their *Weltschmerz* "of a higher order" by the fact that almost all—if not all—the greatest Hungarian creative artists belonged or belong to this species despised by them. Marxist literary and art critics fight against the illusion that decadence or nihilism is a "superior" or "modern" state of mind. It is neither modern, nor really intellectual, quite the contrary.

Speaking of decadence, the sense of crisis breaking forth from the depth of our times is often mentioned as an immediate reason. But here two things are being mixed up. One is the feeling common to social systems and classes which have been overtaken by history and which find themselves in a crisis; this, in Hungary, does not produce a sense of crisis, but the conviction that our cause is right, a proof that we are on the right path. The other is the type of crisis which the progressive and revolutionary forces have to overcome when they meet great, perhaps unexpected obstacles in the course of their progress, complications on account of which they have to struggle with themselves also. Such as bitterness, or a rising feeling of self-doubt, etc.

Let me mention a number of examples of the latter: a sense of crisis may arise in the peasantry when the old peasant way of life disappears; it may occur also in many honest, good comrades when—in the place of the old and accustomed—new factors appear in international politics or in the economy. One may also fall into a critical mood when something changes or becomes questionable in one's personal life. This is a natural concomittant of all changes, since something always dies, something new begins, and this has consequences as regards one's feelings and mood. It is the vocation of the artist-intellectual to put this in words or form. But whichever way he might put it, with however great an artistic force, the consciousness must not disappear that in these cases the crisis is not the essence of the social phenomenon, and that these crises are crises of transition. A creative attitude, and real intelligence is shown by those thinkers who not only sense the difficulties and live with them but face them too, and are aware that these do not indicate the end of the world but its progress, as they reflect the dialectics of the world. Therefore, instead of falling into despair, they analyse the new situation, seek out their place, their new role, formulate their new instruments, the new forms of the struggle in new circumstances. The difference between the Marxists and the non-Marxists is not that the

former do not feel what other people feel, but that the experience of a crisis does not destroy their social faith, they have the strength to pull themselves out of the sense of crisis, they are not satisfied with lamentations but know how to think, to act, to fight. Our ideal is therefore—both in real life and in the arts—a consciously acting man, who fights for the socialist transformation of reality in forever new circumstances and on an ever higher level.

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BENCE SZABOLCSI

A PERSONAL APPRECIATION*

by

CYNTHIA JOLLY

One of the first things I remember on being enrolled as a student of the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest shortly after the war was being approached by a student-teacher. "You must meet the Professor," she said. She took me to one of his lectures where he was holding a large group spellbound. He spoke in a quiet yet arresting voice with a mellifluous flow, to which as a foreigner grappling with unknown sounds, I was bound to pay attention. Long sentences flowed over my head, but from frequent Latinisms I gathered he was talking about the continual flux and reflux of Classicism and Romanticism, that the whole of European musical history could be described as "romantic" struggle followed by "classical" achievement, followed anew by "romantic" upheaval, until some really big fusion was reached. The idea caught my imagination, and I struggled to write down the periods he suggested.

After the lecture, she introduced me. A courteous man in middle age, Professor Szabolcsi showed a flattering interest in the new arrival, and spoke a few sentences in carefully-chosen English. The darting mobility of his eyes showed the eagerness of his mind. "She has brought a lot of English music," said my friend, and before I could take a breath we were poring over a volume of English folksongs on one of the wooden flats in the vast marble foyer of the Academy. "This is most interesting," he said excitedly, looking at "Waly, Waly" and "Come you not from Newcastle." "Those are the notes that have been added to the essential scale—here is the five-note pattern, that second is only filling in." And little pencilled brackets appeared round many notes which had been taken for granted.

For me it was the beginning of adventure. I began to realize the breadth and tolerance of the Professor's sympathies, the legendary position he has acquired in Hungarian musical life, his influence among the young—the

* This article is reprinted by courtesy of *The Composer*.

present-day school of Hungarian musicology is almost entirely his creation —the major part he had played in establishing the then revolutionary new Hungarian movement, typified in the work of Bartók and Kodály...

Known in the early days as the "young barbarians," the two composers must have been fortunate to have at their side a pacific und reflective thinker of such quality, who grasped in all its subtlety the immensity of their undertaking. Yet never was a man more diffident and unassuming, less obviously a champion of difficult causes. How hard it is to describe his contribution in his description (from *Bartók's Life in Pictures*) of the early years, when Bartók's name was synonymous with everything in music which was unacceptable and unethical: "Ever since 1915–20 a small group of critics stood on his side (Béla Reinitz, Antal Molnár): from the twenties he could rely on a group of fellow-fighters from the younger generation, headed by Aladár Tóth and Sándor Jemnitz."

Born in 1899, Szabolcsi belonged to this "younger generation." He had studied law at Budapest University and had been an early pupil of Kodály, seventeen years his senior, at the Liszt Academy of Music. It was natural that he should return to Budapest to join in the struggle as a "fellow-fighter" after completing his doctorate under Abert at Leipzig in 1923. He began to write criticism and to edit, or contribute to, Hungarian music journals: his two-volume *Encyclopedia of Music* (1930–1, supplement 1938) was the result of collaboration over many years with Aladár Tóth. It is astonishing that the total change of temper in Hungary's musical life (in the 19th century it was practically German) can be traced to the interaction of such a small group of men, each with a different function, but fired by a common purpose. Szabolcsi's was to expound, interpret and clarify, to put the immediate issue into a wider and more universal perspective. He even took part in the practical business of helping the works to reach a wider public. How often the early song-publications and choral pieces of both composers bear the note *"Deutsch von Benedikt Szabolcsi"*! It was only a small facet of his activity, but it shows how eagerly he lent his literary skill as well as his musicianship to further what for him was a great moment in musical history: when a country consciously forges its own musical idiom instead of adopting that of others. In a recent article on Kodály's youth, he described his pioneer settings of Hungarian texts as "the grandest thing that had happened to the Hungarian language in music." Hearing that I wanted to study Bartók's *Bluebeard* in the original, he talked over with me Bartók's view of its declamation: "Treat it as if it were Monteverdi, respect the musical shape, but declaim it freely according to the

speech accents: it is recitative." Within living memory Hungarian had been contorted to fit West European musical phrasing, yet here already it had found a "classic" expression...

It is in keeping with Szabolcsi's steady loyalty that he should now be Director of the Bartók Archives in Budapest—no sinecure in view of the complexities of Bartók's estate—and one of the editors responsible under Kodály's direction for publishing the massive patrimony of Hungarian folk-music: the *Corpus Musicae Hungaricae*. In addition, discerning articles on both composers constantly appear (in English in *The New Hungarian Quarterly*) and a major critical study entitled *Bartók, his Life and Work* was published in German in 1958.

Although his output on the subject of Hungarian musical history is prodigious, ranging from pre-history to the 20th century, in no sense is he chauvinistic. He has the perennial Hungarian zest for looking at phenomena in depth, and he uses his Hungarian background as a springboard, rather as Bartók did in his researches. His approach resembles that of the "Complete Man" of the Renaissance: it has a universality about it which is almost shocking in an age when musicology tends to be sterile and technological, concerned with specialist issues. It is essentially humane and humanistic: it sees connections, searches for relationships, sees the picture whole but knows its parts in all their detail. His first original work was a monograph of Mozart (1921) followed in 1948 by a study of Beethoven. He is an authority, too, on Bach and Vivaldi—in the course of library-combing expeditions carried on all over Europe, in 1947 he came across a Violin Concerto "Il Ritiro" in the library of S. Pietro a Majella in Naples. He identifed it as Vivaldi, and prepared it for publication and a first 20th century performance in Budapest. He also discovered and edited a Symphony in C by Vivaldi, and a series of essays called *European Dawn* (1949) traces the development of classical music from Vivaldi to Mozart.

But "a knowledge of the great periods of music is incomplete without a corresponding knowledge of the folk-music which nourished them," and this conviction has made him a musical ethnographer of international importance. Classicism and folk-music for him are "long-lost brothers who are for ever longing to unite." He had the advantage of living in a country where he could see the process happening at close range, the folk-elements rising to fructify the art-music, while the art-music, sometimes quite shoddy, would find itself absorbed into the repertoire of a creative peasantry. I took him my humble efforts at collecting, and it was astonishing to see the skill with which he could place even the smallest fragment of melody without ever losing touch with the bigger issues. He showed me, for instance,

how medieval Italian *laude* had come to influence the "new type" of Hungarian folksong, while the "old type" showed purely Eastern relationships. In *A History of Melody*, he describes how a Renaissance art-melody, itself a revival of a Latin metre, turns into a Protestant chorale and then into folk-variants, of which he had discovered Czech and Hungarian examples.

But not only does Szabolcsi believe that art-music is related to folk-music, but that music as a whole is related to other sciences of man. "Man and Nature are inseparable allies: one may speak for the other." This attitude makes him, musically speaking, an explorer, an anthropologist, an archaeologist, even a geo-biologist. He is constantly checking up musical research against progress in all these sciences because of his belief that the earliest history of man may come to be discerned from the present-day geographical distribution of melody-patterns. The original forms are nowhere extant, but the forms which exist point back to a vanished continent.

How did he come to attempt such a mammoth undertaking as *A History of Melody?* Certainly the germ of interest was there even in the D.Phil. thesis for Leipzig (a study of Benedetti and Saracini from the point of view of monody), and it grew over the years 1930–40: but it was not until life was limited to a cellar in Budapest with Russians and Germans battling for the city above, that it began to take final shape. "What will remain if everything is destroyed? Perhaps melody will show the traces..." In German it is modestly described as *ein Baustein*—a basis of a history—but as well as laying a foundation it is also a stepping-stone to further research.

His aesthetic awareness extends to painting as well as to literature: one of the most enchanting passages is where he describes the influence of 18th century dance through a description of Watteau's paintings. He takes the utmost care in choosing illustrations so that they really express his meaning in another medium. He is aware of the "sound" of painting, just as he is aware of the visual values of music, and of what he calls the "polyphonic intricacy of experience." His literary style has been forged into a highly personal idiom, full of allusion, and one of the difficulties of translation has been that to do him justice one should write in the 17th century style of Sir Thomas Browne, with long periods and suspensions. "His Hungarian floats above the earth," as one perceptive reader put it.

What is his most striking quality, beyond his erudition, his formidable musical memory, his sensibility? I would say empathy, and facility in communication. Szabolcsi can immerse himself in his chosen subject, and then make his experience valid for others.

Composer, Summer 1966.

SURVEYS

JÓZSEF BOGNÁR

GANDHI'S HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY*

Mahatma Gandhi was one of the great men of the 20th-century. He combined an understanding of what modern politics required with a living faith in the traditional system of values of India and all mankind. We live in the age of computers, of huge enterprises and of scientific revolution, but we still need great men, their example, what they teach, and the aims they pursue.

Mahatma Gandhi was a man of courage and an Asian through and through. He was venerated as a symbol of the spirit of the East. He was a humanist who stood for the equality of men, nations, races and religions, an internationalist who wished to serve not only the cause of Indian liberty and independence, but also the fraternity of man. Gandhi's role in history was revolutionary. He made a nation out of the despairing, oppressed masses of India who were no longer capable of resistance. He was not alone. The leaders of the Congress Party worked with him, but it was Gandhi who formed the Congress Party into a mass movement.

> "There was, in this small and constitutionally weak man, something as hard as steel, something rock-like which did not yield to physical powers..."

His example encouraged others to resist tyranny, to act in unity and to be prepared to make sacrifices. To be the father of the Indian people and the author of national independence is in itself an immense achievement. India has the second largest population in the world, by the year 2,000 every sixth man on earth will be an Indian, and yet the work and example of Gandhi was not confined to his nation. The methods he adopted in the fight for national independence have had a substantial impact on a number of Asian and numerous African political movements and on their leaders; and on Martin Luther King and many leading figures in anti-war movements today. His image has continued to inspire the dramatic struggle waged against hunger since what we need in this fight is not only a more developed technology, a larger quantity of material resources and a higher level of organization, but also a restructuring of conduct, independent action and initiative on the part of hundreds of millions of simple villagers. We have much to learn from him in the fight for peace, disarmament and new kinds of international relationships, since that struggle has to be waged with tools that do not underestimate the power of morality.

The ideas and the political work of Ghandi, and their effect have been praised by many, and strongly criticized by others. A third category had, of necessity, to emerge between those who were his unconditional adherents and those who were his severe critics. Those who respected and even admired him, who considered his influence on

* Address delivered at the Budapest commemorative meeting of the International Gandhi Seminar.

the masses to have been one of the driving forces of the Indian movement for independence and who approved of much that he taught, yet who rejected some of his doctrines which they considered misguided.

Ideas, concepts and rules of conduct which have an impact on mass behaviour cannot be torn apart from their actual historical context. This is important to keep in mind when speaking of Gandhi. He was not a conventional political figure, certainly not in the usual (particularly European) sense; he was a prophet, a teacher of his people, in whose work politics was not separated from morals. He was aware of this. Except early in his career—he never accepted an important political office (e.g. that of the Chairman of the Congress Party). There were times in the history of Europe when politics and economics were thought of as being a part of ethics. On the other hand, not everyone in India agreed with Gandhi on this issue; Tilak, for instance, a gifted mathematician, a man of wide intellectual horizons—who died in August 1920—did not think of politics as a field dominated by ethics. Not to speak of the fact that "pure" political treatises were written in India even earlier than Asoka's empire, treatises more extensive and more complex than Machiavelli's work. Machiavelli studied the problems of political management and tactics within the borders of a small Italian principality. He was no authority on ruling over empires that included many nationalities and different cultures. (I would like to remark in parantheses that these reflections on the relationship between politics and ethics as well as between economics and ethics are merely meant to indicate that each sphere of social activity has categories and laws of its own. When it comes to action, these have to be taken into account.)

Gandhi defined, on the one hand, general moral rules governing issues like the individual and justice, self-control, man and the machine as well as problems like peace, democracy and people, poverty and riches, education and so on, on the other hand, he organized simple political action that was easy to understand by everybody (attacking the salt monopoly, the khadi movement, the movement in support of the untouchables and so on) as part of which men of the lowest social standing joined in large-scale community movements. He was trying to educate the masses to engage in certain activities and to refrain from others. However, he never attempted to fill the gap between general rules and individual action through political programmes. Moral precepts have an impact on human behaviour but do not constitute a firm, coherent system of political objectives in which forces and power relationships, interests, the laws of evolution or historical trends are carefully taken into account. When the concepts and ideas of Gandhi are assessed this consideration has to be invariably kept in mind. In the opposite case not only words of praise or criticism will become one-sided but the essence of his work and the particular nature of the situation in India will not be understood either.

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In the years before Gandhi's birth millions of poverty-stricken peasants and sepoys rioted. A major part was played in this unrest by the heads of the small feudal states. These riots were ruthlessly suppressed by the British authorities. Isolated peasant uprisings and various forms of individual terroristic acts were, however common also in subsequent periods.

It is obvious that foreign conquest and rule of a country with a large population, of a people with a great past and culture, are apt to produce a national crisis. The essence of this crisis is—as borne out by the example of China—that the people are incapable of understanding the reasons for their humiliating defeat or for the triumph of the other side. (This particularly applies to civilizations as divergent as are the Indian and the British ones, neither of them is able to understand the system of values and rules of

conduct of the other). When the reasons become clear, it is difficult to lay aside the inherited system of values of a national culture and civilization and to accept the conquerors' views on things on which their mastery was based. Japan was, to an extent, capable of doing so but Japan was not turned into a colony, the country was only defeated and humiliated. Japan built a "counter-system" and started four wars within 80 years; in other words, Japan became an aggressive (imperialist) power herself. When a conquered country is unable to discover the secret of success the leading sections of society, landowners and a part of the middle classes, become denationalized and linked to the conqueror in their habits and interests.

That is why Gandhi's ideas and methods which demonstrated the moral superiority of the tormented and humiliated people of India over the conquerors were of such importance.

A very large population, living in extreme poverty had to be set in motion in a country of vast dimensions with a minimum of communication facilities (large numbers of illiterates, absence of an efficient press, officially controlled travel and so on).

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The fight began at a time when *all* political activities (both conservative and radical) originated from the middle classes and when the industrial working class was barely organized and its influence was limited. The peasantry, constituting more than 80 percent of the population, living in 700,000 villages, was a shapeless mass afflicted by misery, sufferings and famines, exploited by the government, by landowners, by money-lenders, by petty civil servants, by police, lawyers and a priestly caste.

India was divided at the time by a great number of conflicts, of course exploited by the British, conflicts between Hindus and Muslims, conflicts between various nationalities, castes and classes, which rendered united action difficult.

Finally, the situation evolving in the world simultaneously with the independence movement under the leadership of the Congress Party should also be taken into account. In Europe—particularly beginning with the thirties—the Fascist powers were gaining ground. Japan was the ally of the Fascist states of Europe. It should be emphasized that Fascism did not upset the peoples of Asia and Africa to the extent it did the peoples of Europe; racial discrimination, persecution of men on account of their origin, ruthless measures applied in suppressing the opposition were, after all, nothing new for coloured peoples. They had long been the suffering victims of similar systems. On the other hand, the Fascist powers—particularly Italy—did everything to win over Indian leaders. (Mussolini tried to meet Nehru who passed through Rome in 1936. The invitation was very energetically declined by the latter).

The Soviet Union was grappling at that period with the first five-year plans. In 1939 Great Britain after all acted against the continued advance of Fascism in Europe, then in 1941 she became an ally of the Soviet Union. In my view, it was due to the political caution of the Congress Party and to Gandhi's rejection of violence that India was capable of fighting for her independence against British imperialism in such a way that her anti-fascist attitude could never be doubted.

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It is obvious that under the then prevailing conditions the political struggle waged and action in favour of national independence had two aspects, one of these was the *modern* mass movement under the leadership of a political party comprising the best forces of the nation; the other was the *traditional* one which mobilized people by resorting to simple slogans familiar to the illiterate rural masses who were deeply rooted in the Hindu traditions. These two aspects of the political struggle were closely linked.

The dispute concerning non-violence and civil disobedience had been going on ever

since the campaigns were initiated. Gandhi kept on pointing out that he did not teach the world anything new, since truth and non-violence were as old as the hills. In the Gita of the Mahabharata, Krishna expounds the criteria of knowledge, and *non-violence* (ahinsa) is listed—besides humility, perseverance, patience, justice and self-control. There is no doubt, however, that Gandhi was the first to seek to transform the ethics of love from a means of mediation between individuals into an effective social force. Non-violence and civil disobedience were changed, under the conditions of the fight for independence, into a dynamic method, a means of resistance against the tyrant's will. This did not mean an escape but effective opposition.

The method was certainly likely to produce fermentation in society. This conclusion is justified by the participation of many million peasants in action initiated by Gandhi who continued to conduct this activity also in periods when the leaders of the Congress Party were serving terms of imprisonment.

Non-violence (civil disobedience) thus proved effective political tactics.

But it follows from the idealist-moral-religious way of Gandhi's thinking that he did not regard this teaching simply as political tactics. He identified non-violence with kindness and justice. Furthermore he exaggerated the importance of means in relation to objectives. It is certainly true that bad means often make it impossible to attain noble ends. It must also be kept in mind that means are employed before ends can be attained, and so, they often mislead the masses. Nevertheless, the view that means are more important than ends is unacceptable.

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Gandhi felt and lived the sentiments and mood of the masses better than anybody else. Sometimes he agreed to action despite sporadic violence. He called off action on several occasions, in most instances because he felt that the masses had become tired or that certain results could be obtained in some other way.

Gandhi conceded that violence was not the principal evil. Cowardice, submission and servitude were worse. "I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour."

A method which could be effectively used under certain conditions was clearly overvalued by Gandhi when he demanded that the future State of India be committed to non-violence. This proposal was rejected by the Congress.

The Gandhi who based himself on traditions was also a radical social reformer. This radicalism linked him to the progressive intellectuals in the leadership of the Congress Party. His radicalism originated in moral philosophy not in politics, what he wanted to accomplish was a moral revolution. As a "moralist revolutionary" he was unsophisticated and Utopian in many respects but he was successful as the originator of mass action. He condemned the exploitation of the masses and expressed the view that political freedom must include economic freedom of the starving millions. He achieved substantial results by action in the interests of the equality of women, against child marriages and for the right of widows to remarry. Action in the interests of the Untouchables which made it possible for the Untouchables to have access to all public institutions, must be deemed particularly successful. This prevented the British government dividing India later into three (instead of two) parts. He was a liberal in the religious sense; he professed the kinship of all religions and looked for what they had in common.

His efforts in trying to reconcile Hindus and Muslims were immeasurable: what he wanted was not bargaining but coming to terms with the Muslims, because this—as he pointed out—depended on the good-will and magnanimity of the majority. He recognized

that the Muslim question was also a social issue, for in several states the small tenants were Muslims, the zamindars (landowners) and bankers were Hindus, while in other states a reversed situation prevailed. At the time when religious strife burst out during the war he tried to come to an agreement with Jinnah, the Muslim leader (1943–1944). He consistently rejected partition which was accepted by Nehru and other Congress leaders, and he devoted his last fast to the cause of a Hindu–Muslim reconciliations. This decided his fate. A few days after finishing his fast he was killed by an extremist Hindu religious leader.

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Among his reform ideas that in favour of local self-government (decentralization), his views on the reform of the education system and his ideas on the relations between individual and community should be emphasized.

As a moralist revolutionary he believed that the sentiments of the rich could be changed, that capital and labour could peacefully cooperate and that social problems could be quickly solved in an independent India on the basis of popular understanding.

Government activity and life in independent India provide convincing proof of the illusory nature of these assumptions and expectations. Government took action, passed laws or issued decrees concerning almost all questions which—in Gandhi's view—ought to have been solved by a moral revolution and by understanding shown by the rich. But social inequalities are greater than Gandhi assumed. Inequalities have increased in many spheres; the constitution provides for the abolition of the caste system, but this provision has not been put into effect in practice; equality of women has been accepted only by the middle classes; the land and tenure reforms have produced no radical changes so far.

I have the highest opinion of the efforts made by Indian leaders in the interest of economic development in the past and present. These reflections were merely intended to bring Gandhi's expectations face to face with reality in contemporary India.

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Some of Gandhi's ideas in the socio-economic field are mistaken but still have a certain sound educational effect. What I have in mind is his dislike of modern technology and industry and his bias against towns. It is obviously wrong to think that a country—particularly one with such a high birth-rate—could—without modern industry and technology—do away with poverty and increase the per capita national income tenfold, then twentyfold. It follows therefore that industry is indispensable in India and in every other developing country. Industry, in turn, is not only a productive activity but also one of the regulators of the way of life; wherever there is industry, urbanization will be inevitable even if it is conceded that big cities are not attractive. This is one side, the other is that the application of a traditional technology—particularly in a country like India, with enormous actual and latent surplus manpower—will be needed for a long time to come (for generations). In countries lacking capital it takes a long time to create conditions in which every working individual is employed in jobs at the highest level of technological development. On the other hand, as a result of a fast increase of the population and the fast expansion of industry and small-scale handicrafts a rapid increase in agricultural output is made inevitable. Otherwise India and other developing countries must face famine. Consequently, the weight of agriculture is substantially larger than was assumed in traditional "pro-industry" economic theories. Thus Gandhi, while starting from mistaken conceptions, instinctively discovered real facts and correlations which must never be lost sight of when rational political and economic action is taken.

Gandhi imagined that the recurring gaps in the balance of the economic development

of society could be bridged not only by the constant expansion of production and consumption but also by reducing demand. This notion runs counter to the progress of human society and the economy, still this made sense in India to some extent. No doubt, starting economic growth in a poor, densely populated country with a high birth-rate will demand grave sacrifices. It is likewise obvious that these grave sacrifices are undertaken by the masses when the burdens of economic development are equally shared by all, that is when it is the rich who have to pay in the first place.

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Gandhi, by European standards, was a politician out of the ordinary, this means that the features of prophet, preacher and teacher of morals prevail in him over the operation of political machinery. This should be supplemented by adding that he was not attracted by the role of the politician, who must—in most instances—also be an expert since he has to cope not only with human aims and abilities but also with objective processes and their inherent laws. The prophet and the teacher thinking in terms of moral postulates might proclaim the principle of non-violence and non-compulsion in the new state but a politician cannot accept this. Compulsion, that is the application of some force, cannot be ignored in domestic policy unless there is no need to act *contrary* to the interests of certain social groups and everyone can be made to understand by persuasion the necessity of such actions at the moment when these are taken, although their correctness will only be proved by subsequent events. These courses are inconceivable in a society in which great social tensions have accumulated and where modern and traditional elements have existed side by side for generations. This however does not mean that the warning words of a prophet or teacher of morals are unnecessary. The fact that force or compulsion is necessary does mean that the greater the force or the compulsion, the better. (What I am thinking of is compulsion by force and not by moral persuasion. The latter was accepted by Gandhi. Let me add that moral compulsion is not always easier for an individual to endure than compulsion by force.) In our age when violence has raged to such an extent and in so many different forms it is perhaps not necessary to produce evidence that the application or force has its limitations not only in the moral but also in the rational sense. When excessive violence is resorted to, events will lead to a reverse result, what is achieved in such cases is not the desired result, or else—if this is secured (that is the protection of prestige)—the amount of energy and resources wanted is not in proportion to the aims involved and also produces disequilibrium in other spheres of social life.

For the politician the question arises not in the terms of Gandhi's dilemma namely, whether it is permitted to use force or compulsion under certain circumstances but in the way a certain objective (a set of objectives) can be attained with the minimum of violence (that is, by duly considering, in advance, the social interests an action may come up against and also by using the power of persuasion). The actual answer to the question requires the assessment of the situation and possible alternatives.

I already mentioned that though the interests and activities of Gandhi were not focused on *tactical issues* connected with the operation and balancing of the political machinery, he was a master of tactical flexibility. He was really a figure capable of resolving extremes and opposite poles in himself, in his conduct and actions. His extraordinary tactical flexibility was demonstrated in two ways: on the one hand, he was always capable of forging ahead, if so required by the state (fighting state) of the masses; on the other hand, as a distinguished heir of thousand years old political and diplomatic traditions, he alternated and combined political action and negotiation. To complete the picture it

should be added that he made use of his extraordinary sense of diplomatic tactics against a world power which spread over three continents and which gave a series of diplomats and politicans of no uncommon talent to the world.

A teacher of morals admirably versed in winning over and handling the masses, a diplomat who was able to demonstrate his moral and later his positional advantage over his negotiating partners in ingenious ways, such gifts are seldom found in a single individual.

Gandhi set out to fight starvation in his country. Much concrete action was organized by the Congress Party in the interests of the tenants against zamindars and other feudal elements. The struggle against starvation is carried on in our days with a growing impetus not only in India but all over Africa and Asia. This struggle is now waged by independent nations which are apparently and legally unhampered.

Reality is, however, different. In one part of the world large economic resources are concentrated and the increase of the population is relatively slow. In another part of the world—particularly in Asia—economic resources are extremely limited, and the increase of the population is rapid, almost explosion-like. It should also be taken into account that in these countries illiteracy is great and the scientific capacity which is one of the driving forces of economic expansion is relatively small. It is obvious that a fast increase in food production is an elementary interest of these countries. A sound programme of water conservation, highly productive grain crops, the restoring of the soil's productive capacity (use of chemical fertilizers) and profit-yielding live-stock breeding are needed. These countries must solve these problems by mobilizing their own resources *in the first place*. In addition, a more equal and just distribution of commodities is required, and this demands strong active and purposeful governments because, in the contrary event, inequalities will not be reduced but increased under the impact of economic evolution. The law of economic life which operates in a spontaneous way is that the rich become richer and the poor poorer.

Only a distribution of income which comes near to the requirements of justice and equality and an economic policy aimed at reducing sharp differences between various areas (states) can give a real impetus to economic expansion and the increase of food production.

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In addition to strongly emphasizing these requirements it should be stressed however that the fight against hunger is the cause not only of the countries concerned but of mankind as a whole!

It should be understood by all that hunger and death from starvation are no less dangers in the contemporary world than the presence of nuclear weapons. There are hundreds of millions living all over the world for whom death from starvation appears to be a real menace while nuclear bombs are a distant danger which is difficult to understand. For this reason, progressive world public opinion must exert great moral and political pressure on the peoples concerned, in order to bring them to cooperate and participate in the fight against starvation.

The principle of non-violence was subjected to criticism in the foregoing; it has also been pointed out that compulsion will always be needed in the lives of states although great care must be taken in its application. But the mobilization of countries and peoples for the fight against hunger should be carried out according to methods like Gandhi's by resorting to a specific amalgamation of persuasion, moral and political pressure. Undisguised force would mean war and war could turn into a nuclear war, which would bring about such a destruction of the available material and intellectual resources as would render living conditions extremely difficult for the survivors. International organizations are called on to organize the fight against hunger, although there is no supreme

power on an international level that could bring about changes without the agreement of states as regards the division of labour and the distribution of commodities. It also follows from this that compulsion in order to have economic activities regrouped on the international level is hardly conceivable, it would be ultimately tantamount to war or to the infringing of the independence of nations.

In this way the fight against hunger leads to better international relations, peace and disarmament. Gandhi specified only moral rules of conduct, on the international level also, he assumed that the rules which govern the activities of people (individuals) and small communities would apply to society as a whole or even to international relations.

But morals and norms of morality are moulded by existing conditions; in other words, the attainment of higher moral conduct is not possible unless international interests, relationships, institutions and mechanisms are transformed. It goes without saying that every simplification must be avoided; *identical* international norms exert their influence in a *most divergent* way on various states; the respective interests, differing value systems and norms of thinking were shaped by differing historical antecedents, traditions and heritages; there are major differences in the internal position and social background of governments. In spite of this, a mutual renouncing of the use of force in inter-governmental relations is an important requirement—particularly in the nuclear age. But Gandhi thought that—and we have been following a similar train of thought in this respect—imperialism would disintegrate when the colonial system collapsed and he did not expect that it would again shift its centre and would evolve new forms and fighting methods. It follows logically that it has become the states' interest to join a security system which provides protection against a potential aggressor. It is thus also obvious that peace-loving countries must be strong and powerful, for weakness cowardice and submission almost invite the use of force. It may be assumed that certain regional security systems (continental systems) will also be created which might comprise heterogeneous elements. (For instance several systems of alliances.)

When institutional guarantees of peace and security are established, real opportunities will be present for reducing armament expenditure. The expenditure on armaments is higher now than the aggregate annual national income of the countries of the developing world. Therefore, a radical reduction of armament expenditure could bring about a change amounting almost to a turning point in the fight against hunger as well. The way of thinking current in certain circles claiming that international tension is beneficial for the developing countries for in the contrary case there would be no one to provide aid for them, is very superficial. The facts show that international tension contributes primarily to increasing armament expenditure which has reached such astronomical figures that it restricts the material and intellectual resources earmarked for aid, credits and technical cooperation.

When the institutional safeguards of peace and security are elaborated and laid down, what was so attractively said by S. Radjakrishnan should not be forgotten, namely that human genius has produced not only a Buddha and a Gandhi but also a Nero and a Hitler. Let us add that there are social, economic and power conditions which are especially favourable for the growth of Neros and Hitlers.

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Mahatma Gandhi in his life and work laid the foundations of a new era in the history of India. We, who are friends of an independent and peace-loving India, sincerely hope that this era will surpass the achievements of the ages of Asoka (3rd century B.C.) which was based on Buddhism, and of the Akhbar empire (16th and 17th centuries A.D.) which relied on Islam. Gandhi has, in all respects, advanced and

enriched the great Indian heritage, reflected in both poetry and political writing, the gist of which is the tolerant and understanding existence side by side of different peoples, cultures, languages and religions. His ideas, views and notions differ in many respects from our ideas and system of action. He proved again, however, by his example, that politics without firm ideals, deep conviction and the acceptance of sacrifices is mere tactical trickery and play at balances devoid of real significance. He who had firm convictions could, depending on changes in the situation, always come to terms or seek compromises to continue his journey safely and resolutely in the same spirit and towards the same goals.

At this commemorative meeting, outstanding fighters for peace and personalities with an international reputation are celebrating together with us. They have come to Hungary and to Budapest for the festivities of the International Gandhi Seminar. Representatives of eighteen countries and fighters of different peace movements, of anti-war and pacifist organizations took part in the Seminar. The lectures and discussions testify that Gandhi's name and spirit are still a banner in the fight for national independence, for peaceful coexistence, for disarmament and against war. And this is so not only because Gandhi has had such a powerful impact on the way of thinking of our friends in India but also because it was through him that we could and can be acquainted with the extremely intricate development problems of poor people, poor in the economic sense of possessing few economic resources.

The roots of Gandhi's humanism may be different from ours but the unprecedented glow of his humanity, self-devotion and moral strength penetrates through the armour of ideological differences, it assists, strengthens and carries forward all of us. The power and attractive force of great personalities who lived fighting and sacrificing their lives for the community lies in the very fact that by bridging the gap between ages, continents, ideas and differing historical situations they make us better and truer. Through their example we can be the architects of better futures for our countries and for mankind and braver and more loyal fighters in the great cause for a more cultured and juster world.

LÁSZLÓ SIKLÓS

TACKLING SHOP FLOOR MORALE

The "Socialist Brigade Movement"

Ten years ago a movement was started in Hungary with the aim of improving people's attitude to their work and interpersonal relationships at their place of work. Since its inception a great many people have joined most of them convinced that their efforts will prove fruitful.

The movement constantly changes. The way everyday life shapes, the desire for a higher income, the rate of industrial development, changes in economic policy, the shortage of skilled workers and many other factors all affect it. That is why it tends to show how society has changed and it even to some extent reflects progress.

Management is able to prescribe working hours, the amount workers are expected to produce and the quality of work demanded. But there is no way of regulating the subjective attitude of individuals toward their

work. And yet it is not a matter of indifference—either for the worker or for management—in what state of mind those employed spend the eight hours a day on the job.

The same holds for interpersonal relations at the place of employment. Most people more or less comply with the rules of living and working together, but they cannot be ordered not to dislike some of their colleagues, and to stop all their petty quarrels and intrigues from one day to the next. And yet hostility and disgust, and even just closing up, leads to similar behaviour by others; aggressive emotions and just plain selfishness create an unpleasant atmosphere, and all this influences one's work and even private life.

Since action by the authorities in this particular field would be doomed to failure —probably everywhere in the world—none is taken.

In Hungary the "Socialist Brigade Movement" attempts to deal with precisely these problems.

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In 1959 groups of workers employed on heavy jobs—workers in the iron industry—made up their minds to do something about those situations where they are at the mercy of accidental features in the way their group is made up, such as someone's moods or whim. At a given place of work many kinds of people come together, some are well-trained and qualified, some can just barely cope with the job; some are well-educated and industrious, others may not even have completed primary school, some try to help their mates when those were in trouble, others remain indifferent even to tragedies in the lives of their fellow-workers.

Since they were working in groups—in what were called brigades—each group set itself special tasks and goals, to achieve better results in their work, to improve their training and learn more about their trade, to appreciate their fellow-workers and to try to help each other in their individual and even personal difficulties.

Daily papers and illustrated magazines carried articles on the emerging movement, and even after the first wave of enthusiasm was spent socialist brigades were formed all over the country.

Today socialist brigades are formed wherever work is done in groups or in close association. The brigades always adjust themselves to local conditions and circumstances, and determine their tasks accordingly.

No socialist brigade can be formed by definition within administrative instrumentalities such as ministries and local government councils, and other places where individual responsibility and decisions or creative independence must prevail, for instance, among physicians, judges and artists, even though medical teams and teams of artists often work together.

At the beginning brigades joined the movement spontaneously. Groups of workers who were interested in doing better work, expected to raise their production figures, and, by developing genuine group solidarity, to utilize some of their latent resources, set themselves the challenge of becoming part of the movement and pledged their support. But by the beginning of the 1960s it was becoming obvious that the very working groups who would be most beneficially affected by the movement, groups where work discipline was lax and which were without any kind of cohesion, were the ones remaining outside. Consequently the management, the shop foremen and the trade union secretaries or other local representatives of the trade unions began to encourage groups of workers to form socialist brigades.

Of course, economic incentives can help also.

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The setting was a shop in a small town, selling clothes and footwear. The sales girl was an attractive red-head, just a little on the plump side. She served her customer before talking to me.

"Where eighteen women work together," she explained, "there are problems. You know it's not so easy being shut up together

for eight hours every day in this little shop, for years on end. The girls quarrel with each other and jump at each other because of little things, and, of course, even more so if there is real trouble. One is getting a divorce, another one is pregnant, she has no flat of her own, she fought with her mother-in-law, her husband was unfaithful to her, she was unfaithful to him. Manci has better breasts, Kati likes men; one girl goes to the opera and the others nag her about it, an other girl to the Gypsy Ball out of curiosity and that is why the others picked on her. Finally the boss said that there was only one solution to stop all this quarelling: to form a socialist brigade. We really need to work together better because a department store will be built near here. Of course, this is not to say that this little hole is not growing, a new housing estate is going up, and just recently textile mills were built, and our little shop is really overcrowded most of the time, but still it will mean competition. We must do better work if we want to keep going next door to the department store."

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While the socialist brigade movement was spreading a lot of problems arose that had to be clarified. The trade unions took in hand the direction of the movement. The Central Council of Trade Unions worked out rules and proposed various pledges the brigades could make. Those who join the movement have to accept the rules.

When a brigade is formed it first elects a leader. Someone who is good at the job, has the qualities of leadership, is interested in many things, ready to make sacrifices for the others; someone willing to keep together the group and improve their sense of responsibility toward their work and each other. Someone who encourages them to learn more. There are places where such a leader can be found, there are places where no such person is available and the brigade is not a success.

"Our brigade is a flop," a friend of mine told me. "You see we don't have the right kind of leader. Uncle Sanyi would have been ideal, but he is too old and often ill. Therefore Józsi Kovács was persuaded to take on the leadership of the brigade because he likes to talk. He is a loud-mouthed, self-opinionated fellow. He does not work much, just botches it up, and then preaches to us. And when we ask him to do something for us, he says to leave him alone because he is busy with more important matters."

If the brigade is good, that shows in the first place in their work. Knowing this, early in the year when the management tell them about the yearly objectives, brigade members "pledge" to make a special effort along some line that will help to fulfil the plan.

In the industrial plants, for instance, many brigades pledge to reduce production costs. They pledge to make a better use of the available space and capacity, to maintain production at an even level, to increase the efficiency of the machines and equipment, to economize raw materials and power. They pledge to improve technical standards and the quality of their products.

"In our shop we are permitted 0.7 per cent of rejects as a maximum. We want to push down this figure to 0.3. It would mean 40,000 forints of surplus profit for our factory," a brigade leader told me.

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To make better efforts that are better than average, this is the basis of most of the production pledges made by the socialist brigades. They try to do everything just a little better than absolutely necessary, they carry out their assignment, and they do the job entrusted to them particularly well.

A tailor employed in a clothing factory was given a blueprint showing how he should place the pattern on rolls of linen. While he was working, he figured out that if he changed the arrangement of the patterns, his line could produce more dresses. Similar cases often happen; workers simplify the process, they reduce the number of operations, or somehow tap hidden resources in a way the

foreman or the planning engineer would not think of because they are not in such close contact with the job.

A brigade in a rolling mill decided at the beginning of the year that the roller train would never stop if it was up to them, that they would produce 3 per cent more than their target and of a higher quality. That was their pledge.

"We could not even complete half," I was told by the brigade leader. "Owing to a technical defect, the roller train was out of order for three days, and we had to send back the iron block from which we roll the sheet because of its poor quality. What we had in mind was supposed to be for a whole year—of course on the basis of the factory plan—and in the meantime the plan was changed... We still have the wish to do well. We visited the Ózd Metallurgical Works to exchange experiences. We saw a number of very rational methods there which should be introduced in our plant, too. We suggested it to the director, originally a worker like ourselves, promoted from the ranks; he said that our proposal could not be coordinated with the development plan."

The socialist brigades in the retail trade would like to achieve a higher turnover, clean and neat shops, tasteful wrapping and packing, and promise never to charge more than the fair price and to give fair weight. They hope that no customer will leave their shop without buying something.

We were in the knitwear department of a Budapest department store. The head of the brigade was glad to tell about her observations.

"When we get attractive merchandise, people crowd the department and we can hardly keep up with the rush. But when the merchandise is not good, we can't do anything. Yesterday I sold a single piece, and I had a hard time persuading the elderly country woman who was my customer to buy a cardigan which was two sizes too small for her for her niece... We are in the middle of the season, summer things are no longer sought after, and the autumn things haven't come yet. And then how are we supposed to wrap up everything nicely, when we don't get enough paper and enough bags? They say at the store-room that we squander the wrapping paper, although if a customer just comes up to me and begs me to give her some paper to replace a torn bag or for something she just bought at the market, I refuse her."

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Some of the pledges which seem peculiar and the obstacles which prevent the realization of realistic pledges, reflect the historical events of the past twenty years. Twenty years ago when retail trade was nationalized, competition stopped, and the sales attendant no longer had the incentive to sell, for the customer left his money with the state even if he went elsewhere to shop. The competitive spirit is reawakening again today. Although the shops and stores still belong to the state, they are competitors since within certain limits individual shops can determine their own price policy, some sell certain articles cheaper than others, others give little gifts or show extra attention to the customers, still others keep their stocks always well supplied and try to avoid shortages. This is, however, a long process which has only started now. The socialist brigades are trying to do what they can to promote the changes which are an improvement.

Often there is a gap between the pledges and their fulfilment. The good intentions of the individual are not enough to ensore the success of the movement.

Many brigades pledge to undertake too little already at the start, for they know in advance that they won't fulfil much beyond what is required. Others offer to do things which are really their basic duty. "We shall not be late for work," a brigade pledges. "We shall keep the shop clean and sweep the factory yard every Saturday," promises another one.

Some of the brigades, however, do want to do better and more effective work and

carry out what they have undertaken. We heard it from workers at a porcelain factory:

"Before our goods are marketed, the factory subjects every single piece to quality inspection. We said that we would control the quality of our own products and pledged to supply only faultless pieces. If some defective products are still delivered and the fault is discovered only at the shop that sells it, the worker to whom it is traced back pays the expenses. We enabled the factory to eliminate the job of quality inspection and in this way helped to reduce production costs. Now we get higher pay."

During the first years of the movement participants had ambitions of excelling without expecting any material benefit for their efforts. They rarely received anything in return. All the recognition and reward they got consisted in their photographs being put up on the notice board at the gate, or occasionally a little celebration held in their honour, briefly attended by the manager, possibly they were allowed to stay at the factory's holiday home without paying or they received a nominal sum of a few hundred forints.

The initial enthusiasm petered out with the years, the management often took advantage of the brigades' selfless efforts, their readiness to help. But the country's economic policy also changed.

Since January 1, 1968, the introduction of the new system of economic management, new principles have come into play. Prior to 1968 there were few companies where the individual had any direct stake in production, where he was provided with adequate incentives to produce more and better goods. Nor were wages sufficiently differentiated. The new system of economic management provides the incentive for the workers and employees to do better work: they get better pay for better results. This practice has changed the situation for the socialist brigades too. Now their motivation is no longer dependent merely on enthusiasm, there are financial incentives to spur their ambitions.

Of course, there are still difficulties. During my visit to a rolling mill I asked the workers there what was the reward for particularly good work.

"If we overfulfil the plan, we get good money—at least that has been the case since the introduction of the reform. But still not as much as we should get for the work we do," I was told.

But in a small brickyard in Transdanubia the situation has changed considerably.

"If we fulfil the plan, every brigade member gets 300 forints extra every quarter. Now they are beginning to pay for hard work. We get extra holidays after every two years we spend here, and those two or three days of extra rest are worth more than money."

In 1962 the movement indcluded 29,000 brigades with a total membership of 280,000. In 1965 there were already 54,000 brigades with 570,000 members. Of these latter 19,000 brigades have completely fulfilled their pledges and won the title of socialist brigade.

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Right from the beginning the brigades recognized that there are several prerequisites for being able to do better work. One of these is being highly skilled and well-trained in the job, and this takes constant study, and if need be one has to begin at the beginning.

Thousands of workers enrolled in the Workers' Evening School to complete the primary grades. Those who had finished their basic education, attended advanced training courses in their trade. At the same time the older and more experienced members of the brigades helped the unskilled workers in the group to advance to a semi-skilled status. Those who had the ability were sent to vocational secondary schools or industrial technical schools. By this time already a large number of non-physical workers had joined the movement. The less highly trained members of technical brigades—draughtsmen and technicians—enrolled in university courses.

It is always very tiring to study after work,

but they tried to overcome fatigue. Many of them fell asleep during the lessons, and a large number stopped after a few months. Still, some of them won the struggle against themselves and the difficult school subjects, and completed what they had begun. They joined special study groups and stayed after work in the special study rooms placed at their disposal at some of the larger factories.

A pensioned worker told us:

"In those years an arithmetic class was more important than work, no one could shirk studying. That was when I completed the seventh and eighth grades of primary school. All the people between 45 and 50 were studying. You see the brigade decided that they would send everybody to school, more knowledge was needed for operating the machines and understanding the more difficult operations. Even those who were ill came. I remember there was a man who was hard of hearing in our class, and the teacher always explained things to him after class."

The initial enthusiasm declined. Two years ago and last year, those who could, tried to get out of extra study. "We are no longer children," people will now say.

I visited a rural box factory in a fruit-growing region. After the shift hundreds of people were cycling out of the factory gate. The leader of the brigade named after Attila József, the great poet, told us:

"After work we wash off the dust, and the twelve members of the brigade scatter eight-ways, riding their bikes home to eight different villages. At home we feed the livestock, we hoe the garden, we take the children in hand, and it gets late without us noticing. None of us feel like studying."

Those who attend school leave work earlier for otherwise they would be late for the course. Those who study cannot do overtime, cannot work in the afternoon and ask to be spared from night shifts. At some places of work the others accept the sacrifice for their benefit.

A worker employed by one of the Budapest chemical factories told me:

"The management sign the needed permission and approve that someone attends evening classes. Thus they accept the obligation to give them time off. What I want to know is who will be willing to stay here and do overtime for those who are getting additional training? His fellow workers. If the person in question has been with us for some time and has earned our respect, it is all right. But even so one sometimes meets disappointments. There was a decent quiet lad who worked with us, I used to do overtime and night duty for him for three years. When he passed his exams, he left the factory. Since then I say that no one can be expected to be so generous. There is no sense in it. The lad I spoke of studied for himself, and you might say he did it at my expense and he stole some of my rest."

The self-education activity of the brigades still has not completely stopped. Those whose jobs demand it, or who have special talent and inclination study. But it was recognized that it is not worth the effort it takes to force those who do not want to study or who live in circumstances which mean that they are unable to afford the time.

The brigades began to educate themselves in a new way. Groups of eight or ten—more or less according to the place of work—decided what play to see together. In the small towns and villages where there is no theatre, every brigade member read two or three good books and spoke about them to his colleagues. If they did not understand something, or become especially interested in a topic, they invited a competent lecturer. After an evening at the theatre they sometimes asked some of the actors or the director to speak to them about the work and the performance. Some brigades even visit art shows. It even happened that a brigade invited the painter to explain his works because they could not understand them. In return the artist invited the brigade to his studio.

In most of the brigades there usually is a better educated person who stimulates and

encourages the others. They try to find things of common interest, and meeting with art and literature proves to be enjoyable for all of them. People who never read a book earlier now discuss novels.

Once I was travelling in a train among workers going home from work. Some were sleeping, others preferred to drink beer and play cards. But I noticed one man reading a thick volume.

"The brigade started me reading," he explained. "I never expected to get into the habit of reading. My wife did not believe at first that I no longer wanted to go to drink; she thought I was ill. I travel one-and-a-half, two hours a day. I know every tree in the landscape, but I still don't know literature."

In the early sixties only those were admitted into the movement who said they would go to the theatre with the brigade and read the number of books requested. But not everybody likes to read, and there are places which are a long way from the nearest theatre. Exaggerated demands produced a reaction: today most of the groups prefer to come together just for a little fun or amusement after work, to rest and relax. Some people object even to this.

"I disapprove of this type of gatherings," a brigade member active in the movement for eight years told me. "The women, the wives who scold and quarrel on account of these things are right. Why do we leave them out? Don't they deserve a bit of relaxation just as much as we do? There are so many things anyway to disrupt family life, why should the brigades act that way. And then not everybody likes to see the same faces around himself after work that he has seen for eight hours at the shop."

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In the 1920s and 30s the workers built up a solid front at their places of work—against the employers. After 1948 this kind of solidarity was no longer needed, the plants and factories were nationalized. Still a kind of cohesion and solidarity is still essential. Not against anyone or anything, but for each other. This is the kind of solidarity the socialist brigade movement is trying to develop again.

A member of long standing in one of the brigades at the Rolling Mill told me:

"In 1963 our most skilful mate began to build a house. He did not have much money, his wife was not very well and they had small children. Saturdays and Sundays we all went to help them. We laid down concrete, we laid bricks, everyone doing what he could do best. I had never done any carpenting, but the roof structure I rigged up is still perfect. The next year we added on a small room to my little house as my daughter got married. Then they came to help me. I figured out that I would have had to ask for a loan of 15,000 forints if I had had stone-masons to do it. Fifteen thousand forints are six months wages. This year we are going to help our youngest mate who is going to get married."

There are many ways in which one can help. Brigade members do not only help each other, directly. A very large number of brigade members donate blood without payment, both in industry and in offices, in town as well as in the country. Often an entire socialist brigade will appear at the infirmary or the room designated for the purpose when the mobile blood bank calls, giving as much collectively as fifty to eighty litres, for operations, accident wards and maternity hospitals. There is hardly any need to recruit blood donors: road accidents, industrial accidents, the illnes of friends and relatives are more effective than any Red Cross campaign.

The manner of giving help and sympathy is different everywhere and depends on the circumstances. A lot of people call on pensioned colleagues and help in heavy household tasks: the girls cleaning and laundering, and the men gardening. Others take home orphan children or children under state care from the institutions, giving them a holiday and some fun.

There are brigades which really go all out to help mates who are in trouble. Of course,

there are also some groups which do it half-heartedly only because they were persuaded at the beginning of the year or because one of them promised to do good irresponsibly, just in a mood of momentary enthusiasm. Then the brigade only pretends to fulfil their pledge. There is no thanks in it.

In 1969 as many as 1,100,000 people were active in 96,000 brigades, that is over one-tenth of the population of the country, and approximately one-third of all those in employment. Right from the start ten years ago, to the present the majority have been from industry. Out of the 26,000 employees of the Csepel Iron Works, 19,000 are brigade members, and out of 150,000 workers in mining, 73,500 belong to brigades.

In the course of time many were disappointed in the movement, and its selfless spontaneous character has changed. The movement has lost its glamour. And yet during the same period the number of participants nearly doubled.

This fact in itself provides an explanation. The movement became drab for the very reason that additional masses have joined it as a matter of form only. Those who volunteered eight or ten years ago to improve their relationship to work and to each other, really believed in what they were doing. At that time there were one or two socialist brigades in a bigger workshop, or department store. The members were in the centre of interest, they were admired and regarded as exceptional people, almost heroes. Today some 15 to 20 brigades are working in the same shop or place of work. In this way their role, their position and their output has ceased to be exceptional. Not only because of their numbers, but also because they offer to do less, and even what they promise they achieve only with difficulty. As the movement has become a mass movement, standards have dropped.

Greater material incentives since the introduction of the new system of economic management spurs workers to produce more and to produce higher quality goods but this is still not enough.

A factory manager told me:

"It makes things more complicated that there is no surplus of manpower. Rapid industrial growth is faced with a labour shortage and the shortage is getting worse. It tempts workers to try to find better jobs for themselves. They move from plant to plant, always to the job which seems to be the best at the moment. It should be one of the responsibilities of the brigade movement to limit this senseless mobility which, in the last resort, is bad for everyone."

Members of brigades which work honestly, where members are loyal to each other and their place of work, stay on. But often their loyalty is insufficiently appreciated by the enterprise both morally and financially. When a factory employs a new worker and the new person asks for higher wages than those get who have been working there for fifteen or twenty years, the enterprise often satisfies the request.

Where this happens brigade members become discouraged and disillusioned.

These problems were discussed at the national conference of the Trade Unions in the spring of 1969. The minutes of the conference show that despite faults and mistakes, there are still ample reasons for the movement, and it will continue to be needed. While economic life is improving and the general approach to life is changing, it strengthens the individual sense of responsibility, helps those who are working side by side to work together in a collective, helps them to improve their skills and possibly even their cultural and general educational standards. At some places it helps more, at some less.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

FROM A CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

SUSAN SONTAG: *Against Interpretation*
Farrar, Strauss and Giraux Inc. New York, 1961

Her fame caught up with me sooner than her book which came to hand regrettably late; and her fame sounded exciting.

The book—as could be expected—is not the equal of its reputation. Although *Against Interpretation* is an interesting, exciting book, the work of a lively spirit who can really think, has artistic sensitivity and writes well, an epoch-making or unique quality can hardly be discerned. It may be said with assurance: the work is weakest where it is most bent on tearing down walls where it forges a theory and sketches aesthetics; and it is everywhere first class even challening, where the author employs her passionate and combative artistic temper, her wide, active and lively reading, her alert intellect and supple aesthetic sensitivity on dealing with concrete works of art.

The eponymous essay "Against Interpretation" tries to force open doors—and not very recently opened ones either; it does not fight really against interpretation, but against arbitrariness especially against Freudian and Marxist abritrariness, or at least what she describes as such. Miss Sontag wishes to see and to describe a work of art (first of all, of course, a work of literature) as an independent object living according to its own laws, independent of its social, historic, and even psychological and moral implications, and rejects all these, and especially the reading of the intentions of the author into his work, as manifestations of critical arbitrariness. And in the programmatic second essay "on style", she argues against the separation of form and content as if this were something never-heard-of. At the end of a long (and in many respects very appealing) train of thought she comes to the conclusion that form too can be content, and that content too (first of all action and Miss Sontag does not mean anything else by story) can be form.

It is well-known even to those superficially acquainted with the development of aesthetic thought that in the above theses, even if they are clothed in and equipped with examples taken from however modern or at least contemporary artistic products, there is very little that is really new: it may be said that both have a history of at least half a century. The interesting thing is rather that all this could have been that exciting in the United States in the late fifties of the twentieth century; it seems that both the old truths and the fallicies have to be discovered again and again.

Actually, it is not the philosophic-aesthetic basis of her views that is interesting, but the conclusion at which Miss Sontag arrives through them (or rather in spite of them) in her analysis of concrete works. This is interesting also because Miss Sontag is a

gifted novelist. And the essays of this volume were born between the two novels; as she herself writes in the preface her activity as a critic is not a by-product or her creative work, but relaxation between two creative periods—the realization by the author of her own problems through the discussion of the achievements of others.

The book reviews—which make up the bulk of the volume, twenty out of twenty-five articles—have two especially interesting aspects. One is the discrepancy between the attitude she adopts and the results of putting it into practice. Miss Sontag, in spite of her declared aims, also explains and interprets as soon as she meets a work of art, she seeks the roots of the artist's inspiration, the lesson to be drawn, the "intellectual content" and its formal realization, the hitches and contradictions between the task set and its execution. But can anybody who writes criticism do otherwise?

One can obviously imagine a method according to which a critic describes the work as if it were the positivist description of a work of art (the quantitative art analyses that have become fashionable recently, lean strongly in that direction). But what is this good for and for whom? Such a description of a vase from the Ming-period could have been justified as long as photography and photographic reproduction had not reached and adequate stage, and there is some room for it even in addition to photographs, primarily in the clarification of the relationships of proportions and forms; because that vase is unique and not everybody who is interested can see it. But literary works and films (Miss Sontag deals in essence only with these) are multiplied art and only make sense if they are multiplied; those who want their description, can have direct access to the work itself. If the reader heeds the critic, it is because he feels that he has not understood all the sensed beauties of the work, or because he cannot grasp on his own what disturbs him in the enjoyment of the work; therefore he needs the assistance of the "expert". (Disregarding now the function of information, of the drawing of attention, which is also part of criticism, and an important moment in Miss Sontag's writings too.) And this "assistance", whether it refers to form or to content—whether it approaches the work from an intellectual or from an emotional point of view—is necessarily and inescapably the moment of "interpretation"—whether the critic admits it or not.

The other interesting feature of these articles is that they are strongly, almost exclusively, centred on Europe. As if we were now witnessing the opposite of the intellectual movement of the forties and early fifties; then European literature and film were fertilized and kept in a state of excitement by American art—first of all, by the novel and the film, and to a smaller extent by the visual arts and poetry—but now, it seems, and Miss Sontag's book also bears witness to this, American artists again turn with intensified interest towards Europe, expecting the revival of art from here. It is significant and characteristic that out of the twenty essays to be found in this book, there aren't perhaps even five dealing with American phenomena—and those too belong to the sphere of the literary or scientific essay. (This does not mean that Miss Sontag's area of reference and material of association is not filled amply with American phenomena and works; but there too, the film is represented much more heavily than the novel or literature in general.)

However, Europe—even if it perhaps appears to be a single phemonenon when viewed from the United States—is a very varied world on the map of the human spirit; which then is its landscape in which Miss Sontag is at home? The names with which she deals, inform us unequivocally. Of the prose-writers, Cesare Pavese, Simone Weil, Camus, Michel Leiris, Nathalie Sarraute have special essays devoted to them, and of the theoreticians Lévi-Strauss, György Lukács and Sartre. Ionesco, Hochhuth and

Peter Weiss are the playwrights and Bresson, Godard and Resnais the film-makers whom she discusses.

Even if we take in account the moment of chance—these authors had just had their book or work published in the United States at that time—the direction of the author's interest forms a tendency: the school of the "new novel" the group of film-makers grown out of the "new wave", the philosophers not opposing Marxism, but forming a separate school. (She writes of a single Marxist, György Lukács; and this is one of the most superficial and least well-informed articles in the volume. It solved the problem with dash rather than through profound study. This article as well as references in the others are convincing proof that Miss Sontag, although she seems to be a diligent and even passionate reader, has informed herself of Marxism not first-hand and not always from the best second hands.)

The above-mentioned tendency is again very appealing. Taking the risk that Miss Sontag chases me too, with a contemptuous smile, into the camp of the "interpreters", it has to be stated that this work of hers makes her a supporter—in sentiment and in thought—of the non-marxist Left. She is for the revolution in the arts, she does not recognize a correlation between this and the social revolution—but at the same time she does not deny either the necessity of the latter.

Miss Sontag has not got to waste words to prove that the cinema is art also, this is self-evident to her; artist-profiles, trends, individual careers take shape in her eyes with the same obviousness in this art as they do in literature for the man of letters. As a natural corollary to this, she is able to analyze films with extraordinay sensitivity, delicacy and differentiation. I have not read of Godard's *Vivre sa vie* any more thorough, better, more sensitive and more reasoned analysis than hers.

But the critic's trade plays its little tricks on Miss Sontag here too. She, who takes a stand against interpretation and moral evaluation in questions of art, when it comes to actual works of art, does not hesitate for a moment to interpret and to pass moral judgements; in her excellent essay on science-fiction films she clearly proves that these scientific thrillers while offering opportunities for the gratification of destructive and sadistic instincts are myths of the distrust and suspicion against science, the revolt against the role of the intellectual, and first of all myths of alienation in metropolitan life. And it is she who reproaches them for never even alluding to social conditions; their science has no social context, it is sheer adventure, serving the good or the wicked, without distinction. And she demonstrates of the "new novel" with the same assurance and resolution that it depicts an artificially narrowed down world for the sake of affected artistic aims—even though she affirms these artistic aims and recommends them as a general method in the interest of the further development of the novel, with the peculiar argument that is the easiest way for the novel to rid itself of the quality of being generally understood, of which modern music and painting have already "luckily" rid themselves.

I could go on long enumerating the merits and weaknesses of Susan Sontag's book. To mention but one or two of her merits: she is able to analyze Peter Weiss' *Marat/Sade* with true depth, because she recognizes in its success the so far most complete realization of Artaud's dramatic principles; her article on happenings is the most plastic and most penetrating one on this new artistic or pseudoartistic phenomenon, in which she recognizes on the one hand the manifestation of the crisis of the figurative arts, and on the other, a reappearance of the surrealist tradition. And it is not the least of Miss Sontag's virtues that she does not respect authority at all. She dares to say of Camus (on the evidence of his diaries) that he is not an important

thinker and that he was more phenomenon than achievement, and she has the courage to publish a sharp (and well supported) dissenting opinion on Brook's world-famous production of *King Lear*. And her criticism of Arthur Miller is brilliant and in my view very sound.

But here I have to stop. I cannot take one by one her explained or hinted at opinions, I cannot rejoice or fume over them in public one by one. One has to be grateful for the phenomenon: Miss Sontag's volume of reviews and essays is fresh evidence that in the republic of writing there is a dialogue over the frontiers, and if life in Europe is becoming strongly Americanized from the material point of view, intellectual life in America—at least in her best sons and daughters—has recently become Europeanized. And this holds more promise in the arts, but perhaps beyond the arts too, than can be fathomed in this moment.

PÉTER NAGY

PAUL ASTON

INSTANT LITERARY TOURISM

"I think I ought to bid adieu to my friends with the same solemnity, as if I was going to mount a breach, at least, if I am to believe the information of the people here [in Vienna], who denounce all sorts of terrors to me." (Lady Mary Wortley Montagu writing to Alexander Pope in 1717, prior to setting off for Hungary.) The German tribes of the ninth century had full reason to look with alarm on the predatory activities of the Hungarian marauders in their territory; and the humanists of the Renaissance might justly have held that the Hungarian concept of culture was suspect (despite the splendid library assembled by the enlightened King Matthias Hunyadi) when a Hungarian engineer named Orbán in 1453 succeeded in producing a monster cannon which enabled Mehmet the Conqueror to flatten the walls of Constantinople and so break down the eastern bastion of European culture. But there can hardly be a country today that has more respect than Hungary for the concept of world literature, and does as much to further a knowledge of foreign literatures among its own citizens, among whom a fashion for Villon, Dostoevsky or Shakespeare (in translation) may be just as potent as the cult of national poets like Endre Ady or Attila József. Hungarian writers, meanwhile, may justly feel aggrieved that they know more about the outside world than the outside world knows of them.

Happily, a latter-day reverse trend is becoming more and more apparent as a number of Hungarian works are translated into other languages, in the case of poetry by noted foreign poets; while in the field of prose, the Corvina Press continues to publish novels and short stories in English and other European languages. Thus for a modern traveller the exploration of these works, some of which, like a good travel agent, I propose to serve up here in brochure form, need hold none of the terrors foretold by Lady Montagu's jeremiah friends in Vienna. I hope the noble lady's elegant scorn will prove applicable here, too: "I can hardly forbear laughing, when I recollect all the frightful ideas that were given me of this journey."

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As another English traveller (Miss Pardoe) remarked in 1839, "Pest is decidedly one of the most cheerful-looking cities in Europe." And in the *Crimson Coach** by Gyula Krúdy, we are presented with a remarkably rich portrait of the city's "gaiety" and sophistication and how it draws and misleads would-be Bohemians from the provinces. The story itself is slight. A pair of personable but not very brilliant provincial actresses come to the capital, attracted not by the offer of a job, but in search of the bright lights. Being out of work, they are supported largely by a tempestuous, middle-aged aunt, likewise from the provinces, who also comes to Pest every so often in search of the bright lights and lovers. One day the sight of a splendid crimson coach sweeping down Andrássy Avenue at dusk focusses the dreams and ambitions of the two young ladies on the person of its owner, a legendary figure in Pest life—the millionaire baron Edward Alvinczi. Hereafter the efforts of one of the actresses, Clara, concentrate on finding access to the world symbolized by this splendid figure, who for her is "the gate of the great world." A series of tableaux follow as Clara's guide, a gloomy and perpetually frustrated Mephisto-figure known as Casimir Rezeda, who is by profession an unsuccessful newspaper editor, shows her scenes from the Bohemian life of actors, journalists, courtesans and poets. Clara's meetings with Alvinczi are brief and embarrassing. Rezeda's affair with Clara is even more brief and unsatisfactory, and the actress leaves to take up a job in the provinces.

Time matters in the story only inasmuch as it is nearly always May. The end of the story comes when Clara has run the whole gauntlet of temptations and not succeeded in catching hold of any of them. In the words of the other actress, Sylvia: "When we came to Pest, we thought that this was the start of the wonderful, amusing society life. I... always believed that something extraordinary was going to happen if I settled in Budapest. But nothing happens at all." While for Clara and her love for the great Alvinczi: "Let me be always as happy in my life as I am now. Let me never have any other love than the one whom I hardly ever see. Let me never be his... I am like the women who knit stockings all their lives and knit into the purls all their thoughts, longings, dreams."

For Rezeda, the situation is even more unhappy: "Rezeda is a scented flower. The flower of provincial girls." "Thus Mr. Rezeda lived for his loves—and did not even get as far as the bedroom of the merchant's widow." He buries his frustration in the world of poetry, and outwardly in lethargy and an assumed cynicism.

It is not by chance that the story is set in the behind the scenes stage of the theatre, journalism and poetry. All the unsuccessful figures occupying this stage are delightfully real, while the one really successful wordly figure, that of Alvinczi, is really an inflated caricature of all the other characters' dreams and hardly has any substance at all. It is the gentle wit with which Krúdy passes his pantheon of dreamers before our eyes which brings his impressions of Pest to life. It is almost as if *Vanity Fair* were recreated in impressionistic stage terms—as the scenes change we catch the smells of the city, or the strains of music from a nearby music palace. The characters treat their rooms like stage settings and their clothes as theatrical props as befitting the make-believe of their existences. And throughout the book a thin vapour of sensuality lingers, linked to everyday objects in a way which makes Krúdy's impressionism wholly sensuous. The book's great popularity ever since its first appearance in serial form in 1912 is no doubt due to the precision with which Krúdy catches the nostalgia for the Pest of the turn of the century and the great vigour and humour with which he expresses it. The translator,

* Gyula Krúdy: *The Crimson Coach*; Corvina Press, Budapest, 1967. 215 pp. Translated by Paul Tábori.

Paul Tabori, has done a service in making it available to English readers.

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Krúdy's style is essentially literary and full of delightful *apercus* which can be quoted out of context—photographic details, as it were, for the literary traveller. A number of contemporary writers, including Endre Fejes and György Moldova, have chosen the anonymity of the documentary style for their medium, because instead of describing the individual as he tries to impose his dreams and ambitions on reality, as Krúdy does, they are interested in characters who react to the tide of events. In Moldova's *Dark Angel*,* the starting point of the story matters very much. The central figure, a 17-year-old boy called Csaba Válent, after the collapse of the 1956 uprising, is left to fight on with the unchannelled anger of youth. His illegal activities soon involve him in trouble with the authorities, and he is sent to work in a reform school in the country. Here he creates a favourable opinion of himself among the supervising officers, and among other things completes his school examinations. After his release, he takes a job with the bus company; but the main part of the story describes his attempts to come to terms with himself and the people around him, particularly the women he meets. The anger, or rather uncompromising attitude he had manifested in the uprising, lead him to break with all the people with whom me might have formed a satisfactory relationship—his probation officer, his first lover, some fifteen years older than himself, his parents and finally Éva Őri, the Jewish girl he loves. None of these friendships allow him to form some sense of purpose because they are all based on an unequal relationship which his fierce sense of independence will not permit. The break with Éva, closing a relationship in which all the subconscious forces of attraction and repulsion had been brought into play, decides him to return to N., the place where he spent the period of his sentence, as being the only opportunity for him to undertake some purposeful activity.

Csaba is very much an outsider, and as such atypical, but his story does raise many of the questions facing many young people in the transition from youth to adulthood —what to work for, who to work with, what things are worth bothering about. The impersonal, wholly narrative style—the only sentences in quotation marks are snatches of verse, the questions at the examination, clichés and excerpts from a war-time diary —holds the main figure at dispassionate, but also compassionate, case-book distance. At times the boy's refusal to accept the commitments of personal contact is irritating, but his clear-headed assessment of himself and his situation always regains our sympathy. The book is an engaging document of a dilemma which affects not only young Hungarians.

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A similar restlessness, a search for affirmation affects the characters of some of Imre Sarkadi's intensely personal short stories, collected together in a volume called *The Coward*.* There is space here to mention only two of these, the first and longest title story and the short, incomplete "Adventure with a Wolf." *The Coward* tells of a thirty-year-old woman married to a successful sculptor, who after ten years of marriage realizes that she has come to an impasse. Her physical beauty and her intelligence serve only as fitting adornments for the successful artist in his social life, and as a handy model in his creative life. A chance meeting with a young admirer tempts her to escape and form a new, more emotional relationship. In doing so however, she would

* György Moldova: *Dark Angel*; Corvina Press, Budapest, 1967. 286 pp. Translated by Ursula McLean.

* Imre Sarkadi: *The Coward*; Corvina Press, Budapest 1967. 148 pp. Translated by Barbara Scott, József Hatvany, Andrew Feldmar.

have to abandon all the material comforts her husband provides, a comfortable home, money, a car, and though she willingly provokes physical danger and pain to prove her courage—seizing a viper by the hand, and subsequently cutting open her wound with a knife to suck out the poison—when it comes to her way of life, she is unable to make the sacrifice. Her very human reaction is the exact opposite of that of the animal in the "Adventure with a Wolf." Provoked unneccessarily by a lone skier in the Bükk mountains, the wolf proves that though the challenge is wanton on the part of the human, he can rise to it, and the nobility of his death gives rise to remorse in the conscience of his adversary. The degrading manner of its death does not debase the animal in the way the "coward" Éva's failure to escape drags her down. Conscious of her weakness, she sinks below the level she had formerly maintained, and accepts as a lover a man whom she would not have dreamt of considering before, and "from now on it will go on like this until I grow old and die."

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The tersity of Sarkadi's prose, and his ability to choose striking symbols pinpointing conflicting attitudes, make his narrative very forceful and thoroughly readable. The issues he raises are valid themes for discussion in any language, which makes the business of the translator that much easier. Quite often the background, with a relatively unfamiliar literature like the Hungarian, is so essential to an understanding of a writer's work that the foreign reader is deprived of much enjoyment unless he has some personal knowledge of the country. No extent of footnotes and forewords can really act as a substitute. Translators are reduced to such baffling remarks in their introductions as "the writer, as a poet, lies somewhere between Paul Valéry and T. S. Eliot, whereas his novels are more likely to remind us of Gide and Joyce"; or "this character was the toast of Budapest, a combination of Marie Lloyd and the Gibson Girl"; or of an untranslatable concept, "*pálinka* is a sort of fruit brandy, the Hungarian schnapps or slivovits"—who could tell from the last, for instance, what *pálinka* means in the Hungarian mind, or particularly the Hungarian stomach?

Much of Hungarian literature is thus deeply rooted in Hungarian conditions, added to which is the complication that it is written in the Hungarian language. Certain fragile concepts, especially verbal humour, get lost in the translation; which is why I am doubtful about enthusing too much over the next work, as it takes us to the provincial and rarified world of Transylvania, the land of the Székelys.

One of the standard Hungarian anecdotes about the Székelys tells of three peasants who sit down to play cards after lunch. Just after nightfall the sound of dogs barking in the village penetrates the silence of the room. Half an hour later one of the players, having just produced a winning flush, says: The dogs are barking in the village. About eleven, his neighbour turns up trumps, and says: Must be a fox. Midnight is long past when the third pays out heavily, and exclaims irritably: Look, are we talking or playing cards?—Unfortunately, the stock image of the Székelys does not do justice to their native wit. When I first read *Abel Alone** a pleasant tale forming part of a trilogy by the late Áron Tamási, I appreciated the scenic descriptions of the Carpathian Alps and the brooding presence of nature in human activity. This is after all a country of legends, where many of the Hungarian medieval ballads took their most characteristic form. I was however unprepared for the precocious quick-wittedness of the central character, a boy of fifteen who is sent by his parents to work in the Hargita hills all by himself as a forest guard. But a recent visit to the country soon convinced me that

* Áron Tamási: *Abel Alone;* Corvina Press, Budapest, 1966. 168 pp. Translated by Mari Kuttna.

native Székely shrewdness may make its appearance immediately after a child begins to speak. Indeed, one vexed uncle of my acquaintance, provoked out of his avuncular benevolence by some unexpectedly felicitous sallies on the part of his eight-year-old niece, actually began to *argue* with her as if she were an adult. As Abel discovers, this sort of tolerance is possible only within the family. A quick tongue may be useful in difficult situations; but when dealing with a bank director cum boss, or timber carters, marauders or Rumanian gendarmes wit may invite either suspicion or a violent reaction. Abel realizes this: ' "Have some sense,' [the friar] said. 'I wish I had less,' I sniffed." But in fact he has enough discretion to avoid serious clashes with older people. "For the future, I'm resolved to live like a man and use my own head."

As an example of Abel's approach to his forest-guarding profession, I shall quote a brief passage from the early part of the book, when the boy discovers a cache of explosives and sets fire to one of them to find out what they are. The bomb explodes, causing havoc among the trees. "Then I went and took a look at the other eleven iron pumpkins. Luckily they weren't infected by the desire to explode like their mate, for they were still humping in their nests... I came back, and couldn't wonder enough at the amount of power such a small bomb could produce. I measured up the torn-out tree and found it would be enough for about ten cartloads. As I decided this, I suddenly recalled that the director had promised me all the trees that the storms uprooted. 'Well, Abel, you can make eleven more storms', I said, and cheered up no end."

In translation some of these humorous passages lose their edge, but sometimes I think the translation might be a little sharper. If Hungarian books are to be as successful on the market as they deserve to be, then only the finest attention to detail in translating a given work can help the foreign reader familiarize himself to the echoes of an unfamiliar language.

With this very brief package tour of some works of Hungarian literature, I have endeavoured to show that to venture into the land of Hungary through its books should not leave the reader, again in Miss Pardoe's words, "in the slighest degree disappointed on a longer look." One may hope that a closer acquaintance will precipitate a similar effect to that evinced by a contemporary of John Paget's in 1835, "a learned country man of ours, whom spleen or the fidgets had driven so far from his usual haunts about Westminster Hall," who "declared with open eyes and gaping mouth that he had discovered Pest!" Or does tourism of any kind serve mainly to confirm preconceptions?

CALM AFTER THE STORM

One at times gets the impression as if in the seemingly regular output of books there were also occasional "blasts" similar to blasts of wind and suddenly arising currents in rivers. Of course blasts and currents also come to a standstill and literary blasts can also ebb, when neither good nor bad books seem to be emerging. 1969 Book Week, as I mentioned in the previous issue, was such a *blast* and the following summer has brought a temporary anti-climax,* a welcome chance to discuss some really interesting books I missed out earlier.

* See Endre Illés's short stories in Nos. 3 and 11 of The N.H.Q.

Emil Kolozsvári Grandpierre stressed in a volume of essays (discussed later in this article) that there is no living Hungarian poet who is not somehow or other indebted to Endre Illés. As far as I am concerned, I certainly feel this obligation. I feel indebted to him as a novelist for the many days and hours he spent over my manuscripts, as a man of letters, for even more. Endre Illés as the head of the best Hungarian publishing house and perhaps the best living Hungarian essayist prompted silent vows on my part since either out of mere whim or as a result of congenital laziness I was ready to accept the easy way out. (I confess that if his example was not enough to overcome my shortcomings, there was always the measure of his competence either to harass me or to encourage me.)

ENDRE ILLÉS: *Szigorlat* ("Rigorosum"). Magvető, 1969, 514 pp.

The same high standard can be discerned in Endre Illés's short stories* which recently appeared in a collected edition in a very original arrangement. When I speak about high standards I do not mean style and structure only, nor the attractive elegance of his writing, what I am thinking of is a high standard in characterization and presentation, a kind of finality and ruthlessness in judgement. The stories in this volume speak of a world which no longer exists—a world which passed with one's childhood and youth and a social class—that of the gentry and the upper middle class which was swept away by a changing social order. The "liars" and moral "gamblers" of Endre Illés represent this world, to borrow two titles from the author. Illés gives us a clue to his attitude: "... I was always largely interested in the source of origin of the lie. How it appears and in what disguise. In a great historical pageant the lie stands naked. But I tried hard before that to tear off the disguise..." This endeavour—and its result—has led to Illés being called "cruel," or more emphatically even "ruthless." The more so since he was trained as a medical practitioner. The reviewers could not help thinking of him with a surgeon's scalpel in his hand. This ruthlessness as his friend and critic István Vas said (discussed later in this article) is the measure of a high moral standard which in his recent short stories was made more intimate and colourful by a good dose of understanding and irony. Apparently Vas does not like the word "ruthless," I on the other hand consider the "surgeon" analogy superficial. Here is a sentence from Illés's introduction, concerning his time in medicine: "I was never attracted by practice, nor by the beauty of treatment. I was only interested in diagnosis." It is not only lies and hypocrisy which play an important role in Illés's short stories but man's defencelessness. Here is a man on whom cruel practical jokes are played, there is a girl who is treated by her brother with condescension as if she were a governess. It is neither crime nor catharsis which dominates in these stories but unpunished sin. There is nobody to take revenge for the victims, there is no sense of catharsis in the reader, we are revolted because our sense of justice has been hurt. Endre Illés may be ruthless as a writer but he certainly is a sensitive artist. That both are true can be clearly seen in his story "Judith." Judith is a vulgar disgusting woman, the widow of a great composer who is both revolting and painfully pitiable in her thirst for love.

In modern literature the classical observer, the type of writer training to transform himself, to conceal himself in the fate of distant figures seems to be more and more ousted by a more realistic type, one more truthful about himself, less distant, more of the Hemingway kind. There are few examples for the mixture of the two. But Endre Illés is certainly one of the exceptions. His autobiographical stories with a lyrical line are the best and I am thinking now of "Double Circle," one of the finest Hungarian short stories about a relationship full of mis-

understandings between a father and his son and the sudden death of the father. The stories dealing with the university years of the writer which appealed to me as a student, still gripped me just as much as years ago. Or perhaps even more. These stories did not fade after the passing of twenty odd years and they do not merely conceal the secret of Endre Illés's youth but to a certain expent mine also.

GYÖRGY MOLDOVA: *Az elbocsátott légió* (The Dismissed Legion). Magvető, 1969, 271 pp.

Endre Illés represents a high standard, György Moldova's latest novel has none. It is insolently superficial, and the credibility gap could not be greater. A bad book written by a minor writer is only boring, we may even feel pity for a good writer if in spite of good intentions he happens to write a bad book (this can happen to anybody). But if a talented writer like György Moldova,* makes a habit of following up a good book by three irresponsible, untrue and sensational ones, I am unable to find excuses for him.

The book itself hardly deserves notice, but its subject has prompted much, almost without exception adverse criticism.

Flórián Smidt, a peasant-boy who became an army officer in 1947, was arrested in the early fifties on the basis of trumped up charges. He moved from prison to prison, to internment camps, he had been tortured as many others were, both communists and non-communists. The ÁVO, the State Security Organs, the dreaded secret police of Rákosi, were responsible for these arrests.

Flórián Smidt nevertheless stayed a revolutionary and a communist, although the communist system had thrown him into prison. He even saved the life of an ÁVO officer in 1956. In 1956 true to his convictions he supported the system and he felt in the same way when the novel opens in 1958 and he gets a job in a boiler-room. One of the men in charge is an engineer, the very security police officer whose life was saved by Flórián Smidt in 1956. Inevitably these former security officers, dismissed by the new government and given higher or lower posts in various parts of the economic life, consider Smidt to be their friend. These men still stick together, they meet on seemingly innocent pretexts, they organize and they try to plant their own people into more important positions. They are convinced that the system was no longer socialist but a lukewarm sort of capitalism, that they were right and that they had done the right thing. In other words, the novel argues that with few exceptions they were all jolly good fellows and convinced revolutionaries and that it is not surprising that Flórián Smidt the revolutionary should mix with them. He is placed on a construction job in the country, there are differences of opinion, the lot he is involved with are exposed, finally a revolutionary like Flórián Smidt is sentenced. Moldova lets one feel that this is done in the name of the revolutionary and communist government.

I think that so much will suffice to allow anyone who is even slightly familiar with the recent past of Hungary to understand why this book should have been received with so much resentment and even hostility. Let me add for the benefit of the less well-informed that many of the present leaders had been inmates of ÁVO prisons and many still wear the marks of the torture to which they were subjected. Still more carry the invisible marks of terror. Consciousness of innocence was insufficient protection against insecurity, fear and torture. This book, provided it is meant to be taken seriously, advocates a lost and bad cause—and what's more, with bad arguments.

It is unnecessary to discuss ideological and political questions in this context. Not that I underrate them but I feel that they

* The following stories and reports by György Moldova have appeared in The N.H.Q. "Rags and Richess"in No. 21. "The Invincible Eleven" in No. 24. "The Tattooed Cross" in No. 33.

have little to do with the real worth and value of this book. Moldova's novels, as a matter of fact, are all cut from the same cloth in spite of their political implications. They are adventure stories and the political background and conflict is there *faute de mieux*. Hungary is a small country and Hungarian writers did not live in Alaska, Africa, or Haiti in the heroic age. One has to look for the equivalents of six-shooters, cowboys and Indians and Tonton Macouts in the violent and unruly recent political past. There appear to be more firearms in the hands of priests, students and former members of the security police in Moldova novels than in all the armouries of the Hungarian army, but never mind, exaggeration is one of the writer's stock-intrade.

What is the Moldova formula? The ingredients are a hero, a book-hero by preference, whose single property is that he is unshakable, whatever is done to him. He is beaten up, he is humiliated but he remains unshakable. He has his own laws to govern him which are like the springs of a watch. The hero besides being unshakable also gets going whenever the writer winds him up. He goes to the provinces to some construction scheme, he goes back to Budapest, then again down into the country. He is unshakable and moves. These are actually his two main qualities. He seems to be doing whatever he does complacently and without any particular reason. What he is thinking and feeling is left entirely to the reader. According to the behaviourist bible the reader has to supply a supposedly complicated emotional and intellectual life for a slightly idiotic hero. That's a full description of the principal character of every Moldova story. The minor ones are even more featureless. Moldova substantiates his attitude by what he claims to be a quotation: You can only call a man a hero who can't be budged from the centre of his being. I have no idea who the supposed American thinker is whom he claims to quote but in the light of any literature written after the Christian legends, this seems a naive illusion if not utterly silly. Nor are Moldova's heroes any different.

Yet Moldova has his virtues as a writer, he is a jolly good story-teller, his descriptions are extremely suggestive (if not quite accurate) and he can create an atmosphere. But in this last novel of his he is definitely below his usual standard.

EMIL KOLOZSVÁRI GRANDPIERRE: *Utazás a valóság körül* (A Journey around Reality). Magvető, 1969, 641 pp.

ISTVÁN VAS: *Megközelítések* (Approaches). Szépirodalmi, 1969.

Chance produced a pair of contradictory writers of belles-letters for the same review. It is tempting to deal with them contrapuntally, though such treatment may appear somewhat forced on occasion. Kolozsvári Grandpierre's novel *Tegnap* (Yesterday) and short stories have not received their due either from criticism, or the general public.* István Vas is a well-known poet.** Both volumes of essays are intelligent, individual and clear, yet entirely different in kind.

They do not differ in quality, only in character. Grandpierre the critic reacts this time to literature and (even more) to events of everyday life; István Vas, on the other hand, observes and analyses; his allergies seem to urge Grandpierre to write his essays, István Vas writes because of a desire to know and comment.

Grandpierre once said that a writer is determined by his obsessions. This volume of essays illustrates the point. Grandpierre's obsession as a writer is to fight against the morbid Hungarian sense of reality and against rigid patterns of thinking. He discerns them first of all in literature but his examples extend to the smallest trifles of everyday life,

* See Emil Kolozsvári Grandpierre "Womens' Life is One Long War," The N.H.Q. No. 34.

** See István Vas: "The Changing Image of Apollinaire," in The N.H.Q. No. 34.

from great Hungarian prose-writers down to the grocer round the corner. Grandpierre is entirely unprejudiced, and he deliberates everything judicially, he detests highbrow theories, hazy abstractions, and pedantic scholarship. His is a mind that Hungarians like to call a lucid French wit. He underlines this by reviving the somewhat old-fashioned form of the essay in dialogue. There are a number of these in the present volume, the best perhaps and the wittiest which we may call peripatetic meditations and annoyances. In them he sums up thoughts that are scattered throughout the essays. He actually enjoys being annoyed which becomes evident if one considers that his literary studies, such as those on Casanova, Anatole France, on style and on language, although convincingly intelligent, are less exciting than the others. (This statement is unjust bearing in mind the excellent paper on *In Cold Blood.*) In his dialogues on current culture, literature seems to play the least important role; like the sociologists he worries over insignificant trifles, such as the deterioration in the quality of a Serbian kind of *kebab*, waste in the use of garages, and other silly measures. He wittily states that in Hungary we can distinguish two types who do damage: the passionately and irresponsibly improvising *Hussars* and the careful petty-minded *grocers*, God help the area of economic life that falls into the hands of either of them.

One can get the impression that Grandpierre's essays are more practical concerning realities than most conventional ones. They actually are in the way they are written but in their subject they are even more abstract. Grandpierre is not interested in literature and in emerging realities but in forms of thinking, inhibitions, mechanisms both present in everyday life and literature as well.

Certain of his observations on Hungarian literature are *par excellence* literary. For instance, that Hungarian reality is an Oblomov one—not suitable for novels. There are many good short stories but few real novels since passive heroes are out of place there, tricks and misunderstandings are needed to make a novel out of what happens to them. Grandpierre does not develop this theory, he simply states it, making use of it when dealing with various authors. But unless he proves it, I am afraid that Grandpierre must stand convicted of the sin he claims to detest, the use of clichés in thinking. This cliché, by the way, is somewhat dated, it derives from the *Geistesgeschichte*-school of the early thirties, but it remains a cliché nevertheless. I do not consider Grandpierre to be a constructive thinker, he is more of a destructive critic. His irony, his passion, his learning and powers of observation are at their best when demolishing. It would be a pity to quote the trite cliché that it is easier to destroy than to build at this stage. The history of all long-lived theories indicates the contrary.

It seems irresistible, however, to use clichés as I wanted to introduce István Vas as a learned poet, when as a matter of fact he is also a born one. In fact all poets are both learned and born and Vas is one of the best of them. If it were not slightly feeble, I would quote an ancient cliché and call Vas a most learned poet, which his immense erudition and clear intellect make him. He is following one of the noble traditions of Hungarian poetry whose great representatives were János Arany in the last century and Mihály Babits in our own.

István Vas, in contrast to Grandpierre, only writes about literature and art. Let me add hurriedly that this statement also is superficial since any literary subject involves the weighing up of principles of conduct.

His *approaches*, as he modestly calls his essays, although written by a scholar poet, are not abstractly academic but very personal indeed. They always start from the experience of a reader of poetry, or someone looking at pictures or the attitudes of a translator. (A highly interesting section in his volume is called "The Diary of a Translator." It contains observations not only on the writers translated but also on the art of translation which, though it flourishes in

Hungary, has hardly been discussed other than in an occasional workshop piece. Common sense and logic are basic qualities in Grandpierre's writing, István Vas does not lack them either.) These intellectual qualities can hardly be regarded as virtues but they are definitely rare in obscure essays of the German variety which are common in Hungarian and should therefore be pointed out. This faint praise, however, is a personal experience for me. István Vas discovers obvious truths which I myself would not have discovered without his help, though I feel as if I had always known them. That Nelly Sachs, Constantin Cavafis, Saint-John Perse and many others became living figures in Hungary only thanks to criticism and translations by Vas is not surprizing since they were little known here. But T. S. Eliot, Apollinaire and Goethe also changed after I read Vas's essays though I thought I knew them well. I do not want to give a list of Hungarian poets since their names are hardly known abroad, though they are more important for Hungarians than better known ones abroad since discussing their principles and practices, Hungarians discuss themselves. Vas is capable to argue with us and convince us even where tastes differ because his statements are so clear and nevertheless not dogmatic.

I am hardly able to review this volume of essays. Vas not only forces his thoughts and forms on me but I blindly accept his arguments, his descriptions and his ideas. I am unable to find false tricks, cheap thoughts, a lack of taste or idiosyncratic views in his many-sided *approaches*. His integrity as thinker and critic would disarm a more bloodthirsty reviewer than my humble self. It was a pleasure to discuss his volume—I certainly enjoyed writing about it.

IMRE SZÁSZ

HUNGARIAN SYMBOLISM

André Karátson's *Le symbolisme en Hongrie. L'influence des poétiques françaises sur la poésie hongroise dans le premier quart du XX^e siècle* appeared as No. 40 in the *Recherches* series published by the *Sorbonne*. As the title implies the book deals with French influences on Hungarian poetry in the first quarter of this century. Karátson recently published a volume of short stories. He is a young literary historian who has been living in Paris since 1956.

The present volume is dedicated to the author's two teachers, Albert Gyergyai in Budapest and René Etiemble in Paris. This in a way indicates the two terminals of his activities and at the same time his chief interest: relations between French and Hungarian literature.

To start with, Karátson summarizes Hungarian history, culture and literature of the period between the death of Sándor Petőfi and the time Endre Ady first attracted notice (1849–1900). Then he discusses the work of the poets who were grouped around *Nyugat*, the leading periodical of the age, in general terms. They include Endre Ady, Dezső Kosztolányi, Mihály Babits, Árpád Tóth, Gyula Juhász and Ernő Szép. He relies on current Hungarian research, especially the work of Aladár Komlós and György Rónay. This section mainly serves to inform those interested who do not read Hungarian, and it must be said that he does a first-class job. What he does is to make quite clear to all those who read French that the symbolist revolution in Hungary necessarily followed

the decline of what is usually called the populist-nationalist school.

This is only one, and not even the most essential, part of Karátson's work. The analysis of the reception and the effects of French poetry is based on new or partially new research. Thus it has a great deal to offer to Hungarian readers, and also to those who are looking for detailed facts about the situation in various parts of the world in order to synthesize them into general principles in a study dealing with the history of style and that of the psychology of creative work.

Karátson points out in his conclusion how different the role and weight of symbolism were in Hungary and in France. Hungarian poetry took over from French symbolism precisely what it needed to express its thoughts and to renew its forms. This happened forty years after symbolism first flourished in France, nevertheless it was still an effective force in France. It is another question altogether that the work of Jenő Komjáthy, an important Hungarian poet of the *fin de siècle*, also prepared Ady's and Babits' revolutionary innovations, though he took other paths that were independent of French symbolism. Karátson touches on this question but he does not discuss it in detail. Hungarian symbolism was much more involved with the major political and social questions of the age than French symbolism. That is why the change of style is much more eye-catching, that is why the innovations were so opposed by the literary establishment which was conservative both in outlook and method. Another interesting question that still has to be examined is the influence of *fin de siècle* English and German poetry on Hungarian symbolism. There is no doubt that the liberating effect of Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud, precisely because it arrived so late, appeared in the hues of *fin de siècle* practice.

André Karátson begins the analysis of each poet with the textual criticism of French translations of his work. This helps to point out the similarities and the differences between the two styles, and leads up to the question of the taking over of themes and then to the dissection of Ady's, Babits's and Kosztolányi's idiom. According to his self-made rules he puts the emphasis on similarities, as all students of comparative literature do, he points out a great deal that is new, thus his discussion of the influence of Verhaeren on Kosztolányi and of the contemporary role of the child theme is most interesting. One side-effect is that he does not place sufficient emphasis on what is the essence of the work of this or that poet, for instance the extraordinary unity of Ady's symbols, their specifically Hungarian background and the internal relations of his mythology. French examples provided the initial impulse, but they then grew according to their own laws, and were forged into the sort of unity which could have reacted on modern poets anywhere in Europe, if they had known Ady. The sort of analysis will prove the value of Karátson's research which will show in what way Verhaeren elements shape as peculiarly Hungarian provincial themes in Kosztolányi's *A szegény kisgyermek panaszai* (The Poor Child's Lament), and also the psychological laws according to which poets assimilate their experiences.

In this and in other ways *Le symbolisme en Hongrie* is a thought-provoking work. Though Karátson only does the philological spade work, he does prompt Hungarian literary criticism to re-evaluate the rigid hierarchy in which the poets of the first *Nyugat* generation are usually placed. The most essential lesson the book teaches though is that the dialectics of French, English, German, Italian, etc. influences will have to be studied when Kosztolányi or Ady, Ernő Szép or Mihály Babits are weighed up, in order to get closer to establishing which are the specific and which the general characteristics of Hungarian symbolism.

PÁL RÉZ

ARTS

"HUNGARIAN ART 1945–1969"

Exhibition in the Museum of Applied Art

Twenty-five years is a long time in the history of art, particularly in this hurried age. Whichever twenty-five-year period of European art we take from the last one hundred and fifty years, we shall find many contradictory trends and artistic personalities, and such a luxuriance of artistic products that it is difficult enough even to survey, let alone to hold a historically authentic exhibition of an era.

The same applies to the fine arts in Hungary, whether we consider the first quarter of the century, or the period between the two world wars. And in the case of contemporary art, that is, if we wish to present the art of the last twenty-five years, the task of selection and arrangement is even more difficult, for we lack historical perspective, the sifting effects of time.

The Budapest exhibition held in honour of the 22nd International Congress of Art History was not preceded by very much scholarly preparation. The directors merely placed in rough chronological order almost a thousand paintings, sculptures and drawings, showing even some preliminary sketches, studies and photographs, thus undertaking mainly a descriptive enumeration. As a result of this unambitious conception, the show recalls the long procession of so-called Salon Exhibits of the past, notorious for their unimaginative selection and arrangement, where the multitude of run-of-the-mill work makes it difficult to notice the few significant pieces. For this reason the over-sized exhibition held in the Museum of Applied Art was of less interest to the general public than to experts, for whom it was a valuable opportunity of seeing again many earlier works all grouped together, offering a chance for comparisons and for the revaluation of old opinions.

Although its lack of scholarly preparation was obvious and its selection and arrangement seemed random, nevertheless material of a quarter century does offer many instructive conclusions. It indicates the laws along which the last twenty-five years of Hungarian art had developed, and even points out a certain process of classification. It is also indicative of the incessant dynamism of generations in art.

At the great turning-point of 1945 a generation of artists had reached maturity and the height of their creative powers: they were the ones born between 1895 and 1900, who subsequently developed their individual styles in the 1920s and 30s. The names of Aurél Bernáth, István Szőnyi, Jenő Barcsay, Béni Ferenczy, Ferenc Medgyessy, Dezső Bokros Birman and János Kmetty mark this generation.* These artists represented the phase of development which followed on the Nagybánya School, the Eight and Hungarian Activism; and who were shaped by the trends of Lyrical Impressionism, Neo-

* Of those listed, Aurél Bernáth (No. 5), István Szőnyi (No. 8), Jenő Barcsay (No. 15), Béni Ferenczy (No. 28), and Ferenc Medgyessy (No. 2), were discussed in The N.H.Q.

VIOLA BERKY: THE LONELY HILLSIDE
(Oil, 100 × 100 cms, 1967)

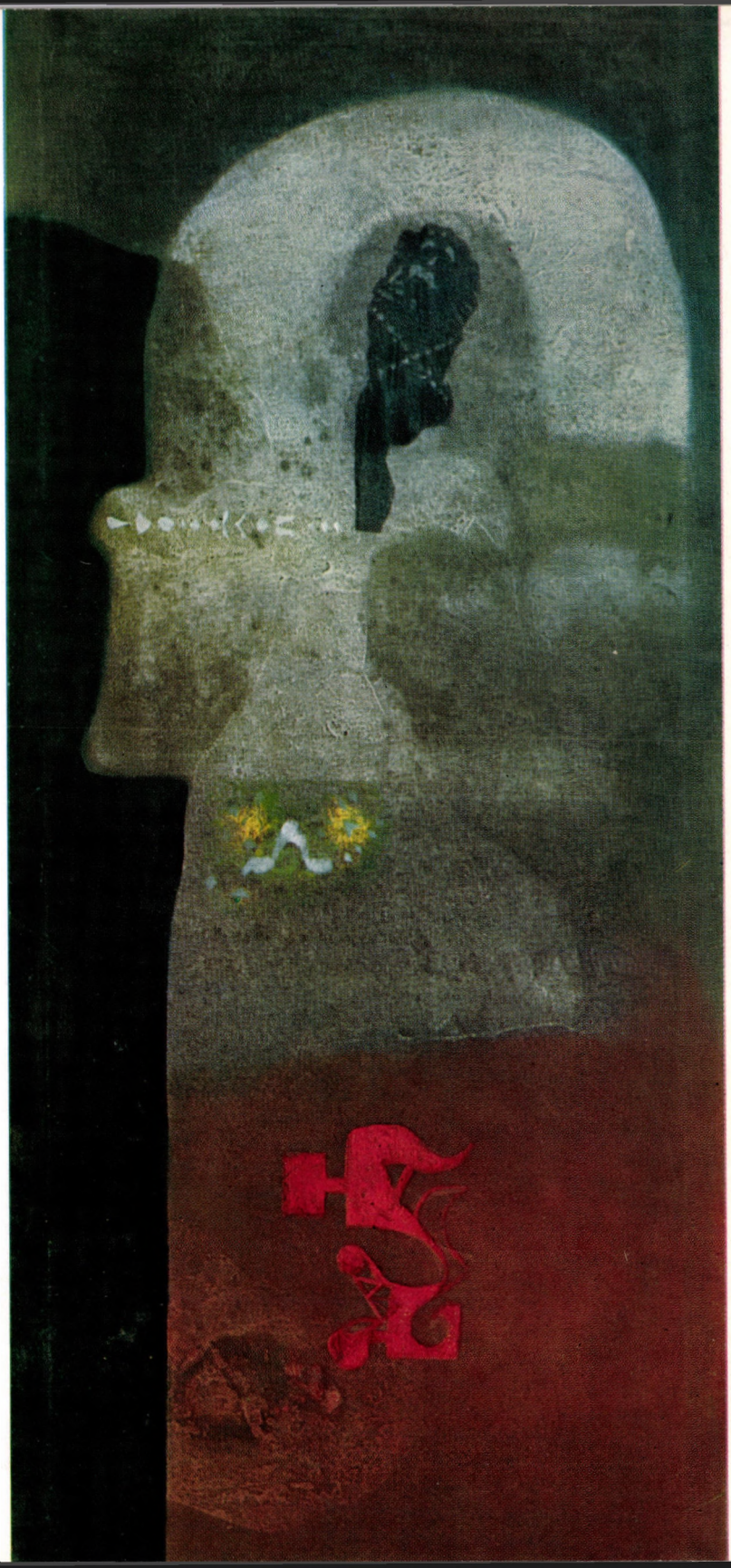
Photo Alfréd Schiller

JÁNOS OROSZ: FAREWELL TO THE LITTLE HORSE *Photo Alfréd Schiller*

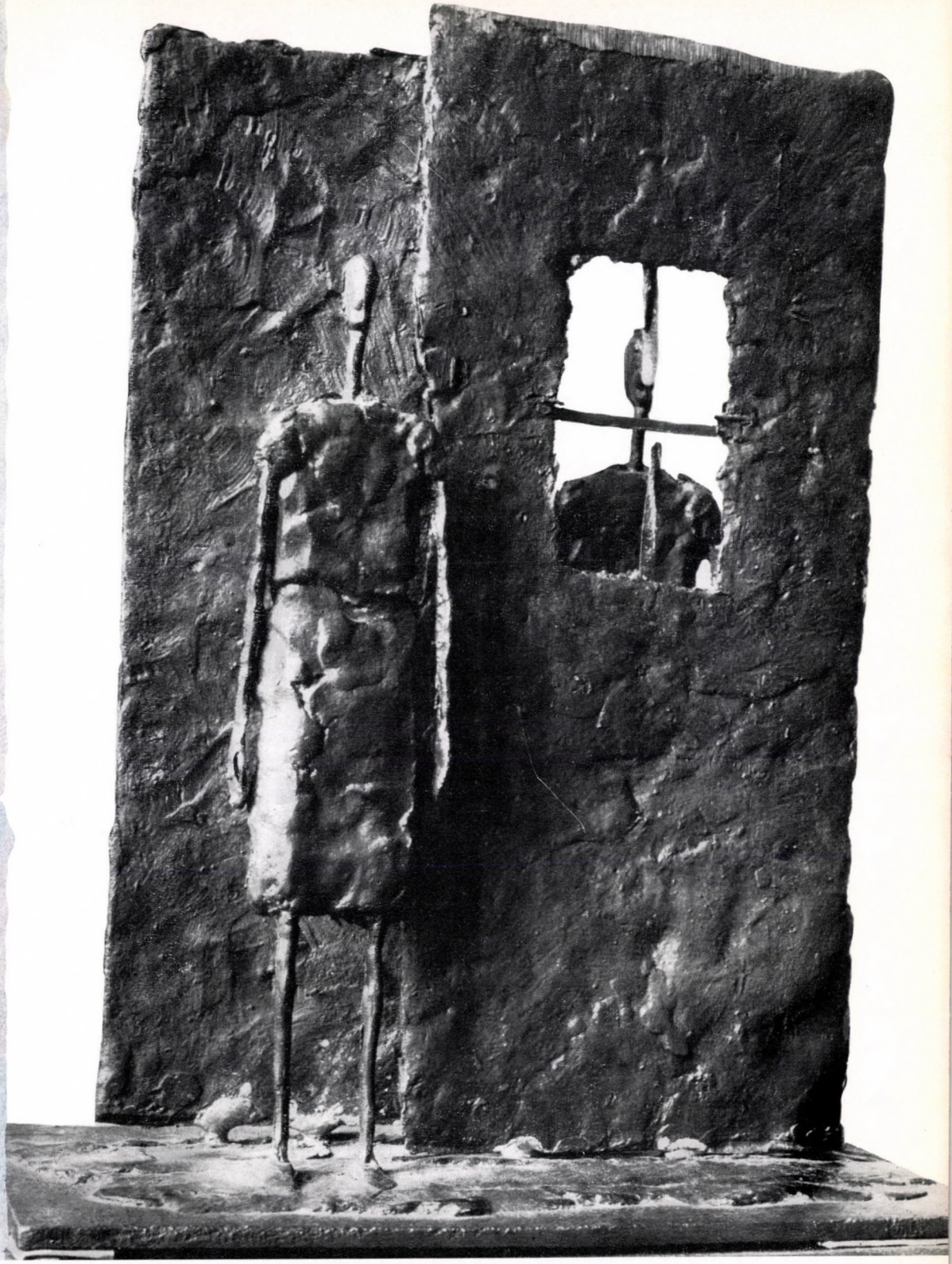
(Oil, 150×110 cms, 1967)

ENDRE BÁLINT:
THE LEANING
CROSS
(Oil, 120×51 cms, 1968)

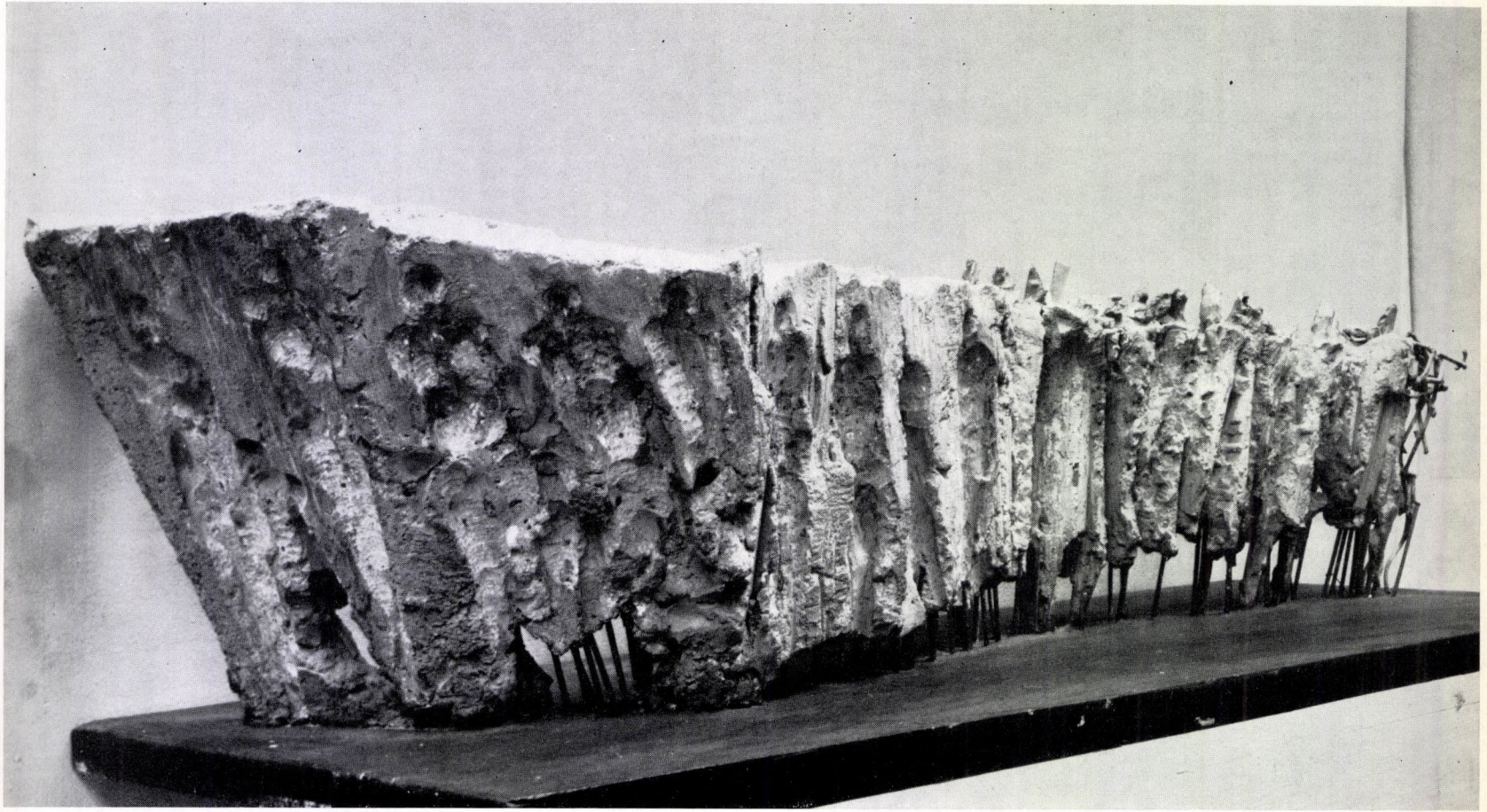
Photo Alfréd Schiller



Béla Kondor: The Wasp King *(Oil, 34×27 cms, 1965)* *Photo Alfréd Schiller*



ERZSÉBET SCHAAR: WALLS *(Bronze, 22 cms, 1966)* *Photo István Zilahy*



IMRE VARGA: FORCED MARCH* *(Steel concrete, 60 cms, 1968)* *Photo István Zilahy*

* A piece of sculpture evoking Miklós Radnóti's poem printed in our previous issue.

Classicism, Expressionism, and structural composition which was filtered from Cubism. This generation has not changed much even after the turning-point of 1945. Although some had produced major works only towards the end of the 1940s or even later, their art was rooted in the Hungary of the 30s. Of these, perhaps Jenő Barcsay has progressed the most; over the last ten years, he was able to expand the monumental, decorative, and at the same time constructive, style which he only began to develop in the 1930s. At the same time, this generation provided the college professors of the last twenty-five years, that is, the educators of the newer generation. This prolonged the survival of their particular styles.

The formula for the next generation is more complex, for those born between 1905 and 1910 or thereabouts. Although their artistic personalities had developed, they could not have created anything of lasting value prior to 1945, for the war interfered with their work. This generation was decimated and dispersed by the Second World War, in fact several of its highly gifted members, such as Lajos Vajda,* Imre Ámos,** and György Goldman did not even live to experience the Liberation. This generation was even less homogeneous than the preceding one, more deeply rooted in Hungarian tradition and was linked together by their common adherence to Naturalism. The majority of the younger generation was trained in the neo-classicism of the Roman School, but the great avant-garde wave of Hungarian art, the representatives of the specifically Hungarian surrealism of Szentendre, the non-figuratives, and the exponents of all the new trends aligned in the 1940s under the name of a European School also joined them. Endre Domanovszky, Jenő Kerényi, Endre Bálint, Dezső Korniss, Margit Anna, Miklós Borsos, Tibor Vilt and Erzsébet Schaár*** all belong to this generation, and so do László Bencze, Géza Fónyi, Gyula Hintz and many others more closely associated with academic tendencies. This generation faced, of course, a great challenge, for they could have been the ones to develop the stylistic ideal of the new revolutionary period of modern Hungarian art. Their ambition to do this was curtailed by the fact that during the years of the personality cult, on account of a dogmatic interpretation of socialist realism, conservative tendencies had prevailed, and the misunderstanding of the demand that artists should create works comprehensible to the general public blocked the development of individual trends and approaches. Only a few leading artists of this generation were able to attain an individual style expressive of their artistic personality.

There are even more contradictions in the generation born after the 1910s, who were just about completing their studies towards the end of the 30s. This is the "aborted" generation, ruined by the war years. Such outstanding members of it as Amerigo Tot, who lives in Rome, Vasarely or Simon Hantai, who have made their home in Paris, have lost their contact with the mainstream of Hungarian development too early to be typical of their contemporaries.

Those born in the 20s, who attended the College of Fine Arts after 1945, or had graduated afterwards, already show more independence and originality. Tibor Csernus, Lili Ország, Béla Kondor, Ignác Kokas, János Orosz, Imre Varga, Tamás Vigh and the younger graphic artists are the most notable artists of this generation. Their emotional and ideological world reaches back to the Hungary of the 40s, but they experienced—most of them as children—the war, and the age of great fervour and illusions as well as the era of disillusionment. They are the children and the pupils of a new society, and wherever their development has led, they have been affected by the problems of Hungarian society today. Hungarian and

* See The N.H.Q. Nos. 16, 23.
** See The N.H.Q. No. 16.
*** See The N.H.Q. No. 25.

European attachments, socialism and humanism, populism and modernity, acceptance of traditions and keeping pace with the times—all these are problems each had to solve in his or her own individual way. From preceding generations and from their masters they really learned only their craft. For some time they attempted to express themselves in the idiom of their teachers, but they soon grew up to change the course of modern Hungarian art, for they were the ones to break away from the naturalism of the Post-Nagybánya trend, to recognize the new achievements of Surrealism. In this respect, they are a transitional generation, as were The Eight at the beginning of the century. They have clarified some problems and presented others.

Essentially, it is the co-existence and interaction of these four generations that can be observed at the large exhibition held at the Museum of Applied Art. Unfortunately, only a very few of the newest works have been included, certainly not enough to epitomize the more recent trends. In this way, the problems of the new wave of the avant-garde are not shown by the exhibition, but then this new wave has come into being only in the last four or five years.

Even this brief survey generation by generation may indicate that several trends have mingled in Hungarian fine arts for the last twenty-five years. The groupings and alignments are complicated, and the main trends are not yet obvious. For this reason only individual artists and individual accomplishments stand out—or the lack of them. With the majority of the paintings and the sculpture it is apparent that they are closer to being products of good craftsmanship and documents of cultural history than genuine high-quality works of art. Unfortunately, the number of such culturally and historically interesting yet aesthetically insignificant pictures and sculptures is considerably greater than that of really high-ranking works.

If those responsible for the exhibition had decided to show only works above a certain standard, the exhibition might have assumed an entirely different character. For there are a few artists whose works show sufficient maturity to be judged by a purely aesthetic yardstick. Endre Bálint, Margit Anna, Béla Kondor, János Orosz, Lili Ország, Miklós Borsos, Tamás Vigh, Tibor Vilt, Erzsébet Schaár, Jenő Barcsay and Arnold Gross—to mention only a few characteristic examples —have exhibited works which deserve to be included in any, as yet non-existent, museum of contemporary Hungarian art.

LAJOS NÉMETH

MEANDERING RIVERS OF ART

"It is undoubtedly pleasant to remember days gone by. Whatever happened long ago, seems to have been more beautiful. But the theatre is the most beautiful. It is always different. Mysterious. The stucco decorations are beautiful too. They are wonderful. Idyllic and fancyful. This drawing is of course inexact."

This inscription is copied from the bizarre stucco ornaments of "Theatre," a drawing by the designer Zsuzsa Szenes. The pen-drawing depicts the entry of a king, framed by a half-drawn curtain, in the orchestra pit, a brass band of the imperial era and singers reminiscent of the Salvation Army, on stage a few characters dangling their legs, and next to them the inscription "Manager's Office." The fairy-tale, playful fustiness is there on a number of other drawings; on "Swimming Lesson" the water of the "bubble baths" of pre-World War I years is effervescent in a basin decorated with grotesque tiles, the

bath is Art Nouveau, and on the floor above refreshing therapeutic waters splash forth from water-spouts remindig of Persian, Assyrian, Greek and Indian masks. These drawings include "St. Ann's Ball" with splendidly laid tables and figures dancing the quadrille, "Holiday Cottage" with windows covered in ivy and a little girl of our great-grandmothers' time holding her hoop, and even a composition depicting a burst pipe, where the open arms of a housewife in ungainly trousers, who has just crept out of a Second World War shelter, greet a moustachioed plumber.

Is it really so good to remember the good old days? At Zsuzsa Szenes's Székesfehérvár exhibition where her tapestries were shown in addition to her drawings, the latter were thus introduced by the foreword to the catalogue: "(The drawings) are filled with the flotsam of petty-bourgeois homes, from this crowded breeding-ground their inhabitants emerge pale, thin or stout... aged in honest work... at the border of nostalgia and irony, the grotesque and the tragic. Is there any redemption from this suffocating anguish? If we now turn our eyes to the woollen embroideries or the curtains, we sense that the answer is yes. The shadowy world of the pen-drawings is dissolved by the woollen designs, by the curtains gleaming like church-windows, by the clear lines of the flowers and the simplicity of the compositions." (Márta Kovalovszky)

"Textile Tapestry 68" first introduced the work of Zsuzsa Szenes and a few of her companions. Their success had not been preceded by any sort of expectation, neither the public nor specialists suspected what these women were weaving and embroidering. Their drawings, which are so important for the understanding of the development of their art, could of course not be shown at this tapestry exhibition, but since then there have been several opportunities for their display. Seeing them, the viewer is embarrassed; are these lines dictated by sincere longing, by a conservative nostalgia for the past, or are they poking fun at this past and giving vent to a provocative instinct for blasphemy? True, the world of the themes of the tapestries is also *déjà vu*, familiar from the Art Nouveau decades and the Victorian era, and yet they are—just like the drawings—exciting and novel. "The drawing is inexact"... yes, next to the past the fashions, taste and instincts of the present can also be discerned, and what seems to be a joke and is—faintly or strongly, but always—an important component of the work, is related to the playful cheekiness that gives birth all over the world to reminders of the nineteenth century and Art Nouveau, all the intentional trivialities of pop art and pop music, and the inscrutable mixture of neo-sentimentality and the neo-blasé attitude.

Four other artists exhibited their work at the memorable tapestry exhibition. It was hardly a surprise when it turned out later that they were all friends, former students at the Budapest College of Applied Arts. The drawings bear witness that the past presented them with almost inexhaustible memories. Their childhood coincided with the years of the Second World War, with the last years of gentry Hungary, which overplayed its tragicomic rodomontade even in the nursery. They attended grammar school at the end of the forties and college at the beginning of the fifties. They graduated from the textile faculty, but not all from the tapestry class. They were mainly taught to design prints, mass produced materials for curtains and dresses. They were trained in the boring and exact academic manner, and it is likely that little of what they learned in those years lives on in them. After graduation they worked in studios for applied art, or on individual orders; they often met with resistance. This, and the bringing up of their children explains why in spite of their talent they mostly remained unknown, and their art developed "in secret" to the stage where they produced an unexpected impact, a breakthrough surprising even the general public.

Two Tapestry-weavers

Two only practice the classical technique of tapestry, Gizella Solti and Hédi Tarján. The talent of Gizella Solti is suited to monumental tasks. She wove her tapestries for public institutions, hotels, plants, schools; she wove only a few smaller tapestries; palm-sized ones with sensitive designs for the decoration of her home, and a larger wall-carpet depicting an ancient paddle-wheeler steamship for the already mentioned tapestry exhibition. Her drawings are studies in the service of tapestry-weaving. On her smaller studies too the forms are composed into lines with the tapestry technique in mind, and her larger drawings are obviously work studies, which lose their importance (at least for the artist) after the tapestries have been completed. But it would be wrong to think that this exclusivity of tapestry composing has led Gizella Solti to a one-sided, pretentiously serious monumental style. Irony and the bizarre lead a hidden life in her designs formed of natural shapes, foliage and leaves. She covers her tapestries with harshly angular ornaments, luxuriant vegetation, with strange variations of decaying forms resembling pressed flowers, which —moving away from the concrete Art Nouveau floral elements—develop towards non-figurative fantasies.

Hédi Tarján, the other tapestry-weaver, is of a more playful nature. She collects old photographs, her mood is ironic, this also finds expression in her passion for absurd, grotesque situations. She keeps the photograph of Duchamp, the Dadaist master, on the wall of her studio, with parts of furniture floating over his head. Tapestries by Hédi Tarján seem to break out of the classic genre of carpet-weaving. She here and there leaves bare the thread warped into her loom, like a kind of railing, thereby cutting "holes" into the surface of the tapestry. Her figurative designs are ironic; the coquetry of ladies in large hats and the clicking of heels by old-fashioned Hussar officers can be seen on her tapestries. Her world is therefore sometimes similar to a stage where musical comedy figures—instead of singing—stand still in the postures of absurd dramas.

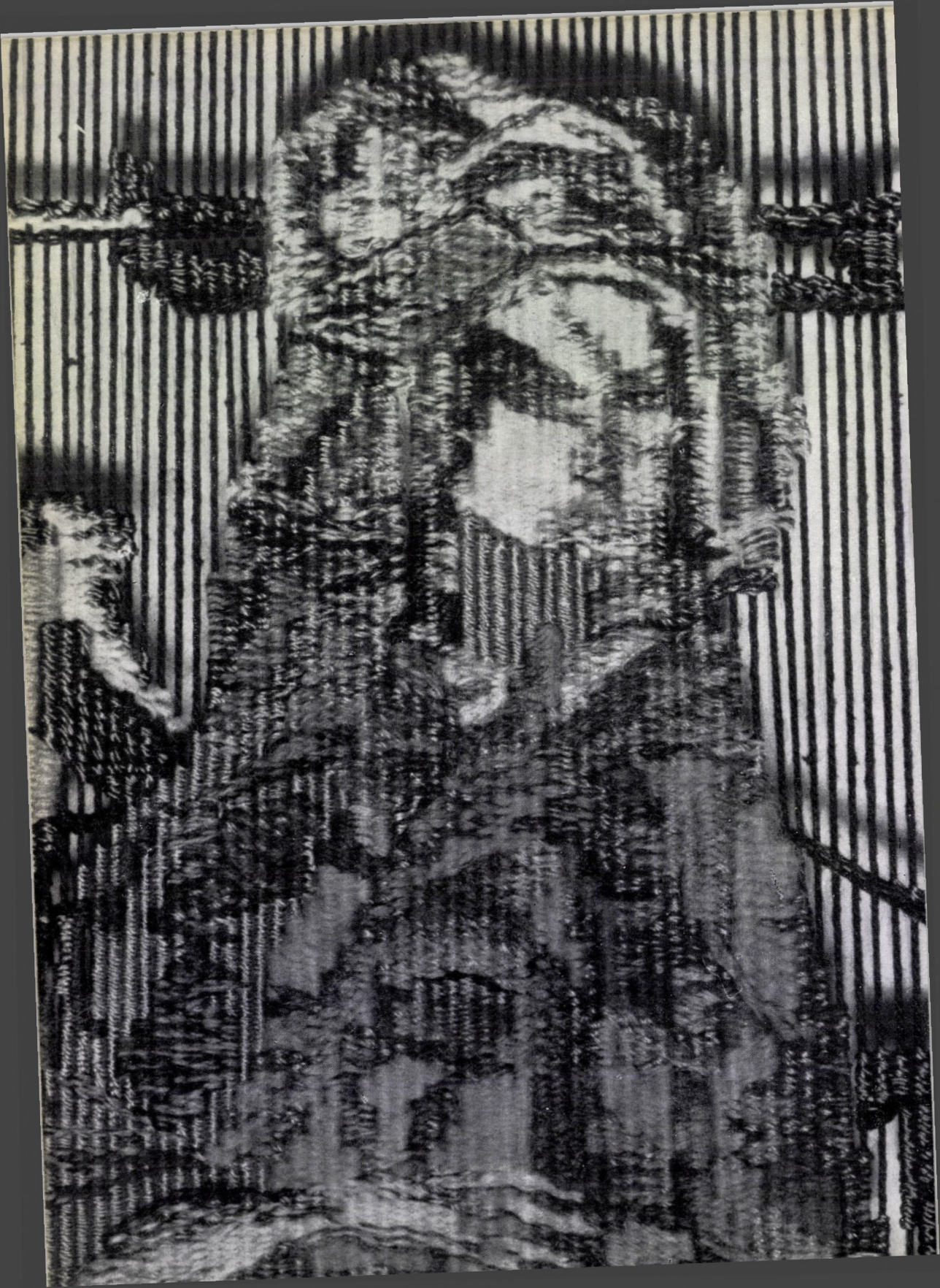
Colourful Patches

Margit Szilvitzky, who formerly studied there, today teaches at the College of Applied Arts. She is a quiet, balanced artist, who makes her wall-carpets with an almost impersonal assurance and sense of style. The appliqué technique which she practises is related to the branch of folk art which used to be practised by the felt cloak-makers, the masters of coloured short leather overcoats and waistcoats. Modern terminology calls this technique collage, but the various expressions and trades cover a similar essence. Miss Szilvitzky's instrument of expression is the coloured patch, which rhythmically changes in both hue and texture, and covers the textile surfaces with contrasting patches. It is not by chance that I have mentioned the work of the cloak-makers, these patches remind in their shapes and contours of the flowery forms of Hungarian folk art, and Miss Szilvitzky does not shrink either from sewing small pieces of embroidery, gleaming metal buttons, and pearls between the patterns as marks of barbarian splendour. "It often happens that in a tale a plant or flower speaks," Miss Szilvitzky said in the course of an interview, "and it then behaves as if it were human. Such floral elements and flower-children figure on my tapestries, and I would like to make their human behaviour beautiful and rich." But a refined sense of style and irony hide behind this naive-sounding program. One of Miss Szilvitzky's tapestries is called "spring," but it can by not means be considered an innocent play of decoration with flowers, it is rather a parodistic reminder of folkloristic ornamentation which was fashionable at the turn of the century and is reappearing today, or of the folkloristic-oriental architecture of the Hungarian

ZSUZSA SZENES: ANCESTORS
(Wool embroidery, 69×90 cms, 1968)

Overlea

HÉDI TARJÁN: THE LITTLE LAI



Art Nouveau, of the bizarre ornamental elements employed by Ödön Lechner.

The Art of "Unwarrantable Intimity"

The most sensitive and most lyrical artist, not only in the group but in the tapestry exhibiton as such, was Marianne Szabó. Her material is the abstractly slender line, which she is able to bring to life with any kind of thread on any kind of material. She draws excellently too. The study drawings made for her tapestries and prints, the line-drawings elaborating her floral ornaments, grow beyond being simple studies, they sometimes remind of Beardsley's brilliant work. When the weekly *Élet és Irodalom* (Life and Literature) interviewed her and sounded her on her links with the art of the turn of the century, she answered: "It is difficult to avoid Art Nouveau, because it touched everything with such unwarrantable intimity". It appears that this grotesquely intrusive intimity, which at the same time bashfully clothes itself into a floral gown, has become the sole form of manifestation for the generation of Marianne Szabó, the only possible solution for linking a personal way of life with the artistic calling. The interview continued: "There is a childish corner in everybody, where one does what one would like. That is what we have done. We had great moral success."

The mention of the "childish corner" inevitably leads to the suspicion that this "discovery" of an unusual fervour of textile art may be a childish fashion, a path branching away from the more serious roads of art. It would be difficult to give an exact answer to this question, and to apply childishness or, its in this case perhaps more justified variation, the concept of feminine art, as a value category. The situtation is both more intricate and more beautiful. It is beyond doubt that in the years of the classic avant-garde we could remember the feminine taste and fashion of the turn of the century, the products of Art Nouveau, only with disgust and loathing, and it would have been difficult to frighten art historians of good taste with anything more than the prediction that the world would be seized with nostalgic longing for the bourgeois promenades decorated with giant roses and checked trousers. But nothing is more uncertain than good taste. Today we again find a refined enjoyment in the contradiction which we expect from the astounding meeting of modern taste with an outworn Art Nouveau. We are, so to say, kept alive by this expectation, which is no doubt an affected attitude, a not very constructive, not very classical species of astonishment. And tracing the reasons for it, we discover behind this new mannerism the moral exhaustion of the classic avant-garde, the art of the great, which has not only become a museum object in a reproduced form, at a popular price, through the giant mechanism of a consumer economy, but also a commodity, which—kept in glass cabinets—hardly differs from the sweetish atmosphere of a drug-store or even from the general picture offered by the pavilions of pre-World War I promenades. So the neo-Art Nouveau now in vogue is the protest of a generation disappointed by non-conformism, and as it usually happens, the militant protest manifests itself not only in resistance, but also in the exaggerated or refined application of the object of disgust and in its re-production. Artistic instinct does not choose, does not analyse these reactions, but simply follows the "interesting," of which it senses that it foreshadows information. As Zsuzsa Szenes's equivocal inscription indicates, the theatre is the most beautiful, the always different and mysterious. Or as Marianne Szabó defined it: unwarrantable intimity. It is commonplace that the artistic trends today in vogue strive to create a scene where ambiguity and feminine adaptability, mystery, the massing of erotic themes predominate. The play has become absolute, it has outgrown asceticism and covers the ruins of the first waves of the avant-garde as a

veritable field of flowers, and in its extreme form this may appear even on the human body, as demonstrated by the attitude to many of the hippies.

It is worth of notice that in the Hungarian fine arts this trend has now been able to appear as growing out of local roots and alloyed with local peculiarities. While the quick and agile practitioners of poster art and of other branches of applied graphic art may have learned the tricks of the new taste directly from the pages of foreign periodicals, and while the hands of the painters and sculptors were paralysed by various kinds of inferiority complex, the "craftswomen" found their way back to their gentle and quiet conservativism, to the original and genuine Budapest of the turn of the century. Yes, the paddle-wheeled steamship, the lady on the promenade in her large hat, the tiled swimming pool, the crocheted fashion figures hung on the wall, the officers raising their hands in a salute, and the waterspouts with Assyrian heads have not come from contemporary periodicals but from the vegetative self-assurance of these women, from their instinctive memories, and they have the approval of currently fashionable art. It is their great advantage that while today's pop art and its associated trades often fight against technical uncertainty, against the difficulties of awkward execution, they are trained craftswomen, and their material at the same time satisfies the requirements of crude manufacture and artistic elaboration.

The world of the Budapest of the turn of the century has been hidden for decades like an intermittent or meandering river, as a shameful reminder of the taste of the boulevards and of bourgeois palaces. It is all the same undeniable that those years, those boulevards assembled from a mixture of materials were the most memorable, most expensive products of the growth and boom of Budapest. Today when in the competition of social systems the re-production of the "belle epoque" is an economic and political necessity, a manipulated or sincerely felt psychosis, Hungarian artists can rely on memories of a genuine boom. Not only an ironic grimace, not only the poking of double-edged fun at academicism and at the short-winded old avant-garde may have induced these textile artists to create their works, but—as a particularly East European trait—also a nostalgia which has definitely given up the society of the Art Nouveau period but is unable to give up those fragments of the notion of a home which remind of the *fin de siècle*.

GÉZA PERNECZKY

THEATRE AND FILM

THEATRE IN BUDAPEST

by

J. C. TREWIN

There was once a London drama critic, notorious for his slashing reviews: so notorious that when he wrote, in effect, "This is really a harmless little play," the management hailed it as the most exciting tribute in remembrance. That was a long time ago; but, generally, in drama criticism understatement still persists, though I must make an exception of the man who recently preferred a small episode by Harold Pinter—a Pinter splinter—to Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. No fire from heaven has yet smitten him.

Personally, I have held that a critic's first task is to appreciate: not, on the whole, a popular idea. When I talked about criticism to an uncompromising audience in the English East Midlands, somebody said sternly at the end: "I like a critic to carve up a play." My protesting noises went unheard. The trouble is, I am afraid, that invective is always the easiest form of criticism: the easiest to write and—it seems—to read.

You will forgive this prologue. It is written only a short time after returning from Budapest where, thanks to the generosity of the Hungarian P.E.N. Club, my wife and myself saw thirteen plays in a fortnight. To be exact, twelve in Budapest: the thirteenth was at Veszprém in Transdanubia at, for us, the surprising hour of five on a Sunday afternoon: an engagement that interested me because the general feeling was so like that of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre. The late Sir Barry Jackson, great pioneer of British repertory, would have found himself thoroughly at home.

I hope now that I can write with the "absolute detachment" that Charles Morgan held to be necessary to drama criticism. Let me say at least that I have tried not to be swayed by the kindness of our hosts; the felicities of their conversation; memories of those things—the quietness, for example, of the average audience—that make any form of playgoing in Budapest so civilised an event. Yet, firmly detached as I seek to be, sitting here with the acid at hand, the daggers sharpened, and Roget's *Thesaurus* opened at its pages of abuse, it is hard not to be grateful for what we have seen on the Hungarian stage. For a critic, you will gather, life can be difficult...

Inevitably, home playgoers are less susceptible than visitors. They are used to this actor or to that director. They know that A. is given to listening to himself, that B. is not always audible, that C. is theatrical rather than intellectual, that D. overanalyses, and that poor E... But I need not run through the alphabet; it is something that visitors do not recognise. Tennyson wrote of "that fierce light which beats upon a throne, and blackens every blot." A stranger cannot see a production or a performance in so fierce a light. Mannerism does not

affect him unless it is inescapable enough to mar a performance. Often I have been surprised by a visitor's response to a London production that has been critically mauled. There are certain things in the theatre that we should not know too well. A first impact is important.

Now, after two comprehensive visits to Budapest—with six years between them—I believe that a Hungarian audience can under-value its theatre. There are superb things. In 1963 Miklós Gábor's Hamlet appealed to me as one of the finest in living memory: here was a universal character, and Gábor gave the kind of performance that I think would have been acclaimed anywhere. Today I am remembering his Richard III, a less universal figure but still a show-piece among classical parts. Such players as Éva Ruttkai (who was Juliet in 1963), Lajos Básti, Imre Sinkovits, Irén Psota, István Iglódi, all appear to me to have great quality. I agree that the disadvantages of not knowing a language are obvious. But for a critic there is one advantage. He concentrates resolutely upon acting and production; he searches for the small detail; he is acutely conscious of attack, rhythm, timing. If he has to miss verbal subtleties, he does get a sharp impression of a production as a whole and the fitting of the players into its pattern.

Naturally, I think first of the Hungarian stage for its classical achievements. At present it is a primarily a directors' and an actors' theatre; these are the names one hears above all. For a handicapped stranger contemporary work is less easy to value, though obviously there are dramatists of wit, cogency, and imagination. The visitor has to experience them at a remove, whereas in Shakespeare the barriers are down; most Shakespeareans can go with a free mind to any production from the Folio. So, too, with such a dramatist as Ibsen—and here let me speak immediately of *The Master Builder (Solness építőmester)* at the Vígszínház. That night—it was the première of a new revival—I learned, astonished, that Ibsen in Budapest was *vieux jeu*. In Britain he still speaks from one of the lower slopes of Olympus, or shall I say, more reasonably, that the searching wind that blew across the London stage eighty years ago is keen-edged yet. "Welcome, wild north-easter!" wrote a not very good poet in another context. We have not ceased to regard Ibsen as the cleansing, probing north-easter of long ago. A *Doll's House, Hedda Gabler, The Master Builder:* these remain major plays and major challenges. Laurence Olivier and Michael Redgrave have each acted Solness since our new National Theatre company began to operate. Heddas have multiplied. It alarmed us to find—or so we assumed—that Budapest had heard everything Ibsen could say, and that many intellectuals were taking *The Master Builder* without noticeable reverence, indeed finding its symbolism dated.

When I write, then, about this production, you must allow for my natural response: the feeling that Ibsen continues to be a master-builder of the stage. Solness, who could be the dramatist's self-projection, is a man in his late afternoon, haunted by the spirit of the morning. Or he is, as I believe F. L. Lucas put it, ever on guard, like the priest of Nemi: the priest that slew the slayer and must himself be slain. Hilda Wangel—who has turned up before, oddly, as a secondary figure in *The Lady from the Sea*—should be at once the tempting spirit of youth and the bird of prey: she must not be simply a charming young woman who has dropped in on Solness during a walking tour. The major scenes can have a burning theatrical force. At the Vígszínház the director, Zoltán Várkonyi, had clearly put on the play for its dramatic conflict, in the assurance that what Ibsen had to say would come across without any forcing. Watchers could get from the production what they wished; I got a good deal. Lajos Básti's Solness had the mask and the manner. I do not say that it was a blazing performance; but Solness does not blaze: he is a shadowed giant. In expressing him Básti reminded me

again and again of an English actor, the late Sir Donald Wolfit; there was the same expansive method, the same fullness of voice. Similarly, Ilona Béres could establish Hilda without causing one to ask the more awkward questions. I thought she rushed her climaxes; in the second act she was—shall I say?—striking twelve too early. But the play continued to loom in the mind, and the last act had the tragic inevitability it must have.

Two flaws worried me. First, the wife's performance. This lacked authority, and for the only time during our stay we heard from the more distant areas of the theatre a distracting, mocking laughter. I had no wish to laugh; but—for these comparisons must occur—I could not help recalling Celia Johnson in London, with the tragic eyes that stared into the past but at the end of the play were filled with an overwhelming terror of the present. At the Vígszínház the actress had no evocative quality. My second worry was with the lighting, not because it was especially dramatic, or had to be, but simply because I was conscious of it and I do not think one should ever be conscious of lighting: it should be there, and that is all. Except on one or two nights, we did find this the least satisfying part of Hungarian production—possibly because during recent years in London lighting has become a cult and the switchboard a god. Directors have their own specialists by them to light the stage. Sometimes the effects are admirable and unobtrusive; sometimes not. But all the time the effects do improve; it is a matter that might be studied in Budapest.

I began with Ibsen because of our astonishment at discovering that Budapest had left the old man behind. (Years ago I made a radio version of one of his most ambitious and least-regarded plays, *Emperor and Galilean*, which has never appeared on a London stage; frequently now I wonder how it might go—a curious blend of Ibsen the theatre-man and Ibsen the thinker). Shakespeare—and this can be called under-statement—is quite another matter; he belongs to Hungary as to Britain. On this visit we saw *Richard III*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *Timon of Athens*, a most unexpected trinity.

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My first theme is *Richard III* at the Madách. We have had it less than usual in Britain during recent years, though it turned up, of course, at the end of the cycle Stratford christened *The Wars of the Roses*. The reason is that nobody has felt like competing with Laurence Olivier who, during September 1944, gave the definitive performance of our time. It has become a calendar-point; one speaks of "before Olivier's Richard" or "since Olivier." He has acted it now both on the stage and the screen; and in the theatre, which was its true place, he made no effort to strain excitement. From the first slow entrance downstage, pale of cheek, evilly debonair, he had the man's measure, whether as sea-green corrupter or as scarlet sin. He preserved Richard's pride, and the silences, malign or mocking, were infinitely laden. Miklós Gábor, you will observe, had competition here; and I can now say in honesty that he is the best Richard I have met since Olivier, not simply because much of his approach was different, but also because he had thought himself deeply into the part and one was not tied to an actor—as one had been to various other Richards since 1944—merely banging away in a cannonade of the theatre theatrical. Of course, Richard is defiantly theatrical, a double-demon; but the part cannot be slammed across without thought. This is an intellectual villain; the blood is the blood royal.

I took Gábor at first as a Richard ready to adventure in villainy as an intellectual exercise, startled by his success—as in the wooing of Lady Anne where the player's postures were very fine—moving almost incredulously from plan to successful plan, and then, at the heart of his task—throned

and crowned—knowing that this must be sustained to the end, that he had reached the point of no return. Theatrically he grew with the night: the opening of the second half of the play, the coronation when he sat beside Anne in the torch-flare, was a striking *coup d'oeil*. But it was never just a Richard for the watcher. Gábor never failed to act with his mind; and he was much aided throughout by his director. László Vámos's cuts had been judicious, and he saved the Ghost scene on the night before Bosworth from being the formal and rather silly queue that it often is. Here the ghosts had, so to speak, been choreographed; they intermingled; their voices reached us from an echoing vault. Richard woke to his doom, a man haunted, and I think it was wise of Vámos to omit the famous stage convention of the ultimate duel. We know what theatre history has to say of Edmund Kean's "preternatural and terrific grandeur"; we know how Olivier fought in his last contorted agonies at Richmond's feet, yielding his spirit only when he caught sight of the cross-hilt of his sword; we recall the too complicated affair at Stratford, with Ian Holm whirling a ball and chain. It was entirely impressive in Budapest to have Richard standing alone downstage, with despair in his eyes—Gábor acted with his eyes—while from the mist behind him the enemy pressed forward: no more than this, but enough. Richard was consistent to his death, and his last fight was in his mind.

Much else in a swift, compact production appealed to me: the set, with the diverse textured woods matched always to the shifting textures of the play; the authority of Irén Psota whose Margaret, far younger than usual, was no Shakespearean beldame but a woman to whom grief had given prophetic vision; László Márkus as Buckingham, sleek and purring. Indeed I was troubled only by the Tyrrel who seemed to me to have an Italian-operatic aspect which minimised the part, and by the variations in the armour, an odd mingling of periods—though I hasten to add that this was a matter for someone more armorially expert than I could pretend to be. The play held its surge, and Richard, "one raised in blood and one in blood established," his full deadly power. I wish now that Gábor could play Macbeth, and that the production could be brought to England. Here is something for a World Theatre season, or (in Scotland) for an Edinburgh Festival. An actor of these gifts must have international scope.

A second Shakespeare was István Egri's production of *The Comedy of Errors (Tévedések vígjátéka)* at the National. Now I have long had a special feeling for this romp, perhaps because it was one of the earliest Shakespeare plays I saw as a schoolboy in the English West Country. A provincial star actor of the day, who fancied himself in the shouting melodrama of *The Bells*—too short to fill out an evening—put on *The Comedy* as a curtain-raiser. It was a rough-and-ready business in which the Dromios, as I remember, were black-faced (an easy trick); but I was glad then to see it as it was revived so seldom. Later, over the years, I would discover it in other double bills—once with *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, once with *Titus Andronicus*. Apart from Komisarjevsky's wild and idiosyncratic frolic at Stratford-upon-Avon in 1938, its only real triumph would be Clifford Williams's Stratford revival of half-a-dozen years ago: a curious record considering the liveliness of the play in the theatre—a comedy in which Shakespeare, with his two pairs of identical twins, trumps the aces played long before by Plautus in the *Menaechmi*.

Williams's Royal Shakespeare production, done at short notice, proved to be the life and soul of the season. Budapest has met it. It delighted me that Egri's production took an independent line; in particular that it remained in the right latitude throughout. Thus it was gay and Southern and uninhibited; a Northern frost never fell upon it. Though I say "uninhibited," even when

it was at its most relaxed one discerned a rhythm; even in so unpoetic a piece as this the director had heard the tunes and had orchestrated speech and movement. Bernard Shaw might have been pleased, for this was something he never failed to demand in the theatre. It was not easy at the National to separate the players, but I liked István Sztankay very much as Antipholus of Syracuse, and he did not miss the moment that in Britain we still think of as Alec McCowen's when, after Adriana has addressed him in thirty-seven lines of blank verse, Antipholus says incredulously, "Plead you to me, fair dame?" The right sense of humour glittered through the night. From the moment the attendant executioner began to sob during Aegeon's expository speech, one knew that Egri was on the proper road. Two small matters. Did Moonshine creep in from another play? And the performance of the Abbess—I was sorry about her, for it should be a glorious serio-comic moment at the last when we approach the dénouement and within a brief scene (and keeping his face straight) Shakespeare unravels the coil—leaving us to imagine what talk will be like at that "gossips' feast" within the Abbey. Certainly the Abbess should have more definite character than I observed at the National, though possibly I had been spoiled by seeing the part played in England by a mistress of the serio-comic, never an easy medium. Shakespeare, by the way, has always been extraordinarily lucky in his Hungarian translators. I was told that the version of *Richard III* by the distinguished poet István Vas was much respected; and I felt instinctively that Imre Szász had done justice to *The Comedy of Errors*. At the National I scribbled "Henry V" on my programme. An irrelevant note, one might think; but *Henry V* is a chronicle little known in the Hungarian theatre, and while watching and listening to István Sztankay it occurred to me more than once that he would be admirable casting for the King.

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I was less happy on a later National night, the production of *Timon of Athens*, a difficult rarity. A most respected director, Tamás Major, clearly had views on it. He saw it, I believe, Brechtianly. We had therefore to be "distanced" (or "alienated"—irritating words both). The set reminded me approximately of a circus ring; there was a band in the background; scenes came and went like individual turns; the actors flung cloaks off and on; above the stage was a hint of the "big top," green leaf, blue sky; the lighting appeared to click on audibly in the way I remembered it long ago in a Plymouth theatre where the sun would rise with a sharp snap.

All of this I found worrying, for I have never wanted to be alienated from *Timon*, to take it at a remove, to go through the mental evolutions demanded by a Brechtian-minded director. In fact, I am invariably prepared—why not?—to surrender to stage illusion; probably an old-fashioned view but still valid. The extraneous trimmings in this *Timon* revival *(Athéni Timon)* were the more worrying because it was plain that the director, intellectually, was on terms with the piece. He could edge the irony of what has been called a Thersites-play, the condemnation of ingratitude. He left no point unsharpened to what a later dramatist described as "a spire of meaning." One was grateful for such a scene as that for professional cynic and professional Fool. And yet I found as the play moved along that its bitter magic was not working on me. For once I did miss the English text. I did want to hear

The sea's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves
The moon into salt tears
and
. . . the beached verge of the salt flood
Whom once a day with his embossed froth
The turbulent surge shall cover. . .

I am told that István Iglódi spoke with quick understanding, and this I could well

credit; but in my view he was too lightweight for the character. I had no sense of the experienced, expansive nobility of Timon, the Athenian noble: "To Lacedaemon did my lands extend." This was a young man who was what in Cornwall we should have called "teasy": that is, always prickling, but never rising into the roll and fury of the great tirades, never encompassing the white-hot fury of wrath against humanity, the anger of a benefactor who has known the sudden harshness of ingratitude, a sin that Shakespeare through life must have abhorred. Iglódi is not to be blamed. I have not known a Timon to carry the tragedy, though Paul Scofield has made the best effort yet. ("God did something when *He* gave Scofield that larynx" said an American woman at Stratford a few years ago, deeply disappointed with the play as one for her favourite actor, but determinedly loyal to his voice). There were sound performances at the National: the Apemantus (Lajos Őze), for one, and the Alcibiades (again István Sztankay). But it could not really be my *Timon*, though I found the première exciting. I remembered a modern-dress version in the English provinces two decades ago when I happened to be with the then director of the National Theatre of Greece; he took earnest pains to tell us that it was no part of modern Athenian hospitality to fling hot water at one's guests. He might have been even more alarmed by the realism of this excellently-directed key scene in Budapest.

Let me say that, earlier, I had seen István Iglódi in a part to which he was matched perfectly, Prince Miskin, the title-role of a version of Dostoevsky's *The Idiot (A félkegyelmű)*, also at the National; he had the precise remote gentleness, and Egri's imaginative production—beautifully grouped—held together a play that could have been worryingly diffuse. That was a good beginning to our stay; and on the following night, upon the same stage, we saw Imre Sinkovits, who had been the rough Rogozhin in *The Idiot*, as Moses in a production of Imre Madách's seldom-staged national classic—with modern implications—which had been revised for the theatre by Dezső Keresztury. Sinkovits, with his dominating aspect and his gift of stillness—something to be prized in any actor—was quite extraordinarily effective; and, watching him, I thought again of A. E. Housman's lines:

> No fire-faced prophet brought me word
> Which way behoved me go.
> Ascended is the cloudy flame,
> The mount of thunder dumb;
> The tokens that to Israel came,
> To me they have not come.

In the performance by Sinkovits one did recognise the fire-faced prophet, saw the thunder and the flame. Though I find it extremely hard to suggest a parallel to Sinkovits, of all actors, it may be that he has an affinity with Alec Clunes who in Britain was the Moses of Christopher Fry's *The Firstborn*. In Madách's *Moses* I did miss the language. At *Timon* I could repeat many of the lines to myself. At *Moses* I had to rely upon the actor's power of evocation and it was a tribute to him that one could acknowledge eloquence. The director, Endre Marton, had put on the play with wise simplicity, against back-projected cloud. There was nothing in the least oleographic here; no sense of the stiff coloured plates of Biblical illustration. We found it a night to admire.

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In two other productions, each at the Vígszínház, I found work to praise, though I was aware that in doing so I was well behind the theatrical times. But one has to keep up with the past; a knowledge of stage history is vital, and the theatre was not born last Tuesday week. *Elizabeth of England (Angliai Erzsébet)*, Ferdinand Bruckner's historical melodrama, was born forty years ago. Agreed, as a play it can be most curious, with its anachronistic plotting round Eliza-

beth; by now, moreover, the two-level construction—Philip of Spain and Elizabeth, as protagonists of their nations, each praying for victory—no longer stirs the pulse, however surprising it might have been when Bruckner wrote the play. Yet, for anybody theatrical by instinct, it must be an experience to meet this sort of drama in action. Zoltán Várkonyi went at it with zest, hurtling us from Whitehall to Madrid, treating the business with a steady vigour, and letting Lajos Básti, who played Philip of Spain much as Donald Wolfit might have played it—a constant comparison; the actors are strongly alike—bring to the part a full-scale, thunder-stroke attack; nothing else would have served. Éva Ruttkai, a superb Elizabeth, took and held the stage without tearing it up by the roots. She is a most responsive actress: here was the Queen's humanity as well as her regality. I am never likely to see the play revived in Britain (Phyllis Neilson-Terry and Matheson Lang did it nearly forty years ago) and I accepted the occasion whole-heartedly as a collectors' piece.

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Ferenc Molnár's *Játék a kastélyban*, also at the Vígszínház, had two chances in London and missed them both. The dramatist, redoubtable technician though he is, has never had his due in Britain. I did not see Gerald du Maurier when he staged *The Play's the Thing*, which is the English title, but I can imagine that he would have lacked a certain sense of enjoyment. Clive Brook managed fairly well in a revival twenty years later, but the comedy seemed strangely outmoded. At the Vígszínház it was great fun. It needs the laughter of an audience ready to take every point; and I would like to see it essayed again in London, at an appropriate moment, though I doubt whether we have an actor and actress with quite the relishing qualities of Antal Páger as the dramatist who saves an actress's honour by writing a script for her overnight, and Ruttkai as the actress who is so ingeniously saved. Both of these comedy performances were timed to an inflection in the treatment of the play by Gyula Benkő.

Our other nights in Budapest were more firmly Hungarian of the moment. Thus I enjoyed immensely what we saw of György Szabó's *Love Locked in a Closet (Szekrénybezárt szerelem)* at the Pesti Theatre. It struck me as, superficially, a blend of Ionesco and N. F. Simpson, but heightened by the author's individual wit—he is writing about conceptions of happiness—and with a charming quick gaiety: we were very glad of Mrs Lili Halápy's unerring translation. One or two theatres, I am sure, might manage this in London; it must be commended to James Roose-Evans at the Hampstead Theatre Club.

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On one of two visits to the Thalia we saw Zsigmond Móricz's *Be Good Until You Are Dead (Légy jó mindhalálig)*. Though it had a wistful narrative skill, it was clearly not a play for export. Friends in Budapest shook their heads when they heard that we were going, or had gone; but the evening had a gentle, naive friendliness, and it was a pleasure to have with us sympathetically—as at the so different *Timon*—Professor László Kéry, himself a former student of the famous school at Debrecen where Móricz's story is set. We went again to the Thalia one morning for a dress rehearsal of Gábor Goda's *The Planet Man (A planétás ember)*, and on the strength of the one act we saw took it to be engagingly satirical, almost at times as if Priestley were laughing at a "James Bond" notion; the production by Károly Kazimir had plenty of drive. I would have liked to stay for the second half. Kazimir and his theatre are obviously important in Budapest life, and again I found myself thinking of Roose-Evans.

Of our evening at the Microscope Theatre I have to write tentatively. Our compan-

ions were practically prostrate with laughter; I consoled myself by recalling the poet's lines about the gift of laughter, "the emptying upon earth, from unsuspected ambuscade, the very urns of mirth." But, alas, though I am sure that some of the renowned Budapest jokes derived from that night, and though Lili Halápy's translation was masterly when laughter would let her speak, I had to make do with the visual effects—as in a hilarious comment on the operetta stage—and wish that my ears were tuned to the talk of the day. Without doubt the comedians had the manner, and it was a pleasure to watch the audience swaying like a wheatfield in the wind.

It was our last Budapest performance. Looking back later that night, I caught myself talking again in terms of an actors' and directors' theatre. I repeat, when one comes freshly to an artist, one has to judge on the immediate evidence. Frankly, Budapest is too modest about its stage; nothing I have yet known in London's World Theatre seasons (so carefully devised by Mr Daubeny) has exceeded Budapest playing in quality, and much has been far below. Believe me, this must not be taken as simply a letter of thanks for generous hospitality: it does come from the critic's heart—an organ with which, remarkably, he is equipped.

So to our thirteenth play, in unexpected circumstances. Late on a warm Sunday afternoon we were in the Petőfi Theatre at Veszprém (where I believe the new version of *Moses* was originally done), watching Scribe's *A Glass of Water (Egy pohár víz)*, famous example of the *pièce bien faite* and a proof, wherever one meets it—I had not done so for many years—that Queen Anne of England is not dead. Coincidentally, we got home to London to find that the same period is in a television serial called *The Churchills;* from what I have seen of this, Scribe would have been the better dramatist for the task. At Veszprém, under the highly intelligent direction of István Pétervári, the actresses outmatched the actors; we had a richly rewarding Queen Anne (Ilona Szekeres): totally unlike the historical Anne, I daresay, but why quarrel? A dramatist has every right to claim licence (and Scribe and Bruckner, in their various styles, were importunate).

That was a happy afternoon. I shall not forget sitting—with Professor and Mrs Kéry—in the circle while, outside, the autumn day moved into darkness and down round Lake Balaton people were talking of the splendours of October and asking if the clear gold weather would last. It did. It lasted while we were driving round the lake next day; while we were on the Tihany peninsula or in the utter peace of Szigliget or away on the southern shore. It lasted throughout our next week in Budapest while we grew more and more attached to the beautiful city of the Danube. It was—unkindly perhaps—still mellow with sunlight when we flew away unwillingly from Ferihegy. And I discerned in that serene weather the counterpart of the theatre in Budapest. It may have its storms; it may be snowbound; but of these things we had no knowledge. An occasional shower, maybe; an ephemeral greyness: nothing else. We had known in Hungary what an English Poet Laureate called "the acted passion, beautiful and swift," and we were grateful for it. I write now as one of that presumably snarling group of drama critics; somebody dismissed them as "ratsbane scattered up and down the pit." No matter. Even we have our moments; and our moment in Budapest was unforgettable.

DIRECTORIAL PASSION

Who is the boss of a theatrical production: the director, or the playwright? This question has been of continuous interest for the last few years to the Hungarian theatrical and literary public, sometimes below the surface, sometimes in wide-ranging open arguments. After all the basis of theatre is the play, the literary work, and unless the theatre is prepared to interpret it properly, a production may deteriorate into impromtu hamming or unartistic anarchy; at least, this is what most men of letters and their adherents tell us. The theatre always communicates its message through the performance, even in the plays of long-dead or insignificant dramatists. The literary work is only the foundation, a very important foundation of course, for a production, and, indeed, even a cathedral would collapse without adequate foundations. But people do not visit a cathedral merely for the sake of its foundations, say directors and theatrical people. This rivalry for domination is well-known throughout Europe today and possibly throughout the theatrical world, and sometimes it has rather extreme consequences. For instance, recently in West Germany, Edward Albee prevented the performance of his *Everything in the Garden* at the Staatstheater in Stuttgart because some aspects of a young director, Hans Neuenfels', stage interpretation.

It is not by accident that this discussion has grown particularly sharp in certain parts of Europe, nor that in Hungary, leading personalities of Hungarian literature and the Hungarian theatre had met, under the auspices of the PEN Club, to attempt a clarification of this conflict in public discussion. Nor is it an accident—to cite another German example—that Günter Grass, too, banned the Münster performances of his new play on account of certain "falsifications" by Horst Gnekow, the director.

If Gérard Philipe would play it...

A few years ago M. Jean Darcante, Secretary General of the International Theatre Institute, was in Budapest. In answer to questions put to him by journalists he said that he saw a definite difference in acting style and approach between the theatres of Eastern and Western Europe. He added, however, that he used "eastern" and "western" as geographic and certainly not as political terms, for in his opinion the style of the West German theatre was much closer, for instance, to the Russian than to the French. He even gave an illustration. Among other things, in the Soviet Union he saw a performance—it must have been of some modern play—which included an unforgettable piece of stage business. A man entered the empty stage. He stopped in the door, looked about him, managing to make it evident that he had never been there before. He tried to take in everything and get his bearings. He had a bad heart, and starting to notice the pain, came further into the room, walked round the table and sat down in acute pain, then collected himself and continued the wait. According to M. Darcante, this little scene was a brilliant feat of acting, giving an exceptional actor's clinically accurate interpretation of a heart condition and of his situation in the scene. But, he remarked, on the French stage, for instance, in Gérard Philipe's interpretation, coming into a strange room would have been done in an entirely different manner. Gérard Philipe—he was no longer alive at the time, but apparently M. Darcante considered him the embodiment of French acting, or simply did not want to mention a living actor—Gérard Philipe would enter, he would cast a single glance at the room to suggest that he was in an unfamiliar place, he would make directly for a chair to sit down, but he would halt in pain for a second, and then

he would sit down and wait. The business would not take a quarter of the time of his Russian counterpart. "I wish to stress," M. Darcante insisted, "that this is not a political but a geographical matter, or not even that, for in this respect a West German actor's style is closer to his Soviet collegue than to a Polish confrère. And it is certainly not a matter of artistic standards, for seeing the Soviet actor was an experience fit for a connoisseur, although certain old-fashioned conventions were undeniably evident in his acting." M. Darcante asked me, what possible reason there could be for the difference, for he said, he could not himself explain it. And yet the matter is far from mysterious.

Lost Theatre and Salvaged Literature

If we examine the distant beginnings of European drama, it becomes obvious that it did not develop as literature. Greek drama came into existence as a competitive event in ritual games, and the author of the work which was entered for the contest was the same person as the director who rehearsed the play with the actors. The extant records of the productions, the didascalia, mention Aristophanes for instance not as a playwright, but as the coach of the stage production. There is no evidence to indicate that any given play had other performances than their original first showing. (A Sicilian performance of Aeschylus's *Persians* is an exception, but it is known that Aeschylus himself visited Sicily at the time, so it is probable that he himself staged the play there.) In our own century, some Hungarian poets (for instance, Babits, who translated a number of Shakespearean plays) were astonished to learn that Shakespeare did not make provisions for definitive editions of his dramas although he had seen to it that they should be staged properly.

None the less, the written word has preserved the text of the plays although theatrical performances have been lost to oblivion. For a long time, no one paid any attention to the problem of past performances, for there seemed to be no way to pin them down. When finally modern historical scholarship began to look into the development of the theatre, for two hundred years their search centered merely on the history of drama. When at long last an attempt was made to deal with the theatre as an independent art form, and to reconstruct its past periods, it proved to be a difficult undertaking, and it has made very little headway to this day. Certain records, such as, the *didascalia*, various descriptions and memoirs, were available, but, paradoxically, these are literary sources. When finally, some fifty years ago, Max Hermann in his *Forschungen zur deutschen Theatergeschichte des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, for long regarded as the standard work on the subject, tried to reconstruct the antique theatre, it was soon demonstrated—for instance, by Albert Köster—that this impressive construction lacked a sufficient foundation. Nor was Margaret Bieber's attempt, *A History of Greek and Roman Theater* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1961), which tried to reconstruct the ancient theatre on the basis of the visual arts, considered reliable, for in her work, too, arbitrary conclusions and speculation outweight factual evidence—this is not surprising, for here too the double transmissions of art and literature separate fact from conjecture. Against all this, being a written document, plays have survived—whether in exact or inexact copies—as the only reliable evidence of the theatre of past ages. The invention of printing only increased the gap, and during the period of naturalism the written drama achieved full monopoly over the art of the theatre. Even if we simplify somewhat our account of this development, it is obvious that the naturalist theatre was reduced to copying and imitation anyway, as realism and authenticity were the major criteria of a good performance. Accuracy and a resemblance to actual life down to the tiniest

detail, and accuracy and a close resemblance to the written text of the drama—almost including the misprints—became the standards.

The Theatre's Right to Immortality

This kind of naturalist theatre did not, however, develop equally fully everywhere. And yet the difference in acting styles which struck Darcante—and, of course, others as well—are evidence of differences in development. In the theatrical life of America at the turn of the century, for instance, there were as yet no signs of the subsequent flowering of the theatre and drama. An actor by the name of James O'Neill had made a fortune by touring the States with a dramatized version of *The Count of Monte Cristo*. When Edward Sheldon's feeble play, *Nigger*, was staged in the United States, Ibsen, Hauptmann, Chekhov, and Gorky were already the leading European dramatists; Reinhardt was already directing plays, and Stanislavsky had been at the head of the Art Theatre for six years. In other words, by this time naturalist drama and the naturalist theatre were in full flower, and the German and Russian naturalist theatre completely dominated the theatre of Northern and Central Europe—primarily through the naturalist drama, which became in these countries, too, the only form of dramatic expression.

On the other hand, naturalist drama remained practically unknown, not only in the United States—where at the time there was hardly any theatrical life to speak of, but also in France. The French, who practically initiated naturalism in the novel, have not had a single naturalist dramatist. And they had only one stage director who inscribed naturalism on his banner, namely, Antoine, but it is typical of his French reception that Cocteau, when some critic tried to defend Antoine by saying that he was a genius after all, replied: "Montgolfier was also a genius, but he still set back the development of French aviation by fifty years." Then, even in times of crisis, even during the dramatic slump that occurred during the naturalist period, the French theatre managed to preserve the more playful, "freer," perhaps more abstract and more stylized performance. It was that much more difficult later for the naturalist theatres to get rid of the pressure of copying and imitation, of sticking to back-drops painted in a life-like manner, and of carefully rehearsed misprints—and of the kind of acting which was an inevitable concomitant of this naturalistic style.

And yet, the theatre was beginning to claim more and more passionately its own independent rights, its emancipation from the monopoly of literature. The fact was that in the meantime a decisive technical revolution had occurred, which brought with it a basic change in the relation between manuscript and theatrical production. Up till now—especially since the invention of printing—only the play itself survived from a theatrical performance; of the performing artist, only his name and reputation survived, and that, too, largely through literary descriptions. No wonder then that literature was proud of its role. But the development of the phonograph, film, radio, tape-recording, colour-film, and so on, in the last fifty years, has gradually made possible the independent, authentic recording of a theatrical production divorced from the written play. In fact, technical invention created an entirely independent art, the cinema, which is able to get along with effects similar to that of the drama even without a writer (Chaplin). This turn of affairs greatly increased the pride and consciousness of theatrical artists, so that—not unconnected with a similar revolt by painters and sulptors against the dominant position of literature—they are re-claiming their usurped rights. Of course, in accordance with Newton's law of action and reaction, this rebellion is the most passionate where oppression

is the strongest: wherever the theatrical world is the most heavily burdened with naturalism.

A Hungarian Who Fought for the Theatre as an Art

All this introduction is relevant to the role director Károly Kazimir has in Hungarian theatrical life. I should like to report on this season's production at his summer theatre, The Theatre in the Round, and of this season's opening at his permanent winter theatre, the Thalia.

Károly Kazimir has been the most exciting and original personality of Hungarian theatrical life in the last ten years. I have already described his career, in *The New Hungarian Quarterly* (No. 30). At present he is the Art Director of the Thalia Theatre and in summer, the head of the Theatre in the Round—a seasonal project. At the PEN Club discussion mentioned above, he spoke on behalf of theatre-centred artists, voicing the need for an independent theatre and expressing the view that it is the right, and in fact duty, of the director to communicate his own message, through the performance that the muse of the theatre cannot be merely *ancilla dramaturgiae*, the handmaiden of play-writing.

Several factors had to interact to save this position from failure and complete repudiation. One of these factors was that the personality cult, while it raised naturalism to practically a state religion in the arts, strongly curtailed the primacy of literature and subordinated it to the arbitrary decisions of theatre managers and editors—often bureaucrats—representing the official view. In their capacity of state trustees, they often insisted on making changes in manuscripts, and sometimes introduced changes themselves. This practice in itself ruffled the sanctity of the literary work which had fed on nineteenth century traditions of individualism and historicism. Another factor is Kazimir's own personality. He is an excellent diplomat, keeps aloof from extremes, and is willing to compromise. This last quality ensures that he will continue to influence Hungarian theatrical development as a theatre manager as much as a stage director. Finally, Kazimir possesses excellent taste, and he is strikingly sensitive in recognizing talent and quality, in distinguishing between good writing and bad, a director who may create theatre without a play, but certainly not without literature. To document this, it will suffice to cast a glance at the programme of his Theatre in the Round.

The Budapest Theatre in the Round

As I said, The Theatre in the Round is Kazimir's summer project. It is, of course, not a private undertaking: he is commissioned by the State and is paid by the State, as he is in his residential theatre, the Thalia. Still, the Theatre in the Round cannot be regarded as a branch of the Thalia, for on the one hand, The Theatre in the Round is associated with Kazimir personally, he founded it (before he took on the Thalia), he picks the plays, the designers and the actors, and he directs the performances. On the other hand, he employs in The Theatre in the Round not only people from the Thalia company, but employs available actors and actresses regardless whether they belong to other companies.

At present The Theatre in the Round holds its performances in the City Park, not on an open-air stage as, for instance, the Joseph Papp company in the Central Park in New York. The City Park in Budapest is the site of the international and local fairs and industrial exhibitions, and one of the permanent buildings of the fairground is the summer home of the Theatre in the Round.

The Hungarian adaptation of the theatre in the round had for a long time been a pet idea of Kazimir's who wanted to break away

from the solidified traditions of the proscenium stage. He started the project in 1958, already in the City Park, but in a shedlike building, far more primitive than his present premises. From there he moved to the Ice-Skating Theatre, for a few years, and finally, fairly recently, to the present pavilion. At first he specialized in Greek dramas which were really not intended for the proscenium stage, but later he tried other plays too. Among the latter, the dramatization of Thomas Mann's *Mario and the Magician* was the most successful, especially since the exceptionally gifted Zoltán Latinovits rendered the magician in an imaginative and powerful performance. Last year —making a definite change from conventional theatre—he abstracted from Dante's *Divine Comedy* an oratorio-like production, and this year he tried something even more fantastic: he staged the *Kalevala*.

Theatre for Snobs?

The *Kalevala* is the well-known great national epic of the Finns. In the first half of the nineteenth century, European literature discovered folk poetry as spring of poetic composition. This discovery brought about the rejuvenation of Hungarian poetry, too, inspiring, among others, Petőfi. In this period the Finnish ethnographer Elias Lönnrot began to collect the ancient heroic songs of his people, and systematized them as a single folk-epic of 32 songs, entitled *Kalevala*. Then he continued to elaborate his original work, published in 1835, and in 1849 what was called the *New Kalevala* was published, with its fifty songs and almost 23,000 lines, which is today generally called the *Kalevala*. The *Kalevala* established connection between its large number of mythical stories sometimes through the identity of the characters, sometimes through the unity of certain mythical objects, places and symbolic elements, and its unified folk style and form. Obviously it is just as impossible to shape a unified play from it as from the *Divine Comedy*. If one happens to take a fancy to the idea, one may write a new play or even a series of plays from the material of the episodes, just as Greek mythology has been an inexhaustible source of plays to this day. But this was not Kazimir's intention. He wanted to present to his audiences the *Divine Comedy* and the *Kalevala*. Obviously a summary of 2,300 lines from Dante's 14,000, and 4,000 lines from the nearly 23,000 of the Kalevala, would just approach the flavour of the real thing, according to some critics, no more than the strip cartoon comics occasionally published for young people based on condensations of the classics. Kazimir proudly accepts the didactic character of these productions, saying that education is also one of the responsibilities of the theatre. But the comparison with "comics" is really not fair. On the other hand, it is undeniably true that the programme policy is stretched more in the opposite direction—towards snobbery. Two years ago Kazimir staged one of Petőfi's tactfully forgotten dramatic works, *The Tiger and the Hyena*, and even managed to achieve some degree of popular success with it. It was Petőfi's name that saved the play from being generally called trash, being a historical melodrama in the worst fashions of the 1840's, and imitating a contemporary fad which even persuaded Petőfi to deviate temporarily from his revolutionary, republican thinking, towards royalism. Last year Kazimir staged *The Divine Comedy* in a formal, oratorio-like production, with actors reading their lines in formal evening dress, and a stylized masked chorus. The seats sold like hot cakes. I kept being asked by friends to get tickets "for love or money," because the house was sold out well in advance of the opening.

Poetry and Dead End

The *Kalevala* project was even more successful. Less intellectualism and less educa-

tion is needed for its comprehension than for Dante. On the other hand, it is undeniable that in the *Kalevala* episodes Kazimir was able to conjure up the charm and atmosphere of folk poetry for the audience sitting around a small stage. A few poplars signified the Finnish landscape, but what really distinguishes Kazimir's production from a strip cartoon is that in his staging of the Kalevala, he showed the insight and ingenuity to conjure up genuine poetry on the stage.

None the less, I believe this trend, the performance of Kalevala included, is a deviation leading to a dead end from an otherwise purposeful road. I had applauded from the very beginning, the struggle Kazimir waged both in The Theatre in the Round and in the Thalia against conservative literary and theatrical public opinion. Kazimir has placed his name into the history of the Hungarian theatre by staging Pagodin's *The Aristocrats*, Sartre's *Le Diable et le Bon Dieu*, and Brecht's *Arturo Ui*, and staged such Hungarian plays as Fejes' *Scrap-Yard*, and above all Örkény's *The Tót Family*. Moreover his valuable contributions include highly successful productions of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Shakespeare, Mann's *Mario and the Magician*, Babel's *Dusk* and Hochhuth's *The Deputy* in The Theatre in the Round, and *Waiting for Godot* in his Studio Theatre. He introduced Hungarian audiences to Kafka and to some young Hungarian playwrights. It is interesting, but characteristic that in the beginning he had to fight chiefly against the conservative and snobbish literati, whereas today these same circles are his most reliable supporters.

The flame on Thalia's altar

The Thalia Theatre opened its autumn season with Zsigmond Móricz's play, *Be Faithful Unto Death*. Móricz (1879–1942) was probably the most important Hungarian prose writer of his period. His writings, reflecting a deep awareness and much experience of life, speak in the first place for the peasantry. Both as a novelist and a playwright he is the most typical representative of the literary trend which developed in Hungary under the influence of naturalism. He wrote *Be Faithful Unto Death* originally as a novel (published in English by Corvina Press, Budapest, 1962), soon after the First World War, embittered by the defeat of the 1919 Commune.

The novel's hero is a young boy, Misi Nyilas, who entered the famous *Kollégium* of Debrecen—a secondary school—as a scholarship holder. His diligence, decency and innocence won the respect and support of his more worthwhile teachers, and from this, he deduced that the world of grown-ups is decent and pure, unlike the world of boys, who fight, lie, steal, mock and tell on each other. However, as soon as he enters the world of grown-ups, first as a private tutor and then reading to a blind man, he experiences a bitter disappointment. He is unjustly accused of theft and embezzling. He is subjected to the school's disciplinary action, and they nearly fail him. The author dramatized his highly successful novel with the encouragement and help of Sándor Hevesi, then director of the National Theatre in Budapest, a brilliant critic and Shakespeare scholar. The play was performed in 1929 with great success, the hero's part was performed by a famous character actress. Since then, the part has always been played by an actress; but one wonders at the Thalia Theatre's reasons for reviving the play—unless it's because it is prescribed reading for exams.

Kazimir staged it with Puritan simplicity, employing only one highly imaginative set, thus easing the naturalism we have come to expect from this kind of play, but he retained naturalist traditions in acting. Yet he did not succeed in creating a good performance. Most critics ascribed this to Kazimir's "holding back" his actors, damping their passions.

The flatness of the Thalia production of

Be Faithful Unto Death revealed that the director had no personal interpretation or message, either with the play nor with its production. And this brings me back to my introductory remarks. Kazimir's attitude, his stand against dusty traditions, was based on the proud principle that a director too should have something to say to his audience about the world, about his times, about themselves and his own self. To do this, he must use writers, dead or alive, actors, and a whole theatre.

JÓZSEF CZÍMER

THE PÉCS FILM FESTIVAL

The aim of the annual film festival at Pécs is to show Hungarian films, both new and recent. It is a significant aspect of Hungary today that a year's output should be enough to fill a week not merely with screenings, but with memorable and enjoyable film events.

Most critics start their review of film festivals by carping about the programmes, the arrangements, the selections and finally, the prizes. But it would be difficult to fault either the arrangement or the broad principles governing the programme of the fifth Feature Film Week held last October in Pécs. The programme consisted of four concurrent but distinct parts: first performances of brand-new stuff from the studios; secondly, gala performances of significant films made in the course of the year; then, retrospective series of first features by directors who had come to the fore in recent years; and finally, a few newish foreign films, to add interest and widen the festival's perspective.

Naturally, the quality was uneven: there could be no film industry in the world, past or present, capable of producing nothing but masterpieces. There are always large numbers of films made for entertainment, which yet fail to entertain, and a smaller number of necessary films which aim high but, by some split of consciousness between the idea and the execution, become artistic failures. While the first kind of failure is no concern of any festival, the second kind provide material for discussion and study, even argument. For not everyone pitches the borderline between art and boredom in the same spot, and one critic's condemnation may not stop others from analysing it away and discovering virtues.

Two conclusions can be drawn from the first films by new directors shown at Pécs. First, their quality: the new directors aim higher, and execute their ideas with far more assurance than their predecessors, here or abroad. Secondly, their films do not merely fit into trends or schools according to the tradition of the various studios which trained them. Instead, they combine approaches and adapt the dominant themes of recent years in a way which demonstrates clearly how today's artistic preoccupations had emerged.

The first showings

Palm Sunday (Virágvasárnap) is the first feature film directed by Imre Gyöngyössy, and it bears many marks of being a debut. It probably appears more eclectic than it really is, for it is just bad luck that the story, based on historic fact, should have so many parallels with Bunuel's *Nazarin* (1958). On

the other hand, why are so many scenes, such as a young boy escaping from the gendarmes by wriggling out of his clothes and haring across the pasture, such pure Jancsó? A Truffaut or a Godard may freely quote Carné or Hitchcock, but it is more dangerous for a Hungarian director to pay the compliment of imitation to a near-contemporary and (if all goes well with Gyöngyössy) a rival. However, Gyöngyössy's style can also be very different from Jancsó's. He handles group scenes with great assurance, not setting up a choreography as Jancsó does, but filling his frames to overflowing with seething, writhing humanity to suggest forces and pressures which will explode into rebellion or become a revolution. The juxtaposition of the crowd and the individual is his recurring image: quite unlike Eisenstein, where the individual pictorially rises from the crowd, here it is the crowd that closes in, swallows and obliterates whoever would dominate it.

The film's most unforgettable scene is near the end where the wailing women come to pick the strange fruit hanging from the Magyar trees. It raises pity and terror to the pitch of tragedy, and yet it is conceived in pure film terms, the perfect fusion of picture, movement and sound. Such a scene holds the promise of a significant new talent—as soon as he learns to pare down, to simplify. Too many episodes and too many aspects of the same psychological situation are the marks of the novice: they come from accepting repetitions which seem logical in the script but are rendered unnecessary by the higher explanatory powers of film.

Impostors (Imposztorok), directed by Félix Máriássy, is likewise an ambitious film: the semi-fictitious anti-hero represents the officer-class of the early 'twenties whose crassness, stupidity and megalomania could bring Fascism to power. But there is a serious and undigested split in the style of the plot and the sub-plot. The colonel, his dogs, his military or amatory activities are in the highly stylized, near-burlesque suggested by his very moustache. On the other hand, the story of the law-student corrupted by the heady friendship of a handsome and self-assured young officer is conceived in the romantic, deeply-felt mode of personal tragedy, far from the spirit of farce with which Horthy confronts the even more farcical monarch whose Regent he claimed to be. Máriássy's treatment of their historic clowning is excellent, but the only connecting link between the student's tragedy and the ludicrous grab at power is the romantic stance of two young officers, who see themselves as patriotic heroes, and are both driven to the inevitable final heroic gesture of a squalid suicide. Very few films or plays have ever succeeded in welding comic alienation and romantic sympathy, and *Impostors* fails, too.

The Comic Muse, 1969

Not a first performance, but recent enough to be included here was a completely different satire: *Do You Know Sunday-Monday?* (Ismeri a Szandi-Mandit?)* directed by Livia Gyarmathy. Her brief, to examine people as workers, in relation to their work as well as each other, could have led either to an *I'm All Right, Jack*, or to a treatment such as in the excellent *Forbidden Ground* (1969; directed by Pál Gábor) where the industrial setting serves one of the primary themes of Hungarian films: the theme of individual responsibility in public matters.

In *Sunday-Monday*, the problem isn't one of responsibility: nothing goes wrong, except, here and there, a machine part, a model sailboat, or a human life. The problem is modern man's alienation from the thing that fills his time: his work. Both the workers and the management of a factory are seen to pay more serious attention to their hobbies —model yachts, private feuds, drink or seduction—than to work. A group of schoolgirls on a holiday assignment contribute

* See also Gábor Fáy's review in No. 36 of The N.H.Q.

scope for jokes and nude photography—and the only thing which is surprising throughout is that the film is a complete success, enjoyable from beginning to end. For this, the director contributes a sense of timing and a subtlety of taste which stops short of Forman's crude satire or the Jacques Tati pitfall of the comedy-of-objects. Her sense of style is shown best in the way most of the film was shot: obliquely, with the actors seen from doorways, behind the machinery, through closed-circuit TV, always off-centre. If Jancsó's camera becomes an actor, gliding to and from as a part of his choreography, then in *Sunday-Monday* the camera could be compared to a clumsy and apologetic chance visitor who stumbles around the factory and the party, noticing mainly things he should not see, perhaps missing the central action, and luckily missing all pompous and self-important 'significance'. The context in which they live looms larger than the characters.

In this, it is a complete contrast with *The Lady from Constantinople* (Sziget a szárazföldön), a new comedy by another young woman director, Judit Elek. Its story may have had satirical intentions, but the performance of Manyi Kiss, an actress who has learnt enough about the craft of acting in a career of over thirty years to upstage even a Shirley Temple, focuses total pathos on the central character—and turns the film into a tear-jerker. Moreover, each sequence, excellently conceived in itself, is drawn out too long: the old man's death and funeral, the Flat Exchange, the house-viewing party ought to have been cut by a third. The quality of the acting clearly merits a feature film, but the script department should have supplied a few more ideas.

The third new comedy shown at Pécs, *The Tót Family* (Isten hozta, őrnagy úr!) is by one of the most experienced and most consistent directors, Zoltán Fábri; it is stylized, elegant and visually witty, but being the film version of a play,* it should roll more smoothly. The creaking joints are the written inscriptions, a device frequently borrowed from silent films, but (with the sole exception of Pierre Etaix's *Yoyo*) always an unfortunate and pointless loan. The stage play by István Örkény had the brilliant idea of confronting the psychotic Major with the sycophantic family of one of his men and creating a para-military power struggle between the old despot, the father, and the forces of Fascist rhetoric. The film succeeds in deepening further the undertones of the play, which is as much as one can expect from the popularization of a successful theatrical venture.

* See parts of the play in No. 28. of The N.H.Q.

Thematic patterns in Hungarian films

Looking at the films produced last year, and taking these together with the retrospective screenings of directors' debuts, three distinct thematic patterns emerge. Each of these is not merely peculiar to the Hungarian cinema, and therefore exciting to addicts abroad, but is also recurrent, worked out again and again, thus sometimes familiar to the point of tedium to home audiences.

Apart from such straight comedies as mentioned above, the three main thematic groupings are: (1) the young autobiography, the Rousseau-esque sentimental education. The prototype and finest example of this theme is István Szabó's *Father* (Apa, 1966). But *Father* had followed both Jancsó's *Cantata* (1963) and Herskó's *Dialogue* (Párbeszéd, 1965) as well as Szabó's own *Age of Daydreaming* (Álmodozások kora, 1965) and these were continued in turn by others: *Signal* (Lássátok feleim, 1967), *Baptism* (Keresztelő, 1967) and *The Sack* (Hogy szaladnak a fák, 1967) which was perhaps the best of this fertile crop.

The second, and even more dominant theme in Hungarian films is the complex of terror and oppression. The prototype was *The Roundup* (Szegénylegények, 1966) but Jancsó himself developed the theme further

in *The Red and the White* (Csillagosok, katonák, 1967) and *Silence and Cry* (Csend és kiáltás, 1968). He finally simplified it to the problems of the power-struggle within a revolution in his *Confrontation* (Fényes szelek, 1969). To a certain extent, András Kovács's *Cold Days* (Hideg napok, 1966) also belongs here, though as in all Kovács films, the real issue is not power and oppression, but the responsibility of the individual in a historic or political situation.

This leads to the third group, which, in a numerical analysis, includes the largest number of serious Hungarian films: the theme of responsibility. Who was responsible for evils in the past, who is responsible for abuses in the present, who has the right and the duty to influence or change things? The most artistic, complete and unified treatment of this subject, with the strongest contemporary bite, had been Kovács's *Walls* (Falak, 1968).

In the Pécs festival, the brandnew *Bespectacled* (Szemüvegesek) directed by Sándor Simó, was so similar to *Walls* in subject, structure and characterization that it is hard to recall it as anything but a gauche, watered-down imitation.

The Synthesis

All three themes, that is, autobiography in a historic context, the individual in society's thumbscrew, and the individual's responsibility in changing the world merge in a new film which dominated the Pécs week: Sándor Sára's *Feldobott kő** (its working title is *Thrown-up Stone*, but what the hell!). It is the product of a "good stable," one of the script writers being Ferenc Kósa, another director of uncompromising artistic integrity whose debut was *Ten Thousand Suns* (Tízezer nap, 1963–67). Sára himself was the cameraman of the larger part of noteworthy Hungarian films and has directed various documentaries, prize-winners in their own right and useful sketches for *Feldobott kő*, such as *Twelfth Night* (Vízkereszt, about the outlying farms of the puszta) and *Gypsies*.

Feldobott kő is a coup de foudre of this thematology, covering the three themes mentioned in one go. The young hero emerges from a rural working-class background, and the process of his maturing is not only autobiographical, but a metaphor for the maturing of socialism in Hungary. The film traces the process of discovering the rights, then the obligations, of the individual, through an unblinking recognition of reality; often unpleasant reality. Sára's implicit message is that without this recognition one cannot undertake changing any aspect of reality.

The inner life of the young man is less in evidence than usual: and where it appears, as in his response to the beauty of his friend's wife, it is the least well-wrought part of the film and could even have been omitted, except to show the young man as human and not just an Everyman figure. The forces of oppression are shown not as the sadistic splendours of an enemy ideology, but as the stupid and crass muddle which can confuse even good causes and which can defeat even the heroes who bravely challenge it. But Sára makes it clear that in the end, the evils of stupidity can be defeated not by heroic gestures, but by the long, slow processes of education, enlightenment, and eventually, welfare, freedom and peace.

Sára is a true image-maker among Hungarian directors, though not all his images succeed equally. The visual pyrotechnics of an upside-down world through the surveyor's lens is arty rather than meaningful, and the scene where a group sits by a dark river listening to a broadcast needed a footnote for me, as it would for any other foreigner or any Hungarian audience in the years to come, who did not happen to sit in darkness that year, listening to Hungary's most notorious political trial. I would level the same criticism against the final still-frames of

* See also Gábor Fáy's review in No. 36 of The N.H.Q.

Impostors, too. Shorthand glimpses of history are self-defeating, for ars longa, vita brevis est, and a scene in a film, encased and preserved in film archives, will long survive allusions to living memory.

On the other hand, Sára's long shot of the farmers gathering on carts, approaching the site of the projected cultural centre, none coming too near either to the site or to one another, is one of the most powerful metaphors ever coined for the problems of the puszta and its peasantry. In the forest scenes, with the Gypsy encampment, Sára avoids any studied image-making: the shaved heads are ready-made, and he shoots the whole sequence with the speed and casualness of a documentary newsreel: its power derives from this conviction of documentary authenticity. But this causes one of the breaks in the style of the film. First, the darkly photographed scenes with the Greek partisan are stylized, allegorical: he has brought revolutionary ideas much as Prometheus brought fire. The very fact of his being a Greek has Aeschylian echoes, stressed by the scenes being mounted as an open-air play, complete with a chorus of blackclad peasants. Then, the interiors are shot even more formally, perhaps to stress that politics are decided in elaborate, theatrical stage sets anyway. But there is no proper transition between these scenes and the naturalism towards the end.

Perhaps I would not have noticed such minor shortcomings in *Feldobott kő* or in the other premières, had there not been a screening of Jancsó's *Confrontation* one evening. The controversy which raged around it has died down by now, and we are left with a proof of such total mastery of the medium, such total command of movement, picture and sound, that all the other films shown at Pécs looked halting and disjointed. This was true not only of the Hungarian debuts, but also of such internationally prized spectacles as Bunuel's *Galaxy* or Wideberg's *Elvira Madigan*. It is not a matter of mere professional gloss—Bo Wideberg has that, and so has Fábri—but of that un-analyzable residue, that final artistic quality which sets apart even a minor Rembrandt in a provincial art gallery.

MARI KUTTNA

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ILLYÉS Gyula (b. 1902). Recognised as one of the greatest living Hungarian poets. He was elected Vice-President of International P.E.N. in 1969. Among his recent contributions to The N.H.Q. see "Orator in the Night" in No. 28, "The Maker," a poem in No. 33, "Grass Snake and Fish," and "Consolation," two poems in No. 35.

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NAGY, Lajos (1883–1954). Writer and journalist. Extremely prolific, the author of eight novels, several hundred short stories, volumes of essays, criticism, sociological writings, satirical sketches and an excellent two-volume autobiography. See also his "The Wolves and the Lamb" in No. 9, and "May 1919" in No. 33.

NAGY, László (b. 1925). Poet. Born in a small village in western Hungary, he came to the capital after the war and studied at the Academy of Art to become a painter. Later he read Hungarian for a few terms at Eötvös University. His first volume of poems, published in 1949, established his place among the leading members of the post-war generation. Since then he has published eight volumes of poetry and numerous translations. See the poem "Bartók and The Beasts of Prey" and an interview with the poet in No. 23, as well as his poems "The Ferryman," "Prayer to The White Lady," "The Break-Up," and "The Peacock Woman" in No. 27.

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