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ECONOMIC PLANNING AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION*

by

JENŐ FOCK

Prospects for Medium and Long-term Planning

The recently held tenth Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party evaluated the reforms in the management of the economy introduced in January 1968 from the point of view of the development of economic planning as unambiguously positive. The reform is in accord with the level of development of the forces of production and with the specific features of Hungarian economic life. It makes it possible for economic planning to be raised to a higher standard, for management to be carried out in a more specific way, paying proper regard to forecasts, and to decide on the major questions in the building of socialism in a more thorough way, taking account of a number of possible variants. It also makes it possible to rely on the skill, creativeness and sense of responsibility of the working people to a greater degree. Improved planning methods introduced by the reform ensure a strengthening of the planned nature of the economy, the extension of Hungary's foreign trade relations, and the complete fulfilment of international commitments. The reform makes a contribution to closer and more intensive cooperation with CMEA countries whose economies are planned, in the first place with the Soviet Union. The Hungarian reform of economic management has demonstrated even more convincingly than hitherto one of the greatest—if not *the* greatest—advantage of the socialist economy as compared to the capitalist one; that is that, based on the social ownership of the means of production, the planned and conscious social direction of the national economy is both possible and

* This article is an elaboration of an interview given by the Prime Minister to *Társadalmi Szemle* (Social Review), the theoretical and political monthly of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, 1971, No. 1.

necessary. Working out appropriate plans which truly reflect the most important social interests is an extremely intricate task. The Hungarian plans meet these requirements fairly well.

As regards span and function our economic plans are worked out for different time spans: there are one year and five year plans; a long-term plan covering a period of fifteen years is being worked out at present. If one wants to define the characteristics and functions of plans of different time spans one might say, slightly simplifying, that the objective of one year plans is to ensure the continuous smooth and balanced flow of the economy. Five year plans attach greater importance to developmental changes and to a certain structural transformation of the forces of production, as well as of production and consumption, dealing with these of course always with an eye to the internal and external equilibrium of the economy. In the fifteen year plan it is precisely the moment of change that comes to the fore. The longer span a plan covers, the less conditions prevalent at the start tie the hands of planners, and the more plans must rely on a variety of economic forecasts.

As far as direction is concerned, earlier one year plans were of primary importance. At present, however, as a result of the increased independence of enterprises and in view of the fact that plans are not broken down to specific directives any more, greater importance is attached to five year plans by the central guidance of the economy. One might say that—today—the main buttresses of the planned economy are the five year plans, and that the economic regulators too are primarily coordinated with the five year plans.

The Necessity of Long-term Plans

The development of socialist relations of production must necessarily be accompanied by activities becoming more conscious in all fields of social life, particularly in the economy. It therefore became a precondition and a pressing necessity to lay our plans on scientifically well established foundations, for instance by increasing the importance of long-term planning in the national economy and by shaping five year plans with full knowledge of, and taking into account, lasting long-term tendencies in socio-economic, technological and scientific development.

The more important economic decisions affecting the next few years are generally included in five year plans. Certain socio-economic problems, however, such as the electrification of the economy, the housing problem

and bringing regions on various stages of development onto an equal level, are beyond the scope of five year plans, prompting planners to draw up plans covering a longer span. Proper foresight demands that those responsible for the guidance of the economy should be able to look ahead some ten years beyond the targets of the five year plans, since most decisions affecting development become effective around that time, or even later.

Long-term planning is a highly important aspect of economic planning, and of the economic activity of the socialist state. Long-term plans primarily express the economico-political strategy of the party and the state, laying down the guidelines and opening up vistas for actual economic direction on the basis of which decisions can be made, and directives for the next few years can be issued. The basic aim of long-term plans is to correctly assess predictable trends and the outcome of objective growth processes. Realistic ways for the application and extension of scientific and technological achievements in this country must be carefully weighed, and the unfolding of the scientific and technological revolution must be speeded up. At this point I wish to refer to one of the most important and difficult questions of planned economic direction, that is the planning of technological development.

Drawing up plans allowing for expected trends of technological development is a complex task indeed. This is so not only due to the fact that scientific and technological development contains a number of unforeseeable and "incalculable" elements, but also because one has to start from given realities, and an approach to the solution of the problem must be made with the aim of catching up with the most highly developed countries —at least in certain selected fields—a fact which demands considerable intellectual and material efforts. The appropriate "planning" of technical development is a key question of every plan—in particular of every long-term plan—since it is closely connected with growth in the productivity of labour—and taking a historical view—with the fundamental question of competition between the two systems i.e., "who will overcome whom"; furthermore the planning of technological development lays the foundation for an increase in the well-being of a society. Another important objective of long-term planning is to indicate the strategy to be followed in the field of international economic relations.

I hope that what I have said shows why long-term plans are necessary. However, I would like to stress again and again that a conscious social regulation of economic development cannot be restricted to a certain transformation of the actual situation, it must also include far-reaching social objectives in the future.

Working out Long-term Plans

The preliminary spadework which preceded the drafting and working out of the Hungarian long-term plan has been carried out in three stages:

–first: the development of the national economy during the seventeen years from 1950 to 1967 was analysed and the past trends of economic development were established;

—secondly: concepts and their variants for development of various fields of the economy were worked out, and

—in the third phase the variants of development are evaluated on a national level, substantially analysed, macroeconomic concepts are worked out by combining alternatives of sectoral development and exploring the various avenues of developing the economy. Alternatives of long-term development strategy of the national economy are worked out.

The first phase, i.e., the analysis of the past twenty years of the Hungarian economy, was essentially completed by the end of 1968.

The task of the first part of the second phase was to trace out in advance the prospective development targets as well as ways and methods of development of single sectors. In the past year plan-hypotheses were generally established. The summing up by the National Planning Office indicated the social demands that served as a basis for further planning, the main politico-economic targets and hypotheses of the rhythm of growth and the distribution of resources.

After a detailed elaboration of variants of sectoral development, which lasted up to roughly the middle of 1970, suggestions by branches were checked and analysed, combinations were worked out and evaluated, and only after all this was done, by the end of 1971, will the results of long-term planning be comprehensively summed up and combined, will variants of the long-term national economic plan draft be drawn up and submitted for discussion to higher organs of the party and the state. This, however, doesn't mean that work has come to an end since the investigation of development alternatives of foreign trade relations, changes in the price structure and other effects will be continued in 1972–73. All this will allow a stricter delineation of the long-term plan and permit the simultaneous development of preliminary concepts for the ensuing fifth Five Year Plan.

Experiences from the Analysis of the Past Period

Before discussing the principal lessons obtained I wish to comment on the work of analysis as such. There is no doubt that an analysis of the past is—strictly speaking—not a constituent part of drawing up a plan; but if we were asked why we waste so much effort on the past instead of facing the future, the answer is that in our view the analysis of past experiences is an important preliminary stage in the drafting of plans and it is, to a certain degree, a new method of planning which will also be carried on in the future. If lessons really are to be drawn from the past—something we are determined to do, it is our duty to do this, what's more—we cannot rest content with merely taking note of what has or has not been fulfilled or overfulfilled. An evaluation is needed relying on available experience in order to establish the deficiencies and what they can be attributed to. This would then indicate which components of development should be stressed in the future. A thorough analysis of past development thus contributes to raising the scientific standard of planning and buttresses the sound foundations of our plans.

As regards the lessons to be learnt, analysis showed that the Hungarian economic growth rate considerably exceeded that of the times before the Liberation; it was fast also in comparison with other countries, and it enabled Hungary to make up during twenty years for the time-lag of almost one hundred years, to considerably improve the living conditions of the population and to lay the foundations of further progress. All this has been achieved simultaneously with the development of the socialist socio-economic system, while at the same time preference was given to a more general policy concerned with building society and establishing new socialist relations of production. It has not succeeded yet—and, in fact, could not have succeeded in so short a time—to get close to the economic level of developed capitalist countries, or to their average living standard. The analyses revealed the external and internal causes which partly stimulated and partly put a brake on Hungarian economic development pointing out at the same time that we also failed to avail ourselves of the opportunities offered to the full.

For all that, fundamental trends of economic development, such as socialist industrialization, bringing into being a socialist agriculture, the basically socialist orientation of foreign trade as well as an income and social policy which did away with social injustice, were, in essence, in conformity with demands deriving from the socialist transformation of society. The Hungarian economy by and large developed in a manner that

corresponded to what the objective situation required, although economic policy prior to 1956 was prone to distortions, and the deficiencies of the former system of economic guidance in addition temporarily imposed heavier burdens on both the economy and the population than absolutely necessary.

The improvement of industrial technology and the modernization of the production pattern were unsatisfactory; in this regard too we failed to take advantage of our existing possibilities which were anyway limited from more than one point of view.

According to all indications a somewhat quicker rate of economic growth cannot be achieved without tapping new resources since a number of sources of extensive economic growth are in process of exhaustion. The following could be done to speed up the growth rate. (I am of course only giving an outline.)

Material and moral incentives as well as the standard of planned economic guidance and of the training of workers must be raised. The application of scientific achievements, both of Hungary and of other countries, to production must be speeded up. This includes making use in the first place of the experience of CMEA countries. The advantages of the international division of labour must be exploited to a higher degree; in the first place more thorough and more efficient cooperation must be established with socialist countries, in trade, production development and scientific research. Furthermore a deliberate international financial and credit policy must be carried out laying particular stress on foreign credits the aim of which is to speed up technological development. The time for making investments operative must be shortened and the advantages inherent in investments designed to modernize and rationalize the scale of productive capacities and put an end to bottlenecks must be better exploited.

Long-term Planning and the Fourth Five Year Plan

Although the fourth Five Year Plan could not yet be based on a consolidated and final long-term plan, the two plans were worked out in a closely interrelated way. The fourth Five Year Plan already reflects aims which are in conformity with ideas included in the long-term plan on the basis of branch, sectoral and comprehensive development hypotheses which had been meanwhile worked out on a long-term basis. The central development programme included in the fourth Five Year Plan organically fits into the economic development concepts which are now taking shape in the

long term. They are, for example, the natural gas production programme, the aim of which is to modernize the pattern of energy consumption, the development plan of the aluminium industry relying on both the country's bauxite resources and on international cooperation, the plan for the development of the production of modern vehicles and means of transport, the petrochemical programme to develop the processing of crude oil products, the introduction of up-to-date building technologies whose aim is to extend the use of light building constructions and the computer programme which plays an important role in modernizing the level of technology, management and methods of organization of the economy as a whole.

There is no doubt that the central development programmes included in the fourth Five Year Plan to a certain extent delimit the freedom of decision-making in the next plan period. The main development programmes which were already decided upon centrally draw on investment potentials of industry in the period following the fourth Five Year Plan to a certain degree. They of course provide a certain elbow-room in respect of central investments and allow particular scope in the field of growth and investment of enterprises so that a sufficient degree of freedom is given for the taking of further decisions at a later time.

An extreme and unacceptable position belittles and therefore underrates freedom of action in the direction of Hungarian economic life. If available resources and means are concentrated systematically and purposefully on the most important tasks and areas, considerable changes can be produced, and what is more the greater the time span the more considerable the changes. Fifteen years are, in fact, a long enough period to make a difference. Since we are talking about extremes let me mention another extremist point of view, that is, the view which overlooks the effects and further consequences of growth included in five year plans beyond the plan's time-limit. This extremist view considers short term plans as entities so to speak independent of the fifteen year long-term plan, and considers the latter—arguing that the future cannot be planned anyhow—merely a roughly outlined, kind of loose prediction quite unsuited for practical action. In respect to the interdependence of the Fifteen Year Plan and the Five Year Plans, one has to take a realistic view on both limitation which is the natural consequence of actual development, and freedom of decision which makes considerable changes possible.

This is the right place to touch upon a problem which has often been mentioned in connection with long-term plans, that is, that we might become exaggeratedly committed for 10–15 years in advance by making premature and insufficiently considered decisions on economic develop-

ment. Bearing in mind past experiences this concern certainly appears to be justified but I do not think that this applies equally to the more recent past. I hold that the above-mentioned central development programmes, and the investments which necessarily ensue, are justified and timely beyond doubt. Besides what one has to worry about is not only certain delimitations on later decision making, but at least as much about the late date at which Hungary is caught up by the tide of the technological revolution, leaving opportunities unused because of hesitations and indecisiveness.

Extensive or Intensive Development

I do not think that one can speak about "purely extensive" or "purely intensive" economic growth. However, one can and must distinguish between extensive and intensive phases of development in order to correctly evaluate the efficiency of Hungarian economic management and to indicate in this way the possibilities, concrete tasks and the roads to efficient implementation to be followed. Which phase of development has been reached can be gauged by whether extensive or intensive aspects—which are found side by side—prevail and have become decisive, characteristic and determinant.

Nor would it be right to identify newly crated productive capacities simply as extensive phenomena. The two terms are not synonymous in economic terminology. It isn't right either to interpret extensive development in a disparaging and pejorative way as regards the past. The extensive period of the Hungarian economy was—in spite of the known mistakes, deficiencies and the unsatisfactory exploitation of given opportunities—a necessary phase of development which could not be avoided or passed over.

The transition from the extensive to the intensive phase of development is a complex process which takes a relatively long time. In certain industries new capacities and work places are established also in the intensive phase. This, however, does not necessarily lead to a higher proportion of those employed in industry.

At present, Hungary is at the initial period of the intensive phase of her economic development. The capacity of a number of industries could be intensified and technical growth makes possible the development of labour-saving technologies or the employment of more up-to-date equipment which are required for a more up-to-date production pattern and a higher standard of work, which will then produce higher values. In addition, it

has to be taken into account that previously large labour reserves are becoming exhausted and this, too, decreases social pressure tending towards the extension of employment.

The intensive factors of economic development cannot of course become predominant in one go; a certain transitional time is needed which cannot be limited to a single five-year-plan-period. For example, although the absolute number as well as the proportion of those employed in industry will increase in the course of the fourth Five Year Plan, a considerable change will take place as compared to the previous phase. The main point of industrial progress will be the development of technology, a sharp increase in productivity and an exploitation of opportunities for reconstruction and rationalization.

In the intensive phase there are better conditions for recovering development expenditure in a shorter time and the conditions are more favourable for achieving higher labour productivity and a more efficient specific utilization of total social work input. Intensification is based on a higher technological culture, the mastery of which takes time and requires considerable expenditure however quickly knowledge may be acquired. Rational economic development requires a rational joint use of extensive and intensive growth methods of industries, enterprises and regions in order to develop an economy with an "intensive" character of a higher technological and economic standard, and to do so within as short as possible a time.

Investments

To ask for investments greater than justified by the resources available is not a new phenomenon but has been a permanent and chronic accompaniment of economic development for a long time. It must be clear to all that while a considerable section of demands for state investments is fully justified some demands are not in keeping with the present level of development. The increased investment demand of enterprises is also related to the fact that, in the present system of management, enterprise activity in part produces the necessary financial resources. In addition, considerable efforts are made all the time to secure public investment and to obtain state support for enterprise investment. The lively demand for investment in the field of production cannot be considered unjustified from an economic point of view, since the transformation of structure, the increase of productivity, and efforts for a more up-to-date and varied assortment, require the considerable modernization, replacement and expansion

of fixed assets. Tension mainly follows on the limits of execution, in the first place in the building trade.

It is the fundamental aim of economic policy in general investment policy, in particular of the fourth Five Year Plan, to establish conditions of economic equilibrium. With this in view the demand for investment must be limited on the one hand, while on the other great efforts are made to increase the growth rate of the building and building material industries above the average, as well as of those industries which supply material, structures and equipment needed in the building trade. During the third Five Year Plan investment in the building trade and building material industry amounted to 5.7 per cent of total investment, in the fourth they will, according to estimates, reach 7 per cent. In addition to a higher and faster than average growth rate of the building industry, the building material industry, and the assembly industry, building industry regulators will also contribute to shorten the production period of building operations.

The faster growth rate in the infrastructure—as prescribed by the fourth Five Year Plan—naturally modifies the investment pattern. The proportion of infrastructural investments amounted to 40 per cent in the third Five Year Plan in the fourth it is estimated at 44, the growth being almost exclusively due to increased housing construction.

In my view one of the most important objectives of the immediate future must be a reduction in the time taken to complete construction. The completion of investments in process must be speeded up and efforts must be made to expand industrial capacities, and to establish new plants requiring a minimum of building operations. This is easier said than done. There was every reason to raise housing targets; this was a correct decision, which what is more could not be put off, since unsatisfied housing needs produced considerable social tension. In 1975, 39,000 prefabricated housing units will be produced as compared to 16,000 in 1970. Primarily thanks to this, the number of dwelling units to be built in the fourth Five Year Plan will exceed that built in the third by a round hundred thousand. Since the output of housing factories is not convertable, there is no danger that existing tensions in industrial, agricultural etc. construction will increase because of intensified home building, respectively that the latter tension may be significantly diminished at the expense of the former one.

The carrying out of industrial and agricultural investments must not necessarily suffer delay because of the considerably increased rate of housing construction. In my view a real danger is that, because of commitments assumed of necessity in connection with long-term development targets, and in view of still uncompleted investments started in earlier plan periods

—too many simultaneous investment objectives are being envisaged. Hence, in the following period, new growth targets must be evaluated in a strictly restrained and circumspect way, an appropriate choice must be made between needs and the production of building materials suitable for up-to-date building techniques must be developed at a quick rate.

Living Standards

If one would have to decide which of the many objectives included in the national economic plans are the most important ones we would answer without hesitation that the sum and substance of all plans—of the five and the fifteen year plan as well—is to raise, as far as objective possibilities allow it, the material welfare and cultural standard of Hungarian working people, and society as a whole, and to create the most favourable conditions for the unfolding of the manifold talents of individuals. I think that the socialist character of the central direction of Hungarian social development is most comprehensively and pregnantly reflected precisely by the aforesaid. How this most important question is attended to depends, in the last resort, on the level and development of the productivity of social work, in other words also on the given level of social development. However, within the latter, "welfare" goods designed to be consumed by society, can be distributed in different ways and according to various considerations among the various classes, strata, groups and individuals within society. This is what gives "independent" and great significance to income policy, as it is put into practice.

The chief aims of Hungarian incomes policy are: the perceivable, permanent and steady increase of incomes and a greater differentiation between individual earnings deriving from work dependent on the social usefulness of work done. A further aim is to decrease differences of income deriving from the number of family members and the composition of families, that is, from the proportion—which differs from family to family—of young family members not yet of working age plus those too old to work. The income pattern of the population should contribute to the growth of a healthier and more cultured way of life.

According to detailed calculations, sums allotted to family allowances, pensions, health and education will increase at a faster rate than the national income and/or the increase in personal incomes in the course of the fourth Five Year Plan. This tendency will continue to be effective also in the long run according to the calculations of the long term plan and the

assumptions made by the planners. Certain factors, for example, family allowances, will make themselves even more forcefully felt than hitherto, a fact which is doubtless right, expedient and fair, primarily bearing in mind socio-political considerations. This means that the living standards of families increase in addition to higher earnings deriving from more productive and efficient work by members of families who are employed, because health provision improves and schoolboys and schoolgirls will be better provided for and receive a higher standard of education. The living standards of families will also increase at the same time because pensioners will receive higher pensions and society will contribute with higher family allowances to the sustenance of children.

Within the gross income of the population the proportion of money incomes and allotments in kind will presumably increase. It seems desirable that—of the two—money income should increase at a faster rate. Changes will be relatively slight in the years to come but will make themselves more vigorously felt in the long run. One might ask whether this trend is not inconsistent with the aim of providing incentives for workers in the interests of higher productivity and efficiency by more quickly increasing earnings deriving from work. This inconsistency can be partly eliminated by a more consequent and purposeful wage policy which stimulates to higher efficiency and productivity; on the other hand it is only an apparent inconsistency and if one looks at the matter from another and broader angle, it becomes clear that material incentives stimulating to higher work performance do not depend solely upon higher incomes directly deriving from work but also the way the total income of the population increases and the way in which it is distributed among how many men and women.

Incentives according to work done are truly efficient if per capita real incomes of workers increase at a satisfactory rate. This, however, does not depend solely on the rate at which total incomes deriving from work increase but in addition also on the number of those employed. During the past twenty years the occupational force increased by approximately one and a half per cent per annum on the average. This rate of increase will slow down during the fourth Five Year Plan and probably will not even amount to 0.75 per cent. In the subsequent ten years it will only reach—as far as can be foreseen—one fourth of the earlier growth rate. Consequently, the percentage of the population's income deriving from allowances will increase within total incomes, while incomes per earner deriving from work will also increase at a faster rate. All this presupposes a sound development of the Hungarian economy and increases which will reach plan targets by 1975 and the estimated rate of growth in subsequent years.

Prices Policy

Consumer prices are one of the most complex socio-economic phenomena for they sometimes have to fulfil contradictory functions. Consumer prices may act as incentives, play a role in refunding the costs of production, in the formation of living standards, in the distribution of personal incomes and in changing the pattern of consumption.

It is a characteristic feature of our present consumer price system that —in spite of corrections made in recent years—consumer prices considerably deviate from social expenditure in a wide field of commodities. Even in the course of the 1968 reform of economic guidance we only adjusted an insignificant proportion of all consumer prices.

Consumer prices which, owing to subsidies and turnover taxes, considerably depart from social costs of production, are an increasingly felt retarding force in the phase of intensive economic development. They inhibit a more rational transformation of the consumption pattern, modify income proportions in an economically unjustifiable way and run counter to the principle of distribution according to work. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to definitely proceed along the way leading to a consumer price system in accordance with value ratios, in an economically and politically circumspect way and at the right moment, of course.

The prospective programme of consumer price reform means, in the final analysis, that state subsidies will be done away with and by and large uniform rates of turnover tax introduced while certain deliberate and permanent preferences will be kept up. These deliberate and permanent price preferences will be restricted to a relatively narrow range, first of all, in order to attain objectives in the domain of health and culture; however, the preferential list will also include commodities and services regarding which social aims, and occasionally economic considerations, justify the granting of price preferences in the long run.

It is obvious that this kind of comprehensive consumer price reform can only be gradually realized in a way advantageous for the working people as a whole. Price rises can and must be set off—taking into account possibilities of increased consumption—thus, we do not have to choose between "rational prices or a rise in living standards."

Only a smaller part of the long-term consumer price programme can, in our view, be implemented by 1975. In the subsequent period we shall have to follow the set course step by step. In the second half of the long-term plan period, the administrative regulation of prices must be gradually limited to commodities of fundamental importance.

This long-term price policy takes into account that the Hungarian state will for a long time keep up preferential state prices and other kinds of subsidies in certain fields. We shall continue to give permanent price preferences to milk and dairy products, that is, the consumer price level of these commodities will be kept below the effective social costs of production. Price preference will be given, for educational reasons, to school-books and educational appliances, and exemption from school-fees and/or low tuition fees will be continued; the most important drugs and baby-food will be sold at reduced prices. The same applies to rents, water supply and baths, and to prices in certain fields where no economic advantages —or only very slight ones—would derive if price preferences would be discontinued, for example, in passenger transport, particularly in towns. Reduced prices of a number of cultural services will presumably be continued for a long time.

Permanent prefences will only be given within a restricted range of consumer goods available on the market. This is the more justified since, in line with the increase of living standards preferences designed to ensure social welfare are losing importance. At present, the low prices of foodstuffs of vital importance and of children's wear etc. still embody this aim.

Directing demand and stimulating supply will be an important objective of price policy also in the future. However, we object to continuing on principle what we formerly had to do as a necessity when prices conveyed a different meaning to the producer and to the consumer. If difficulties crop up in the marketing of certain products it is reasonable to lower consumer prices. On the other hand, it would not be right to keep up an unfavourable production pattern by granting higher prices to producers.

Within the framework of a uniform price policy, the consumer prices policy also must primarily further the optimum utilization of our resources and the development of a consumption pattern which is rational and profitable from the point of view of the economy. One must therefore implement the right trend in order to stimulate production and consumption simultaneously.

Certain economists tend to think that it is necessary to keep up consumer price preferences in the long term. They wish to continue the present preferential system which covers a large section of the economy and which leads to a consumption pattern which in many respects clashes with the country's economic interests. According to this view, consumer price policy is mainly meant to promote and stimulate the development of a healthy and cultured way of life, to subsidize the consumption of certain social groups, to develop a biologically more favourable nutritive structure and

to decrease actually existing differentiation of family incomes. This way of looking at things wants to by and large extrapolate present preferences arguing that if preferences were discontinued, the considerable differences between the incomes of families—deriving not so much from differences in earnings but far more from the size and composition of families—would increase. This view—which attributes a high social consciousness to consumer price preferences in spite of the many illogical and fortuitous elements they contain, both from an economic and a social point of view—was justified for 15–20 years after the Liberation, particularly in 1950–53. (It is another question that the living standard was hard hit by the economic policy of the years between 1950 and 53. Preferences could only partly protect the workers; they were not as such able to influence competently and simultaneously increases in production, real incomes and consumption.) Today, however, price preferences can be justifiably maintained only for social reasons and in an increasingly narrow domain. Preferences inhibit Hungarian economic development to an increasing extent.

Other economists do not rely on social points of view, accepting the fact that these days they emerge in ways different to the earlier ones. They want to keep up prices preferences in the future also but in order to further production and production development. These economists argue that in every phase of development tasks inevitably emerge which make state subsidies of new industries or else high producer's prices necessary because of high initial costs. At the same time low consumer prices must provide for the capacity of the market to "absorb" the large volume of future production. They argue that this has been Hungarian policy so far, particularly in respect to technical commodities. In their view this is the right way to improve growth.

There is something to be said for this view. To mention only a few examples: it is possible that the introduction of colour TV, or air conditioning will show such price policy features. At the outset it will be expedient to refund actual expenditure to the producer but the consumer cannot be charged the total costs. One can carry on such a price policy in certain specific cases but it cannot become a guideline of economic conduct. If it were applied over too wide a range, the earlier subjective administrative price system would be re-established. The aim, therefore, is that consumer prices should, in general, cover social costs. This, together with a simultaneous increase in the standard of living, is the guiding principle of long-term Hungarian price policy in the next 10–15 years.

Cooperation between Socialist Countries and Middle and Long-term Integration within CMEA

Cooperation between the socialist countries is a factor of fundamental importance in Hungarian development. The successes of creative work by the Hungarian people cannot be separated from economic cooperation with socialist countries. The more Hungary relies on what other socialist countries have achieved in economic development the more successfully will the country progress. We are determined to exploit this resource in the future even more purposefully and effectively. In the middle-term cooperation this is furthered by co-ordinating our five year plans. The integration of the Hungarian plan with the Soviet Union and other CMEA member countries is a firm prop of the Hungarian Five Year Plan. The fourth Hungarian Five Year Plan lies on secure international economic foundations. In this cooperation with socialist countries plays a decisive role. The sale of a considerable part of goods for export can be taken for granted and so is our supply of basic raw materials, important machines and equipment. The integration of plans was a good occasion to establish permanent cooperation relations and to conclude agreements aiming at a further specialization of production.

Possible co-ordination of long-term plans of CMEA countries was discussed. Not a detailed co-ordination of plans was meant but a sizing up of prospects of development and a working out of wider possibilities of cooperation in the most promising fields of economic growth.

Long-term integration of plans does not simply refer to the mutual exchange of export commodities or surplus goods for it means the inceasingly close intertwining of reproduction on an increasing scale—the establishment of scientific and technological relations and—as a result of all these—such a planned division of labour which settles the ways and means of cooperation for a longer time.

Efforts made to speed up the economic integration of CMEA countries also further the long-term intensification of cooperation. This work relies on the decision adopted by party leaders and heads of governments at the 23rd session of CMEA in April 1969. The unfolding of integration in cooperation between CMEA countries can be considered the start of a historic period.

Certain decisions adopted at the 24th session of CMEA in May 1970, such as systematic economic and political consultations and establishing direct contacts between enterprises and institutions, are a decisive step towards integration. It will, however, take a longer time to develop common

concepts, on certain basic questions, such as agreement on currency matters, calling into existence a uniform CMEA monetary system, etc. This is due, among others, to the fact that a number of questions of vital importance concerning a uniform monetary system which is to stimulate efficiently the cooperation of socialist countries, and the preconditions needed for the creation of such a system have not been elaborated even theoretically up to now. Although it is certainly not easy to solve these extremely complicated problems which have no precedent, there is no doubt that the development of socialist integration is an objective tendency the CMEA countries have become aware of, and represents, in addition, one of the main aims of their economic policy.

Possibilities and Limitations in Europe

The economic life of European countries is closely interlinked. The intensity of economic relations between different countries and groups of countries has frequently changed in the course of history. After the Second World War, in the period of the Cold War, the economies of the socialist and the capitalist countries drifted markedly apart. As a result of considerable changes that took place in the past ten years, the re-establishment of closer economic relations between socialist and capitalist countries has become a characteristic trend of economic life in Europe.

The past twenty years have seen a conspicuous degree of integration in the economic life of Western Europe and Eastern Europe. The European Common Market is a considerable economic force, economic growth there takes place at a relatively quick rate and this already attracts Western European countries outside the organization. Economic cooperation within CMEA was an important factor in the unprecedented quick growth of socialist countries. History demands that European economic groups should not continue to develop more or less in isolation but that relations of the member countries with other parts of Europe should be extended. This is the common interest of both socialist and capitalist countries. In our days the idea of comprehensive Europe-wide economic cooperation has decidedly come to the fore.

An increasing number of problems can only be worked out, rationally and satisfactorily, if all concerned European countries join to solve them. A case in point is the husbandry of power resources. It is to the decided advantage of the countries concerned that interconnected electric power grids are operating in Western Europe and also within the framework of

CMEA. The cooperation of the two high capacity grids promises further advantages. Oil and gas pipelines cross more and more frontiers these days. It is high time that the building of a comprehensive European oil and gas pipeline system be discussed. The growth of traffic and of telecommunication is of decisive importance in the economic life of all countries; increased coordination in building a continent-wide road network is therefore another subject calling for all-European cooperation. Efforts aimed at improving the human environment, a question that has become pressing as a result of the growth of towns and technology, should also be aligned.

More and more people become aware of the immense unused possibilites inherent in an expansion of East–West trade. This refers to commerce as well as to the exchange of technical know-how and services, and to the extension of technological cooperation, that is to those aspects of commerce which have grown particularly fast recently. As a result of the increasing international flow of technological know-how technological and scientific cooperation as well as that kind of industrial cooperation in which both commerce and technology play a joint and permanent role, are given increased importance in addition to the more traditional aspects of commerce.

Of course, such relationship can only be developed on the basis of mutual advantage, commercial trust and respect for each other's principles, social structure, and state institutions. Although the prognosis as regards Europe-wide cooperation gives rise to confidence factors crop up in many fields which retard the growth of cooperation. Differentiating between countries, discrimination in commerce and economic obstacles maintained on the basis of political considerations do not further mutual understanding nor do they serve the cause of improved relations.

One also has to take into account efforts by certain people in the West who wish to enlist economic cooperation in the service of ideological undermining. Hungary supports every kind of economic connection which promotes the economic advantages of both parties on the basis of political equality; it is on the record, however, in terms that cannot be mistaken, that, in both political and economic relations, Hungary considers the growth of socialism and the consolidation of cooperation between socialist countries an aim which must be given priority.

The forces interested in an Europe-wide economic cooperation are far greater than those which wish to put a brake on this process. Conditions are therefore favourable for a healthy and extended growth of economic relations between socialist and capitalist countries. Possibilities for this should be looked for primarily in the further extension of bilateral cooperation. In addition, the situation appears to be ripe for a discussion

of the main problems of Europe-wide economic cooperation with the participation of the governments of all European countries. The main point is not only to further work going on in the European Economic Committee, the initiative taken by member countries of the Warsaw Treaty who suggested that a European Security Conference should also take up the question of Europe-wide economic cooperation is also relevant in this context. The task of this Conference will be to lay down the most important objectives and, besides, to be instrumental in establishing an atmosphere indispensable to economic cooperation without discrimination between European countries. Only a gradual development can be expected; one cannot reckon with striking and quick changes. Provided the countries concerned clear away all obstacles and make joint efforts Europe-wide economic cooperation could considerably contribute both to the economic growth of the participating countries and to the security of the European continent.

GYÖRGY LUKÁCS
1885–1971

I am speaking here* in the name of György Lukács's family and friends. My heart is heavy—as indeed that of all of us—forgive me therefore if my words are much poorer than the shock and grief they are meant to express. I feel—and so I am sure do all those in whose name I am speaking—that this death, expected and unavoidable though it has been, as every death is, destroyed more than a human life. It put an end to a rare natural phenomenon. Human greatness appears on this earth in many guises. In György Lukács, however, quite an exceptional variant of greatness made its appearance, that of a great thinker who, like the farmer who broadcasts the seeds he grew himself, sowed the products of his mind into the soil of our everyday reality, into our working days which are history itself. That was his life, and let me add, this is how and this is why he lived and died a communist. He did some hard thinking and what his mind worked out he also wanted to put into practice. He was the labourer of his own wisdom. He was the philosopher of practice.

Friends are speaking here through my voice, the voice of affection and grief. It is not up to us now—we could not do it if we wished—to take stock of György Lukács's impressive life and work, its achievements and inevitable pitfalls. This will have to be done by the world at large now brought to respectful attention by this sad event by those who supported and those who opposed his thought and action. A friend must tell of his affection which makes this farewell so hard. We ask what other qualities besides the workings of a great mind tied us to the dead, to the one who is now, alas, no longer with us. What human qualities informed his mind making it work just the way it did? What was that which captivated us in his work and personality alike? I should venture to answer with one

* *Delivered at the grave-side*

phrase: his love of man. Which, ultimately, presupposes confidence in man. György Lukács went through more than one trial during his life, his work and his services to the cause of socialism were frustrated on countless occasions, he had to face the obstacles which his being a philosopher of practice raised in his way—but all this never upset his faith in man which he endeavoured to justify with an unceasing and indefatigable exercise of his mental faculties. His convictions were not affected by his personal fortune. Nor, I should say, by the misfortunes of the age in which he lived. Nor by those of mankind. I recall with admiration the fragile and spare figure of the man, rocked by the upheavals of our age, which became so light, airy and transparent in his last years that only the glasses on his nose and the shining consciousness behind them kept him in a kind of delicate balance, but the order of his thoughts was not disturbed by the transmutations of the body. The wise, modest smile did not fade from his face when six months ago he was told, at his own request, that his illness was very likely fatal, and in our last talk, shortly before his death, he taught me with the same old passion to teach, the inevitable cigar in his mouth and the almost timid smile unchanged on his bony face which seemed to ask the pardon of the pupil listening to him for knowing something better. He was preparing, apparently unmoved, for his death, with an attention worthy of a Socrates.

György Lukács believed in a happy future. Or, let us say, in a happier future. His life, as well as his thoughts, were on a large scale. He accepted sacrifices and never thought them worthy of mention. He had the special gift of considering his thoughts more important than the power that society might have offered him. In the company of people he was modest and self-effacing, but he knew no mercy when faced by hostile ideas. This was one way to explain his fascinating personality: his powers of persuasion were gentle and inexhaustible and his convictions were firm like a rock. One always knew where one stood. He was a whetstone on which we could sharpen our own personalities. His disagreement was a compliment, though he did not consider it below his dignity to argue with the most modest of opponents. He was so much at one with his thinking that he felt himself invulnerable to the last.

Standing at the grave of a friend one usually sums up all one's doubts and regrets in one final question: what was the nature of his life? We can rarely give a satisfactory answer, since another man is for the most part impenetrable even to the most perceptive eye. My own answer is hesitant but hopeful that our standards of judgement will not deceive us and we shall not be misled by the selfishness of our search for solace; I think that

our great friend György Lukács had a happy life. He could work on the tasks he himself had chosen, from the beginning to his last moment, his life was regulated by a discipline he imposed on himself, he could work in a social system of his own chosing and he could render his final account in the firm conviction that he had honestly done all that he had committed himself to.

This thought would be a great consolation for all of us who are now compelled to exchange the living work of his mind for the legacy he has left us.

TIBOR DÉRY

FERENC ERDEI

1910–1971

This number had already gone to press when Ferenc Erdei died. Few played as important a role as he did in the Hungarian intellectual and public life of the past thirty years. Erdei was a member of the Editorial Board from the inception of this journal, and he did more than his share in shaping those features which gave the paper its image. He used his wide knowledge, his mastery of sociology, and his considerable political finesse to support the work of the editors.

Erdei as a person was typically Hungarian, East Central European and Socialist, for he was a patriot, an internationalist, a dreamer and an executive. His contributions to literature and scholarship were of the highest standard, at the same time he essentially influenced the political and social development of the country's agriculture.

Ferenc Erdei lived to be sixty-one, his parents were peasants, and so was he, when he first started work. Peasant in this sense certainly does not mean farmer. He was born in South-East Hungary, in Makó, one of those Hungarian towns whose population is largely engaged in agriculture. Makó is noted for its onions. Work was organized on a family basis, and Erdei started when only five. Right through his life he stayed close to the land, and to agricultural work. In the early thirties, when still a young man, he simultaneously made a stir in literary life, in scholarship and in politics. He was one of the founders of what in the thirties was called the Village Research Movement, young men who expressed the unbelievable backwardness of rural life in Hungary in works of descriptive sociology that prided themselves on both their scholarship and their prose. Erdei's first work, *Futóhomok* (Running Sands), is still the most accurate and most sensitively written description of the Great Hungarian Plain. He also began to study ways of furthering the development of modern and intensive agri-

culture, and, though young, he took part in public life and politics at the same time.

He wrote a number of books before the Liberation, and became the Chairman of the first real Hungarian agricultural producers' cooperative, the Makó onion cooperative. In the dying days of the Second World War, Erdei, aged 34, became the Minister of the Interior of the Hungarian Government that was formed in the liberated part of Hungary, in Debrecen. He held a number of portfolios right up to 1956.

Following 1957 he employed his experience, his knowledge, his political authority and country-wide popularity in looking for the most rational ways of socialist Hungarian agricultural growth. As General Secretary of the Patriotic People's Front, later as Chairman of the Council of Cooperatives, and finally, in the last years of his life, as General Secretary of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, he was able to express all three aspects of his personality and show himself as a scholar, a politician and a writer. Though his public functions kept him extremely busy, he found time in the last three years of this life to revisit those towns and villages of the Great Hungarian Plain which he had written about in his first book. *Város és vidéke* (Town and its Environs), his last book, describes the changes that took place in the past twenty-five years.

The book was published the day he died. "The Hungarian people lost a great son," one of the men who spoke at his grave-side said, and the whole country agreed.

I. B.

DISCUSSION–DECISION–ACTION

Marginalia to the Tenth Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

by

ILONA SÁNTA

In the course of the last fifteen years, and particularly in the years immediately prior to the Tenth Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, a variety of valuable discussions have been carried on in such different places as scientific institutes, political, social and economic institutions, newspapers and journals, in communist circles and among non-party men, in universities, co-operatives and factories, in private conversations and public debates. It is almost impossible to list the wide range of social, political and theoretical topics that have been under discussion, and continue to be discussed today. Historians, teachers, writers and journalists have examined such questions as criteria for judging the national traditions of the Hungarian people, the extent to which the country has advanced on the road leading to a fully socialist nation, and again, the extent to which a revolutionary Marxism adapted to produce answers to important national questions, the destiny and future of the Magyars and what are the present requirements of patriotism and internationalism. The experience gained from the new system of economic guidance that was introduced in 1968 has led to a series of newer questions, e.g., problems related to the deployment of labour and productivity, the increase of economic efficiency, a price and wages policy and the mechanism of social incentives. Further controversial questions have been and continue to be the concept of the working class as such, the wider limits of the working class, the present structure of Hungarian society and the extent of its mobility and open character, and whether there is sufficient interplay for social mobility to work. Workers and peasants, lawyers and government employees have argued over the way socialist democracy can be furthered in present conditions,* bureaucratic methods reduced, social developments

* This subject is discussed in Ottó Bihari: "The Development of Socialist Democracy in Political Institutions", No. 42, p. 76.

and institutions controlled more effectively by the masses and technical and popular viewpoints reconciled. Young and old discuss the relationships of the generations to one another, the extent to which the young people of today differ from our forebears, and whether one can and should attribute greater importance to division by generations as against division by classes —a problem which undoubtedly exists.

The lively discussions going on are a sign of an active intellectual life and indicate a strengthening of democracy. It is evident that only in the refreshing atmosphere of democracy can views be freely expressed and ideas exchanged, and only in such an atmosphere can dissenting opinions be heard. There are of course discussions in which passions take precedence of ideas, and it is not the weight of the argument which is decisive, but the louder voice. There is also a danger of the powers of demagogy gaining ground, and that transient impressions and accidental, individual experiences are taken as generally received facts; in which case discussions may misinform instead of orientate. Some debates are not concluded when they should be, and immature ideas and unrefuted opinions consequently gush out unexpectedly like an underground stream. Yet despite all this the fact that discussions are being carried on and that people want to argue is a considerable advantage to society: it has a valuable effect on the public way of thinking, mobilizes intellectual resources and helps the bodies responsible for guidance to become aware of important attitudes when decisions have to be taken.

The subject-matter, the scope and the intensity of these exchanges of views and, indeed the fact that feelings sometimes run high, show that they are matters of consequence in Hungary, and not merely a kind of passing fashion. They demonstrate that the conflicting interests and differences which undoubtedly exist are not irreconcilable, because their tendencies and basic characteristics are rooted in the ground of common interest and their expression is, in addition, a democratic means of aligning interests and reconciling opinions. On the other hand, they express a social and intellectual demand for a more intensive probing into essential truths; they seek appropriate answers to the questions of our complex age, answers designed to reach the target we are determined to achieve.

Most of the discussions going on in Hungarian public life were started by the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. In the eighteen months of preparation for instance, working out the scientific-political guiding principles of the Central Committee, a number of experts, scientists, state and party officials were interviewed; a closer agreement on a number of questions was thus achieved, and it was only after animated discussions that

the majority vote was reached. The new Law of Councils, passed by Parliament in February 1971, was also preceded by long discussions; the viewpoints expressed in the course of numerous discussions were taken into consideration, and as a result the new Law strengthens the administrative, representative and self-governing character of the Councils, extends their sphere of authority and provides the material means which enable Councils to make use of their rights.

This constructive exchange of ideas has assuaged the anxieties common to communists as the after-effects of dogmatic prejudices. The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party learnt that neither ideology and political policy nor the unity of the party are jeopardized by discussion. Today the overwhelming majority of party members openly declare that free democratic discussion is a precondition to the development of correct policies and of their uniform implementation. The free competition of ideas is the only weapon with which inaccurate, biased and faulty conceptions can be fought, and the best alternatives selected: only in this way can obsolete rules and decisions be prevented from continuing—without justification—to exist. The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party is well aware that socialism is based on a one-party system—and in Hungary this is unalterably so, owing to certain well-known historic changes; in such circumstances it is particularly important that unity should be achieved by democratic discussion. And it is therefore important that the Party itself, being the guiding force of society, should stimulate, initiate and inspire discussion and criticism. (At the Tenth Congress a Secretary of the Central Committee expressed this idea as follows: the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party is a governing party which at the same time, has to undertake the task of criticism.) The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party accordingly sought the opinions of party members, communist and non-communist experts, scientists, workers and peasants before adopting important resolutions in the period between the Ninth and Tenth Congress: and following this line the documents of the Congress were published in the press and submitted for discussion to party organizations, social organs and the public opinion of the country.

This was not a mere formality; for it was meant as a means of submitting the policy of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party to the judgement and control of the membership and the masses of non-party members, and to interest them directly and indirectly in helping to shape this policy. In the documents produced, the Congress included a number of critical comments, suggestions and ideas.

At the Congress the delegates submitted in writing some 150 motions

amending the draft resolution. The motions were mainly designed to clarify the details and supplement the resolutions. At both the Congress and during the preliminary discussions it was clear that the Party membership and the public which was committed to socialism basically approved of the main political guidelines of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and wished to move from it neither to the "right" nor the "left." It would be, of course, naive to think that the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party is a homogeneous organization carved out of a single block just because it is a workers' party and its policy is determined by revolutionary Marxism. The party is also built of people, a fact which means that the problems may be approached and interpreted from different angles. Since the interests of party organizations and party members differ to some extent, and their circumstances and various experiences also differ, a number of different positions may evolve; it is, however, precisely their open comparison and confrontation that makes it possible to eliminate biased viewpoints and reach an overall social generalization on a Marxist basis.

The discussions preceding the Congress were genuine discussions: the party members compared their own experiences to the policy of the Central Committee. These discussions made it possible to distinguish between genuine problems stemming from deficiencies in execution or objective difficulties, and those demanding improvements and developments in details of the party policy. They brought into the light of day those questions which lead to differences of opinion simply for lack of knowledge, inadequate assessment of the policy, and the oversimplification of extremely complicated tasks. At party meetings and conventions a number of controversial questions were clarified and the exchange of opinions largely made it possible to see past events as an integral whole and to provide a coherent interpretation of the tasks of today and tomorrow. There were no clashes of diametrically opposed opinion at the Congress, no spectacular discussions held for the sake of argument alone. If, however, the concept of discussion is interpreted in a broader sense, meaning the exchange, complementation and clarification of ideas as well as the elucidation of the problems from different aspects, then there were discussions at the Congress which were useful indeed. Starting from the same basic principles, the delegates presented suggestions examining the facts in the context of their own particular activities and experience.

The Congress adopted a definite standpoint on a number of debatable questions. It went decisively beyond any false choice between the complete subordination of individual or group interests to some kind of abstract public good and the transformation of society into a hunting-ground of particular interests. Concrete and deliberate measures were demanded to reconcile interests on a higher level, to formulate overall social interests in a scientifically more exact way, and to encourage their realization more energetically. The fact there may be opposition between the targets of long-range development plans and the daily needs of the people, between their actual and future interests, was recognized. These differences however, can and must be reconciled by a well considered conscious economic policy, a flexible combination of both types of interest and correct political propaganda.

Another alternative, flatly setting self-interest on the one hand against a socialist consciousness and socialist ethics on the other, was also rejected. It was made unmistakably clear that lasting results in producing a socialist consciousness can only be achieved if they are based on a correct system of interest. A bad system of self-interest negates any kind of persuasion, even when truly socialist. But there is no system of self-interest which could produce a socialist mentality and morality automatically. It is obvious that one cannot rely entirely on either self-interest or a political-ethical education.

This is a problem which has been widely discussed in recent years, and the Congress dealt with it, because a correct interpretation of the present system of economic guidance by the leaders and the masses depends on a proper elucidation of the concept of interest.

No one taking part in the Congress questioned the reform of the economic mechanism. On the contrary: it was accepted that the reform came up to expectations and is well-designed for the realization of economic-political aims representing overall social interests and the operation of a higher-standard socialist-planned economy. The report of the Central Committee pointed out that the reform was not unanimously welcomed at the time it was introduced. In the course of the discussions which preceded the Congress it appeared that many had not carefully weighed the intrinsic logic, effects and consequences of the reform, although it had been, in general, approved. In addition to illusions on the subject, many exaggerated anxieties had also been voiced. Time has dealt with the illusions. The anxieties, however, were increased by greater and lesser failures, due

in part to the fact that far-reaching ventures of this kind, influencing the life of society as a whole, cannot be "programmed" with mathematical accuracy. Defects occurred which were due to mistakes made by the guiding and executive bodies, or to the fact that the reform could only make itself felt step by step. Taking all this into consideration the Congress, while fully subscribing to the objectives of the reform, drew attention to a number of important tasks, among others that the economic regulating devices have to be further refined, the work of the executive and guiding organs of the economic departments improved, and a new type of relationship established between these organs and economic enterprises. Sharper supervision is needed to ensure that the independence granted to enterprises through the reform should not only serve the particular interests of each enterprise but the interests of society as well.

The Leading Role of the Working Class

The Congress also took up certain attitudes on various unsettled questions dealing with the interpretation of the leading role of the working class. It was stressed that notwithstanding the contemporary scientific-technical revolution it remains incumbent on the working class to guide society. Contrary to views which considered that the leading role of the working class should be modified, the Congress emphasized that this role becomes effective in the first place through the leading activity of the revolutionary party of workers, although it also manifests itself through socialist executive power, trade unions and other organs of society. The Resolution of Congress declares that "all those manual workers and intellectuals play a part in asserting the political leadership of the working class who have subscribed to communist ideas and who promote the Party's Leninist policy, in order to reach the objectives envisaged by the Party and accepted and supported by the people." At the same time the Congress also stressed that party members should be recruited in the first place from those engaged in direct productive work and that experienced class-conscious workers should have a greater say in different fields of party work.

Turning to the pessimistic forecasts occasionally heard that egoism and increasing materialism will undermine the socialist character of the system, the Congress declared that the life of society is essentially determined by the discipline and organization of the working class. Anti-social activities were not ignored, and indeed met with the general reprobation of the Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, which demanded

severe measures and increased social control in this respect. On the other hand, the significance of such symptoms was neither sensationalized, nor played down, but investigated in the context of the facts of social-economic life. The essential point was to see that social-economic relations and a system of incentives were so developed that only those individuals whose work benefited the community should be able to profit from them, and that therefore no alternative to an industrious, busy life and a sense of public spirit should be open to an individual which would allow him to make his way in the world. This is the objective basis of the realization of moral demands.

The Congress also declared that in view of the socialist reorganization of agriculture, the relationship of both classes is now based on the same foundations, that is, on socialist ownership of the means of production, a fact which intensifies the basic identity of interests between the two classes. It expressed its satisfaction at the fact that the political consciousness and collective sentiment of the peasants are increasing, which again brings the two basic classes of society closer to each other. The Congress was nevertheless fully aware that the social building of socialism is not all harmony. Conflicting interests—which must of necessity arise in the relations of the two classes, despite of the basic identity of their interests—were therefore taken into account, first in respect of the share in the national income, in prices, wages and market relations, and in the rate at which the differences between town and village are liquidated. The Congress made it clear that the working class is also interested in rural development and in the increase of peasant incomes; this is not only due to—let us say—"strategic" reasons, i.e., because socialism relies on the worker-peasant alliance, but for directly practical reasons as well. If in addition to increasing agrarian production, further aims held in common are to save the rural population from a premature old age, and prevent the depopulation of the villages, every effort must be made to see that peasant incomes should increase *pari passu* with the incomes of the working class, and that the development of villages should reach the same level of development as towns.

Standard of Living

Dealing with living standards, the Congress declared that the real incomes of workers and employees increased by an average on 30–32 per cent during the past five years, while real wages per earner increased by 17 per cent. In implementation of the aims of the Ninth Congress of the Hun-

garian Socialist Workers' Party, the peasants' total real income increased at a quicker rate i.e. by 37 per cent during the past five years, and has reached the income level of industrial workers. At the same time the Congress did not ignore the fact that to some extent average figures obscure the differences in income within a single given stratum, and that the incomes of certain groups of the population, and a number of individuals did not rise in the same degree.

The Congress rejected egalitarian trends with respect to future development, which generally appear disguised as a support of the collective spirit and solidarity. Indeed, it committed itself far more firmly than before to the principle of distribution according to work done. The aim in view was that the earnings of workers should depend to a greater degree than before upon work output, the increase of productivity and economic efficiency, and within each category upon individual performances. It also was decided that unjustifiably great differences in family incomes should be offset by higher family allowances, and the condition of pensioners improved by raising pensions; the state should find the wherewithal for increases in the support of children and the old who are unable to work—in so far as the budget can afford these further burdens. One of the essential aims of the incomes policy of the fourth Five-Year-Plan is that owing to greater work efficiency the people's living standard should so improve as to make it felt despite the predictable increases in certain prices.

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The many questions discussed and decided at the Congress could be enumerated at great length. It did not set itself up as "the final court of justice"—in the final result it is always life that judges—but it acted as a guiding body competent to choose between alternatives and make decisions. The resolutions were sound and realistic decisions—as acknowledged even by western observers—reached after a thorough exchange of ideas.

Part of the international press, however, considered that the Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party failed to give sufficient attention to the outstanding problems of our age but trifled with "everyday matters." As in membership and other Party meetings, the Congress focussed its attention on concrete problems interesting the public *here and now*, and therefore examined what has to be done *here and now*. Can this be branded as parochial? Was the Congress trying to avoid the great questions of the century? This is hardly credible, and, in fact, many vital topics—perhaps

the most important ones—were present at the Congress, not however in any abstract but in concrete form, closely related to domestic conditions.

Questions on the development of the system of guidance, for instance, and its organization on scientific foundations, emerged in connection with the rapid scientific-technical revolution taking place. The intricate interrelations between science and production were discussed in connection with the fourth Five Year Plan, long-range planning, economic-political objectives and possibilities of technical-scientific co-operation; seen from another viewpoint it appeared as a condition of the modernization of the Hungarian educational system and necessary if we were to reconcile social and economic progress. The great problems of the future of mankind, such as the struggle against imperialism, peaceful co-existence, European security, the unity of the socialist countries and of the communist world movement were also concrete subjects of discussions.

There were of course problems, considered by many as the great dilemmas of the century, which were left untouched by the Congress. Whether our age is the age of atomic agony and death, for instance, was not a matter for discussion, because Congress made a wide survey of the immense forces which make it possible to preserve peace and bring about the victory of progressive tendencies. Nor did the Congress discuss which of the two societies, capitalism or socialism was superior; this was considered *a priori* evident. Similarly, the place of Hungary in the world was also taken for granted from the very first, as well as the fact that national and international policy proceed side by side, since the national interests and the interests of universal progress are dialectically interdependent and coincide; the differences and dilemmas between the two which occasionally emerge in the final analysis, can be solved. The Congress was not concerned to argue with those—from either the "right" or the "left"—who measure socialist reality, which is far from perfect, but develops and progresses step by step, by an abstract model; who believe that socialism is a kind of "holy ikon" which can be designed in advance, and who subsequently lament when the features do not turn out to be as beautiful after all as their flights of fancy had designed. Utopian fanatics, however, were in fact given an answer, though not through direct discussions; for intelligent planning, rooted in reality, purposeful efforts and concrete actions are worth more than pious wishes.

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In accordance with the principles of democratic centralism, the Congress, as the highest organ of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, had the

authority to decide on future action. The stress in party work now is laid on the *execution* of the resolutions, uniformly, and precisely, as a mandatory obligation, and on its supervision and control.

Nobody, of course, wants to inhibit future discussion. The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party knows that its activities can only remain abreast of modern science if it does not content itself with improvised *ad hoc* decisions, but makes a methodical use of scientific results which allow a choice of alternatives in methods of proceeding, reached on the basis of open and exhaustive discussions. It is precisely on this account that a number of problems have been submitted to scientific investigations. Political scientists for instance have been invited to make a thorough study of the stratification of society and the development of political consciousness, experts were asked to take part in a large-scale investigation designed to modernize legislative and governmental work and to develop the socialist public administration, as well as to analyze the social interconnections of the scientific-technical revolution, and so on. The study of these complicated questions which touch society as a whole will undoubtedly provoke further discussions, and not be confined to a narrow circle of experts. It is obvious that society cannot sit looking on with folded arms while it waits for the outcome of scientific investigations to urgent questions which brook no delay and have to be settled *today*.

Lenin once quoted Napoleon's famous dictum: "On s'engage et puis on voit"; this principle holds good not only in times of armed conflict but also in the daily round of work. Lenin also pointed out that when action has to be taken, interminable discussions are a source of dangerous bureaucratism. In matters which *require concrete action*, decisions must be taken—weighing practical experience on the level of scientific knowledge *today*—even if it is certain that these actions will have to be later amended. Although social life is not an experimental laboratory, every kind of social activity contains certain experimental risks. Passivity is also a sort of choice: it is a kind of action turned wrong side out. In terms of "pure" science this may seem empiricism, but the body responsible for leadership has no other choice.

The historical and social roots of bureaucratic attitudes as well as its true characteristics will remain under examination, analysis and discussion for a long time to come. The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, however, cannot predict results, and has to indicate—relying on present knowledge and experience—ways of developing legislative and governmental activities, simplifying administrative work and establishing the means of stimulating a greater interest in public life on the part of the masses. Economists are

quite right to urge the introduction of mathematical programming and the widespread application of cybernetic models in the analysis of economic processes, planning and working out scientific forecasts. The organs responsible for making economic-political decisions nonetheless cannot sit and wait until up-to-date scientific methods come into general use; they have to select and decide on the basis of present domestic conditions. Although sociologists are carefully examining the situation and the concept of the working class and differentiation among them, the government has to provide more appropriate material and moral incentives *now*, and has to improve the educational level and skills of the working class and see that a higher percentage of children of working class origin attend universities *now*. Though writers on aesthetics do not yet really agree on the concept of socialist realism, publishers must make every effort to popularize good books imbued with a true socialist spirit *now*.

There is no denying that there is a certain contradiction between the simultaneous demand for action without delay and the satisfaction of scientific requirements. But there never was nor will be complete accord between theory and practice. This is why a narrow empiricism is a constant danger in practical life, while theory is threatened by the danger of unsubstantiated speculation. But the major part of these dangers can be avoided if one is aware of them, and resists them accordingly.

This much is certain: there is no reason whatever to be concerned for the freedom of discussion and a democratic public spirit, because the disciplined implementation of the resolutions do not endanger freedom of discussion. In a certain sense, action is the continuation of discussion. Reality and life itself answer political "arguments" and the actions undertaken by society, by either justifying or repudiating them. If circumstances today allow the overall interests of society to be determined by the rational co-ordination of particular interests, and not by force, discussion precedes decision as a matter of course. This is, one might say, one of the most substantial institutional safeguards guaranteeing the development of discussion as an organic part in the process of decision making.

To sum up, the free exchange of ideas must be encouraged and the implementation of the vote of the majority ensured at the same time. The indispensable freedom of discussion, said Lenin, must be combined with the indispensable requirement of unity.

In the view of the Congress the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party has made greater progress in the democratic preparation of decisions than in the supervision and control of their execution. It was, therefore, emphasized that greater demands must be made on the leadership and all

communists generally, and supervision and control tightened at all points. This is, in fact, an important condition if ideas are not to remain dead letters, or resolutions distorted in the course of execution, and if the aim is that practical work should match up to theoretical decisions and politics be effective in every sphere of social life. Every kind of political guideline is only worth as much as is actually translated from blueprint into fact in the struggle with real life, and in so far as people transform themselves at the same time.*

* This article was published in the January issue of *Társadalmi Szemle*, the monthly of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. The author made certain changes of an explanatory nature, for the readers of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*.

ANNA HAJNAL

POEMS

FEAR

I am afraid I may be Ilia
the wild duck mired in the oil.

What if, instead, I'm Algernon
the white mouse in the maze,

or Pompilius, the dog in the laboratory
with the cancer graft under his skin?

I am afraid. What if the bull calf
with the new moon marking his forehead

—the one chosen for slaughter—
is really who I am? I have a fear

that maybe I am Bonnie
the chimpanzee who died

in the solitude of the spacecraft...
But no, I know I'm Anna, and afraid,

for knowing this, I know I live
until the debt I owe for this is paid.

HALF PAST FOUR, OCTOBER

Twilight. By now the genial sea of dusk
is lapping at the window. A rising tide
bears the plane-tree aloft and far away.
Above these undulations of the sky
on silky wings the wild goose floats unseen.
His cries we hear, and hear again
until the waves of dusk rise over him,
but where will he be then? Where does he fly
southward with his strong companions?

How many planes and levels deep does dusk
hover in autumn? Deeper than the sea
where the wild saffron, purple sea-star blooms,
down to the cellar where the silken mole,
hardworking and secure, lives with his brood.
It seeps where the snake is drowsing amid dead leaves.

The dusk flows past us, turns on wings
noiseless as fins,
the owl, his eyes like bulbs, drifts by, a fish with ears;
the bat's wings wriggle like a slowly-swimming skate,
we grow sleeply too but cannot hang
head-downward from the plane tree's hollow all the winter long—
we know what would be good,
we live as best we can.

Translated by
Daniel Hoffman

SOCIAL MOBILITY AND THE "OPENNESS" OF SOCIETY

by

EGON SZABADY

Hungarian society, like every other economy that is progressing towards a more developed industrial cum services structure from an earlier agricultural one is undergoing a continuous process of social, economic and occupational restratification. The observation of this process is an important task, since economic development following the new economic mechanism introduced in 1968 has changed the movement of the labour force, slowing it down in certain areas precisely because of full employment caused by labour shortages and acting as an accelerating factor in others.

The most important data of the 1970 Census are now available allowing a further study of mobility and at the same time a survey of recent changes.[1] Relevant material connected with the 1962 Budapest International Symposium on Demography was also published,[2] as well as data referring to social mobility collected by the Demographic Research Institute of the Central Statistical Office between 1962 and 1964[3, 4] preliminary results of which already appeared in the columns of this journal.[5] Finally, material provided by the processing of the 1968 1 per cent microcensus is also avail-

1 *1970. évi népszámlálás 2. Részletes adatok az 1%-os képviseleti minta alapján.* (1970 Census 2. Details Based on the 1 per cent Representative Sample). Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, Budapest, 1971. pp. 238.

2 *Studies on Fertility and Social Mobility.* Ed. Egon Szabady. Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1969. pp. 331.

3 András Klinger–Egon Szabady: *A társadalmi átrétegződés és demográfiai hatásai* I (Social Mobility and its Demographic Effects). *Központi Statisztikai Hivatal Népességtudományi Kutató Intézetének Közleményei* (Publications of the Demographic Research Institute of the Central Statistical Office), No. 7. Budapest, 1965. pp. 325.

4 *A társadalmi átrétegződés és demográfiai hatásai Magyarországon* II (Social Mobility and its Demographic Effects in Hungary). *Központi Statisztikai Hivatal Népességtudományi Kutató Intézetének Közleményei* (Publications of the Demographic Research Institute of the Central Statistical Office), No. 30. Budapest, 1970, pp. 394.

5 Sándor Szalai: "Restratification of a Society." *The N. H. Q.* No. 23, 1966. pp. 24–33.

able for use. All these sources provide ample opportunity for an analysis of present Hungarian social structure and help to determine what kind of social mobility formed the present situation.

Intrageneration mobility will be considered as the basis of this analysis since it best expresses the great change which Hungarian social structure has undergone in the last twenty odd years. Intergenerational mobility will be touched on to complete the picture, and marriage mobility will also be briefly discussed.

All data observed apply to active earners and the social mobility of those only is dealt with who were engaged in some kind of economic activity at the time of the survey. Naturally those who are no longer in employment, that is present pensioners and rentiers, also changed their socio-economic status, their social mobility is, however, not so typical of present mobility, and that is why data referring to them were left out.

Three groups were established which best express the social status of individuals resulting from their occupation:

(1) *Agricultural manual workers.* All those are included whose activity is connected with agricultural production (crop growing, raising of livestock, gardening and so on, regardless of whether they are agricultural labourers, members of agricultural producers' co-operatives, own account farmers, or merely family workers.

(2) *Non-agricultural manual workers.* All those are included who are engaged in industry, construction, transport and services (such as fitters, masons, smiths, drivers etc.) regardless of whether they are employed (labourers), members of artisans' co-operatives, or craftsmen on their own account or family workers.

(3) *Non-manual workers.* All those are included whose work does not demand physical effort, such as various kinds of managers, technicians, technical personnel in health and culture, as well as clerical and administrative workers.

For purposes of a certain detailed analysis a distinction is made as regards non-agricultural manual workers between workers and self-employed on the one hand, chiefly in respect to intergenerational mobility, since a large number of fathers used to be craftsmen on their own account and the attitude and behaviour of their sons largely differed from those of workers, especially in the past), and non-manual workers on the other hand. In certain cases a distinction is made between professionals whose work demands a higher education and between those in other non-manual employment.

Occupational Distribution

Census data throw light on the framework whithin which the process of restratification is taking place. They help to follow the results of changes in the social structure which took place in the past twenty years, and also in the preceding decades, giving a general idea of the way in which socio-economic processes affected the social and occupational distribution of active earners in Hungary and also the direction and extent of movement in different periods.

Looking at figures for the past forty years (Table 1), one can draw the following conclusions:

1. Two social strata show a significant increase in numbers. There are 4.7 times as many non-manual workers and twice as many non-agricultural manual workers as there were forty years ago. This double process is connected partly with the process of urbanization and industrialization, and partly with the rapid increase of places of employment requiring more training and less physical effort.

2. As against this the number of agricultural manual workers has declined significantly, at present they only amount to 45 per cent of the 1930 number. This did not lead to a decline in agricultural production, on the contrary, the 1966–1970 production index for agricultural products is, on average, one third higher than the 1934–38 one. Productivity has gone up, there is less demand for manual labour and mechanization has increased.

As a result of these changes 18 per cent only of active earners are engaged in agricultural manual work, a significant drop from 54 per cent in 1930. In the same forty-year period the proportion of non-agricultural manual workers has gone up from 39 per cent to 56 per cent, and that of non-manual workers from 7 per cent to 26 per cent.

It is worth investigating whether this process of change was uniform in the course of the past forty years, or to what extent the growth and decline rates of those belonging to different strata deviated during this long, historically varying period.

If we look at the drop in the number of those engaged in agriculture, that being the greatest numerical change in the restratification process (1,100,000 persons fewer are employed in agriculture), one can observe that mobility was at its greatest in the sixties. Between 1930 and 1949 the number of agricultural manual workers still went up, and between 1949 and 1960 it went down by less than 2 per cent yearly. Between 1960 and 1977, however, the number of those engaged in agriculture went down by an average annual 5 per cent. The decline was fastest between 1960 and 1963,

a yearly average 7 per cent. The socialization of agriculture and following it the migration of the young to towns and the retirement of old peasants produced this result. The decline stayed around 5 per cent yearly in the remaining years of the decade.

The development of the other two strata differed not only in direction but also in time. The growth in the number of non-manual workers was around 2 per cent yearly between 1930 and 1949, and 9 per cent yearly between 1949 and 1960. This great increase somewhat slowed down in the past ten years, between 1960 and 1970 the number of non-manual workers increased by an annual 6 per cent. It is worth mentioning, however, that it speeded up again, and the number of active earners belonging to this stratum went up by nearly 7 per cent between 1968 and 1970.

There is a similar trend in the case of non-agricultural manual workers. Annual growth was slow between 1930 and 1941, between 1941 and 1949 there was even some regression. As against this, the number of active earners of this stratum grew by more than 4 per cent yearly between 1949 and 1960. This rate slowed down after 1960, but following 1968 it livened up again and once again reached an average 3 per cent growth.

TABLE 1

Distribution of active earners by social groups 1930–1970
(Thousands)

Year	Agricultural manual	Non-Agricultural manual	Non-manual	Total
1930	2,025	1,440	272	3,737
1941	2,160	1,725	317	4,202
1949	2,190	1,495	400	4,085
1960	1,751	2,211	798	4,760
1963	1,361	2,386	902	4,649
1968	1,014	2,641	1,136	4,791
1970	912	2,802	1,287	5,001
		Percentage		
1930	54	39	7	100
1941	51	41	8	100
1949	54	36	10	100
1960	37	46	17	100
1963	29	51	20	100
1968	21	55	24	100
1970	18	56	26	100

To what extent are these changes due to people changing the social stratum they belonged to in the course of their life, that is to changes in occupation of a nature that led to restratification. Relevant 1970 Census data are not yet available, but the results of the 1968 microcensus indicate this process.

At the beginning of 1968, according to the results 1,026,000 persons out of the 18 year old and older active earners of the country had changed their basic social stratum in the course of life. In other words, 23 per cent of the active earners took part in social mobility.

More than three-quarters of mobility indicate a trend in two directions. 48 per cent of those involved changed from agricultural manual workers to non-agrocultural manual workers. A further 29 per cent who were engaged in non-manual work by 1968 had been non-agricultural manual workers in their first employment. Another type of mobility is represented by those (11 per cent of all mobile persons) who beginning as non-agricultural manual workers became agricultural workers; 7 per cent of mobile persons were non-manual workers earlier and became non-agricultural manual workers; 5 per cent were agricultural manual workers earlier and now are engaged in non-manual work.

When we examine what proportion of those who started in a certain occupation stayed within the same social stratum or left it we find significant differences resulting from the nature of the Hungarian restratification process. 41 per cent of those who started as agricultural manual workers no longer belong to that social stratum; the proportions for non-agricultural manual workers and those in non-manual employment were 17 and 9 per cent respectively.

Entrance mobility proportions indicate the same process, in a reverse direction of course. 13 per cent of agricultural manual workers had started in some other type of employment as compared to their occupation of 1968; the same applies to 22 per cent of non-agricultural manual workers and 31 per cent of non-manual workers resp.

The first job of about 500,000 non-agricultural manual workers, i. e. 19 per cent of those belonging to this group, was an agricultural one. 27 per cent of present non-manual workers (300,000 active earners) were first employed in non-agricultural manual work. Less than 50,000 agricultural manual workers moved to this stratum, their proportion being only 4 per cent.

An examination of 1968 active earners in terms of their 1960 social stratum clearly indicates the trend of the changes in the restratification pro-

TABLE 2

Intragenerational mobility (in relation to the initial social stratum)

Active earners in 1968

1968 social stratum	Initial social stratum			
	Agricultural manual workers	Non-agricultural manual workers	Non-manual workers	Total
As percentage of the 1968 social stratum				
Agricultural manual workers	59	5	1	20
Non-agricultural manual workers	37	83	8	56
Non-manual workers	4	12	91	24
Total	100	100	100	100
As percentage of the initial social stratum				
Agricultural manual workers	87	12	1	100
Non-agricultural manual workers	19	78	3	100
Non-manual workers	4	27	69	100
Total	29	53	18	100

Based on 1968 microcensus data (1 per cent representative sample)

cess which occurred between these two points of time. Of course only those could be considered who were already active earners in 1960. 11 per cent of those working at both dates were restratified which is a rather significant movement for an eight year period. At present most of those showing mobility moved from agricultural manual work to non-agricultural manual work. The ratio of those who formerly being non-agricultural manual workers have become non-manual workers during this period as well as of those who have changed their non-agricultural manual work for garicultural manual work—who have probably re-entered the group of agricultural manual workers—is relatively high.

Between 1960 and 1968 also leaving mobility is highest and entrance mobility is invariably lowest amongst manual workers in agriculture.

We were able to observe intergenerational mobility over a longer period, since the 1930 and the 1949 Censuses already obtained and processed data on active earners as compared to the occupation of their fathers. This can be completed by the material collected during the 1962–1964 restratification

TABLE 3

Intragenerational mobility (in relation to 1960) of those employed both in 1960 and 1968

1968 social stratum	1960 social stratum			
	Agricultural manual workers	Non-agricultural manual workers	Non-manual wokers	Total
As percentage of the 1968 social stratum				
Agricultural manual workers	80	3	1	22
Non-agricultural manual workers	19	91	5	54
Non-manual workers	1	6	94	24
Total	100	100	100	100
As percentage of the 1960 social stratum				
Agricultural manual workers	92	7	1	100
Non-agricultural manual workers	9	89	2	100
Non-manual workers	1	13	86	100
Total	25	53	22	100

Based on 1968 microcensus data (1 per cent representative sample)

survey carried out by the Demographic Research Institute of the Central Statistical Office which allows some, comparisons regarding mobility between generations.

According to the conclusions of this latest survey, the basic social stratum of active earners differed in 1962–1964 from that of their fathers (1938 or latest position) in 42 per cent of the cases. This general proportion regarding intergenerational mobility considerably exceeds that established by earlier surveys. The 1930 Census only showed it as 24 per cent and the 1949 Census as 27 per cent. All this indicates that Hungarian society has become more "open".

On the basis of recent and earlier investigations intergeneration mobility is clearly shown by the fact that the children of agricultural manual workers are engaged in non-agricultural manual work. The latest data indicate that this is responsible for more than a half of intergenerational mobility which corresponds to the 1949 and the 1930 proportions.

The weight in the population of those whose fathers were non-agri-

cultural manual workers and who are now in non-manual employment is increasing; both in 1949 and in 1962–64 they made up a fifth of all mobile persons, significantly more than in 1930 when they represented only 12 per cent.

It occurs rarely these days, however, that children of non-agricultural manual workers take up agricultural employment. According to the two earlier surveys they made up 14–15 per cent of intergenerational mobility, by the first half of the 1960's, however, this figure had dropped to 7 per cent.

Entrance mobility of the three basic social strata shows significant differences for the three dates considered.

In 1930 38 per cent of non-manual workers were the sons of fathers who belonged to the same stratum, by 1962–64 this proportion dropped to 24 per cent. At first sight, non-manual workers of non-agricultural manual origin showed only slight changes, their proportion grew from 46 per cent in 1930 to 52 per cent in 1962–64. But if we take into consideration that craftsmen on own account made up the majority in this stratum in the past and at present the majority of these fathers are manual workers, the changes appear as much more significant. In 1930 only 14 per

TABLE 4

Intergenerational mobility (Entrance rates)

As percentage of the father's social stratum

Year	Non-manual workers	Non-agricultural manual	Agricultural manual	Total
		Non-manual workers		
1930	38	46	16	100
1949	29	54	17	100
1962–64	24	52	24	100
		Non-agricultural manual workers		
1930	3	59	38	100
1949	3	59	38	100
1962–64	4	45	51	100
		Agricultural manual workers		
1930	0	6	94	100
1949	0	8	92	100
1962–64	0	9	91	100

cent of non-manual workers were of non-agricultural worker descent: this figure was close to 40 per cent by the first half of the sixties.

Amongst non-agricultural manual workers the proportion of those immobile in relation to the earlier generation is significantly smaller than in the past, due to the large-scale inflow. This is explained by the significant increase in the proportion of those of agricultural origin.

Entrance mobility is not significant in the agricultural stratum. At all three points of time considered the fathers of more than nine-tenths of active earners of those employed in agriculture also belonged to this social stratum. A minor growth in the proportion of those of non-agricultural manual origin can be observed.

Intergenerational restratification is even better indicated by a long-term comparison of the proportion of those who left a certain stratum, than by the entrance rates.

There is hardly any change as regards changes of occupation of the children of non-manual fathers. At all three points of time roughly two-thirds remained in their father's social stratum, and the proportion of those who themselves were non-agricultural manual workers hardly changed either.

The proportion of those who left their social stratum changed more significantly amongst non-agricultural manual workers. During 30–35 years the proportion of the immobile declined from 79 per cent to 64 per cent. At the same time the proportion of non-manual workers whose fathers were non-agricultural manual workers grew significantly from 10 per cent to 27 per cent.

Agricultural workers show the highest proportion of leavers in relation to earlier generations. Only 54 per cent of the children of fathers belonging to this social stratum stayed in it, compared with the past when intergenerational stability was around 75–76 per cent. As a result four of every ten persons of peasant origin were non-agricultural manual workers; close to twice as many as in 1949 or 1930. The proportion of non-manual workers of peasant origin is also increasing. As against 1 per cent in 1930, by 1962–64 6 per cent of the children of agricultural manual workers were engaged in non-manual work.

The data of the very latest survey also indicate a different leaving mobility for the two non-manual groups. More than three-quarters of the children of professionals follow a non-manual occupation. Almost half of them belong to professionals. But only 63 per cent of the children of fathers doing other non-manual work also belong to this non-manual stratum while more than a third of them are non-agricultural manual workers.

TABLE 5

Intergenerational mobility (Leaving mobility rates)

As percentage of the social stratum of active earners

Year	Non-manual	Non-agricultural manual	Agricultural manual	Total
		Fathers of non-manual occupation		
1930	64	33	3	100
1949	66	28	6	100
1962–64	68	30	2	100
		Fathers of non-agricultural manual occupation		
1930	10	79	11	100
1949	17	70	13	100
1962–64	27	64	9	100
		Fathers of agricultural manual occupation		
1930	1	23	76	100
1949	3	22	75	100
1962–64	6	40	54	100

Social Mobility by Age and Sex

There is a significant difference in social mobility by the demographic characteristics of active earners. Far fewer women show evidence of restratification than men. This difference is significant since, according to the latest census data, more than 40 per cent of all active earners are women.

As regards intragenerational mobility the difference between the sexes must be regarded as natural since the time span of economic activity is shorter for women than for men, their economic activity having started relatively recently, therefore social mobility, particularly the significant changes which occurred in the period following the Liberation in 1945, affected them to a lesser extent during their own working life. While in 1968 27 per cent of economically active men whose social stratum according to their first job differed from the actual one, this indicator was only 17 per cent for women. 23 per cent of men in non-agricultural manual employment initially worked in agriculture, but only 12 per cent of the women. 39 per cent of men in non-manual employment were engaged

in non-agricultural manual work earlier, but only 17 per cent of the women.

The differences between the sexes apply also to intergenerational mobility, but to a far smaller degree. According to the 1962–64 survey 43 per cent of the fathers of the men and 36 per cent of those of women belonged to another social stratum, but this survey gives merely a rough indication since the economically active women were underrepresented in the sample.

According to 1968 data intragenerational restratification was relatively very low for those aged between 18 and 29; then it grows parallelly with age, falling back a shade for those 50 and over. All this underlines that

TABLE 6

Intergenerational mobility by age and sex
(In 1968, in relation to the initial social stratum)

Sex and Age Group	Agricultural manual	Non-agricultural manual	Non-manual	Total
Agricultural manual workers				
Men	87	13	0	100
Women	89	10	1	100
18–29	86	13	1	100
30–39	81	18	1	100
40–49	88	12	0	100
50–x	89	11	0	100
Non-agricultural manual workers				
Men	23	76	1	100
Women	11	84	5	100
18–29	12	86	2	100
30–39	19	77	4	100
40–49	25	72	3	100
50–x	22	75	3	100
Non-manual workers				
Men	7	38	55	100
Women	2	17	81	100
18–20	2	19	79	100
30–39	4	26	70	100
40–49	7	35	58	100
50–x	5	31	64	100

the most significant mobility occurred amongst those who were in their twenties in the period following the Second World War representing the greatest proportion of those who changed their social stratum. Mobility was less for both those who were younger and those who were older at that time.

It should be noted that one cannot draw any conclusions regarding the mobility of the younger ones in view of the shortness of the period under observation.

These general differences can be observed unambiguously in the major processes of restratification.

According to 1962–1964 figures, the trend of intergenerational mobility by age deviates from the general trend of intragenerational mobility discussed earlier. Examining the two most significant directions of restratification one can observe that while non-agricultural manuals of agricultural origin do not indicate any significant deviation by age, every age-group showing a large, over 50 per cent mobility, there are significant differences by age among non-manual workers of non-agricultural manual origin. Especially those who were 30–49 years old at the time (1962–64) show a significant deviation as compared with their father's occupation (55 per cent), but social mobility in this respect is rather high even amongst younger people (49 per cent for those under 30). The intergenerational mobility of the elderly is smaller.

There is no significant deviation by age-groups among the immobile agricultural and non-agricultural manual workers. Differences by age-group are greater among the immobile non-manual workers. 21–22 per cent of those under 30 and those between 40 and 49, 18 per cent of those between 30 and 39, and 30 per cent of those older than that remained in the father's social stratum. All this indicates that intergenerational mobility was highest amongst those who were between 20 and 29 around 1945–50.

Marriage Mobility

Intra- and intergenerational mobility is also indicated by marriage mobility. In this respect one considers those couples as mobile (or restratified from the point of view of marriage), where the social strata of the bride and bridegroom are not identical. When analysing this question one must bear in mind that in case of the bride her own occupation can be taken into consideration only if she is an active earner; in case of dependent family members the social stratum of those on whom they are dependent, in most cases their father's, was taken in account.

The last available data, those for 1969, indicate a 35 per cent marriage mobility, that is just about 65 per cent of those getting married chose someone within their own social stratum. This shows a slight increase as compared with the oldest available figures, those for 1952, when the marriage mobility index was 31 per cent.

TABLE 7

Marriage mobility (Based on national marriage statistics)

Year	Agricultural manual	Non-agricultural manual	Non-manual	Total
		Brides (per cent)		
		Grooms engaged in agricultural manual work		
1952	88	9	3	100
1969	53	33	14	100
		Grooms engaged in non-agricultural manual work		
1952	25	61	14	100
1969	10	63	27	100
		Grooms in non-manual employment		
1952	12	23	65	100
1969	2	21	77	100
		Grooms (per cent)		
		Brides engaged in agricultural manual work		
1952	59	35	6	100
1969	53	43	4	100
		Brides engaged in non-agricultural manual work		
1952	6	82	12	100
1969	10	81	9	100
		Brides in non-manual employment		
1952	3	35	62	100
1969	6	47	47	100

Similar data for the pre-Second-World-War period refer only to Budapest, but they indicate that no essential change took place in marriage mobility. In Budapest 29 per cent in 1929 and 31 per cent in 1940 married someone from a different social stratum. These percentages are barely below the 1969 ones.

The frequency of marriages with someone outside one's own social stratum is different as regards the two sexes. Brides in non-manual employment chose their partners in a more "open" way than the grooms. In 1969 three-quarters of men in non-manual employment getting married chose brides within the same stratum, but at the same time only 47 per cent of brides of non-manual category chose husbands from their own social stratum. 63 per cent of non-agricultural male manual workers are immobile as regards marriage, the corresponding figure for women is 81 per cent.

There are significant differences when compared with 1952, a change also due to social restratification. At the beginning of the fifties nine-tenths of grooms in agricultural employment still chose brides from their own social stratum, today the proportion is barely half of that. It is interesting that while the proportion of immobile grooms increased amongst those in non-manual occupation, that of the brides declined correspondingly.

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Summing up one might say that significant social changes took place in Hungary following the Second World War. The socio-economic, and through it the class, structure of the population changed to a large extent and the rate of changes, and even more so their contents, significantly differed from that in earlier periods. It resulted first of all from the fact that not a mere economic restratification took place, it also had a large-scale social effect in accord with the changed form of society. The change-over to a socialist way of production also altered the features of society. Greater democracy in society increased the possibility of movement between the various social strata, primarily as a result of the cultural revolution and the spread of educational opportunities available to all social strata. Present Hungarian society is much more "open" than Hungarian society before the Second World War.

Another conclusion that can be deduced from this analysis is that large-scale social mobility has significantly blurred the limits of various social strata; as a result social groups and classes are no longer closed to the same extent, and are much more heterogeneous as regards their origin and nature than they were in the past. This refers in the first place to origin (inter-

generational mobility), but also to changes that occurred in the working life of individuals and as a result of social differences between spouses. This can be said most unambiguously about those in non-manual employment, as far more of them are now of worker or peasant origin than in the past. The picture of non-agricultural manual workers (the working class) has also changed as compared with the 1930's. This stratum was much more closed in the past too. This was connected with the fact that society was far more unchanging before the Second World War, that the agrarian character of the country barely changed in the first half of the century, and industrialization barely increased. In recent decades the urbanization and the industrialization process were both speeded up and so did migration from the village (which was connected with the socialization of agriculture and with the resulting increase in productivity and mechanization). As a consequence the working class was filled up from the ranks of the peasantry.

Finally one must emphasize that the process of restratification slowed down to some extent in recent years. This is explained by the fact that the most essential movement took place in the course of the fifties. Naturally the possibilities for social mobility of younger generations in the course of their own working life lessened. Social stability and cultural changes also account for a decline in the intensity of restratification between generations and between spouses. Of course, this does not mean that the "openness" of society has come to an end, or that possibilities for moving from one social stratum to another have narrowed down. What it indicates is that Hungarian society got over the most essential soci-economic changes, and that the need for social restratification is already smaller.

JÚLIA SZALAI

DIVISION OF LABOUR WITHIN THE FAMILY

Since the earliest times man was born into family communities and lived through certain determinant periods of his life of lesser or greater importance in family communities. What does the attribute "of determinant importance" mean in this case? It means that the family is one of the most important educating communities which directly conveys to the individual social norms and values, aims and the means to reach the latter; thus, the time a person has spent within a family considerably influences the development of a social being as a member of the "great society of mankind". Hence the norm and value system man has primarily acquired in the family is not a matter of indifference from the point of view of either the individual's adjustment to society or of his admittance to society. For this reason society, in some way or other, always controls the family as such and what it teaches. However, the measure, form and content of control considerably changed in the course of history. Its development was always in the closest possible connection with the problems of social equality: the question of supervision always cropped up as a subquestion of social equality for social relations determine its content and aim in the first place. It would go beyond the limits of this paper to give even a rough outline of this close connection, an analysis would have to describe a number of concrete social facts, deal with real social relations and situations and follow the history of problems of equality and control. Therefore—without aiming at completeness —I have attempted to outline only why there is in my view a close, and, from the point of view of control, a primarily determinant connection between equality and social supervision.

In the first place it has to be taken into account that today's civilized "modern" societies are loose societies inasmuch as the closed corporate production function of the family as well as the vitally important role the family played in safeguarding the survival of society has practically ceased. It should be pointed out that problems of keeping the family as such under control and the possibility of conflicts between the individual and society emerged and obtained a definite character in modern societies for the first time, apart from incidental and exceptional occasions. This means that the great majority become members of the social division of labour in a wider sense—beyond the framework of the family division of labour. Accordingly they become members of new communities, creators and vehicles of new norms, values and objectives, and convey the new system of norms in one way or other to the family, in many cases of course with considerable distortions and generational deviations. The possibility of a new kind of control differing from or maybe even opposed to that of the family comes

into being through an at least partial secession from the family. What has all this to do with problems of social equality? The fact is that in the division of labour the position of individuals is not equal nor are the "advantages" and "disadvantages" such as: income, prestige, possibility and degree of identification with work, chances to take part in management and direction etc. for all these are closely connected with the individual's position in the division of labour. Closely connected with the aforesaid is the fact that the consciousness of their social position i.e. the evaluation of their situation and, in this context, their expectations and norms, objectives and intentions related to change are not equal either. It follows that the content of the internal control as developed in the family—transmitted by individuals and determined by material factors and factors of consciousness—is also divergent. At the same time, the structure of management, guidance and institutions—which developed at an earlier stage in the evolution of the division of labour and became an all embracing system in line with the unfolding of capitalism—represents the given state of affairs for them. The division of power and participation in the developing system of institutions and organizations which proclaim social norms, objectives and expectations in today's differentiated society—more or less definitely—but systematically becomes the monopoly of certain social classes and sections; this, of course, does not mean that their activity is exempt from every kind of social control; it only means that on the basis of existing power relations they enjoy a relatively higher autonomy in their activities and decisions than other sections of society and classes and are able to make their interests effective even if the latter put up resistance. "Official" social control—embodied by the introduction of measures, setting up and running organizations etc.—is dictated and induced by this power and directing system. Since the chances to make one's way in life are not equal for all members of society, the ability to establish control in the above sense as well as the control as such and, consequently, the effect of check kept on families, is not equal either from the point of view of individuals and their communities.

Now let us consider from the point of view of the family division of labour in what form social differences appear in narrow and relatively closed family communities and what social control means in relation to the community?

In the first place it is necessary to clarify forms of exercising control over families. Basic types of control that can be easily discerned are:

a) An extreme case is that of a family which forms a closed autonomous community within society; since society cannot directly control family activities, the values and objectives the family imparted to the individual can only be set against real social expectations after the individual has left the family. It frequently follows that the individual has to put up with a number of unsuccessful experiences when he becomes integrated into the social division of labour and society wastes much useless energy in order to rectify what the individual has brought from home. ("Ex post" form of control).

b) Another extreme case is when direct channels for exercising control over the family are available and, as a result, the process of adjustment to society goes off smoothly for both the individual and society ("Ex ante" form of control).

These two forms of control appeared and clashed as the outcome of a long historic process. Today our main task is to consciously select the method by means of which "ex post" control-elements can be eliminated and substituted by previous control. In other words: if the ideal society is conceived as one which ensures equality for its members, the necessity of post-control diminishes and conditions of previous control are increasingly given the more progress is made

towards this goal; this, however, means increased socialization of the family. It is not mere chance that Plato and Sir Thomas More, who both concerned themselves with Utopian societies imagined the education of children as a social commitment. What then does the concept: socialization of the family mean in a differentiated society? The main point is that society realized control by taking over a considerable part of the activities of family life and so-to-speak absorbs the family. In this way society creates both the material and the ideal conditions of "ex ante" control and by so doing narrows down the field where it is necessary to exert "ex post" control. This concept includes—in the widest sense of the word—the ideals of society, its objectives of differing temporal duration as well as all the means and ways enabling it to reach the aforesaid. Of course, this kind of investigation takes place from a particular aspect, the aspect of the family and the division of labour in the family, generally speaking only, the expectations, decisions and activities of society in respect to the family are closely connected with other kinds of social processes and activities. Hence, the present situation and development in Hungary of the division of labour in families will be analysed on the basis of the dimensions of socialization. The family controlled by various conflicting forms within a mobile society of pluralistic values and "sub-cultures" is at the extreme pole of the historically realized dimension. The other pole, conceived as an ideal one, is represented (in contrast to the former one) by the "ex ante" controlled community which integrated with and became absorbed by society. The central question (consisting of a number of subquestions) is:

Where is the place of the Hungarian family of today between these two poles, to what extent does the division of labour within the family correspond to social expectations and what need is there if any for subsequent control? There are two approaches to the problem through concrete analysis, one of which is family-centred whereas the other is society-centred. The first is interested in the effective formation of the division of labour in the family and can be divided into two spheres:

a) Division of tasks deriving from childbirth and education of children incumbent on parents. In this sphere of family activities "plus" charges fall to the lot of women for biological and psychological reasons.

b) Caring for the family was in the course of history also mainly the task of women. To what extent does this hold good in our days? This question is important for it is the beginning and end of the disadvantageous situation of women as against men. This investigation is therefore closely connected with problems of emancipation and social equality and is the transition to the social-centred approach.

The latter is expected to give an answer regarding society's expectations in respect to the family, the extent to which society has provided for conditions in order to fulfil these expectations and—provided that those conditions are given—the ideas of the members of society—of fathers and husbands, mothers and wives—do meet expectations on the family and on the division of labour.

The shaping of decisions

The first group of questions of the family-centred investigation of the division of labour is related to the education of children in the family, how parents divide these tasks between themselves, how much time do they spend on their children and under what conditions etc. The present study relies on Hungarian data of the international time-balance investigation of 1965–66. The time-balance included industrial towns with a population ranging from 40,000 to 200,000, sufficiently diversified industry (i.e. the population does not engage in a single tradi-

tional industry only) with at least 30 per cent of the inhabitants working in industry and a maximum 25 per cent in agriculture; the town had to be the centre of the region, meaning that a part of the population of the nearby settlements commuted to town every day and worked in industry. The outer boundary of the town—which was still included in the sample—was drawn where the number of commuters did not exceed five per cent of the population. For these reasons Győr was chosen in Hungary.

The persons questioned were asked to record on a school time-table-like questionnaire how they had spent their days, what time different activities took and certain other aspects e.g. who was present, who helped them and what secondary activity did the person questioned perform besides—say—did he or she listen to the radio while cooking? In Hungary the survey was supplemented by a questionnaire the aim of which was to obtain information on activities in the family and at home. One of the main points of the supplementary questionnaire was to show the division of work at home, that is, research was done into the content and extent of housework.

This study therefore relied on data provided by two closely connected investigations. Since then, however, new questions also arose in respect to which neither of the surveys gave an explicit answer, although it would have been highly important and interesting to clear up the problems enumerated below, from both a theoretical and a practical point of view.

One of the problems is, for example, whether the husband's or the wife's decision counts in the division of labour at home, the decision of which of the spouses does the shaping of the character in the distribution of activities mainly depend; to what extent do income, dwelling etc. determine the shaping of decisions in the division of labour; what is the influence of the urban or rural character of the place of residence in the case of identical incomes, that is, does it further development tending towards equality, or that towards the preservation of traditions in the division of labour.

The emancipation of women taken as a complex question against the background of production, services, network of social institutions and organizations, and where—within this complex system—the place of the "subsystem" of inequalities in the family is situated in reality etc. is a further set of problems. All this requires detailed investigations, for example, a comparison between men and women in respect to skill, scope of activity, employment, incomes, social prestige of work in the sphere of production or from the viewpoint of laws, statutory provisions and decrees; moreover, differences according to the place of residence ought to be investigated with special regard to the disadvantageous situation of women as against men.

Education of Children

The first group of questions in the family-centred division of labour is concerned with the education of children in the family circle, how do parents divide these tasks, how much time do they spend on their children, under what circumstances and so on.

Education in general and particularly that of children plays a highly important role in the realization of the ideal "ex ante" control. Society is aware of this as shown by a number of measures of social policy, for example, by the development of the crèche and kindergarden system. The many problems that emerged in this respect are well known. The capacity of these institutions is insufficient but even if the needed material and personnel conditions could be provided for, another thought provoking problem—particularly important from the viewpoint of the present subject—arises: the expectations of socialist society towards the family manifested themselves most directly by ex-

pectations in respect to women. The economic requirements of industrialization made it an absolute necessity to draw women into the orbit of production, yet the demand to establish equal rights for women was an explicit social aim embodied by a number of measures and institutions whose purpose was to ease the situation of women and mothers. One of these measures was the crèche-kindergarden system. However, this system was only instituted for women and mothers who are employed; this shows to a certain degree that the system was mainly established to serve working women. The other objective: the social education of children, that is, preliminary control and providing "equal chances" can only be a partial objective at best. The situation is somewhat different in the case of schools. The primary school—called general school in Hungary—is, in fact, "general" for it is compulsory for all and, therefore one of the basic conditions of socialized education had been fulfilled. Reforms of the educational system—particularly in the four lower forms—brought about a number of positive changes in respect to the second basic condition i.e. the content of the curriculum which was expanded; there are new educational appliances, illustrated primers reminiscent of story-books and in addition new subjects such as environmental studies. However, the third basic condition, namely, sound teaching and really good teachers are still lacking in some cases.

All this goes to say that the role of the family is almost exclusive in the education and care of children before they are admitted to school and almost equals it during school years. This is emphasized by the fact that school—because of the gap between kindergarden and school, and school and family and because of peculiarities of the Hungarian school system—exerts "ex post" control where the conduct of children as developed by the family is supervised. What does the development of the mode of life of children depend on? Obviously on the parents who educated them. Their ideas, however, are closely connected with their mentality, system of values and norms. The orientation of values of adults is a function of their position in the division of labour. This therefore is the most decisive dimension from the point of view of which the division of labour in the family and the problems of the education of children will be examined.

In addition, it also has to be taken into account that education to a large extent depends on the extent and intensity of care parents devote to the education of their children. This is determined by two fundamental factors, one of which is the composition of the family, the number and age of children representing a minimum time and intensity demand while the other factor is the maximum time parents can spend on their children. Differences are of course far greater in the case of women, dependent on whether they are housewives or in employment and it is certain that this factor highly deviates not only in respect to the length of time but also as regards the content and structure of time parents can devote to their children. (See Table 1.)

The time-span ranges from 20 minutes to 3.5 hours. Differences of social position are not differentiating factors, however, the fact whether mothers go to work or not is of considerable influence as regards the time spent with children. Unfortunately, the fact that mothers stay at home the whole day does not mean that parents spend a longer time together more intensily on their children, because the mother's extended time is compensated for by the "liberation" of the father from education. Mothers who are "only housewives" spend 1.2–1.8 times as much time on their children, on the other hand, husbands of women not in employment spend only half the time on their children as husbands of women who are employed. The latter type of family life is more harmonious from the point of view of time spent with children since father and mother play their proportionate part in

TABLE 1

Time spent on children on weekdays on the average (minutes)

	In clerical and professional employment				Manual workers			
	husband	wife	husband	wife	husband	wife	husband	wife
	wife employed		wife not employed		wife employed		wife not employed	
Families with children on the average	45	57	19	105	42	70	22	84
Families where the smallest child is under a year old	34	214	27	—	51	181	24	179
Size of sample	5	4	3	—	19	15	6	5

education. In families with a baby, fathers have to take a greater share in the education of the older children and by devoting—say—only a few minutes more to the children they compensate a part of the mother's time while she looked after the baby. (See Table 2.)

More than half of the time of women is taken up by "domestic chores" (dressing, washing, care of sick children etc.). The husbands position is just the opposite. The latter are concerned with education in the narrower sense of the word, in every group. The determinant factor of the pattern of activity of husbands is here also whether their wives are earners or stay at home and devote themselves to the household and the family. This means—seen from another angle—that fathers stick to a greater degree to education at the expense of other kinds of housework.

TABLE 2

Time distribution of parents' activity with children (in per cent)

	Clerical and professional				Manual workers			
	husband	wife	husband	wife	husband	wife	husband	wife
	wife in employment		wife not in employment		wife in employment		wife not in employment	
Care of children	35.9	60.8	24.4	48.6	39.7	86.4	24.1	64.0
Education (playing, reading etc.)	64.1	39.2	75.6	51.4	60.3	31.6	75.9	36.0

It is interesting too, how parents divide their time between the above mentioned two kinds of activities. Table 3 shows that there are considerable differences also according to the place occupied in the social division of labour, although differentiation according to whether women are in employment continues.

Parents doing clerical or professional work set greater store on education particularly if the mother stays at home and attends to the children and does the housework in addition. In families of manual workers physical care comes first. It should be added that differentiation according to activities is of no importance from the point of view of the development of children. In the case of small children physical care and games, going for a walk, etc. are of equal importance. The aim of this differentiation is to characterize the attitude of parents and to learn what they take upon themselves and what they consider more and what less important. More detailed analyses show that parents doing clerical work devote more time to the intellectual-bodily development of their children (playing, walking outdoors, telling stories etc.) and it can be assumed that they look after their children more efficiently and with a higher competence. Unfortunately—and in this primarily lies the effect of the post-control of the school—school education does not decrease the disadvantages resulting therefrom to the detriment of children of manual workers, on the contrary, it increases the latter's handicap as is shown by differences in average school achievements.

A further breakdown of the pattern of activities shows that women have far more definite ideas in respect to what has to be done with their children than husbands do. This provides an explanation for the fact that there is a closer relationship between the ideas of mothers than between those of fathers as regards the distribution of time spent on education, order of importance and time expended on certain activities. There are, of course, differences between women also which depend more on the section of society they belong to and less on the differences between the categories of those in employment and those not in employment.

Thorough analysis of the time husbands dispose of has led to the same results: differences are more considerable according to whether or not their wives are in employment whereas they are slighter if the question is examined from the point of view of the social division of labour.

TABLE 3

Division of activities of the time both parents spend on their children

	Professional and clerical				Manual workers			
	wife in employment		wife not in employment		wife in employment		wife not in employment	
	min.	per cent	min.	per cent	min.	per cent	min.	per cent
Physical care of children	50	48.9	45	36.5	60	54.0	47	44.0
Education	52	51.1	79	63.5	51	46.0	59	56.0
Total	102	100.0	124	100.0	111	100.0	106	100.0

Finally, if the pattern of activity of husbands and wives is compared it appears —in conformity with the above—that there are more differing features than similarities. The degree of deviation is the slightest in the group of professional people, particularly if both parents are in employment. The difference between the two structures culminates at the other pole i.e. where the wife of a manual worker is a housewife.

To sum up matters it can be said that women are in fact burdened with a "plus charge" due to childbirth and education and, in addition, to a greater degree than could be justified, by the fact of *motherhood*. This is particularly so in the case of housewives whose position is in many respects disadvantageous anyway.

Neither the number nor the standard of Hungarian children's welfare institutions provides a suitable basis for implementing socialized education and discontinuing "ex post" control. The most important measure taken in recent years as regards the care of mothers and children was the introduction of the child-welfare allowance. The latter means that mothers can choose, after maternity leave expires, whether or not they want to take up their earlier job at unchanged conditions and let a crèche, a grandmother etc. look after their baby, or stay at home and draw the allowance, which amounts to 600 Ft a month, for three years. The alternative offered as well as the appreciation expressed in respect to childbirth and motherhood are positive features. It eases—in the short run—social tensions which mainly affect manual workers, and diminishes to a certain degree the many burdens of young mothers such as going to work and in addition looking after a home and baby.

Housework

The other aspect of this piece of research concerns housework in the narrower sense of the word, that is the division of activities in providing for the family as a whole. Throughout history this was a typical woman's job. It has been pointed out earlier why this question is of particular significance in socialist society whose declared aim is to establish social equality. Accordingly, and in harmony with values as proclaimed by the new social order, certain commodities were put on the market and services introduced with the object of facilitating the situation of mothers and wives; a considerable part of them were explicitly intended to take over tasks which otherwise have to be done in the home. However, as with children's welfare institutions, in this case too the drawback is that services and commodities are of low standard, their quantity is insufficient and there are no institutions providing complex services from cooking to washing. Another problem—the effects of which are not known yet—is that a considerable part of services are performed by women, that is, "housewives" do housework when in employment. There are "technical" problems, social aims are not clear either.

It has been briefly outlined above that society should take over the larger part of domestic activities by providing services and granting social allotments, for this is the most suitable way to ensure equal chances in housework in a differentiated society. This, however, can only be effective if society tries to ensure that all its members are given an opportunity to take equal advantage of services and allotments, for only in this way is it possible to keep a check on at least a part of earlier inequalities and tensions. A precondition is that recourse to services etc. should mean an unequivocally positive alternative for every family. In other words: it should not just be a paying proposition for certain people but be available to all members of society irrespective of their income. The following data show that there are many problems:

TABLE 4

Domestic appliances per hundred households

	Head of the family			
	Executives and professionals	Other clerical	Skilled or semi-skilled worker	Unskilled worker
Sewing machine	44	45	42	37
Washing machine	71	59	55	28
Vacuum cleaner	55	35	17	5
Floor-polisher	15	5	2	—
Electric or gas boiler	20	13	5	1
Refrigerator	25	13	7	1

TABLE 5

Average per capita costs a year (forint)

	Head of the family			
	Executives and professionals	Other clerical	Skilled or semi-skilled worker	Unskilled worker
Cleaning and washing	164	83	29	17

TABLE 6

Average time spent on housework in families with children (minutes)

	In clerical employment						Manual workers					
	husband	wife	total	husband	wife	total	husband	wife	total	husband	wife	total
	wife in employment			wife not in employment			wife in employment			wife not in employment		
Time spent on housework	67	178	245	54	355	409	93	222	315	88	386	474

The considerable differences are not only due to differences in incomes but probably to deviating traditions, a different order of values, leaning towards conservatism or the new as well. This had to be mentioned in advance otherwise the length and structure of time devoted to housework and the division of labour between husband and wife could not be appropriately analysed, for the main point of the question at issue is the time and energy saving of family members. A clear picture could be best obtained if the hours and minutes saved owing to various domestic appliances could be taken into account. Failing this, only their assumed effect can be indicated.

It appears from analyses of the time spent on housework that the minimum is one hour and the maximum 6.5 hours (on the average per group); in every group therefore more time is spent on housework than on education. In this respect, however, two points of view have to be taken into account; first, work done for the family as a whole includes cooking, washing, cleaning etc. for the children, too, the time requirement of which appears here; hence, earlier data can be considered as time exclusively spent on children. Secondly, in view of today's housing conditions and degree of mechanization the time needed for housework is more definite and generally longer than the time required to look after children.

The division of housework shows that there are signicant differences between husband and wife as well as between social groups. It is worth while noting that in this case the tendency of the division of labour is precisely the opposite to earlier experience: here the primary differences arise from the fact whether women are in employment or housewives whereas differences according to the place occupied in the division of labour are only of a secondary importance. In the case of husbands the latter is the dominant factor. It should, however, be added that time-data for husbands—according to which manual workers help their wives half an hour more a day—are contrary to everyday experience and data from other sources as well. This is attributable to the fact that here the concept "housework" was interpreted in a wide sense and includes work done around the house. To this manual workers contribute to a far greater degree than clerks or professional men. If housework isinterpreted in the narrower classical sense the participation of husbands appears as the opposite.

Table 7 shows that the division of labour between husband and wife is far less uniform in respect to the family as a whole than regarding the care of children; this is a negative phenomenon, for the contrary could be justified by certain activities and their time requirement which only the mother can perform. It appears that women in so-

TABLE 7

Time distribution of husband and wife according to different activities (in per cent)

Activity	Professional and clerical				Manual workers			
	husband	wife	husband	wife	husband	wife	husband	wife
	wife in employment		wife not in employment		wife in employment		wife not in employment	
Housework	27	73	13	87	30	70	19	81
Education of children	44	56	15	85	37	63	21	79

TABLE 8

Time distribution between housework and education of children (those in employment only) (per cent)

	Professional and clerical		Manual workers	
	husband	wife	husband	wife
Housework	60	76	69	76
Education of children	40	24	31	24

ciety primarily do the work of housewives and not that of mothers while men are ready to take over a relatively greater part of the education of children. The division between the two groups of activity of the time spent at home corroborates the aforesaid.

The table only contains data for earners since the aim is to clear up how time is divided between the two important kinds of activity after husband and wife have come home from their place of work where they have spent about the same time.

In Hungarian society today housework is therefore divided in a traditional way which is disadvantageous to women and prejudices their emancipation. It seems that while preliminary control (socialization) is a definite social aim in certain spheres of education, similar endeavours cannot be found in housework.

If the only one working is the head of the family, child care allowances are not available to family members. This means that Hungarian society grants even certain remedies to working women only which creates, in addition to earlier inequalities, a new kind of differentiation between women at work and those who work at home; this difference will become the more glaring the more women take up employment. This is a far-reaching problem requiring much complex research.

Detailed analyses of the different patterns of activity look for an answer to the question: to what extent does housework and the division of time spent on housework follow the traditional pattern and what changes have the earlier mentioned factors (household appliances, services, housing conditions and women entering employment) brought about. In other words: is the division of labour of complementary or competitive character within the mentioned disproportions in the time schedule? Complementary here means the traditional type of division of labour, that is, certain kinds of activities are only done by husbands and others by wives; in a division of work of competitive character spouses perform about equal work of all sorts. First, however, it has to be cleared up what is to be understood by traditional (complementary) division of housework. In the course of history—provided that there was a division of housework at all—the latter relied on the difference of physical strength between men and women. Men performed strenuous work while women did easier work mainly in the house. Sometimes a differentiation was made between work around and inside the house; these notions were related in practices to social facts enhancing the characteristically disadvantageous position of women: slight participation in matters of the outside world, complete exclusion from taking part in politics, and in close connection with these, their lesser knowledge. Hence, men were able to point to higher intellectual qualities and mental superiority in addition to biological arguments embodied by greater

physical strength. What has been called earlier complementary division of labour seldom appeared in a pure form. Modifications of it generally brought about heavier burdens for women who had to take over classical man's jobs. This was furthered and became justified by technical development as a result of which less and less strength and the kind of skill men have was needed. The question now arises: is there a reversed shouldering of work, do men perform traditional women's jobs and to what extent? As a first approach to an answer, housework was divided into two groups; on the basis of this breakdown it could be established whether the work of the husband or of the wife brings about the disintegration of the complementary division of labour. (See Table 9.)

At first glance it is striking that in every group of manual workers, work requiring great muscular strength plays a far more important role in the pattern of activities than in the case of those doing clerical work.

TABLE 9

Division of labour between husband and wife (per cent)

Housework	Professional and clerical				Manual workers			
	husband	wife	husband	wife	husband	wife	husband	wife
	wife in employment		wife not in employment		wife in employment		wife not in employment	
Work around the house requiring physical strength	65	4	74	17	69	12	91	29
Easier housework	35	96	26	83	31	88	9	71

This fact is closely connected with housing conditions which differ from class to class in addition to the earlier mentioned conditions of mechanization and availability of services. Sociological research has shown that the proportion of those living in state-owned flats decreases progressing downwards from those who hold leading posts (50 per cent) to unskilled workers (23 per cent). The composition of those who live in one-family houses is reversed. The proportion of unskilled workers living in the latter is 48.8 per cent whereas the ratio of members of the professions and of executives is 13.3 and 17.8 per cent. It takes a long time to equip a family house completely and in the meantime those who live there have to carry out activities requiring considerable physical strength, from which those in state-owned flats are exempt. There is generally running water in the latter whereas in a considerable proportion of one-family houses those who live there have to carry water from the well.

This table however, does not answer the question whether the disintegration of the division of complementary work helps competitive work to flourish or if it points to a third type in the division of activities. This problem can be analysed in different ways. We have to investigate to what extent the help of men eases the burdens of women and decreases the drawbacks deriving from domestic chores of married women who have a job although housework requires the full time and energy of a person. The share of

husbands in housework was, therefore, examined, as well as the effect it exerts on the schedule of women. This can be gauged by comparing the weight of the most and/or least time-requiring activities with the total time spent on housework in every group. The aim is to express as a percentage the maximum-minimum time requirement in the housework schedule; the index of the proportionate division of labour is the difference between the maximum and the minimum percentage.

TABLE 10

Share of activities in different groups (per cent)

	Professional and clerical				Manual workers			
	husband	wife	husband	wife	husband	wife	husband	wife
	wife in employment		wife not in employment		wife in employment		wife not in employment	
a%—b%*	30	50	44	44	34	46	55	40

* a%—activities requiring maximum time; b%—percentage of activities requiring minimum time.

According to Table 10 the sharing out depends in the first place on the employment of the wife and—if both husband and wife are working—on the section of society they belong to, but in the second place only. Men in families where the spouses are professional people work according to the most uniform schedule while deviations range up to a considerable 50 per cent in the case of women of the same families. A similar tendency appears in the case of working-class families if both are working. At the same time, the pattern of activity of a housewife is more uniform than that of her working husband. The fact therefore that husbands take part in housework to a higher degree considerably modifies the time-table of women; with more time on their hands and exempt from any duties, they can devote themselves to a higher degree to traditional female work (cooking, ironing, washing, patching up clothes etc.). The more uniform schedule of housewives goes together with heavier work which requires bodily strength: in this case the husband lends a helping hand to a lesser degree only, and spends most of his other time on traditional men's jobs such as gardening, digging, hoeing, wood-cutting etc. This is therefore a new, third type of division of labour between spouses in the case of working women: husbands take over all sorts of housework as a result of which their pattern of activity becomes more proportionate and harmonious; accordingly, wives are charged with less housework and their schedule assumes a more complementary character in a positive sense. The division of labour between husband and wife in housework follows the above mentioned pattern which relies on the historical lack of equal rights of women.

Finally, if housework is broken down by components a clearer picture shows interesting results: husbands and wives evaluate the order of importance of housework differently; wives stress the importance of certain activities husbands attach less importance to, and vice-versa.

If the weight of a day's housework is investigated separetely in the case of men and women it appears that the ideas of husbands in respect to their participation in housework differ to a far greater degree than in the order of importance in the education

of children. It should be added that these divergences cannot be explained unequivocally either by the employment of wives or by the fact of belonging to a certain social class. This points to the fact that husbands take a hand in housework far more sporadically than in education. More intensive participation in domestic chores is a less important and more dispensable item of their schedule than occupation with their children; in the latter field they give relatively more and steady help to their wives. In the case of wives, the situation is reversed. The graphs representing the division of time women spent on housework practically coincide or run parallel; in all groups the same activities are at the top and at the bottom, in order of importance. Accordingly, women have far more definite and rigid views in respect to care expended on the family as a whole than on the time-requirement and importance of the education of children. All this corroborates what was said earlier, that women are housewives in the first place and mothers only in the second place.

Finally the question arises: do the members of society find it "natural" that spouses divide work to so slight an extent? Women are charged with many burdens while men shoulder far fewer: disproportions in the division of labour are even more striking in housework than in the education of children. If one or another of the partners has a guilty "social conscience", endeavours to change matters could be carried out more easily. In other words: to what extent are families worried because of the unequal division of labour? What are the expectations of spouses in regard to themselves and to each other in respect to housework? Spontaneous and characteristic answers can be obtained if family members are asked about their views regarding their participation in housework and the answers are set against available facts. The latter are taken from the time-balance investigation while opinions represent answers given to the following questions: "In your view, how much time do you and your wife (husband) spend on housework?" (Table 11.)

The opined time-data reflect in every case ideas and intentions and it appears that the answers are section-specific and depend with equal force on the employment of the wife and on the actually performed hours and minutes spent on work. Women in every group thought that they have spent more time on housework than corresponded to

TABLE 11

Data of time spent on housework in families with children on the average (in minutes)

Opinion of		Professional and clerical				Manual workers			
		about husband		about wife		about husband		about wife	
		presumed data	factual data	presumed data	factual data	presumed data	factual data	presumed data	factual data
wife working	husband	78	67	276	178	66	93	288	222
	wife	78	67	282	178	72	93	294	222
wife at home	husband	42	54	432	355	54	88	438	386
	wife	48	54	456	355	36	88	432	386

facts. This points to two effects. First, a considerable part of the work is tedious and burdensome and is at the bottom of the scale of social appreciation. From this point of view therefore women find continuous repetitive work trying. On the other hand, it is known from complaints by men and women that the lack of a "cosy family nest" causes serious conflicts. Therefore, women —first of all housewives—believe that the prestige of housework is best furthered at least in the family circle, if the family is provided for to perfection and for this reason they spend their whole day, one might say almost all their time, on housework. Women at work also often compound with their conscience by declaring that their work is not at the expense of housework and try therefore to increase the time ratio of housework to the detriment of their "leisure time". In order to decide which of the two effects dominates, the statement of husbands on the help given must also be taken into account.

Manual workers—and their wives even more so—believe that "housekeeping is a woman's job". Women declare that the participation of men in housework amounts to half an hour although it is in fact one and a half hours. "Self justification" in respect to lending a hand in housework is mainly stressed by manual workers. Those in professional or clerical employment, both of whom are working, find this kind of activity most burdensome; in view of both partners the husband ought to take part in housework more intensively.

It appears therefore that precisely those families are willing to eliminate disproportions and broaden the basis of the division of labour where the question has been solved for the most part and that there is but very slight hope of liquidating the disadvantageous situation of women out of their own resources where the division of labour causes the greatest problems at present.

The sum and substance of the study is that not much can be expected from "natural" development in the distribution of work in the family, nor even a partial solution of the problems of inequality. It is necessary that society contributes to such an extent to housework which would really enable progress towards the realization of social ideals which have been earlier referred to as the only possibility to keep a preliminary check on the family in a differentiated society.

A SEX QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE YOUNG*

We are six students in our final year of psychology at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. The review "World Youth" which is published in Budapest in several languages, also in Hungarian, asked us to do an enquiry on the sex life and attitudes to sex of young people, and we interviewed 400 secondary school pupils and university students on the subject.

We drafted a questionnaire which consisted of two main sections. All those who answered were volunteers who filled it out anonymously and nearly all of them were perfectly happy to take part in the enquiry. We found them in the voluntary social work camps and holiday camps in Hungary.

Apart from a certain amount of general information—homes, parents' occupation, etc.—all our questions dealt with various aspects of the main subject.

The first group of detailed questions was about sex, how and from where they first learnt about it, and the quality of the information. In the second group we asked for information on their first sexual experiences, their motives and the part their emotions played in it.

We then asked about attitudes on the selection of partners and the expectations that accompanied them. The central part of our questionnaire was designed to reveal the connection, accord or contradiction between the students' beliefs and concepts about sex life and what it turned out to be in practice, and we included questions on the relationship between sex and love.

A certain number of questions were asked about adult attitudes to the sex life of the young, as seen by the young people themselves.

In the final part of the questionnaire we tried to gain an insight into general moral standards on sex. We asked the young people we interviewed about marriage, the family and any general moral principles governing them on these questions.

We asked these young people three types of question. The first, and most simple, demanded only a *yes* or *no*—they were asked to underline one or the other. This did not, of course, mean that the matters to which they referred were equally simple, but that attitudes could be more or less reduced to a yes or a no.

In the second type of question a number of possible choices were offered in simple cases (e.g., attitudes in the selection of partners). These choices consisted of a single word. In more complicated questions the choices offered were several. The answers were of course on various levels, and condensed various patterns of thought in themselves. Many of the alternative questions of this kind gave the opportunity for the

* This article on the results of an enquiry made by university students in Budapest, was first published in *World Youth*, July, 1970 and is published here with their kind permission.

creation of an independent opinion, for besides the offered choices of answer those who answered could extend their replies with other alternatives as they pleased.

We also used a third type of question —the "open-ended" question. We only used them twice; perhaps we should have used them rather more. The principal advantage of open-ended questions is that the type of reply is freely chosen by the persons answering. This, however, is also a disadvantage because it provides them with an opportunity for evasion, avoiding a careful and thorough study of the question and an honest answer. And in fact these fears were justified.

The youngest individuals we questioned were 15, the oldest 24. The majority, about 80 per cent, were young people over 18.

The breakdown of the answers on their homes showed that 57 per cent of the boys and 16 per cent of the girls were from Budapest. We made a further breakdown into provincial towns, cities, villages and homesteads; 39 per cent of the girls came from villages.

The breakdown according to social background showed that 11 per cent of the boys and 23 per cent of the girls came from industrial workers' families, 8 and 12 per cent from rural workers' families, 12 and 12 per cent from white-collar workers' families and 69 and 53 per cent from professional families.

Since we carried out our enquiry in youth camps, we could only question students, schoolboys and schoolgirls; this breakdown, therefore, did not accurately reflect the real distribution of young people. We were, however, compelled by external circumstances and lack of time to draw our conclusions from such material as was available. We can only hope that this did not substantially affect the result.

Honesty: The questionnaire as we mentioned previously, was well received, and we talked with the young people after they had answered it. They showed great interest in the topic and even drew our attention to other points. There were certain problems with some of the girls: nine of them stopped answering when they came to the more "delicate" questions, and some of the questionnaires which had been distributed among them were never returned. The honesty of the answers seems to be confirmed by the fact that we were never given flippant replies, deliberately nonsensical answers or puerile remarks.

Sex education

How old are young people when they first learn about sex? From whom, from what sources do they get their information? What is the difference between boys and girls in this respect? To what extent are they satisfied with the information?

These were our questions, set out of course in a more detailed and sophisticated form.

In general boys appear to learn about sexual matters earlier than girls, although girls need such information more. The average difference is one year: the boys said the earliest information they acquired was at the age of 10–11, the girls at 12–13. The fear of parents that if they explain about sex when their children are young the children will begin their sex life earlier is not justified. By means of "correlation" calculations we observed that there was no correlation whatever between the date of sexual information and the beginning of sexual experience. It appears clear that early information on sex does not imply early sexual experience.

The majority of boys (60 per cent) got their first information from friends, the majority of girls (54 per cent) were told by their parents. The information from friends was inaccurate and tended to distort the facts, hence many questions remained unanswered. 50 per cent of the boys said that this source of information was unsatisfactory. 66 per cent were satisfied with the information given by parents. This confirms that the advantage lies with correct

information given in a deliberate and planned manner by parents.

Books on education play an important part but are not as yet as widespread as they should be; 22 per cent of both boys and girls declared that they got their information from such books and that generally speaking they were satisfactory. The school, which, apart from the family, is best qualified to provide sex education, plays a very small part, and so does medical information. Forbidden pornographic pictures and doctors rate about equal as a source of information (the percentage of both is very low).

The answers clearly reveal that present forms of sex education are unsatisfactory and rather inefficient. We asked those who answered our questionnaire to make some suggestions. 40 per cent of the boys thought that extra-curricular organized sex education would be best; extra-curricular, perhaps because boys *a priori* abhor everything which smacks of school. Girls thought that sex education should be better organized in school and more books on sex education should be published. 12 per cent suggested better use should be made of television and film for sex education. Very few mentioned sound radio; it shared the bottom place with unrestricted pornographic literature as a source of information.

If the proper information on sex is given to young people at the appropriate age, esoteric explanations will have no effect on them. In the absence of such education their expectations of sexual experience will, in varying degrees, fail to correspond with its real possibilities and hence jeopardize its success.

The beginnings of sexual experience

The first form of interest in the other sex takes the form of regular meetings between two young people, or "dating". There are two stages in this process, at two different ages. With boys the first wave of interest occurs at about the age of 13. By this time the boys have already acquired information on sex for good or bad. This partnership does not differ greatly from ordinary friendship and is mainly motivated by sexual curiosity. The second wave of interest appears at the end of puberty. At this stage the boys are moved not only by motives of curiosity in the choice of their partner although in many cases their motives are still superficial. This second wave of interest generally appears—with boys—at the age of 16–17.

With girls the first wave of interest reaches a peak at the age of 14, and then subsides until the age of 16, when the second stage begins. In this respect boys and girls are the same, but while boys choose their first sexual partner around the age of 18, with girls this may be delayed until their 20th year.

The first choice of partner is followed after approximately 3 years by the first sexual relationship. 32 per cent of the girls and 82 per cent of the boys admitted full sexual experience. It is very probable that psychological reasons (e.g., shyness) inhibited girls, and that a higher percentage would be more accurate.

A breakdown of the figures on sexual experience according to the place of their homes gives (in per cent):

Home	Boy	Girl
Budapest	57.3	42.3
large provincial town	36.3	20.5
provincial town	42.7	16.2
village, small settlement	50.0	9.8

It is immediately noticeable that sexual intercourse is more common for boys living in the capital. This, of course, is due to the fact that life in a capital city provides greater opportunity. Incidentally, the first sexual experiences of most of those from Budapest were of a casual nature. In the villages the figures are very similar, probably because in the provinces sexual experience is the mark of manhood. As the ideal of every boy is the sexually mature man it is only natural that boys want to achieve this experience even before they are biologically mature.

Girls living in the capital lose their virginity earlier than others. The connection between life in urban Budapest and freer and more informal opportunities for sexual relationships are obvious. Adults—such as parents, neighbours, teachers, etc.—are less able to exercise control and the young move about more freely and act more independently. This means two things: on the one hand sexual desires can be fulfilled more easily in an urban environment than in the more restricted conditions of the small town, village or homestead, and on the other the personal moral standards regulating sexual attitudes are less binding. Furthermore, the position of women in society is still ambiguous. The only unchallenged position for a woman is marriage, and in the provinces it is widely believed that sexual experience for women is only permissible within marriage. This attitude is not so prevalent in the capital. As a result girls from a provincial background are conscious of more restrictions and they exert an influence on them when the opportunity for pre-marital intercourse arises.

The majority of students coming from the provinces probably live in hostels. Urban moral attitudes begin to influence their way of thinking, but the stricter moral standards brought from the closed communities of home still affect them strongly.

The girl who has had sexual intercourse has mostly lost her virginity around the age of eighteen. Her loss of virginity is determined by her age and by her age when she selected a partner. The earlier a girl finds herself a partner the earlier the age she will probably indulge in sex. The average period between the selection of the first partner and the first experience of sex is three years. Only 15.1 per cent of the girls started sexual intercourse in the same year they found a partner.

For most of the girls the first sexual experience was accompanied by a positive emotional attachment to their partner, i.e., they were in love.

It was interesting to note that the girls who first experienced sexual intercourse in the same year they selected a partner, and who were insufficiently prepared for it, even when motivated by love, declared in most cases, that the main emotional reaction on the loss of their virginity was disappointment. This was due probably to their exaggerated expectations, and their lack of intimate knowledge of their partner.

All girls expect a great deal from the first sexual experience. The following disappointment exerts a strong influence on their later sex life.

The majority of the girls declared that the loss of their virginity evoked emotions of joy and pride. Since most of them were in love, only a small percentage of them felt the opposite. The loss of virginity produces complex emotions in girls, their joy should be conceived more as the joy of giving than a physical joy or delight. Pride finds its explanation in the change in her position which is to her benefit.

For 70 per cent of the girls the first partner was older, for 30 per cent he was the same age but because the sex relations of the girls were almost exclusively inspired by love, there were no other significant differences.

The picture presented by the boys is more varied. The majority said that their first sexual experience was motivated by curiosity. If we study the emotional reactions, we find significant differences:

Motivation	age of first partner	emotional reaction
Curiosity	older	1. nothing special 2. disgust 3. disappointment 4. gratification
	same age	1. nothing particular 2. gratification 3. joy 4. disgust
	younger	1. joy 2. pride, disgust, satisfaction
Love	older	1. joy 2. pride
	same age	1. joy 2. pride
	younger	1. joy 2. pride

It is to be noted that where the first partner was older the emotional reaction of the boys was indifference, or a negative emotion; where the first partner was the same age they felt more joy, and if the partner was younger, joy took first place.

When sexual relations were inspired by love the emotional reaction was positive, irrespective of the partner's age. But in any event the joy and pride felt by boys in their first sexual experience is different in character from the emotions of girls. Positive emotions are much more subjective in the case of boys.

The table we have just given omits a question in the questionnaire, namely, upon the initiative of which partner was the sexual relationship begun? The answers revealed the interesting fact that in general, and particularly in the case of partners of the same age, the boys enter upon their first sexual relationships on the initiative of the girls: from which one must conclude that nowadays the initiative formerly exclusively in the hands of the "stronger sex" tends to be taken over by the "weaker sex". Obviously we are witnessing an equalization between the sexes. This is also confirmed by our findings that in such relations there are no negative emotional reactions.

Only 34 per cent of the girls who were still virgins professed moral standards which forbade pre-marital or extra-marital intercourse. This difference reflects a strong ambivalence which is probably due to the fact that about 50 per cent of the girls who replied to our questionnaire had not as yet found a steady and reliable partner to whom they could be attached. As the overwhelming majority of girls considered that love was the decisive reason for sexual intercourse, they felt no incentive to enter on any sexual relations without it.

The Selection of Partners

One of the significant indications is that the process of selecting a partner begins at the age when the regular partner, the "steady" appears, i.e., when the partnership endures for a considerable period.

Our enquiry revealed less steady partnerships among boys and the contrary among

girls. Most steady partnerships were found with the girls from the provinces.

Girls find their steady partners at the age of 18–20, boys only later, at 20–21.

The alternatives in the selection of partners were divided on the basis of external and internal qualities. Boys up to 20 for the most part chose their partners on the grounds of their external qualities: a beautiful face, a good figure, etc; but from the age of 19 onwards they also looked for positive internal qualities. Girls tended to select their partners for their inner virtues, and from 20 upwards these qualities dominated their choice.

Studying, one by one the attitudes adopted in the selection of a partner, we observed that the girls sought partners who understood them: this qualification took a very important place. It is encouraging that in their choice of partner both sexes support the notion of equality, girls being somewhat more insistent on this than boys. This aspiration is understandable if we consider the place occupied by women in society and in the family. It is nevertheless interesting to observe that side by side with this trend toward equalization the girls expressed the desire to be able to "look up" to their partners twice as frequently as the boys.

The most important attitude on the selection of a partner is expressed in the desire for mutual respect and trust by both sexes. Common interests and attitudes are placed third and fourth along with "understanding".

It might be worth mentioning that the choice "good sexual partner" took a very low place in the selection of a partner. Those who gave it importance also demanded fidelity from their partner.

The next topic in the group of questions was the ending of a relationship. Boys mainly gave their reason as growing tired of their partner, girls said disillusionment, which can be interpreted as meaning that the partner failed to come up to their expectations. "Growing tired" on the other hand can be explained as meaning that the partner breaking off the relationship had changed, and his demands and tastes had altered.

The desire for equality is confirmed by the fact that both sexes, practically without exception, considered that the opinions, claims and emotions of their partners had to be taken into account. This is probably because in the age group under investigation (up to 24) grave conflicts between partners are rare, for on this level of relationship adjustment is easy.

It is a sign of the times, and of social attitudes, that material advantages played a very small part in the selection of partners and likewise in marriage. This was revealed in their answers: material advantages came last with both boys and girls, 2.7 and 1.8 per cent respectively.

Another question was whether it was permissible to have an affair with one or more partners at the same time. Boys were more permissive on this question: a third of them had enjoyed or were enjoying relationships with more than one girl at the same time. Three-quarters of the girls condemned this behaviour.

Answers to the question on where young people got to know each other were remarkably uniform. The vast majority answered, at school.

There is no objection to that, but the unanimity of the answer probably means that young people have very little other opportunities to make acquaintances.

Sex and love

Over half of the boys had no opportunity of leading a regular sex life, 10 per cent declared that previously they had this possibility. Of the girls 74 per cent had no regular sex life. 44 per cent of the boys said that the reason was because there was nowhere to make love, 35 per cent said it was because they had no partner, 14 per cent said that they did not need it. Only 6 per

cent of the boys mentioned the fear of conceiving as a reason, and fear of veneral disease failed to figure at all.

Many girls (60 per cent) said that there was no need for a sex life—we felt this answer represented the stupid out-of-date belief that it was not proper for women to enjoy sexual intercourse. 15 per cent said that there was no proper place to make love regularly, 12 per cent were afraid of unwanted pregnancy, 12 per cent had no regular partner. We find it encouraging that only one per cent of the girls and one per cent of the boys refrained for fear of gossip.

Very few chose to answer the question "what kind of contraceptive method or device do you use?" (It was an open-ended question.) Only 13 per cent of girls who enjoyed regular sexual intercourse used contraceptives, 5 took the pill, one described abortion as a method of contraception, one stated she and her partner practised *coitus interruptus*. 12 per cent of the girls refrained from sexual intercourse for fear of pregnancy.

32 per cent of the boys used some kind of contraceptive method or device, and many answered that their partner used one. But only 6 per cent of the boys refrained from regular sexual intercourse because they were afraid of producing a child.

Another question was: "What do you think of sex?" 56 per cent of the boys and 63 per cent of the girls answered that sex was a natural part of life (over half of all those questioned). 35 per cent of the boys and 25 per cent of the girls regarded a sex relationship as a basic ingredient in male and female partnership. 8 per cent of the boys maintained that sexual pleasure was the most important thing about it, only 2 per cent of the girls agreed. Six per cent of the girls displayed a conventional attitude by replying that they thought sex unnecessary, but part of normal life.

We then proceeded to examine the correlation between the answers given to four related questions:

1. Did you ever think of having a sexual relationship without love?

2. Do you think that a purely sexual relationship can develop into love?

3. Can a sexual relationship be maintained after love has died?

4. Do you think it permissible to have other sexual relationships apart from a relationship based on love?

The majority of the boys answered "yes" to all these questions. This corresponds to the old bourgeois attitude that men are permitted everything, in and out of marriage. The second place was taken by boys who answered "no" to all four questions. This is a very strict model reflecting the extremely idealistic view that sex relations are only acceptable when love exists.

Most girls answered "no" to the first and last question. This reflects a separation between theory and practice. Girls probably wish to appear liberal-minded and have laxer morals in theory, but in practice they are strict in their conduct. The second place was taken by those who answered no to all four. This is probably the most idealistic view, and most characteristic of girls. The third place was taken by those who said "yes" to the second question and "no" to the others. The fourth represented the usual pattern of marriage: extra-marital sexual relations are condemned but with the cessation of love sexual relations can persist—this is a characteristic pattern of most marriages.

The girls resolutely rejected the idea of entering into sexual relationships without an emotional background. 60 per cent of the boys have had such relations. Motivational analysis gave some interesting results: the majority of the boys admitted that the main attraction was the casual character of these relations and the absence of any "heart-to hearts". A few said that they had also indulged in such relationships but found that the disadvantages, frustration and alienation, were greater than the advantages.

Adults and the sex life of the young

Most of the young people questioned, looking back, said that their parents had been understanding and indulgent. But with regard to sexual education there were major differences between boys and girls. Irrespective of the type of education they had given them, 90 per cent of the parents would not tolerate pre-marital sexual relationships for their daughters. With the parents of boys this figure fell to 20 per cent. The majority of parents with sons were quite indifferent, only 20 per cent had discussed the matter with them. The energetic opposition of parents with daughters is accompanied by a passive ostrich-like policy; only 10 per cent of these parents will discuss sex with their daughters.

The boys enjoy practically complete freedom, since even those from families where a pre-marital sex life is disapproved for the most part simply disregard any prohibitions. Most of the girls face much stronger opposition, but the majority of them (66 per cent) ignore it. Independence naturally increases with age and from eighteen onwards it is firmly established.

It was interesting to learn the young people's opinion on the reasons for adult opposition, though, of course, many of the adults were permissive. The parents of boys and girls were afraid of unwanted children in the event of pre-marital sexual relationships—the fear, of course, being much greater with the parents of daughters. Many more parents regard sexual relationships as far more immoral in the case of girls than in the case of boys. Conversely, the parents of boys warn their sons against the dangers of venereal diseases; parents with daughters are less fearful on this score. This may be due to the old conditioning which found prostitution a solution for masculine sexual problems. Some retain the absurd idea that sexual intercourse is unhealthy for girls. Only a very small percentage of parents oppose sexual relationships on religious grounds. It was also interesting that in the case of boys a great number of parents thought that the sex life of youth was embarrassing to them. Several of those answering the questionnaire declared that the prohibitions imposed by adults were really the result of envy. Very few of the parents were afraid for their children's "good reputation", and fewer still believed that young people have no need of sex.

Young people appear to regard the opinion of their parents with a quiet objectivity. If they disagree, they express it by discreetly going their own way. There are no serious conflicts in this field.

90 per cent of the girls thought that public opinion was against pre-marital sexual relationships. This opinion stressed the easier conditions for boys, since only 60 per cent of them held the same views. Over half of the answers expressed the belief that these attitudes will change and become more tolerant in the future. A minority thought that the situation will remain the same. A small minority of girls thought that public opinion would become stricter on this question in the future.

In an open-ended question we asked those we were questioning how they hoped to solve their sexual difficulties. The majority replied that they had no particular sexual difficulties. This was one of the most surprising results of the enquiry. The boys expected to be able to solve their own problems such as they were. They believed, more than the girls, that there had been a general change in moral attitudes and ways of thinking, which made things easier. Girls mostly expected marriage to solve any difficulties.

Moral standards

In the last group of questions we probed into problems of moral standards on the relation of marriage to sex.

In the first question we attempted to discover the relation between sex and marriage through a choice of statements.

1. Sexual relationships are only permissible in marriage for the purpose of procreation.

2. Sexual relationships are only permissible in marriage and are for pleasure as well as the purpose of procreation.

3. Extra-marital sexual relationships are only for men.

4. Sexual relationships are based on equality of relationship between the partners, irrespective of marriage.

5. The partners have no moral or material responsibility toward each other.

6. Sex life means free and pleasurable relations with several partners at a time, without emotional attachments.

61 per cent of the girls and 64 per cent of the boys, i.e. an almost equal percentage, opted for Statement no. 4. That is to say the majority of young people do not consider sexual relationships dependent on marriage, but can conceive of them outside marriage, on a basis of equality andres pect for each other's personality. We ourselves are of the opinion that this view—which we consider to be the modern view—is one of the main points of contention between the younger and older generations in considering the connection between marriage and sex. Certainly it implies a freer, less rigid relationship which at the same time, recognizes the equality between the partners.

Quite a number, however, (30 per cent of the girls and 18 per cent of the boys) opted for Statement 2. This is stricter than Statement no. 4, and if we look at it carefully, we will see that it is very close to Statement no. 1 which reflects a severely religious and moral outlook, and which was chosen by only a very few (girls 3.7 per cent, boys 2 per cent).

Only one girl, but 7 per cent of the boys preferred Statement 3. The attitude expressed in this statement, which rejects every kind of equality, was fortunately not very popular; and yet, among the boys, this choice came third among the six!

In fact, the greater number of the sample were in favour of a flexible, more modern outlook and rejected rigid and empty conventions. Girls tended to be rather stricter in their attitudes than boys; they were "family and child-centred".

We next asked whether they thought that the present form of marriage corresponded to the ideal of an enduring relationship between man and woman. 80 per cent of the girls and 47 per cent of the boys answered "yes"—a significant difference but comprehensible in the light of the analysis of the answers to the previous question. The girls look on the married woman as the finally desirable ideal, and therefore most of them choose marriage: the social and family position of the "husband", in its present conventional meaning, has no attraction for the boys. They tend to seek more flexible forms in family life and are unwilling to force themselves into the present pattern of marriage.

Asked to select among several choices the purpose of a good many marriage, girls (37 per cent) answered that it was for the creation of a mutual, lasting emotional attachment. 33 per cent of the boys put the rearing and education of children first, the girls put it second, and conversely, a number of boys (30 per cent) put emotional relations in the second place. On this subject, it can be seen, the opinions of the two sexes are not so dissimilar.

The assertion that a regular sexual life was the main purpose of marriage was chosen by very few (girls 8 per cent, boys 13 per cent). One might well see in the answers to this question a new, more complex and flexible picture of marriage emerging.

Closely linked with the previous questions was the next—what can maintain a marriage when love has disappeared? Both sexes put the child in the first place (boys 43 per cent, girls 41 per cent).

The girls placed the fear of loneliness second, the boys force of habit. The material aspects of marriage and physical comfort

played an insignificant role with girls (1 per cent), but they were more important with the boys (14 per cent).

This however reinforces our previous observation that the girls attached great importance to emotional attachment.

Those who considered the present structure and forms of marriage adequate tended to adopt a stricter moral attitude on the relation between marriage and sex and on the whole preferred to opt for Statement 2.

In place of conclusions

This enquiry was very limited in scope and no far-reaching conclusions can be drawn. We may permit ourselves, however, to draw attention to a few trends that seem to emerge. In the first place, it would appear that the more rigid standard prevailing in society in earlier generations, what is known as "the double standard", has by no means fully disappeared.

This is how young people see it today, but a large number of them adjust themselves to these standards, even though their own beliefs may be radically different and they do so with reluctance.

While both sexes appear to agree on basic principles, there are none the less singificant differences between them, beyond what can be considered normal. Much more should be done for the emotional education of young people—especially for boys. Girls should be encouraged to take a rather more rational attitude towards their emotional needs.

The prospects for family life and the rearing of children appear favourable enough. It seems that the present form of marriage, which is too insecure while in many ways too rigid, must be replaced with something more attractive. The contradiction between the part played by the marriage-based family in the rearing of children, which demands stability, and the whole range of sexual relationships from permanence to rapid transience should be solved. There is considerable cause for optimism in the principles and beliefs these young people have expressed, and for a certain cautious pessimism over any hope that a solution can be found in the next thirty to fifty years.

[Compiled by: Zsuzsa Polgár, György Csepeli, Márta Szyoboda, Pál Bilkei, Anna Glauber, Tamás Turai, Anna Gergely]

LIGHTS ELSEWHERE

(Short story)

by

ERZSÉBET GALGÓCZI

One afternoon in November, toward the end of consultation hours, a young woman came hurriedly into my surgery.

"Please, Doctor, will you come to my husband; he's been spitting blood for over two days now."

They lived out at the Csangota settlement. She had asked the State Farm for the loan of a large-wheeled buggy, since a car or even a tractor would have bogged down in the mud-laden ruts of the road—a word that definitely flatters that centuries-old eight meter-wide cattle-track. Dusk was falling, and a fine rain smoked in the air, the kind of November damp that soaks through your shirt and the tobacco in your pouch before the rug and the fur-cap. We plodded along, jolting heavily over the potholes—incalculable and treacherous because the pools of water lying in them and the mire in the ruts united to produce a slimy and apparently smooth surface. For a while the electric lights of the village winked behind us like sinking buoys, but as the bleak plain swallowed us up it became increasingly difficult to believe that somewhere there were lights—in houses, over gates and along roads.

Tired and gloomy, I meditated morosely on the settlement—the most notorious of all the settlements in the area of the State Farm. Its fifty or sixty cottages were no more than three miles or so from the farm centre, but as far as conditions in the settlement went it could have been thirty miles away. There was no electricity and not a single telephone. The children went to school in the village near the farm centre, that is, when they could—during the autumn and spring muds not even the postman was able to get through, and it was by no means rare for its inhabitants to be cut off from the world for weeks at a time. The water from the shallow wells was so noxious that the whole population—children and nursing mothers included—preferred to drink the local *nova* wine. This wine is

made from an easily grown ungrafted grape with a poisonous content, which is still made at home and consumed in some parts of Hungary, and time and again I had written and gone to the different authorities recommending, demanding, that at the very least an artesian well be sunk and these vines, whose consumption may lead to blindness and mental disorder, be ploughed up (other twentieth-century amenities are not within the scope of a medical officer). But nothing has happened in the two years I have worked here. On one occasion in fact, a member of the State Farm management simply shook me off with a contemptuous gesture. "It's good enough for those people," he said.

He has no idea why I have hated him ever since. A man in a leading position has no right to ignore the fact that if people are wretched and ignorant it is we who are responsible.

Through the windows of the houses standing aimlessly and untidily here and there a pale light filtered out on to the pitch-black street. In the village at the farm centre this sort of faint light is cast by the television screens—here it is a sign of kerosene lamps.

When we finally stopped the silent driver in his windcheater blundered his way down, unhooked the storm-lamp between the two rear wheels and lit up the mud under my feet as we made our way into the house. Through something which might have been a kitchen, where the driver remained, we passed into a small, crowded room. The signs of poverty were there, despite the pleasant warmth and the cleanliness, penetrated, however, by the sour smell of illness. I saw furniture inherited from grandparents and blackened by time, even as the beams of the ceiling on which I almost cracked my skull. The two bedsteads, the heavy table and chest of drawers, and the high brick stove made it difficult for me to turn in my damp fur coat. The young woman swiftly relieved me of the burden.

In the bed nearer the lamp lay a young man alarmingly wasted, his skin stretched dry and red over the protruding cheekbones. His sunken eyes shone with an unnatural light. His skeleton hands clutched at a white handkerchief, spotted with wet blood here and there. His face seemed vaguely familiar, but I could not remember ever having treated him. A tubercular patient could not show such symptoms of decline if he had proper treatment. But then why did he look familiar?

The examination confirmed my suspicion—as much as one can be sure of a diagnosis without an X-ray—tuberculosis of the lungs in a distressingly neglected condition, and with a very slight chance of recovery.

The examination depressed me and made me angry—as unnecessary death always does.

"How old are you?" I asked the patient.

He replied quietly and accommodatingly:

"Twenty-two, Doctor."

"Why didn't you come to see me? Why did you neglect your health so badly?" My voice involuntarily took on a tone of indignation. By that time of the evening my chin is as stubbly as a coachman's and my manners are just as prickly. "If you were some stupid old man, I might be able to understand! But you're young, you've had some schooling, and you were in the army, weren't you? Why didn't you see a doctor if you were ill?"

"But we did see you, Doctor." She spoke up timidly behind me. In her rubber boots she had been moving about so noiselessly that I had forgotten her presence.

"When?" I snapped, turning angrily. At this moment I recognized the young woman. In the shapeless quilted jacket worn by every worker in the State Farm, regardless of sex and age, and the heavy scarf wrapped round her head in which she had come into my surgery, I had hardly been able to see her face or figure. Only her voice had made me think that she was young. Her husband must have lost over forty pounds, but she had not changed at all. She had been young, eighteen or twenty, her face freshly pretty, with a gentle and innocent beauty, the kind of young woman who blushes and laughs easily and is easily scared. But beside her awkward lanky husband she had been the one in command of the situation, the person always equal to the occasion. It must have been eight or ten months ago that she had brought me her husband—a man grinning in embarrassment whose shoulder she barely reached, complaining that he was often in sweats, had a cough, frequently felt overcome with weakness and probably had fever although they did not have a thermometer to make sure. An X-ray of his chest showed a lesion the size of a plumstone, but as I am only a district physician, I sent him to the borough T.B. clinic with instructions to return with their report. The next day he did in fact come to see me again, but that time alone, and showed me the papers he had been given at the clinic. He had been referred to the nearest T.B. sanatorium, less than sixty miles from us.

"How long will I have to stay there, doctor?" he asked me anxiously.

"Six to eight months," I replied mechanically.

He was horror-struck.

"How long?"

"What's the difficulty?" I asked, but he did not answer. "It seems like a long time, I know, but if you want to get well... You are working, I see

from your papers; you are a tractor-driver, your medical and hospital expenses will be covered by National Health, and you will even get sickness benefit. So what's the problem?"

The blood had drained from his face; he sat staring before him with glassy eyes.

"My wife..." he stammered.

"Doesn't your wife work?"

"Yes, of course she does."

"Well then?..." I could not understand the depth of his despair. "It will be a little bit harder for both of you, but you won't starve." It occurred to me that obviously they were newly married, so I smiled at him encouragingly. "Your wife can visit you every Sunday."

"Yes," he said faintly, and almost fell out of my office.

A terrible suspicion now flashed through my mind. I turned back to the patient.

"You didn't go to the sanatorium, or did you?" I yelled at him.

"To the sanatorium" she screamed behind my back.

The young man riveted his eyes on mine with a silent supplication in his gaze, lifting a weak finger to his lips as if trying to say "'sh!".

I was wild with anger, and for a moment I lost control. I began to swear at him and called him all kinds of fool, an irresponsible idiot, an animal fit to be stuffed, and concluded in a rage:

"You should be reported! No one's allowed to play with a life, not even their own!"

She rushed to the bed sobbing.

"Why did you say that there was nothing wrong with you? Why did you lie?" She turned her tear-streaked face to me. "Only two weeks ago I sent him to you again, doctor. He came back saying that you hadn't found anything the matter... But we could have borne being separated for a little while! Why did you lie to me, Janó?"

I felt ashamed of my rude outburst, which had probably spelled out to them the cruel verdict of death. I suddenly felt very sorry for them. God, they were so young. I tried to be calm and collected.

"My dear, get your husband's things ready, and I am going to call the ambulance. We are going to take him to the hospital tonight... I hope he will be all right. We shall do our utmost..."

She composed herself immediately, though she could not stop her tears. She went resolutely to the chest of drawers to get her husband's clothes together. I was making my preparations to leave, when I noticed that the patient was motioning to me to lean closer. Astonished, I obeyed.

"Doctor," he whispered imploringly, under his breath, "please don't go! I need you!" Sensing my reluctance, he hastily added, "It was not just stupidity that I did not go to the sanatorium!... I don't know what to do... Only you can help me... Piroska will call the ambulance."

Can one say no to a dying man? It seemed he needed to get rid of some great burden.

I gave the young woman instructions about calling the ambulance, and I was left alone with the husband. I pulled one of the straight-backed chairs up to the bed.

"Doctor," the patient did not look at me, his eyes, shining with fever, roved to and fro over the blackened ceiling. "I really don't know where to begin. I don't know how well you know this settlement. There are very few young people and still fewer children here. A year ago there were still six of us young chaps... now there are only five, because I got married. We've been together in a gang ever since we were kids, and even then we didn't know what to do to pass the time. There's no cinema, no dancing, no TV on this farm, not even bowls. We used to play cards and we got up to all sorts of stupid tricks. Like the time we took a farmer's cart to pieces, hoisted it up to the roof piecemeal, and then sweated our guts out and reassembled it there, so that in the morning when he got up the man went half crazy wondering how the heavy cart had climbed on to his roof. Or we went round all the houses and took all the gates off their hinges and used them to barricade the only road, the cattle-track, which leads to the farm centre... When I think back to those things, they were really only harmless mischief... compared to what followed later.

"Two years ago we were drinking away down at the Pajas' wine-cellar and discussing women—for what else can you talk about when you're drinking? None of us could boast of a girl friend. There were a few girls in the settlement, it's true, but they went out to work, and when they were at home they refused to talk to us because they hadn't the slightest intention of marrying any of the local boys... Who would be fool enough to spend her life here if she had some way of getting out? And the girls all wanted to get away. The man could be lame, or a drunkard, or the kind who beats his wife, none of it mattered as long as his house was at the Farm Centre or in the village...

"Well, one day Pet... well, it really doesn't matter which one of us said it... he said that the wife of one of the men was alone for the night because her husband had been sent with a lorry-load of calves to the Austrian border—we should have a try. We drank some more and got ourselves really worked up, and went and banged on the woman's door. She didn't

turn on the light, just called out asking who it was. We said it was us. She asked us what we wanted. Well, we told her in plain language just what... She sent us off to... you may imagine where to. But there was no holding us by then, we broke through the door..."

The patient bit his bloodless lips in a torment of shame. It was obvious that the wish for concealment struggled within him with the desire for relief.

"The next morning when I woke up, more or less sober, I would have liked to spit myself into the eyes. Mrs. Kov... This woman, who was ten years older than I, had never hurt a fly, and once when I was a child, she had even given me an apple... And we treated her like blackguards. I was fearful she might report us, and I waited for the police all day long. Not that I thought I did not deserve it, but still I was frightened. I dreaded the punishment—prison and the shame of everyone finding out. But nothing happened. In the evening I went to bed early, but my pals got me out of bed, and I had to go with them to the cellar. I had made up my mind to tell them that what we had done was vile and shameful and that I would never take part in anything like it again. But then they started on me: What's wrong with you? Playing chicken? They made fun of me and called me a sissy, mum's little virgin darling, said I was yellow, and I don't know what else, and when nonetheless I stammered and came out with what I thought, there was such an awful, threatening silence that I knew they would not only beat the soul out of me, but they would freeze me out—and then what would happen to me? What could I do during those endless autumn and winter evenings? If there's no one to gab to occasionally, you'd go crazy around this place. You may think me a coward, Doctor, and that's probably just what I am, but I gave way... And from then on it became our principal 'amusement' to crash in on a woman when she was left alone for the night. True, with some of them there was no need to break down the door..."

"And didn't any of them report you?" I asked, dumbfounded.

"No, none of them. As a matter of fact, I also wondered a lot about that... I suppose they were ashamed to. For then not only the police and the court would find out, but the whole farm... and even the husband... And in addition they were probably afraid of us. Suppose we had been arrested. Once everybody's term was up, and we might have come home and taken our revenge. Keeping quiet about what happened might be best... Please, doctor, don't think that I want to pretend to be better than I am, but I went along with the gang with such a terrible conscience, so bitterly ashamed of myself all the time that I kept on hoping that

sooner or later it would all come out into the open and we would all get what we deserved."

"No, I don't think that," I said, because I could feel that he was aching to hear me say it.

"Last year we went to the Catherine-day ball at the village and there I met Piroska. Doctor..."

His voice faltered and he closed his eyes. He was silent for a long time, only the sick lungs laboured as, overcome with emotion, he panted for air.

"It's no use," he whispered. "I can't tell you just how it was with me. I seemed to turn into a different person, or rather, it was as if a stranger had inhabited my body till then... I became gentle, sober and hard-working, happy at the mere sight of the milk-shop where she worked. I never dared hope that she might love me, too; and I still think that I don't deserve such luck and one day she will realize it. Her father is a shepherd with six children, they've only recently moved here from the Great Plains, they couldn't even afford to give Piroska a dowry, but what did we care! We decided that both of us would work as hard as we could and save all we could, and in a year or two we would start building a house in the village. For neither of us wanted to stay here. We thought that at first we would build just one room, a little shack, to have a roof over our heads, and then bit by bit we would add the kitchen, the pantry, and another room—we're young, strong and healthy. And then suddenly the doctors tell me to go and spend half a year in a sanatorium! Well, how could I have gone?" He fixed his fevered, burning eyes questioningly on me. "What would happen to the house?" His voice faltered, and his eyes wandered to the ceiling again.

"I thought a lot about it. I can't tell you how it tore at my mind, sometimes I thought I'd go mad. Once I went away and left Piroska alone those five boys, my former pals..." He bit his lips in agony. "How often that ghastly picture came into my mind though I tried my best to push it away! A young woman all by herself... and the five of them drunk... And if my wife tells them, 'Get out, or the police will hear of it'—because she is no coward, and she would do it, too, they'd laugh in her face. 'Go ahead, beautiful, but don't make any mistake, your darling husband will go to prison, too. Because he hasn't always been the gentle lamb you know. Before you domesticated him... Christ, not at all!"

I stopped him.

"You all said that you had hoped it would all come out in the open sooner or later and then all of them, and you too, would get the punishment you well deserve... Apparently you werent' quite sincere about that."

"But it's completely different now, doctor don't you see?" the sick man cried out, and sat up in his agitation. "It isn't prison that worries me now. That seems to me now a very small price to pay! What I am afraid of is that if Piroska finds out, I shall lose her!"

Pity and anger gripped my heart. Twenty-two years old! For the whole year he had been trying to cover up his past like a bleeding wound. Like his bleeding lungs. He had covered up his past with his bleeding lungs.

"What am I to do, doctor?" he asked in despair.

As if he still had a choice! Or is there always a choice left?

Before I could make any reply, the door was unexpectedly flung open, and the young wife, her clothes drenched and her eyes red, ran in. The rumble of the cart had been deadened by the mud outside the house, and her rubber boots had made no noise coming through the porch.

"The ambulance is waiting for us at the crossroads, where the highway branches off," she said, her voice thick with tears, as she caught up her husband's clothes and laid them on the bed. With infinite tenderness she urged the patient: "We must hurry, János."

I put my fur coat on, went out to the dark porch and lit a cigarette. The damp tobacco was bitter like scorched food. A nameless menace lurked in the relentless hiss of the invisible rain. All around me stretched the plain without lights, sunk into the night like a bucket with a broken chain, left to rot at the bottom of the well.

EPEPE

(Parts from a novel)

by

FERENC KARINTHY

Summary of Preceding Chapters

Budai, a young Hungarian linguist sets out for an international conference on linguistics in Helsinki, but the plane, which he boarded by mistake at a transfer point, takes him to a large and quite unfamiliar city. In the gigantic hotel his passport is taken away from him, his currency is converted, all virtually without his participation and without any intelligible exchange of words.

Budai spoke a number of languages and understood even more. In this city, however, they did not understand a word he said nor could he understand them. In the constant bustle, rush and hurry he could not communicate with anyone to explain that there had been a mistake, nor could he ask for advice on what to do, whom to contact and how to continue his journey to Helsinki.

The city was the same as any other in the world, only larger, and so crowded that there appeared hardly any space to move in. Budai starts off on exploratory walks looking for railway stations, post offices, airports, tourist offices and consulates. During the course of these sorties he becomes familiar with the main landmarks of the city; the self-service cafeterias, the underground, markets, stadium, brothels, amusement park, police stations, prisons, cemeteries, maternity clinics, suburbs, zoo, slaughterhouse, bars, courts and churches. Then he begins to experiment with the ways of understanding the language. All in vain. He remains a prisoner of the city.

His only human contact is his language teacher, Epepe, a girl working as a lift operator, although even with her he can only achieve a minimum of communication.

His money and sense of security gradually diminish together. Slowly Budai sinks through the grades of society into the depths, becoming a tramp, a warehouse loader. He falls seriously ill, but never abandons hope, fighting to the very last, finally only for the sake of maintainig his own identity.

The city is shaken by an upheaval, there is a revolt and violent fighting in the streets. Even though he cannot understand the reason, his plight drives Budai to join them. The commotion, however, goes down in bloody defeat and the next day life goes on as before. Budai perceives a ray of hope for his return home.

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So far he had not succeeded in extracting any information from Bebe on, for instance, her hours of work, where she went after work, her telephone number, where she lived or where she could be found. Although she had been very quick in understanding other things, questions of this sort, were met with what seemed blank incomprehension or deliberate disregard. He was no more successful when he secretly tried to watch her movements. She was either in the lift or she was absent from it, but he never saw her arrive or leave.

On the other hand, they understood each other well enough for him to ask her to take him to a railway station for example, or to an airport. But when—on a suitable occasion and when they were again on the eighteenth floor—he tried to approach her on the subject, drawing a picture of the vehicles—Etetet showed no signs of helpfulness. On the contrary, her expression changed to sadness and her eyes filled with tears. Could she possibly be so moved at the idea of his intended departure? He tried to console her, to caress her, but his gestures were clumsy and awkward, foolishly clutching her elbow with no idea of what to do next. For lack of a common language the abyss between them was too wide, no matter how much both of them would have liked to close the gap. And then, at that moment, someone rang for the lift. They never had time enough for a peaceful moment together.

That same night, the light went out in Budai's room, just as he was stepping out of his bath and was getting ready for bed. He glanced out into the corridor, then out of the window. Everywhere was the same dense darkness. The street lamps were out, and only the headlamps of the cars cut through the black night. Something must have gone seriously wrong with the power supply, something that affected the whole neighbourhood, for even in the far distance he could see no light. He could lay his hands on anything he needed and he had nothing to read anyway, so he crept into bed, even though he was not at all sleepy.

Soon afterwards, he heard a faint tap at his door. He listened to make sure he was not mistaken, but it was repeated. Someone opened the door with care. He had forgotten to turn the key. That somebody slipped cautiously shutting the door quietly and then standing still, just breathing. It was only then that Budai realized that he had been expecting this all along. It was probably the reason why he had not locked the door, and why after a tiring day like this he had remained so alert and excited. Subconsciously he must have realised that if there was no electricity, then the

lift would not be working either... Just to reassure himself, before the other person could speak, he asked:

"Bebebe?" The girl answered with an embarrased laugh, revealing her own natural confusion. But even now she corrected his pronounciation: "Jeje..."

It could just as well have been Dede, Thethetheth, Tete and even Cheche. He had still not been able to make out what effect the vowel sounds had on pronounciation. The girl remained by the door, advancing no further into the room. Of course, it was only natural she would feel tense and strained if she had made up her mind to come to his room. And in this peculiar situation, Budai possessed enough instinctive tact to become aware of it. He got out of bed and stumbled over to her in the dark. He was wearing his only pair of pyjamas, which he used to wash over and over again, but they could not see each other in the dark. He banged into her as he was inching in that direction. His outstretched hand touched her breast, and he swiftly withdrew it, horrified at the thought that she might think he was being too presuming... But he was suddenly suffused with warmth as the heat of Pepe's body radiated through her bra. Her breast was like that of a young girl, firm and yielding.

They moved over to the bed. In fact, there was no other place to go in this tiny, standardized hotel room. The girl lit a cigarette and sat down beside him, her face illuminated for a moment, and she seemed alien, her hair sleeked and done differently. She turned away, not looking at him, and immediately blew out the match, evidently finding the darkness more congenial. From then on only her cigarette glowed intermittently as she puffed at it, barely revealing the contour of her face in the darkness. Slowly, the room filled with cigarette smoke.

But she could not even finish her cigarette. She managed to evade his hold and ran out to the bathroom in her stockinged feet. There he could follow her movements as she searched for the taps, and then the splashing of water. In that interval he locked the bedroom door and slipped back to bed.

As she slid in beside him he could smell the fresh scent of soap and cologne. Her skin was cold from the water and she shivered slightly. Budai tried to warm her, taking the girl's ice-cold feet between his legs and putting his arms round her shoulders. And after that he did everything expected of a man, guided by his emotions and experience. Veve did not resist, nor did she have to be coaxed. Nevertheless it took her a long while to relax, and even then not completely. It was clear that she derived very little satisfaction from the whole thing and considered Budai's pleasure

more important. But he was the kind of man who needed a reaction from his partner; he could find no pleasure in his own satisfaction alone. And he was in too much of a hurry. He had been living alone too long and he could not wait.

He felt a little ashamed of himself as they lay there together in the darkness. The girl was the first to break the silence, asking him some question or other leaning on one elbow. Interestingly enough, he guessed immediately that she wanted to know whether it would disturb him if she smoked. She drew the sheet around her, as she clicked the lighter, ashamed to show her naked body.

And then she began to speak once more, softly, with many pauses, stopping timidly here and there, now and again tapping the ashes of her cigarette into the porcelain ashtray Budai brought over from the desk. Gradually, she began to speak more volubly, perhaps telling a story she had longed to tell before, perhaps confessing something about herself or her life. Despite the fact that she, more than anyone, was perfectly aware of just how little he could understand of what she said. Budai tried to follow her from her voice, from the intonation, rhythm and stress of her speach, but in those circumstances it was very difficult. Gradually her voice, still retaining the soft delicacy natural to it, became more agitated, broken. Barely did she finish one cigarette before she lit another; she was clearly and personally involved in what she was saying. Could she be talking about one particular person all the time? But whom? Who could have disturbed her so much, and just at such a moment? Was she talking about her husband?

Something occurred to Budai. He groped for Epepe's hands in the darkness, feeling over first the right and then the left, to see whether there was a wedding ring or something like it on one of her long fingers. He did not find anything, naturally, since he would have noticed it long since in the lift. The girl must have sensed what he was thinking because she lit her cigarette lighter and in its glow took a ring from the bag she had left on the bedside table.

He motioned to her to give him the light and examined the ring, turning it over and over. It seemed to be gold and the shape of a genuine wedding ring, although there was no inscription. On the outer side, however, were engraved thin blue lines. True, it could still be a wedding ring, and he seemed to remember that in recent years he had seen something like it, just as modern. But if it was really a wedding ring why did she carry it in her bag?

Or was this precisely the key to her peculiar behaviour? Was this the

reason why, although she had appeared so willing to answer all his questions, she had evaded any information about herself, where she lived or her family connections? Was an unhappy marriage, something she did not want to reveal, the explanation behind it all? Was this the reason why she did not wear its symbol on her finger?

He assumed that this was at the core of everything she had been saying, and it seemed as if her words suddenly had meaning. He thought he was following her words, at least in their essence. The details did not matter anyway... It must have been her home life that had come bursting from her, how unendurable it was, how many of them lived crowded together, all kinds of relatives, aunts and uncles and perhaps the two children from her husband's first marriage. And then there were perhaps lodgers and tenants who could not be got rid of, helpless old people, ill people, screaming neurotics, dirty quarrelsome drunkards, all of them of dubious profession, their brats, all of them crowded into the small flat. There was a continual uproar and racket, fighting, chaos, with never a moment's peace, but nowhere else to go. The rest of the house was just as crowded, and so were the other blocks of flats. There was nothing better to be got, except at a fantastic price or through influential connections, and even then, what would become of all those old sick people? In such circumstances it was inevitable that their marriage would go to bits. Her husband had taken to drink, oblivious of everything in his drunken bouts, gradually becoming more degraded and they drifted apart, no longer living as man and wife. And she, too, escaped from home as much as she could because even the dreadful tiny ill-smelling lift was a haven compared to that bedlam... That was why she did not wear her wedding ring and why up to the present she had not wanted to talk about herself. And even now she was ashamed of exposing her husband to him. But she wanted to explain why she had come to his room like that, so that Budai should not take her for a worthless creature looking for easy adventure. She had to tell somebody —that is, if this was what she was really saying and not something else.

During this time the smoke had thickened in the room, and she seemed to relax somewhat, now that she had unburdened herself. Reaching out to the bedside-table for yet another cigarette, she spilt the glass of water standing there. She snatched for it but the abrupt movement jerked her off the hotel bed. Budai caught her just before she touched the floor, and both of them were soaked with water. Bebe laughed. Her laugh was infectious and they both burst into a peal of laughter, propped one against the other. Neither could stop, because as one began to calm down, the other started off again in another paroxysm. Giggling helplessly they rolled

around in the bed, and when the girl nearly fell off again, they laughed more uproariously than ever.

As an added stimulus Budai remembered that as a child he had seen a sideshow in the city amusement park called "Get Out Of Bed!" Fat, large-breasted women lolled around in lacy nightgowns on big feather quilts and pillows, and if a player hit the target with a rag ball the bed would tilt and one of the stout females would come crashing down, to the laughter of the audience. He could not get this diverting recollection out of his head and it gave a further fillip to his high spirits. He would have liked to share it with Vedede, and spontaneously began telling her about it. She lay close beside him and listened intently, chuckling once in a while and nodding her head, producing little sounds of understanding and finally laughing together with him as if she understood everything.

This encouraged him to start explaining how he had come there and from where, telling her the whole story of how he had embarked on the plane, how he had lost his luggage, how they had taken away his passport, and all the rest of it. He included all sorts of things as they came up in his mind, how he had persuaded them to take him to the police station, what he had seen from the high dome of the church when he had climbed up to it, and how he and his fellow countryman had missed each other in the underground... Then he started talking again about things at home, about his dog and what a wise old dachshund he was, and how in the winter he would trace out paths for himself in the snow in the garden, with only the tip of his tail and nose visible, two moving dots in the whiteness that covered the ground. And that he used to ski in the Mátra and the Tátra mountains preferring solitary excursions, gliding gently along forest trails mantled in silence, green and white and soft, with the fresh hoof prints of deer in the snow. And when he reached the heights of the mountain how the depth below drew him down, the bliss as he threw himself forward on the skies, letting himself go in an ecstasy of weightlessness...

The woman listened in understanding silence, nestling close to him in the bed. Budai, however, suddenly stopped talking and lifted his head:

"Do you understand?"

"Onderstand"—she replied.

"Understand?"

"Onderstand."

"It's not true, you don't understand!"

"Onderstand"—she repeated over and over again.

"It's not true, you're lying"—he broke out in exasperation.

"Onderstand."

"How can you understand? Why are you pretending to understand when you don't?"

"Onderstand"—answered Debebe stubbornly.

In a sudden fit of anger Budai siezed the girl by the shoulders and shook her, crying out:

"You didn't understand one word I was saying!"

"Onderstand."

"Liar!"

"Onderstand."

"Listen, you..."

His own insults carried him away; he lost all control and hit her on the chin with the palm of his hand. But she went on muttering the same word:

"Onderstand, onderstand."

By then he no longer knew what he was doing and had lost any mastery over himself. He wreached and tore at her, pounding her wherever he could, her face, her neck, head and breast. She did not defend herself, she only put her arm before her eyes, crying softly in the darkness. Her passivity, on the other hand, only served to increase Budai's ungovernable rage and he slapped her in his frenzy, pulled her hair striking her again and again with his fists in a haze of delirium forgetting everything except that she must pay, she must pay...

Then suddenly he collapsed over her, exhausted and gasping, crushed by the knowledge of his guilt. He put his arms round her, pulling her close to him, kissing her hands and pleading in his shame:

"Forgive me, I'm mad. Please, please, don't be angry with me. I'm out of my mind! I'm mad, I'm mad..."

Cheteche's eyes were still full of tears and her face was burning from his onslaught. Budai would have given half his life to placate her. He fell upon her, caressing and kissing her all over her body. He kneeled beside the bed and put his head in her lap, whispering and babbling in a choking voice. The girl's skin smarted, her hands were dry and hot as she reached out to stroke his head, thrusting her fingers in his hair, and pulling him up to her.

This time Ebebe relaxed completely, she was soft and yielding, doing things for him that she had never done for anyone, not even her husband. This was clear in her behaviour. Now she could rise with him in full consummation. But it was not this one fleeting moment that was important but the perfection of their union, obliterating everything around them, effacing space and time. Only the two of them were left in the world.

There were moments when the thought of the classical siren flashed through Budai's burning brain—if the price of this meeting was all that had happened to him until now, even then, wasn't it worth it?

And on this cue the light went on in the reading lamp on the bedside table. After the long period of darkness even the small bulb hurt their eyes. The woman narrowed her eyes, turned away and sprang out of bed. Of course. If there was electricity, then the lift was working and she had to go back. Hurriedly she began to dress lighting a cigarette in the meanwhile. Budai stayed where he was, greedily watching her as she slipped into her tiny knickers, put her stockings on and fastened them. He was utterly in love with her, and watched her in ecstasy, fearfully but blissfully recognizing that he could not live if he lost her.

He would have liked to give her something, or at least to offer her something, but there was nothing in the room except some cheap cold cuts and dry bread on the window sill. Petet, however, did not want anything. She swiftly arranged her hair, put on her lipstick, smoothed down her blue uniform and said good-bye. With words and signs they agreed that she would come to him tomorrow at this same time... She forgot her cigarette in the ashtray, and it continued to burn. The room was full with smoke, but even so, Budai did not open the window.

*

When he awoke in the morning, his first thought was to count the hours until their next meeting. This time he wanted to receive her properly and he ran down to do some shopping. He had some money, because he had worked quite a lot in the market in the past few days, and he spent the whole morning queuing before food stores. He bought cheese, cold roast-meat and fish, boiled eggs, salad, fresh bread, butter and biscuits and two bottles of the liqueur that could be found everywhere, since he could offer his guest neither tea nor coffee.

By the time he returned, his room had been cleaned and aired and the linen changed. So it must be Friday. Another week had passed. The third since his arrival. It seemed much more to him of course. He wondered whether there would be another hotel bill in his pigeonhole downstairs, since he had not paid the previous one... He still had plenty of time. Last night Bebe had come quite late and it must have been almost midnight when she knocked at the door. This was only a guess of course, since he had no watch. He felt too impatient to sit around in the room. He went out again with the excuse that he would go and look for a present for his girl.

He had not seen her at all in the lift—was she off duty today? Was she working late perhaps? Or maybe she had a day off and would come back just for his sake? There was nothing in pigeonhole 921 at the desk. Perhaps in the afternoon... He turned into a side street behind the hotel. He had not been this way before. He tried to think of something he could buy her as a memento. A bracelet? A necklace? Something fancy? A cigarette case? A lighter? In any case something that she could always carry with her or wear.

Further on, to his surprise, he discovered a skating rink. It was relatively small, a few feet below the level of the square surrounding it, so that he could look down into it. A great many people were watching from the pavement. The rink was full of skaters, and interestingly enough, most of them were elderly. Aging women, fat and scrawny, bald and paunchy men glided, circled and swirled on the ice to the sound of slow music. It was a strange and spectral sight to see them posture, arm in arm, some of them even dancing in the dense crowd. Budai stayed on, listening to the music, gazing at the compact current whirling below him, at the many gracefully weaving elderly people. Slowly he too was lulled by their rhythm as they revolved...

In fact, that night he had missed the greatest opportunity presented to him since his arrival. At last there had been occasion and enough time to make someone understand him and to take him—where? To a railway station? To an airport? To a consulate? It made no difference as long as he could take one step further to a place that was familiar. True, considering who the other person was and the situation, it would scarcely have been tactful of him, as far as Etete herself was concerned. He remembered how she had reacted when he had hinted at something like that up there on the eigtheenth floor, and how it had been shortly after that the girl had come to him... Tonight, however, no matter how, he must use a gentle wisdom to explain and overcome her resistance. This was something he could not put off any longer.

The strangest thing in the whole affair was that the only person who could help him to get out of here was the one person who bound him to the place. And indeed, he himself was not quite sure whether he wanted to leave or not. He tried to think things out, but he was far too excited and expectant to be able to think logically... He got round it by deciding to ask Dede to go with him to the right place. This was the most important question and if he knew how to find his way back there, he could fix the time for his departure later.

In the meantime he began to grow impatient again. Perhaps he had

misunderstood and she had said she was coming earlier. Perhaps she was already looking for him. He hurried back to the hotel thinking that he would buy her a present in the foyer from the souvenir counter. But before that, however, he wanted to go to his room and, as usual, queued to get his key.

But when he reached the desk and handed over the little card with the number 921, the desk clerk looked back and spread his hands out signifying that there was no key. It was true. The pigeonhole was empty and there was no key hanging from the nail. This had never happened before. Perhaps they had hung it somewhere else by mistake? Or had the cleaning women taken it upstairs? They had never done that before either, and anyhow, they had already done his room. He did not give up, and again showed his card—the grey-haired clerk in his dark uniform seemed familiar. It was true that he had seen so many clerks here that he mixed them up. Or was this the same one who had been on duty when the bus brought him from the airport and put him down at the hotel? Whoever he was he was quite chilly in his manner towards Budai, shaking his head, throwing out his hands to show that there was nothing he could do. When Budai continued to insist, he took out a large ledger, flipped over the pages and found an entry. He nodded his head and twisting the book round pointed to it with his finger—this did not help Budai in any way—and the next moment slammed the book shut and turned to the next guest who had been fidgeting nervously and watching Budai's lengthy argumentation with ill-concealed impatience.

At this, Budai, with considerable misgivings, took the lift to the ninth floor, traversed the corridors and approached his room. The door was shut. He put his ear to it cautiously and listened. He seemed to hear slight noises inside. He stood there feeling helpless and for want of anything else to do, knocked on the door and opened it. A middle-aged woman with a kerchief round her head appeared in the narrow aperture. She glanced out and closed the door immediately... He looked at the number again to make sure he was in the right place. Yes. This was it, 921. So what had happened was that they had given his room to somebody else. That was the reason why the linen had been changed.

At the moment he was mainly concerned with one point. What had become of his things? The few clothes he possessed and the canvas bag, the only piece of luggage with him when he arrived. He knocked again but this time nobody opened it, and it was locked from the inside. He did not leave it there however, and began to bang on the door he thumped with his fist and kicked it until they opened it again. This time a scrawny

man with blotches on his yellow face, in his shirt sleeves, his trousers held up by braces, squeaked at him from the narrow opening. His angry voice was high and feminine, and he would have shut the door again had not Budai put his foot in the door and pushed his way inside.

It was the smell that hit him first—the heavy, sour, acrid human smell. Then he noticed how many of them there were in the tiny room. In addition to the two he had already seen there was a small old woman in the corner mumbling, perhaps praying, and children, four or five or six—it was impossible to tell in the semi-darkness since the shade was pulled down. There were children on the bed, in the pram next to it, and on mattresses on the floor, there was even a basket for a baby on the table. Added to all this were two cats, scutteling here and there, jumping on the window sill, on the chairs, on top of the wardrobe, frighteningly huge, splotchy, dirty beasts. And angora rabbits in cages, the kind he had already seen in one of the rooms. Some of the smell must be due to them. He could not imagine how a hotel could ever allow such a thing... The whole room had been completely rearranged, and did not seem like the same place at all. The bed had been pushed to the other wall, the lamp snade and been removed, and there was a playpen in the middle of the room. There were clothes drying on the backs of the chairs and bundles, blankets, packages, baby's bottles and chamber pots everywhere.

All this while the new tenants chattered, babbled and quacked at him, and tried to thrust him out. He looked around for his own things, but in vain. He could see no trace of his bag, his pyjamas, his clothes and the notes he had left on the desk. He looked in the bathroom and found that the toilet things he had brought from home had disappeared. They had fastened lines above the bathtub and diapers and rubber pants were hanging there to dry. Then he let himself to be propelled from the room. Even the children were pushing him and crying. He could not come back here anyhow. He would not have wanted to, even if he could. He would have been ashamed to disturb them, or to have an obviously needy family thrown out. And clearly they had not been put there in the first place to be flung out again at the first word from him.

Very well, but then where was he going to stay? In his desperation he began looking for Epepe again, hoping that she would perhaps appear in one of the lifts, but she was still not to be found. He went down on the main floor again, wormed his way through the foyer, lining up once more at the reception desk. He tried to explain his predicament, motioning towards the keys to indicate that he wanted another room. The reception clerk, however, was by then in a state of extreme irritation constantly being

ragged and bothered by the same person. He did not even pay attention and devoted himself to the other clients. Budai's stubborn protests were all in vain, because they ignored him completely.

He then moved over to the counter which had the little signs indicating various services and tried to continue his protest there. But unfortunately, he was no more successful than before; the women who were working there did not understand him and soon turned their backs. He returned to the reception desk and after another long bout of queuing which exhausted him both physically and mentally, he tried to explain that if he was such an unwelcome guest at least let them give him his belongings so that he could look for lodgings somewhere else. And, of course, he asked for his passport as well, without it they would not even allow him to enter another place. Surprisingly enough, it seemed that the reception clerk understood something of what he said; he asked for the card with the room number on it and proceeded to take out a thick file. He thumbed through it and picked out two documents clipped together, waving them in the air. He spread them out on the desk and in a didactic tone which seemed to say, "I told you so", he began to jabber:

"Tuluplubru klott apalapala groz paratleba... Klott, klott, klott...!"

Out of all this Budai could only make out the expression "klott" which from his previous investigations he concluded was some form of address. And if he were not mistaken, "groz" meant two... He looked down on the desk before him. The upper one was familiar, and he soon realized that this was a carbon copy of the last hotel bill he had received, the one they had given him last Friday, and which he had never paid. Beside it was a similar form, with similar columns and entries. Only the totals differed, the last being somewhat smaller, 31.20. This was probably the one for this week.

From all this he concluded the reception clerk was probably telling him to pay the two bills. You, yes, you... Which meant that in the meantime they would withhold his things and his passport and he would get them back when he paid. That is, if he was right in his conclusions and if the reception clerk was not saying something quite different.

Budai, of course, did not have nearly enough money to pay, and after his shopping in the morning he had only a handful of change left. Suddenly he realized that he would be unable to keep his date with Devebe that evening. At that moment this was what upset him most, the thought of what the girl would find when she knocked expectantly at the door. He could not even leave her a message... This was unbearable, maddening and for a moment more painful than anything else. The blood rushed to

his head, a mist came over his mind and he wanted to smash things, strike out and kill. He was past all control now, standing there and stamping, gasping and shouting in his mother tongue. He knew, of course, that they could not understand him but in his desperation the Hungarian words poured out.

"Swine... blackguards, all of you... lousy, filthy swine!..."

It was quite a scene, and a crowd of curious people gathered around him. Then the fat doorman with the fur coat and gold corded cap who must have been called in from the entrance, appeared beside him, seized him by the arm and began propelling him out through the crowded foyer. Budai was still unable to control himself; his whole body trembled. He was incapable of resistance. When they reached the swing door, the doorman held it open and motioned him to go. And since he did not move, the doorman gave him a violent push throwing him out on to the street, with perhaps an added kick in the behind...

He was still paralysed, and stood there stupefied. It took him quite a while to get hold of himself and try to tidy his clothes. His hat had rolled away and he managed to find it, but his coat was ripped open with two buttons missing, and was torn at the shoulder. His mind was empty and he went whichever way the crowd took him. He found himself again in front of the ice rink. It was growing dark and the street lamps had come on. The skaters revolved in the flaring light and loud music... Later, he came across the skyscraper under construction, and with his customary obsession, counted the floors. He got up to seventy-five, which meant that it was three floors higher than before.

Filth and dirt were everywhere—had it always been like this? Had he merely disregarded it before? If the wind blew, as it was doing then, it snatched up and whirled the garbage and litter round and round. It must have disrupted a newspaper vendor's stand, because there were thousands and thousands of newspapers scattered around the street... It was queer how many old people there were in this city: lame, crippled and half-paralysed, they tottered and shuffled on their sticks in the throng which swallowed them up and ground them apart, and whose waves constantly closed over them. Fragile old ladies, frightened, sick little birds stumbled around in the alien crowd, dragging their spent bodies along, trying to cross at corners or to get on buses, but always pushed and thrust aside by the crowd. What on earth kept them here? Why didn't they move to smaller cities and more pleasant surroundings? Or perhaps they had no place to go?... Then there were strange eccentrics grimacing, waving their arms about, mumbling to themselves and muttering, as well as maniacs stalking the

streets and raving in their madness, some with knives in their hands threatening passers-by, whom it was best to avoid. And the stuttering beggars, and others pressing forward, rattling plates. Slubbering halfwits, people with limbs missing, idiots crawling on all fours... and all of them wanted to live, crushed, pressed together, leaving no room for one another, but overwhelming and surging and choking everything unbearably and suffocatingly with their overflow of lives...

A fleeting thought crossed Budai's mind. Perhaps it was because of Bebe that they threw him out of the hotel. Not because of the unpaid hotel bill. He must have misunderstood, they had found out about their relationship and that the girl had been in his room. And this rigour was not based on some kind of conventional moral or religious taboo, or because that kind of contact was not permitted between guests and employees. There was a much deeper and more practical reason. Namely, that their union could result in offspring, in another human being who would only add to a population already crammed to overflowing. May be that this was the crime they decided he had committed, the worst crime that could be committed against society, an attempt to increase the birth rate still further.

It was dark, lights sparkled in the sky, white, red, greenish and purple. They flickered, flashed, whirled, circled, spun, glittered, gradually fading or suddenly leaping out, appearing as mysteriously as they had gone out. What were they? Stars? Aeroplanes? Signals beamed from the tops of towers and skyscrapers to warn aircraft? Rockets, spaceships?... But he was really no longer in the mood to dwell on it. The approach of evening only served to remind him that the hour of his meeting with Petebe was drawing near, and he rushed back to the hotel.

The doorman who has always been so polite before and had always opened the swinging door, now barred his way with his short, fat figure. So he was not merely a puppet or a robot, as Budai had thought. He recognized him, and evidently remembered his face from the scandalous scene in the afternoon. Though it was true that he stood there with the same mechanical, rigid and expressionless face, blinking stupidly with his little eyes, just as he had formerly waved him inside.

Budai drew back and aside but not very far. Where was there to go? However insulting the fat idiot's behaviour, he had no other choice than to try to get by him. He waited until several people arrived and the doorman opened the swinging door, touching his cap with two fingers. Budai cautiously attached himself to them as if he were part of the crowd. But the chap was too smart. He let everyone through, but just as Budai tried to slip

in with them, he quickly stepped forward and barred the way with his body. Whatever Budai tried, and however clever he was, the doorman was always there. At the third or fourth attempt, he tried to force his way in with such violence that the two of them were inextricably interlocked and since neither would give way, they began to fight in the entrance, each trying to push the other out of the way. Budai was no weakling, and he thought he would have an easy time of it with this mountain of lard. But he proved surprisingly strong. He moreover, had propped his back to the door and this gave him an added advantage. In the end neither of them could stir, and they stood there, not moving an inch backwards or forwards. In point of fact this meant that Budai was beaten, since he was the one who wanted to go through, and now he had to retreat.

Were there perhaps other entrances to the hotel? Did they use a separate employee's entrance? He started off to look for one, and turned at the next corner. If he moved carefully round the whole building, he would most certainly come across one. Yes, but the hotel was wedged in among buildings of various sizes and shapes to the right and left, and it seemed even at the back. The winding, zigzagging streets took him off his course and a little further on he had to stop altogether, because road repairs had closed the street. A little while later he realized he did not know where he was. Was he really going round the hotel as he intended, or had he shot off in another direction?...

Suddenly, he was back at the ice rink for the third time that day. They were just about to close down, or would have closed, but the skaters refused to leave the ice. The employees tried to steer them off towards the stairs, pressing them forward with the wide long-handled shovels they used to clean the ice, but all in vain. The crowd swirled back in dense swarms ducking past them the best they could. Shrieking triumphantly they returned to the ice and the whole business had to be begun again.

It was all good fun and Budai would have been happy to go on watching but abruptly he was seized with fear at the thought that while he was passing the time here, Dede would arrive at the main entrance... And he was hungry, too. He had eaten nothing since the morning. What could have happened to the package food he had bought and left between the double windows of his room? He had forgotten to look for them when he had pushed his way in, and now this added to his annoyance. Had it been eaten by that huge family, or had those grotesque cats gabbled it up?

If he went to a self-service buffet or bought something in a shop, he would have to queue again and run the risk of missing the girl. He preferred to remain hungry and wandered back in the direction he had come from

towards the main entrance of the hotel. It was at that moment that the exotic clerical delegation at which he had so often marvelled stepped out of a large black car. The doorman saluted them and bowed with exaggerated greetings, deferentially removing his cap. The bearded old men with their purple mitres and gold chains went inside. Budai tried to attach himself to this group, hoping for a momentary lapse in the fat chap's vigilance. But he sighted Budai immediately, and blocking his way, pushed him out. You couldn't pull a fast one with him.

Would this doorman's shift never end? But on the other hand, inspecting him more closely, he was not at all sure whether this was the same person who had been there earlier. But if it was another, he bore a most remarkable ressemblance to the first, not only for his fur coat and his flat gold corded cap, but also for the oafish blinking of the eyes, the puffy, balloonface without expression and the ultra-stupid stare. Considerable time passed—perhaps hours. But nothing happened. Somewhat later rain began to patter down, and Budai moved under the canopy. The doorman did not seem to mind this, and made no move towards him. Ebebe, however, did not come, did not appear, there was not even the slightest sign of her, and he began to wonder whether there was any hope at all of ever seeing her again... If he was right that he had to leave the hotel because they had discovered their relationship, then this would apply to his companion too, and she would be considered his accomplice. Could it be that his girl had been thrown out too like himself, or fired from her job? That meant that he could wait for her here till Doomsday, it would be no use...

He was faint from hunger, tired, listless, mentally drained dry by all the agitation and by running around the whole day. He swayed, and leaned against the wall. He made an attempt to pull himself together, however, and to think of something he could do. Could he distract the doorman's attention, for instance? As children do, when they point to something behind the other's back, even throwing something and break down his defences. But what could he use to distract or disturb this impenetrable guard? Hardly the kind of trick of throwing pebbles or bits of paper at his feet. The chap was much too suspicious to fall for that... He had already learned that he had to make sacrifices and to take risks, that in this city he would never get anything, or achieve anything without paying for it.

With a bitter sigh he clutched the change left in his pocket, and, at a pause in the traffic, drew back a little and with an almost imperceptible movement threw the coins on the pavement before the doorman. Small change was all he had and it struck the pavement with a ringing sound, not

rolling too far. He was right. The fellow picked up his ears and bent down where he stood, curious to see what it was. It was the moment Budai intended to use to slip into the hotel behind his back.

He had almost reached the swinging door, he already felt he was inside, but at that very moment a large group was on its way out, for the same door was used both as entrance and exit, which was rather peculiar and inexplicable in such a busy hotel... There were a great many of them, broad-shouldered lanky boys, some coloured ones among them, in vivid red sports clothes. They gabbled unintelligibly, laughing and joking, and must have been members of some sports team, like the ones he had seen in that gigantic stadium. They moved out in closely serried ranks; it would have been impossible to push his way in against them, and by the time they had all emerged, twenty to twenty-five of them, the burly cerberus was again guarding the house with his customary vigilance.

Budai, annoyed and disappointed, tried to pick up his change from the pavement, to repeat the experiment later. The doorman, however, planted his huge boots over the spot where most of the coins had fallen, and Budai could only get at the ones further off. He thought the doorman was only baiting him but no matter how much he wrenched and pulled at his leg, the fellow did not budge. Budai's anger now concentrated completely on the doorman, and he kicked him viciously on the ankle with all the strength at his command. The doorman gave a loud whistle, and Budai fled.

When he reached the next corner and stopped to catch his breath, he began to think rationally again and wondered why he had been so frightened. The whistle had obviously produced a reflex reaction from his former adventure with the police, and he had no desire whatsoever to get mixed up in anything like that again. And it was highly possible that when he had attacked that idiot, he had whistled for the police. No matter, it gave him a certain satisfaction to reflect on the hefty kick he had given him, the only revenge he could take. He was terribly sleepy and could hardly stand on his feet, but his hunger was even greater. In any event, it would certainly be almost impossible to get into the hotel. And even if he did, he couldn't move back into his room. They wouldn't give him another either, so that he could lie down a bit. This was clear from the behaviour of the reception clerk. He would have to walk the corridors or sit around in the lounge.

He found the familiar buffet still open, and hurriedly devoured a few sandwiches. And now? What should he do? Where should he go? Up to that moment he had at least had some kind of comfort, a tolerable spot where he could get away from everything, take a bath, rest and organize

himself. But now? When he had no possessions and even most of his money had been left behind under the doorman's boots? Where could he get a room? Even if he happened to find another hotel—and at that moment he had absolutely no idea where to look for one—they would not let him in without his passport and papers. And Gheghe. How could he ever find Gheghege again...?

It was still raining. Slowly his hat, coat and shoes were drenched through and through. He was close to the entrance to the underground station. He must have taken this direction instinctively with the idea of sheltering from the rain, and then, this was the road he had always taken when off to load barrows in the market. Going down, he took the tube line that he had always taken. He was too faint and apathetic to think of anything else to do.

He knew that loading at the market went on throughout the night, at the side ramp. But this time he had not come to work but to find a place where he could put his head down, out of the rain, any kind of corner where he could lie down. He was like the tramps he had seen who, after work or drinking, huddled themselves into a corner... Pretty soon he found a comparatively acceptable place. At the bottom of the ramp, where the hustle and bustle had come to an end, tucked in the back, empty crates were piled up high next to a wall, leaving just enough space for a man to crawl in behind them, hidden from anyone outside. There were even a few cheap sacks lying on the cement floor, and it was clear that this little hideaway had sheltered others before him. He lay down as he was, bedraggled, soaking wet, covering himself with his wet coat, pulling the rags together under his head as he tried to control his long-instilled habits of cleanliness. He was so exhausted that he fell asleep almost before he could turn on his side.

*

(In the chapters between the last excerpt and the one that follows, Budai, always searching for Epepe and the way home, lives through an uprising and its bloody repression, sinks still lower, and wakes after passing the night on a tube platform.)

*

II

He was awakened by the same sound that had lulled him to sleep: the far-off unending gabble of the loudspeaker. Down here there was neither day or night, and even at that time, masses of people were coming and going. They slept, or they walked aimlessly about in the corridors and elsewhere. He stumbled up to the surface again. The way out was blocked by an iron-barred gate. There was no way in or out, and the entrance was guarded by a number of soldiers in white drill uniforms with rifles. All he could see beyond the gate, in the gloom—was it dawn or twilight?—was that the oval square and the streets were completely deserted and there were other guards at the corners. There must have been a curfew. He went down underground again to sleep.

When he awoke again he heard the trains going and felt the familiar draught. Upstairs the way was open out into the street. It was a sunny, breezy day and the streets were just as full of pedestrians and traffic as at any time before. The dead bodies all disappeared, and all other traces of the fighting had also been removed or effaced with boardings or paint. Caught up in the human current, Budai wandered back to the china shop where he had sought refuge at the time. The windows were boarded up and the shop open for business, even though its supplies seemed rather meagre. The façade of the building opposite which had been shelled because of the flag run up there, was covered with matting to conceal the breaches in the wall.

The change was even greater in the district where he had seen the people leaving their homes. The ruins and the rubble had been removed and the earth had been flattened out to make it appear that an empty space or bare earth had always been there. Where there had been barricades these had not only been taken down but the broken paving had also been repaired. Further on, people were busily occupied on the skyscraper he had admired so often, where the strikers had stopped working. At that moment they were at the eighty-first floor.

He also found the grey house over which the battle had raged throughout the night. It had been damaged too severly to be as yet fully repaired, but it was surrounded by scaffolding, as if in the process of reconstruction. Here too the traces of the siege had been concealed and the wrecked armoured car had disappeared from the entrance... If Budai himself had not taken part in the event, he could have hardly guessed from its present condition, what had happened in the city.

There was a park along one side of the building. At that time he had taken flight from the smoke bombs by running alongside the railing. Now

the sunshine had lured people out into the open. Children were playing on the grass, people were rowing on the lake and many others sitting on the banks, splashing their bare feet in the water... Could it be possible that similar rebellions had taken place earlier? The crumbling, charred walls he had come across in his flight, indeed, bore witness to previous battles. Could it be possible that these movements were an inevitable feature or consequence of the way of life, and burst out from time to time, draining the population and their emotions?

They were selling those spicy little sausages again. He still had enough money and waited in the queue. They tasted better than ever before. Children ran and played all round him, chasing after rubber balls. Lovers murmured to each other, people ate, sang, listened to portable gramophones, sunned themselves, slept or threw pebbles into the water, enjoying the fine weather. Had they forgotten their battles and their dead so soon? He felt it was somehow disloyal and treacherous, and yet it did not depress him. As he lay down on the grass to take a bite or so, he felt himself on the contrary filled with good cheer and hope by their strong will to live. Now he felt very much part of them, and was, perhaps, even happy. He crunched up the sausage wrapping paper and threw it into the lake.

It was only a couple of minutes later that he realized that the ball of paper was floating away on the surface of the water. At first he thought the wind was blowing it, but no, the falling leaves, the tiny bubbles and the fragments of reed were floating in the same direction. *The water was flowing!* Slowly, very slowly, but very definitely, it was flowing. He tried again, this time with twigs; they were carried away too.

The discovery stirred him to the very depth of his being and he felt reborn. Because if this were really so, then the water was flowing somewhere... He began walking round the lake. It was an irregular circle in shape, no more than two or three hundred metres in diameter. A marble fountain tossed streams of water into it on one side, and farther on was a broad terrace with an equestrian statue leaping at the cloudless sky from a high stone pillar. The brightly painted, flat bottomed row-boats ruffled the water. Their occupants were mostly young people, boys and girls rowing aimlessly here and there, shouting across to one another.

He found the place were the water flowed out, opposite the fountain. A small wooden bridge arched over it. It was a quiet little brook, winding its way towards a more wooded section of the park. The water ran slowly here too, shallow and narrow, and he could have crossed it easily in two strides. But however small, modest it was, sooner or later it had to flow into a river or a stream which in turn would eventually reach the ocean.

And there he would find ships and ports, and he would be free to go wherever he wished.

He did not even want to think of the man he had been a few minutes before. It was as if he had been someone else. All he had to do was to follow the brook, never losing it and always keeping close to its banks. He could rent a rowboat, or even steal one. He would take it from the very depth of the earth if he had to. He could almost hear the boom of the sea, and smell the strong tang of salt. He saw it before his eyes as it fumed, foamed and sparkled, dark blue and white marble, always presenting something new in its eternally changing reflection, and as the seagulls swooped upon it... Good-bye Epepe, he thought. He was very sure now that soon he would be home again.

SOCIALIST TASTE AND THE SOCIALIST MIND

by

MIKLÓS SZABOLCSI

The question of socialist public taste has been occupying Hungarian public opinion for several years, and a growing number of articles, studies and surveys related to this topic have appeared. This sudden interest is understandable. Indeed, this past period can rightly be called one of extensive development of Hungarian cultural policy. The increase in cultural media complicated the cultural structure. And questions, currents and stratifications which had been hidden came into the open. The question of which way to go became more acute.

On the other hand several factors have revealed the necessity of updating the question of social consciousness, thus giving it a new importance. Among these factors were events on the international scene and in the international working-class movement in recent years, as well as the turning-point that occurred in our own development. The latter was characterized mainly by new phenomena brought about by the economic reform, or, more broadly speaking, by the fact that Hungary is now ranked among the medium developed industrial countries, and is embarked on a scientific-technological revolution. This has fostered a growing interest in, and need for, the scientific examination of social realities and processes, and a desire to see our situation as it is, without illusions, in all its contradictions, and the tasks that stem from it.

Since 1965, therefore, many articles and discussions have appeared dealing with the development of Hungarian taste today.

I

The debate in fact was initiated by a special consultative body of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, consisting of representatives of the professions and the intelligentsia. In 1965, under the title "The Role of

Literature and the Arts in our Society" it published, not a study, but rather a series of theses which discussed problems and stimulated debate.

In 1966, the journal *Alföld* (The Plain), appearing in Debrecen, began a longer series of discussions on popular education. Almost all the problems, difficulties and new experiments in the field of mass culture were discussed in this debate. A logical consequence of this was another debate (in 1967–68) which was mainly concerned with taste. In the first place it drew attention to the contradictions between public demand and the expectations of those supplying the goods, and to the fact that taste is often underdeveloped, showing how conservative habits impede the influx and reception of new cultural material. The participants in the *Alföld* discussion were mass educationalists, journalists, teachers and librarians (the excellent article by Mihály Bimbó[1] was an attempt to discuss the more theoretical questions in this field). A year later, in the Budapest journal *Valóság*, artists, critics and writers on aesthetics raised the same questions. The main topic on the agenda was modern art and the difficulties of its reception. Let me emphasize that in this debate an effort was also made to grapple with the problem of public taste, mainly in the article by Miklós Szántó.[2]

Thoroughgoing investigations can also be found in several other comprehensive sociological studies. Not only in empirical investigations, but also in many leading to general conclusions worthy of attention. I am referring to the valuable works of Zsuzsa Ferge,[3] Judit H. Sas,[4] and, in this particular field of interest, to the work of Ágnes Losonczi.[5] Let me add to these the interesting experiments of Ernő Gondos,[6] the studies of Pál Miklós,[7] and finally the material for the conference on popular education held in Hungary. Naturally the whole question of taste is the subject of a large international debate and there are many artistic and cultural-philosophical points of view. Since Levin L. Schücking and Arnold Hauser the problem of taste has been discussed in both bourgeois and Marxist criticism. But the literature on socialist public taste is less extensive. As far as the topic of this article is concerned, the most thought-provoking book was that excellent work of Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*.

1 "Cultural Policy and Taste", Alföld, 1968, No. 6.

2 "Public Artistic Taste through the Eyes of a Sociologist." *Valóság*, 1967, No. 6.

3 Zsuzsa Ferge, *The Stratification of our Society*. Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1969.

4 Judit H. Sas, *People and Books* (Social Studies). Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1968.

5 Ágnes Losonczi, *"The sociology of musical life"* (For whom, when and what kind of music?). Zeneműkiadó, 1970.

6 Ernő Gondos, *Jonah and the Whale in Óbuda*. Budapest, Magvető, 1968.

7 Pál Miklós, *"The Value and Meaning of Reading Today and Tomorrow."* *Új Írás*, November, 1970. (All in Hungarian).

2

I shall begin with questions. First, what is taste?

From the psychological point of view, it is an apparatus which evaluates and selects; it is an ability to filter, evaluate and in general relate to one another, reject or receive incoming experiences and impressions (originating in art, the environment, etc.). From the sociological point of view, it is an element of reception, a precondition for the reception of works. And if we want to describe it in aesthetic terms, then one can say that taste is one element of the ability to "assimilate" a work of art, a need to "assimilate" certain works and to reject others. In this sense, and using Lukács's terminology, it belongs to the "after" of the work of art. We are consequently dealing with a complicated notion which can be differently defined according to whether it is viewed from the psychological, sociological or aesthetic point of view. No matter which definition we consider, it designates not only a state of affairs, a static system, but an active, dynamic apparatus.

And what do we call "public taste"? This question was also the subject of several debates during which several different opinions were voiced. Public taste, one can say, is the average of many individual tastes, and we can therefore refer to the taste of a group, a stratum, a class, a nation or, more correctly, to the general direction of the taste of these groups. It is also clear that the larger this group is, the coarser the average taste is, and the less correctly its direction can be determined. The public taste of a nation or a society can only be regarded as a system of contradictions and a strongly stratified structure. Thus public taste is not mainly a psychological but a sociological notion, i.e. it can be examined by sociological means. And as a natural consequence, neither individual nor public taste is constant, but is ever changing, in constant formation, developing or regressing. It is historically, socially, geographically and nationally a determinate, mobile structure. So we cannot speak of taste or public taste in general, nor, as we shall see, can we really even speak of socialist public taste in general, but only of the public taste of the socialist Hungary of the 1970s, or rather of the types of taste which compose it.

3

What are the components of taste as a dynamic, selecting and filtering structure? How is it developed and formed? There has been very little research on this subject, so it is mainly by summarizing everyday experience that we can describe its components as follows:

(a) Certain psychological factors.

(b) Family upbringing and education.

(c) The artistic traditions, legacy, accumulated resources of the collective or people in question.

(d) This basic disposition is moulded by impressions acquired later, experiences acquired both spontaneously and apparently-spontaneously (e.g. the aesthetic quality of the environment as well as consciously acquired, learnt, artistic qualities; aesthetic ideals as well as impressions interpreted and systematized not by aesthetic but by ideological demands. In this field, mass communication media play a large and ever increasing role.

(e) Taste is formed and developed by the social environment, by the opinion of the power élite, by prestige factors, the micro-milieu transmitting the culture.

(f) A significant role is played in the formation of taste by prevailing fashion, which on one hand selects a few objects from the multitude of objects forming the artistic environment, puts them in the limelight and thus influences choice; on the other hand it makes its effect felt through "prestige" factors.

(g) Finally, the latest (including Hungarian) sociological investigations have convincingly shown that taste is strongly influenced by the position of the individual in the division of labour, by his material level, his living conditions, his housing situation.

It consequently also follows that, as Mihály Bimbó pointed out, taste belongs to the sphere of what is known as everyday consciousness rather than to the sphere of theoretical consciousness. To put it another way, consciousness, and within it the ideological factor, is only one of the components of the development of taste, effective, though mainly indirectly, through complicated transmission mechanism (and among these the life style and social environment are of great importance).

In its genesis—that is, looking at it diachronically—taste is very complicated, often consisting of contradictory elements; nor, looking at it synchronically, is it homogeneous either, i.e. the individual does not use the same system of values and norms to evaluate various fields of art and life. That is why people with excellent literary taste often have bad taste in the plastic arts, or connoisseurs of music, or excellent *literateurs* are hidebound in their attitude to interior decoration.

4

Complete relativism?

Does taste develop spontaneously? Is it formed under the influence of various and illusive factors which can themselves be neither influenced nor grasped? Paradoxically, taste can at the same time be strongly influenced, developed (and "regressed") by individuals as well as by groups. It can be modified with the help of "direct" conscious factors as well, i.e. through a direct ideological or aesthetic influence, and even in an indirect way by creating a variety of choices, by modifying the economic and living conditions, by the "prestige" factor, by various kinds of education. It can be changed, developed in a good direction, or regressed to a low level. It can also be orientated in a mediocre direction. The question is whether we can single out the direction in which it should be developed.

5

And here I reach one of the most difficult questions: what is "socialist taste" and what is "socialist public taste"? How can the adjective and the word it modifies be related? How can "socialist (individual taste)" be characterized? It is very difficult to define this, precisely because of the complicated components, the many instinctive or already mechanical elements comprising "taste".

We can only represent an ideal picture, a "model" to be realized, to be constructed. Socialist taste is more strongly influenced by ideology. In its choices and system of comparisons, socialist ideas contained in the works of art, or rather the place occupied by the single works of art in the whole of socialist culture, play a greater role. (Of course this statement has to be understood in all its complexity, taking into account the peculiarities of the artistic representation of ideology and ideas.)

Thus socialist taste embraces works which fulfil a demand for universality, large works representing the world in its complexity; it even prefers them. But it is also receptive to other, and different types of art, it accepts not only the harmonious, but the inharmonious and grotesque as well. And socialist taste is not some kind of rarefied ascetic taste, hence it receives, assimilates and claims as its own "lighter" or more entertaining works of art, evaluates and accepts more "restful" artistic qualities; it can experience relaxation and escape as well as catharsis.

Socialist taste is not settled, conservative. It is alert, open to receive new cultural material and actively participates in its development. It is not

a completed structure, adapted to certain types of work. It is not a system of unchanging norms, not even in the sense that it adapts to "great works"; it represents rather an open, evaluating and selecting ability. It follows from all this that socialist taste relies on a minimum of educational requirements, both with regard to subjects and level, and presupposes certain abilities (e.g. to "decode" the works, understand the meaning of their symbols).

Thus socialist taste in general accords with socialist ideology and the general ideals based on it. That is how taste can become a part of one's conscious thinking, that is, more and more part of one's philosophical equipment. So we can speak of the close connection between socialist consciousness and socialist public taste, as well as of how socialist taste can help the conscious element, that is, the ideology. It can put more life into ideologically conscious elements, making them more complete, motivating and colouring conscious actions. Socialist taste contributes to the development of a rich and meaningful life. It plays a significant part in the formation of "man and his environment", in the development of relations between people, in regulating the operation of collectives, in shaping the forms and styles of social action and in increasing its effectiveness. Socialist taste can display its most effective activity precisely in the re-interpretetation and filtering of fashion, and even in the possibilities provided by technology and production.

In the session of the Academy of Sciences in which the question of taste was discussed, a number of questions were on the agenda: How can the new system of economic management in Hungary be further developed so as to serve the total development of the individual? How can short and long-term interests be reconciled? How can the worth and prestige of civilized and moral values be preserved when material standards are constantly increasing? In general the question is, how can the possession of material goods be reconciled with the interests of the collective society? And still further, how can a way of life for new collectives of another type, worthy of today and valid in the technological era, be created, i.e. how can we represent the model of today's developed socialist society? Here, developed socialist taste can be very helpful.

It is probable of course that taste will always include instinctive, half-conscious and occasional-casual elements, which belong to the sphere of everyday consciousness; but the distance between socialist theoretical consciousness and taste can be decreased.

6

Perhaps the above picture of "socialist taste" is too general, too abstract an ideal picture. But perhaps it is an ideal picture to which we can relate, which can be approximated, and whose formation we can help.

And socialist taste? According to what we have said so far, this is also a sociological notion, which can designate the average level of taste to be reached as well as its general direction. Of course, socialist taste also changes in time and space; since it is based on different traditions, in different national environments it takes on different nuances. The socialist public taste of different collectives, nations, countries sifts out different things from the multitude of artistic products, changes, adapts and uses fashion in different ways.

Thus a socialist public taste is not the same as the public taste of the socialist countries, since as we have said above, included in it are many different kinds and variations of taste co-existing with one another. Nor does socialist taste mean the taste of any particular class or stratum of society. This is worth emphasizing, since there are people here today who claim that socialist taste is exclusively the general taste of an imagined or genuine class or stratum.

(In Budapest in the 1930s, for example, the taste of a certain intellectual group was based on an appreciation of the highest values of the progressive, humanist culture of the time, almost inevitably, however, marked by an acceptance of certain types of art which have proved ephemeral, and by a certain confused *snobisme*. On the other hand, just after the War the strong and vigorous People's College movement (Nékosz) threw up a young intellectual group with a taste and standard of beauty largely determined by their peasant origins which they professed with a certain fervour. United with cultural elements of the worker's "movement" it threw up a peculiar, individual mixture of both, badly dated today.)

Socialist taste is not bound to any single class. It is based on socialist relations of ownership, and on the socialist social structure which influences it. It is stratified, but fundamentally homogeneous, that is, it has no "low" and "high" levels. One of the characteristic peculiarities of socialist taste moreover is precisely its width of range and democratic, as opposed to aristocratic, leanings. Socialist taste is consequently also a collective term: it embraces on a large scale many different types of taste. It includes "lower" types of taste as well, constantly evolving towards the "higher" types of taste. Like individual socialist taste, which embraces the objects of everyday use, light entertainment as well as the great works of art,

so socialist public taste must also be imagined as wide ranging and varied.

Looking at the problem from another angle, a socialist taste could also be defined as characterized by a rational adaptation to the social system and to conditions of life created by the social order, with a demand for the creation of a suitable artistic environment.

But why call this type of individual and public taste "socialist"? Isn't it simply the same as the highest order of taste created by earlier developments? Certainly the work, traditions, ideals and norms of human and individual national culture are built into the system of ideals and regulators of socialist taste, and socialist taste starts from the highest level of the pre-socialist culture and is nourished by it. But it adds to this foundation the values of socialist culture, and is at the same time wider and greater than its predecessor. The ideological factor plays a bigger role; in certain fields it even plays a regulating role, not only in connection with past works of art, but also with those of the present and future.

Contemporary Hungarian socialist taste is not as yet fashioned, not even in a rudimentary form. It is still only a possibility. A possibility, and an obligation. Hungarian socialist taste has yet to be developed, created on the basis of a conscious programme. We might go so far as to say that the model has to be created as well, and plans and actions adjusted to it. In the first place, of course, the future of Hungarian socialist education has to be planned, and taste adjusted accordingly. This ideal picture, or model, has to be designed on a basis of the facts as they are, building on both obviously known and latent demands, and taking into consideration all the changes in taste which may be affected, for good and bad, by modern technology.

7

To add a few further remarks about contemporary Hungarian public taste and a possible model for it:

A. What are the traditions which nourish contemporary Hungarian taste and the nature of its various elements?

(1) The genuine "folk element" (taking for its ideal in behaviour, music and customs the peasant way of life, folklore, and a taste developed around 1890) both in its original form and a more sophisticated version of those tastes which can be called a "popular trend". József Erdélyi and István Sinka, the eminent adherents of this movement, developed in opposition to a certain overripe, overrefined luxuriance in the poetry of the early

twentieth century, turned back to the folk arts and ways, which they believed were simpler and more deeply-rooted, while discovering, like similar movements in other European countries, elements of a certain mystique in them. This "secondary" "popular trend" is also divided into several strata, separated in time. The most recent is perhaps the taste integrating within it the traditions of the Nékosz movement.

(2) The type of taste represented by "Jókai", a liking for romanticism and dramatic situations, conservative in its choice of cultural values, a less developed kind of taste. Mór Jókai is one of the great classics of Hungarian literature, a representative of the nationalist, patriotic, romantic, dramatic trend of writing, and the most widely read Hungarian novelist of all times. But what most of his followers, mainly those only now just beginning to have a taste for reading, like in his works, are first of all the dramatic situations, the heightened romanticism and the angel-devil, black and white of his characters. That is why we consider that the type of taste represented by his name is only the first step or first phase in developing a literary taste.

(3) Almost as wide is the Catholic type of taste of "gentry-bourgeois" origin. It is a kind of old-fashioned taste, stubbornly preserving the traditions of a particular stratum of society at the end of the last century. Typical of this type of taste is the dark, massive furniture which preserves the atmosphere of homes of the upper bourgeoisie at the end of the last century, the antiquated suite of the big family cupboard and the double bed, crammed into small country houses or modern flats, the complete bedroom suite, the Hungarian songs, hackneyed by the superficial interpretations of commercialized gypsy orchestras, far from the real folk songs and folk music of Hungary and which recall the atmosphere of the Hungarian lesser nobility of the end of the last century; the operetta exuding the air of late nineteenth century Vienna, and the pseudo-moral, stereotyped literature which catered to the taste of the "patriotic Hungarian middle class".

There is also a more urban, petty bourgeois variation of taste. Some of the works preferred by this type of taste are now beginning to loose their original class characters, the Hungarian song, for example, which has nowadays become generally popular.

(4) Another variation of present taste can be characterized as "the culture of the Worker's Clubs." In a peculiar way, Péter Veres, the writer of peasant origin, was representative of this cultural form, so characteristic of the working class. He was an agro-proletarian writer, who came from the remotest Hungarian countryside, the Puszta, but who was educated to political consciousness, literacy and the higher articulate values by the culture

of the Social Democratic workers' movement. In literature, this culture is characterized by a preference for the naturalists such as Zola and Gorki, uniting of worker and peasant life, for realistic and naturalist works in general, with a liking for more scholarly and committed works, and also group poetry recitals and in music for folk and movement songs, rejecting at the same time more apparently sophisticated works.

(5) And finally, the taste of certain intellectuals and a smaller group of workers. It is oversimplifying to describe this type of taste as homogeneous, because it too has many variations and forms, but fundamentally it can be defined by a spectrum ranging from Attila József and Bartók to Thomas Mann, modern films and modern furniture.

B. To these different types of taste representing roughly the trends dominating round about 1945–48, new elements have been added in the past 20 years. We cannot speak of completely developed new types of taste, but rather of the influences, factors and educational media and material, which form and modify public taste, such as non-Hungarian—European and world—culture. In the first half of this twenty-year period, the products of Soviet culture exercised a great influence; for the past fifteen, influences from other directions have been penetrating the country. Certain aspects of world literature, of jazz and the different variations of beat music have certainly penetrated the Hungarian world of taste and become part of it.

Thus in its "high" variation, a type of taste is being formed which is increasingly susceptible to the more twisted, loud and fragmented impressions of world culture, and which in general feverishly searches for the new, the surprising, the shocking. Although only barely perceptible, a kind of taste is growing which rejects the old, the traditional past or "semi-past", and always chooses and adopts as its own whatever represents the living present.

On the whole we are not fully aware that the various efforts aimed at the conscious development of tastes have had considerable success in various cultural fields: the quantitative increase in educational or cultural media and material and its delivery to the "consumers" has provided a wider basis for the development of taste; in literature, music and, for instance, in interior decoration and fashion we can see the result of much enthusiastic initiative, and devoted activity in developing taste, increasing cultural standards and disseminating knowledge, over the past twenty-five years. One must add to this the influence exercised quite spontaneously by technological achievement on the taste of the public and, first of all, through the development of the townscape, architecture, interior decoration and clothes. These influences almost imperceptibly but continuously form and

modify public taste, by awakening the demand for different shapes, colours, harmonies and lines.

The mass communication media of course also exert a very strong influence on the formation and modification of taste. Above all television, which in a very short time has changed and formed Hungarian taste. Perhaps it is still too early to say that a new type of taste has been created under its influence but it has certainly begun to reshape both in mixing and unifying the earlier types of taste—and this is not necessarily a bad thing—but also by equalizing, assimilating and levelling them. It is also clear that certain inherent features of television, its visual quality, its tendency to simplification, quizzes, games are already creating a definite type of taste. Today we are living in a changing world of taste, and although it is too early to speak of completely developed new types of taste, we can observe certain processes, certain consequences and certain dangers. We are witnessing a relaxation, an interplay of existing forms of taste, an assimilation of frontiers. Social mobility, the possibility of breaking out of the framework of a class or stratum, and the accelerating flow of the agrarian population into industry, as well as the changes in professional structures, have all had an important effect on the formation of taste. Perhaps the rapprochement and interplay of town and country, agrarian and urban types of taste is its most characteristic feature. There is a certain receptiveness of taste; in spite of its strongly conservative character, many signs point to its increasing receptiveness. There are, of course, certain dangers of bias, or mediocrity or simplification, but there is no need to consider them fatal. They are the consequences not only of the effect of the mass communication media, but also of the technological factors in contemporary life.

8

Considering the future model of Hungarian socialist taste, one wonders whether Hungarian socialist taste will have a national character which is different from a general socialist taste. The fact that in addition to the universal stock of cultural material it depends on specific cultural materialism as well effete and traditional, gives a different character to the taste of a particular society. And this cultural and traditional material also forms peoples, assists in encouraging certain tendencies while suppressing others or restraining others. No doubt this is part of the reason why we can speak of "Italian" or "Russian" or "German" taste, and as a broad, first generalization these terms are valid.

A peculiarly Hungarian type of taste can therefore indeed exist; and today it is more clearly visible in the field of literature in general than in the plastic arts. Of course, with the increase of the cultural media and wider choice, even characteristics which appeared to be "traditional" or even "eternal" can be changed and shaped. In the future therefore old and stereotyped forms of taste will not be so identified with the national character as in the past. The difference between "town" and "country" will very probably decrease still further and with it the type of folk and popular art developed in the 1890s. Taste of a "national" character will in general not show itself in a predilection for certain pseudo-national traditions but in the constant interaction of an indigenous art based on the conditions existing in any given country and influences from abroad. When the two influences come together, enriching each other, they will give rise to a specific form, and further enrich the structural pattern of taste.

It is probable that socialist taste will have a greater impact in the future. That is, it will exert a more effective influence, comparing, evaluating and selecting, in more fields of the arts and in daily life. The representatives of future Hungarian socialist taste will, we hope, be well versed in literature, music, the plastic arts, architecture and the cultural world of everyday life.

9

Following this brief sketch, I would like to consider what is to be done, in terms of research and the practical orientation of culture, to form a good socialist taste.

One of the aims of scholarly research could certainly be a further thorough scientific investigation of the level of taste by using and developing what has so far been done. An especially urgent task appears to be an investigation into the psychological character of the mechanism of taste and precise investigations into the field of experimental aesthetics and the determination of certain psychological characteristics of taste and perception.

Literary people and historians are in general reluctant to accept cultural prognostics, that is to commit themselves to any exact outline of the future of culture and to any artistical measurement of the paths leading to the future. I believe however that we shall have to familiarize ourselves with certain forms of investigation into the cultural future, by at least accepting that a model has to be set up, and regarded as the goal to be attained, and that the specific steps to be taken should be adjusted to this model.

It is a platitude but socialist public taste, the power to select, can only be formed if there are things from among which to select, if there is something to be preferred, and something on which we can rely. In other words, it has to have a firm foundation. To realize this model and carry it out as soon as possible certain economic and organizational measures are also necessary, similar to those which have been most successful in the Scandinavian countries. In those countries, the production of industrial products of a certain type and level of taste is not permitted, nor indeed are they in demand. We should also make sure that the formation of taste should be increasingly taken into consideration in the course of economic development, on one hand by effective propaganda, and on the other by preventing the circulation of bad and tasteless products.

Nor should we ignore the different social and moral means we can use to influence and form taste. Here we are referring to the function of critics, the role of the mass communication media, the leading role of political, intellectual and economic attitudes, and the "prestige" factor. We have to take into consideration the role of those directly involved in cultural life (the so-called micro-milieu) as well as cultural fashions, which admittedly can degenerate into forms of *snobisme* but can also prove to be a most stimulating force in the development of taste.

And finally, in the development of taste and the formation of a socialist taste, education and teaching both have fundamental roles to play, both in school and in extra-curricular activities. Today, questions of school and what is generally known as public education are increasingly becoming important, and the question of the development of socialist taste is closely connected with them.

THE COVERED WAGON

(Short story)

by

IMRE SZÁSZ

To Paul Engle

The student apartment building lay parallel to the road some distance from the town. It was twelve storeys high, about six hundred feet long and housed at least two thousand people. It had been built only a few years ago: the aggressive angularity of glass and concrete was somewhat alleviated by the surrounding trees which gave the false impression of being the edge of a forest, just as papier maché and wooden façades pretend to be towns in cowboy films. One almost expected to hear the swearing of the film-hands from behind a clump of trees.

The Covered Wagon, as the building was romantically called, aimed at a new conception in student living. And indeed, with its comfortable modern furnishings, plastic and aluminium luxuries and large metal desks, it was more a mixture of second class hotel and institute for design than it was a student hostel. Its stillness, however, was that of a hospital. Not a sound could be heard coming from the rooms; the carpeted corridors smothered every footstep. Even that wing of the building where the foreign writers on grants were quartered was silent. Only occasionally could loud conversation be heard: when someone had bought several bottles of California wine from the only shop in town where drink was sold. At such times the literary disputes sometimes continued in the corridor after midnight—as far as the next doorway at any rate. In the habits of the foreign guests you could still detect remnants of the nightly peripatetic discussions back home, though the savanna instinct of spirit and leg, like a lion in a cage, were confined here to a fifty yard stretch of corridor. But those wine parties became less and less frequent: both the available funds and the initial big show of friendliness gradually dried up. By the end of the second week the Asians had grouped themselves loosely together, just as had the South Americans; the West Europeans had made friends, if

at all, with one another, while the people from socialist countries had made friends with nobody least of all one another. They had difficulty in making themselves understood: most of them spoke English rather poorly, and they dragged along with them in addition the voiced sounds and gutturals of their own countries. Carriers of some special linguistic disease, they seemed to withdraw into voluntary quarantine.

Thus there was normally no sound in the rooms but the sound of mechanical existence: the burr of the strip lighting and the air exhauster, the angry din of the waste disposal unit and the wail of the water pipes—almost human in its unpredictability.

Sunday evenings the corridors were even more silent than usual. The girls were not even using the washing machines, and the driers, they were not sipping their cokes on the floor of the washing room.

On one such dead Sunday evening Gábor Kéri was sitting at his typewriter in room 987 A. He had been sitting there since finishing his frankfurter and mustard supper and he hadn't been able to write a single word. He hadn't been able to write a single word for the whole month he'd been away from Hungary. He looked at his watch. Half-past nine. He drew his tremendous bulk up from the chair—which wasn't designed for his measurements—crossed the kitchen, glanced with slight distaste at the pile of unwashed dishes on the table and opened the door into room B where János Sobor the poet lived.

"Want to play cards?" he asked.

Sobor, smart as usual in a suit, was sitting at his desk with a sheet of paper in his hand. He was a few years older than Kéri and a good deal smaller.

"I've written a poem," he said. "Shall I read it to you?"

"You're shitting poems," said Kéri, enviously. This was in fact the second poem Sobor had written in the month since their arrival.

"I'm a second Goethe, I am. Want to hear it?"

"No. Let's play cards."

"Let's not. I'm sick to death of cards. We play every evening. Change your shirt, you smell."

Kéri shrugged:

"I haven't got a clean one. Why don't we go down and play the pin-ball machines? I'll take you on at ten cents a game."

Sobor put down the paper.

"Okay," he said after a slight pause, "If you've got plenty of money to lose."

He swept a heap of small change into his pocket and stood up:

"The teams file out for the World Cup final. Brazil up front in yellow shirts, behind them in cherry red, Hungary. Who do you want, Brazil or Hungary?"

"Brazil", said Kéri. "Wait while I grab some cash."

Jenny was coming down the corridor, the only girl in the whole place whose name they knew. She had a spotty face and thick nose, but quite a good figure. That was all they knew about her, apart from the fact that whenever they ran into her she greeted them with a shy and automatic smile.

"Hi," she said and smiled. She passed them slowly, almost hesitating, as if she wanted to ask something. She always came down the corridor with those slightly shuffling steps, as if ready to stop at any moment, like someone who finds the question marks of curiosity too heavy to carry. They'd never seen her in the company of another boy or girl—not even on campus if they happened to come across her.

Sobor looked round after her:

"Would you screw her?"

"In this war-time economy, certainly!"

"I haven't screwed anyone for a month."

"You'll have to learn English, old man. There's no sex these days without language."

They went down by elevator and wandered along to the snackbar where the pin-ball machines were. The snack-bar was in darkness.

"It's shut," said Kéri dismally.

They walked across to the huge longue which was as dead and deserted as a village football ground back home on a Monday afternoon. Only in the corner, almost in hiding, a few boys were sitting with indifference, television watching. Kéri and Sobor stopped behind them and had a look too. It was some sort of a talk show. They didn't understand a word of it.

"Come on let's go," said Kéri after a few minutes. In the corridor he went sluggishly over to the coke machine, put in fifteen cents and the can came crashing out. He tore it open and took a long swig.

"God, how I loathe this drink," he said.

They ambled back to the elevators. The right one happened to be the one so up they went to the ninth floor.

"Shall we play cards?" asked Kéri.

"No, I'm sick of cards. Wash your shirts."

"While you write another poem? You can't really want to write another poem?"

"A Goethe always wants to write another poem."

Kéri went over to the spring door of the garbage chute, opened it and chucked the empty coke can in. It fell clattering down nine floors.

"It'd be nice to throw a bomb down here," he said staring into the dark hole.

Sobor laughed:

"Where are you going to find a bomb here at ten o'clock at night?"

"If I'd been a bit better at chemistry," sighed Kéri. "Apparently you can make bombs out of sugar and vinegar and..."

Sobor roared with laughter.

"Sure you're not thinking of French dressing, you ass? You just need a bit of oil and mustard..."

"I'm quite serious," said Kéri offended. "I read somewhere that you can make bombs out of sugar and vinegar or alcohol. They threw one in the London airport."

Sobor wasn't listening.

"Hey," he said with sudden inspiration, "why don't we play elevators?"

Kéri looked at him, annoyed, he was still thinking about bombs.

"What do you mean elevators? I'm not a child."

"Listen. If you press the call button, you don't know which elevator's going to come first. You take the first guess, I'll take the next. A dime a go."

Kéri was still peevish:

"You can hear which one's going to come."

"No, you can't. Come on, we'll try it. Press the button. Okay, which one?"

"The right."

The left elevator came and spotty-faced Jenny got out of it.

"Hi," she said smiling.

"Hi. Bless your little bottom," added Sobor in Hungarian. Kéri didn't say a word. The girl walked off slowly down the corridor.

"Away we go!" said Sobor brightly. "Brazil starts."

"Right," muttered Kéri. He won.

"Now for the famous Hungarian attack," said Sobor. He lost. After he'd handed the fifth dime over to Kéri he said:

"Spend it on doctors!"

Along came Jenny again. She smiled at them. Sobor pressed the button. "Left" he said. They waited, the right elevator door opened. Jenny got in and held the door open expectantly for the two Hungarians.

"Nem, no," said Sobor. "No luxury cruise for us, we're working," he added in Hungarian.

Jenny let the door go, and puzzled but still smiling, disappeared.

"She does nothing but grin," said Kéri as the elevator door closed on the spotty-faced smile. "What about my dime."

Sobor fished a coin out of his pocket.

"Fat men like you usually have their strokes at an early age. Do me a favour and have yours right now, will you?"

Sobor had already lost four dollars by the time Jenny stepped out of the elevator again with a carton of milk in her hand. This time, as if fortified by the milk, she stopped and asked Sobor with a smile:

"What are you two up to?"

"What does she want?" asked Sobor, whose English was even worse than Kéri's.

"She wants to know what we're doing, I suppose."

Sobor smiled at the girl, went over to the elevators and pretended to press the button, pointing first to the right elevator, then to the left. "Which?" he asked, summoning up all is English knowledge. Then he pointed to the right elevator: "This". He waited a moment, took a step back. "No!" he said deeply disappointed, fished out a dime, handed it to Kéri, hastily taking it back again before Kéri could pocket it.

The girl looked bemusedly from Sobor to the two closed doors of the elevators.

"You might have learnt Hungarian, sweetie," he said to her reproachfully in Hungarian. He turned to Kéri: "Would you mind if the Hungarian team signed on an American player?"

"Okay by me," Kéri shrugged his fat shoulders arrogantly. "You can sign on the whole UN for all I care."

Sobor took the girl's hand, gave her a dime, pressed the call button, and, pointing from the right elevator to the left, asked her: "Which?" Then, because she didn't reply immediately, he repeated urgently: "Which?"

The girl pointed to the left side. The left door opened.

"Hurray," shouted Sobor. He took a dime from Kéri and pressed it into her hand.

Kéri lost his turn and Jenny won hers again. Sobor put his hand on his heart and bowed in front of her. Then he kissed her hand. Slightly embarrassed, Jenny laughed; she was obviously happy to be one of the gang. Sobor, completing his antics, gave her a broad grin.

When she had won for the tenth time Sobor fell down on his knees before her with a rapture of a mediaeval knight.

"She's an angel! An angel from heaven! A goddess!"

Jenny got the message even though she didn't understand the words, and smiled at Sobor. Kéri looked at them in disgust and irritation.

Sobor jumped up, brushed off his knees and with a grandiose gesture offered Jenny his arm:

"Come, lady." Then, to Kéri in Hungarian: "I'll screw her. Where did you put the schnapps?"

"It's in the fridge." He gazed sourly after them as they paraded off down the corridor, Sobor humming the Wedding March from Lohengrin.

Kéri went over to the elevators and pressed the call button. Left, he thought to himself, but the right elevator came. He went down to the first floor, looked into the lounge where the same few boys were still stuck in front of the television, loitered there helplessly for a couple of minutes, then went back into the reception area and threw a provocative glance at the blonde girl reading at the desk. She didn't so much as raise her head from her book. He walked past her to the main entrance, opened the door, went down the steps, crossed the road and the small field and started to walk down the footpath beside the river. It was pitch dark; only the elongated and watery reflection of distant lights gave the impression of some sort of illumination. After all, I won four dollars off him, he thought. Four dollars is something. Good we stopped when we did, my luck was on the turn.

He was gradually approaching the edge of the town; the windows of the houses at the other side of the field were lit, the footpath wound between trees and bushes. I've got altogether twenty-five dollars left for this month, he thought. I shouldn't have brought my money with me. They say you shouldn't walk around in this country with cash in your pocket. Especially in deserted places like this. Two tough kids come along, hold a knife against your stomach and grab the money.

He decided that if someone attacked him and asked for his money he'd defend himself. Two hundred and forty pounds; the mere weight in itself would be an advantage. He used to tell them in the coffee house back home that he'd boxed in his youth, but it wasn't true. Still, two hundred and forty pounds, and he moves relatively easily and quickly, perhaps you can tell from his walk that there's muscle here. Those two skinny kids with their switch-blades would think twice before...

All the same he clenched his cigarette lighter in his pocket like a knuckle-duster, and, glaring at every bush, advanced along the sandy footpath. There wasn't a soul on the river bank and, apart from the chirping of the cricket there wasn't a sound either except distant strains of rock music coming most probably from the open windows of the Pi Beta Epsilon fraternity home.

"Thugs, where are you?" he said out loud. Then, louder, "Come on,

switch-bladers, here I am!" Then shouting: "Hey, Al Capone, what's keeping you? Hey..." he stopped, he couldn't think of a single Mafia leader's name though he'd read about them recently in a Budapest magazine. "Up the Hungarians," he yelled instead.

He stood still. Someone's bound to come with all that row, he thought, but there wasn't a movement, there wasn't a sound. He shrugged his shoulders, took out his lighter, and, lighting a cigarette, sat down on a stone at the water's edge. Here the oblique reflection of the lamps made pleats of light on the water, but even the subcutaneous play of muscles of the undercurrent was powerless to associate the texture of light with anything living.

The stone was damp and cold and he soon got up and walked back to the Covered Wagon. The girl at the reception desk was still reading.

He went up to his room, switched on the light, paused for a moment, then went into the joint kitchen and stood there, shamelessly eavesdropping. He could hear faint sounds of movement coming from the other room. On the table, beside the pile of unwashed dishes, was a carton of milk and the last of the schnapps they've brought with them from home. They didn't leave me much, he thought. He rinsed out a glass under the tap, filled it up and emptied it in one gulp. Then he filled the glass again, sat down, lit a cigarette and slowly sipped the schnapps. He looked at the dishes. At least he could have got her to wash the dishes. In the intervals. He's got nothing to do in the intervals anyway since he can't speak English. He can't exactly carry on a conversation with her. He's got to go on doing non-stop gymnastics so she won't get bored. And he's no twenty-year-old.

The idea pleased him and he went on maliciously sipping his schnapps. Of course, it's not his turn, that's why he didn't get spotty-faced to do the dishes. Okay, let him exert himself. It serves him right. He got up, opened the door of the fridge, took out a frankfurter, ate it in two bites, sat down and drained the bottle. He drank slowly and dreamily... If I were home Edit would bring me a coffee, Tibi would be asleep by now, after our game of toy football. In fact he hadn't seen his son a single Sunday the whole summer. He went out in the morning, had lunch in the Hungaria and then went off to the races. After the races he played poker in the Artists' Club till midnight. Now he felt he'd played button football with his son every Sunday evening.

He finished the schnapps, got rather shakily to his feet and went back to his room. He stopped dizzily in front of the notice board on which a map of the town, a timetable, themes for short stories and diary notes were stuck through with pins like butterflies. At the upper corner of the

board was the home telephone number of the professor, the dean in charge of the troupe of foreign writers, offering help in case of emergency—like the number of the police or the fire brigade.

He went out to the elevators and pressed the call button. Left, he muttered to himself. The left elevator came. Down in the reception area he put a dime into the pay phone and with a slightly shaky finger he dialed.

At the fifth ring someone lifted the receiver. "Hello," said the professor. His husky voice was even huskier now that it was dazed with sleep.

"I want children," said Kéri to the husky voice. He had to tell someone how much he was missing his son.

For a moment the professor was indignant.

"At this time of night? Who is it?" Then, as he pulled himself together, he was immediately able to diagnose the peculiar linguistic disease. "Gábor?"

Kéri, as if from a sunk submarine, bubbled into the telephone:

"Yes, . . . I, Gábor. I want children."

"You've got one in Hungary."

"I want children here."

The professor's voice took on a certain animation:

"Well, adopt one. I suppose you don't expect me to make one for you?"

That was too much for Kéri. He tried to unknot the sentence. Make children. That can only be one thing. What the hell does he mean, make children?

"I not make children," he said finally. "János make children in room. To Jenny."

A hoarse sigh broke from the receiver:

"Oh, my God!"

"God, yes, God. And children. Children of God. I want to be children of God." His eyes swam with tears.

"We all do one way or another," said the professor soothingly. Kéri didn't understand but he didn't care either.

"But is no God," he shouted passionately and, for the sake of effect, he repeated it in Hungarian too.

He put down the receiver. To be God's child when there is no God. That's great, that's East European. And he went back to his room somewhat happier.

SÁNDOR CSOÓRI

THREE POEMS

GOLDEN PHEASANTS FLYING

Here they were all running, running past my heart:
the late March wind, my father's horse with his head like a burning coal,
here my friends ran by with feet dampened in dew,
ran with the great joy of the earth.

The golden pheasants flying through the forest's gate,
a wounded moon driven by the heavens' breathing
and in showers born of the rending of the clouds
the world was as beautiful as in a future Gospel.

Faces of foliage, of people, faces of waters and of girls,
you never left me forsaken in the happy chase.
We stepped over the sibylline immobility of stones
as across the forgotten dead.

And sea, once only have I seen you, but I've tasted you—
You were the summer's wine, the cooled draught of the universe,
o mystical wing which upraised me from within
above all dry sobriety and my own death.

Where are you, sea, and you, my schoolmates hiding beneath the bridge?
Where are you, ploughs of dawn with which I harrowed the sun?
Wind threading the needle's eye of Spring, revolution of the lilacs,
whose side have you joined up with, now that you've deserted me?

I stand above my village; behind me, the ancient ruin.
The woods are desolate, forlorn the meadows of boyhood.
The golden pheasant scurries among the trees, the wind is scudding too,
and I have no other joy but that I may cry out to them.

THE DREAMERS OF MY DREAM

What sins they drove me to are known
by those glorious women alone
who stretched themselves on the springy bed of time.
Saints with chokecherry blood smiled in vain at them.

Never did they wear paper mask or dainty gown.
As the wind lives on the plain, their true home was this city,
as the moon up the Embankment, high on the Royal Castle shone,
they in the studios were resplendent in their mortality.

I loved them because among them I was free
as a man who's always on the road,
breaking through sun-hedge, between mine and wood,
faithlessly leaving city, sea, and galaxy—

Or like a tenant for months lodged in a distant attic
of the heavens, who in the silence grows completely black,
then throws up everything, a wise descendant of the dead,
and for a glass of water floating toward him in hand, is glad.

The nurses of my body and my pain, when my dream
snapped they were the dreamers of my dream.
Among the shadows of the earth they sought the way
more fanatically than those I had set out to victory

in the name of a bareboned country.
Their half-opened mouths were the cave of my future,
homeland of my smiling, the river
of words surrounded by secret leaves, by showers.

I STOLE YOUR FACE

If you should turn from me, you will not be a stranger—
behind you stands the ancient blazon of the sun;
behind you, my life, an immortal shadow, silent
as a totem bird exiled in the golden heaven.

You can hide anew each minute, or reappear;
I shall not search for you behind the snowfall
or in the smarting wilderness of smoky offices
where your phone, a pearly rattler, waits upon its coil.

I am content that once, like heaven's fire, I stole your face
and gave it to other women to make them fair;
content that in my matted body, in my dreams
like a buried statue or legend burnt in tile, you are always there.

Translated by
Daniel Hoffman

FROM FORTHCOMING ISSUES

BYCICLE THIEVES?
Júlia Juhász

PROTECTED URBAN AREAS
László Gerő

JOHANNES VITÉZ, THE FATHER OF HUNGARIAN HUMANISM
László Domonkos

A HUNGARIAN CONTACT OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
István Gál

SURVEYS

IVÁN BOLDIZSÁR

SEARCHING FOR IMAGES OF ENGLAND AND HUNGARY

1.

One of the common contradictions of our age is the twofold picture, *image* as the popular Anglo-French term has it, which public opinion in any one country forms of any other. Of these two images, one is a picture in the strictest sense of the word: the one which is seen on the television screen. (The use of the word 'picture' in this sense can hardly be called traditional: it is only ten years old.) But the other picture is a metaphorical one: the image existing in public opinion. The contradiction between the two arises from the fact that the picture as seen hardly influences the imagined picture. The image a nation holds of another has changed very little: the stereotypes which have been current for generations, sometimes centuries, live on in the public consciousness.

The contradiction is sharpened by the fact that the world, to use an accepted cliché, has shrunk. The aeroplane has brought London nearer Budapest than Vienna used to be; and the Atlantic Ocean tends to be advertised as the Atlantic River by international airways announcing their new supersonic jets. With only a little exaggeration, we can talk of a revolution in tourism, caused not just by the plane, but also by the car. Today, more people see Naples in a summer season than in generations in the days of our fathers: they see it, but in spite of its wonder and beauty, it does not occur to them to die: they are used to magnificent views. Perhaps last year, they were in Katmandu—or perhaps they'll be there next year.

Tourism, one would think makes people better acquainted. But experience proves that the opposite is true: it has strengthened the traditional stereotypes, which we might call the romantic image, and it petrifies the newer stereotype, which we might term the political one.

One of the tasks of my paper* is to present the traditional-romantic as well as newly formed political images as they persist and appear in English and Hungarian public opinion. First, however, it may be worth examining why the difference between fancy and reality today is more paradoxical than before, and why I single out TV as the most formative influence on public opinion. I know of course that reality and the image of reality are never the same, not even in the consciousness of one person, so how could one expect it to be so in the case of that of the general public? But information visually observed impresses more than that heard or read: which is why we can only speak of a revolution in communications since the advent and spread of television. On the other hand, the revolution in tourism really alters the viewer's, the audience's,

* Presented at the first Anglo-Hungarian Round-Table, Wilton Park, December 1969.

relationship with the world, and it gives new meaning to the concept of participation.

It might be worth our while to examine this more closely. The revolution in telecommunications has created a new kind of reality by enabling people to become eyewitnesses of contemporary historic events. The broad masses of the public now live on two levels: first, their own daily personal lives, and secondly, the one they share with others, while watching TV.

The significance of the experience has also been changed by this fact. In previous ages "experience" has meant something seen with one's own eyes, heard through one's own ears. But this simultaneous witnessing has created a second level of reality. Most people, thinking back on such "second-level experiences", can hardly separate them from the primary, original, three-dimensional reality. The second reality may become more important and more memorable than the primary reality. Sometimes this happens because on the one hand it is more concentrated in expression, as well as in time; and on the other, because the secondary reality has an additional power to surpass the primary, the original one: it is collective truth; the new, more deeply felt and continuously common experience of all men. One and the same event, such as the moon-landing, was seen at the same time in London and Budapest; thus the world has shrunk even further. Further, yes, but not yet far enough; at least not in the relations between nations.

One of the contradictions of our age is that in this shrinking world, despite circumstances far more favourable than those in any previous century, or any previous generation, one country's knowledge of any other has not increased as much as could have been expected. On the contrary, perhaps even on account of the plenitude of available information, false notions could be said to have multiplied.

The world has indeed been shrunk by machines and the revolutionary changes they have brought, in quotation marks or without, but they have not abolished the contradiction between the two images. Every day on the TV screen we can watch the daily life of another nation, its art, the faces of its famous or ordinary people, its streets and landscapes; we can even spy on their style and pace of living; but even so this image hardly changes the "image". And coming down to Hungary and England this means that the English TV audience sees us far less frequently and the Hungarian TV audience sees the other rather more often, but still, the two pictures do not match.

2.

It is worth attempting a confrontation of the two images in order to look for reality and perhaps even to find it. Only when the public opinion in any two trading countries is rightly informed about the conditions prevailing in the other can economic cooperation grow and succeed, only then can it be more than just a contract to buy or sell. This is why instead of the phrase "improving economic relations" I prefer the word "deepening", in spite of its literary tinge.

The contradiction between the two images is only one characteristic aspect of our times. Another characteristic is the increased importance of economic affairs in the human context. It is obvious that this too is a function of the shrinking-world syndrome, acting in both directions, being both a result, and a continuing cause, of the shrinking process. In a London supermarket a housewife can find stuff from all parts of the world, even from Hungary—though only paprika and tinned pork. If the Hungarian exporters can manage to sell even more paprika and tinned pork to their English buyers, then economic life will grow. This is to be welcomed, but it means that the London housewife will come to believe that nothing but paprika grows in Hungary and that they do not manufacture anything but tinned pork. In our shrunken world,

the exchange of goods had been speeded up by modern transport and packaging, but relations between the two countries could only undergo lasting improvement if the word Hungary was not exclusively associated with paprika in the British mind. Other things likewise belong to this associative process, such things as paprika are components of the traditional romantic image. In the newer, and far from romantic picture we also have the historic mistakes of the Stalin era, and the platitudes of cold war propaganda.

Far be it from me to say that a Hungarian housewife has a clearer idea of England than her dreams of fine woollens and Earl Grey tea, or that her new image is any nearer to reality than its reverse. Let us take a closer look.

The traditional picture of England is a combination of two concepts, and, as frequently happens with public opinion, these two components contradict each other. According to one of these concepts, England is the land of liberalism, individualism, in other words, of freedom. According to the other, it is the land of lords, gentlemen, snobbery, clubs, fox-hunting, cold blood, the stiff upper lip; in other words, of class oppression. The first could be called the Byronic image, or the image presented by Byron himself, the second, the Dickensian image. One need not explain why "Byronic", Byron the romantic fighter for liberty, but as for Dickens, it was really not his fault that up to about fifteen years ago, no other English writer was published even half as extensively in the Hungarian language. This is somewhat of an exaggeration but public opinion always ignores the finer shadings; and the Dickens phenomenon was common to all socialist countries. The world of David Copperfield, Oliver Twist, and Great Expectations, and particularly, the picture of society they present, has sunk deeply into the minds of whole generations of readers. Had Dickens been a lesser writer, had his descriptions had less power, his effect would have been more transient. The drab London of Dickens' descriptions has provided the first experience of England for Hungarian readers, at their most sensitive, at the age of twelve to fourteen. This is the age where identification is still easiest; and identification tends to be the most important effective tool of literature. I was David and I was Oliver for years myself and I noted with considerable surprise a generation later that my sons and even my daughter saw themselves as Dickens characters.

This nineteenth-century picture of England had been further strengthened by Marx's analysis of the situation of the English working class. I hardly need explain that such an interpretation of Marx is anti-Marxist, but this does not alter the fact that for many people, and especially for that layer of the reading public which would not have come into existence without Marxism, this is the most lasting literary impression of England and English society, in addition to Dickens, and sometimes even without Dickens.

This nineteenth-century picture has been strengthened, paradoxically, over the last ten years by "neo-realist" English novels, plays, and the films based on them. I put the word neo-realist in inverted commas, for it is not usually applied to these English works, but only to the Italian films of the fifties; but their style and effect is very similar. *Room at the Top* or *A Taste of Honey* has essentially served to strengthen the Marxian view of social classes both in readers and viewers, even though the settings have altered a great deal.

In the meanwhile, the Byronic version of England lives on undisturbed in Hungarian public opinion; primarily in turn-of-the-century politics and ever since in literature and literary life. One really must not expect the public opinion of a distant country to resolve the contradiction between class oppression and individual liberty, particularly as English society has never completely resolved it either. Of the Byronic and

Dickensian pictures, the one of liberty always dominated; and I am not saying this just to flatter my English audience. By way of proof—if there is such a thing as proof in this kind of thing—I recall that Hungarian intellectuals and the Hungarian working class were against the Germans, that is, for the English, in both the First and Second World Wars. (I do not mention the peasants, because I cannot; the social position of the peasants precluded them from taking part in forming public opinion. The position of the Hungarian peasants, the very concept in fact, is one of the chief obstacles—I shall come back to this later—to any realistic picture of Hungary in the minds of the English public.)

The anglophilia of intellectuals, I remember, went as far as greeting one another during the first years of the war with the question "Are the English winning?" For a long time the BBC's Hungarian (and for those who spoke English, of course English) short-wave news broadcasts were the main sources of war-time information. And if Hungarian historians today argue points with Professor Macartney (and not only the Marxist historians) and even if it is hardly worth while to argue about his analysis of contemporary political matters, he is none the less a notable figure in the Hungarian public opinion of the recent past. His news commentaries beginning "This is 'Elemir' Macartney speaking" are memorable even from a distance of twenty-five years.

Just as the Dickensian picture is exaggerated, so the Byronic is over-idealized. When after an absence of twenty-eight years I once again stepped on English soil back in 1961, I noticed a vulgar little poster stuck in the railway compartment: "Keep Britain white!" I felt this as a personal insult. Was this really possible in England I asked myself; I had been fooling myself in thinking that constant attention to English newspapers and books had kept me well-informed. However, the image of the "land of freedom" was stronger in me than my actual knowledge of current affairs. After all, I *had* known that there were small racist groups even in Great Britain.

Since 1961 Hungarians have once more been visiting England. The personal impressions of Hungarian travellers have naturally softened the Dickensian picture and deepened the Byronic one. (I am forced to insert another parenthesis: Hungarian tourist traffic is another sore point in the English picture of Hungary.)

3.

As we have seen, several recent political and propaganda strands have been woven into the traditional romantic and anti-romantic images; yet it is possible and even worth while to try to unravel these. The new, third, picture is once again made up of two parts. One is purely political, the other not at all so. The political picture derives partly from the facts, and partly from cold war exaggerations and distortions. The basis of this third picture is the difference between the social and the economic order. England is a capitalist country (and when Hungarians talk of England, they naturally mean Great Britain, or the United Kingdom) filed in Hungarian public consciousness as an imperialist power. Wide sections of the Hungarian public consequently have no idea of the Welfare State, and the anti-imperialist, Empire-shedding postwar English political forces are hardly known. Many are prone to associate imperialism with colonial expansion—lock, stock and barrel. Although one never reads it in any Hungarian paper, the majority of the Hungarian public is convinced to this day that Great Britain is still a colonial power. Without wishing to go into a detailed political analysis, I must add that this picture has in no way been softened by the "special relationship" between London and Washington.

That part of Hungarian opinion which adopted Marxist principles finds it difficult to imagine the situation of what is called

a socialist Labour Party in a capitalist system. The phrase "that part of Hungarian opinion which adopted Marxist principles" tends, in my experience, to surprise my English readers: both the statement, and the fact that it is stated. But even the wider sections of public opinion tend to regard the Labour Party as anything but socialist, and this is something that pleases the more conservative groups of Hungarian opinion as well.

The new portrait of Britain which is not political was in fact created by the Beatles, with some assistance from Mary Quant. This is the teen-to-twenties variation on the liberty-image. In England, the young can do anything; for this, we have to thank the Beatles, their successors, the Rolling Stones, Tom Jones and Humperdinck. And yet very few young Hungarian boys and girls know that *Tom Jones* is a novel by Fielding or that Humperdinck is the name of a mediocre German composer of opera, even though Hungarian TV has frequently told them. Rock music has become the watershed between generations in Hungary: those who like it are young, or at any rate, accepted by the young: whoever rejects it, is in turn rejected by young people. And the young tend to believe that beat has become the national music of the English, that everyone likes and values it there. Perhaps they are not so far out, seeing the Beatlemania of the illustrated weeklies, or considering that they were awarded the O.B.E. And this belief strengthens the first version of the conventional stereotype: we could even call it a Byron–Beatles image.

I have deliberately avoided discussing the Anglomaniacs, who approve everything that is English, especially in matters of dress and food; for Anglomania is a wide spread continental phenomenon. I have also neglected the Anglophobes, who ask: "The English, are they human?" for they disapprove of everything that is English, because this is not a continental, but a parochial reaction. Nor have I referred to the art of understatement, even though Hungarian writers, scholars and intellectuals frequently mention it, but as my own prose is bound to reveal, do not quite know how to employ it.

4.

It is a far more difficult task to account for the picture of Hungary in the English mind. I would not even dare to try, except that as the editor of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, I have been observing the reactions of our readers in the universities and elsewhere. During my frequent visits to England in recent years I have amassed a fair amount of experience on the subject.

The traditional English picture of Hungary is plain romantic, or rather, plain falsely romantic. Hungary is believed to be a vast plain; mountains cannot even be imagined, even though as early as 1573 Sir Philip Sydney, and in the seventeenth century, Edward Brown, commissioned by the Royal Society, described Hungary complete with mountains and rivers. Then there was John Paget, the English lover of the Balaton, who wrote what is one of the loveliest descriptions of it to this day, including the extinct volcanoes around the lake. But in the general view Hungary is flat as a pancake, there is *puszta* everywhere, pronounced *pooshta*, as the *sz* is believed to be like the Polish equivalent to the English *sh*. Wild horses of course gallop across this puszta, and the madly romantic brothers of Wild West cowboys guard them and career after them. The Hungarian tourist advertisments between the wars, and even to-day the cheap, *kitschig* films made by German studios and by us Hungarians are all to blame for this false picture—we smile indulgently when we hear this kind of rubbish, instead of correcting it. So the happily growing numbers of English tourists in Hungary first and foremost start looking for the puszta, are surprised and then annoyed on finding that this romantic

Central European Wild West has not existed for a long time now and that what there is of it, and its wild horses, can only be found on the Hortobágy and at Bugac.

This illusion is harmful not just because it disappoints tourists, but also because it proves the lack of economic, cultural and political contacts. Even in economic circles it is difficult to convince people that Hungary is not an agricultural country any more; it is industrialized one. It is difficult to establish a picture of the social and economic development of Hungary in the age of socialism if it continues to be regarded as a folklore-reservation. And here is the proper place to return to the subject of the peasants to their old and new social position.

There is no social class or stratum in England which provides any equivalent to the Hungarian peasants. Not even the word 'peasant' covers the concept, and the word 'farmer' is completely misleading. The explanation for this is the different rate of development—or rather, the centuries of development which were missing in Hungary. There was a semi-feudal system in Hungary up to 1945; this is something that English opinion has either never known, or has forgotten under the influence of Cold War propaganda. During the Cold War, and occasionally even in this day and age, one reads articles which seem to imply that before the Liberation Hungary enjoyed a liberal and democratic social and political system, comparable to that of England, and that this was destroyed by the Communists. The truth is that there has never been any parliamentary democracy in the English sense in Hungary. In the neo-Gothic and slightly neo-Byzantine House of Parliament built on the left bank of the Danube, a Hungarian national assembly used to assemble, forming a Government party and opposition parties, but the people, especially the peasants comprising 75 per cent of the population of those days, had no vote. Until the early 'twenties only open elections were held, without a secret ballot.

The semi-feudal character of society was embodied in the system of large estates. This did not mean merely that wealth and political power accumulated in the hands of a very narrow section of society, less than one per cent of the population, but also that ninety per cent of the peasants owned no land whatever. Three million peasants and their families lived in the worst possible eighteenth-century conditions in Hungary even during the 1930s. Poverty and isolation together created an anachronistic civilization. This civilization, this life, is painted in the works of the best Hungarian writers, such as Zsigmond Móricz of the previous generation, and among present day writers, Gyula Illyés, now in his sixties. But how could an English reader understand their works if even the very word 'peasant' calls up quite different associations, and a Hungarian village is simply beyond his imagination altogether? And if this is so, then the picture that the English public has of the changes that have taken place in Hungary over the last twenty years could not possibly be correct, nor unfortunately, is it correct.

According to the Romantic view, Hungary is a provincial, rural country, with a beautifully situated capital, where, before the war—long live the Viennese operetta!—life was very gay; but now the proud Hungarian peasant has been collectivized, that is, oppressed, and the glitter of Budapest is all gone, and life is bleak and sad. The traditional-romantic and the newly-forged political pictures held by the English public are difficult to disentangle. For it was on the substructure of the romantic image that cold war propaganda settled during the fifties, its negative features merely adding nostalgic tints to the romantic picture. I should like to compare only one actual fact with this fantasy. According to the fantasy, collectivization has ground the Hungarian peasant down into the depths of poverty. The truth is that in every Hungarian village new houses, new streets and housing estates

are being built today. The new houses are modern, healthy; the peasant no longer needs to fetch water from the well, but even in those few villages—and their numbers are decreasing—where no water is laid on, plumbing and a motor-pump are installed in the houses, gas or electricity is used in the kitchen, and the charming, much-regretted horse is replaced by motorcycles and cars in the "stable". I find it difficult to say all this, for I am afraid that I simply will not be believed; and this is not the fault of English opinion, but of the memory left behind by the glamour propaganda of the Stalin era, so one-sided and false that no one believed it.

Luckily the many thousands of new village houses are tangible facts. But how can the peasants build all these new houses if they are improverished by the collectives? I am not going into the details of the economic viability or otherwise of the Hungarian producers' cooperatives; I only wish to point out an instance which seems to be merely a by-product of collective farming, but is actually a characteristic aspect of it. I shall not try to establish whether the average smallholder earns more today than when he was independent, I only want to recall that the three million landless peasants and their families of the old days cannot be talked about in that way at all, they have stepped straight from the early eighteenth into the middle of the twentieth century. But, let us suppose, for simplicity's sake, that the former smallholder earns a little less now than he used to. Then how come that he never built a new, modern house in the days of his independence? Because he used to save every available penny to buy land, and more land. Not only because land was the only basis of increasing one's wealth, but also because the entire social hierarchy of any village was based on one thing: the amount of land one owned. Under the new collective system, the peasant can buy building land, but he cannot accumulate arable land. He is forced to spend his savings on raising his standard of living; one could even say: raising the level of human dignity. He builds a better house, he educates his children, he dresses better, he visits the city more frequently, and he even spends money on trips abroad.

I have mentioned this single fact, the increase in the new homes built in the villages, in order to contrast the image with the reality. From such comparisons, we realize that the clichés of the Stalin era have survived almost intact in public opinion. In England and in other Western countries people sometimes say that yes, they know that things have changed somewhat in Hungary, yes, they hear that things are getting a little better. But from their questions, or the remarks which follow, it is easy to see that they have no yardstick for measuring the changes, and that they simply cannot imagine the improvements. The faults and distortions of the Stalin era, together with cold-war propaganda, have produced a Manichaean public opinion; things are seen simply in black and white. The new ways of establishing socialism cannot find a place in their consciousness. And this brings me back to what I said earlier on; the English simply cannot believe that Hungarian tourists travel in western countries individually, not in organized and controlled groups, even in England itself. They do not believe that the National Bank of Hungary allows them to take hard currency, exchanged at official rates, with them. The cliché of the Iron Curtain has entered like iron in the soul... and the daily press unfortunately continuously repeats it, making it impossible to accept the idea that a socialist government allows its citizens to travel. Every Hungarian who visits England is a little suspect: he is assumed to be favoured by the regime, or even directly employed by the regime, if he has been given a passport.

It is equally difficult for them to imagine that the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party recently declared that Marxist ideology has no monopoly in Hungary and that it has

to fight even for its hegemony. This fact, or even exaggerated versions of it are of course not disputed by English opinion: but the other fact, that it is openly discussed is hardly acceptable to the stereotyped image.

For this reason it is difficult to explain the new economic mechanism in Hungary to large sections of British public opinion. But I must point out, after some introspective self-examination regarding this image-business, that in Hungary itself these reforms were not accepted easily. Here also they had to fight against both the conservative, traditional image and recent versions of Hungary's self-image. The problem with the traditional image was that Hungarian society had never been economy-centred; the trouble with the recent image was that after the Liberation economic development concentrated on production first and foremost and economic practice, common to all socialist countries, gave little importance to trade and services or any form of a combined economy.

The new economic mechanism did not fit into the prefabricated images of Hungarian public opinion, and it is equally difficult to accomodate it in Western public opinion.

I know we cling to the old images despite ourselves and very nice they are; wild white horses galloping over the plain, Byron and the flag of freedom flying in the wind. But sometime or other we shall have to abandon them for a more realistic, not necessarily less attractive picture. And now might be a good time to begin.

ISTVÁN GÁL

GREAT ELIZABETHANS BUY HUNGARIAN HORSES

Recent research in Hungarian economic history has thrown light on the surprising degree of early commercial relations between England and Hungary. At the end of the sixteenth century the changing European trade routes ran through Hungary because of the rapidly increasing supply of Western manufactured goods. The Hungarian regions connected with world trade were in the first place at the receiving end for English exports, and especially textile exports. The export of Hungarian ore and other mineral products to England did not begin until the second decade of the seventeenth century when the Westminster Treaty provided an effective framework for this kind of commerce. There is no mention in historical sources, however, of any trade in agricultural produce or animals in that period.

Today, as the Hungarian connections with the England of the Elizabethan age are being studied, two interesting sidelights have been uncovered on the purchase of Hungarian horses by famous historical figures of England. One of the buyers was the Earl of Sussex, the envoy of Queen Elizabeth to Vienna, and the other the Queen's confidential advisor Dr. John Dee, a scholar and a man of great erudition in many sub-

jects. It is common knowledge that English horse breeding only started under Henry VIII with horses acquired from Italy and Spain; English races began in the reign of James I.

A recent publication of the Austrian Academy of Sciences reproduced a letter written by János Zsámboki (1531–1584), Hungarian humanist, historian and printer, and the curator of the Court Library in Vienna, dated December 2, 1567, and addressed to the Mayor and Senate of the city of Nagyszombat (Trnava, Czechoslovakia) taken from Zsámboki's correspondence preserved there. In this letter Zsámboki asks them to buy and deliver to Vienna four matched horses for Queen Elizabeth's envoy in Vienna.

"I have no less a reason for writing than to recommend to you this distinguished representative of the English envoy who is looking for four good matched horses, and at the same time asking you to find a good servant for him who would bring them here; he will be well paid for it."

Since the deal would be profitable to the Hungarians, he suggests to the Mayor and council that "it would be advisable for Your Honour to make a present of wine, corn, fish to the agent of the British envoy, etc. as a sign of your esteem, and do this with the Emperor and the Archduke in view, that they should know the courtesy you showed to my lord the Envoy".

János Zsámboki, or, as he is better known, Johannes Sambucus, was a historian, physician, cartographer and scholar whose immense library of manuscripts and books was to form one of the original collections of the Nationalbibliothek in Vienna. Shakespeare himself knew his book of poems, the "Emblems", and Marlowe made use of his edition of Bonfini. The English emissary to Vienna was Thomas Radcliffe, Earl of Sussex (1526–1583), who remained in Vienna from August 5, 1567 to March 14, 1568 to carry on discussions on the proposed marriage of Queen Elizabeth to the Archduke Charles of Hapsburg. While in Vienna he often rode out in the same carriage with the Emperor Maximilian II, and the Archduke Charles. He visited Graz, and stayed in Pozsony (Bratislava, Czechoslovakia), during the meeting there of the Hungarian Estates. This was probably where the Hungarian horses caught his fancy, and led him to seek the good services of Zsámboki, a serviceable man about the imperial court in Vienna, in the purchase of horses from Nagyszombat, the town of Zsámboki's birth.

Nothing came of the proposed marriage between Queen Elizabeth and the Archduke. The Queen's Protestant subjects strongly opposed it, on both religious and political grounds; and the only tangible result of Sussex's mission to Vienna were the four horses bought with Zsámboki's help at Trnava (undoubtedly destined to be hitched to the carriage of some great personage in England).

Dr. John Dee, the famous astrologer of Queen Elizabeth, carried out another deal in horses. Between 1562–63 Sir William Cecil sent Dr. Dee to Germany to study cryptography. Here a Hungarian helped him to annotate Trithemius's *Stenographia*. Dee dedicated his *Monas Hieroglyphica*, the book he wrote based on Trithemius, to Maximilian II, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Hungary, dating his dedication January 29, 1564, and in April 1564 he went to Pozsony to present it to the monarch personally. Dee made several visits during his lifetime to Northern Hungary and Central Europe. His diary contains a number of entries referring to Hungary. On February 12, 1589 he wrote "Elmond Hilton came from Prage (sic) with nine Hungarian horses towght (sic) towards on jorney." On May 23rd of the same year he made the following entry: "I sent the Landgrave my twelve Hungarian horses." Thus, when Mr. Hilton, Dee's fellow-traveller in Prague, arrived with Dr. Dee's nine horses, the latter apparently already possessed three more. Dee sold the whole twelve to the Margrave of Hesse-Cassel.

EDIT SŐTÉR

HUNGARIAN ALUMINIUM

The Hungarian aluminium industry looks back on a successful past of forty-five years. Recently a comprehensive fifteen-year plan of great importance was worked out, covering bauxite mining, alumina production, aluminium metallurgy and the production of castings, semi-finished and finished goods.

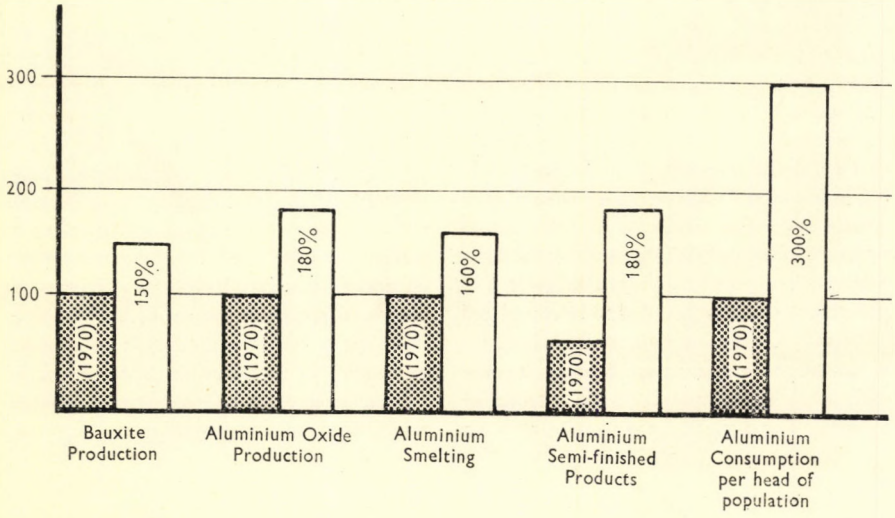
The plan is based on Hungary's considerable bauxite reserves which amount to 1.5–1.7 per cent of the estimated entire bauxite reserves of the world. Hungary's surveyed bauxite reserves are the third largest in Europe, only Yugoslavia and France have larger ones. The socialist international division of labour helps to remove obstacles in the path of development and to cope with difficulties which the relatively moderate economic resources, scarce energy supply and narrow internal market of a small country could hardly surmount otherwise. The alumina-aluminium agreements between Hungary and the Soviet-Union as well as between Poland and the Soviet-Union were concluded within the framework of the socialist division of labour.

The Fifteen-Year Plan

Hungarian aluminium consumption amounts to almost that of European industrialized capitalist countries. However, the Hungarian pattern of consumption differs in many respects from that of Western industrial countries, for in certain important sectors of the economy e.g. in the building trade, agriculture and packaging, far less aluminium is used in Hungary than the stage of technological development demands, though the necessary conditions are present.

The main point of the fifteen-year development plan is to come close to or reach the highest standard in every field where it is economically justified to use aluminium under the conditions prevalent in Hungary. Every production phase of the aluminium industry—from the processing of raw material to the manufacture of finished goods—will be developed proportionally and in alignment with each other so that bauxite mining will increase by 150 per cent, alumina production by 80 per cent, aluminium metallurgy by 80 per cent and the produc-

Fifteen-year development plan



tion of semi-finished aluminium goods threefold. As a result the per capita aluminium consumption can increase two and a half to threefold as compared to the present consumption, and reach 19.5 kgs per inhabitant. The significance of this target can be best indicated by the fact that the per capitay consumption of 19.5 kgs is about double of the 1967 average consumption of the developed European industrial countries. (It should, however, be noted that the per capita consumption in the USA had already reached 19.5 kgs in 1967.)

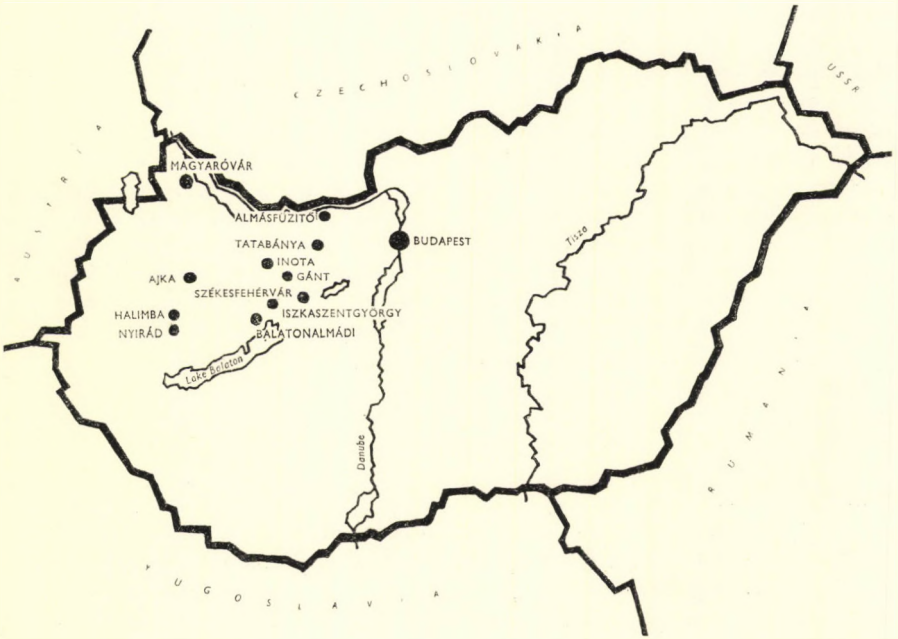
Significant Investments

The fourth Five Year Plan provides for considerable progress in the implementation of the development programme of the Hungarian aluminium industry. The output of bauxite mining, for example, will reach three million tons a year by 1975. This is approximately the target figure as laid down in the fifteen year long-term plan of bauxite mining for 1985. Alumina and aluminium-block production also come close to the targets of the long-term plan; thus, the increased production of basic material makes it possible to step up the manufacture of semi-finished and finished goods on a large scale. The increase of production between 1965, 1970 and 1975 is shown by the table below. It should be noted that only a part of the alumina production is processed into aluminium blocks in Hungary while a considerable quantity of the Hungarian alumina production is further processed in the Soviet-Union. As a result the production of semi-finished aluminium goods can increase at a quicker rate than that of the home production of aluminium blocks.

	Production		Planned production
	1965	1970	1975
	tons		tons
Bauxite	1,400,000	2,000,000	3,000,000
Alumina	275,000	448,000	780,000
Aluminium blocks	58,000	66,000	80,000
Aluminium semi-finished goods	31,000	73,000	160,000

During the fourth Five Year Plan almost ten thousand million forints will be invested in the aluminium industry. In the field of bauxite mining certain large-scale investment projects in process—Rákhegy II., Iza II. and Halimba III.—are scheduled to be completed by 1975. Other investment will help to make use of mine water brought to the surface. A new mine is to be opened at Fenyőfő. The completion of the new alumina works at Ajka will considerably boost alumina production. Owing to the reconstruction of the three Hungarian alumina works, new production capacities will operate enhancing the profitability of the existing plants. Important technological development tasks have to be solved to improve production of the aluminium foundries.

The production of semi-finished goods is also increasing considerably. In Inota, for



Bauxite Mines, Aluminium Oxide Works, Aluminium Smelters and Aluminium Mills

example, a new factory will be put into operation producing narrow strips out of cast rolled basic material and the rod drawing mill will be further developed. Cast rolled wires will be produced at Tatabánya. The broad strip rolling mill will be completed, the second phase of the investment project started and, in addition, the capacity of the extrusion press plant expanded in the Székesfehérvár Light Metal Works, the centre of the production of semi-finished aluminium goods in Hungary. The foil plant of the Kőbánya Works will be enlarged, and new thin strip producing machinery installed. Since the production of corrugated sheets, varnished strips, folded profiles and reluxa strips started, a larger quantity and wider assortiment of high-grade semi-finished goods of special finish will be available.

The Hungarian processing industry will need the following quantitites of aluminium by 1975 as compared to the quantities processed in 1965, 1968 and 1970:

	Production			Target
Year:	1965	1968	1970	1975
Thousand tons:	63	84	107	166

These figures also include the quantity of aluminium needed for the production of aluminium finished goods used in, or exported by, Hungary. Exports amounted to 42 per cent of the total quantity of finished goods in 1970 and will reach, according to calculations, 44 per cent by 1975.

1,600 million forints are allocated for the development of the production of finished goods with a high aluminium content between 1970 and 1975. As a result of this investment a new finished goods producing capacity will come into being with a production value amounting to 2,700 million forints by 1975.

Needs of the Building Trade

The production capacity of finished goods already considerably increased during the third Five Year Plan. The Hungarian Cable Works established a new aluminium cable plant at Balassagyarmat. The new Tiszaföldvár plant of the Aluminium Works for the production of aluminium mass products was put into operation in the summer of 1970; the Boldogháza aluminium radiator plant of the Jászberény Refrigeration Equipment Works and the Füzesabony packing plant of the Mátravidék Metal Works started production. The Székesfehérvár plant of the Metalwork Enterprise producing aluminium locking devices started production in November 1969.

How and for what will increased aluminium production be used? It is expected that the building trade will make the greatest progress in this field. The aluminium consumption of the Hungarian building trade lags far behind that of other developed countries; up to now relatively small quantities of aluminium were used in dwellings, public buildings, factories and agricultural buildings. In 1968, the per capita aluminium consumption by the building industry only amounted to half a kilogramme in Hungary, that is, to one third of the present consumption by developed industrial countries and only one eighth of that of the United States. It is expected that in the next fifteen-year-plan period aluminium consumption by the building trade and by agriculture will increase seven to seven and a half-fold and, thus, reach the present consumption level of the United States Aluminium is indispensable for up-to-date light building constructions; combined with various other modern materials, synthetics etc. it is frequently used in different kinds of building constructions and fittings.

This problem can only be solved by the close cooperation of the aluminium industry and the building trade. The first moves have already been made though on a small scale only. The Tuzsér cold storage plant with a capacity for ten thousand tons of apples was built in accordance with this method in record time. It is obvious that as a result of favourable experience demand for aluminium will increase and it is foreseeable that far greater quantities will be needed for the building of new, modern large workshops and storage buildings as well as for public ones and dwellings. It is likely that aluminium will become an important building material in the construction of small houses, as it already is abroad.

Packaging Technique

Packaging is another field where a considerable increase of aluminium consumption can be expected. There is an enormous demand for aluminium in the food industry, quickfrozen foodstuff prepacked in up-to-date aluminium foils are an example, as are oven-ready meals on aluminium trays and food in tubes, easily opened and transported canned food and chilled beverages in aluminium canisters. It is particularly important to step up the production of varnished aluminium, the basic packaging material of the canned food industry. This demand allows for the establishment of an

economically efficient large plant of high productivity in cooperation with the Soviet Union.

It is certain that a considerable demand for aluminium household utensils will occur. The popularity of pressure cookers, soda-water syphons, coffee-percolators and teflon coated pots and pans continuously increases and aluminium cylinders for propane-butane gas will increasingly be needed in order to meet the growing demand of the Hungarian natural gas programme. At present there are more than one million gas cylinders in use, each of them weighing seven kilogramme; so far they came up to expectations and have, moreover, aroused the interest of experts abroad.

The per capita aluminium consumption of the engineering industry also lags behind and only amounts to one fifth of that of developed industrial countries. Aluminium must be used to a greater extent if the products of the engineering industry are to keep level with the demands of the times, for aluminium improves the quality of products.

In the electric industry which is, one might say, the traditional field for the consumption of aluminium, Hungary has reached the highest standard. The quality of Hungarian cables and aerial wires meets the requirements of the most exacting western norms. The increase of world-market copper prices forces developed countries to use more and more aluminium instead of copper for the production of underground cables. This tendency also shows in Hungary and the considerable increase in the aluminium consumption of the electrical industry is most probably ascribable to this development.

Certain products of the aluminium industry play an important role in boosting Hungarian exports and, thus, improve the balance of payments with capitalist countries. The fourth Five Year Plan envisages an increase of Hungarian export by 52 per cent and within the latter an increase of exports to capitalist markets by 42 per cent. Aluminium sells readily on capitalist markets at prices higher than those otherwise obtained. One of the main aims of the development programme is to increase, in addition to the export of basic materials, the export of higher standard processed goods and finished goods.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

THE HARMONY OF OLD AND NEW

DEZSŐ DERCSÉNYI: *Historical Monuments in Hungary*. 230×270 mms, 16 coloured, 136 black-and-white plates, Corvina Press, Budapest, 1969.

People in England have not quite got accustomed to the existence of a Department of the Environment. It is like decimalization. One uses it, but one does not quite understand it. Essentially it is a merger of the Ministry of Housing with the Ministry of Public Building and Works. Environment is a sufficiently vague term to cover both and more—more indeed than the new department covers. Roads for instance are environment. They do more damage than all the rest put together.

Felix Hungaria, you need not yet worry about that all-devouring ogre. Roads eat up space, they make thousands of houses almost but not quite uninhabitable and, under the pretext of need, they sanction the demolition of countless buildings worth preservation or at least conservation. Dr. Dercsényi does not make that distinction although it is included in the work on which in a recent book he so passionately and sensibly reports. Preservation, in case some of my readers don't know, is the protection and if need be restoration of buildings of architectural value, conservation is the protection of areas whose visual value lies in the *ensemble*, including as a rule a majority of buildings not strictly of architectural value worthy of preservation. The most familiar English example is King's Parade at Cambridge. Not one of the buildings on the east side would justify preservation, every building of the west side does, and so as a foil to the west side the east side must be kept its humble self—for the sake of the conservation of the whole parade. Preservation means to keep buildings as they are, only watching that nothing deteriorates. Conservation means to keep a character—no more. So demolition and replacement will go on in conservation areas, and what has to be watched is the harmony of the new with the old, not by imitating the old but by sensitivity to its character. We, in England, list buildings of architectural value as I or II, buildings of minor value as III (which has now been abandoned). Hungary also has its I, II, III, the III being buildings, as Dr. Dercsényi writes, "of townscape value". That is as far as Hungary has taken up the conservation idea.

To illustrate the position in terms of Hungary, we would call the Tárnok utca and the Országház utca a conservation area. There are plenty of medieval town-houses, most of them only recently discovered, and the Government is restoring them exemplarily. The problem of preserving or replacing the nondescript buildings between them is trickier and falls outside the scope of Dr. Dercsényi's book. It can be done successfully and in some of the smaller Hungarian towns it is.

Dr. Dercsényi's book is in fact about preservation strictly, and in the field Hungary has much reason to be proud. The book starts with a preface (By Ali Vrione of Unesco) and a history of preservation in Hungary. The preface contains a paragraph worth remembering. It presents the many reasons for preservation over and above architectural value:

"The siting of a castle like that of Diósgyőr... will show us how insecure the region was... while its position betrays the origin of the invaders it was designed to hold up, and its architectural development the importance attributed to it. The richness of its fabric shows the power of its owners, and its present condition the political evolution of the county. It is in fact almost a page of history."

That is excellently said, and turn to the illustration of the castle of Diósgyőr (which incidentally lies just west of Miskolc), and there is yet another point of view that strikes one at once, if one lives in Western Europe and is interested in architecture. The castle is oblong with an inner courtyard and four square angle towers. Now this is a type which characterizes the South Italian and Sicilian castles of Frederick II, the Suabian emperor, and then Charles of Anjou. In France Doudran and the Louvre of Philip Augustus represent it, in Britain the Welsh castles of the late thirteenth century. The nearest in appearance to Diósgyőr is a castle like Bolton Castle in Yorkshire, and that dates from 1379 etc., whereas Diósgyőr is of 1343–95. It is interesting therefore that King Charles Robert (Caroberto) who ruled Hungary from 1307 to 1342 and Louis the Great who ruled from 1342 to 1382 were of the House of Anjou, as was Robert the ruler of Southern Italy who moreover was a brother of Louis IX of France, successor of Philip Augustus. So here is a network as far stretching in its historical and architectural relations as the functional network to which the preface of Dr. Dercsényi's book refers.

Not the least valuable aspect of the book is the historical introduction—not Hungarian history (which all of us over here could do with) but history of the *Denkmalpflege*, the care for monuments in Hungary. Dr. Dercsényi distinguishes three phases, 1863–1934, 1934–49, since 1949. The first phase is Austro-Hungarian, and preservation came under the *K.u.K. Zentralkommission* in Vienna. It is the phase we would name after Sir George Gilbert Scott, the French after Viollet-le-Duc. The nominal aim was restoration, the factual aim to make the building truer than it ever was. One characteristic feature is the isolation of the monument under treatment by the removing of those small houses and streets which in the Middle Ages came close to the big building. This display on a platter was made for the Matthias Church in Buda and for Pécs Cathedral. Besides, the south side of Pécs, the present furnishings and more are of 1882 etc., and the picturesque top of the south-west tower of the Matthias Church is of about 1900.

By that time, however, the attitude had begun to change. After all, William Morris's Anti-Scrape, i.e. the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, was founded in 1877, and Ruskin had pleaded passionately for preservation instead of restoration already about 1850. A Hungarian quotation, belated of course, but nonetheless trenchant, presents the case. It comes from Baron Forster, chairman of the Commission for the Preservation of Historic Monuments and dates from 1906; "The task we are confronted with is not one requiring the architect to demonstrate his genius and fantasy by remodelling and reconstructing our historic monuments; it demands far more. Through an intimate knowledge of their style, he should endeavour to protect and preserve them with loving care in their original form with every respect for the work of the original architect." And the passage goes on: "What right has the restoring architect to consider, say, the thirteenth century

parts of a historic monument as the original structure, and to destroy the rest, because it is the product of the fourteenth, fifteenth or sixteenth century?" Indeed even before 1906 the restoration of the abbey church of Ják and the ruinous Premonstratensian church of Zsámbék, begun in 1896 and 1899 respectively, were done according to SPAB principles. But the best principles are of no avail, if the money is lacking.

The Commission in 1901 had 80,000 crowns, the cost of the restoration of Ják was 300,000, and of the Matthias Church cost over 2,000,000, of Pécs Cathedral nearly as much. It was only in 1934 that more money was granted, the Commission was reorganized and contacts made on the technical matters of preservation with Italian experts, especially those in Rome. Proof of the new expertise are the excavations and the reconstruction of the Palace of Esztergom, especially of the lovely chapel of *c.* 1200 with the beautiful rib-vaulting of its choir, the Roman remains at Szombathely with mosaics and a main road crossing, and the palace of Visegrád with its amazingly up-to-the-minute Italian Renaissance details of the age of King Matthias who died as early as 1490, twenty years before the first example of work *all'antica* in England.

The Second World War left Hungarian buildings in a desperate state and what in the last twenty years has been done by an impoverished country must amaze the traveller from England. The traveller who himself may have something to do with preservation will be interested in Dr. Dercsényi's exposition of the way preservation is organized in Hungary and of the particular problems of individual sites, churches, country houses, town houses, farm buildings and occasional early industrial buildings.

Finally, it is particularly noteworthy that Hungary among its *preservanda* includes what we would call Victorian buildings and not only the celebrated Houses of Parliament —progeny of ours—but also the National Museum of 1837–46 by Michael Pollack, the former County Hall of 1834–41 by Zitterbarth and the Municipal Music Hall of 1859–64 by Feszl. So the Hungarians have made up their minds not to fall into our fatal error the most cruel victims of which have been the Euston Propylaea and the Coal Exchange. But how many more have been pulled down, because they were not listed at all or only as grade III. As for Budapest, since the Houses of Parliament, though begun in 1884, were only completed in 1902, may one take it that Ödön Lechner's capital Art Nouveau (the Postal Savings Bank is of 1899–1902) is also protected? If it isn't, it ought to be, however unfeeling our vandals over here have been only a year or two ago to the Imperial Hotel in Russell Square.

NIKOLAUS PEVSNER

THE FEARFUL FUTURE — THE HAUNTED PAST

FERENC KARINTHY: *Epepe*, Magvető, Budapest, 1971, 302 pp.
GYÖRGY G. KARDOS: *Hová lettek a katonák?* ("Where Have All the Soldiers Gone?"), Magvető, Budapest, 1971, 224 pp.

Utopia and Anti-Utopia

Writers don't care to write Utopias nowadays. Philosophers and writers just don't dream about Sun States, Erewhon and Icaria; science-fiction writers at best invent newer and unimaginable wonders of technology which generally however lack any kind of philosophical or social background. At the same time anti-Utopias are being produced *en masse* as if to make good the deficiency. The dreams we dream about our future are inseparable from our despair about mankind—writes E. M. Cioran. The Utopian and the apocalyptic points of view—poles apart, two completely opposite approaches—increasingly converge and frequently blend into one. Anti-Utopians imagine the kind of future we all fear; we dread its approach, we long to resist it, that is, if only it were possible. But, alas, its roots are already deeply planted in our today. Aldous Huxley's ironical and distressing *Brave New World* started a school.

Writers today who are fearful of this kind of future—or one of its possible variants—do not create an ideal world in their novels to set against the present; they do not describe the happy Town where there is no money nor illness nor tyranny nor slavery and where the personality can unfold in freedom. On the contrary, stressing the by no means unjustifiable anxiety felt in the face of the growing dangers of the twentieth century, they let their imagination dwell on the inhumanity of a technology beyond control, on the cataclysm of atomic war, on the distorting effect of the manipulation of human beings, on the threat of over-population, on alienation.

And it is with the last the author of *Epepe* is mainly concerned.*

The City Labyrinth

Budai, the chief character in the novel, is a middle-aged inhabitant of Budapest, and an expert on the Finno-Ugrian languages by profession; he sets out by plane for Helsinki, where he is due to deliver a lecture at a congress. By some mysterious, fantastic error he finds himself in a large city in a country whose language, for all his skill as a linguist, he cannot understand. He lives in this city for a few months and makes every effort to learn the language there; the dangers of our daily life, continued in the imagination, surround and harass him. He haunts hotels and restaurants, the brothel and sporting events, the amusement park and the prison, subways and taxis, the cemetery and the zoo, the law-court, the slaughter house, the skating rink and the market-hall, hospitals and pubs, always looking for some clue to the strange tongue, trying to establish a connection with his past and his native country. But all in vain. And, yet each minute fragment of the life around him is logical and natural; all the daily matter of modern life has only shifted one slight degree, to the grotesque, not to absurdity. Nothing is unfamiliar—yet everything is absolutely strange. He

* See parts of the novel on pp. 89–109 of this issue.

doesn't understand the regulations of the hotel, the humiliations caused by the prison, the splendid, bloody view of the uprising that broke out unexpectedly, nor can he make out why life goes on after the revolt had been suppressed as if nothing had happened.

To arrive at a proper understanding of the situation the fantastic fact has to be accepted that while all the inhabitants understand one another Budai, despite all his efforts, cannot learn the language. It is coherent, it makes sense for the porter and the maid, the lift-girl, the policeman and the police officer. Budai is the only one who does not understand it; nor do the others understand him; he comes to symbolize the process by which, the novel suggests, we understand each other less and less as we wander in the labyrinths of great cities.

Where was Ferenc Karinthy when this idea, the theme of the novel, entered his mind? On the Budapest Boulevard during the afternoon rush-hour traffic? Or—more plausibly—on one of his trips abroad, maybe in the United States—strolling the streets of an American metropolis and overcome by fear that people might not understand his English nor he their American, or that he might not find his way back to the hotel and even less to the airport and home? Or somewhere else, in another country with a different language? Who can tell? A fear transformed into an obsession and set down in novel form, where the plot turns on one single absurd element supported by a thousand realistic details. The fear, the agony might have sprung from something in the writer's specific situation, from a momentary malaise which developed into a fixed idea; in any case this fear of non-communication is one of the greatest problems of our age, the increasingly frequent subject matter of novels and poems, philosophical treatises and sociological surveys.

The Greeks, who concealed their fear in a mythological disguise, populated the labyrinth with monsters; modern man knows that the labyrinth itself is the monster: the danger of losing contact with one's fellow-beings and losing one's identity in the course of this desperate search. The age-old anxiety has increased out of knowledge under the stresses of city life and a technological civilization, and at the same time its psychological and social causes have become clearer. Which is why the growing solitude, terror and neurosis of walkers in a city, looking in vain for a companion, has become a frequent subject in modern literature: Beckett and Le Clézio, Robbe-Grillet and Kerouac, writers who have nothing in style or form in common, have written on the tragedy of man wandering the highways and boulevards of cities or straying in their blind alleys. A hundred and fifty years ago Stendhal could still dream of a large city and of living a secluded life and working in the midst of its Maelstrom; poets and novelists later were to idealize the bustle and beauty of a great capital. The writers of today seem to think that Stendhal's dream came true—overtrue—and turned to agony.

Driven by their inner restlessness, their heroes take roads that seem to open out on to infinity, but lead nowhere—their labyrinth, therefore, leads to suicide, murder, slow decomposition and despair. Karinthy's hero is apparently projected into this particular world by chance, and does not know—as the reader knows—that this city is similar to the city he left. Is this why he does not finally, like them, accept nothingness? In the last scene of *Epepe*, a finely poetic piece of writing, Budai sets out along the borders of a small lake, which is not a small lake, but is fed by a small rivulet, a brook in the City Park, for the water is flowing slowly —flowing somewhere, flowing to the sea, and the sea would take him home. Goodbye, Epepe, he thought. He was confident that he would soon be home. Budai set out for home from his anti-Utopia as the heroes of classical Utopias sailed home from the reality of their perfect worlds.

One wonders whether Ferenc Karinthy did not dare, or chose not to push to its conclusion the central themes of alienation. Or was it, perhaps, a deliberate device of his that Budai could not communicate with the inhabitants of the City, a slightly artificial device—that the linguist should remain unaware that it is a mirror-image of his own city. The experiences which led Karinthy to Epepe were different from those which drove Beckett to the crossroads where his characters were waiting for Godot, and Le Clézio's to his Miss B. and the strange and yet so real Town? Or has his character, the Hungarian linguist, a different attitude to life, adopting the closing words of *The Tragedy of Man*, a last-century epic drama by Imre Madách: "Strive on, strive on and trust"? It was scarcely a philosophical perception that moved him to set out along the banks of the rivulet; it was, perhaps, his inherent temperament, a stronger faith and confidence than the others' in the delights of life, a greater eagerness and hopefulness; it seems to be a different kind of philosophy, deriving from a different experience.

Savoir Vivre

A certain earthly wisdom has always characterized Ferenc Karinthy himself and sometimes his characters. It is a certain savoir-vivre, meaning no more or less than the pursuit of wordly matters, love and play, the joys of thinking and travelling, entering into competition with others, delighting in eating and drinking, meeting with success, revelling in sensuous and intellectual pleasures, and turning them all into art. Karinthy is a born storyteller, whose flexible language and easy style, skill in the creation of character and ready humour has always served this basic philosophy of his, in whatever manner he chose to express it, be it the avid pursuit of pleasure as such, or its reverse, whether he writes about childhood memories in his earlier short stories, novels and plays, or water-polo players grappling with each other above and below water, or vegetating and pretentious Hungarian emigrants, successful university professors and unsuccessful half-genuises. And all the while he tells his splendid stories in an increasingly splendid style, concise, ironical and elegant, putting his tragi-comical characters into tragi-comical situations—that's what people are like—that's the way we live in the world! He seems to despair of any moral order in the human situation and human fate, as if he wanted to abandon any ethical judgement on the world, or any picture of the most important suffering and passions. With such a view of life a greater and more penetrating compassion gave way to sardonic amusement, carefully considered ideas and profound feelings were replaced by exciting and entertaining *stories*, told with originality and felicity.

Epepe was inspired by the view that man must persevere. Ferenc Karinthy has retained all his literary abilities; as always, he is natural, he has a feeling for life, for the farcical aspect of topsy-turvy yet basically real situations; his inclination to the grotesque is still present, and his witty imagination, the lively rhythm of his stories never fail to impress the reader. Taking full advantage of the form and opportunities of the anti-Utopian political novel, Karinthy has supplemented it in *Epepe* with insights into greater problems, such as the mode of life of lonely men, the relationship between different kinds of solitude, the shaping of modern ways of life and the final question, where does social and individual life lead? Budai, or rather the writer—and the intelligent reader as well—searches for the answer. Poetic consistency is not one of Karinthy's qualities, and in order to pass judgement while avoiding an answer he makes it impossible for his chief character to question the world in which he has to live, and to connect the past and present

with the threats of the future. Karinthy however manages to interweave his own moral uneasiness into the subject, the situations and descriptions, in a higher degree than in his earlier writing. This disquietude —alas!—continues to be the eternal price paid for *great literature* with a moral purpose.

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Unexpected Success

Avrahim Bogatir hét napja ("The Seven Days of Avraham Bogatir") by György G. Kardos was the first novel of an almost unknown writer at the time it was published three years ago; it became a bestseller, was praised by the critics and translated into German and French; the American edition is now in preperation. The scene of the novel was laid in Palestine in 1947, and the critics stressed that in addition to describing a historical period, clashes between savage nationalism and colonialism, and so forth, the book devotes itself to more universal and acutely contemporary problems, such as whether a person can avoid taking a political stand in a crisis?

Apart from the interest of the tale itself, the apparently old-fashioned form of the novel is due to the fact that Kardos seems to use a traditional form of writing at a time when the technique of fiction has undergone a revolution, revolutions in fact, but in its succinct factuality, powerful atmosphere, and assured and elegant allusiveness, it is completely modern. On its first appearance critics, of course, asked the usual question. Is Kardos a one-book man, or has he more up his literary sleeve?

Where Have All the Soldiers Gone? shows that Kardos's first novel was no flash in the pan; he is a real writer.

Khamsin and Limbo

The story takes place immediately after the Second World War in a T.B. sanatorium in Palestine. The war ends, but the wounds it has left bring the past home with shocking violence both to the war heroes and to the reader himself; the wounds the fighters of General Anders' Polish Corps received in many battles, as well as all the prejudices and passions, the vicious indifference and vicious angers of half-crazy and confused Arabs, Englishmen, Jews and Poles. Exhausted Europe meets in this hospital; wounded, desperate and displaced men—more than one of them doomed to death—wage their past victories over and over in their minds and continue to wage a fierce and sad war with one another, trying to be faithful to their earlier ideals and obsessions or at least to their former standards. In the background visions of the Near-East appear: Arabs and Jews stand by, uncomprehending, amazed, smiling, watching these vain struggles, this Maelstrom of magnificent gestures and vile intentions—with no presentiment, perhaps, that they too will soon be carried away on the current of political passion.

It was clear from *The Seven Days of Avraham Bogatir* that Kardos is particularly expert in combining the basic theme of his novel and the environment in which it is situated. In *Where Have All the Soldiers Gone?* peace and quiet have returned to the world, but before these miserable wrecks who have never forgotten their past glory die, preparations for war are once more afoot. Tossing and turning on uncomfortable iron bedsteads semi-fascist and fascist Polish officers, soaked through with an arrogant nationalism, dream of massacres to come. This one or that tries to conceal his anti-Semitic views in the presence of the Jewish and non-Jewish doctors and nurses from all quarters of the globe who are looking after them, but ancient antagonisms rise again and again, in the plot of the book itself, and in the dialogue. However strongly they feel these differences, the conflicts are meaningless, and ring ironically in the airless wards of the ill-supplied sanatorium where camphor injections, pneumothorax and the death-rattle are daily routine. Passionate

outpourings, hatreds, tempestuous outbursts are somewhat grotesque in the face of the almost certain end.

The Polish officer who dreams of bygone triumphs and revenges to come, the baroness with a religious vocation for missionary work and a secular vocation for the pleasures of seduction, ready for sexual conquest at the drop of a hat, and all the other doomed creatures, wait in the limbo here below. Their sufferings are intensified by the impending khamsin, the hot wind from the desert which "dims the sun, cuts off the cool breeze, drains the humidity from the thin air and transforms the earth into a dry grey-white, glowing, burning hot, dry furnace." It tells them, far from their countries, suffocating from the circumstances that bind them, that the last act is near. It is too much for the Jews and Arabs of Palestine, it is even more unbearable for the foreigners; the khamsin covers them like an immense glass bell, saturates their bones, jangles their nerves, and drives the weaker to outbursts of fury and fits of madness: the intolerable climate is the final burden added to the wounds inflicted by history and the slow decomposition of their wasted bodies. Their spiritual pains, their broken bodies, the khamsin, combine and interact on one another in counterpoint.

The Guide

An Arab boy, Abed Saker, is our Virgil through this tour of hell. He lives in Katra village on the hill slopes above, and works in the sanatorium. He nurses and washes the patients, and his duties also include changing the Monaldi bottles; he is in and out the wards all the time, and through him we get to know Kretek and Grünwaldowa, Beata and Sergeant Steiner, Mario Mendez the doctor and Rachel the nurse, Fatiya, the dying Arab peasant woman, and Zosia; sympathies and conflicts develop rapidly, change and are transformed in the small world of the sanatorium. Abed, uneducated but quick-witted, is curious about everything, but understands little; the reader becomes aware of what is happening, the disputes, the antagonisms, the death struggles, on a dual level; through the uncomprehending eyes of the boy, through the all-comprehending vision of the writer. Abed himself is moved by the extreme manifestations of human misery; even he, the poor Arab boy, feels rich and strong before them, he feel disgust or at best disdain for the hatred, malice and malevolence of the patients. Kardos never comments directly, rarely explains the background or the past. The historical and psychological causes of the hatred and suffering emerge through dialogue and snatches of conversation; the reader understands their connotations and implications as the simple Arab boy does not.

Young Abed-Virgil, however, is not only an intermediary between characters and reader. He is at the same time an independent character in his own right, one of the chief actors in the story. He recalls the *ingénu*, the innocent, the Candide of eighteenth century literature; his simplicity and honesty act as a foil to the corrupted spite of the Polish officers. His puppy love for Hephzibah, his innate sense of justice raise the hope that he will come to represent another kind of human behaviour; but it may equally happen that time and the world will tarnish his innoncence, and his frank, open, honest look be dimmed by the prejudices of history. The writer raises the question, but leaves it unanswered.

Irony and Poetry

As in *The Seven Days of Avraham Bogatir* Kardos leads up to a great set scene where all the characters confront one another. The great scene in *Avraham Bogatir* is laid in Jerusalem, and comes in the middle of the novel. The fate of the characters had not

yet been decided, the story continues. In *Where Have all the Soldiers Gone?* the great set piece comes at the end with the death of Colonel Bugajski. Like the other, junior, officers in the hospital, Bugajski is an anachronism with a fantastic feudal-military ideal of life and man's place in it: and yet he is of another mould, and despite his absurd and out-of-date attitudes he arouses a certain sympathy in the reader. Under the impact of suffering and impending death, he seems to become aware of the futility of his whole past.

The officers line up for the final farewell. Zmogrodzki who had suffered from frozen feet, mad Michalek and the vile Litvin put on their dress uniforms, hobble up to the deathbed of their commander, and stand at attention. If only for a few moments the human wrecks are soldiers once again. Up to this moment the author has watched them with a sardonic smile; even on the threshold of death they continue to fight one another senselessly, like Kilkenny cats, their minds concentrated on new wars, new prisons, new gallows. But now, when they stand before their dead commander and the new senior officer Major Sienkiewicz says "let us pray", Abed's disdain, Kardos's irony falls silent; death, the death of Bugajski, the approaching death of the others, offers new insights. Irony dissolves into poetry and the shock and emotion felt by Abed seem transmitted to the author. Lorries rumble onwards outside the sanatorium, crammed with soldiers of the Eighth Army singing *Lili Marlene;* the sound of the voices penetrates to the ward from the road beyond, but almost mockingly, singing of the trivialities and transient frivolities of common life, and in those final moments the cool mordancy of the novel fades into the sad words of Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*.

PÁL RÉZ

FILLING THE VACUUM

GYULA KURUCZ: *Nohát meséljünk* ("Let's tell a tale"), Magvető, Budapest, 1970, 184 pp; GÉZA BEREMÉNYI: *A svéd király* ("The King of Sweden"), Magvető, 1970, 165 pp; ZSUZSA VATHY: *Erőterek* ("Fields of force"), Magvető, Budapest, 1970, 221 pp.

In the last ten years or so there have been almost no young talents to follow the "young" writers of thirty or thereabouts, and a qualitative vacuum seemed to be the result. But recently there has been a significant change. Several new young writers, with marked individualities from the outset, have appeared at the same time, at first through a number of short stories published in literary reviews, and later with separate volumes of their own. For all the differences in method and style, one common feature marked them all: the rejection of aesthetic tabus. The means and tools of their craft were not adapted to preconceived ideas but in accordance with the need of the ideas they wish to express. They are linked with contemporary Hungarian society: they wish to fulfil their purpose, express their individuality to the full, here and now, not in the future.

The one of the three new young authors

with the most promise is Gyula Kurucz, who has written a novel based on a singular plot. Three wanderers set out from the Earth for Fairyland, to discover the last spot of the world not yet subjugated by civilized mankind. They are three, just as in a fairy tale, but their mission and character are very much of this world. The retired strong man of a circus, and the two public officials, one the boss, the other his subordinate, have the privilege of pioneering the intended invasion by Earth. They carry a walkie-talkie and guns in their knapsacks and they wander through the country to be conquered. The place is full of miraculous beings, the incarnations of the thousand-year dreams and unrealizable desires of humanity. The three valiant pioneers fall into a perfect pattern: the group leader commands by means of arbitrary orders, the subordinate official carries them out with mean cunning, the strong man with brutal force. Under their influence the fairy creatures also seem to change, we learn their other side. Woodcutter, famous for his indefatigable labours, walks with a stoop, looks around him, sees the innumerable trees he has cut down, and no longer knows why he had exhausted himself in his purposeless efforts to destroy the wood. Little Snow White, it now appears, was simply intent on snaring the prince as her husband and now, betrayed and deceived, is forced to beg the wicked stepmother to give her an "anti-baby apple".

The author roundly declares that his work is a parable: this helps the reader, because nothing is more tiresome than a concealed parable revealing itself in its very concealment. The blessings of civilization turn to a curse in the hands of those who make machines work for them instead of using their brains, and human values perish wherever the conqueror's arrogance prevails. All the methods employed up to the present to degrade and liquidate human beings are the primitive fumblings of the beginnings of industrialism compared to the sophisticated inventivness of the modern mind. The balance of forces is clear in the story: the old bogeys of Fairyland, the iron-nosed witch and the seven-headed dragon, become the oppressed and exploited slaves of the wanderers with their very noble mission.

The theme Gyula Kurucz has worked on is one congenial to his philosophical inclinations, and the story and its ending (the human group, after it has unscrupoulously and successfully accomplished its mission, falls victim to an accidental planning mistake on Earth) accentuates his deliberate purpose. Some of the handling is clumsy, some of the plot too elaborate—a weakness due to the uncertainties of a beginner. Nor is his style as yet commensurate with the demands of his fantastic imagination.

Géza Bereményi's *novella* is built on an ingenuous idea which he exploits to the full. Unexpected twists and turns produce a perfectly natural effect as in well-organized theatrical situations. Charles XII. King of Sweden, on the eve of a battle decisive for the fate of his empire, is involved with a young man of contemporary Budapest in a lively discussion on his own war plans and the young man's love affair. The King has stepped out of the pages of a historical novel because he thought it absolutely necessary to exchange views with the reader, and to make use of the opportunitites and possibilities provided by the two different historical epochs. "Your campaign depends on mine and mine depends on yours"—he declares, as the basic reason for their encounter, and out of this idea emerges a well-written short story. The dialogue is persuasive, and convinces the reader of this mutual dependence, stressing the identical role played by choice and decision in both the great historical and the small personal actions.

The other *novella, Games on the Hunting Ground,* is likewise enthralling. Young people bored with what they feel is purposeless work meet in an apparently deserted hunting lodge and play at Red Indians. They adopt the expressions and attitudes of the Indian

stories read in their childhood. Later they change their period and adopt another type of warfare, playing at being an underground group whose members meet for the last time before capture. They are determined to discover the person who betrayed them and in the violence of their discussion they begin to reveal, all unawares, their true relationships to one another, the hidden and open contradictions which exist between them. The acted argumentation of the underground group and the very real arguments arising among themselves are interrupted by a man carrying a gun, who orders them to stand against the wall and levels his gun at them. The play has not changed into reality: the man is a hunter who, overhearing their discussion, decided to join in as a "playfellow", not so much because he liked the idea, but rather because he wanted to bring them to their senses, or perhaps (as indicated by a half sentence) because the play has awakened in him very real memories.

These sudden switches and turns, these somewhat unusual plots, will lead the reader to see that both the stories are variations of the same theme, that it is the same restless man in each wearing different masks, and struggling in different situations, which all stem from one basic situation—the choice history or individual life force on him between the opportunities he imagines and those practically open to him. The full implications of this theme have not been explored by the writer: he never goes below the surface. "Literature" would have been a better title than "The King of Sweden", because artistic values here take precendence of subject matter. Beremény displays qualities rare with beginners: he writes with unusual assurance and lightness of style, the structure of the stories is precise; all superfluous elements have been pared away, and consequently there is no boring overelaboration of ideas. Concise descriptions successfully indicate frames of mind, the play of association evokes others. If he inserts a narration—rarely, as most of the tales are built on dialogue—he connects the several threads smoothly, making use of the achievements of modern prose easily and naturally. The imagined and the real world overlap, the writer changes his stance within one and the same sentence. The way he handles time and space makes it clear that Beremény does not simply take over fashionable techniques wholesale, he is intent on using them functionally. Any human action, a person in a room walking from the window to the door, for instance, provides him with the opportunity of both describing the movement and the scene, and at the same time evoking the memories of the person at that precise moment—which can continue over several pages. Beremény only uses this method when the specific situation justifies it; despite all the temptations inherent in this type of story, he never abuses it.

Beremény is a rare example of a beginner mastering his craft and demonstrating that the routine of writing, in the good sense of the term, can be acquired relatively early. But his undoubted talent fails to provide his well-written stories with solid ideas. This weakness is indirectly linked with his cult of form: the first pleasures of the craft and game of writing tend to swamp the theme in his mind, and he consequently fails to convey it adequately to the reader.

This first book of Zsuzsa Vathy demonstrates a special quality of the short story. Short stories that are fully valid in themselves gain when read together, revealing further aspects in each, lending newer interpretetations to one another. The recurring motive in her tales is the struggle waged by thinking and creative men against the obstacles placed in the way of self-expression, the fight waged for a meaningful, active life. Vathy began her adult life as a chemical engineer. The compulsion on her to formulate her thoughts led her away from the rational world of technology, but her outlook has

been conditioned by her engineering experiences. An ironical short story "If in This Summer" recalls her early career as a writer. A melancholic and embittered student keeps the dead flowers in her room, and replaces her bright rug with another, striped grey and white, in order to eliminate anything which might distract her from self-analysis and philosophical absorption. She also speaks ironically of "natural science imbued with the futility of existence". "When I distilled liquids in the laboratory I discovered the compulsory unity of matter and spirit in the two phases of the process, liquid to vapour, vapour to liquid; in the theoretical utility of machines I saw a transcendency to which I vainly aspired; in the two sorts of charges which I never really understood I discovered the schizophrenia of the world; the inability of rare gases to react was a symbol of the loneliness of the subject, and the severe logic of crystals was identical with the indifference of nature." Young intellectuals who feel the gap between their daily work and their True Vocation *(My screams)*, cannot rid themselves of one question: and what would you like to be now? This feeling invades her at the solemn moment of receiving her degree, the symbol of accomplishment and social status. All she received with her degree was an already determined place in a circular orbit. But man is not identical with his profession; he is not "his passport photo, his name, his height, his role, not even his words and adopted gestures, the smile or grimace he addresses to the public, the joy or disgust he is able to voice, no, he is something quite different —he will not even tarnish it by defining it; perhaps he cannot even express it."

Zsuzsa Vathy has a power of consistent thought and is precise in the way she formulates it: her aim is to express the suppressed desire for fulfilment which is inevitably frustrated. This unsuccessful and ever-recurrent struggle is most precisely expressed in her short story *Career*. A model employee, a paragon of correctitude has a little habit of counting everything around him. This leads to the compulsive urge to collect and store scientific data and the huge mass of information he acquires begins to build up a system in his brain until gradually he reaches his goal: to condense the universe into a single formula. He publishes his great solution, but his paper is rejected, and his overcharged brain, mocked at by the "lunatic devotees of detail", is no longer amenable to reason. The whole system of connections crumbles and disintegrates.

These short stories are written in different tones and styles according to their themes: accurate, objective description here, a loosely-shaped narrative there, each form she uses is the vehicle for a series of well-constructed ideas; nearly every story has its counterpart. The *Wedding Rings* is the counterpart of the *Career:* the story of man in search of final stability. A man has a wedding ring which is too large for his finger, and in constant fear of losing it he buys another without telling his wife. The new ring fits his finger exactly but now he is afraid she will learn its secret and he changes it again, going and buying new rings until he realizes that his restless fear is due to the latent but hopeless disaccord with his wife. The grotesque story is cleverly constructed: with the repeated changing of the rings the style of writing also changes; it begins with farce and ends with tragedy.

She is consistent; even the natural connection between reality and irreality (the elements that are real on another—imaginative—level), has a consistency which makes her short stories interesting.

László Varga

EXPERIMENTING WITH UNEMOTIONAL POETRY

GYÖRGY PETRI: *Magyarázatok M. számára* ("Explanations for M."), Szépirodalmi Kiadó, Budapest, 1971, 127. pp.)

Sometime in the twenties or thirties Mihály Babits (1883–1941), who was at once a Catholic, rationalist and humanist poet, and the author of a monumental history of European literature drew the attention of young poets to T. S. Eliot, a congenial spirit. Since then Eliot has become part of literary education in Hungary also. Interesting papers were published on him and a dozen or so poets translated his works, a volume of his selected poems has been published in Hungarian. "Waste Land" was translated by Sándor Weöres, who wrote a beautiful poem dedicated to Eliot's memory, and István Vas, who found a source of inspiration in Eliot. The 1947–8 turning point in Vas's manner was certainly influenced by Eliot.*

Nevertheless this is the first time that a young poet turned to Eliot for help, even before his first volume appeared, in order to avoid the danger of epigonism. György Petri is 28, his first volume of poems was recently published, his attitude in itself is already sufficient to merit attention. Two years ago István Vas printed his poems in *Költők egymás közt* ("Poets Between Themselves"), an anthology. At that time Petri wrote about himself: "My poems printed in this anthology were all written in 1968–69, after a gap of several years. When writing verse at an earlier date I was influenced by Attila József. I stopped writing when I recognized that the tradition of Attila József could not be directly continued. He was the last to produce major verse with the maximum intensity of his personality while safeguarding the lyrical bases of poetry. I also found that my inclinations—in close connection with my growing interest in philosophy and my studies—encouraged me not to accept my experiences directly as subjects but to search for the nature and bases of the more general problems of life involved in these experiences. This of course means that the traditional framework of poetry is disrupted or at least widened, on the one hand epical and dramatic elements are introduced, and, on the other the poet must, to a certain extent, renounce his personality. T. S. Eliot's verse opened the way for my own inclinations in this direction. But I do not pretend to be a "follower" of Eliot; beyond differences in outlook the main difference is that impersonality is not my programme but my problem."

Attila József (1905–1937) was discovered for the world by Benedetto Croce shortly after his death. In recent years he apparently had a beneficient and liberating influence on poetry in several countries, including Italy and France. It is characteristic of the metabolism of world literature that a Hungarian poet turns away from him at the very moment when contemporaries abroad look to him for their own liberation. Stephen Spender, who paid several visits to Austria in the middle forties would have understood Attila József well, and not only because they were near contemporaries. They had common interests, Marxism, the workers' movement, the fight against fascism, the relation between Marxism and Freudianism, the problem of personality. Spender, in *World within World*, distinguished his poetry from Auden's in the following terms: "As for me, I was an autobiographer restlessly searching for forms in which to express the stages of my development." These words could have been said by Attila József about himself; at the same

* István Vas on his visit to T. S. Eliot in *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, No. 17, p. 137.

time what Spender said about Auden was also true of him: "Auden was a highly intellectual poet, an arranger of his world into intellectual patterns, illustrated with the brilliant imagery of his experience and observation. His special achievement was that he seized on the crude material of the unconscious mind which had been layed bare by psychoanalysts, and transformed it into a powerful poetic imagery. He showed great technical virtuosity." Attila József could be described as didactic, as Spender described Auden. Attila József, who drew upon the Kalevala, Hungarian folk poetry, Rimbaud, and the avantgardists of East and West—was one of the most erudite Marxists of his time, if not the most erudite, and new findings seemed to prove that he had studied Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* thoroughly and with understanding soon after it appeared. He concerned himself with the problems of semantics and biology too. Apart from a short period when he wrote free verse, his poems were extremely strict in form—he wrote sonnets, in some of which he joined a Mozartian musicality to the wildest imagery and the most scientific and precise notions. In the past twenty-five years these qualities made him the standard against which Hungarian verse is measured, though the process was not a smooth one. Not only his successors, his contemporaries and even his predecessors were judged by his standards. This was often unfair, and falsified the true nature of their work. Everybody found his own Attila József: the Marxist, Freudian or existentialist, the poet conscious of the future or the poet who surveyed destruction, the poet who safeguarded traditions or the innovator, etc. I vividly recall that a few years ago I introduced an evening devoted to a poet who was then 30, and very talented and independent and I spoke of the problem of detachment from Attila József. Both the audience and the poet protested against my words.

It is György Petri's merit that he was the first who put it bluntly that Attila József' enormously rich poetry could be also an impediment. A foreign poet, like Eliot —owing also to a difference in language and tradition—was more likely to set him free. In this case the danger of epigonism was not involved. Poems with "epic and dramatic" elements by Hungarian poets could also be found, such as Lajos Kassák, Tibor Déry (both influenced Attila József) or István Vas and Ferenc Juhász. As to the problem of impersonality, this is the concern of many contemporary Hungarian poets although they are primarily inspired by modern French verse structure.

The title Petri gives to his volume: *Magyarázatok M. számára* ("Explanations for M.") is most unusual in the history of Hungarian poetry, it has probably the same provocative effect as Eliot's *Prufrock and Other Observations* had at that time. It is an experiment in thinking without emotions, and in avoiding the traps of hope and despair. Petri writes "You learned to write dispassionately". The poem's title is: *A felismerés fokozatai* ("Degrees of Perception") its epigraph is by Novalis, in the text Burke is also mentioned. In one of his verses Petri says that he wanted to become the "ghostly hall of possibilities". One of his poems is a paraphrase of Hölderin, another evokes the memory of Catull: a third is dedicated to Kavafis, a fourth to the memory of Arnold Schönberg. The volume contains open allusions to Greek mythology and hidden allusions to Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*. Following Pessoa, or perhaps Sándor Weöres, Petri also published the diary of an imaginary person who committed suicide in 1811. Sadness is "neutral" for Petri, consequences are "sly", modesty is "mannerist", sorrow's grace is "corrupt". The poet's vocabulary consists of the colloquial language of the 60s and 70s. His complex sentences are accompained by explanations in brackets. His poems are usefully provocative and sometimes annoying: he is often loquacious, he has not yet learned to be concise.

LÁSZLÓ FERENCZI

HUNGARIAN EYEWITNESSES ON THE PARIS COMMUNE

MÁRTA NYILAS (ed.): *Magyar szemtanúk a párizsi kommünről* (Hungarian Eyewitnesses on the Paris Commune), Budapest, Kossuth 1971. 274 pp. With an introduction by Tibor Erényi.

The centenary of the Paris Commune has produced a number of new books and studies on the subject in many countries, but the Hungarian contribution is relatively poor. Two self-contained books have been published; one of them, a translation of a work by that excellent French Marxist historian, the late Maurice Choury: *"Vive la Commune"*; the other the subject of this review.

A number of queries promptly come to mind: Who were these eye-witnesses? Have any of these accounts been previously published? Do they tell us anything new? And so on and so forth.

Well, with one exception none of these eye-witnesses came from the working class, or was a socialist. The exception was Leo Frankel, the Hungarian Communard, the well-known head of the Committee for Social Affairs. Studies on other works of his have appeared in Hungarian, French, German and Russian. The people we meet here are mainly young republicans, liberal intellectuals who could be defined as representing the "extreme left" opposition in the spectrum of Hungarian politics. With the Hungarian revolution of 1848–49 still in their minds, they travelled in Europe in order to see at first hand the progressive life of the West held up as their ideal, and these young rebels, these intellectuals of the opposition, consequently all ended up in France. They were all enthusiastic for the French Republic, and a few of them, such as Gábor Ugron, whose account of the critical days is the longest, fought for the Republic against the German troops as a volunteer. This was the background of their thinking and the attitude they adopted.

The Commune of course, meant much more than this, and these eye-witnesses understood very little of it. Not only because in the daily happenings of life contemporaries are prone to miss what is historically important and really new, but also because none of them was a socialist. Géza Schulhof, also a contemporary of these events, but living in Pest, the legal advisor of the General Workers Union attached to the First International, wrote at the time: "The press adopted a non-committal attitude because it had no interest in the final goal. Only the workers realized the importance of the Paris events." I mention these limitations to their point of view, but nonetheless, even though these eye-witnesses were only slightly aware of the social content of the Commune, and were by no means sparing of criticism either, yet when the life and death struggle began between Paris and Versailles, their sympathies undoubtedly lay with Paris, and after the fall of the Commune they wrote with indignation of the bloody counter-revolutionary terror, increased by the fact that they knew it by first hand experience. Their judgements are damning and the evidence they produce terrible. Not because they tell us anything new; but because it is the result of immediate observations.

Let Nándor Borostyáni speak first. Born in 1848, he went to France as correspondent for a Hungarian newspaper of the "middle left". There he went through the Franco-Prussian war and the Revolution of September 4th, 1870, of which he wrote with great enthusiasm. His account, which appeared in 1871, in the January 15th issue of the paper *Szabad Polgár* ("Free Citizen") painted a picture of the 4th of September almost to the last detail and he added: "Thus has the 4th of September arrived. This unforgettable day of cardinal importance in recent French history."

Like other Hungarians of the same stamp he described the proclamation of the Commune and the civil war which followed were qualified by him as "misfortunes," and he blamed the politicians for their "impatience."

Borostyáni, however, was not so superficial as to content himself with this generalization. As early as April, soon after the fighting broke out, he, like his companions, blamed the Thiers Government and the reaction: "If we look for the causes of the present French civil war, we must in the first place hold the National Assembly and the Thiers Government responsible for this fratricide. Most of the National Assembly indeed consists of royalist representatives who accepted the republican form of government not out of conviction but only as an act of necessity... The fact that the majority of the National Assembly from the outset were no friends of the real republicans is proved by innumerable examples." And these were indeed listed by the sharp-eyed reporter: the willingness to capitulate, the fact that the National Assembly failed to move to Paris, that an Imperial general was named Commander of the Paris garrison and that Imperial officiers were also nominated to head the National Guard. And finally—a perceptive point which deserves attention—Borostyáni also declared that one of the causes of the Commune was the fact that the Government did proclaim a moratorium for the payment of rent arrears and overdue bills (the effect of which was also emphasized in Marx's *Civil War in France*).

Borostyáni wrote critically of the Commune, which according to him "opened the way to many abuses" such as the taking of hostages, "demanding ransom from the wealthy" which, according to him turned this section of the population against the Commune. In the one article, however, which he wrote during the Commune itself, he was above all interested in an ending of the civil war and in the future, the fate of the Republic. He wrote bitterly that "a peaceful settlement is unimaginable" and claimed that civil war could only benefit the enemies of the Republic. Discussing the future, this leftist Republican eye-witness wrote that "for those of us who are witnessing these sad events at one remove, the fear that the losing party in the struggle will be the Republic seems justified. If the Government wins, it is foreseeable that the reaction will win," and he already feared that some kind of monarchist restoration might occur.

János Török, a Hungarian on a tour of the world accidentally arrived in Paris on his way back from Australia, and there lived through the 19th of March. He did not show as much understanding for the events of the Revolution as Borostyáni and hurriedly left the country, but his account is still interesting because it proved how much the "common people" were on the side of the Revolution. "The interior of Paris is now one vast election canvasser's constituency but the canvassing is going on in a more terrible way than at home at election time. Bourgeois, worker, proletarian and soldier are all orators. One canvasses for the Republic, the other for Bonapartism. The common people, however, are the most faithful supporters of the Communist Republic. I hurried up and down the streets and boulevards of the city, saw the people stream by in their hundreds of thousands, fight and kill... On the eve of the civil war I was horrified by the scenes and since I had no desire to offer myself as a victim for no reason at all, I packed up and left."

It is interesting that the same János Török, who in the article of his which appeared on April 2nd seemed to damn the Commune, wrote in the June 4th issue of a Hungarian paper after the victory of the counter-revolution: "The Commune has been stabbed to the heart and is in its death agony; the ideal of freedom is being trampled in the dust with the glorious people and the proud city. What the Prussians spared with respect is trampled underfoot by the hired servants of Versailles."

The most detailed account of revolutionary Paris was given by Gábor Ugron who came of a family of noble landowners. Ugron had studied law, was fired with literary ambitions, and inspired with an enthusiastic love of freedom. He left Hungary for France in January 1871 to fight for the French Republic as a member of the Garibaldist volunteers. After his return from France, he played a significant role in Hungarian public life as an MP, both in attempting to reconcile the peoples of the Danube basin and in his support for domestic reform in Hungary itself. Ugron arrived in Paris several months before the proclamation of the Commune and remained there until June. While there, he sent systematic reports and accounts of the situation to Hungarian papers, which appeared with more or less delay. His attention was directed towards the progress of the war and the battles taking place, which he described in minute detail. But he had an eye for other events as well. He discussed the mood of the people of Paris, cultural life there, and referred a number of times to political events, and political and military leaders.

His first reports of March are soberly objective, lightened by descriptions of the clothes the National Guardsmen of the Commune wore. As early as that month he noted an essential new feature of the Commune, the active part played by women: "I would be remiss if I failed to mention the female sutlers, women who went beyond the limitations of their sex in their self-sacrifice and fought side by side with the soldiers." About the adversary in Versailles he wrote on the other hand: "Many gentlemen and meretricious menials (including the prostitutes) are buzzing around their master, the former around Thiers and the latter around his servants."

Ugron, like his Hungarian companions, watched the spread of civil war with bitterness, sometimes he expressed confidence in the success of attempts at mediation, reporting on such attempts on the part of the freemasons and the inhabitants of the large provincial towns, and bluntly blamed the Thiers government for the lack of results.

In the beginning of April he concentrated on detailed descriptions of military movements, frequently animadverting on the disorder and vacillation he encountered in councils of the National Guard, that is, of the Commune. On the other hand, towards the end of March and the middle of April he reported on the election of the Commune, and the bye-election and the "escape of the financial world," the food shortage and the high cost of living. Ugron's reports, indeed, vividly conjure up the situation in the blockaded city for the readers in Pest: "The glittering shops and stores in the great boulevards have pulled down their iron shutters and soon the keys will rust on the nail. Only the grocers are still alive, the others, if not dead, have gone, like the sensitive gold coins no longer in the large pockets of the elegant world. This is very observable at night, because the trains of the demi-monde are left without men to admire them."

He reported on the theatre as he saw it, and devoted one article to his visit to a convent which had been opened up and incredible abuses had been exposed by the Commune. He himself talked to a half-insane nun there who had been in solitary confinement for some minor offence. He wrote of the concerts and exhibitions organized during the Commune and reviewed Emil Bayard's painting "Sedan," exhibited at that time by the Commune; he also reported on the opening of libraries. Such cultural news, however, only occasionally broke through his consistent preoccupation with military events.

Then came the historic moment of the fall of Paris, carefully observed and reported by Ugron. Commenting on the advance of the Versailles troops he added that "beside every captain there is either a National Guardsman with a white ribbon around his hat and a tricolor armband acting as guide, or a police

spy, also wearing the tricolor armband, as familiar with the streets as the gendarmes guiding the general staff, astutely leading the regular troops. I find it quite degrading when the army shakes hands with police spies."

On May 29th, the day that followed the defeat of the Commune, Ugron wrote: "From one reign of terror we fall into another. While the first one was wild, this is hypocritical. The first could be controlled before the madness of despair set in, but this cannot be controlled or outwitted." He also reported on the activities of the four courts martial, which organized the execution of hundreds of prisoners of war and in which as Ugron wrote, "witnesses are declared unnecessary and all efforts to produce evidence frustrated. People are saved or killed without rhyme or reason. This is the way M. Thiers interprets the statement he proclaimed to the civilized world: 'Law above all, everything according to law.' "

A letter of June 6 from Ugron declared that "the Commune was drowned in blood, and all men of principle answer with Victor Hugo: *Le cadavre est à terre et l'idée est debout.* (The corpse is on the ground and the idea on its feet.) Ugron also wrote about the connection between the International and the Commune in connection with the appeals of Jules Favre and his campaign against the International: "The members of the International in Paris are thrown into prison but the International is alive and on the march in every part of France... The sober minority of the Commune was made up of precisely the members of the International. The International, like the freemasons supported the revolution, but they did not make it. For above all, let me repeat with Kossuth that 'revolutions are not made for the people but by the people.' "

Nándor Szederkényi, also a young Republican, born in 1837, who later became an MP, wrote an article on the Commune which appeared in May 1871 in a Hungarian newspaper. Szederkényi, in "The Struggle of the Idea" identified himself totally with the Commune, or rather what he considered its essence, the idea of a federative republic. He defended the Commune in even more impassioned lines than those quoted above: "Unhappy people of Paris, who have already shed so much blood in struggles like these on behalf of ideas designed to benefit humanity! Now once again you paint the squares of Paris with it...

What is happening at the moment within the walls of Paris is one of the unique sights of the world. Such a formidable struggle has never yet occurred in the history of the world. It may be belittled or denigrated; the fact remains that the citizens of Paris are now in the process of writing the greatest drama of civil strife ever seen. It remains for the future to reveal whether the idea for which Paris is fighting rightly demands the sacrifice of life for the good of mankind or not."

In Szederkényi's eyes Paris was fighting for freedom, equality and a federative republic, all goals which he also considered legitimate and just and therefore the vigorous judgement he passed on the enemy was summed up in the last sentence of his article: "The Pharisees of Versailles are only shouting 'crucify him!', and Thiers, like his predecessor, is only washing his hands."

The Hungarian actor István Benyei also happened to be in Paris at that time. Benyei was another convinced republican who, in his letter of June, 1871, expressed the same opinions about the Commune as Szederkényi. In opposition to the lies of the Monarchist papers he wrote: "I am also with you and support what is for the time being (but in my belief not forever) a defeated Commune, because it inscribed great principles on its banner, and unless they are realized public prosperity, freedom and the rights of the people, which can in the short term be suppressed but never questioned, cannot be achieved... The

future will prove that the members of the Commune and their activities have been precipitately and wrongly condemned at the present time and I live in the conviction that not the Commune, which was abandoned, betrayed a hundred times and damned a thousand times, is at fault or guilty; the fault and the guilt is Europe's, which allowed it to fail and carelessly condemned it, and which watched as its freedom was being strangled by the tyrants' hirelings with indifference."

The volume also contains Frankel's letters to Marx as well as an article he wrote for two socialist papers, the Viennese *Volkswille* and the Geneva *Vorbote*, on the history of the Commune.

Nor, in conclusion, should László Geréb be forgotten. This excellent historian and bibliographer collected the material for this book over many laborious years, and it was only his death that prevented him from carrying it to completion.

JÁNOS JEMNITZ

THE PEASANTS AND THE 1945 LAND REFORM

The recently published book* on the land reform by Ferenc Donáth is both extremely informative and full of interest and should prove of lasting value. What makes it valuable is that the author gives a full account of the history of the Hungarian agrarian reform carried out twenty-five years ago which provides many lessons for the present and future. It is enjoyable as a piece of reading, and in addition quotes a number of important documents.

The writer's aim is made clear in the question he raises in the preface "Can a new study of the agrarian reform of 1945 add anything to our existing knowledge?" and he clarifies it in his answer by declaring that his main purpose is to point out its nature as a "collective action" on the part of the landless peasantry in the repartition of the great estates. More precisely: "The repartition of the large estates resulted from the activity of tens of thousands of poor peasants. The idea of the Communist Party was to commit the reform into the hands of the persons interested; this principle was the very essence of Marxism and the action was, moreover in the nature of an emergency arrangement, for the central power had no administrative organization vested with the needed authority at its command at that time, and unreservedly supported the activities of the progressive sections of the urban and agricultural working-class anxious to take a direct part in the management of public affairs."

The author proceeds to generalize from this specific characteristic of the agrarian reform, extending it to cover a far wider field. "The period when popular organizations flourished in Hungary coincided with the period of direct democracy". As he explains—"the spirit of revolutionary democracy affirming the supremacy of the workers' interests and organizations produced that special atmosphere in which the land-dis-

* Ferenc Donáth: *Demokratikus földreform Magyarországon.* ("Democratic Land Reform in Hungary"), Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1969, 404 pp.

tribution committees functioned, resisting the orders of higher authorities and making their own revolutionary amendments to the Land Reform Act. The committees were the genuine children of this revolutionary spirit, even if not its first-begotten."

These questions, the author believes, are important to-day in the context of the present and future development of Hungary. "Considering the ancient pattern of society, it had appeared expedient to maintain the earlier administrative structure. But since that time the pattern of Hungarian society has undergone fundamental changes. The general educational standards and skills of the members of urban and village communities who make collective use of the means of production are on a far higher level now than then—and incidentally, they are rising year by year—which inevitably leads to conflict with the old form of administrative organization acting as an obstacle to their free development. The validity of this statement is not affected by the fact that there may be no overt signs—under present conditions—of this conflict, it may indeed appear in a distorted form, and even seem quite unreasonable, as for instance, in the economy, at the time when the first changes in the economy were designed precisely to end such conflicts. The statement remains true even where communities or the majority of a collective membership have not yet become consciously aware of the need for change. The conflict nonetheless continues to exist as one of the main though hidden sources of social tensions. For this reason the earlier attempts, the forms they took and the actual methods employed in the direct management of public affairs—by people's organizations among others as exemplified in the practices of the land-distribution committees—may well be of interest even to-day."

Up to this point I am in complete agreement with the author; his work, I believe, is of outstanding importance and pioneering significance. In research terms, however, the two subjects have to be distinguished, although in close organic connection with each other. There is the question of direct democracy and the question of the agrarian reform. Two important questions of one and the same period are here at issue, which, however, are essentially different in their character and their historic consequences.

1. Ferenc Donáth has dug deeply and exhaustively into the mine of original sources at his disposal. With only a slight simplification one can summarize his conclusions as follows: Consequent upon liberation by the Soviet army the former state authority collapsed and new local organs, representing the power of the people, came into being in Hungary, and laid the foundations of a new kind of revolutionary "people's" democracy. "This was the period of the people's movement" writes the author, "when the workers were eager to manage and shape their life through their own organizations and prepare the ground for their own purposes according to their own choice...". "All over the country people's organizations were set up: factory committees, national committees, land-distribution committees, production committees and so on, each of them forging a new kind of life in their own particular workplace. The country lived an age of direct democracy, with meetings going on all the time, but the flow of democracy was soon, alas, followed by the ebb, with great damage to Hungary's subsequent development."

The "democratic flow" ebbed because neither the new Government nor the central leadership of the Communist Party supported it; indeed, they opposed it. "The government" says Donáth, "did not support the people's claim to manage matters directly, on their own; it was strongly opposed to it. The central power and the people's movement clashed directly on this question. The leadership of neither of the political parties of the time backed the people's demand, and the press ignored it or treated it with hostility."

There is no arguing facts; but the inferences which have been drawn from them and the assessment of events will give rise to discussions for a long time to come. Ferenc Donáth has made good use of the discussions on this subject, but there still remain many points at issue. Let me add that, like the author, I too supported the popular movement of those times. The sympathies of my father, my brother and my wife, my friends of peasant origin and my younger friends, the students of the Győrffy College, were all engaged on the side of this movement and I, who was Minister of the Interior at that time, supported the cause as well.

A number of questions such as the historical antecedents and sources of this popular movement, the character of the local expressions of this movement and what were, realistically speaking, the alternatives to the democratic transformation at that given historic moment still remain to be investigated.

The importance of these questions is best shown by the result of the elections held in 1945. Why did we get far fewer votes than was expected? What could have been the reason that the various forces of reaction together gained a majority in this completely valid election? Was it because of the development of the people's movement, or because it was the policy of a broad democratic alliance to oppose it, or because it did not oppose it sufficiently strongly?

This is not the place to pursue these points. My purpose here is to write an appreciation of Ferenc Donáth's book, and its great value is that it has successfully set out to explore the "people's movement" of that time. The author is to be particularly commended for raising all the fundamental questions of this initial stage, questions which have been disregarded or suppressed till now, for following up and analysing events in detail, for his assiduity in uncovering the meaning of this historic experience, and for the courageous resolution he has shown in his thorough examination and assessment of the causes.

These virtues of his book cannot be too highly praised. It was a particularly fertile and glorious moment in the history of the Hungarian people, all the more to be appreciated for the shadow cast over it by later events. Ferenc Donáth's book has already had an effect, in that this period of the people's movement has moved into the limelight and has met with the recognition worthy of its importance at a time when we have been celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of those events.

2. The principal part of Ferenc Donáth's book deals with the land reform itself and is, for two reasons, an excellent study in agrarian history; on the one hand it gives a full and complete account, from beginning to end, of the historic events which formed the background to the land distribution; and on the other it discusses the agrarian-political and the general political problems related to the land reform in a broad and comprehensive manner.

Of particular importance are the lucid and precise description of the character of the 1945 land reform; the section dealing with the preliminary spadework which preceded the reform, including a thorough exploration of the theories inherent in the various political standpoints; the complex political and historical recapitulation of the whole process of implementing the agrarian reform, including the new, very important disclosure convincingly proving that the repartition of the land was intrinsically due to a popular movement, and that in the period of direct democracy revolutionary forces broke out from the depths and laid the foundation of a new social development; and the general history of the land reform, including an account of the struggles following the redistribution of the land, the completion of the reform and the effect it had on production.

The connection between the people's movement and the land reform is of particu-

lar interest, since in the course of the land reform and its implementation the popular movement not only took shape but expanded, took on new life and finally came into conflict with the central power over the general political structure of the country, and within that over the re-organization of the administration. In the final event the people's organizations declined as a result of the opposition of the central power. Nevertheless the popular movement which, it would be fair to say, owed its inception to the liberation of the country, played its part in the land reform, and the conflict which subsequently arose between the people's organization and the organs of the new central power was only to a very minor degree caused by the land reform itself.

Convincing support for this contention is provided by a number of facts on which the author lays particular stress. The first is that demands for the passage of statutory provisions on the implementation of the land reform were put forward at mass meetings and by numerous delegations. These activities were unreservedly supported by the leaderships of the Communist Party and the Peasant Party, which took the first steps to fulfil the demands of the people's movement in January 1945. In the second place the Land Reform Bill laid down that the landless peasants themselves should carry out the redistribution of the land. Again, when reactionary forces launched an attack on the agrarian reform, it was the left-wing bloc itself which mobilized the people's movement.

A national movement developed against any conservation of ancient estates, and as a result more land became available for distribution, and a newer movement for a further redistribution of land came into being and spread, organized by the Communist Party with the support of the Peasant Party.

All this is convincingly demonstrated by Ferenc Donáth, using such statements as "the radical land reform" instigated by "the poor peasants"; and "the most characteristic feature of the democratization of land ownership in Hungary after the Liberation was that the revolutionary action of the poor peasants corrected the law which was a compromise between the coalition parties, leading to a special amalgamation of agrarian reform and agrarian revolution", "the implementation of the Land Reform first took a revolutionary form on the Great Plain".

3. The chapter on the redistribution of the land gives a comprehensive, precise and absorbing account of the struggles preceding the agrarian reform, both in the earlier years and at the time of the Liberation.

The sections dealing with the sequestration of the land, the assessment and decisions of claims and the distribution itself merit still further praise. They bear witness to the thorough and conscientious work of research undertaken by the author and his deep sympathy with the landless peasants. They are well and vividly written. All the difficulties and involvements of the situation and the prudence and firmness shown by the landless claimants are clearly and intelligibly set out.

"Suspicions and aspersions" he writes, "could well have been avoided if the land had been mechanically distributed, if only the objective conditions and financial situation of the family—facts of common knowledge—had been taken into account, while subjective factors such as the personality of the claimant and his ability to farm had been disregarded, and opinions as to whether a claimant deserved to own land at all, or how much, had not been voiced. In brief, if matters had been settled in a bureaucratic manner, according to decrees and orders issued by higher authorities, as demanded by some of the County Commissions for the Redistribution of Landed Property. The committees dealt with affairs with much greater consideration. Well-informed on all local and personal matters, they came to their decisions on the merits of each case in the higher interests of the community, on a level

mere bureaucrats, ignorant of local and individual conditions, could never have achieved."

The author senses and understands the difficulties of the different cases in all their complexity that the committees had to resolve. "Should the existence of dependents such as parents, disabled relatives, or the children of a daughter who was a war widow be taken into consideration, and to what extent, when the size of the area to be allotted was determined? What acreage should be allotted to a person owning land which is, however, charged with a widow's life-interest, or to a woman with many children who receives a pension as the widow of a railwayman, or to former agricultural workers who later became railway workers but who farm a plot of rented land at the same time and are thus simultaneously workers and farmers? Should a widow be given land whose husband was originally an employed farmhand and subsequently went on to day labour but who now lives with her son, aged 40, a former sergeant in the gendarmes who had not been politically cleared?"

The literary powers of the author reveal themselves most effectively in his description of the land-distribution, the use of quotations from contemporary documents.

The chapter entitled "The Class Struggle for Reforming the Reform" appropriately continues the chapter on the land-distribution. It is in some respects even clearer, and is, therefore, an agrarian-historical and political-historical document of considerable value. The essential importance of this chapter lies in the fact that the author prefers to eschew generalizations and inferences on the people's movement and deal with concrete events. Only after a due consideration of the factors involved is a cautious analysis of their interrelationship advanced. The chapter gives a careful analysis of a number of factors and the part they played in helping to implement the agrarian reform and to sustain its achievements. These were:

—the conflict of class interests over certain aspects of the reform (e.g., exemption from expropriation of less than 100 cadastral yokes in otherwise expropriated estates, new claims etc.);

—"the insolence of office" displayed by various administrative bodies and the Land Office, and clashes between the two trends (revolutionary and reactionary) in the administration;

—the character and development of the reactionary and the revolutionary forces respectively and the conflict between them against and for the reform;

—the interaction of practical and political activities which influenced the completion of the land reform.

The chapter dealing with the discussions of the landless peasants on the land-distribution is of great interest. This is particularly so on account of the conclusions Donáth reaches on the differences that occurred between the original plans and the reality in regard to the land reform, which are of great theoretical importance. "The abstract and narrow manner" writes Donáth "in which the advocates of a radical reform discussed peasant unity and disunity before and during the war only revealed itself after the repartition of the great estates had been decided, when the peasants started on the actual distribution of the land between themselves. The main point, these advocates of a radical reform claimed, was the attitude adopted by the rich peasants towards the land reform. Would the wealthy peasants see eye to eye with the landless peasants in the radical distribution of the large estates, or would they ally themselves with the big landowners in an attempt to maintain the sanctity of landed property and the preservation of a large labour reserve? On this, they believed, depended the progress of the peasant movement and the passage of the land reform free of complications."

"The question of the solidarity or disunity of the peasants" concludes the author, "as it was raised before the war, was nar-

rowly conceived and meaningless when compared to the reality, and not only in respect to the relationship between rich and poor peasants. Solidarity and antagonism simultaneously united and separated the different sections of the poor peasants themselves in varying degrees. The old traditional village revolted against the principal enemy, the nobility and the gentry. This unity—or near unity—nonetheless went hand in hand with bitter dissensions between the village and the puszta, between landowning peasants and destitute peasant labourers, between smallholders and those who received land and those who did not. There is no need to comment; such were the facts." This is perfectly accurate, and Donáth's account of both the general picture and the details of the antagonisms between landless peasants and the owners of dwarf holdings, between the village and the isolated homesteads on the Great Plain, struggling against one another for land, is at once lucid and interesting. His observations on "the people of the puszta" are of great value, but even more informative is his description of the controversies between one village and another. Parts recall the possessory actions described in ancient chronicles; they are followed by a historical account, and the chapter ends with a Marxist analysis of class relations, the whole providing a complex picture of these peculiar conflicts.

The same chapter also contains a detailed and illuminating account of the tenant problem. The parts dealing with the redistribution of land reveal a number of facts not commonly known to the public.

This part gives a clear, easily comprehensible account of Act V of 1947 which declared the land reform concluded, and which dissolved the village Committees for Land Claims and the County Commissions, administrative questions still outstanding being delegated to the local administration. The description Donáth gives of the political struggles and compromises which accompanied it are a model of historical writing.

He ends this chapter by summing up the land reform as a whole. In a very well-written, succinct and penetrating manner he distills the substance of the reforms in their historical perspective.

"Would it not have been possible" he asks "to redistribute with less conflict? Without disputes, protecting designated interests and the provisions of law, as those who supported the due forces of law and order considered desirable, and who were anxious that events and actions should not exceed established limits?

"Of course this could have been achieved, but without the same results.

"The land reform would almost certainly have been restricted to a smaller scale if it had been carried out in the autumn of 1945 instead of half a year earlier, if Parliament —convened after the elections—had framed the Land Reform Act, the administrative authorities or the courts would have been responsible for implementing it—with the same disregard of law but this time with the bias tilted in favour of the landowners—apart from the fact that the whole procedure would have taken far longer, as witnessed by the land reform of 1920.

"But this type of reform would have meant that not only the landless peasants, but also Hungarian democracy itself—with so weak a democratic tradition behind it—would have been the losing parties. The poorer peasants could never have taken control of their own affairs or played an active role in handling matters of such importance to themselves. A large social class would have been deprived of the opportunity of becoming conscious of its own capabilities and strength; its development would have been halted, with very little prospect of ever being in a condition to take over the management of its own affairs. The grievances of a few hundred landowners are insignificant compared to such drawbacks.

"Millions of hectares of land were distributed; the very great differences in the market value of the plots depended on their

distance from the village, ease of cultivation and the quality of the soil. In addition, it was impossible to satisfy all needs, there was simply not enough land to go round. Arguments, disputes and dissensions were consequently unavoidable; the only way to eliminate them would have been by using force to inhibit the popular will. Hungarian public life—and the well being of the people—could only benefit by the fact that passions had been fully vented, anger brought out into the open, matters freely debated, and that officials had to justify the decisions they made in each separate case. Of course it could not all pass off without hitches and difficulties, and in the course of these disputes the interests of various individuals and groups often gained the upper hand over the public interest. This however also occurs in countries where democratic practices have reached a higher stage of development. Where there is no democracy it is a regular and permanent feature of public life."

4. The last chapter "The Effect of the Agrarian Reform on Agricultural Production" is different in character from the others. It is also a study in history, but deals not with politics but with production. Although an excellent piece of writing, it is less clear-cut, less definite than the previous chapters. Here, too, the passages of political character, that is, the disparity between agricultural and industrial prices to the detriment of the farmer, an analysis of the Three Year Plan in terms of agriculture and the assessment of the effect of the revolutionary implementation of the land reform by the landless peasants on production, are most valuable.

The part of the chapter dealing with the co-operative problem is very good indeed. The author covers all developments in the co-operative movement that cropped up during the agrarian reform, and supplements his account with a summary of the 1948 experiences of land tenure on a co-operative basis, which he rightly describes as a new land reform on a smaller scale. These questions are important and absorbing, but Donáth does not cover all the different attitudes displayed towards the co-operative problem. He could not, of course, be expected to give a comprehensive survey of the question, and this is clear from the fact that he only touches on the most important question, namely, whether it would not have been more expedient to preserve the large-scale farms in the land reform? We must accept that a discussion of this subject goes far beyond an historical account of the land reform. It must, however, be added here that a complete picture of the land reform demands an exhaustive study of the co-operative problem, a task which has still to be undertaken. This work of Ferenc Donáth's provides an important source of information for such an enterprise.

FERENC ERDEI

GALBRAITH'S INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

In *The New Hungarian Quarterly* we often refer to the fact that in accordance with Hungarian cultural policy many books are published the ideology of which is not socialist and the arguments of which are not Marxist, but which are otherwise of importance because of their relevance to the progress of human thought, or because they are masterpieces or because they have something new to say on the conditions of human existence. In such cases, Marxist criticism formulates its position concerning the work in question.

Letters from and conversations with numerous readers have shown that it is difficult to envisage how this mechanism works in practice. We are now demonstrating by an example: in the summer of 1970, a translation of John Kenneth Galbraith's *The New Industrial State* was published in Hungary (Közgazdasági és Jogi Kiadó; Publishing House for Economics and Law). A long notice appeared in the August-September 1970 number of *Társadalmi Szemle* (Social Review), the theoretical organ of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. What follows is the English translation of the complete text of the *Társadalmi Szemle* article, indicating on the one hand how Hungarian cultural policy operates in practice and on the other, the style of such debates. *(The Editor.)*

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The dynamism and complexity of the scientific and technological revolution which unfolds the world-over these days confront not only natural scientists and the technologists with new problems, but also social scientists. It is not an exaggeration to say that as the scientific and technological revolution gains ground, the importance of the social projection of this process increases steadily. It is not surprising that both the Marxist theoreticians and the bourgeois ideologists try to explain what will be the social consequences—today and in the years ahead—of the transformation of the structure of production, of science becoming a decisive force of production. It is not difficult for Marxists to find the *point d'appui* for the answer (which does not, of course, mean that—this being clear—Marxists must be content with superficial generalizations): the scientific and technological revolution is the material expression of the possibility of the transition from capitalism to communism, from the prehistory of mankind to its true history. In the official and unofficial ideology of the advanced capitalist countries, theories of "industrial society," distorted reflections and interpretations of the above-mentioned objective processes have become generally accepted.

Speaking of Galbraith's book, one first of all has to lay down unequivocally that it represents these reflections of a spurious consciousness: the fundamental thesis of the author is that modern capitalism is *not capitalism*, that the power of capital has declined in the advanced Western societies, and that as the class of capitalists, so the working class is also on the wane. Of course, if this were all that Galbraith is saying, it would not be worth wasting words over it. *The New Industrial State* is a work worthy of attention, and its publication in Hungary was justified, because in Galbraith's work apologetics and occasional demagogy are mixed with criticism and thorough analysis. Galbraith wishes to persuade his readers to believe that capitalism is no longer capitalism. To do this—in a paradoxical way—he is forced to reveal a great deal of *what* modern capitalism really is.

Galbraith wishes to describe American society in the first place, but he does not hide that he considers the tendencies observed by him valid for other Western and even for the socialist countries.

The central category of his book is the mature corporation. Mature corporations

form the industrial system comprising the most dynamic sectors of the economy, and differ from enterpreneurial corporations, which today play an inferior role in the modern economy, in that their activities are no longer determined by profit maximization. Their management has passed from the hands of stockholders to that of managers, so-called technostructures are established which set as their principal objective the level of a maximum rate of growth besides safeguarding monetary profit compensation. A close fusion, the identification of interests is characteristic of the relationship between the industrial system and the state: the objectives of the mature corporation appear as social objectives, and the state creates the conditions—through the training of skilled labour, the maintenance of the level of aggregate demand, the control of the wage-price spiral, its own purchasing activity, and in many other ways—for the industrial system to plan successfully, i.e. to adjust demand to production. It is in this way that the "revised sequence" opposed to the free play of demand and supply, to the classical market mechanism, occurs within the industrial system. It is not the consumer who determines what industry should produce through the *ex post facto* regulating mechanism of the market, but the other way round, *the producer persuades the consumer*, manipulates his demand in order that the latter should buy and in suitable quantities and at such prices as correspond to the interests of producers and sellers. "With minimum prices established by the firms, demand that is managed by them for specific products, demand that is managed in the aggregate by the state, and maximum levels established by the state for wages and prices, the planning structure of the industrial system is effectively complete. All that remains is to ensure that everyone, at all times, refers to it as an unplanned or market system." (Page 260, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, fifth printing; p. 307, Hungarian edition.)

It is not difficult to see that Galbraith has taken a significant step forward since writing *The Affluent Society*. In his earlier book he still advocated a theory of equilibrium, the monopoly of capital is balanced by the monopoly of workers (Trade Unions), the monopoly of sellers by the co-operatives of consumers. In *New Industrial State* he already recognizes that Trade Unions are the partners of the employers as "Jonah is to the whale," and that consumer sovereignty is a demagogic phrase. One ought to bear in mind, however, that when Galbraith exposes myths, he at the same time creates and spreads new myths.

Such a myth is the absence of a role for capital in the industrial system, since it is not capitalists but the "impersonal" technostructure that makes decisions. Does this technostructure exist as Galbraith describes? According to him the extent of the technostructure is "very broad," with the exception of semi-skilled and unskilled workers it includes most engineers, economists, clerks, foremen, etc. Since extraordinarily complex information is needed to make decisions—he asserts—a great number of people participate in these processes of decision-making. However, reality shows the opposite to be true: exactly because decisions are supported by an extraordinarily complex information system, it is easy to narrow down the process of decision-making to a closed élite, which is in a position to take in and to evaluate inflowing information. Intensive specialization and the environment of monopolistic capitalism lead to essential contexts remaining hidden from the overwhelming majority of clerical and technical workers participating in the production process. The broad interpretation of the technostructure by Galbraith is an attempt to homogenize heterogeneous strata. One can not even accept that power belongs to the peak of Galbraith's technostructure (the technocrats and managers), since they have the chance to make decisions. The essence is not who commands and who decides, but in whose interest one

commands and decides. In the capitalism of our days a trend to which Engels already explicitly drew attention, becomes more and more obvious, owing to the increasing socialization of production—one may add: owing to the existence of the socialist system—the capitalist private owner is more and more forced, in order to save the system, to transfer the representation of his own individual interests to impersonal "intangible collective capitalists," the state apparatus and management. The interest of the intangible collective capitalist is indeed not momentary profit maximization (Galbraith draws attention to a tendency which does in fact exist), but to conserve the system of private property and of exploitation, to maintain it, and that the principal instrument in our days appears to be manipulation and planning serving manipulation. (N.B.: Galbraith dissolves manipulation in planning, although—and for this he himself supplies sufficient evidence—planning in the industrial system is only an instrument of as comprehensive manipulation as possible). The technostructure as an impersonal organization does not embody power, but serves the power of the "intangible collective capitalist."

Just as Galbraith makes the profit motive and the capitalist class as a power factor disappear on the one side, so he eliminates the working class on the other. He deduces the gradual disappearance of the working class from the reduced importance of manual labour. Professional and office employees form a new class, which is characterized more and more by identification with the objectives of the industrial system. In reality a double process occurs, which results from the transformation of the social structure and from the educational-qualitative requirements of the production process; on the one hand, the proportion and absolute number of those living on wage labour increases within the population, which means proletarization and at the same time the appearance of a working class which is on a higher educational level and makes more differentiated demands, and on the other, one may observe —as a phenomenon accompanying the separation of capital and the function of capital—a managerial-technocratic stratum identifying itself with the interests of the bourgeoisie. Of this double process the first is the determinant element. The transformation and strengthening of the working class and the rise of its standards. However, Galbraith one-sidedly considers the secondary phenomena of the process as absolute. The indirect effect on consciousness of the mechanism serving the manipulation of demand, the "revised sequence" is apparent behind the harmony of interests allegedly developed between the "white collar" class and the industrial system, the befogging of the class status of the toilers whose consumption is being manipulated.

Galbraith explains the system of motivation. His basic principle is that of "agreement"; but in reality, the impersonal, administered rule of the particular interests of private capital over the social interests, demand and individuals is hidden behind this.

The key to Galbraith's theory is provided by his technological vulgar determinism. Modern technology inevitably involves the transformation of the whole of society in a determined direction; if we have once decided that there should be modern technology, the rest—according to Galbraith—comes "by itself." With Galbraith, technology is from the beginning, by definition, an autonomous factor in which the categories of the *mode of production* are dissolved. This is why he may put his question meaning: "where does technology lead?" instead of investigating: in what direction does society progress, and technology with it.

For Galbraith *planning* is the principal "imperative" of technology, "the increased use of technology and the accompanying commitment of time and capital were forcing extensive planning on all industrial communities." (Page 23, Houghton Mifflin

Company edition; page 51, Hungarian edition.) Although we again see here exactly to what the author reduces the essence of planning (this essence is none other than the taking over of the functions of the market and the determination of what should be consumed), let us for the time being not consider the question whether one can justifiably call the influencing of consumption planning. Let us first examine the relationship between technology and the regulation of the economy in Galbraith's view. According to him it is simple linear determination: an undeveloped technology leads to a market, an advanced technology to planning. (N. B.: it is another indication of a vulgar approach that, out of the dialectic interrelation of market and plan, he emphasizes only the moment of exclusivism, and makes this moment absolute in an abstract way.) Marx already pointed out that it was not the machine (i.e. not technology itself) but the mode of its application that may be considered an economic category. The large-scale socialization of the process of production becomes possible at a certain level of technological development. The application of science to production, the increased size of production, the division of labour within the economy and within society create an imperative necessity for the relation of production and demand to be altered from the start, and to be regulated. The factors mentioned do not simply have a technical or technological character, but express the socialization made possible by the level of technology. Consequently, it is not technology in itself but the laws of social progress that determine planning.

Galbraith, like others arguing a theory of industrial society (Ellul, Fourastier, Marcuse, etc.), makes a fetish of technology. He is unable to see that technology is the objectivization of human productivity, and as a tool is subordinate to laws valid in the existing social formation.[1]

One cannot discuss planning—as Galbraith does—independently of relations of ownership, since, if we only consider the level of the material forces of production, nothing justified the introduction of a planned economy in post-revolutionary Soviet Russia, or in most of the people's democracies after the Second World War, let alone in the developing countries. Planning is a social relationship, which expresses the relations between the existing concrete body of society (as a subject) and the social-natural environment (as an object), and between people and groups of people.

Technological determinism neglecting the real class interests and the relations of ownership leads directly to the advocacy of convergence, the theory of convergence between the socialist and capitalist system. It is true that if we deny the power of capital in capitalism and if we call manipulation planning, the class content of the totalitarian monopolistic capitalist state a harmony of interests, if we completely disregard the social conditions of states with a socialist regime, or the function of their economic and social structure, then it is not difficult to find a superficial analogy between isolated external forms deprived of their content. If we regard only superficial forms, the technology of planning and organization and the economic operational frame-work, then we cannot convincingly refute the theory of convergence. But it we dialectically analyse the modes of production which form an organic unity of content and form, then divergence appears as a decisive trait. In capitalist conditions the planning and manipulating bourgeoisie, which acts as the intangible collective capi-

1 Criticizing the views of theoreticians of the "industrial society," the Soviet scholar S. Dalin interprets the relationship of technology and planning in the same way: "Not technology directly, but the socialization of all spheres of human activity creates the possibility and necessity for planning. Technology, or to be more exact, the progress of the forces of production plays a decisive role in this socialization. But viewed from another angle, this evolution itself is also subordinate to the laws of social evolution." (*Mirovaia Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnie Otnoshenia*, 1969, No. 10, p. 22).

talist, subordinates the evolution of society and the talents of individuals to an economic development which only appears to be an end in itself. Particular interests rule over social interests. Socialist planning, on the other hand, places the economic sphere in the service of the free, universal evolution of society and individuals, the laying of the foundation of "the realm of freedom."

Galbraith senses the anomalies and one-sidedness of the "industrial system." In some places he also draws attention to the danger of a close fusion between the industrial system and military circles. His personal politics, the condemnation of the Vietnam war and his ties with the Kennedy clan also express his opposition to the ruling power group. But since he does not see a real social-political force in the working class his protest is without force and foundation: he pits aesthetic experience against material production and the sphere of material goods, as a principle alien and opposed to these. The world of aesthetic values can be realized according to him by the "scientific estate," which he believes to be the most decisive power factor, and which is strong enough to overthrow the profane reign of the techno-structure and of the industrial system. It is clear that this political position is full of illusions and utopias. The ideology of the "revolution of scientists" fulfils a fundamentally reactionary function: apart from the objective of replacing an existing ("technocratic") élite, it on the one hand turns away radical scientists from the labour movement, and on the other, it may act to prevent the development of the revolutionary unity of consciousness and of material forces.

The rational nucleus hidden in the envelope of the ideology of the "revolution of scientists" may easily be brought to the surface by Marxists, the dynamism of the scientific and technological revolution forces open the framework of a society of particular expropriation, and develops—a tendency which was already pointed out by Lenin—the material conditions for the transition to socialism, and forces capitalists against their will to pass from the complete freedom of competition to the qualitatively new order of transition to complete socialization.

The Hungarian edition is ably introduced by Mihály Simai. The translator, Éva Hantos, has worked conscientiously, but it must be mentioned that the style of the Hungarian version is a good deal less colourful than the original.

GYÖRGY G. MÁRKUS

FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF

Some works by Hungarian authors published in translation during the second half of 1970

POETRY, FICTION

CSERES, Tibor: *Studeni dni* (Cold Days), Narodna Mladi, Sofia

DÉRY, Tibor: *Monsieur G. A. en X* (Mr. G. A. in X), Caralt, Barcelona

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FÜST, Milán: *Lubil som svoiu zenu* (The Story of My Wife), Epocha, Bratislava

HEGEDÜS, Géza: *Ketzer und Könige* (The Clerk), Corvina Press, Budapest, joint edition with Prisma Verlag, Leipzig

HIDAS, Antal: *Vetvii gugieli* (Selected Poems), Hudozestvennaia Literatura, Moscow

ILLYÉS, Gyula: *Pustan kansaa* (People of the Puszta), Arvi A. Karisto, Helsinki

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JUHÁSZ, Ferenc: *The Boy Changed Into a Stag*, Oxford University Press, Toronto

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PERIODICALS

CHANGES IN FARMING CO-OPERATIVES

If they wish to remain faithful to reality, most Hungarian periodicals—literary, social or economic—must describe the problems of the Hungarian village and changes in agriculture. Hungarian journalists have traditions to rely on. The situation of Hungarian society between the two world wars was one in which neither a literary nor an economic approach to social problems was adequate, Hungarian writers therefore inclined towards descriptive sociology. Following the victory of socialism and the start of large-scale co-operative agriculture, traditional *sociography*—as descriptive sociology of a type that writers who were keen to produce works that were as highly appreciated for their style and language, as for the information they conveyed, was and is called in Hungary—was given another role, that of indicating the road that would lead to socialism and the methods to be employed.

Contemporary Hungarian periodicals give a fair amount of space to *sociography*.

This review endeavours to summarize articles dealing with villages and agriculture which appeared in 1968, 1969 and 1970 issues of two socio-political journals: *Társadalmi Szemle* and *Valóság;* two literary reviews: *Kortárs* and *Új Írás;* as well as two specialist economic ones: *Gazdaság* and *Közgazdasági Szemle*.

Társadalmi Szemle, the theoretical and political organ of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, is in its twenty-sixth year. *Valóság* started fourteen years ago and is increasingly considered as their forum by Hungarian intellectuals. It is published by the Society for the Dissemination of Popular Science. *Kortárs*, the literary and critical journal of the Hungarian Writers' Federation, was established fifteen years ago, its columns "Science and Society" and "Hungarian Reality", show deep social interest. *Új Írás* is eleven years old and is devoted to art, literature and criticism. It was founded by the younger generation of writers.

Gazdaság is a quarterly published by the Hungarian Economic Society, and was established to prepare the ground for the new system of economic management. *Közgazdasági Szemle* appears monthly as the organ of the Economic Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. It is in its seventeenth year.

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Two important changes took place within a single generation in Hungarian agriculture—the land reform and the creation of a system of socialist large-scale agriculture. In her "Twenty-Five Years of Hungarian Agriculture", in *Közgazdasági Szemle* (1960/4). Mrs. Ernő Csizmadia, staff member of the Economic Institute, deals with the role of agriculture in the Hungarian economy today. Naturally, its most important function is to provide food for the population. In addition,

however, through exports, it is a instrument of economic development. Through increased raw material production and by providing labour it furthers progress in other parts of the economy—in other words, it serves to strengthen balanced development. Does Hungarian agriculture fulfil this complex role? The author illustrates her argument by examples. For a long time, exports of agricultural products made up some 20–22 per cent of all Hungarian exports, and a considerable part of the foreign exchange value of machines, equipment, installations and licences bought from capitalist countries, serving the technical development of the industry, was paid for by food exports. At the same time, domestic consumption of staple foods also increased. Individual and auxiliary farming covers some 3–4 per cent of the country's arable soil. The overwhelming majority of land is owned by the 3,000 co-operative and state farms. The growth of the co-operative movement has resulted in the collectivization of nearly 12 million acres.

Társadalmi Szemle (1969. No. 12.) carries an article by Dr. Ferenc Erdei, academician, agrarian economist, writer and statesman, Secretary-General of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences,* describing certain characteristics of the "Changing Hungarian Village" showing the development of the past twenty-five years. The main forces in this transformation were the change in relations of ownership, the country's industrialization, the regrouping of the population, mechanization of agriculture, the formation of the various sections of Hungarian society, urbanization and the growth of a new generation. Two details are particularily important in the changes in the relations of ownership. The country's agriculture was given a small-scale character by the distribution of large estates in 1945. With the establishment of co-operatives, by the end of 1962, 3,000 co-operative farms, medium scale farms and millions of household auxiliary plots came into being. Further change was brought about by reaching a level of large-scale farming which has united the whole farming process from production to finished goods. In connection with the industrialization of agriculture, Erdei points to qualitative development, necessarily arising from quantitative growth when it is no longer a question of simple mechanization but the introduction of a higher technological level. Consequently, the number of highly qualified experts employed in agriculture is also increasing. Social restratification did not take place without conflicts, but by now the proportions have essentially become stabilized. Sixteen per cent of those employed in agriculture work in the state sector, 71 per cent in co-operative farms and 13 per cent as members of other associations.

In *Valóság* (1969. No. 2.) Ferenc Erdei summarizes the discussion on social issues in agricultural co-operatives. He touches on various tendencies in the development of co-operatives, stratification and the bases of co-operative management. Erdei indicates the ways in which Hungarian development deviated from the Soviet model it had originally chosen as an example. Although the aim had been the realization of Lenin's cooperative principle, the practical example was still provided by Stalin's basic Kohlkos. In Hungary, however, from the very outset a greater role was played by less developed co-operatives. The principle of "one village —one cooperative" was not realized and relations between families and cooperatives also took a different trend from the one expected. According to the original idea, just as in the case of individual farms, the whole family would have taken part in the work of the joint cooperative, joining the collective as a unified cell. Since this, however, did not take place, the collective organization of the common farms had to be built up separately and no equation sign could be placed between co-operative membership and those working there.

* Ferenc Erdei died when this issue was going to press. See Obituary on p. 25 of this issue.

In "Changes in the Structure of Employment in Hungary", which appeared in *Valóság* (1970. No. 1.) the sociologist János Timár analyses the tendencies of development in this sphere over the past 25 years, by making comparisons with West European countries and the United States. He points out that in Hungary also there is a rapid decrease in the number of people employed in agriculture. The number of those working in industry has settled around 40–45 per cent, and there is a speedy increase in the number of those employed in various branches of the service industries. A decisive change in the employment structure in Hungary was brought about by socialist industrialization, and later by the full socialization of agriculture. Between 1960 and 63, the number of those employed in agriculture went down from 1.9 million to 1.6 million, falling back from 39 per cent to 33 per cent of the total labour force. The reason does not only lie in the mass migration of young people but also in the modification of the category of agricultural workers. In the past all individual farmers, regardless of their age and all other factors, were regarded as active, today, the cooperative members when reaching 60 or 70, that is retirement age, are entitled to state pensions. The mechanization of agriculture, resulting in large-scale farming, have made it most probable that by the beginning of the 1980's, the number of people employed in agriculture will decrease from the present 1,500,000 to below 1,000,000. This decrease is caused not so much by migration but rather by the fact that young people starting work do not replace the number of those who joined co-operatives at a more mature age and meanwhile reached retirement age. This trend of development in agriculture also affects the income structure. In the past twenty years, migration was from lower productivity agriculture towards industry, in this way industry played the role of "supporter," while now the drift tends towards the developing branches of servicing where the level of productivity is even lower but which has a virtually unlimited need for labour.

In the May 1970 issue of *Kortárs*, Ferenc Erdei, in "An Agricultural Co-operative in Szeged," reviews the development of a co-operative farm from its foundation up to the present. He carefully examines the process by which, in the course of twenty years, peasants formerly working individually on their own property were forged into co-operative living in the village community, acknowledging co-operative common ownership, as well as the phases the co-operatives had to go through in order to develop from a small-scale producer into a large-scale enterprise. The features characteristic of the development of this co-operative, are valid for the Hungarian co-operative movement as a whole. The co-operative farm—called *New Life*, in the rural outskirts of Szeged—was formed in 1950, with 19 members. A year later it merged with the co-operative of another suburb the rural character of which was even more pronounced. Their main product was red paprika, traditionally grown in this region. At that time the joint co-operative functioned rather as a loose association of paprika growers who worked hard in their $1^1/_2$ to 2 acre household plots—and neglected the cultivation of the common lands. They themselves processed and jointly sold the paprika. In 1960, they were joined by another co-operative but the members still gave preference to their household plots. In 1963, a new management took over the co-operative and the chairman—who was brought over from another co-operative—introduced a new approach by starting to convince the members to work with the same intensity on the common land as they did around the house. The management did their utmost to develop the co-operative farm by improving the conditions of brigade work and family cultivation alike. They were in this way able to win over the members. In 1969, still another co-operative announced its intention to join. Some of the

members and employees in the co-operative have fixed working hours in the repair shops, and work according to norms for money wages. The land cultivators have contracts with the co-operative while the animal breeders work according to a scheme which lies between the two aforementioned forms. The co-operative is increasingly assuming the character of a large-scale enterprise. Even in connection with household plots, the work of organization, purchases, sales and processing is carried out jointly. Thermal springs are used to heat the green houses. The members live in Szentmihálytelke, and the co-operative looks after the school, the kindergarden, various social organizations and the house of culture. This line of development is generally characteristic of the agricultural co-operatives in Hungary.

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"The System and Management and Production Structure in the Co-operative Farms" by János László in *Valóság* (1970. No. 7.), deals with the advantages and development under the new system of economic management. The new system works towards eliminating the contradictions originating from administrative state interference in financial and price questions, and provides considerable independence for the co-operatives in choosing the structure of production which, together with investments, was formerly determined in an administrative manner. Not all of the new economic regulators, however, proved to be useful, and therefore gave way to new contradictions. The increase in land used for bread grains, for example, was induced by price subsidies. This, however, was at the expense of fodder. The shortage in feedstuffs on the other hand, had a retarding effect on cattle and pig breeding. The recognition that agriculture can only be stimulated to greater production and higher productivity by increasing the price level, was of great significance. In 1970, the price level increased by 17 per cent, and the repayment of 60 per cent of state loans was cancelled. The co-operative farms were therefore in a position to procure accumulation funds even though this still only sufficed for reproduction on a static scale. This can only be resolved—according to László—by an economically justified price level, and increases which secure socially justified financial interests, and which are in accord with the need to replace fixed and current assets used in co-operative farms, a suitable level of incomes, as well as accumulation equally adequate to social and group interests. "A dynamic development of the economy and a simultaneous major change in this structure can only be expected if the profitability of the various branches is determined according to their role in development and in structural change."

After 1957, agriculture could receive industrial products only through assignments, and bureaucratic distribution thwarted intensive development. This situation has been replaced by market relations. Another important incentive for development is the regulation of the funds of participation and accumulation, and the taxation of incomes. In this respect there is still room for improvement. Extremely high progressive taxes, going up to 60 per cent, are imposed on the growth of participation funds even though it has been proved in practice that the cooperatives maintain a correct ratio without this, and instead tend to increase their accumulation funds. This form of taxation has a harmful effect on the demand for increased employment. László points out that it would be more advantageous if tax allowances would be ensured to those cooperatives which increase their accumulation funds to a greater extent. In any case, agriculture preceded industry in switching over to a more effective economic reform, and thanks to this, it has achieved a realistic, 13–15 per cent increase in production during the third Five Year Plan. Animal husbandry has, however, not developed. Instead of

growing, livestock has decreased. Regulations which take economic laws into account are still needed to eliminate this phenomenon.

The introduction of the system of new economic management did away with the system of "Central distribution" of investments and the state provision of resources —primarily budgetary—which followed from it almost automatically. Since 1967, the significance of co-operative resources among the sources of investment has increased by leaps and bounds, as Mihály Vidmann, the manager of a branch of the Hungarian National Bank in an agricultural area, establishes in the 1970. No. 12. issue of *Közgazdasági Szemle*, in "Some Questions of Assisting and Developing Co-operative Farms". Co-operative investments provide an incentive for a more accurate appraisal of economical operation, need and opportunity. The list of co-operative investments is headed by building construction, with special attention to speeding up the establishment of cattle and pig breeding sheds. Vidman is one of many who insist on the necessity to develop animal husbandry and the dangers inherent in further growth in the area devoted to bread grains.

In a highly interesting study published in the 1969. No. 4. issue of *Gazdaság*— "Systems of Incentives in Food Production" —Ferenc Erdei writes about bread grains and cattle, examining the question of the economic incentives which make the various sectors producing and processing raw material interested in ensuring goods of an adequate quantity and quality for the consumer. In bread grain cultivation large-scale methods are applied on a modern technological level, at the same time the milling industry has remained obsolete, and the baking industry is so strongly concentrated —by using irrational technology in spite of the fact that it is mainly operating with large-scale methods,—that it creates grave transport difficulties for the trade. The production price of wheat is higher than its prime cost, the costs of storage and milling hardly meet the expenditures of the milling industry, and the baking industry receives price subsidies from the state since, for political reasons it would not be right to raise the price of bread which is very low. Since the baking industry is highly subsidized, the reasonable thing would be to quickly modernize and deconcentrate the industry, also with state support. Erdei points out that if economic incentives within a vertical structure are realized differently in various structures, this causes tensions. All branches of beef and milk production show a deficit in spite of state subsidies. The reason for this is that the rate of subsidy decreases with the increase in yields, and thus the producers are not interested in increasing their yields. Erdei suggests an increase in producers' prices with a simultaneous decrease in the prices of technological means serving modernization. The new system of economic management therefore creates possibilities for technological growth by a reduction of prime costs and the forming of joint undertakings which through creating healthy competition would establish a modern economic approach, and act as regulators among the various interests.

In "Some Problems of Economic Structure in Agriculture" (*Gazdaság* 1970 No. 1.) Dr. Mihály Fecske, a staff member of the Agrarian Economic Research Institute, examines the structure of the Hungarian economy and reaches some noteworthy conclusions. He points out that in 1968, 80 per cent of the income of co-operative farms originated from bread grain, so that this is undoubtedly a profitable type of farming. On the other hand, we have already reached the state when there are surpluses of bread grain, and not much possibility for export either. Consequently it does not seem to be reasonable to further extend its production. At the same time, the market is far from being stocked with fruit and vegetables and gross returns here are three times as high as in the case of grain, so that everything points in favour of further

developing their growth. It is true that grain cultivation is simpler, requiring less manual labour and manpower, but since the cooperatives only use two thirds of their labour forces a month, labour is available for raising fruit and vegetable production. However, fruit and vegetable growing involves high production cost and the output value lags behind input by some 1,000–2,000 forints per unit of agricultural area. In order to make the development of these intensive types of agriculture worthwhile, there ought to be changes in economic incentives. According to Fecske, economic regulators in animal husbandry are not right either, it is not mere chance that, in 1967, weak cooperatives provided 30 per cent of all yields in animal husbandry, strong cooperatives contributing only 20 per cent. Animal husbandry then is not profitable and this is expecially true for cattle breeding. In Hungary there are 355 pigs to every 100 heads of cattle, and even though this is a country with a long experience of pig breeding, the possibilities for keeping pigs are economically restricted. The kinds of protein fodder which make pig breeding economical—fish-meal and milk powder—are not available in Hungary and have to be imported. Cattle breeding would seem to be more profitable, with its unlimited market—two thirds of Hungarian agricultural exports consists of beef cattle. Nevertheless, the cooperatives are not interested in increasing their cattle stocks, since, according to the present system of economic incentives it shows losses and has to be subsidised. This support however, decreases in proportion with the increase in yields. The lack of modern cattle farms is also a hindrance, as is insufficient rough fodder production. A growth in milk production, however, would also further more economical pig breeding since powdered milk could be produced in the country. Indicating such correlations in agricultural structure could pave the way towards dynamic growth.

László Nádasy—a film director who also writes *sociography*—reported on a country-wide tour, dealing with problems of vertical integration in Hungarian agriculture. He examined ways in which enterprises which at present only produce basic food materials, could be developed into complex large-scale farms. In "Race With the Years" in the 1970. No. 2. issue of *Valóság*, he illustrates the economic advantages of such complex development, giving a concrete analysis of the social and economic necessity for auixiliary branches and the conditions for their establishment. According to a publication issued by the Statistical and Economic Analysing Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Production in 1968, 16 per cent of all the money incomes of agricultural large-scale enterprises originated from production coming from auxiliary branches, a figure one and a half times greater than in the previous year, with a value of 9.9 thousand million forints. Nádasy uses the example of prosperous co-operative farms to show the need for developing auxiliary branches. Because of the seasonal character of work, there is a labour surplus and no guarantee of work for family members. There are thousands of examples to show that whenever places of employment are created on the spot, those who had left the villages to work elsewhere, return home and start working there. At present, enterprises processing agricultural products, make up 6.5 per cent of auxiliary branches, that of plants connected with repair, industrial production and servicing 78.3 per cent, while those jointly producing and marketing make up 15.2 per cent. These figures also indicate that the existence of complex enterprises also improves supplies in the village, thus raising living standards not only by providing ample work but by an expansion of services as well. According to Nádasy the question has an even more important aspect. This is the rise of productivity in agriculture, through the expansion of processing, for which there are many cheaper and more economic opportunities on the spot than

within concentrated state industry, as well as a better utilization of export possibilities by producing goods which are not profitable for state industry or would require greater investments. He writes "The development of (Hungarian) agriculture, although realized on the basis of central measures, is not solely dependent on these measures but owing to the insertion of certain economic regulators, has a relatively free movement which assumes its own economic laws, and which owing to undeniable results has an increasing effect on these central measures." This is a most significant thought since at present the cooperation of auxiliary branches and co-operative farms in marketing still encounters many obstacles, since they represent competition for state enterprises, many of which, following the path of least resistance and unwilling to develop their own technology, use discriminative regulations against the cooperatives. In addition to their extraordinary economic usefulness, the auxiliary branches also ensure a social mobility in the economy which is one of the basic conditions for dynamic development, and an excellent source of increased income.

József Takács, deputy Section Head in the Central Bureau of Statistics, said in his "Security and Factors of Income in Agricultural Co-operatives" (*Közgazdasági Szemle*, 1970, No. 11.): "The financial basis of a sound enterprise atmosphere is ensured by a proper income level." He uses figures to illustrate the fact that in recent years the income of co-operative farm peasants has increased considerably, and in 1969, their *per capita* consumption approached the level of consumption by workers and employees. Between 1964 and 69, there was a 47 per cent rise in their incomes, and some three quarters of this rise came from cooperative farming. Using the amount of average daily income in 1968, Takács set up three categories of farms—the lowest paying 70 forints or less, the middle group, between 70 and 100 forints, and the highest, those above 100 forints. According to this rating, 838 of 2,840 co-operatives provide low incomes, 1,580 medium and 422 high incomes. Dealing with the question of income security, he establishes that between 1964 and 1968, in 6.8 per cent of the cooperatives, income stagnated. Among the factors affecting the level and security of incomes, he concentrates on, and analyses the quality of the land, the degree of concentration, auxiliary activities as well as the quality and quantity of labour.

"During the course of the next twenty years, about half of those in agricultural employment, and within this the overwhelming majority of co-operative members, will be replaced because of old age." This is how György Fekete, staff member of the National Planning Bureau, starts his forecast in the 1970. No. 1. issue of *Közgazdasági Szemle* ("Perspectives of Co-operative Employment"). Then he goes on to examine various factors affecting this trend. A basic employment speciality of co-operative farming is that both the cooperative management and the membership assume obligation only for a minimum utilization of the labour force. The limited but enduring migration tendency of the younger age groups of agricultural workers must be counted on for the future as well. There are several factors influencing the labour situation in cooperative farms. Fekete analyses the relations of demographic level, the attraction of other types of employment, technological growth and productivity, urbanization, activities and employment in auxiliary branches. He calls attention to the great importance of expanding the activities of cooperatives with large memberships as an outlet for agrarian over-population. In other places, problems arise from a shortage of labour. But in the kinds of gardening which primarily require women and girls, there are labour reserves, even in the long term. This is important because the interests of the national economy require a maximum exploitation of the long-term export opportunities both in animal husbandry and gardening.

"Pro and Contra" by Ferenc Kunszabó was published in the August 1970 issue of *Kortárs*. Kunszabó portrays the transformation of the Hungarian village, by reviewing the stratification of a village in the Mátra region before the war and after the Liberation, when the bases of social differences lay in occupation, financial position, origin, schooling and above all, in privately owned land. He compares this with the present character of the village where differences appear according to a new order of values, depending on how far the members were able to adjust to new conditions when the private ownership of land no longer prevailed. He groups village society in four categories: "distressed", "lagging behind", "with a fair income" and "well-to-do". No other bases of distinction—as for example peasants, intellectuals, etc.—are used. Kunszabó, however, adds that nowadays the actual way of life people lead, is also important, that is, who are "reticent, unsociable" and who "really make use of the things they acquired —all the rooms of the house, the car, books, records". In the village in question, as well as in many other Hungarian villages, it is the people belonging to this latter type who head the social ladder.

László Nádasy's "The Plough" was published in the 1968. No. 8. issue of *Új Írás*. It tells of the eventual success, after many vicissitudes, of an agricultural invention of great significance, the roller plough. The invention dates back to 1959, and despite all its obvious advantages, it took a decade long stuggle to start production and application, increasing the efficiency of ploughing by 30–40 per cent. The 1968 report still talks about initial successes. The fight for the roller plough had become a national issue, supported by an enthusiastic group of experts. For one year, *Új Írás* provided a forum for the discussion centering around the invention, it was not just an invention which was at stake, but the fate of an Hungarian invention, and the exposure of the obstacles in its way. The closing article expresses joy mingled with fatigue and relief felt by those who fought persistently for a just cause. The fight often seemed senseless, the necessity to fight a time and energy-consuming struggle in the country's own interest imposed very heavy burdens. The final success, however, will perhaps obliterate all these memories.

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An increasing number of agrarian economists are now dealing with the future of Hungarian agriculture. All the 1970 issues of *Gazdaság* include studies concerned with the future of agriculture. No. 3. issue contains an article by Béla Csendes, Senior Section Head of the Agrarian Economic Research Institute, on "The Future of Cost and Price Conditions in Agriculture". Csendes points out that because of the high cost of agricultural machines, it is much too expensive for enterprises to replace manual labour by machinery. In his opinion, contrary to former practice, a greater role should be given in the future to decreasing industrial price levels, instead of increasing agricultural price levels. In other words, agricultural equipment ought to be cheaper. This would be an important step because of the still existing obstacles to rapid mechanization. Agriculture still occupies more labour than necessary; 13 acres per worker is pretty small. In addition, the efficiency of yield-increasing instruments is also low. This has to be changed in the long run. Most agricultural products are granted state subsidies and therefore "the level of enterprise input is lower than that of social input", and the level of social input can only be increased if agricultural price levels are increased. But "no future can be imagined which would make enterprise input equal to the rise in price level, to social input". The first task is to ensure that the increase of agricultural workers' income should not depend on productivity—the income rise ought to be covered by the total national income pro-

duced in agriculture—and the precondition for this is a further considerable decrease in the number of agricultural workers.

In the following issue, No. 4., of *Gazdaság* last year, Béla Csendes continued his train of thought in "The Long-range Factors of Agricultural Price Ratios". He points out that since the number of agricultural workers is higher than desirable, they concentrate on work-extensive products ensuring high gross incomes. The price level of these products should be cut down in favour of the work-intensive branches, and thus the number of agricultural wage earners could be economically decreased. Consequently, prime costs would also decrease because prime costs are higher than agricultural prices.

The second, 1970 issue of *Gazdaság* carries a forecast by the *Agricultural and Food Industrial Long-Range Development Committee*, consisting of deputy ministers, agrarian economists, agricultural experts and functionaries. "Hypotheses and Prognoses for Long-Term Planning in the Development of the Food Economy" states that domestic agricultural consumption shows an annual 4.7 per cent increase and in order to meet this, agricultural production must be increased by 1.4–1.8 per cent a year. The domestic surplus demand occurs in the same fields as in exports, that is in meat and vegetables. Consequently, their production has to be greatly increased. Thirty-eight per cent of agricultural production is provided by household plots, auxiliary and other sectors. Household animal breeding for example, should therefore receive increased support. Food processing must be raised by an annual 5 per cent in order to meet demands, while retail trade turnover in food stuff and consumers goods will be trebled by 1985. These must be taken into consideration when setting targets.

The export basis available for the food economy in ten to fifteen years' time will be easily utilized, with the developing integration of the CMEA countries, Hungary will probably, based on long-range agreements, be able to take a greater share than at present in the food supply of several socialist countries. Increased domestic consumption and better export possibilities, this is the two-fold basis on which Mrs. Béla Pálovics, staff member of the National Planning Bureau, examines "Questions of the Concept of Long-Range Agricultural Development" in the 1970. No. 9. issue of *Közgazdasági Szemle*. She poses three questions. First: "Is a lower or higher rate of growth a rational question?" Answer: the next one or two decades can be characterised by a relatively fast increase of agricultural production. Secondly: "Is the increase of agricultural exports in the country's interest?" Answer: food export should increase in such a manner that the share of goods with favourable, secure and economic marketing possibilities should be decisive in exports. And finally: "Can a holding back of the rate of increase in the food production be in the country's interest?" Answer: in setting the long-term development objectives of agriculture the central question will not be how high the average growth rate of production should be, but rather to harmonize the development of animal husbandry with the possibilities of increasing fodder production.

The 1970. No. 6. issue of *Társadalmi Szemle* carries a statement submitted by a working-party of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, and discussed and accepted by the Political Committee of the Party: "Directives for the Development of the Cooperative Movement and the Activities of the Communists in the Cooperative Farms".

The "Directives" establish that the principle for the further development of the cooperative movement continues to be the Leninist principle of cooperative policy, in the application of which Hungary has reached the stage that makes it possible to switch from extensive to intensive farming. By providing adequate support and ensuring necessary conditions, the state makes it

possible for cooperatives to operate in an entrepreneurial manner, helping with passing effective legal measures. Another noteworthy passage in the statement emphasizes the importance of the role and significance of the cooperative movement, stating that the cooperative sector, far from regressing, is in the stage of further extension, since it corresponds to the spirit of the new system of economic management. It stresses the fact that contrary to the former state of affairs when the cooperative and state farms received their instructions essentially from the Ministry of Agriculture and did not possess an effective social organ of representation, the interests of the co-operative members are now presented by regional associations and the cooperatives are equal partners with other enterprises.

The "Directives" indicate the objectives of communists in increased development, control, organization and propaganda work. Thus, higher demands are made on Party workers who must be able to grasp overall connections.

In the 1971. No. 3. issue, *Társadalmi Szemle* publishes an article by Dr. Imre Dimény, Minister of Agriculture and Food Production: "The Tasks of the Food Economy After the 10th Congress". The Minister traces the road of development by analysing the conditions of 1965, when the food economy still had to face many social and economic difficulties. At that time, conditions for modern production were still limited in cooperative farms, which were struggling with a shortage of labour they could not compensate for by higher technology. Neither the theory nor the practice of a unified food economy was then in operation. Agriculture and the food processing industry were separated, their relations being characterized by clashing interests. The precondition for intensive development, however, lies in a harmonious, organized cooperation of these two closely related fields. Development was also hindered by several unsettled elements in social relations. A favourable turn was produced by increasing incomes, market orientation and growing exports. The financial condition of the cooperatives improved, and by 1970, the income level of agricultural workers became equal to that of industrial workers. The economic reform was realized and proved to be successful in the food economy as well. There are, however, many serious problems that still await solution, such as a concentrated development of animal breeding, a greater choice in vegetables and the provision of steady flow of supply. Production and processing of raw materials have to be expanded, and storage capacity must be increased. The economy demands a better supply for domestic markets and a further increase of exports. The planned rate of growth in agriculture is 2.9 per cent, which is identical with that of the third Five Year Plan. It nevertheless means a step forward because of changes in structure. The production of meat and animal products is given a greater role, and the structure of production places the consumer in the foreground. Economic incentives provide a stimulus for a more rational utilization of existing land, to make production more effective while decreasing the labour force employed—that is, increasing demands must be met through greater productivity. These changes are brought about by a more rational distribution of resources, in accord with the interests of the national economy. Between 1971 and 1975, 20 to 22 per cent more money will be available for investment than during the previous five year plan. Even this is not enough, and therefore the efficiency of investments will become a central issue. It will still not allow for developing all aspects of agriculture to the same degree, and the problems of refrigeration, storage, supply of first fruits, as well as the full mechanization of transport and loading will not be solved. The amount allocated for investment, however, will be used to transform the structur- of production, and 40 per cent of all investe ment will be spent on developing animal

breeding. These objectives will have to be achieved with 120,000 fewer agricultural workers than in 1970. This will be counterbalanced by the fact that 40 per cent more money is allocated for machinery than in the previous plan period. The raising of the technological level is considered to be the most important task, and in connection with this, the training of new workers and a fast, flexible use of scientific results are of primary significance. The cooperatives are helped in the realization of plans by development grants to supplement incomes, as well as by differentiated forms of the state collection of accumulation. The project calls for concentration on improving the work of management as well.

[Compiled by: György Berkovits, Péter Fóti, Vera Varga]

DEMOGRAPHY

In its fourth 1970 issue, *Demográfia* (Demography) publishes several papers presented at the 9th Meeting of Biologists, held in Budapest last May.

In "Characteristics of Multiple Births" György Acsádi and Endre Czeiczel compare 1968 data with 1960, 1959 and 1954–58 data, in order to eliminate random factors. The overwhelming majority of multiple births are twins. Doctors report that about one in every 100 births occurring in Hungary is a twin; for every hundred twins born (that is, for every 10,000 births), there is one case of triplets, and for every hundred triplets (every 1,000,000 births) one case of quadruplets. In 1968, for every 1,000 girls born in multiple births, there were 1,016 boys. It is striking that among the first born of twins, there are more boys than girls.

The paper deals at length with the occurrence and properties of identical and non-identical twins. The examination of multiple births is of interest in that it enables us to establish the origin of certain diseases, to separate environmental and genetic factors, and measure their respective influence.

A lecture by András Klinger, also held at the May meeting, dealt with biological factors influencing fertility. This work, which refers back to Egon Szabady's "Demography and Human Biology", is concerned with problems dealing with which demographers need the collaboration of biologists, or to put it another way, with those demographic facts whose explanation requires a thorough grounding in the biological sciences. One such topic is infant survival. This includes research into the proportion of dead births; the occurrence of spontaneous abortions; the distribution of the sexes among new born babies; their physical characteristics (birth weight and length); and seasonal fluctuations of births.

At the May meeting, Károly Miltényi discussed the effect of induced abortions on fertility. He analysed the effect of induced abortions on the number and proportion of pregnancies as well as on the number of pregnancies carried to term. He pointed out that from the end of the last century (1881 to 1890) until 1957, that is, when induced abortions performed by doctors were made

legal in Hungary, two thirds of those who otherwise would have been born were prevented from doing so by contraception and one third by induced abortion. Since 1957, however, while the birth rate went down, the proportion of pregnancies increased significantly as did the proportion of induced abortions.

In "The Legal Aspects of Certain Kinds of Birth Control", Endre Nizsalovszky examines the extent to which a couple, or more directly the woman, is free to refuse an offspring from a moral point of view. That is, he asks to what extent these actions, 'with regard to the presumed third party' fall within the ambit of free determination of the use of the human body, and to what extent they come within the prohibiting zone of the law. The study deals with the interruption of pregnancy, with contraceptives, sterilization, and artificial insemination.

László Cseh-Szombathy submitted "The Acquisition of Deviant Behaviour Forms in the Course of Socialization in the Family" to the 7th World Congress of Sociology in 1970. The point he argues is that a decisive role is played by the norms and evaluations which allow or tolerate behaviour which, in certain groups, is part of the special culture transmitted from one generation to another, and which will continue to be handed down, through cultural transference in the formation of deviant behaviour. Although the norms regulating behaviour of various people are changed and modified in the course of general social development, most of the norms accepted in childhood are so deeply built into the personality that only outside pressure exerted over a considerable period of time can change them.

The child's system of norms is formed within the family. The parents, partly consciously, partly unconsciously, influence the formation of the child's system of norms through their own behaviour.

The results of the 1968–69 survey of alcoholism by the Demographic Institute of the Central Office of Statistics (the third such investigation by this institute) support the view that the transfer of deviant norms within the family is also significant in the formation of alcoholics. These results also show that family traditions are not conditions but rather factors in the development of alcoholics. Furthermore, the effect of traditions becomes effective only after a long time when activated by other experiences.

V. C.

FROM FORTHCOMING ISSUES

THE TRUTH OF RECORDED MUSIC
András Pernye

THE KODÁLY METHOD AND THE OPEN CLASS IN AMERICA
Klára Kokas

RECENTLY DISCOVERED SCHUBERT AUTOGRAPHS
István Kecskeméti

ARTS

THE 1971 "SALON"

The era of salons has definitely come to an end. Present work, even the art of a small nation, is so heterogeneous, and the discrepancies between artistic trends and endeavours are so considerable, that it is almost impossible to give an idea of this variety within the framework of a single exhibition. A striking example might throw considerable light on the problem: Pollock and Mondrian don't agree with each other if exhibited on one and the same wall of a gallery although expressionist abstraction and neoplasticism are products of the same era. No arranger of an exhibition can smooth away the contrasts and avoid the danger that the exhibition will eventually only provide a kaleidoscope of contemporary art instead of demonstrating the many-sidedness of artistic development. This danger particularly exists in the case of an exhibition such as the one of "New Works" organized at the Budapest *Műcsarnok* which throws the gates wide open to all artists: as a result practically all Hungarian artists took part at the *monstre*-exhibition with at least one of their works. There is no doubt that in view of the abundance of pictures, sculptures and drawings, visitors were bound to feel reminded of 19th century salons, it took hours and hours to simply survey the exhibited works.

The great number of participants and works shows that the jury deliberately did not want to bar anybody's way to success or to a name, as long as a minimum standard was reached. Hence, the exhibition included works ranging from a naturalism which dispassionately records what is seen to Minimal Art, and from lyrical impressionism to Pop Art.

Because of the large number of exhibited works and in view of the fact that each artist was allowed to exhibit only a limited number of pictures or sculptures, the present review cannot deal with stages of individual artistic development. It would also be a hopeless undertaking to emphasize one or another work for, even admitting that some fine works of art were on show, none were of cardinal importance, and in many cases the artist, for instance Ilona Keserű, Béla Kondor and Tibor Vilt, had recently shown far more attractive work. At the same time the many exhibited pieces distinctly show if only in a statistical way, the main points around which Hungarian fine art crystallizes at present, as well as the trend of certain general tendencies.

It can be said that the presentation of reality, that is, optical painting of experiences essentially based on impressionism, which in the Hungarian art of painting became entwined with the lyrical interpretation of nature, increasingly loses its hegemony or appears through various refined transpositions. The optically uniform style which represents nature as it is and keeps the principle of classical perspective, and at most transforms the subject according to sub-

jective emotional intentions was succeeded by compositions conveying the symbolical meaning of experiences the artist went through, or individually motivated free visual associations, or abstract image forming ideas and a search for pure plastical relations.

The fact that this kind of painting of reality interpreted in an impressionist sense is still continued is not due to a handful of masters of this older generation who go on developing their earlier style but to a set of young painters who, paradoxically, present basically impressionist and naturalist experiences in Cubist disguise. This is not genuine Cubism it could only be belated epigonism anyhow, for the pictures are only painted à la Cubism and, therefore, one looks in vain for a really new kind of spatial construction and development of the architectonic principles of this mode of painting. Modern Hungarian art had obtained inspiration from Cubism at an earlier period, particularly from its early "Cézanne" and primarily geometrical stage which was completely assimilated by Hungarian painting. The recent Cubist wave is so-to-speak the rear-guard struggle for impressionist representational painting which does not change the composition and inner meaning of the picture but wants to give the semblance of modernism merely by splitting it up in a Cubist way and by geometrical decoration. Although a number of such pictures were exhibited, some of undoubtedly high decorative value, it remains certain that this trend is not capable of further progress and can at best give inspiration to various genres of the applied arts.

Other works also point to the fact that the dividing line between the fine arts and the applied arts is growing dimmer. This is not a specific Hungarian phenomenon for it touches upon one of the most serious inner problems of modern art. It appears in the case of both figurative and non-figurative works; at the exhibition a number were on show which all fulfill aesthetic functions in the environment in which they have been sited. This is true of György Segesdy's spatial forms as well as of works which essentially belong to the sphere of monumental decorative art by painters such as Gyula Hincz or Endre Domanovszky who used to be realists. In the case of this type of work, figural decorations are indicative marks which sometimes appear as fig-leaves or a mannered sign-manual; it would be more appropriate to speak in this particular case about "semi-abstractionism" or "shy-abstractionism". These works imply a modicum of meaning and their significance does not amount to much more than the role they fill as decorative elements.

It is characteristic of the artists of the Hódmezővásárhely school, who took part at the exhibition with a considerable number of works of art in a uniform style, that they also turn to and follow the decorative line. Hódmezővásárhely kept up Hungarian realist popular traditions and represented a relatively homogeneous style for a decade. This seemingly homogeneous style united two trends, one of which was rooted in peasant myth whereas the other looked at and portrayed peasant life through the glasses of *verism* although certain realist and classicist elements, stylistic marks reminiscent of quattrocento fresco painting, appeared in both. The harvest of the past few years as well as the here exhibited works of the Hódmezővásárhely school give one the impression of fatigue. Reality itself changed round the Hódmezővásárhely school: both the idealization of the life of peasants, nostalgia for a non-existing myth and the critical realist tendency at the bottom of which there also was some kind of peasant myth, became obsolete. It is not mere chance that the neoprimitive trend which became more and more pronounced in contemporary Hungarian painting, increasingly adopted in recent times that plebeian democratic tone which was the ideological basis of the Hódmezővásárhely school.

Hungarian neoprimitivism had traditions which did not amount to much. In the

Thirties "naive art" was discovered also in Hungary but it appeared to be a passing fad and the naive painters, mainly peasants who occasionally took to painting, were soon forgotten. Their rediscovery was due to international interest shown in naive painters which also spread to Hungary; sometimes, however, it only meant posthumus recognition, for example, in the case of András Süli who won acclaim when he was already dying. Neoprimitivism and folklorism reappeared a few years ago in a new guise; Viola Berki cannot however be unreservedly called a neoprimitive artist nor can Arnold Gross be considered a neoprimitive painter with an individual style in spite of certain likenesses in form. In the case of both Berki and Gross artistic content is inherent in the naivety of fairy stories and their only mode of visual self-expression is original artlessness and the expression of sentiments by metaphors. Tamás Galambos is an undoubtedly talented painter, his work contains more deliberate and premeditated elements and he also has a more satirical vein in contrast to the internal harmony of Berki's and Gross's microcosmic realism displaying an unsophisticated imagination. Galambos's always mocking style—reminescent of sign-board painting as seen at fairs—is not the naive realist, for his is a playful mannered style. Margit Anna has recently given a whole series of works a popular and provincial flavour. This time she is showing a picture in the peasant realist style showing a folksy inspiration. New pictures by Piroska Szántó show similar traits. The folklorist tendency is particularly striking in the drawings on show, mainly in coloured etchings by Ádám Würtz and ballad-like drawings by Kálmán Csohány.

I already mentioned that artists were invited to show works of any style at the Budapest exhibition of "New Works". As a result many non-figurative, surrealist, Pop-Art and similar artists are also represented. A number are leading personalities in the world of art. Jenő Barcsay, László Bartha, Erzsébet Schaár, Tibor Vilt, Tamás Vigh, Imre Varga, Pál Deim, Lili Ország, Endre Bálint, Dezső Korniss, Ilona Keserű, Béla Kondor and László Lakner, to mention only a few names at random, have proved that they belong to the élite of modern Hungarian art. János Fajó, Imre Bak, Tamás Hencze, Tibor Csiky, Ferenc Lantos, János Haraszti and many more make their début in a way, their works had so far appeared only at one-man shows or group exhibitions. This activity of the problems of the earlier mentioned ones and with that kind of conceptual art which reacts at the same time to the problems of Hungarian society. They in the first place organically adapt themselves to the development of modern Hungarian art, although they too represent modern trends, join one or another modern branch and further develop it. Their art which can be called an associative way of looking at the world, is full of meaning. The latest trends, however, are introverted systems of symbols of plastic art remaining within the circle of the Ego; their painting is an act which is contented to render the objective as such and rules out any kind of artistic message and form creating principle. It radically departs from the artistic problems of previous trends; it has no antecedent models in modern Hungarian art and one has to trace back its source to the evolution that took place in Western Europe and America. It seems that of the artists mentioned first László Lakner also joined the ranks of the latter.

In the course of its evolution modern Hungarian art was frequently influenced by West European developments. It joined important international artistic trends sometimes on a regional or provincial level. However, up to now impulses from the outside were well assimilated and although there is no autochthonus development as regards modern social systems, it was clear that modern Hungarian art strove for independence. At present this cannot be felt. There is no way of surveying matters from

a distance and therefore one cannot form an opinion yet whether Pop-Art, Op-Art and Minimal Art will in time become a part of the organism of Hungarian art. Will they be able to produce specific regional values or will these endeavours not amount to more than the importation of international art which is spreading all over the world in our times. This however is not merely a problem of contemporary Hungarian art, similar problems crop up in the latest phases of development in the art of other countries as well.

To sum up: the growing crisis of naturalist art based on impressionist principles, the spreading of decorative work of an applied art nature as well as the strengthening of international trends which seem to depart from Hungarian traditions, characterized the *monstre* show of "New Works", whose main merit was not that it provided an opportunity to exhibit a few really good works of art but that it permitted an objective survey of the contemporary Hungarian art scene.

LAJOS NÉMETH

THE PAINTER AND THE TOMBSTONES

Ilona Keserű's art and style

After "ready-made" art, "objet trouvé", Pop and Minimal Art works, it needs no special proof that objects of art originating from the human environment react on the environment itself, often becoming part of it. Although Ilona Keserű's art could hardly be called surrealist, Pop or neo-constructivist, nonetheless her work demonstrates just this type of interaction. Within her personal environment she does not recognize borderlines between life and art. Once we enter her flat, the environment provided by the furnishings and objects present the same world of forms and colours as her paintings, the component parts of her living space blend into the works of art and vice versa —in an infinite reciprocal process. At the same time—as evidenced by her most recent open-air "exhibition"—this reciprocal action cannot be confined to her home.

Ilona Keserű was born at Pécs, in southern Hungary, in 1933. It is probably not a matter of indifference that her birthplace, the cultural centre of southern Transdanubia, was the home-town of painters and architects of such constructivist inspiration as Vasarely, Marcel Breuer, Forbát, Weininger, Gyarmathy, Farkas Molnár, Jenő Gábor, Ferenc Martyn or Lantos. Although Ilona Keserű graduated from the College of Fine Arts in the 1950s, it was Ferenc Martyn of Pécs, a doyen of Hungarian abstract painting, who had the most marked influence on her development. She was particularly affected by Martyn's personality and his splendid warm colours. It should be added that she spent longer periods of time in Poland (1959–60) and in Italy (1962–63).

However strange it may seem the general public had not until recently an opportunity to become acquainted with her work. Her first independent show was held in Rome (in 1963), the following two were in remote club-rooms (1964–67). Two years

ago some ten pictures were shown to a wider public. Ilona Keserű seems to be content to work for herself. Such is her artistic constitution. She is susceptible to evertyhing that is new, and she can make an emotional adjustment even to trends alien to her. Where her own art is concerned she will listen only to herself.

1967 was a turning point. She found the theme the elaboration of which produced her finest works. These are the works which —closing the cycle of theme migration— returned to their starting point at the open-air exhibition mentioned above. They are the heart-shaped tombstones of the old cemetery just outside the village of Udvari on the northern shores of Lake Balaton. These modest monuments were carved by an anonymous stonemason in the first half of the 19th century with the line of the jutting-out frame as their only ornamentation. This heart shape—with a smaller tongue-like projection between the two symmetrical parts—preserves at the same time the mood of late-baroque cartouches and the attractive awkwardness of peasant carvings. This simple theme was built into Ilona Keserű's paintings in a rather peculiar fashion. Not that the influence of folklore is rare in modern Hungarian art. After Lajos Vajda and Dezső Korniss, particularly contemporary constructivist painters, like János Fajó, Imre Bak and István Nádler, deliberately draw on the sources of ornamental folk art. That is why the trend they represent is often referred to as the typically Hungarian or Eastern European variant of New Abstraction. There is, however, an important point where Ilona Keserű parts company from them. However definitely she developed her heart-motif compositions in the direction of hard edge, the selection of this theme was, in her case, amply justified by the already present spontaneity of wave lines of a similar rhythm in her works.

Indeed, the gesture paintings of 1965–66 were an important station in Ilona Keserű's artistic development. Ever since that time she has shown some affinity for the patch of paint dabbed on with a single movement, or the possibility of feverish pencil play. Her pre-1967 paintings can, nevertheless, be better compared to the clear-coloured abstraction of the two Delaunays including even the problem of the circular segments and colourful whirls appearing in them at this time. Instead of a brushwork effect, the gesture is then increasingly reduced to the outlines of colour patches: to the undulating triple rhythm as in her *Cheerful Picture*, 1967. Another series of her pictures are built on the positive-negative system of black-and-white figures; the edges of the black shapes recall the waving lines which are otherwise used to link notes of music. This linear motif should again be conceived as a precursor of the later folksy tombstone contour.

There is something else that should be mentioned about Ilona Keserű's folklorism: one of its characteristics is that it is based on themes whose folk-art origin is practically unrecognizable. Nonetheless, the mere presence of these themes saves nonfigurative works from strict geometrization. In her case the folksy decorative elements become completely dissolved in the subjective gesture and always emphasize "soft", "warm", "sensuous" and in fact "feminine" characteristics.

Her first textile applications, her "sewn pictures" appeared in 1969. From then on the permanently present folklore reference is accentuated even by her selection of materials: the coarse undyed canvas plastically applied to the base; the string—again left in its natural colour—which mingles with pink and violet ribbons and yarns in a jar instead of the traditional sewing box; or the richly ruffled white fabric of a skirt which, when it is spread out, becomes a very simple but sensitively vibrant "relief" entitled *Two Hills*.

The colour scale, which became a permanent feature of Ilona Keserű's art (and environment) with the first pictures bearing the tombstone motifs, is again tangent on

folk art. One art critic very tellingly called it "the honey-cake colour scheme". It is made up of orange, crimson, pink, violet and grey—and the various shades of these hues are occasionally joined by white. Greens and blues are very rare. Her *Tombstone I* and *Tombstone II* already take one into this colour range. It is interesting to note that the straight shutting off of the theme —where the tombstone sunk into the earth is cut off by the level of the ground—seems to represent a very definite downward pull, although scattered colourful motifs hover on the surface, and some of them have base lines attached to the picture-frame or each other, apparently striving for some solidity. Later the motif seems to follow the lower frame unequivocally, but at the same time —as waves rippling in concentric rings around a stone thrown into the water— larger and larger forms containing each other are lined up in a rhythm of dark and light colours behind it. The biggest of these shapes seems to bulge out of the frame and is suggested only by a few undulating segments which do not tell whether they belong to a motif turned right side up, or upside down. The fact is that the next picture in the series already consists of two shapes vertically approaching each other, one of them pink and the other orange.

At this point analysis is bound to become reduced to dry description, it cannot convey the glow of clear colours, the spatial differences signified by darkening patches of colour and multiplying contours, or the changes of meaning which appear often by merely turning the motif ninety degrees, or looking at its mirror image. And yet all such only seemingly minute modifications are in fact incredibly important. In the series of the "sewn pictures" and textile applications created since 1969, for instance, the symmetrical doubling of the tombstone contours, shrunk into a connecting link, becomes a symbol of femininity. *Black Line*, related in concept to the above, on the other hand shows off the detail cut off from the motif as leaf-shaped, thus recalling elements of earlier collages. Instead of the graphic play of lines colourful yarns and ribbons appear attached to the bottom of the picture. This colourful and shaggy "tangle" falls elsewhere between the closed contours of a human figure or the tombstone silhouette—as in *Sewn Picture. Approach I* and *Approach II* are both built into a composition of a minimum number of elements of a snow-white ground and two plastic coarse linen tombstone motifs. The only difference in the two compositions is that the axis of the forms turning toward each other is either horizontal or vertical. In the former case we see hovering dynamic forms straining against each other while in the latter case the association is with "a mountain with clouds above."

How ripe conditions were for Ilona Keserű to change to tangibly plastic works is demonstrated by what happened to her *Cheerful Picture*. Some of the details of the composition really offered themselves for three dimensional representation. Later on, the artist did in fact paint this earlier picture again attaching strips of tubular bent linen to the appropriate places. These types of solutions brought her close to Pop Art. A characteristic example is a real doll mounted on a pink support. The doll's blue-and-white polka-dot skirt continues in paint on the background. The pink compartments of a paint-box hold snow-white eggs. There are also instances of the artist creating *assemblages* of real plates on which wing-shaped details of the heart-theme are painted. The undulating lines deriving from the heart theme are featured also on one of her newest works, a piece of canvas modelled into the shape of a portable column. On a white band rising out of the grey in the middle, the painted-over string application is seen again, but here the effect aimed at is deliberate banality, the ostentatiousness of a market-place show.

The theme of heartshaped tombstones is apparently inexhaustible. They combine

into immense decorative wall-carpets varied with positive and negative forms of crimson, pink, violet and white, and also into textile compositions based on the natural tonal values of various homespuns. In the latter, two symmetrical circles are drawn into the heart; this theme is a plastic composition consisting of two disks and of cords stretched between them, or is related to the theme of the already mentioned *Two Hills*.

Ilona Keserű works with the simplest materials and forms. The most important consequence, one of theoretical significance, of her art is that at the touch of her hand even the most everyday objects of the environment change into works of art. I believe that the metamorphosis of the big, old-fashioned looking-glass standing in her room is eloquently symbolic of this transformation. The artist painted the wooden frame white, she applied wings cut out of the heart pane to the glass itself. The arching reddish stripes vary from pink to orange, conveying the idea of change within unity. On the other hand, the image of the interior or of the spectator himself or herself enters into the closed system of the work —with the deceptive ephemerality of reflection.

An element in the picture evolves step by step into something else—although the containing whole remains virtually unaltered. The pictorial element—the theme—running the full cycle of metamorphosis, returns to its original starting point. This was the essence of the exhibition held among the old tombstones of Balatonudvari. This was an irregular exhibition with only a few viewers—all the trouble taken merely for the sake of paintings, textiles and silk-screens with the heart motifs. The model and the famous painting depicting it, are usually shown side by side by voluminous books on art history only. Now in this natural environment the assembly of mossy, crumbling tombstones was confronted with the scattered series of blatant orange and red compositions. The colourful wall carpet was a rug on the lawn between two carved tombstones. The archaic grey stone turned into the centre of the hard-edge painting set directly behind it, as if increasing waves of orange, crimson, white and violet hearts were radiating from it.

This was the place where the ever-changing current running back and forth between spontaneous gesture and sharply delineated calculated colour surfaces, between folklore and artistic actuality, and between environment and art was evident in the greatest number of its multiple aspects. And it is this flow which makes Ilona Keserű's art so unique.

LÁSZLÓ BEKE

ELEK GYŐRI, A PEASANT PAINTER

Elek Győri, the Hungarian peasant painter, was born at Tiszaladány in 1905, and died at Tiszalök in 1957. Up to 1932, when he began to paint, he worked as a blacksmith's apprentice, changing from one master to another, from Debrecen to Budapest. István Györffy, the ethnographer, was the first to call the attention of the Populist writers to his work, and under their influence he turned to the political movements of the Left.

Interest in artists of peasant origin and the peasant reality they represented, stemming from the Populist Movement itself, grew in the 1930s. In 1934 Elek Győri was given the opportunity to hold a successful one-man exhibition of his paintings, and some years later, in 1940, anxious to improve his skills and craftsmanship, he enrolled in the College of Fine Art. After the end of the war he worked in various places, Tiszaladány, Tiszalök, Tokaj and Sárospatak.

The pictures of Elek Győri are impressive in their feeling for the community, and their reverence for the daily round of life. He was one of those fortunate artists, increasingly rare in our century, whose work is integrated with the community which nourished and inspired them, and with the life he knew intimately from within and continued to live when physically far from it. He was a chronicler of village and peasant existence. His canvases possess the authenticity and authority of a diary, and his approach shows the sure hand of one who belongs, to whom it is all familiar. He painted the shared experiences of country life: weddings, fairs, work and funerals. He painted what he had seen day after day since his childhood, what happened in the house next door and round the corner of the street, heightening and accentuating each event by his own identification with it.

Győri gave even greater realism to his factual passion by his use of living people in the villages as models for his pictorial short stories. Along the Tisza river, close to the villages where he lived, many people still remember the men and women he painted: the innkeeper, the smith, the gravedigger, the horseherd, the harvesters, the bailiff with his cane *(Inn Scene, László Csikós of Tiszalök, Funeral of a Girl, Aunt Sarah, All Souls' Day in the Inn)*. This last picture, breathing the silent grief of wordless men who remember but never speak of their memories is one of the most moving genre compositions in Hungarian painting. His sense of social justice obviously inspired works like *Ferry on the Tisza River*, in which, painted with apparent cool objectivity, the poor are crowded in a small ramshackle boat beside those preening themselves in the elegant carriage the ferry is taking across the river. This same contrast frequently appears in other paintings of his; the domineering foremen and the labourers in *Vintage at Tokaj;* the stolid, bored young ladies and hard-driven peasants in *Sharecroppers Harvesting the Corn-cobs*.

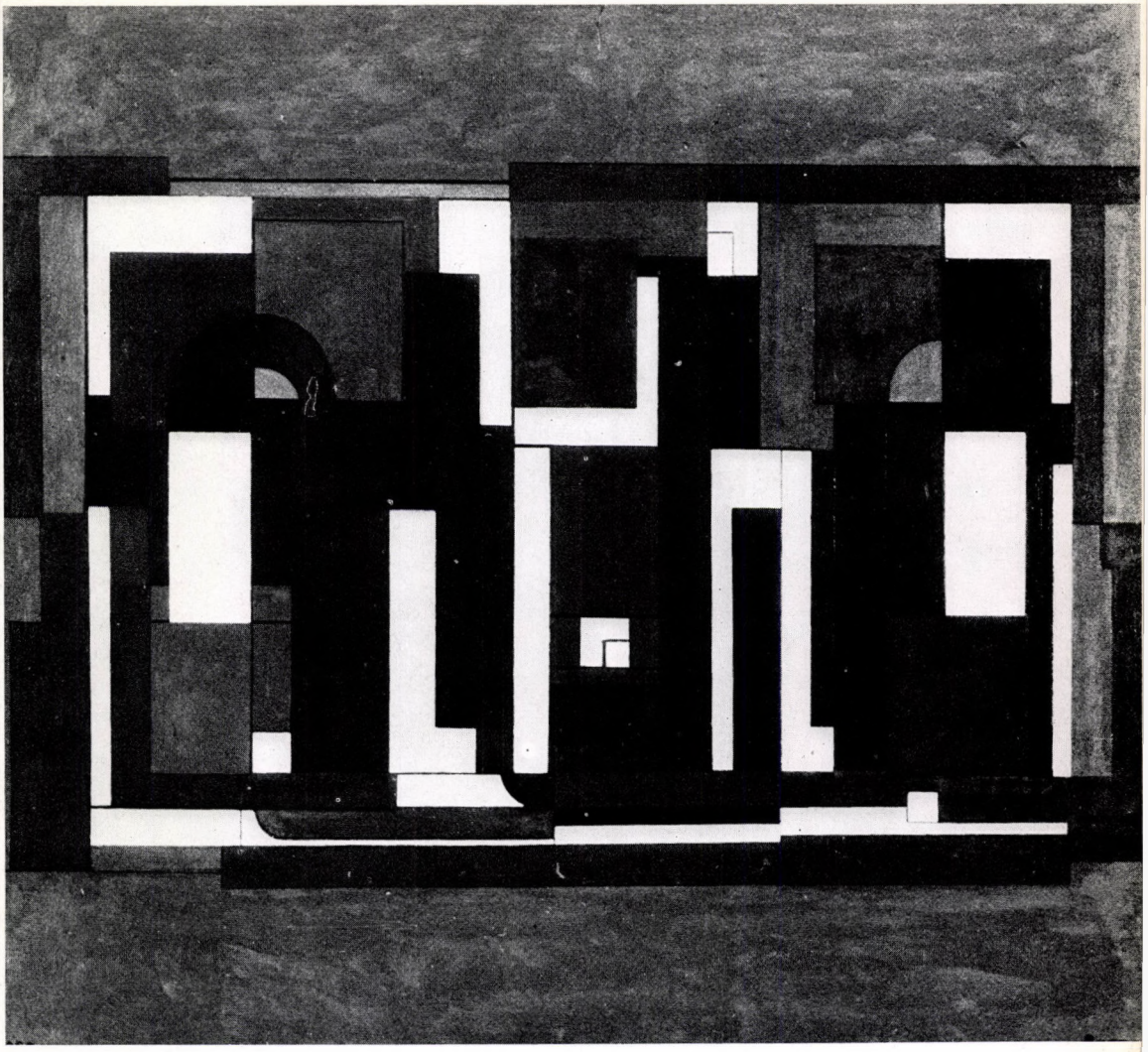
Two of his qualities, his luxuriant use of colours and his strong social sense, place Győri close to the primitive Populist painters, but he lacks their bizarre and fantastic imagination. There is no myth or cloud cuckoo land in his paintings; they are sober, accurate accounts of life, representing things as they are. His manner of expressing himself, especially in his choice of a bright, primary palette for some of his canvases, link him with the international Primitives of the time, but their intellectual content brings him closer to Hungarian peasant writers such as Péter Veres and Pál Szabó.

The biblical simplicity and honesty of his peasant paintings are the affirmations of faith of an artist with a Christ-like attitude towards the nameless people of the villages of Central Europe, who live out the destined course of their earth-bound fate amid the

László Óvári: Street (Oil, 130×150 cms)

Photo: Ferenc Kovács

▼ Dezső Korniss: Calligraphy (Enamel paint, 56,5×200 cms) *Photo: István Zilahy*



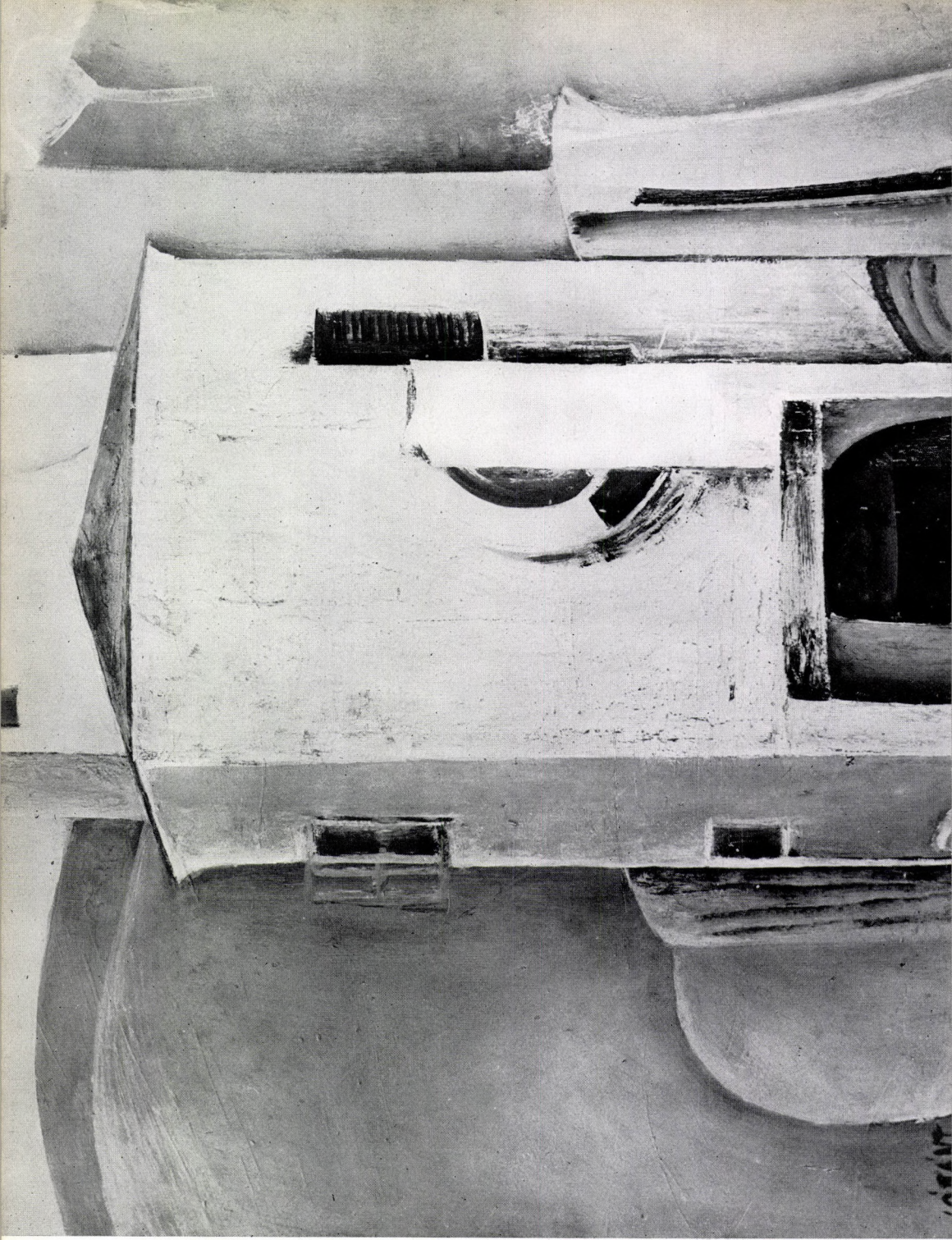
Jenő Barcsay: Picture Architecture in Red (Oil, 90×100 cms)

Photo: Ferenc Kovács

TAMÁS VIGH: DEMETER (BRONZE, 31 CMS)

Photo: Ferenc Kovács


ORSZÁG LILI
INGFAL II.

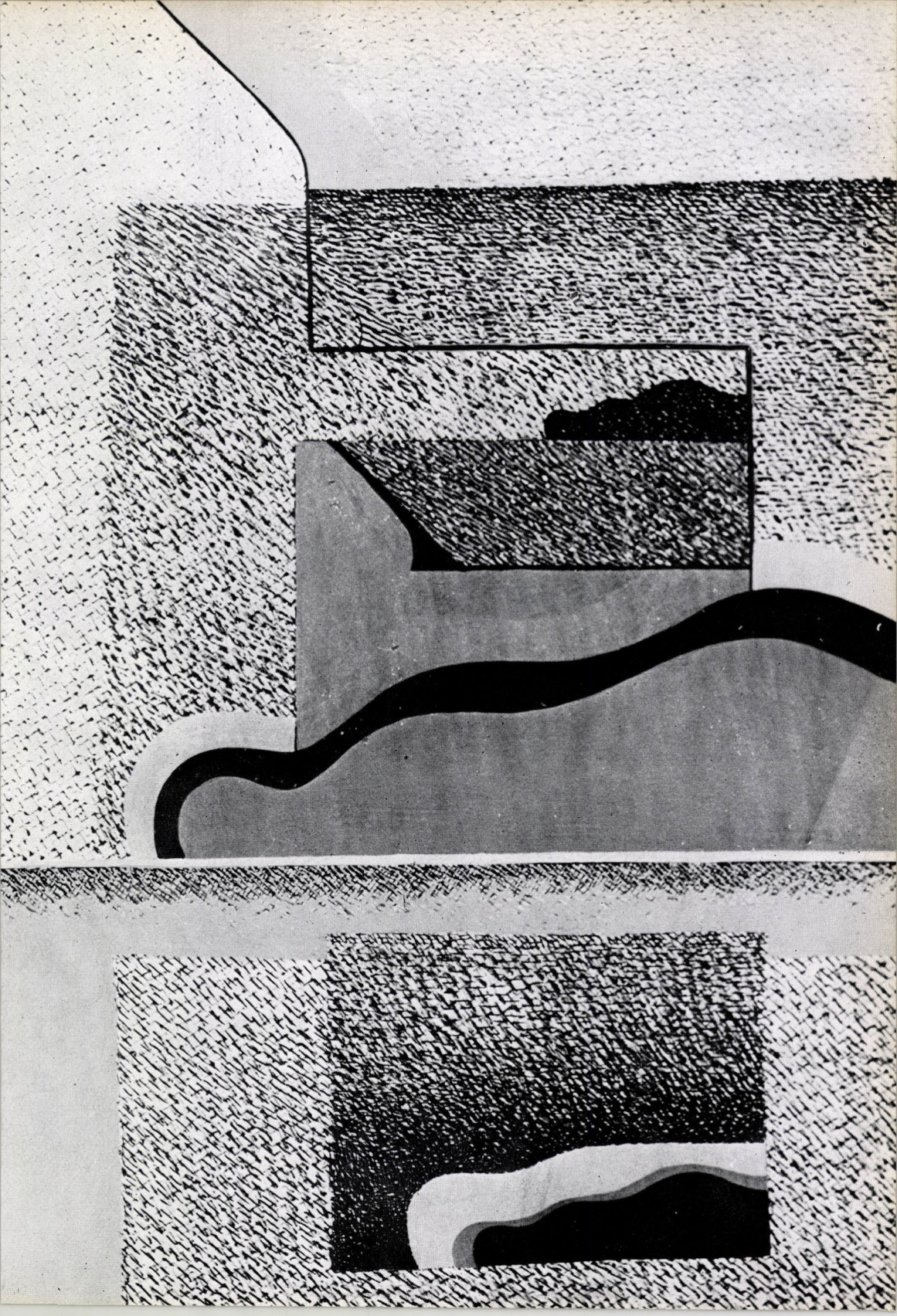


▲ JÁNOS LÓRÁNT: MEMORY OF A MILL (OIL, 80 × 100 CMS)

Photo: István Zilahy

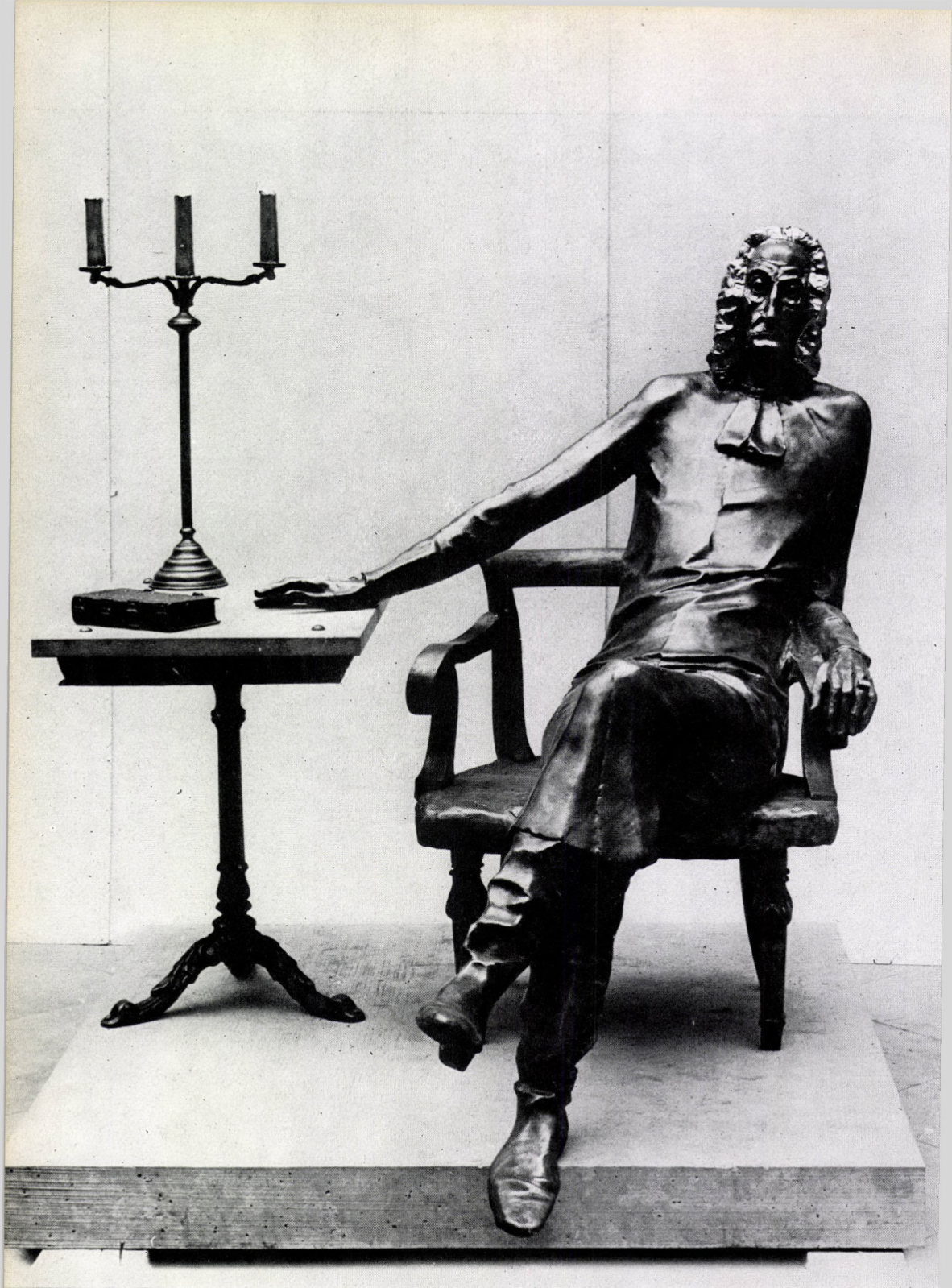
PÁL DEIM: SILENCE 5 (TEMPERA, 60 × 84 CMS) ▶

Photo: Ferenc Kovács

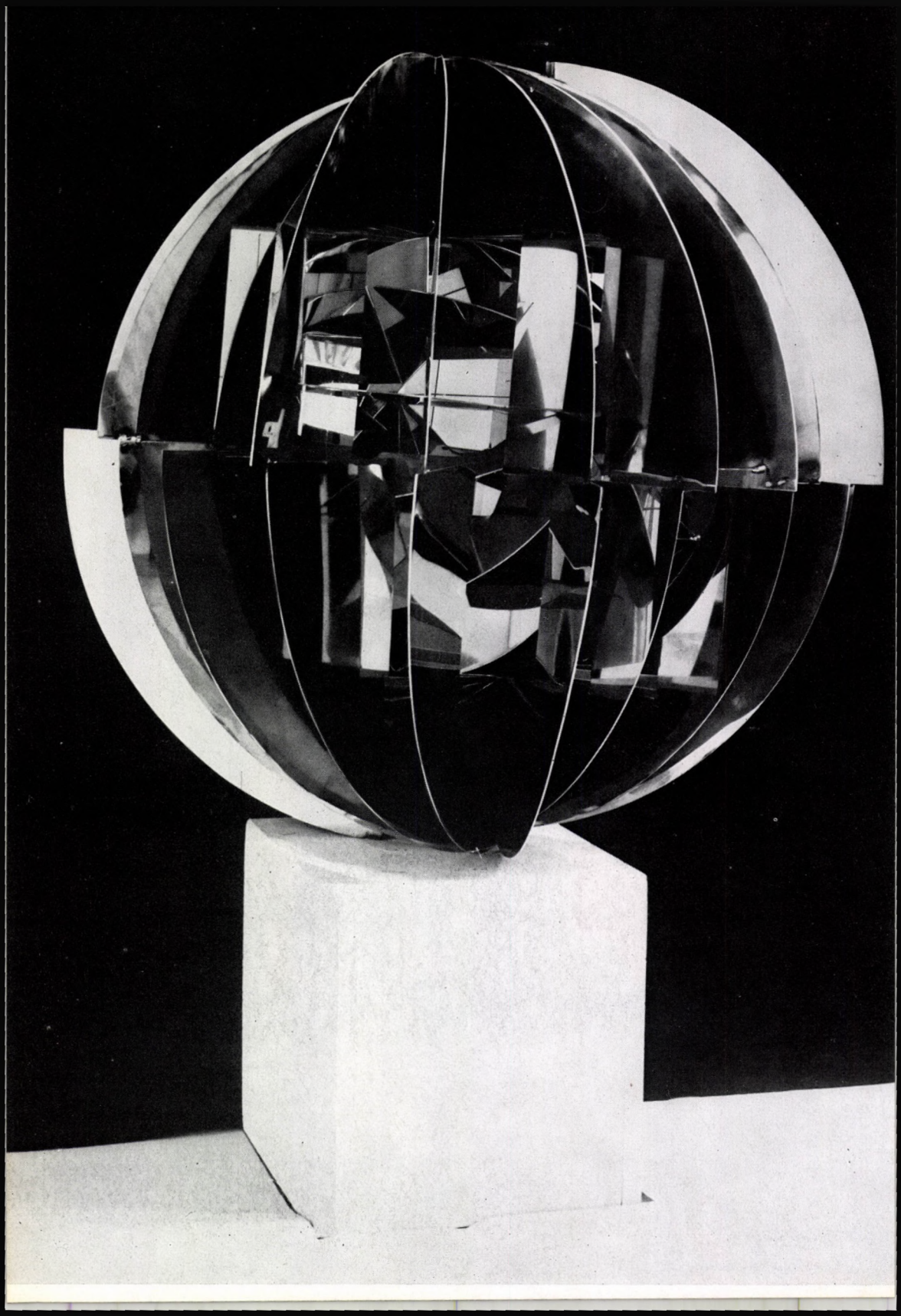


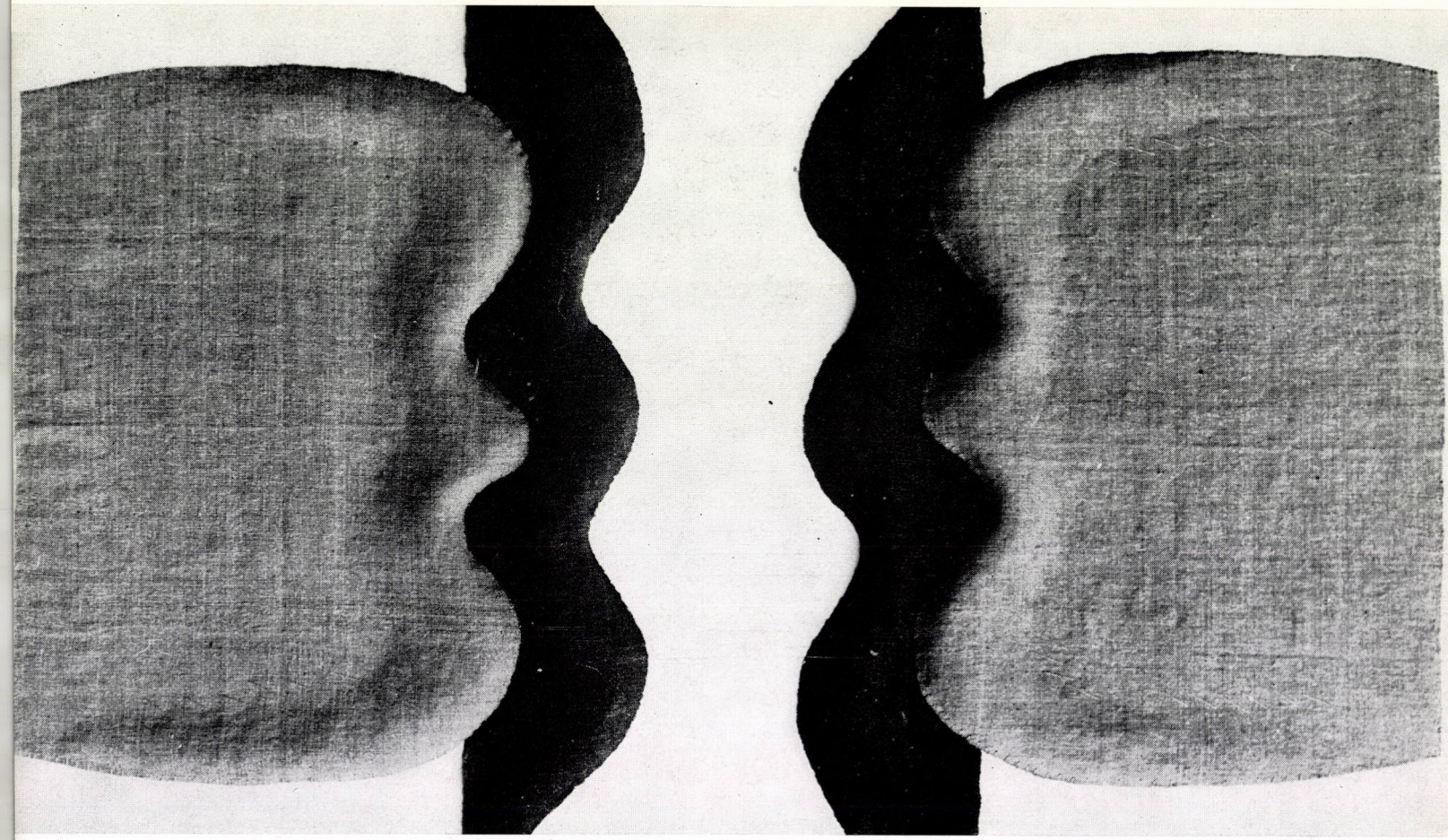
MARGIT ANNA: THE HOLY FAMILY (OIL, 60×75 CMS)

Photo: Klára Langer



▲ IMRE VARGA: THE PROFESSOR (BRONZE, 130 CMS) *Photo: Ferenc Kovács*





On the preceding page:
ILONA KESERŰ: TOMBSTONES (OIL, 80×120 CMS, 1968)
Photo: Yvonne Kranz

ILONA KESERŰ: DUAL SHAPE (CANVAS RELIEF, 80×160 CMS, 1969)
Photo: Zsolt Szabóky

▲ Elek Győri: Tisza Flood (Oil, 30×60 cms, 1948)

Photo: István Petrás

Overleaf:

conflagration and mighty changes of the modern world. Elek Győri was in fact a very faithful recorder of the timeless hopelessness and poverty of peasant life. Brush and paint were only a pretext, for his painting might better be understood as literary in its intention and impact *(Christmas Carol Singers at Tiszaladány, The Conscript Lad, Start for the Fair).*

Most of what are known as Populist painters are two-dimensional in their approach. Győri's paintings are more three-dimensional, they create a feeling of space and perspective, the whole strengthened by his fine sense of composition. *Wedding Procession* (1935) is a panorama of a great snow-blanketed plain on the edge of a village in which the gallop and rush of horses and carriages provide a sense of dynamism in the vast space, increased by the expanse of brooding sky over the small far-off houses in the background, and balanced vertically by the tall sweep-well. The human figures, moving, running, falling flat in the snow, accentuate the dynamism and movement of the rushing horses.

Whether Győri composed his paintings consciously is hard to decide, but then, do the peasant women paint their lovely designs on the freshly whitewashed walls for the spring holiday with deliberate planning or instinctively? It is a fact that they start in one corner, and when they stop in the opposite corner their work seems to be perfectly arranged. That was how artists worked in the early Renaissance: first they placed the substance, the essential matter, on the surface they were to fill, then they embellished it; or they began at one point and reached the end without any compulsion to correct.

A strange sense of the tragic—a discouraged, solitary, emotional impression—though socially easy to explain—seems to hover over the pictures of Elek Győri. His colours glow, but rarely *(Barbecue, Fair at Tokaj)* in their natural warmth. Even the reds are usually toned down, the whites softened into greys. Several of his paintings, in fact, echo the deep browns of Rembrandt; others tremble with the ashen hues so characteristic of Hungarian landscapes. The decorative quality of his bright naive paintings contrasts with the subtle shades and delicate transitions in colour of most of his work *(The Rabbi, Self Portrait).*

It is however to be regretted that Győri ever "learnt to paint." It is clear from his works exhibited at the Miskolc Gallery and later in the Museum of Agriculture that he lost a great deal of his spontaneity and frankly picturesque qualities after graduating from the College of Fine Art.

KATALIN S. NAGY

Errata: By an unfortunate oversight Lorraine Hansbury's name, as well as that of the magazine *Ebony*, appeared in a distorted form in *A Day in Harlem*, Part II, by Iván Boldizsár, on pages 115, 116, and 118, of No. 42.

MUSICAL LIFE

NEW RECORDS

J. PH. RAMEAU: Pièces de Clavecin en concerts (Avec un violon ou flute, et une viole ou un deuxième violon) Concerts I–V. Lóránt Kovács (flute), László Mező (cello), János Sebestyén (harpsichord). Hungaroton LPX 11453 (stereo-mono).

Rameau, the great master of French baroque instrumental music essentially continued, without interruption, the path of development marked out by his predecessors, the most important of whom was François Couperin "le Grand". This path differed fundamentally from both Italian chamber music and concerti grossi, as well as the grandiose and weighty German composition style that culminated in Bach. Debussy, doing research in the history of specifically French music did not come across the harpsichord music of Couperin and Rameau merely by chance. We can perceive the influence of Couperin and Rameau in the fact that the great majority of Debussy's works—particularly those composed for piano—are programme music.

It is true all right that the growth of French baroque instrumental music must be looked for in the small, but elaborately detailed forms of character and genre pieces. When French masters made an attempt to abandon this "small world" they were unable to achieve any worthwhile results for nearly a century.

Each Rameau movement of this series, composed in 1741, gives the impression of a richly wrought bonbonnière or casket. And really, the greater part of them is "programme music", a descriptive title is never missing from individual movements. It is also true, however, that these titles are metathetical in some way, actually only symbolic. Who could explain today, for example, why the slow movement of *Premier Concert La Livri*—named after the Seine embankment—is so brooding and sentimental, in the best sense of the term, or what caused *Le Vezinet*, inspired by the small town in the vicinity of Paris, to become such a lively piece? Truly these are criptogrammic signals.

It is much more important that the composer, departing from the general practice of his time, elaborated both the harpsichord and the flute parts very thoroughly. He moreover adhered to the method of writing the harpsichord part with a figured bass—that is, in outline—to such a small degree that this part is richer, and perhaps more elaborate than that of the flute. It therefore offers an exceptionally valuable document for anyone desiring to study the method of working out the baroque continuo. The harpsichord accompaniments left to us in outline form, and works of other French masters should be elaborated in this, or a similar manner.

János Sebestyén performs this virtuoso harpsichord part with rare plasticity. In his hands every bar pulsates and lives, the

ornaments virtually sparkle and glitter with colour. László Mező's reinforcement of the bass voice may be described as almost ideal. He accomplishes his task practically unobserved—yet he is present throughout, flexibly and rhythmically. Lóránt Kovács's slender and pure flute tone soars, in the first piece there is perhaps a moment or two in which he darts out at the expense of the up-beat, later the three musicians play in admirable harmony.

"MUSICA RINATA": GREGOR WERNER: Oratorio Introductions; MICHAEL HAYDN: Symphony in D Major (1788); FLORIAN GASSMANN: Symphony in A Flat Major; F. SÜSSMAYR: Ouverture. Hungarian Chamber Orchestra. Leader: Vilmos Tátrai. Hungaroton, LPX 11462 (stereo-mono).

The Esterházy family employed not only Joseph Haydn, and its library preserved the works not only of Haydn the "great", but also many other musicians, and many more musical works were brought to their palaces, and performed there. The greater part of these are today in the possession of the Budapest Széchényi Library.

Among the names enumerated those of three composers are fairly well known. Gregor Werner was Joseph Haydn's immediate predecessor as the Esterházys' conductor; Michael Haydn was a colleague of the child Mozart at the court of the Archbishop of Salzburg, he was of course the brother of the "great" Joseph; Franz Xaver Süssmayr is known as Mozart's personal pupil and also as the man who provided the arrangement of Mozart's unfinished Requiem which is performed to this day. Leopold Florian Gassmann—like Werner—was typically a master of the transitional era: he did not as yet speak in the voice of the Vienna classics, but he no longer represented the baroque age either. His works contain elements of both styles.

Three movements by Werner are included in this recording. First an excellently constructed, late baroque prelude and fugue. If we listen carefully we can easily perceive that the cadential order of certain sections is in many respects similar to Mozart's baroque works. It is here that we can observe one of the greatest changes in the history of music *in statu nascendi* so to speak, the processes of simplification that took place *between German* baroque and the rise of *Austrian* classicism. These stylistic features can be discerned in the introductions to Werner's oratorios *Deborah* and *Daniel*. Placing this music holds the listener in a state of suspense. It is true, of course, that Werner was only ten years Johann Sebastian Bach's junior, and outlived him by sixteen years.

The *D Major Symphony* of Michael Haydn (1737–1806), a beautiful three-movement work, on the other hand leaves no doubts about its origin. It speaks in the voice of the youthful Mozart and Haydn symphonies. As regards the performance, the last movement perhaps appears to be somewhat laboured—but the chamber orchestra, without a conductor, performs the two earlier ones all the more brilliantly.

The introduction of Gassmann's four-movement symphony recalls the voice of Gluck's music—the fugal structure of the principal part also bears the stylistic features of the era of transition, but the slow movement sounds the note of "preromanticism" we are familiar with from Bach's sons. The observant listener will derive great pleasure in recognizing the duality typical of the transitional era in Gassmann's work—and all this on a disk of some 50 minutes playing time, the full score of which is by the way only available in the Budapest Széchényi Library, that is why it is first recorded in the present instance.

All this is supplemented by Süssmayr's evocative and inventive "ouverture"—kept expressly in a Mozartian style. It is a virtuoso symphony movement built in the

manner of an orchestral concerto, with exceptionally gratifying woodwind voices constructed lightly and airily.

In the material of this record one can observe that deeply hidden process which the great masters kept in the background—but without which they could not have produced their chef d'oeuvre.

FRANZ SCHUBERT: Sonata in A minor for Arpeggione and piano; XAVER HAMMER: Sonata No. 4 for Viola da Gamba; J. N. HUMMEL: Sonata in E Flat Major for Viola and Piano Op. 5 No. 3; P. NARDINI: Sonata in F minor for Viola and Piano; Pál Lukács — Viola, Endre Petri — piano. Hungaroton LPX 11459 (stereo-mono).

The playing time of this marvellous record is a few seconds short of an hour. This "portrait" record by Pál Lukács, the outstanding viola player begins with a singular masterpiece by Schubert, the "Arpeggione Sonata". The first movement that employs Slav sounding themes soars in rich and broad tones. Lukács is daring enough to exploit all of its romantic beauty, at the same time he shows the action, in the musical sense, behind a diaphanous veil. Some of the great violinists of the past, and they were the only ones, took hold of music in as free and uninhibited a way as Pál Lukács, in such a sovereign manner, yet never arbitrarily. His playing is marked by a particular intimacy and identification, no distance whatever can be felt between the work and its performer. (Distance seems to be the invention of the emotionally impoverished and the half-gifted, those who are incapable of identification with a work invented it as a basic rule of modern performing art.)

The viola da gamba sonata by Xaver Hammer which follows is just as much a product of the second line of the Mozart–Haydn era as the major part of the material on the previously reviewed record. This is entertaining music in the highest sense of the term, offering ample opportunitites for the viola player—in this instance an instrument with a range identical with that of the viola da gamba—to give voice to the magnificent cantilena.

Hummel's viola sonata is one of the most spectacular virtuoso pieces of the instrument's otherwise not particularly rich repertory. In view of the fact that the composer was himself a famous pianist, the piano part is given a special significance, perhaps an even greater importance than that of the viola. Listeners are here given a good opportunity to discover Endre Petri's outstanding qualities as a chamber music pianist.

Nardini's sonata ends the record. The composer—one of the leading virtuosi of the middle of the 18th century—had a splendid grasp of the character of string instruments and of the opportunities they offered. His sonata is a virtuoso piece.

BEETHOVEN: 1. König Stephan, Op. 117; 2. Die Ruinen von Athen, Op. 113; Margit László (soprano), Sándor Nagy (baritone), Hungarian Radio and Television Chorus (Chorus Master: Ferenc Sapszon), Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra, Conducted by Géza Oberfrank. Hungaroton LPX 11474 (stereo-mono).

The two Beethoven ouvertures are well known items of the standard concert repertoire. This record however contains not only the two familiar ouvertures, but also Beethoven's incidental music to A. von Kotzebue's *König Stephan* and *Die Ruinen von Athen*.

Both works refer to Hungary—Beethoven wrote them for the opening of the first German theatre in Pesth, where they were first performed on February 9, 1812. Apart from this—or perhaps just for this reason—he worked numerous Hungarian elements into the music of both the nine-movement *König*

Stephan and the eleven movement *Die Ruinen von Athen*. (Generally elements of "verbunkos" music.)

Some of the movements had to be omitted in view of the fact that their real meaning would only become apparent in a performance of the play as a whole. Nevertheless the record as it is gives a quite accurate picture of these two rarely performed Beethoven works.

Neither is one of Beethoven's masterpieces, and both show strong traces of their occasional character. What is all the more interesting is the way certain aspects of other masterpieces by Beethoven make their appearance almost as quotations—for example, the closing section of the *Egmont* ouverture, in the ouverture to the *Die Ruinen von Athen*. No less interesting is their *durchkomponiert* character, which we can observe in the more familiar *Egmont* incidental music.

Géza Oberfrank is one of the outstanding talents of the younger generation of Hungarian conductors. His personality suggests great strength in the daring and sovereign treatment of the music he conducts. His range is extensive and deep. In the most familiar section of the *Die Ruinen von Athen*, recording for example the *Marcia alla Turca*, he is dynamic and vibrant, in the choruses with a hymnal character both the orchestra and choir sound as in late Beethoven works. Oberfrank is a conductor of the Budapest State Opera House, and this is felt in the record also: he feels quite at home in the world of music drama.

11TH INTERNATIONAL MUSIC COMPETITION BUDAPEST, 1970. Aria, Song, Oboe and Clarinet Competitions. Programme of the Prize Winners: Kolozs Kovács (basso). Aria 1st prize (Hungary), Gerda Radler (soprano). Aria 2nd prize (Rumania), Ludovic Kónya (baritone). Aria 2nd prize (Rumania), Maurice Bourgue (oboe). 1st prize (France), Anthony Morf (clarinet). 1st prize (Switzerland), László Horváth (clarinet). 1st prize (Hungary), Siegfried Lorenz (tenor). Lied 1st prize (German Dem. Rep.). Hungaroton LPX 11534 (stereo-mono).

Owing to lack of space a full description of the material the record contains cannot be provided here, and only a few performances can be referred to. This record means first of all to give publicity to still unknown young artists, and in this sense the works they perform, opera arias, *Lieder*, selections for woodwind instruments, etc. are no more than an opportunity to introduce them to the public.

The bass-baritone voice and dramatic ability of Kolozs Kovács (Hungary) gives rise to the highest possible hopes. Fiesco's aria from Verdi's *Simone Boccanegra*, as well as King Philip's aria from *Don Carlos* remind of the great Italian bass-baritones. The "Blute nur" aria from J. S. Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion*, sung by Gerda Radler (Rumania) is not the most suitable framework for a demonstration of her ability and talent, since the accompaniment is provided only by the piano.

Ludovic Kónya (Rumania) sings an aria from Händel's *Rodelinda* (Bertarido's aria—Act I) also only with a piano accompaniment. His vocal material is perhaps not as rich and varied as Kolozs Kovács's, his technique is nevertheless dazzling.

Maurice Bourgue, oboist (France), despite his youth, is already virtually an artist with an international reputation. It was unfortunately impossible for him to perform the entire Marcello or Mozart oboe concertos on this record. His playing of the two works at the competition was an unforgettable experience. Ránki's *Don Quijote y Dulcinea*, a two-movement, witty composition, was much better suited to the requirements of brevity. His intonation is pure, and his performance is exceptionally rhythmical and lively—at the time of the competition his playing set the Budapest audience astir with excitement.

Clarinets were not particularly strongly represented at least when compared with the oboists. All the same Anthony Morf of Switzerland gives a fine performance of Igor Stravinsky's *Three Pieces for Clarinet Solo* as does László Horváth, a Hungarian, of Leo Weiner's *Verbunkos from Pereg* (Op. 40).

Siegfried Lorenz (German Democratic Republic) sings one *Lied* each by Brahms and Beethoven, and two by Richard Strauss with the sureness of one at home in his mother tongue, and with a clear intonation. He is an exceptional talent, expressing every emotional nuance. He does not merge the various characters, but boldly realizes their differences, without allowing the works to lose their unity. His vigorous, cantabile singing of *Zuneigung* by Strauss deserves particular mention.

ZOLTÁN KODÁLY: 1. Psalmus Hungaricus. For Tenor Solo, Chorus and Orchestra, Op. 13; 2. The Peacock, Variations on a Hungarian Folk Song. József Simándy (tenor) (1), Budapest Choir (1), (Choir Master Miklós Forrai), Children's Choir of the Hungarian Radio and Television, (Choir Master: László Csányi); Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra (1–2). Conducted by Antal Doráti. Hungaroton LPX 11392 (stereo-mono).

Psalmus Hungaricus is a peak in Kodály's work. Both the choice of text and its musical treatment go far beyond the framework that Kodály indicated in the title. This *Psalmus* is a free Hungarian verse translation of the 55th Psalm. The 16th century Hungarian poet wrote a poem in place of the first section of the 55th Psalm, an introduction depicting the situation. The objective-descriptive text is presented by the choir, and the tenor solo expresses David's heart-rending grievance in the first person. Here the choir is given a gradually rising role. The translation of the Psalm ends with a closing stanza similar to that of the opening—with the quiet singing of the choir, which fades away into cheerless darkness.

The *Psalmus* is one of the favourite pieces of Hungarian choirs and orchestras. One can hardly imagine a more authentic and inspiring performance than the one heard on this record. Antal Doráti's Hungarian nature and well-known meticulousness are noticeable in the pure sound of the orchestra—and the Budapest Choir is so familiar with this work that its entire membership usually sings it from memory. József Simándy's artistry is characterized by a profound seriousness and dramatic strength—not only his splendid voice, but these two qualities as well can be clearly felt on this record.

The *Peacock Variations* are also a deservedly popular work, which Antal Doráti with unbelievable care cleansed, on this occasion, of all the faults that it had acquired in the course of many commonplace performances. His rehearsals have become legendary, not even the slightest negligence escaped his attention, and he would not rest until the orchestra fulfilled his maximum requirements.

ANDRÁS PERNYE

THEATRE AND FILM

THREE KINDS OF THEATRE

(István Örkény: Cats' Game, Mihály Károlyi: Ravelski, Peter Weiss: Song of the Lusitanian Bogeyman)

Theatre people—writers, stage managers, directors—can believe in one sort of theatre and stake their lives on it. The theatre-loving audience and those most professional and specialist playgoers who, in ideal cases, could be called critics, cannot afford this luxury. They can have their preferences, of course: in fact, they almost always stubbornly shy away from some type of drama or other. But if, on their theatrical menu, they were invariably given variations of their favourite fare, they would soon grow sick of it. It takes all sorts of theatre to make the theatre.

I thought of this again in course of my winter trip to Brussels: I felt terribly moved when I saw a play of Arrabal: *They Put the Flowers in Chains*, I laughed like mad at *The King* by Flers and Caillavet, a classic light comedy of the beginning of the century. The two companies probably regard each other with aversion, and as creative artists, they are quite justified. I do not, however, think, that any true lover of the theatre could have looked with indifference at either of these equally good performances because of his bias in favour of the other.

Brussels is not one of the highlights of European theatre, but I felt a few pangs of envy: our season in Budapest had not then provided anything that impressed me as much. But when I came home I had the luck to see real theatre three times in a single week, and these performances provoked an echo of the very thoughts I had had in Brussels. Three entirely different plays and wholly different performances—and all three proved to be delightful experiences in their own genre. One of them was almost perfect, and fascinating even for those who prefer other kinds of perfection.

It was an extra pleasure that this marvellous experience was provided by a new Hungarian play, *Cats' Game* by István Örkény, at the Pesti Theatre. Like the author's first important play, *The Tót Family**, which has had a considerable success in various European countries, this play was also based on a short novel of his, and it has preserved the original concept rather more than *The Tót Family* did. Twenty years ago it would have been rejected because of its "narrative" construction: now its very form has made it fashionable for those with fashionable tastes, although it is a tricky play. The montage of extracts from letters read aloud and telephone conversations conceals some of the more traditional dramatic conventions. It has its hero—or heroine—in both the ancient and modern sense of the term; it has mounting tension; its subject is a matter of life and death, and it ends with a catharsis which even Aristotle would have approved.

The framework is the correspondence of two elderly sisters. One, Giza, an invalid,

* See part of act II in No. 28 of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*. *Cats' Game* will be published in No. 44.

lives in West Germany with her rich son; she is a delicate, wise old lady who has given herself up to growing old, to the mental and emotional hibernation which precedes death. The other sister is the "heroine" of the play, Erzsi, Mrs. Orbán, a widow, who is nearly sixty-five and lives in Budapest on her small pension. Giza's strongest desire is to have Erzsi with her in Germany; from her remote wheel-chair—in one corner of the stage—she watches her sister's life with anxiety and disapproval. Her inquietude is quite justified: Mrs. Orbán has given up nothing. She has preserved her thirst for all that life can give, and her capacity to feel the quintessence of pleasure and the extremes of desperation—everything regarded as the privilege of youth. Her life is full of brutal encounters and impulsive, primary reactions. This is summed up in the title; *Cats' Game*, a mimic game of the unruly gambolling and miaowing of cats which Mrs. Orbán plays with her little neighbour, a colourless, timid girl called Mousy.

The play begins with Erzsi plunging into a new friendship with the utter commitment of a schoolgirl; the new friend is an elderly woman, but smart and artful—qualities Erzsi herself has never possessed. The new, worldly wise friend coaxes Erzsi into showing the tricks she uses to keep her man, and with their aid seduces Erzsi's one and only love, Victor Csermlényi, a former opera singer, to whom Erzsi had been faithful all her life, first as a girl and later as the wife of another. The Thursday night dinners with him are still red letter days for Erzsi, when she can delight him, by now grown into a voluptuous gourmand, with fabulously enormous dishes. The guileless woman introduces her lover to her friend, and the latter wastes no time: Victor refuses Erzsi's next invitation to dinner. Erzsi makes one row after another, but all, of course, in vain. There is a splendid scene where Victor's mother, an ex-Wagner singer, a wrecked magnificence, a lioness in the form of a mummy, throws Erzsi out of her flat as any dominating mother of an empty-headed student might throw his discarded girl friend, unable to accept her rejection, out on her ear. In the old days girls used to take poison on such occasions, because they were young and believed that life and unhappiness last forever. Mrs. Orbán, at the age of sixty-five, does exactly that; fortunately her attempt to commit suicide fails: waking, she cannot imagine how she came to do any such thing. Beside her bed sits her sister Giza, prepared to return to Hungary and retire to the provinces with her sister, there to lead the tranquil and secluded life befitting their age. It is then that Erzsi gives a performance of "cat's play" with the obedient and willing little neighbour. Giza laughs and laughs, and then suddenly mumbles in embarrassment: "I've wet my knickers..." No, the cat's play is not for Giza, and loneliness in the provinces and final surrender are not for Erzsi.

So the play is in fact the story of the eternal triangle, with people very much older than usual in such a plot; Mrs. Orbán is genuinely in love, and genuinely suffers. But since *Cats' Game* is a good play, the story contains a great deal more meaning than is apparent at first sight. The "heroine" is ridiculous: Örkény employs a number of grotesque effects, and effectively exploits all the opportunities offered by the subject of passion in old age. The audience laughs a great deal, until they suddenly realize that Mrs. Orbán is only grotesque as are those who take this ephemeral life seriously, this fragile life which may break at any moment, and inevitably breaks in the end, and that she is therefore as magnificent as she is grotesque. This is Örkény's discovery; the tale provides an excellent opportunity for the demonstration of human heroism. Mrs. Orbán's ardour and passion for life is unequivocally grotesque, on account of her age, and because it manifests itself in a passion of love unbefitting her declining years—the same emotion in the young is not grotesque. And it is precisely this obvious folly that makes her

passion admirable. The attitude to life adopted by this slatternly, impudent, old woman, lying and posing when it suits her, outfacing death on the threshold of death, is the only possible way to deny death, the only possible way for man to preserve his dignity in the face of remorseless extinction.

The play was first performed in January 1971, in the town of Szolnok. This was because the author had been so delighted with the performance of *The Tót Family* by the local repertory company in that town that he had promised Gábor Székely, the young director of the company, to give him his next play.

So *Cats' Game* was first put on in Szolnok, and was such a roaring success that the management of the Vígszínház took an option on the play ten minutes after the first night's performance, along with the director and two actors in the cast. In Budapest it was put on in the Pesti Theatre, the little theatre attached to the Vígszínház, and again came up to all the expectations of an expectant audience. The two sisters were played by two elderly and celebrated actresses; (every theatre has a vision of offering the right roles to their grand old ladies, and here they were given such a chance for two at the same time). Mária Sulyok played Mrs. Orbán. This actress combines the qualities of an earth-bound Hecuba and a sublime trollop from Billingsgate: in this role she was both.

The production also started on his way a young director who seems to have the seeds of greatness in him, as well as the young actress who played the part of Mousy, who invested her very dullness with significance and life, and who caught and held the attention of the audience. On the other hand, this production also provided the occasion for an old retired actress of seventy-six, with an honourable career in the provinces behind her, with her last role as the singer's mother, played with gruesome perfection.

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The other new play now on in Budapest is primarily significant on account of its author. No Hungarian in the audience can dissociate himself from a living consciousness and remembrance of the author which penetrates the play and gives it a special authenticity. No one in Hungary can remain indifferent to this play, just as no one in England could remain indifferent to a play found among Churchill's papers, or no one in France to some posthumous theatrical experiment of De Gaulle's. This play was written by Count Mihály Károlyi, one of the most important Hungarian politicians of our century, the President of the first Hungarian Republic in 1918, with a personality which won him the love and esteem of the English who knew him in his years of exile as well as the Hungarian nation. The original title of the play was *Ravelski*. The József Attila theatre of Budapest gave it another, a more "interesting" title—a questionable procedure—and it was performed under the title *The Big Lie*.

Károlyi, a descendant of one of the most famous and richest aristocratic families of Hungary, was a great landowner who became the leader of the bourgeois democratic revolution in 1918, Prime Minister and the first President of the Republic, and began the agrarian reform with the distribution of his own estates. Between 1919 and 1946 he lived abroad as an emigré; the Horthy regime proclaimed him a traitor, and confiscated his property. During the Second World War, in the Hungarian broadcasts of the BBC, he tried to save his people from the disaster he had foreseen. In 1946 he was appointed Minister in Paris by the new Hungarian regime, but the Rákosi government forced him into exile again in 1949, and he died in France in 1955. His only literary work, *Ravelski*, was written between 1926 and 1927, in a quiet little boarding house in Torrington Square in London. He wanted it performed, but friends of his who knew the London theatre life discouraged him: the public did not like

political dramas and even less those with a tragic ending. So the play remained in the drawer of his desk and his widow found it there forty years later. A Budapest review first published extracts from it in 1966; later Miklós Hubay, the dramatist, edited the whole text, and it was finally put on the stage at last this year, in 1971, in a Hungary which fully knows and recognizes Károlyi's greatness.

Ravelski, despite its autobiographical elements, is neither an autobiography, nor a *roman à clé*. It is rather a self-portrait. The author, an able politician, a thinker and a man of extremely sensitive morals, describes the tragedy of an honest politician, condensing his own internal struggles and his own final conclusions in the play he wrote. Ravelski is the president of a social-democrat type of party in an imaginary country. The country is nearing revolution. Ravelski goes to a small border town for important negotiations and the reactionary government of Baron Balth makes an attempt on his life. The people, upon hearing the news of his death, overthrow the government and Ravelski's associates take over. It is now discovered that the hero is alive, only his driver was killed. His supporters, however, and in the first place Gregor, his deputy, an ambitious climber, persuade him to keep it secret for fear that the revolutionary élan inspired by his death would come to an end and the movement collapse. Ravelski, with heroic selflessness, makes the sacrifice, the greatest which a politician and popular leader can make; together with the woman he loves he goes abroad as an exile and from there sees Gregor and his fellows betraying their ideals, reverting to the practices of the former regime and, as a cover for their vile practices, setting up the image of Ravelski as an idol. Left-wingers leave the country, the right-wingers gradually return and Gregor finally recalls Baron Balth. Ravelski can remain indifferent no longer: he returns to his country and on the very day they inaugurate his ornate mausoleum, he proclaims the truth, attempts to arouse the people who have been betrayed and denounces the abuses of his successors. His hopes, however, are not fulfilled: Gregor and Balth have him sent to a lunatic asylum and when he still refuses to capitulate, give the order for his death. Truth, however, prevails. Ravelski's faithful secretary, with the help of documents, proclaims the truth abroad, and Gregor and company are swept away in the international scandal it arouses.

It is clear from this brief summary that *Ravelski* is not a good play. The hero, his supporters and adversaries are painted too romantically, too black and white. Nor does the main conflict stand the test: Ravelski's dramatic flaw, i.e. his political Machiavellism, is treated clumsily. Ravelski's weakness was in consenting to the big lie, even though from the purest of motives. No *realpolitiker* can avoid taking tactical steps. The public of today judges him rather as no realist at all: he recalls the romantic Carbonaro of the Risorgimento; he surrenders to emotional impulses when he should be recognizing and weighing up the full impact of a given situation. His powers of discernment are weak, he assesses neither his departure nor his return as he should, coldly and dispassionately. The dramatic consequence of his political incapacity is that once he is publicly dead but privately alive he awakens no more interest, he is no more an active tragic hero, only a passive, tragi-comical figure.

The play, however, has its significance well beyond and above these faults. Károlyi was well before his time in dealing with the delicate and seasonable problem of power and morality, now a fashionable subject, and well before his time as well in his concept of the play: he worked out a model-situation of his own. Behind the clumsiness, naiveté and faults springing from the author's inexperience, the fundamental concern of the writer clearly appears: the political and moral problem of the purity and betrayal of a revolution. Several elements in the ac-

tion of the play are horribly prophetic, seen from today's standpoint: the betrayal of comrades within the same party, internal conflicts often settled by bloodshed, the silencing of those who protested, and exposed these enormities, and their deliberate transmutation into heroes with the misrepresentation of their true policy, all macabre realities which occurred throughout the world in the decades following the writing of the play. Whether one reads or sees the play, these associations enrich one's experience, and the conclusion one reaches is quite clear: power is moral only when it serves the people's interests.

Unfortunately the József Attila theatre, with a company of not much more than average standards, and which had internal difficulties with the director at the time of the first night, was unequal to the task. There was no intellectual intensity in the performance as a whole, and in consequence the faults of the play, the naiveté of the details, the romantic style in conflict with the theme, dominated all other aspects of the play. Although to see Károlyi's play was a revelation, even in this form, the Hungarian theatre owes to itself and to Károlyi's memory to put *Ravelski* on in a performance which does it justice as a political drama of burning interest today.

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The third great theatrical experience, Peter Weiss' *Song of the Lusitanian Bogeyman*, is well known to readers abroad. It can hardly be regarded as a good play; it is considerably inferior to the two more typical works of the author, *Marat/Sade* and *The Investigation*. It is a political pamphlet, direct propaganda. The expectations of those who knew the play were rather sceptical before the first night: what had it to tell a socialist country, where all its arguments were known *ad nauseam* and where it could less influence a public less exposed to contrary ideologies than elsewhere? The Katona József Theatre however—the smaller theatre attached to the National—put on a production directed by Tamás Major which has become one of the highlights of the season, even though, oddly enough, the arguments of the pessimists were not thereby confuted.

Tamás Major, one of the leading directors of the National Theatre, began his career as the Hungarian pioneer of the Stanislavsky's method, and by the end of fifties he became one of the apostles of Brecht. He waged a selflessly stubborn campaign, undergoing several setbacks in his career in his obstinate struggle against the prejudice and habits which make the Budapest public resistant to any form of intellectual theatre, including the theatre of alienation. Never before did he apply his theory of production so effectively and imaginatively as in *Song of the Lusitanian Bogeyman*. Foreign critics often call the Hungarian theatre an "actor's theatre", meaning that the director often takes second place, but this performance was truly "director's theatre." The performance of many good, even excellent plays has often been mediocre, or outright bad; in this case a mediocre text became the basis of a great theatrical experience.

Experiments have been made already in Hungary involving the public: addressing the audience directly, employing all the elements of "total theatre", mime, music, chant, acrobatics, with the shock effects of the theatre of cruelty, with the opportunities given to virtuosity in acting by actors playing several parts, indicating and commenting rather than genuinely performing. All these experiments seemed rather artificial intercalations, lifeless imitations of foreign fashionable trends. In Major's production all these elements fall into place with genuine artistic authenticity. Up to the present such experiments have also been somewhat uncertain from a technical point of view, but here the logic and coherence of the director's idea have inspired the company, without previous experience in this type of acting.

The actors, experienced old hands and young students just out of drama school alike, acted as if they had never heard of the theatre of illusion; they were well-rehearsed and at one in their interpretation of a new style of acting, proving themselves excellent musicians, declaimers, mimes and acrobats.

This resounding success did not really disprove the doubts of the sceptics. Although Major was faithful to the conception of the dramatist, the audience was given a full experience of total intellectual theatre unusual in Hungary, only carried out here with a complete success which was to a large degree independent of Weiss' text itself. The dramatist never transcended the anti-imperialist propaganda to which the Hungarian public has been exposed for a quarter of a century; the words, therefore, could do nothing to transmute an already acquired conviction to the heights of a genuine artistic experience. The play served as raw material for the director, and not as authentic drama in its own right. And this again raises the question whether really important plays are suitable for this type of acting. It appears that the really good play is intractable, it resists this kind of handling or only gives way to pressure, and mostly suffers from it.

On the other hand the modern direction and modern acting of good plays can only be expected today from artists who know the methods of this type of theatre from their own experience. Hungarian performances of classical and contemporary plays suffer from the lack of this experience, which is the reason why the Hungarian theatre lags behind the Hungarian film, more or less known and recognized internationally as keeping pace with international developments.

JUDIT SZÁNTÓ

A GUIDE TO THEATRE PROGRAMMES

1971, First Quarter

Visitors from abroad, not knowing the language, cannot make much of the Hungarian theatre. They can enjoy opera, ballet, open-air musical productions and concerts, that is all.

Twenty-five straight theatres perform regularly in Hungary, fifteen in Budapest, ten in the provinces. The latter also perform in towns and villages in the environs of their permanent locations. Over and above these, smaller communities are visited by the ten companies of the *Déryné Touring Theatre*, who take every type of play, from musical comedy to classical drama to village audiences. The *Irodalmi Színpad* (Literary Stage) and *Egyetemi Színpad* (University Stage) in Budapest have no permanent company but arouse considerable interest with experimental performances, and poetry and prose readings. The latter is the theatre of the students of Eötvös University. Other towns and other universities have similar experimental theatres, though on a smaller scale. There are two operas in Budapest, and one

theatre where musicals are performed. Three of the provincial theatres have opera companies.

The curtain normally goes up at seven, and there are matinés on Sunday afternoons. Some theatres have special Sunday morning matiné performances for students.

The theatres are all run on the repertory system and provide season tickets. Tickets for individual performances are also very cheap, costing between 15 and 40 forints. (1 U.S. dollar = 30 forints)

Only works by dramatists from countries other than Hungary are listed below. In addition about twenty classical and contemporary Hungarian plays were part of the repertory of the country's theatres in the three month period here dealt with.

NATIONAL THEATRE — BUDAPEST
Chekhov: *Ivanov*
Dostoievsky: *Idiot* (The Idiot) (stage adaptation by Tovstogonov)
Luke, Peter: *Hadrian VII*
Miller, Arthur: *After the Fall*
Schiller: *Maria Stuart* (Mary Stuart)
Shakespeare: *Romeo and Juliet*
Stoppard, Tom: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*

KATONA JÓZSEF THEATRE — BUDAPEST
Albee, Edward: *Everything in the Garden*
Arbuzov, Aleksei: *Skazki starogo Arbata* (Tales of the Old Arbat)
Bulgakov, Mikhail: *Molier* (Molière)
Molière: *L'avare* (The Miser)
Weiss, Peter: *Gesang vom lusitanischen Popanz* (Song of the Lusitanian Bogeyman)
Zorin, Leonid: *Warshavskaia Melodiia* (Warsaw Melody)

VÍGSZÍNHÁZ — BUDAPEST
Chekhov: *Diadia Vania* (Uncle Vanya)
Horváth, Ödön, von: *Geschichten aus dem Wienerwald* (Tales of the Vienna Woods)
O'Neill, Eugene: *The Iceman Cometh*
Pirandello, Luigi: *Enrico IV* (Henry IV)
Simon, Neil: *Plaza Suite*

PESTI THEATRE — BUDAPEST
Edlis, Iuliu: *Gde tvoi brat, Abel?* (Where Is Your Brother Abel?)
Gogol'–Coggio–Luneau: *Le journal d'un fou* (The Diary of a Madman)
Simon, Neil: *The Odd Couple*

MADÁCH THEATRE — BUDAPEST
Griboedov, Aleksandr Sergeevich: *Gore ot uma* (Cleverness Leads to Trouble)
Schiller: *Kabale und Liebe* (Luise Miller)
Shaffer, Peter: *Black Comedy*
Shaw, G. B.: *You Never Can Tell*
Sophocles: *Oedipus Rex*
Williams, Tennessee: *The Rose Tattoo*

MADÁCH KAMARA THEATRE — BUDAPEST
Achard, Marcel: *L'idiote* (A Shot in the Dark)
Beckett, Samuel: *Oh, les beaux jours* (Happy Days)
Christie, Agatha: *The Unexpected Visitor*
Shaffer, Anthony: *Sleuth*

THÁLIA THEATRE — BUDAPEST
Dante, Alighieri: *La Divina Commedia* (stage adaptation by Károly Kazimir)
Heller, Joseph: *We Bombed in New Haven*
Milton, John: *Paradise Lost* (stage adaptation by István Jánosy)
Moravia, Alberto: *Il mondo é quello che é* (The World is What It Is)

JÓZSEF ATTILA THEATRE — BUDAPEST
Chaucer–Starkie–Coghill: *Canterbury Tales*
Goldoni, Carlo: *L'impresario delle Smirne* (The Impresario)
Kerr, Jean: *Mary, Mary*
Knott, Frederic: *Wait Until Dark*

EGYETEMI SZÍNPAD — BUDAPEST
Arrabal, Fernando: *Pique-nique à la campagne* (Picnic on a Battlefield)
Farquhar, George: *The Recruiting Officer*

IRODALMI SZÍNPAD — BUDAPEST
Büchner, Georg: *Woyzeck; Leonce and Lena*

THEATRE 25 — BUDAPEST
Kuan Han-Csing: *Tou O* (Snow in Midsummer)
Platon: The Apology (stage adaptation by László Gyurkó)

NATIONAL THEATRE — MISKOLC
Albee, Edward: *Zoo Story*
Dreiser–Piscator: *An American Tragedy*
Nikolai, Aldo: *Ordine e matrimonia; Viva gli sposi* (Order and Matrimony; The Young Couple)
Zorin, Leonid: *Dobriaki* (The Carrierists)

CSOKONAI THEATRE — DEBRECEN
Brecht: *Leben des Galilei* (The Life of Galileo)

NATIONAL THEATRE — PÉCS
Whiting, John: *The Devils*

NATIONAL THEATRE — SZEGED
Shaw, G. B.: *Candida*

PETŐFI THEATRE — VESZPRÉM
Anouilh, Jean: *Médée* (Medea)
Hasek–Burian: *Dobri Vojak Svejk* (The Good Soldier Schweik)

CSIKY GERGELY THEATRE — KAPOSVÁR
Armont–Vanderberghe: *Garçons, filles et chiens* (Boys, Girls and Dogs)
Faulkner–Camus: *Requiem for a Nun*
Machiavelli: *La mandragola* (Mandragora)

KISFALUDY THEATRE — GYŐR
Racine: *Bérénice*
Rattigan, Terence: *The Sleeping Prince*

JÓKAI THEATRE — BÉKÉSCSABA
Eftimiu, Victor: *Omul care a vazut moartea* (The Man who Faced Death)
Shakespeare: *Richard II*

KATONA JÓZSEF THEATRE — KECSKEMÉT
Frisch, Max: *Die grosse Wut des Philipp Hotz* (The Fury of Philipp Hotz)
Ibsen: *Et dukkehjem* (A Doll's House)
Thomas, Brandon: *Charley's Aunt*

DÉRYNÉ THEATRE —
Barillet–Grédy: *Fleur de cactus* (Cactus Flower)
Ostrovsky, Aleksandr Nikolaevich: *Graza* (The Storm)

Á. Sz.

SOCIAL CONFLICTS—WITHOUT HEROES

PÉTER BACSÓ: *Kitörés* (Outbreak), ANDRÁS KOVÁCS: *Staféta* (Relay)

The strong socio-political interest shown by the majority of directors is an important quality of contemporary film art in Hungary. They show this interest both in their attitudes and choice of subjects and it seems, judging by recent international successes, that this specific national character is appreciated abroad. Critics in Hungary look on them as a new wave highlighting social commitment and as members of one generation, in fact this specific interest is not the feature of one generation only. Some of the directors are around fifty, others thirty or even less, they include Miklós Jancsó, Zoltán Fábri, András Kovács and Péter Bacsó, Ferenc Kósa and Sándor Sára—to mention only those who have been given prizes at international festivals. If we disregard the different degrees of suggestivity, abstraction and imagery, the differences of form and style in their works, their films are seen to have a striking common feature: characterization is somewhat limited and one-sided. One could also say that these characters do not experience the problems and conflicts of the film as part of their individual destiny, they were created to be the symbols of the directors' message. Their

individual features are of secondary importance.

This kind of characterization doubtless has many advantages. Firstly, individuals are shown primarily in their social relationships, their aim is to solve some social problem and this enables the director to break with the traditional rules of film-story-telling. Story-telling is replaced by a sober objectivity, in some cases even by the rigour of scientific observation, sometimes the social environment is drily documented. Consequently these heroes, as individuals, seldom reach the height of their social problems and conflicts and it is even rare for them to represent these conflicts with the emotional intensity of a real personality. As a rule even the films of Miklós Jancsó (*The Round-Up, The Red and the White, "Ah! Ça ira", Sirocco*, etc.) who, owing to his comprehensive, abstract concepts and historical models, is nearest to romanticism show this aspect. This phenomenon is much more apparent in the films of those who do not transpose reality and create model situations but who handle it as a primary phenomenon, with the authenticity of documentation.

Among more recent films "Outbreak" by Péter Bacsó is most characteristic in this respect, perhaps because Bacsó wanted to give more colour to his hero. All that happens however is that the character is more colourful without becoming more substantial, nor is there any real unity between the story of the young hero and the important social problem that is the subject of the film. On the contrary, the story itself seems to fall apart. The principal character is a young factory hand, who is generally dissatisfied. He wants to do better work, earn more, and lead a life more in accordance with his dynamic nature. Neither the huge works, the pace of work there, the way things are organized, or disorganized, nor his immediate environment, offer any such possibility. First he tries to leave the country illegally without considering matters properly and there's nothing left for him to do other than compensate for his failure by womanizing and aggressive behaviour. A young and ambitious economist working in the plant takes notice of him. This economist lives for modern and rational work organization, he only accepts as reasonable what can be justified with the help of a very modest computer owned by the enterprise. He is naturally up in arms against all those who know rationality when they see it, but who see it in terms of the structure of human relationships. True enough, their supporters include some who think that reforms might endanger their positions.

The film's young hero is already working at the side of the economist when the latter, temporarily, loses his battle and leaves the enterprise. His young friend meanwhile has an affair with the pseudo-revolutionary daughter of the manager and finally elopes with her. The father stays stuck between the backward and the reformers. The boy is not prepared to compromise in the case of the economist, either. He discusses the works in an interview on television, leaves his employment, and goes into business on his own fattening pigs on a farm near Budapest. The venture proves to be sound business, but the girl goes back to her daddy, compromises ensure comfort, and she can even keep her pseudo-radical illusions. The young man, in his despair, flings away his money. This is when the economist appears again. He now fights for his computer-revolution in another enterprise. Their meeting signals that from then on they will fight side by side for economic reforms.

Apart from the technocratic idealism which sees the computer not as a means of production, and the carrier of new social contradictions, but a universal remedy, and apart from the circumstance that the deeper conflicts and problems of the technical revolution are more likely to appear on a social level and not an enterprise one, the film cannot use this conflict to find a human approach to these problems and fill it with drama since the central character, and his

personal conflicts, are still on the periphery of these problems. His social relationship to them is much more complex, contradictory and indirect, such a direct and unambiguous relationship to them could only come about thanks to the well-intentioned supposition of the director. The film itself betrays this latent contradiction at a certain moment when the workers in the factory express their mixed feelings toward the new "white-overalled" technician, their former mate.

The reason is that the intellectual background is much sharper than the characters. What the film has to say is not expressed by the hero's conflicts but rather by the social facts which give rise to these conflicts. The central character, one might think looking at the film in a certain way, is the economist, but the film is not about him, his figure remains merely the symbol of the central idea, his person fades away among the other minor characters. The link between the young worker and the economist is too loose and so the supposed ideal unity between the social conflict and the hero's story does not come about. Hence the experienced and gifted director is compelled to make his hero more attractive and colourful to justify his presence in a conflict which is not proportional to his stature. His solution is to compose authentic scenes out of small episodes, the family relations and love affairs of the young working man, giving interesting turns to events, sometimes interposing such scenes with others in which the young man, taking part in substantial, but abstract debates, creates the impression that the conflict arises from the realities of the boy's life, without social contradictions and transpositions. But this is only an illusion.

In spite of, or perhaps because of, this peculiar double perspective, "Outbreak" was a success both with the public and the critics, in the first place because of the unusual character and extreme behaviour of the principal character. The dynamic action and the well-turned story arrest the attention, produce excitement and stress the plasticity of an existing dissatisfied and impatient attitude fed by the slow progress of the struggle for positive social and economic reforms. On the other hand Bacsó's film convincingly shows the aspiration to create a hero whose individuality and consciousness is on the same level as his social problem and conflict. A realistic description of the latter is considered by many film directors to be their foremost task today.

Social conflict and its relation to the principal character has a different aspect in "Relay" by András Kovács. The main problem is educational reform, the topical question of university students and future teachers. The central character is a young girl. Her individuality is not in keeping with the problem's social significance either but this weakness has reasons other than those that operate in "Outbreak". Here the conflict is engendered by the same social reality as that of the heroine. The young student does not only passively accept the idea of reforms she actively fights for them. It seems obvious that in the story of the film, the girl's commitment, her character, mentality and the cause of reforms come to determine each other, and will be expressed in a dramatic way.

This does not quite happen for two reasons. Firstly, because Kovács's real genre is the "cinema directe", as an artist he has much in common with makers of documentaries. In his feature films he probes deeper into problems if the fictions themselves offer him the possibility (e.g. in *Walls*) to apply the methods of the cinema directe. In "Relay" these two methods are not organically connected. The story gradually becomes dull and offers no chance to display the whole personality of the heroine, or to raise her to the heights of the social significance of her conflict. The only thing that happens is that her article on her ideas for reform is refused by the editor of the university journal. The film gives this individual wrong social dimensions. It is shown that the article was

refused by the editor, who is also an assistant professor, because of his servility and the exaggerated tact he shows his professor. Even the fiancé of the girl shows the same servile weakness he is keen to start his scientific career working at the university. He advises the girl to be reasonable and reckon with realities. The girl refuses to compromise, she draws back from the young man and remains on her own. Even this not very ingenious story is mostly filled with the interior monologues of the girl who thinks over the moral problems of her love affair. The result are some true and beautiful scenes, which, at the same time, compel the girl to be even more passive in the drama. This would be in order if that were what the film had to say. The director, however, wants to probe deep and find the social roots of the conflict. The central character and the simplified story are not enough to satisfy this purpose. The girl has been attacked and wronged, without any doubt, but only within her own moral world, and not objectively, on a social level. But the director is not concerned with the moral and spiritual world of the principal character, and the spectator does not get a clear picture of it either. The director wishes to convey an objective social picture but here the chief character becomes a minor character just as in "Outbreak". The director has got us interested in a story but then he speaks about entirely different things.

Let me add that this is the more exciting and more realistic larger half of "Relay". In this half the problem which ought to be implied in the girl's story is shown. This was made employing cinéma directe methods. Interviews were made with practising educators, experienced old teachers, discussions and views of students urging reform were filmed and an audacious montage has been inserted: a short film about the Paris 68 events. The spectator is meant to look on these as episodes in the feature film, but it is questionable whether the director achieved his purpose. In this respect "Relay" is an experiment. The majority of the spectators probably understand this mixing of fiction and reality and their reference to each other but fewer will obtain a unified experience from these two outlooks and the two elements: fiction and reality. One could compare the film to experimental novels written in the 30s: the author inserted socio-philosophical or psychological essays into his narrative and gave a detailed scientific analysis of a world which he could not really show as a poetic image. In the film these essays are replaced by crude documentaries, by the rich and interesting dialogues of the cinema directe. But they can find their right place in a fictitious narrative only if they are organically linked with the main character's subjective world. This could be successful only if the principal characters had a deep and rich personality, proportionate to the social problems in question.

Those who go to see "Relay" will be able to look at an attractive heroine with whom they can sympathize, whose fate may interest them and whose conflict may be socially similar to their own, but looked at as a character, in her actions and in her individuality, she is too weak to convey the real social problems and to turn them into a deep experience. The director is able to explain the conflict to us, but we do not quite understand his heroine.

ZOLTÁN HEGEDÜS

INTERVIEW

MAGDA RADNÓT, PROFESSOR OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

(Slightly abridged text of an interview published in the Budapest daily *Magyar Nemzet*.)

Professor Radnót, you are the first woman doctor whom the Hungarian Academy of Sciences elected as a member, you are the first woman who was appointed a full professor at Semmelweis Medical University in Budapest, and the first woman surgeon to receive the State Prize, one of the highest awards in Hungary. Could you tell us about your life?

Nothing very interesting or spectacular happened to me. I was born in 1911. My father and his three brothers died in 1914 in the war. At the age of three I was a war orphan. After my father's death I lived with strangers for a long time, and later in small rented rooms I paid for myself. I started giving private lessons when I was ten.

When did you decide to study medicine?

When I first began to think for myself I started to wonder how it is that the doctors know a great deal about themselves and about human beings in general that other people don't know and can't understand. I wanted to puzzle this out. Since my father was dead, my mother's relatives tried to prevent me from becoming a doctor. In the summer after my graduation from secondary school, during the holidays, they kept reporting to me day in and day out that I was expected to stay with them in the country, and I certainly couldn't be serious about studying medicine. A respectable girl could perhaps think of becoming a chemist, but going to Budapest to study medicine was the equivalent of the gutter.

What sort of people were in your year?

Most of them came from well-to-do families. Their parents knew well in advance where they'd establish surgeries for them. My fellow-students liked me, and now and then showed they were worried and asked me what I was going to do after graduation. I was often close to despair. But then time and again I met a number of men who turned out to be the kind young people imagine strong men to be like. This gave me strength. Géza Farkas, one of my professors, was this type of man. And Béla Entz, the director of the Institute of Pathology. Something happened once that I shall never forget as long as I live. Some of us students used to work at the Institute of Pathology after lectures, preparing histology slides. We got some money for this job, and we certainly needed it to supplement our scholarships. One day I wrote up a specimen from a tumour and handed this to Professor Béla Entz together with the slide as was the custom. The next day I was shocked to hear that Professor Entz had written up his own opinion which refuted mine. I must have made a terrible mistake. I went in to see Professor Entz, and apologized to him. At

the same time, however, I tried to explain and told him how I had arrived at my opinion. He sat there very calmly at his desk, and listened very carefully to my story. To my greatest astonishment the next day during his lecture at the university he told us students what a great mistake he had made. He had re-examined the slide I had reported on, and established that I had been right. There are two reasons why I shall never forget this. First, really first-class men will admit to their mistakes even in public and second, they don't hesitate to give credit to a student.

You graduated with honours, didn't you?

I needed the scholarship.

How many girls were at the Medical University forty years ago?

As far as I can recall, seven of us girls enrolled in first year. Four were married. Three of us graduated.

Where did you work after graduating?

At the Institute of Pathology in Pécs. I went to Pécs because Béla Entz was the pathologist there, and Professor Entz was one of those people who gave one strength.

Were you already interested in ophthalmology at that time?

I still sometimes think that I am not really an ophthalmologist. At least not in the sense most people understand that term. In those days I was working in pathology, and I never regretted it, pathology is the basis of all medicine. I was unpaid assistant at Pécs. Housemen were not paid in those days. I lived on my scholarship. Certain conditions of course were attached to the scholarship. I satisfied them all but it was being a war orphan that counted the most. I lived in the hospital, in a small room with an iron bedstead, a desk and a chair.

How come you switched from pathology to ophthalmology?

I was appointed to the Eye Clinic at Pécs. At first they were upset that they got a woman, the first demonstrator. It was just chance that brought me there. In those days I was particularly interested in the interrelationship between the human organism as such and the functioning of the eyes. I worked under Professor József Imre at the experimental laboratory of the Eye Clinic. This was were I made my first scientific discovery. One of the assistans happened to shut two buck rabbits in the same cage for a night; they were just experimental rabbits, and it certainly did not occur to him that there would be any trouble if they spent the night together. Shortly after this one of the rabbits developed glaucoma. Glaucoma causes blindness. It was a habit with me to look for causes and correlations, whatever happened. That was what I did then, too. It turned out that the two rabbits had fought and bit each other's testicles. It was fairly obvious that there was some connection between the glaucoma and the injury. That was when I began to wonder about the interrelationship between the eyes and the endocrine glands, and, as a matter of fact, this has remained my principal field to this day. I mentioned my hypothesis to Professor Imre first. He gave me all the help I needed to carry on with the project. He managed to get a big endowment for me from the Széchenyi Foundation, I used it to buy rabbits for the experiments.

You then moved to the State Eye Hospital in Budapest. Why?

Because Professor Imre went there. I followed him to continue working together. Professor Imre and I carried on the experiments together. The experiments on the rabbits made it quite clear to me that changes in the organism affected the functioning of the eyes. Then I convinced myself that it was similarly possible to reserve the process and influence the organism through the eyes. Thirty years later I won the State Prize for my contribution to this field.

Where did Liberation find you?

In the cellar of a block of flats in the Eighth District of Budapest. But after that I continued to live in that cellar for two more years. I was bombed out.

What changes did the Liberation bring in your life?

Until then it had always been a handicap to be a woman, after Liberation it began to be an advantage. From then on I was the woman who 'went one better than the men.' If anyone wanted to write an article on the subject, he called on me. In 1950 I was appointed full professor, I was given a chair at the University Hospital of Szeged, and I was able to carry on my research and scientific work with considerable state assistance.

Was the appointment unexpected?

No, but I was glad. At that time I was the assistant director of the Mária Street Eye Hospital of Budapest University, and so the appointment was not a surprise. I was not appointed by the Minister but elected by the medical faculty of the University Hospital at Szeged. That was the last such appointment. I worked for years in Szeged. Since 1951 I have lectured at the University of Budapest. And since that time, almost twenty years now, I have been the director of the No. 1 Eye Clinic of the University of Budapest.

Up to now six of your books have been published, in five languages. Your name is known in many countries.

My work only is scientific work. True, I have travelled fairly extensively.

Could you tell us something about your trips.

I attended many conferences, held and listened to lectures. This is professional business. There's a little story I'd like to tell that shows what misunderstandings happen to a woman, even now. A scientific work of mine was published in German and was read by a German professor who entered into correspondence with me on the basis of the book. He always addressed his letters to *Herr* Professor Radnót believing that I was a man. The title-page of my book did not show my first name. I never protested. But then after all I had to show myself in my true colours. Some of us medical people went to Germany, and I wrote to the German professor that I would visit him. I called on him at the appointed time. He received me in his study. I introduced myself mentioning my full name. After I was shown in and the door had closed behind me, he seemed to be looking behind me, and then, somewhat at a loss, he asked me to take a seat and began to compliment me, to speak about the weather, and so on. But after a while he seemed to run out of subjects and asked me directly when my husband the professor was coming. Of course, I told him that I was the professor, he had been misled, I was my own husband. We had a good laugh at this, became friends and had a nice professional talk.

I understand that since the last war a good many scientific societies the world over have elected you to their membership.

In addition to being Vice Rector of the Medical University and a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the French, the English and the Czechoslovak Ophthalmological Societies have made me a member.

You initiated experiments and introduced new methods of treatment unique in Hungary at your clinic. Could you please say something about them.

What we are doing is the result of work by a number of talented doctors and engineers. My part in the business is that they are working under me. Talking about our clinical work and experiments, I ought to mention a few things in advance. Medicine, and in particular ophthalmology, can look back on fine traditions in Hungary. I could list a series of outstanding contributions and

the names of eminent professors. They developed the traditional methods of treatment, including surgery, practically to perfection. But we have entered a new era today. If medicine wants to continue to progress, in cannot do so in the future without the help of the related sciences, in the first place technology and engineering.

A few years ago I employed mechanical and electrical engineers who are excellent in their own fields. We familiarized them with some of our medical problems and I assigned highly qualified doctors to work side by side with them. That was how our experimental team came into existence. Engineers at a clinic? you could ask. Yes, that's right. It seems to work. They designed the instruments of the new deep-freeze surgery, and today in cases of the surgical removal of cataracts and operations on the optical nerve these devices make possible cooling from —20 °C to —100 °C. Biochemists who carry out new kinds of examinations also share in our clinical work and we are giving increasing scope to electromicroscopic examinations as well. The main purpose of the biochemical tests and examinations is to find out and record how the various types of drugs and pharmaceutical products introduced into the human organism affect the functioning of the eyes, one of the noblest organs of man.

I was led to understand that some years ago you constructed a cybernetic machine at your eye clinic, and you have been using it since.

Yes, this cybernetic machine was also made by our joint technical and medical team. When we first put it into operation, I was astonished myself. After we fed in the proper data, it provided us with the state of the various organs of the patient within minutes. If we wanted to get the same kind of accurate diagnosis on an eye patient without a computer of this kind, it would take one person using a traditional calculating machine a full day to do the necessary calculation. Our electronic machine reduced the time required for this work to one-thousandth.

You have shown us how you utilize new results in the basic sciences in clinical practice. In what other ways does the development taking place in technology and biochemistry influence the progress of medicine?

I began my scientific work forty years ago. Obviously, years ago when we were less able to control the accuracy of medical research results since we did not have the assistance of the basic sciences at our disposal and we did not have the present techniques of biochemistry to make possible detailed chemical analysis, scientific research was carried on under more primitive conditions. Today a medical research scientist simply must have resort to electro-technology. The related sciences help us to work faster and with increased reliability. Now we are speaking about intensive contact between medicine and the related sciences, let me say that today our achievements in medicine —attained with the help of the related sciences—can be utilized not only in the field of healing, but it indirectly affects again the development of the related sciences. Just to give a simple and well-known example that will make this obvious to anyone: Utilizing the results of the related sciences, ophthalmologists have scientifically demonstrated that a change in the amount of light admitted to the organism through the eyes upsets the rhythm to which the organism is accustomed and reduces working capacity. Trade and business organizations have already drawn the proper conclusions from these medical findings and have seen to it that their representatives flying from continent to continent should arrive at the location of their negotiations at least two days in advance of the talks, to give them time to adjust to the rhythm of life under different conditions of light. In this way, for instance, the advances of medical science can increase the intensity and productivity of work.

LAJOS H. BARTHA

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