The New Hungarian Quarterly

Reflections at Sixty — *János Kádár*

Hungary and International Economic Integration — *Péter Vályi*

Helsinki — Prelude to Europe — *Iván Boldizsár*

Economic Growth and the Quality of Life — *József Bognár*

Amending the Hungarian Constitution — *Mihály Korom*

Petőfi — The Birth of a Poet — *Gyula Illyés*

Poems and Short Stories — *Sándor Petőfi, Endre Illés, László Nagy, Lajos Mesterházi, Dezső Kapás*

48

VOL. XIII ■ No. 48 ■ WINTER 1972 ■ 60p ■ $1.50

The New Hungarian Quarterly

Editorial Offices:
17 Rákóczi út, Budapest VIII., Hungary
Telephone: 136-857
Postal Address: P.O. Box 57, Budapest 5, Hungary

Annual subscription: $6.00 or the equivalent in another currency
post free to any address

Orders may be placed with:
KULTURA HUNGARIAN TRADING COMPANY FOR BOOKS
AND NEWSPAPERS
Budapest 62, P.O.B. 149
See also the distributors listed on the back page

Published by Lapkiadó Publishing House, Budapest

Printed in Hungary by Kossuth Printing House, Budapest

The New Hungarian Quarterly

VOLUME XIII * No. 48

WINTER 1972

A Year of Anniversaries ..... *The Editors* 1
Reflections at Sixty ..... *János Kádár* 5
Amending the Constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic ..... *Mihály Korom* 15
Hungary and International Economic Integrations ..... *Péter Vályi* 22
Economic Growth and the Quality of Life ..... *József Bognár* 33
Helsinki—Prelude to Europe ..... *Iván Boldizsár* 53
György Dózsa and the 1514 Peasant War ..... *István Nemeskürty* 63
Poems (translated by Edwin Morgan) ..... *Sándor Petőfi* 74
Petőfi—The Birth of a Poet ..... *Gyula Illyés* 79
The Seventy Years of Gyula Illyés ..... *Miklós Béládi* 83
On Creation (poem, translated by William Jay Smith) ..... *Gyula Illyés* 90
The Coward (short story) ..... *Endre Illés* 92
Impact of the New Child Care Allowances ..... *Egon Szabady* 99
Love of the Scorching Wind (poem, translated by Kenneth McRobbie and George Gömöri) ..... *László Nagy* 111
Sempiternin (short story) ..... *Lajos Mesterházi* 116
Socialist Realism—Style or Approach? ..... *Péter Nagy* 129
My Mother's Deaths (short story) ..... *Dezső Kapás* 136

SURVEYS

Ups and Downs in the Teaching of English ..... *László Országh* 142
Mexico—The Fiction and the Reality ..... *László Passuth* 148
The Unesco Scholarship Programme in Hungary ..... *Máté Kovács* 152

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Hungarian and Rumanian Ballads ..... *Gyula Ortutay* 157
Man at the End of the World ..... *György G. Kardos* 161
The Second Life of Sylvester II ..... *László Varga* 167
Erecting Barriers to Poetry ..... *Thomas Land* 170
Sociology in Eastern Europe ..... *Károly Varga* 173
America in Europe ..... *G. F. Ray* 177

ARTS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The Luddite Etchings of Béla Uitz ..... *Zoltán Nagy* 182
Hungarian Variations on Grand Art,
Op Art and Pop Art ..... *Gyula Rózsa* 185
Vasarely Revisited ..... *Ottó Mezei* 193
Lajos Sváby—A Merciless Painter ..... *Z. N.* 197
The Copper Age Finds in the Carpathian Basin .... *Mihály Párducz* 198
The Battle of Mohács in Turkish Miniatures
of the Osmanli Period ..... *Géza Fejér, jr.* 201

MUSICAL LIFE

New Records ..... *András Pernye* 205
New Publications by Editio Musica ..... *A. P.* 207
Twenty-Five Years of Hungarian Composition ..... *István Gábor* 20

THEATRE AND FILM

The Pangs of Change in Village Life (new films) ... *Zoltán Hegedűs* 212
Commonplaces and Experiments (new plays) ..... *Judit Szántó* 215
Plays on the Hungarian Stage ..... *Á. Sz.* 219

OUR CONTRIBUTORS 222

This issue went to press on August 10th, 1972

A YEAR OF ANNIVERSARIES

Among many other things this has been a year of anniversaries and reminiscences for The NHQ. *Having devoted almost a complete issue to the life and work of the late György Lukács (No. 47) we now have a number of important commemorative dates in hand, prompted by the—editorially speaking—arbitrary rules of the calendar, but which we nevertheless regard as welcome occasions to show the reader further new aspects of our national heritage.*

The era of the great Renaissance king Matthias Corvinus marked the apogee of Hungarian greatness since, after the king's death in 1490, the country, badly torn by feuding parties and warlords, gradually began to succumb to what Hungarians consider the enormous last wave of the Great Westward Migration: the invading armies of the Sultan, pushing their way northwards from the Balkans. It was hardly the appropriate time to organize and finance a crusade to liberate the Holy Land; but that was—and had been for a long time—the not altogether unselfish ambition of the country's leaders. As soon as the huge army of peasants and serfs had gathered together in 1514, however, its appointed general, a captain of ordinance by the name of György Dózsa turned it against the feudal lords of Hungary, in revenge for the oppression they had suffered—and thus triggered off one of the fiercest and biggest of the European Peasant Wars. Needless to say, the insurrection was ruthlessly suppressed and Dózsa was killed with the utmost cruelty. It is said some of his men were forced to eat his burning flesh. This year—somewhat arbitrarily, since we cannot be certain—marks the 500th anniversary of the birth of Dózsa, who has become a living symbol of revolt and subject of countless poems, novels and works of art.

Of all the anniversaries in sight, however, we regard, from an editorial point of view, the one marking Sándor Petőfi's birth in 1823—150 years ago on New Year's Eve—as the most important. His name is among the half dozen or so Hungarian ones almost any foreigner would at least have heard. Petőfi was the greatest Hungarian poet of his age and very likely of every other and it is fortunate that his life should be so well documented. Although he died at an age when the young men of today have hardly finished their education, the personality emerging from his poems, his letters, articles, diaries, notes and all sorts of contemporary sources, as well as from his activities as poet, actor, critic, revolutionary, translator of Shakespeare, public figure, lover, husband, father and soldier is a puzzling mixture of irresistible charm and remarkable romantic determination to lead the nation into revolution; of

astonishing wisdom and almost boyish naiveté and humour; of great sensitivity and gentleness and cold-blooded impudence verging on arrogance at times. A single-handed political force capable quite factually of rousing the city of Pest to revolt on March 15, 1848 with a poem written for the occasion which he read to the cheering crowd from a plinth of the National Museum, he looked further than most of the intellectual and official leaders of the nation and never hesitated to speak his mind. The NHQ *take great pleasure in announcing that they are publishing poems and prose by Petőfi, as well as articles on him in this and forthcoming issues. An early photograph of him survives which will be printed in a future number.*

János Kádár, who has been leader of this country for the last sixteen years, celebrated his sixtieth birthday this year. It has been a historic period indeed for us Hungarians, and—as he makes clear in the birthday speech we print in this issue—for him as well. He took over when the country was in a state of near-disintegration in late 1956, and under his leadership Hungary has moved to a gradually brightening period of relaxation, security and increasing prosperity as well as growing international standing. We are publishing this speech also since it is a moving human document.

Two widely-read Hungarian writers—both frequent contributors to this magazine—have become septuagenarians this year, but very active septuagenarians indeed, both still turning out a great deal of new writing. Gyula Illyés, the poet, essayist, playwright and writer of brilliant non-fiction books on Hungarian life, past and present, has had three new plays produced this year and published a volume of his "unfinished" poems—a telling sign of public interest in his verse. Endre Illés, author of many short stories, plays, essays as well as criticism, is also a veteran publisher. Generations of younger writers look back to his advice and criticism and his encouragement as a decisive and beneficial force in their lives.

Two important aspects of European security and cooperation, namely economic and cultural cooperation, are discussed in this issue by Péter Vályi, a Deputy Prime Minister who is responsible for international economic relations, and Iván Boldizsár, who was a member of the Hungarian delegation to the Helsinki Conference of European Ministers of Culture held in June of this year.

THE EDITORS

JÁNOS KÁDÁR: REFLECTIONS AT SIXTY

On May 25, 1972, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party gave a luncheon party, in one of the reception rooms of Parliament, in honour of János Kádár, First Secretary of the Central Committee, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday. Attending the luncheon were members of the Central Committee of the Party, and personalities prominent in Hungary's political, social and cultural life. At the luncheon Béla Biszku, member of the Political Bureau of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and Secretary of the Central Committee, congratulated János Kádár on the occasion, and presented him with the Central Committee's letter of congratulation.

We publish here János Kádár's reply to the greetings.

Dear comrades, my dear friends:

Comrade Biszku's address has made it clear to all, including me, that this is an official function, a luncheon arranged by the Central Committee and attended by other guests as well on, as it were, a People's Front basis. Comrades had already told me earlier they were planning such a get-together. I had only one thing to ask of them at the time: Do it if you think it is a good thing to do, but don't urge anyone to attend.

In the kind of atmosphere prevailing here I can allow myself to say something simply and not officially, the way one does among friends. On such an occasion I have to say something, though it is not very easy to talk at such a time.

First of all I'd like to tell you that my early circumstances were such, that in the family where I was brought up it was not the custom to celebrate wedding anniversaries, or birthdays, or name-days. That was how I grew up. It was only in the last ten to twenty years that I first realized that it is a good thing to celebrate such things both officially and unofficially. I want to say that it is right to celebrate the great events of family life. Only I had no share in such things, I wasn't used to them and it is only lately I have

begun to become accustomed to them. The reason I say so, comrades, is to let you understand that I feel a kind of uneasiness about this anniversary and these celebrations, they worry me, I am even embarrassed. Bearing this in mind—and I beg you to—I should still like to say a few words.

First I want to thank everyone present for honouring me by coming here today for us to spend an hour or two with one another.

As I said, birthday celebrations as a family affair are right and proper, and are in fact traditional among our people. I am only sorry I had no share in them at an age when, you might say, one is growing up both physically and mentally.

But it's a different matter when such a family event, for instance, a birthday, is transformed into a public or political affair. The way I feel about it is that I understand and in fact I think it perfectly acceptable, in certain cases and within proper limits, that an obviously private matter—a birthday—becomes a political, a public affair. I understand, and approve it, on two conditions: that it is kept within proper limits and that it is not about me. Once it is about me, well, I repeat what I've already said—it makes me uneasy, I feel embarrassed, I have simply never been used to it.

I am supposed to be—I can even see the number before me on the table—sixty years old, according to the papers, so it certainly must be true. Even by the most modern expectations of life this is regarded as an age by which, they say, one ought to have formulated a philosophy of life. If it is a question of a philosophy of life the letter of the Central Committee, I think, has expressed it better than anything I could say about it. Nonetheless I would like to make a couple of personal remarks.

What is the course of a man's life? I think that if what a man has in mind is not merely his biological life, but human life in the finer sense of the word, then the first thing he has to do is to understand that it is not as an individual that he has, as it were, to get on and fight his way in life, he has to realize, to see, that as a human being happiness is not achieved alone, only together with others.

The letter of the Central Committee speaks about *my* course of life, about *my* merits. Let me say that the individual can only claim merit for certain things. For instance—and I think this is a kind of merit—when someone, at some stage of his life, realizes that he is no leopard or tiger—not even a hamster—that if he wants to live he must live honestly together with the working people; and that if he wants to live better he must live better together with them. I consider myself fortunate that, at a crucial stage in my life—at the ages of seventeen, eighteen, nineteen—I came to understand that man alone can be neither human nor happy. The individual can

fairly take merit to himself for realizing this: he makes the choice himself, which way he intends to go from there.

Another such merit which can fairly be credited to the individual is the effort he makes. The effort he makes, after he recognizes an idea, to live in conformity with it. I consider myself fortunate to have encountered the idea of socialism, of Marxism–Leninism. I familiarized myself with this idea, and it fascinated me. And—do not get me wrong, this is not boasting on my part—in that critical stage of my life, though not without help, I managed to understand that if I wanted to be human, happy and free, a man free in mind, I could not be it alone. I could be it only together with the working class, with my class companions, and only if I tried to understand this already recognized idea and ideology still better and if I lived accordingly, as well as I could. So much can be claimed as personal merit. Everything else, I want to stress, depends on other things, not on the personal resolution of the individual.

Man individually and as a social being cannot live a human life without ideas, without ideals. There are those indeed who live without ideas and ideals, but that is not a human life. At least that is what I think. I am a Marxist and declare myself a Communist, but I can understand somebody who is not a Marxist and a Communist, provided that he possesses some general human idea that dictates his actions and prompts him somehow to serve the community.

Without ideas and ideals, I think, neither man nor society can exist. A society that has no great guiding idea is doomed. I'm going to make a little digression here; I want to emphasize that our working class, our peasantry, our intelligentsia and, I think I may say our people as a whole, have identified themselves with the socialist world of ideas. I don't want to go into the details of how far and how much—it isn't even what counts—but generally speaking one can say that they have identified themselves with it, and since they have ideas and ideals, they have a future and will prosper.

I know of other countries which have greater material wealth and live better than we do, yet their social system has no future, because it has no guiding idea that could lead them forward. So I think one is fortunate to have an idea and to be able to work for it.

When it is a birthday, and when on top of it the family gathering becomes a political affair, one is inevitably bound to draw up a balance sheet: one has to pause for a moment and think of what one has done thus far and how one looks ahead. I tell you frankly I am glad I became a worker, a worker for society and a Communist, and that looking at the balance sheet one can say that some results have been achieved.

As I told you, comrades, if I look at it from my personal angle, life has not particularly spoilt me. I was brought up and lived under difficult circumstances, and later I came up against the world as it was in those days and suffered all the consequences. Those present today know that not even after Liberation was my individual path exactly smooth going. But when nevertheless I try to strike a balance I can honestly say to you: that in all my conscious life I have lived and acted according to my convictions. If something was against my convictions, I refused to do it and suffered the consequences.

Where do these qualities come from? No one has them at birth, no one gets them in the cradle, or even in the family. I can affirm that these qualities, which can be useful to society, can only be acquired by the Party member from the Party, by the worker from the working class—from the people. They are not things acquired on one's own. As far as I am concerned, it has been the Party, the working class movement, the toiling masses that have made me into what I am. I have a pretty good memory, and I know what I was like when I found my way into the movement, and whatever is here, so to say, of use, or which can be turned to use for the community, has all been given me entirely by the movement, by our working class and our people. And if this life of mine we are talking about here today has yielded any results, I think it has to be viewed like this.

The next thing I want to say is that one does not work alone. There are still private artisans today—it may be that they work alone; in working for society one does not. And if you are saying that good results have sprung from the work I have done—I do not wish either to evaluate or discuss it here—then I want to say I have never worked alone. Ever since I was seventeen I have belonged to the working class movement, to the progressive movement of our people, and for this I am indebted to those who at that time spared no trouble on my behalf, and who have guided me here. If you, comrades, say that I am doing my work satisfactorily, then my thoughts instantly turn to the Political Bureau, the Central Committee, our Government, the Presidential Council, the National Council of the Patriotic People's Front. These results could only be achieved because these collective bodies have worked together in agreement, and for the same goal. And incidentally, of course, there are other colleagues who are generally not mentioned on such occasions—the members of the administrative and technical staffs. One cannot do without them either. They are necessary for the organization of all our work.

The need of a certain background has also been mentioned. I always say that a life companion endowed with very much patience and with good

nerves, and an appropriate home background are needed if one is to be able to live and work. In this respect as well I consider myself fortunate. A small circle of my colleagues have complimented me today and expressed gratitude for my humanity. Why, yes, you may be human after all in the office, but you are not always so at home. For you have to relax a little somewhere. So our political collaborators, the strength of the collective, our allies, our friends, our administrative colleagues and our individual home background—are all needed for us to be able to work and produce good results.

Now I come specifically to the experience and philosophy of life. Well, yes, in my life and my work for society I have certainly acquired a philosophy, which I don't want to recount in detail, though I would like to stress one or two aspects, since we are here together in a company where it may be worth while talking about them. There are here today people of different ages, some quite young and some even older than I am. You all know how one feels about one's age. The twenty-year-olds seem old to those of ten, the thirty-year-olds to those of twenty, the forty-year-olds to those of thirty, the fifty-years-old to those of forty, and so on up to the furthest limit of human life. The truth of the matter is that, however old you are, anybody ten years your senior is an old man—and everybody knows this. All the same, somehow or other one is bound to acquire a certain amount of experience. One has to learn a lot of things. I have acquired some experience of life, or something that might be called the wisdom of life, but I want to make it clear that none of it is any discovery of mine, or my own innovation or invention. It had all been discovered by many before me, only every single man must also discover it for himself, if he is to profit by such wisdom.

I should also like to say a word about our scientific ideology—Marxism–Leninism, the ideology of socialism, of communism. In my childhood I used to live in the country, later I came up to town and became an industrial worker and a Communist. There is a certain wisdom which already at the age of five you learn from older people, who say that something that is very important is human common sense. I think this is true. As I said, an idea and an ideal is needed to guide one, for otherwise one cannot proceed in a socially useful way. It may well be that somebody accepts Christianity or some other belief as his ideal. I am biased: I hold Marxism–Leninism to be the best system of ideas. An idea is therefore needed. What is needed in addition are human commonsense and a sense of reality. I don't want to quote examples, but if we only keep our eyes on the final goal, and disregard the given situation and given possibilities, ignoring how and to what extent people understand what we are trying to do—then the final goal can only be harmed. Consequently there is need for both an idea and

a sense of reality in order to see how much of the idea can be realized at the time, so that we can come nearer to the final goal. I may be allowed to let slip—for we also have older people among us here—that life is nevertheless in many respects a compromise. Nothing is realized the way one first envisages it. In the old world I also dreamt of liberation, socialism, communism, and even though it was doubtful whether I would live to see the day of Liberation, there was no doubt in my mind that when the day came all that was needed were a few sensible ordinances and socialism would become a reality. That was over a quarter of a century ago, and it has since become clear that things do not get done quite that way. In short, life forces us to some extent to compromise, but compromise in the good sense of the word. The compromise that we need is not one which retards us; what we need are decisions which take the real situation into account, decisions which lead us onwards towards our ideals and goals.

Our Marxist–Leninist ideology is a scientific system of ideas directing the life of our society. But it cannot be against human common sense. Our theory has to be more than plain human understanding taken in its everyday sense, but it must not conflict with it, for if it does it is not, in my opinion, Marxism–Leninism or communist doctrine any longer, and there is something wrong with it. Thus we have a system of ideas, which we call dialectical materialism, according to which the social life of society, and nature as well, have their own dialectics. Everyone knows those dialectics. Everyone knows that dialectics are something more than logic. But, one of the conclusions derived from my philosophy of life, if I may say so, is that dialectics cannot be inconsistent with logic, they also have to be logical, because if they are not, they are not dialectical.

I could go on talking about a few more discoveries like that, but I want to mention only one. Marxism–Leninism as a science, and communism as an idea are, I am convinced, the humanism of our age. And therefore they mean humanity and a humane attitude. It is also their aim to improve the lot of the working people. I sometimes say that the connection between Marxism–Leninism, socialism, communism, the Hungarian working class and the Hungarian people is not that we have an excellent theory and that we test it on some ten million experimental subjects. And that if the theory is good it has to work. I think of it in the reverse: the reason why Marxism–Leninism and the whole system of communist ideas exists is to ensure that these ten million Hungarians are better off. For if this was not the reason for its existence, and if there were something wrong in this respect, then we would not be doing our work properly. I am very glad that this realization is growing stronger steadily amongst us, that those representing the

Marxist–Leninist ideology are increasingly inspired with a sense of reality and humanity, with respect and esteem for non-Communists, and with the realization that we can only progress all together.

Another aspect of this development is that there is a growing realization in the minds of non-Communists that, irrespective of the ideology or beliefs they hold, socialism paves the way for the prosperity of our working class, our peasantry, our intelligentsia, the people as a whole. In this way we can prosper, work in a good spirit together for the common cause, argue about what is to be argued about, and move forward together.

In our days it is inevitable that we should argue. That in Hungary we have a system of people's democracy which embodies the power of the working class, of which the goal is socialism, is a settled issue. That is settled once and for all. We can affirm this with a firm conviction because conditions at home and in the world are such that the process cannot be reversed. But a big question remains. How shall we proceed, what should be the rate of advance, the pace of revolution? This is an open question, both in the world of ideas and in action.

In so far as the world of ideas is concerned we might well say, let's get together and take a vote as to whether there is a God or not. For some think there isn't, others insist there is. But we won't vote. Because we take people's feelings into account, and respect them. We leave it to the passage of time to solve the question; it's something for scientific conferences and scientific journals to do. Nonetheless we can still work peacefully together and find ways and means for believers and non-believers to work in unity for the common socialist goal.

An important question concerning the pace of revolution is how much we can use today and how much we should invest for the future. And this is not a simple question at all, because to one and the same person it looks one way this moment and another the next. If somebody looks at the question purely objectively, he wants to have as much as possible today; but if one looks at it as a patriot and Communist, or a socially responsible man, then one comprehends that it is unjustifiable to use up everything today, that investments should also be made for the future. For we have to create a socialist country, a socialist nation has to live here, and it has to live a beautiful and good life, and this makes demands on the present-day generation. We have to wage a battle with ourselves over what can be distributed now and what should be squeezed out for tomorrow, for the day after tomorrow, for the future.

I mention all this only by way of example—I won't go any further—to demonstrate that most of man's wisdom is of the kind that needs no special

discovery, it has already been discovered, only we have to discover it afresh for ourselves and take it into account in our actions.

This is how I live, this is how I work. The letter of the Central Committee also refers to the last fifteen years, which has of course been a decisive stage in our development, and in which, of course, I have also been an active participant. It gives me a special pleasure that one becomes so absorbed in things that I have great difficulty in distinguishing between what I myself have done and what I have not, what we all have done together.

In 1956 a grave and critical situation arose which is called counter-revolution by historians. We know this is the learned definition of what happened in 1956. But there is also another name for it that we all can accept: it was a national tragedy. A tragedy for the Party, for the working class, for the people as a whole and for individuals as well. It was a wrong turning, and this resulted in tragedy. And if now we are past it—and we can safely say we are—it is a very great thing indeed.

I have been working as an organized Communist since 1931, and I had already taken part in the working-class movement a couple of years earlier. I have been working ever since that time, because it is the rule for man to work. Yet I feel that, if you have nothing else to say for yourself except that in 1956, in a critical period, and in the following few years, you were of some use—you can say you have not lived in vain.

Now this is a family gathering, isn't it? Since it is about me, I cannot describe this birthday as a political celebration. On such an occasion, of course, one is bound to think of what one must do, how one must continue. Nobody can change his skin, and I think the most essential thing is that the political process itself should continue, and everyone should help the way they can. Everyone without exception. In the result the efforts of the 100-member Central Committee, the 200-member National Council of the Patriotic People's Front and that of the millions of Hungarian citizens is also included. So what we have achieved is the result of the work of our whole active working society. This process must continue in every way possible. It is the duty of all to help in it as far as they can. And this also, of course, applies to me.

There may be a few birthday meditations, but the way I feel about it is that this morning as usual I asked to be given my mail, in order to see what's going on. The calendar says today is a weekday, and whatever we may arrange, life does not stop, it continues on its way.

That's the way one philosophizes and meditates. As an individual I have had to renounce a great deal in private life in the course of these last forty years. I have even had a few things to suffer. Before Liberation they were

physical; after they were pains of the soul—the others did not matter. For it's a pain for the soul when men ask, as with me, whether one is an honest man or not. It makes no difference that a man spent a week or five years in jail, that is not what counts, but that anyone could say he is not an honest man, although he has been one all his life. I am talking about this only for you to understand that, all things considered, I look on myself as a fortunate man, even a happy one, in the sense that in all circumstances I have lived up to my convictions and I have been able to work and fight for a cause which I have always had at heart, doing what my mind and heart told me to do.

There are situations when one has to do something which few people understand at the given moment, yet still one has to do it in the hope that it will be understood later. I also consider myself happy that I have lived to see that very many people, hundreds of thousands and millions, have understood what we had had to do in certain given situations which few understood at the time. And I am happy that this has come about not through force, not by pressure, but by discussion, by persuasion.

I wish the Central Committee, as I also wish myself, to continue working in this spirit and to spare neither trouble nor patience where the work of of persuasion has to be done, because the way that looks shortest is not always the shortest in the end. On occasion one has to stop and argue, to listen patiently to the other party. That is also part of a philosophy of life, if you like, not to go on singing our own tune, but to listen to others as well, and then think about what was said and why. Opinions should be reconciled to show what we all have to do.

Forgive me this philosophizing, but since I am here talking to you I felt I ought to disclose a few of my thoughts and feelings, among friends. We have often discussed and argued together, and on the whole with good results so far. I would like to conclude my remarks by stressing that I feel a sincere and profound gratitude, that I offer my warm thanks to the Central Committee, the Government, the Presidential Council and the National Council of the Patriotic People's Front for this mark of attention, and for the honour you have all done me on the occasion of my sixtieth birthday. I am grateful to you both for the distinction you have awarded me and for this social gathering.

I think we all know each other more or less. Today is just a day in the calendar, tomorrow will be the twenty-sixth, after that the twenty-seventh, life will go on, and there will always be work to do. I will not change any more. Last week I was the same as I am today, and next week and after I shall be the same as I have been up to now. If I am allowed to interpret your

words—and I refer now not only to members of the Central Committee but to everyone present—as meaning that nothing will change the common determination that has brought us thus far and has also brought us together at this table today, and that we shall go on working untiringly together for the same goal, in the same spirit—then I can say that I have had a happy birthday.

I thank you, comrades, and propose that now all of us, Party members and our non-Party friends and allies here present, raise our glasses to our Central Committee, our Party, our working class, our peasantry, our intelligentsia, to the Hungarian people and their prosperity—and I do so especially to your own personal health.

AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HUNGARIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

by

MIHÁLY KOROM

In 1949, the Hungarian nation, for the first time in its thousand-year-long history, created a written constitution for itself. This became the basic law of the state, including as it does the most important norms covering the institutions of society, the state administration and the rights and duties of the state. The Constitution naturally, in keeping with the political and economic situation prevailing at the time it was promulgated, stated what had been achieved and established: that state power is in the hands of the working people. It was then that the building of a socialist society started in Hungary. The Constitution enacted by Parliament in August 1949 was a great historical achievement of the Hungarian people which ensured the appropriate foundations for the further extension of the institutions of society and a socialist administrative and legal system. For that very reason articles were included in the 1949 Constitution which at the time still only had a programmatic character, that is they pointed towards the tasks that lay ahead. Today it can be established that the Hungarian nation was able to make every one of them come true.

Preparing the Constitutional Amendments

In 1962, ten years ago, the 8th Party Congress stated that the Hungarian nation had laid the foundations of socialism. The profound changes which have taken place since demanded, and made possible, significant changes

In April 1972, following a long and thorough debate, Parliament accepted the proposed amendment of the Constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic. Mihály Korom, the Minister of Justice, issued a statement on the preparatory work which was published by *Népszabadság*, the national daily of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, of which the article here published is a slightly abridged version.

in the state administration also. Professional experts in fact started preparatory work as regards the constitutional amendments already ten years ago, although it was only the 10th Party Congress, in 1970, which concretely formulated in a resolution, as an objective whose turn had come to be realized, that the basic law of the state must be amended.

The preparation of a comprehensive amendment of a basic law demands quite some time, the amendments must after all satisfy social needs over a long period. True enough, certain partial amendments were effected in the course of the past twenty-three years, but frequent amendments to the basic law of a country are not advisable, that might even threaten the confidence placed in the stability of the legal order. That is why very thorough research had to be carried out, covering principles and theories, so that those areas could be outlined where a far-reaching amendment of the Constitution appeared to be justified.

Thousands of men and women, politicians, legal theorists, economists and specialists in the theory and practice of state administration, took part in this comprehensive work. Many propositions and observations were made in the course of deliberations and they were all thoroughly discussed. It was only afterwards that a final proposal was worked out, which was then submitted to the organs with whom the power of decision rested.

A number of proposals suggested that a new constitution be drafted, the Party and the Government however decided that it would be preferable if the proclamation in law of the higher qualitative stage signifying the completion of the construction of a socialist society were postponed, rather than offer a constitutional programme, which would mean that the prescriptions of the basic law would only be realized later. Proposals regarding the naming of the state also led to arguments in committee. Some suggested that the constitution should already state that Hungary was a Socialist Republic. This proposal was also rejected for the reasons mentioned above. The formulation proclaiming the socialist character of the Hungarian state was however made part of the amendment since this has already been realized and is a fact.

Some suggested that the basic principles of socialist living be included in the Constitution, others wished the meaning of socialist democracy to be there declared, in other words, the sort of thing that does not belong in a constitution. Other proposals were made that sounded useful enough but which nevertheless could not be adopted. Many suggested for instance that greater moral recognition for selfless work in the social interest be made part of the constitution, or the promotion and support of the socialist rites of birth, marriage and death, the obligations of parents in the bringing up of

their children, the departmental duties of ministries or greater protection for works of art of cultural and historical significance. It was also proposed that the constitution declare that the state ought to give greater assistance to those who suffered serious setbacks or were afflicted by natural catastrophes. Others proposed that the periodicity of elections be adjusted to the five-year plans, that the types of economic plan be included in the draft, that the principles of parliamentary duties be formulated in detail in the basic law, that the constitution arrange for the swearing in of the Presidential Council and the Government, and so on and so forth. All these proposals are extraordinarily important, they show that everyone who took part in the discussions concerning the draft took the task allotted to him seriously. But there is no room in the constitution for such proposals. It is only natural that many important proposals were borne in mind and formulated in the draft. The rights of the defence, for instance, to give just one example, at every stage of criminal procedure.

The Role of the Party and the Trade Unions

The chapter dealing with the social order expresses those changes which took place in the class structure of Hungarian society. They are connected with the leading social role of the working class, the taking shape of the co-operative peasantry, the increasing part played by professional men and women, and the strengthening of socialist national cohesion. The amendment unambiguously indicates that the Hungarian People's Republic is a socialist state where all power is in the hands of the working people. Citizens exercise their power in the first place through elected delegates, in Parliament, and in Local Government Councils. The amendment also expresses an important demand of socialist democracy, that citizens should be able to take part in arranging public matters and in promoting proposals in the public interest in a direct way also, where they live and work.

Originally the Constitution only covered the role of the Party in an indirect way, the amended constitution however declares that the Marxist–Leninist Party of the working class is the leading force in Hungarian society. This, it ought to be said, is a most important amendment. The experience of history shows that the Party is the real and proper leading force in Hungarian society.

The social organizations, trade unions, the Patriotic People's Front, the women's, youth and other mass movements have a significant role in socialist construction. The 1949 Constitution only referred to this in an indirect way,

the amended Constitution however gave constitutional status to their active participation in socialist construction.

The amended Constitution expresses, in accordance with the present position in the construction of socialism, that the Hungarian economic system is based on the social ownership of the means of production. Social ownership has two basic forms in Hungary: state property and co-operative property. Both have a major part to play in the Hungarian economy and economic growth will, in the future as well, be based on the joint development of state and co-operative property.

Economic planning will naturally continue to have a decisive role in economic planning. The amended Constitution therefore declares that the state bases itself on economic plans in its concern for the development of the forces of production, the increase in social property, the improvement in the defences of the country and last but not least the rise in the material and cultural standards of all working people.

The Rights and Duties of Parliament

A number of amendments are very short, sometimes they consist of a single word, but the majority of even those is essential. To give an example, the Constitution generally used the expression "worker",* this, in the course of carrying out the amendments, was generally changed to "citizen". This is a fundamental change. Let me say no more than that at the time the Constitution formulated the rights and duties of citizens bearing in mind that sections of society still existed which exploited and did not work. That is why it proved necessary to differentiate between the rights of citizens in general and those of the workers in particular. Hungarian society today consists of classes and sections the basic interests of which are identical. Under such circumstances it is only natural that every citizen is entitled to all the rights established by the Constitution. I should like to note that the amended Constitution does not merely establish the rights and duties of citizens but also, in every case, indicates the guarantees and duties of the state, which ensure that these can become effective.

The constitutional amendment increased the sphere of competence of Parliament. It declares that Parliament has to debate and approve the government programme. This has been the practice for a good few years, but the amendment now gives it constitutional sanction. In recent years, estab-

* Hungarian differentiates between *dolgozó* = a person who works, and *munkás* = one who does manual work of an industrial nature. The term employed by the Constitution is *dolgozó*. (The translator.)

lishing the principal line of governmental activity has been the most important task of Parliament. This is only natural since Parliament is the highest organ of state authority and popular representation. Debating and approving the government programme also expresses the constitutional proposition that in Hungary Parliament is a higher authority than the Government. The new formulation indicates a further extension of the constitutional sphere of competence of Parliament, giving Parliament an extremely important role in guaranteeing the constitutional system; it is up to Parliament to control whether all the provisions of the Constitution are carried out. The question arose in the course of preparatory work whether a special Constitutional Court ought to be established. This proposal could not be considered since it does not accord with Hungarian practice to let legislation passed by Parliament, including the interpretation of the Constitution itself, be subjected to revision by another authority, say a Constitutional Court. In Hungary it is the responsibility of Parliament alone to ensure constitutionality. The amended Constitution provides the appropriate instruments for this function, making it possible for Parliament to abrogate all regulations or legal norms that are deemed unconstitutional, whichever particular state authority may have issued them.

Judicial Independence

Up to now the President of the Supreme Court had been chosen by Parliament, the members of the Court by the Presidential Council, and the People's Magistrates by the appropriate Local Council. Other professional judges were appointed by the Minister of Justice. The constitutional amendment made the system of appointing judges uniform in such a way that they are now, at every level, elected and not appointed. This, according to the amended Constitution, is part of the sphere of competence of the Presidential Council of the People's Republic. Professional judges are elected for an indefinite time, this is an additional important guarantee of judicial independence. This will undoubtedly increase the status of judicial office.

The Procurator General had been elected for a term of six years in the past, and the President of the Supreme Court for five. The amended Constitution has reduced both to four years, with the aim of harmonizing the terms of the commission to carry out these two offices with the parliamentary cycle. Parliament elects all office-holders, including members of the Government, for a four-year term, and an exception in this case would not be justified. It is only reasonable that the Procurator General and the

President of the Supreme Court should be subjected to and be dependent on the particular Parliament which gave them their commission.

The constitutional amendment simplifies the chapter dealing with Local Councils, it omits to mention, for instance, what offices are to be attached to Local Councils. The reason for this is that Parliament passed an act dealing with Local Councils in 1971 which, in accord with the present stage of Hungarian social development, regulated all questions concerning the organization and operation of Local Councils. The amended Constitution therefore only includes the basic principles and guarantees relating to Councils. This follows from the self-government functions guaranteed to the Councils and the greater sphere of competence given to them in determining their own organization.

Competence of the Government

The 1949 Constitution designated the Government as the highest organ of the state administration. The role of the Government was however extended in the course of time. Today the Council of Ministers operates not merely as the highest organ of the state administration but generally as the highest executive body. The constitutional amendment, in keeping with the requirements of practice, now gives constitutional sanction to an extension of this sphere of competence, allotting the Government tasks which are not expressly of a state administrative character. The Government is, for instance, responsible for public order, it must ensure that the rights of citizens can become effective, it directs the Local Councils and exercises legal control over them, it is responsible for the budget, it negotiates and approves international agreements, etc. The constitutional extension of the sphere of competence of the Government was also made necessary by the fact that the need to encourage scientific and cultural progress and the provision of health and social services have lately come to the fore. These could not yet be included at the time of the drafting of the 1949 Constitution.

Strenghtening Socialist Democracy

The constitutional amendment adds new features to the effectiveness of socialist legality, as well as new guarantees. Before the amendment the Constitution decreed that watching over legality was part of the duties of the Procurator General. But guarding the effectiveness of legality cannot be

exclusively his task, so his role will still be most important in the future. It is the duty of every organ of the state and of every citizen to obey the Constitution and all its provisions. The fact that the constitutional amendment extends the guarantees of the effectiveness of legality and that it designs it as a more general task, is an important change.

The Hungarian Constitution declares that citizens have the right to legal representation in judicial procedures. The amendment extended the rights of the citizen connected therewith in such a way that it is declared that persons subjected to criminal prosecution have the right to legal representation at every stage of the procedure. The amended Constitution, when listing the duties of Courts, emphatically declares that it is part of the duties of the judiciary to protect and guarantee the rights and lawful interests of citizens as well as the social, state and economic order.

The rights and duties of citizens are dealt with in one of the most important articles of the socialist Constitution. The constitutional amendment extends the sphere of rights and duties, though it can naturally only regulate basic rights and duties since these only can be considered as being properly part of a constitution. In the course of preparatory work a consensus was reached on the fact that the rights and duties of citizens ought to be considered and exercised in context, and as mutually interrelated, furthermore that the rights ensured to citizens can only be exercised in harmony with the interests of socialist society. The new arrangements express the fact that, in Hungarian society, social and individual interests basically coincide, and that individual interest must not be allowed to offend the interests of the community and of society as a whole.

A further extension and deepening of socialist democracy is one of the most important factors in the development of Hungarian society. This also demands that it should be possible for citizens to take part in public life and to attend to the arrangement of public business to even a larger extent than at present, both at their domicile and at their place of employment.

HUNGARY AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATIONS

by

PÉTER VÁLYI

I

The process of economic integration has an essential and important role in the economic development of whole regions. That is why the literature devoted to the subject these days is so large and so fashionable. Some consider economic integration to be a panacea that will cure all the economic ills of our age and that will make problems of technology, price and competitiveness disappear as if by magic. Needless to say that is an exaggeration. The complexities of the process of integration also find expression in the fact that to this day authors compete with each other in trying to find a precise definition of the term.

We in Hungary are also closely affected by, and very much interested in, those politico-economic structures which, in the shape of regional integrations, are in process of coming into being, or at the stage of development.

The period of taking shape does not favour precise definitions, there is therefore no point in trying to offer one. It can be said however that economic integrations are interpreted as the further development beyond national frontiers of hitherto national economic forms (division of labour, cooperation, exchange of goods, monetary system) and institutions, and their becoming internationally intertwined, or, in some cases, fully international. Such a process takes place within a given economico-political area. Bearing in mind these general criteria one naturally cannot leave those peculiarities and motives out of account which clearly distinguish integrations in differing social systems from one another.

We are realists, that is why we consider economic integrations to be not a panacea but an instrument adequate to the present world situation, an instrument which provides an organizational and legal framework in an international context for economic growth demanding an increasing input of material and intellectual resources, if problems are to be dealt with in a rational way. On the other hand economic integrations also offer support

to political stability and cohesion within a given region, to that stability and firm background without which a long-term economic policy could only be framed at the risk of committing major errors. What concern us primarily are of course the tasks that have to be carried out as an economic cluster of socialist countries is being established. These have not only multiplied in the course of the past three or four years, they have also become more concrete. A modern structure of CMEA institutions is taking shape, including monetary ones, large-scale agreements covering cooperation in production are entered into, and so on.

CMEA however, as a political concept, is not a supra-national organization but an integration based on the principle of independent national economies. It follows that the mutually agreed plan of economic integration does not aim to establish a closed economic unit. Cooperation within CMEA is becoming more intensive, but it looks outwards too, at the same time, towards other countries and regions and the world economy itself.

The programme of our integration declares openly and with considerable emphasis, that it is possible for each and every country to take part in any major economic action they may chose, to a limited extent also, if they so prefer. Any type of agreement may be concluded, or some other way of linking up may be found between CMEA and any and every other country, regardless of its social system, degree of development, or geographical situation.

Hungarian public opinion also follows the growth of other international economic organizations, including regional ones, with considerable attention.

We keep a sympathetic eye on the growth of Latin-American, African, and other economic clusters which aim to increase the economic weight and influence of the developing countries, serving to provide sound foundations for their economic future.

Current economic interests mean that the events and developments that go on within the European Economic Community are of some importance to Hungary. The likely results of the extension of the Common Market deserve attention. Once this takes place 65 per cent of all Hungarian exports to developed capitalist countries will have a Common Market country as their destination. If those countries are included that, owing to various preferential systems in operation, and other commercial and tariff agreements, can be considered the hinterland of the European Economic Community, this proportion grows to roughly 94 per cent. What is even more important for Hungary than the extension itself is the effect these events will have on general trade policy, and on opportunities for trade and cooperation between this country and the Common Market.

Speaking more concretely: will development in the West-European capitalist countries and the more important economic clusters be in the direction of greater openings, or must one be prepared for a longish period of turning towards the inside, either as the effect of political trends unsympathetic to the socialist countries, or else because of the rearrangements made necessary by the joining of new members. There is perhaps no need for me to emphasize that Hungary, but I should say also our friends and allies, would warmly welcome development in the first direction.

Such a favourable growth alternative, which must certainly be considered possible, would first get the soil ready for a constructive dialogue aimed at analyzing and eliminating the obstacles to trade and cooperation. Later, very likely in a more secure Europe than the present one, new points of common interest in various areas of the economy could be found.

We in Hungary are of the opinion that opportunities for bilateral contacts with the countries of Western Europe have not been exhausted yet. We are doing our best to improve the perspectives of such bilateral contacts, and to make them more stable and more extensive, by potentiating cooperation in industry, agriculture and transport, by cooperating, in a fruitful way, in scientific and technological research, in advantageous financial operations, and by engaging in joint activities in third countries. It is however not right either that the integrations, CMEA and the Common Market should exist side by side without taking note of each others' bare but very real existence. Prominent politicians in socialist countries have already expressed their views in this respect. Taking note of each other, and later a nodding acquaintance, could well mean the opening of a new chapter in the demolishing of discriminating barriers and the overcoming of other obstacles to trade. This could be the beginning of an age of mutually advantageous commercial agreements and cooperation. Hungary is interested that such aspects should come to the fore in Western Europe, and not a likelihood that contacts be limited by discrimination.

Everyone of the CMEA countries interprets their own growing economic integration in the spirit of peaceful coexistence, making an isolationist economic policy with autarchy as an aim impossible, on the contrary considering it desirable that it should be able to carry out its due share in the growing world-wide division of labour, that it should play its proper part in making contacts with the developing countries even more fruitful, that it should exercise a greater influence on the international money market, and that it should also take out its share in the fight against discriminatory practices in trade with socialist countries.

To make it possible for CMEA, as the economic community of the socialist countries, to take the initiative in establishing closer contact with other regions, it will prove necessary to work out the notions involved in greater detail, and for a longer period of time.

II

The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic actively supports the potentiation of international economic cooperation, naturally in the first place the growth of economic cooperation between socialist countries. This is the main motive power of our activity within CMEA, and that is why we have, in recent years, worked systematically, and with all our strength, on the programme of the economic integration of socialist countries. In the course of the years economic cooperation within CMEA has progressed step by step. There is obviously need for experiment and debate when looking for a new way of this kind, that is how the most rational measures can be discovered. CMEA gradually extended cooperation to various fields of economic activity. Mutual contacts between member states of CMEA covers a widening circle from scientific and technological co-operation through long-term foreign trade agreements to the coordination of plans. The efficiency of foreign trade is improving as a result, and specialized production is taking shape, though it is still at an early stage of development. This gradual progress has been going on over the years, and has produced positive and perceptible results. Last year in June however, at the 25th Session of CMEA, a resolution placed a new stage on the agenda, that of integration. That was when the term 'integration' was first officially used in reference to the objectives of CMEA, a year later, in July this year, at the 26th Session of CMEA, the first achievements of the integration programme and the co-operation of the member countries found deserved appreciation, bearing in mind also that these grew out of many long years of preparatory work and the successes of earlier years.

The question arises why the stage of economic cooperation which is now in process of being elaborated was given a new name. The term integration as such was known the world over but socialist economists did not use it. It could be said that this new term is meant to document that all the countries participating in CMEA wish to produce a major qualitative change in their cooperation. This qualitative change will not, however, be implemented by a mechanical fusion of individual independent economies, such an objective would be unreal, the changes will have to occur in those areas where

major problems occurred so far. Qualitative changes can therefore be expected if

—the economic policy and the development plans of the member countries are harmonized;

—all still existing obstacles in the way of the exchange of goods and services by CMEA countries are removed;

—the way is opened to specialization in production and as a result of this to greater efficiency;

—the appropriate economic instruments are created to carry out the above, and the foreign exchange and credit system of CMEA countries is improved;

—and finally if it is made possible that the economic community of the CMEA countries be supported by the appropriate institutions.

This is the way in which the various production cooperation problems that are part of the programme of socialist integration will find a solution in the next few years, more precisely, this is the way in which these desirable results will be obtained more quickly than with the methods employed heretofore.

Everyone is of course well aware that just about every form of economic cooperation could also be found in earlier joint CMEA decisions.

An example is the specialization of production, another the rational structure of power resources in CMEA countries, or the way raw materials supplies are organized. Numerous proposals have covered all these subjects for some time, and considerable progress in fact occurred in them in the course of the twenty-one odd years that CMEA has been in existence. Integration was supported in spite of the fact that the progress made was recognized. This expresses the fact that, given modern conditions of production, in the age of the technological revolution and at a time when intensive methods of production and development are becoming dominant, economic cooperation must be increased and progress must be accelerated. That is why the above-mentioned five problems involved in integration must find a solution.

In what way do we want to extend the proven methods of plan-coordination? There is no wish to replace voluntary coordination by directive planning, with the CMEA centre acting as a joint Planning Office. Nor would it be right if planning were confined to present methods, since that would inhibit progress. These methods are inadequate in two ways. On the one hand coordination only covers a five-year period and does not possess a long-term character, in foreign trade annual plans and agreements are in fact still the rule. What is more present methods of coordination are not

development-orientated, they are not designed to transform the structure of the economy, their objective is merely to increase the turnover of trade between CMEA countries, within a given structure of production.

This is both good and important, but it does not help a systematic mutual taking into consideration of the developmental policies of the other member countries, or the ability to influence them, nor does it further the most favourable development in the long-term, by international standards, of the structure of the national economies. The coordination of economic policies differs from present plan-coordination in precisely these two points.

As regards the second point mentioned, anyone might well say that there are no barriers to speak of today hindering the flow of goods from one country to another, after all, CMEA countries do not discriminate against each other, there are no import or export prohibiting regulations, tariffs or similar instruments. This is how things are, it is good that things are like this, but all this is still not enough to produce that necessary stimulation which could be obtained through a more favourable development in foreign trade. The major obstacle in the way of a faster growth in mutual turnover and a gradual specialization in production is that bilateralism which asserts itself in practice, the exaggeratedly detailed quota system, and the practice of annually balancing units of payment.

The CMEA "Complex Programme" last year declared international specialization in production, the most effective possible manifestation of economic integration, to be the major common objective. A greater part of the positive results of cooperation can indeed be brought to the surface by specialization. It must be borne in mind though that the extension of specialization and the transformation of the general autarchic character of home production is one of the most complex tasks in international economic activity, even under the conditions of a socialist planned economy. A certain stability of relations must exist to start with, that is given within CMEA, then the bi- and multilateral financial advantages of specialization must be measured, but more than measurement is involved, the carrying into effect must be continuous, not only as a whole and in general, but in the case of every single specialization agreement. It may well prove necessary to advance the costs of preparing for specialization and changing over to it. Finally, the general application of specialization demands multilateral accounting. What has been said about specialization therefore also implies the need to change and modernize the foreign exchange and credit system which is not, at present, able to satisfy such requirements.

A further obstacle to foreign trade and the implementation of specialization is that export incentives in individual countries are smaller than the

desire to import, as a result competitiveness in the interests of better quality and greater technical reliability has not developed to a sufficient degree, as far as various exporting enterprises participating in trade between socialist countries are concerned.

A freer flow of goods must of course be achieved by keeping the planned character and stability due to long-term agreements and compulsory quotas, while greater flexibility is introduced into the system of agreements and payments, these being absolutely necessary for the proper functioning of multilateralism. This takes us to the fourth point, the conscious and planned use of monetary instruments.

The extension of the functions and the field of application, and the strengthening of the authority of the transferable rouble in use amongst CMEA countries, is absolutely essential if proper incentives are to be provided for trade and cooperation in production, and if better use is to be made of the advantages of the international division of labour. One of the ways of doing this is to give the rouble, in addition to its accounting function, an increasingly more independent and active role in credit policy and in foreign financial operations, in relation to the national currencies of the CMEA countries and their rate of exchange. The introduction of partial gold-convertibility would also significantly improve the foreign exchange system of the CMEA countries. When it proves to be feasible to initiate the renewal of the CMEA monetary and credit system in the spirit of the complex programme, the economic community of the CMEA will have come into the possession of a powerful lever. This will act as a catalyst producing activity and effective cooperation in the common interest over a wide variety of fields of production.

Joint institutions play a decisive organizational and connecting role in the process of integration. Such could prove useful in many fields of economic activity. CMEA possesses a number of such joint institutions, I might mention the common freight-car pool, the central distributor of the CMEA power grid, and the office which coordinates the charter of ships. The role of CMEA banking institutions is increasing, that is that of the Bank of Economic Cooperation and of the International Investments Bank. There are also institutions designed to coordinate certain fields of industrial production, such as Intermetall for metallurgy, Interchim in the chemical industry and the Roller Bearing Industry Association. An organization which will coordinate the traffic in the tools of the atomic power industry is in process of establishment. One cannot say therefore that there are few such institutions. In spite of this there is every reason to suppose that it will prove necessary to further increase the number of such common institutions

in the near future. Institutions are needed in the first place which will be concerned with production and trade, and which will operate as enterprises and not in the manner of administrative offices. There are very few common institutions of this kind at present and, given the relatively undeveloped state of financial instrumentalities, it is not likely that there could be many more. One might, as an example, mention Haldex which is under joint Hungarian and Polish management, and which really functions as an enterprise, doing the work determined by the two owner-states in the founding deed in an exemplary manner. It pays its way and increases its property and sphere of activity from year to year. A whole host of financial and legal questions will have to be settled first so that common organizations and institutions working as enterprises can be established in trade and production in the first place. The present unsatisfactory state of these financial and legal problems is one of the principal reasons for the establishment of joint institutions of an office or administrative character, which are financed out of the budget. The financial questions which will have to be settled are those I already discussed, as regards the legal ones, two appear to be particularly important. The country where such joint enterprises are to be registered, whose legal norms would then govern their operation, will have to be determined, and a way must be found to ensure the right of intervention of the various owner-countries of such multinationally owned enterprises, while maintaining the principle of one-man responsibility which is essential to the proper management of enterprises.

Settling all these questions under present conditions is not a small task, nor a simple one, but the fifth problem can only be solved in this way.

III

Work on these difficult problems which can only be solved in the long run and in the course of the years is going on all the time in Hungary and in the organs of CMEA. The second focus of this work is the elaboration of concrete notions of integration under present economic conditions. To give an idea of what is involved I should like to mention some of the more recent cooperation enterprises which are already concretely realized, or else about to be implemented, which are crucial as far as the Hungarian economy is concerned, and also important to the other cooperating friendly country.

Work on the extension and modernization of the the power-grid which links the CMEA countries plays an outstanding role in their cooperation. There is talk of the extension of this power-grid, of its being made more

secure, and also of new 750 kV power lines. Major planning work, some of it already in process of execution is being done on a further extension of oil pipelines. Hungary at present receives her crude oil from the Soviet Union through the Friendship I pipeline. This traverses southern Czechoslovakia and reaches Hungarian territory at the River Ipoly. This line no longer suffices for additional requirements, a new one is being built which will reach Hungary directly from the Soviet Union in Szabolcs-Szatmár County, where it will supply the refinery to be erected at Leninváros, in this way linking up with the Hungarian system of oil pipelines.

At present only a single natural gas conduit links Hungary with other countries. A relatively small capacity conduit takes natural gas from Rumania to the Tisza Chemical Works. Starting with 1975, arrangements will have to be made for a larger import of natural gas, the Soviet plan to build conduits which will supply natural gas to socialist countries lying to the West of it, as well as to capitalist countries, is therefore of decisive importance for Hungary.

The gas conduit will also reach Hungary through Szabolcs-Szatmár county. The linking up of major energy networks produces an actual material connection, establishing a steadily growing element making for the integration of the countries that lie along it.

Traffic is another network that closely connects us. In this respect also a series of common arrangements that will take effect over a period of ten years is being implemented as part of integration. Let me mention a few only.

Cooperation in the production of motor vehicles for one. Every type of motor vehicle production is equally important for Hungary, attention is however concentrated on the production of passenger buses and coaches. Close cooperation with CMEA countries, particularily the Soviet Union, has resulted in a productive capacity that is modern by any standards, with an advanced technology and outstanding use-parameters. Considerable attention is also given to the production of passenger cars and goods vehicles, in their cases the focus of production is in other socialist countries. Hungary participates in production in the common interest by the manufacture of parts in large series, and in this way helps to ensure that future domestic requirements are satisfied. In the case of passenger cars this has already happened following cooperation with the Soviet automobile works on the banks of the Volga, and also with other socialist countries (GDR, Yugoslavia).

The further extension of a uniform road and rail network is just as important for traffic. Significant steps will be taken in the near future,

particularly due to the coordination of long-term plans. The fact that CMEA countries will change over to the system of the automatic coupling of carriages at the same time as western countries will be of great technological importance to railway traffic. This will permit a large saving in costs in the operation of railways. It is only natural that an enterprise of this kind which will require the reconstruction of the entire rolling stock-industry, will have to be prepared thoroughly and in a planned way, by the CMEA countries.

The further growth and modernization of the chemical industry is another major field for cooperation.

Every member country of CMEA created the foundations of a major chemical industry in the past ten to fifteen years. The advantages and motive power of international cooperation are now needed if further progress is to be made.

We in Hungary are planning the development of the chemical industry based on crude oil and natural gas, relying largely on cooperation, principally with the neighbouring countries. The planning and construction of a large production unit in cooperation with the Soviet Union has already started. The complex employment of the products of olefin chemistry will follow on close cooperation in deliveries and production.

One ought also to remember that extended cooperation in research, specialization and production which is included in the fourth Hungarian five-year plan. Its present and future importance warrants this. What I am referring to is the computer programme. Following the construction of a uniform system of computing technique, CMEA countries are now getting ready to develop and manufacture complete computer systems, doing so as a joint effort. Mutual delivery agreements will ensure the security of production and permanent modernization.

This programme which is in the common interest is being carried out in fair few factories and research institutes in Hungary. They are expected to make considerable headway in this highly specialized field of the communications technology and instrument making industry, and to lay the basis for the home supply of computers which these days cannot be done without in production, or the planning and direction of the economy.

I should finally mention that, both in the field of the natural sciences and that of the applied sciences, the coordination of scientific research is entering a new stage in the course of the implementation of integration.

It is hoped and expected that joint research programmes and the coordination of research, research institutes established by joint effort and the work of international technological research collectives, will improve

the efficiency of scientific work, and ensure that scientific achievements are made use of and applied as soon as possible in production and in the economy.

In addition to multilateral cooperation within CMEA, great importance is still accorded to bilateral economic contacts with CMEA countries, to furthering their growth, extending them and implementing the agreements so reached.

The principal feature of Hungarian economic policy continues to be the extension of economic relations with other countries, the strengthening of CMEA, and the cultivation of relations based on mutual interest and which are free of discrimination with every other country on the globe.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE

by

JÓZSEF BOGNÁR

Problems in connection with the quality of life are now timely and derive from the well-known fact that there are measurable and not measurable, at least given current instruments, phenomena and indices affecting the life of both societies and individuals. Things and phenomena may perhaps become measurable tomorrow though they are not measurable today, and the social sciences must endeavour to make measurable as many factors as possible. I consider it even more important that the broad interpretation of problems connected with the quality of life leads us back to those important questions which attracted the attention of the classics of economics, including the physiocrats, and of Marx, though his class position differed. These questions emerged once again in discussions connected with the welfare state and its rejection by a section of revolutionary youth, with various efforts and experiments in European socialist countries, as well as the concept of growth of those developing countries which are based on a strong traditional system, societies which endeavour to create an equilibrium between past and future.

These great questions can be formulated, briefly and summarily, in the following way: what is the function and aim of the economy, how far does its freedom of movement range within society and the state, what is the relationship between the economic and the non-economic objectives and functions of society? Which political, social and cultural preconditions (background) favour economic development, what kind of effect do mechanisms governing economic life exert on other (internal and external) objectives and power relations as well as on its scales of value? Whence derive the aims of economic development: are they to be considered independent aims, unrelated or superior to other factors, or do these aims derive from a given philosophical system, being an important instrument themselves in the achievement of more complex aims? Finally, what is the direct or indirect effect of economic

development or the attainment of outlined or planned aims on the general disposition, behaviour and satisfaction of society as a whole, of particular groups and individuals?

One is justified in raising these major questions particularly these days since everyday life is becoming more and more complex. A given society or state (nation) has to achieve not just one great aim but an entire system of interdependent objectives. To give an example, in spite of scarce resources (economic questions) a certain equilibrium of forces (political and social questions) has to be established. Amidst divergent or even conflicting class and group interests societies and states have to provide for some sort of dissemination of knowledge, moreover, to improving it (education and science), and all this has to be carried out under given international political conditions the dynamism of which promotes or hinders governments in reaching their objectives.

The fact that the subject has been raised makes it obvious in itself that the quality of life is a problem of common concern; the question, however, does not emerge in the same manner in the major capitalist countries which, through the generations and as a result of industrial development, have accumulated a wealth of material, technological and intellectual resources; in the European socialist countries which—after consolidation and the development of a firm system of values—now strive for faster economic and technological growth and, finally, in developing countries which—after having attained political independence—have only recently started to build a new society and economy in the midst of enormous internal and international difficulties.

These societies, being apperceptive (adopting) media, are in very different situations; hence, they react to the same impulses, that is to the philosophy of the quality of life, in a different manner. I therefore propose to analyse the question from three different points of view and to draw separate conclusions and discuss problems separately in connection with developed capitalist, socialist and developing countries.

It is known that the classics, Adam Smith and Ricardo, established economic theory as a logically coherent system of causal relations. In this respect allow me to insist on the great merits of the physiocrats and to point to a few remarks by Aristotle who considered economics as a subclass of politics and attributed the same importance to the concept of value in the

field of economics as to that of rights and duties in the sphere of law. The classics determined the concept of value, that of general value and not that of exchange value, discovered the existence of social economics, acknowledged the existence of interests, although they believed in the "harmony of interests" within the laws of economics, and they declared the possible happiness of man to be the aim of economic activity. In addition to the idea of welfare, the postulate of human (social) equality came to the fore right at the beginning, for Ricardo primarily aimed at discovering laws which regulate the proper distribution of goods.

The first views and theories on economics developed under the influence of natural law on the one hand, and under that of English empirical-utilitarian social philosophy, on the other.

This philosophy considered the interests of the community to be decisive, conceiving them as the sum total of the satisfaction achieved by individuals. This is what made the belief in harmony essential. It did not merely follow on the influence of Kepler or Newton.

Economic rationalism, called a system of rational aims by Max Weber, came into being against this philosophical background; it means, in the main, the relation between highest effect and smallest effort, that is, it looks for an optimum relationship between aims and means in the interest of public welfare.

It logically follows from the aforesaid that the postulate of "rational economics" in the practical sense is also a derived principle (an *a posteriori* principle, according to Gunnar Myrdal), i.e. it is a component or derivative of a system composed on a philosophical basis. Thus it is obvious that this postulate—however important it might be *per se* and/or in promoting economic development and in determining the priorities of development—cannot subject the system of values of society as a whole in a philosophical or logical sense. The individual is, as a matter of fact, not only a "homo oeconomicus" but a human being who has some kind of concrete relation to the system of values and aims of his age and society; accordingly, he maintains certain views about the equality of men, the right to learn and to work and about his own value-creating abilities. Society (the state), however, has to provide for the unfolding of every kind of faculty for the public good and must keep up a certain equilibrium between rational economic aims and the postulates of the adopted system of value.

Real problems emerged in theory when—at a later date—requirements of rational thinking adapted—not to social economics—but to capitalist enterprises were considered the peak of the system of values, while economics was treated as "neutral" in questions related to interests, and to the situation

and conditions of life of the great majority of the population. Economics must be free of values *(wertfrei)*, economics has nothing to do with justice or injustice (Clark), it must consider what actually is and not what ought to be (Pigou), economics should only be concerned with subjective values for only such exist (Jevons). These views on the one hand imply that the interest of the capitalist in making profits takes priority over all other values; scholars abstracted from property relations and distribution based on them; real economic processes, however, developed on the basis of and through property relations. On the other hand, these views put bourgeois economics in a difficult position, it was not able to explain certain phenomena which caused increasing tension, what is more, it simply refused to admit the existence of these phenomena altogether. On the basis of the law of Say, for example, they taught—before J. M. Keynes—that supply creates its own demand, thus, unemployment cannot occur. It is true that John Stuart Mill and Alfred Marshall also said something similar, this, however, is no excuse for scholars to deny, under normal conditions, contradictions which have developed in reality and assumed considerable proportions. J. M. Keynes rightly argued that professional economists did not bother much about the fact that their theories and observable facts were inconsistent: this inconsistency, however, did not escape the attention of common people who did not respect economics as they respected other sciences, the theories of which were in accordance with facts observed in practice.

The disastrous economic crisis and unprecedented unemployment between the two world wars produced a new situation. J. M. Keynes showed that capitalism relying on earlier premises was not able to ensure full employment and that the distribution of wealth and incomes was unjust. At that time, an increase in wealth did not depend on the "self-restraint of the rich" any longer and one of the arguments usually adduced to justify property inequalities of wealth became pointless. Consequently processes which had hitherto been determined by individual initiative should—according to Keynes—be centrally guided. State guidance must influence consumer habits, and interest rates and a considerable part of investments must be socially controlled in order to achieve full employment.

J. M. Keynes's ideas more or less influenced all macroeconomic schools of bourgeois economics. Keynes considered himself and the consequences of his theory "moderately conservative", he was right, of course, in saying that, for he wanted to determine the volume of production only by means of forces outside the classical system of thought, but acknowledged the classical analysis according to which it is the privilege of private interest to determine what is to be produced, the proportion of the needed factors of production

and how the value of the end-product is to be distributed amongst them. It follows that Keynes, like most economists thinking along traditional lines, was only concerned with questions of production but was not interested in distribution or property relations. Economists have, however, drawn different conclusions from Keynes's theory: Joan Robinson, for example, emphasized that full employment cannot be achieved without a far-reaching socialization of investments. She therefore suggested firmer state intervention and central planning; Hansen, on the other hand, has stressed the importance of financial instruments and credit policy in the sphere of investments and has proposed to reduce the degree of state intervention.

"Welfare economics", too, has been rehabilitated along two lines: Kaldor and Hicks are relying on the principle of compensation and have refused to confront efficiency and justice. Other economists, Samuelson and Reder for example, consider "social welfare" a normative (moral) discipline and think —unlike other distinguished economists—that it is precisely economists who are qualified to deal with this complex of problems. Most continental economists, however—from Schumpeter to Gunnar Myrdal—reject the idea of harmony (common interests) which derives from the classical school and influences the Anglo-American way of thinking up to our days; they rivet attention on conflicts and on the solution of conflicts by transitional political compromises.

As a result of the ideas and activities of J. M. Keynes and of rehabilitated "welfare state" notions and of trade unions and the working class exercising greater control functions, the standard of living (per capita income) rose at a fast rate after the Second World War.

Technological progress was accelerated, ways of life changed and cyclic fluctuations have decreased in intensity, however, the institutions of capitalist countries continue to survive in spite of higher death duties, the taxation of profits and other factors, moreover, state interference relying on the power of arbitration, as well as state guidance and the direct economic activity of the state protect the established—though improved—order. The traditional institutions of the established order are bolstered by the political rotation system which—in our days—has spread outside the English-speaking world (e.g. to the Scandinavian states, the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria). That is, a kind of balance of powers has come into being in some countries between conservatives and progressives, and the outcome of elections is decided by what is called the "floating vote". In order to achieve power, progressives underwrite programmes palatable to the broad masses of the lower middle-class, which are not particularly interested in politics.

The order, which seemed to be relatively stable and to function satisfactorily at the beginning of the sixties, was fiercely attacked in the second half of the same decade. The concept of "welfare state" and economic life in the framework of the existing institutional order was exposed to hard blows from youth, a part of the intelligentsia and various strata subject to discrimination such as Negroes and foreign workers in addition to the usual attacks by trade unions and leftist parties. Trade unions advocated—true to tradition—a fairer distribution while leftists aimed to widen their basis, young people and the intelligentsia challenged the meaning and justification of the aim rational system, demanded and pressed for a more effective system of values and attacked the "manipulative" system produced by the slogan of free elections. Claims for a more effective system of values—which were sometimes confused from an ideological point of view and chaotic in respect to organizational forms (i.e. their import was emotional, not rational) —included equality, freedom to study, participation, better social services, the improvement of the infrastructure and the protection of the environment. At the same time, great masses of young people—and this is the more important process—reject the old institutions of society which had until now been accepted by everybody as the ground on which competition with the older generation took place. Nor do they in economics accept that mechanism which in the final analysis—in spite of many experiments and the best of intentions—is the economic derivative of an empirical-utilitarian philosophy (rational economy). It is true that these manifestations and ideas are still somewhat amorphous and contain more negative than positive elements: however, it is food for thought that the rebels reject traditional institutions the functioning mechanism of which relies on "rules of the game" as esatblished by traditional forces, and that the rebellion has spread to the children of the ruling class.

These new kinds of pressure coincide with the instability of capitalist society which derives from the overstrained state of the economy (inflation gathering momentum, crisis of the international monetary system: neither gold, nor dollar), radical changes in the system of international relations, growing tensions of the Third World, increasing armament expenditure in a number of countries, protracted unjust wars and so on.

As regards the economic aspects of J. M. Keynes's theory—which was the accepted economic policy for two decades—let me briefly mention that Keynes started from two assumptions:

(a) that there are fixed prices and wages; this, however, is not the case anywhere today, and

(b) that governments reduce budgetary expenditure when private invest-

ments reach an unduly high level; such a government, however, does not exist either.

The devaluation of the dollar means that there is no international reserve currency, that gold, too, can only play a very restricted role when it comes to establishing an international financial system. The devaluation of the dollar disposes of the question *ad interim* only, for the European market is overstocked with dollars; on the other hand, American capitalists are not ready to sell American-owned European enterprises, whereas European capitalists are not willing to buy US government bonds for their dollars.

Thinking over the many tensions, conflicts and absences of equilibrium, one arrives at the conclusion that ever increasing tensions have to be eased somehow. Tensions should be reduced in the field of external relations, on the one hand (restricted strategy of the foreign policy of the US, East-West co-operation, limitation of armaments, etc.), and internally, on the other. Bearing in mind the characteristics of the forces exerting pressure it becomes obvious that the value rational elements of the system must be reinforced; this means that the concept of quality of life will by far surpass the importance it plays at present in the life of the Western world. Increased emphasis must be laid, in addition to efficiency, on requirements of equality and justice, further, on the democratic supervision of economic processes, putting an end to discrimination, the right to study (not in a legal but in a real and material sense) and on the protection of the human environment.

Besides, everyday life has to be gradually reshaped in such a way that it should not merely be acceptable but found attractive by young people, failing which communication between the older and the younger generation will break down. Far greater attention must be devoted to problems of the Third World.

It is certain that the thus reshaped Western world will not be exempt from problems; we, of course, do not know what the new world in making will be like; one thing, however, is certain that the old one cannot go on any longer. It is undoubtedly distressing to part from the old world (this particularly refers to the older generation), and, perhaps, not only illusions but *real* values will also irretrievably get lost besides, uncertainty is always an unpleasant sensation; however, in harmony with the eternal laws of nature and society every rising generation tries to adapt the existing physical world to its own expectations.

This is why I think that the idea of quality of life will also obtain increasing importance in the Western half of our changing world.

II

In the case of socialist countries, the relationship between the value rational and the aim rational systems—which also includes the field of the quality of life—radically differs, for ideological and historical reasons, from what I have said about developed capitalist countries. The system of value of society is—as a result of firm ideological commitments—very complex and wide, and significant political and social forces back it. Consequently, the norms of rational economic thinking can only penetrate gradually—not, of course, to the peaks of the system of values but to their appropriate place.

This situation is partly attributable to ideological and partly to historical reasons.

1. The creators of scientific socialism, and particularly their disciples, had a vague notion as early as the nineteenth century that commodity production and the market will cease to exist and that society will directly control the production and distribution (without having recourse to the market) of the means of production according to needs. (It should, however, be noted in parentheses that Marx and Engels did not provide a concrete programme for the building of socialism and that their indications regarding the conditions of socialist society to be expected were expounded as a negation of capitalist production relations.)

2. Distribution is based on class and social principles and takes place without money, that is, the centrally guided economy expresses itself in physical terms. The same principles are expressed in the "Erfurt Programme" (1891) which was inspired by Karl Kautsky; moreover, Kautsky described socialist production in his early works as a closed autarchic economy. (Analysing what had to be done after the revolution, Kautsky wrote in 1922 that money will remain indispensable for a long time as a medium of circulation, but will lose its function as measure of value.)

Seen from a historical point of view it appears that—after power is taken over—such kinds of "ideological prognoses" can only materialize if a particular historical development leads to "compulsory actions" which give the *impression* that the prescribed principles were realized of necessity.

Such a peculiar historical development was the introduction of the war economy in the post-revolutionary Soviet Union; in the case of European people's democracies, it was social transformation in times of cold war aggravated by trade war. During a war economy the main task is to distribute commodities in scarce supply; legal buying and selling was discontinued, the economy was of a completely subsistance character and the obligation to work was introduced.

The term "trade war" in the case of people's democracies refers to the embargo initiated by the Americans, which was backed by the threat of sanctions. The embargo list included 50 per cent of commodities regularly handled in international trade.

At a time of revolutionary change, irrespective of the fact whether an armed revolt or political, that is, relatively peaceful means are involved, members of society are judged on the basis of loyalty to revolutionary ideas and institutions and sacrifices they are prepared to make for the sake of the cause; that is, every revolution is in itself a value-centric system. It logically follows that the aim rational system (a rational economy based on calculation, taking into account business risks, not to mention profits) can only play a very limited role.

Views and demands opposed to the above situation are frequently expressed by revolutionary leaders, but they generally cannot make a breakthrough in the middle of the battle. Lenin, for example, emphatically declared that socialism demands higher work productivity than capitalism and on the basis of results achieved by capitalism. It was also Lenin who said at a relatively early date that it is inevitably necessary to employ bourgeois experts and that this cannot be done in any other way than by continuing to pay them the high salaries they were used to.

One could point out that those formerly in charge of the European people's democracies frequently made similar demands and urged like measures. Thus economic questions increasingly come to the fore, however, under the conditions of intensified class struggle and in a strained international situation, the receptivity of masses backing the revolution is very limited in this respect. It also should be taken into account that under complicated circumstances (when progress is not impeded by resistance but our own foresight and circumspection as well as a careful weighing of the consequences of every of our steps) differences of opinion might also arise between those leading the revolution, for there are people who do not respect the limits of power and, taking maximum advantage of the situation they want to advance at the fastest possible rate. Others, however, think that moving at full speed, by aggressive or administrative means, endangers or wrecks future economic potentials of the revolution.

In this way such systems of direction developed which—in accordance with earlier ideological expectations and concrete historic circumstances—ordered enterprises to fulfil plan targets by means of and relying on the plan. Certain economic categories though, remained, but could not fulfil their function, therefore becoming reduced to a framework without meaning. Money continued to exist but mechanically followed the movement of

commodities as determined by plan directives. The role of prices in influencing production was not acknowledged and calculations became inconclusive because of previously decided structural decisions, the embargo and because of chronic shortages of foreign exchange. Investments goods and means of production also were distributed on the basis of central directives.

The economic leadership regarded the national economy as a single large-scale enterprise (or trust) and the methods applied were in conformity with this view. Under such conditions economic interests (material interestedness) could not become the chief instrument of guidance and the regime had recourse to administrative coercion, that is, to force, in order to achieve economic targets and for the sake of adequate action and behaviour.

It must be pointed out in all fairness that economic development became complicated not only because of social change and the unfavourable international background but also because of the well-known fact that socialism first came into power in countries which were less developed, in which the role and influence of agriculture were large, where the overwhelming majority of the population in fact earned its living in agriculture, and large-scale industry was relatively underdeveloped.

The new system realized a number of social reforms in spite of economic difficulties. Of the reforms let me primarily stress the ones which are in close connection with the idea of "quality of life" and with the scale of values of the new society. The right to work, that is, full employment, became effective right at the start. (Naturally without making work obligatory for everybody.) Equal rights for women, in respect to work, wages and salaries, in social and political life, made considerable headway. The right to study was made effective on all educational levels, irrespective of the financial situation of parents. The children of sections of society which had been at a disadvantage in the past enjoyed preferences. (A new school system of eight classes with subject teachers was established, complete with hostels at places situated far from cultural centres. Social control was tightened in secondary schools and matriculation was made easier for young people of worker and peasant origin.) It is known that inequalities deriving from the past can only be done away with by providing temporary preferences to the formerly oppressed classes. The structure of the student population, and of the intelligentsia, has radically changed adjusting itself to the needs of an industrialized society. (Higher number of engineers, economists and extended education in the natural sciences.) The right to medical care became fully effective, for a first-class network of public health service covering the entire country was established providing medical treatment free of charge to every citizen with particular attention to prevention.

Cultural values were held in high respect and were popularized at a fast rate; at a farther stage of development, the production of cultural values thrived. This was due, at the beginning, to the fact that the state shouldered great responsibilities in this field. Entertainment affording cultural experiences such as theatres, concerts, opera and books, became available at low cost. Thus, the "purchase of cultural goods" also became possible for people in lower income brackets. As a result a wide section of a new public has grown up in the course of two decades which, in addition to classics, has also shown great interest in modern works provided that the new culture interpreted social problems of our times in a realistic way—ironically or humorously—but not in set formulae. Returning to the sphere of the quality of life one might say that a public keenly interested in cultural values has grown up which—thanks to state subsidies—was able to disregard the "traditional hierarchy" of goods although many at the same time badly felt the lack of a car and even of a flat. (If the traditional hierarchy had continued all this would have taken place 20–25 years later.)

It logically follows from what has been said that the value rational system considerably strengthened in the first period and became attractive in many respects (in the field of culture, science, dissemination of knowledge and education) and was highly instrumental in keeping up equilibrium, because it compensated hundreds of thousands, nay, millions for the scarcity of material goods.

In the second period of development, however, the relationship between the aim rational and the value rational system, and together with it, the structure of the developed system, considerably changed. (Let me remark in parentheses that I use Max Weber's terminology for lack of a more appropriate term. Although these two systems in fact develop and function in every society, it is not right to rigidly contrast the two since, on the one hand, every theory of economics contains the concept of absolute value while, on the other, there is a great interdependence between the two systems except in the case of traditional societies. I shall have more to say about this interdependence at a later stage.)

1. The new system consolidates and strikes roots, and its fundamental norms are accepted, so to speak, unnoticed and by mutual understanding. As a result the methods of leadership and guidance, which developed at the phase of struggle and in times of uncertainty, become disputable.

2. The development of a value rational system on so broad a basis—which by the way is one of the finest features of the system—entails relatively high costs and requires increasing material means. However, only a prosperous and efficiently functioning economy can afford these means.

3. Since full employment has absorbed the overflow of labour, intensive methods (i.e. technical progress) have to be adopted in order to increase production, improve the structure of the economy, develop services and so on. The systems of guidance applied earlier have proved suitable (in spite of deficiencies) to boost extensive industrialization, to absorb the excess of agricultural manpower and to develop new industrial sectors but are unable to step up technical progress, develop a new economic structure, increase paying exports and so on.

4. In line with conditions becoming more consolidated, people (particularly the rising generation) confidently expect democratic ways to become more general and increasingly take a dislike to administrative methods. Hence, what is called "revolutionary violence" can rarely be applied, that is only in case of emergency.

5. As a result of the cultural revolution and of the new educational system, citizens become more and more exacting in every respect. They refuse to attend cultural performances they would have readily gone to formerly nor do they read books which they would have liked earlier.

6. The population's demands for durable consumer goods increases, people are getting pretentious and furnish their homes in a more refined taste, an increasing number of people own cars and so on. Hence, the pattern of industrial production must be adjusted to the more and more intricate consumer demand structure.

Such and similar problems emerge in every European socialist country—to a different degree though and assuming different forms. Therefore, every country needs or will need reforms allowing a freer scope to economic rationality. Although the nature of these reforms may differ dependent upon the size of a country, composition of the population, standard and problems of the economy as well as upon the greater or lesser weight of foreign trade, certain fundamental elements will—in my opinion—be indentical.

(a) These reforms must provide greater freedom of action for enterprises, on the basis of harmony and interrelatedness of plan and market (commodity and money relations).

(b) One must allow the rational behaviour of enterprises to be influenced by the economic ambience, that is, administrative methods must be reduced to a minimum.

(c) Economic rewards for both economic units and individuals leading to a direct interest in production, technological progress and in the marketing of products must be increased.

Forms and methods of a more differentiated distribution must be introduced in order to speed technological growth.

(d) A method must be worked out allowing for comparative calculations of various development alternatives, including economic criteria, on the basis of which one can choose between mechanization and manpower.

(e) The position of consumers and user firms as against producers must be strengthened.

(f) Rational economic categories such as money, prices, credit, interests, profit, etc. must be employed to an increasing extent in order to step up technological growth and structural change.

(g) More attention must be given to problems of equilibrium and/or questions related to investments, stockpiling, etc. which generally jeopardize equilibrium.

There is no doubt that the coming into being, working out and functioning of reforms in many respects clashes with the value rational system and with certain groups backing it, their considerations ranging from the political to the arts. These conflicts, which involve considerable social tension, are probably unavoidable. Governments must, therefore, try to overcome differences which arise between the two kinds of systems and additionally maintain social equilibrium. The postponement of reforms could produce problems more serious than the tensions caused by the reform.

One can choose between alternatives but implement only one in social life, and this refers to both politics and economics. Consequently, if one argued that the alternative which was not chosen or keeping the earlier situation, would have been preferable, one can only deny this in argument but cannot concretely point to the defects or failure of established practice. It should be kept in mind that in spite of conflicts which necessarily soon arise interests show themselves to be common in the long run, for, on the one hand, the economy requires an intelligent, well-trained, broad-minded labour force leading a wholesome life, and the value rational system on the other presupposes a well-functioning and efficient economy.

Of course, the functioning of the aim rational system as such also raises problems which—failing governmental measures—could conflict with the system of value of a socialist society. Incomes, for example, must be differentiated—as pointed out earlier; these differences, however, cannot overstep the limits considered permissible by socialist society. Therefore, in addition to creating new income sources, the state must skim off excess incomes, that is, taxes must be imposed: this is a new kind of task in a socialist society and economy. It is not enough to provide new sources of income for those who adapt themselves more efficiently and flexibly to the requirements of consumers or to the dynamically changing requirements of

external markets. Proper provision must also be made for those who spend many years of service with one and the same factory (loyalty bonus) or for those who by rallying their fellow workers further the growth of the team spirit in the community (socialist brigades).

European socialist countries therefore now face the task of strengthening the aim rational system for the sake of stepped up technological growth and higher efficiency in addition to maintaining and further developing the achievements of the value rational system.

Since Hungary has deliberately taken the road towards an intensification of the aim rational system, it introduced the new economic mechanism (system of guidance) on January 1, 1968; this caused a certain disquietude among supporters of the value rational system (including party and state executives, trade union officials, writers and artists) and became a subject of extensive debate.

Those concerned with political and social questions had scruples about the new way of life which, since it derived from the aim rational system, might undermine the public spirit, by "individualizing", that is making people selfish who may then become indifferent to their fellow-men. Writers and artists feared that cultural and artistic interests would decline in the age of the five-day week, week-end cottages, cars and pleasure trips abroad.

The answer to the first question is that forms of communal life have considerably changed—mainly under the influence of the young generation. These forms are looser, more informal and less regulated, in the view of older people at least, however, common experience, objectives, discussions, work and entertainment establish links today as well, through smaller collectives. Man today is attracted by intimacy and informality and looks for personal experience, he is more active, he is not a listener, as at meetings, he questions, argues and sometimes calls his debating partner to account; these forms of social living produce the kind of communal experience which satisfies man today.

My answer to the second question is that a truly attractive culture always finds new forms in its relationship with the masses. Young men of today possibly prefer clubs or the "underground theatre", however, the form should not be confused with the essence. In 1945–46 eminent Hungarian artists visited factories or went to the country in order to meet workers and peasants. Many people thought at that time that this was a forced gesture; it appeared, however, that actors established then and there human relations with their audience-to-be. It is certain that really valuable Hungarian and socialist culture will always find its way to people's hearts.

In further developing the notion of quality of life the increased competi-

tion (attractive consumption in pleasant surroundings) has to be taken into account. I for one firmly believe that economics and the system of value get on well together. Economics provides a life worthy of man, a life worth living for an increasing number of people. The system of values allows us to enjoy all the beauties of the world, not least that of our own inner life while the going is good, and to fight tooth and nail for our country and political convictions when this proves necessary. These are the two attitudes towards life which, as the century grows to a close, are indispensable for humanism and for the integrity of the human personality.

III

The nations of the Third World face the problems of the quality of life under peculiar conditions determined in many respects by their past. A system of value plays a very important role in taking a stand on issues such as national independence or the lack of it, forming an opinion on enclaves and enterprises within the domestic economy, the character of social reforms which makes economic development possible, the role of traditional institutions, culture and the vernacular and judgements passed on the quality of the way of life.

I do not want to overtax the patience of the reader by entering into particulars and, besides, the above subject would require a separate study.

Let me, however, point out some important interconnections:

1. Seen from a historical point of view, it appears that although national independence is not an ultimate object or an exclusive aim, peoples and nations consider it a value in itself and it is therefore well worth while making great sacrifices in order to achieve it. In this respect nations are inclined to fall into two kinds of error: (a) they continue with nineteenth-century ways of thought while living in an interdependent world where truly fantastic means of communication are available, and (b) they tend to interpret international co-operation in such a way that the stronger party—stronger from both a military and an economic point of view—dictates to the weaker party; if this takes place the real content of independence is reduced to nil.

2. Independence is not only a political concept but also an economic one. In addition to a country's right to dispose freely of its natural resources and to determine trends of internal economic development in a sovereign way, it is entitled to obtain the material advantages in international trade as the countries with which it bargains do. The latter requirement cannot be realized to the full while there are considerable differences between tech-

nological standards but can be gradually approximated if the more developed partner sees reason; otherwise colonialism, which is politically drawing to an end, will come to life again in the economic field.

3. In addition to achieving and consolidating national independence, the main aim is to step up economic growth. Hence social reforms are needed which liberate new energies in the interest of economic development and fairly equally distribute the burdens and advantages of economic growth between various classes, sections, nationalities and tribes.

4. In working out the notion of development expedient methods must be found which provide employment for a growing proportion of those of working age in spite of increases in population. Work-intensive industries must be developed the products of which are of the same quality as or preferably of a better quality than those of large-scale industry, allowing workmen to acquire special know-how which they can subsequently turn to account in large-scale industry. In those countries the right to work has to be interpreted in this sense for the time being since means, investment possibilities and technological-organizational experience are not available for the total mobilization of the labour force.

5. Comprehensive educational reforms are needed ranging from lower grade teaching to university education.

6. Most of these countries have inherited great cultural traditions. As a result of awakening consciousness, which increases with the progress of time, the peoples of Latin America will be able to preserve their culture of European—mainly Spanish–Portuguese—origin mixed with Indian elements and even to add new values.

In Asia inherited culture is particularly deep and varied and radically differs from the European one; the nations of Asia will certainly be able to achieve what Japan once aimed at: acquiring technology from the Barbarians (i.e. from the Europeans), while preserving their higher moral standards ("Samurai in spirit but businessmen in talent"). The Arab nations, having created a culture of their own (philosophy and religion included) are able to enrich it owing to increased national consciousness.

In Black Africa culture has not yet become separated from the way of life and those producing culture are not only and particularly not in the first place "professional" artists, writers or poets. This way of life imbued with culture—to which more and more conscious works of art are added—is sufficiently attractive to be able to influence others and to continue to develop.

7. It should, however, be stressed that certain attractive elements of the inherited cultures and ways of life derive from a traditional society or feudal-

agrarian conditions. Certain refinements of social intercourse, for example, can be attributed to the fact that time is not of value in traditional and feudal society. In an industrializing society, however, time will gain importance and, consequently, certain beautiful aspects of the ancient style of living will in fact disappear. This, however, happens whenever an agricultural society becomes transformed into an industrial one. The mode of life of an American plantation owner of the South was—judging by literary evidences—more enjoyable than that of an entrepreneur in the North, however, slavery was the condition of this kind of delightful and brilliant way of life.

Traditional society has kept certain fine features capitalism has completely wiped out in Europe. In this traditional society, however, people live in destitution and hundreds of thousands die of starvation.

The primary aim is to bring about material conditions worthy of man; accordingly, only those elements of beauty in traditional society can survive which are able to adapt themselves to the requirements of economic growth.

Most people cannot make a distinction between national (continental) traditions, on the one hand, and ways of thinking and behaviour patterns as produced by the conditions of a given society, on the other.

8. Thus, when rational economic thinking is introduced in developing countries, great care must be given to factors of the value system such as equality, the right to work and to study and social justice, and all values deriving from their culture as well as the beauty and attraction of their way of life must be preserved and further developed—provided they are reconcilable with the requirements of social and economic growth.

The situation of developing countries is particularly complex since they have to go through several historical periods concurrently. It is, one might say, the rule in late development that, thanks to knowledge and information acquired in an interdependent world by perfected means of communication, the masses require the realization and achievement of all that took generations in other countries. One has, therefore, to face the fact that developing countries want to enjoy elements of the system of value such as equality, the right to work and to study, a satisfactory health service and so on at once without first waiting for suitable economic conditions, that is, at a time when national income is still very low, and possibilities for accumulation are limited, the balance of payments shows a deficit and inflation is rampant. It can, therefore, be assumed that conflicts will arise between the above elements of the value system and the requirements of economic rationality. Achievements of a major social reform are generally followed by an absence of equilibrium and at this juncture governments take over which—in order to re-establish equilibrium—prevent reforms for a time and check a further

growth in consumption. Experience shows that military regimes are better suited to perform such unpopular tasks which can be carried out by force only.

Other elements of the quality of life—related to culture, way of life, dissemination of knowledge and so on—can, of course, proceed in both periods and make their effect felt not only in the countries concerned but also in the outside world. These factors will be present in the life of every country and each continent as factors shaping knowledge, habits, mentality and fashion.

Conclusion

The idea of a quality of life, mentioned earlier, is not a fundamentally new idea or philosophy. Many scholars were concerned with it from classics to Max Weber and to the supporters of "welfare economies"—although the question comes up in a different form in our days. Marx and Engels and, subsequently, Kautsky also dealt with this question going into it from another class viewpoint and, in the course of concrete development, socialist societies made various attempts to reconcile the requirements of a value rational and an aim rational system.

It is probable that developing countries will have to continue these attempts—approaching them from another historical point of view, based on another social structure, and in a more interdependent world.

Although the philosophical notion is not a recent one, its present forms essentially differ from those in the past. The novelty of its present form manifests itself in that the pressure the masses exert in the interests of the value system has considerably intensified and that there are new power factors, such as the rising generation and the Third World, supporting it. On the other hand, this philosophical notion comes to the fore in an interdependent world (earlier world history consisted of parallel rather than interdependent processes) in which three worlds exercise mutual influence on each other while the technological and scientific revolution, advancing at an unprecedented rate, influences all three worlds.

The aim of the present study was to point out that one and the same impulse has very different effects on each of the three worlds. Since identical impulses exert very dissimilar effects in different media, I for my part do not believe in the convergence theory. This theory furthermore contains a highly obsolete element, the supposition that only systems approximating each other can coexist and cooperate. It follows, explicitly or implicitly,

that non-converging systems are not able to co-operate. This idea, however, is absolutely untenable in the world of today in which the number of contradictions and differences one can perceive and notice has increased, because for one thing, many more nations and states have become involved in the current of world politics. It is probable that formerly there were just as many differences and contradictions these, however, were only reputed or understood in part only, since we considered our world "natural" and "normal" while that of others seemed to be a sort of peculiarity. However, in the eyes of an African, Europe is no less an oddity than Africa is in the eyes of a European! Both Europeans and Africans are, therefore, compelled to come into contact with so many strange practices that, when all is said and done, peculiarities outnumber "natural matters". Peculiarities, however, also depend on frequency of occurrence; peculiarities which turn up continually are no longer peculiarities but alternatives or simply a system of ideas and actions different from ours.

If we want to coexist and cooperate with others in the interest of peace and development we must learn to respect differences inherent in heterogeneous nations.

On this shrinking planet of ours, cooperation is imaginable in this way only since the technological revolution making headway at an increasingly fast rate and interdependent world politics as well raise identical questions addressed to all of us and our answers and the decisions we make also influence the other partner compelling him also to make his decisions.

This is the only international and human attitude which enables us to coexist and cooperate.

Only by adopting this attitude can we develop a system of conduct and action providing a solution to problems related to the quality of life. If we realize that there are three worlds but one planet only and that fundamental differences cannot be settled independently of each other, then we shall be able not only to meet the challenge of the quality of life, but also to surmount the obstacles put in our way by the complexities of our age and by development progressing at an unheard-of speed.

HELSINKI—
PRELUDE TO EUROPE

by

IVÁN BOLDIZSÁR

I

The Congress of Vienna danced, the Helsinki Conference sailed. On board too it mainly deliberated, adjusted points of view, and smoothed the final texts. It was the last night before the closing meeting. True, it also danced, after midnight the bands struck up on the decks and saloons of the good ship Alaavo, which was all-white and Finnish, and the first European Conference of Ministers of Culture, after making mutual concessions, looking for that which linked us all, raised a leg.

The Conference danced, but I can't say it did so till dawn since *one* of the purposes of the sailing trip was precisely that there was no dawn to end that night. It was Midsummer Day's Eve, that is Midsummer Night, the longest day of the year, and the shortest night, a traditional folk-feast of the Finns, going back, they say, to the days of the Kalevala. Shops and offices are closed, factories are shut down, men and women amble around all day and carouse, at night they dance, lighting bonfires on the shores of the islands which they leap across in the midst of ancient rounds and carolling. Around midnight the sun drops beneath the horizon over the sea for a minute or two, but it is soon up again, burning bright red, looking cheerful. The Finns say it laughs, seeing what people do that night. "Night" very much in inverted commas, in this case, since it does not get really dark even for a moment.

At the Captain's table, being the Chairman of one of the two Committees of the Conference that is where I sat, after a few shots of Finnish vodka and of the sweet, but strong "lakka" liqueur, we all agreed what a good idea it was to convene the first European Intergovernmental Conference precisely at this season and how right President Kekkonen was in his

opening speech when he said it was a good omen that we were deliberating at a time of the year when there is no night. On the first day we all thought this a neat rhetorical trope, here on the ship, in a Midsummer mood, shortly before the end of the meeting, the general consensus was that the Ministers of Culture of Europe and the writers, artists and philosophers who had sat in conference with them, had fought the shades of the European night, already in retreat all spring.

I spoke of one of the purposes of the nightly sailing trip, the other, more important one was for the ministers and other delegates to talk over their anxieties once again, and all that had been achieved, locked into one place, but in pleasant circumstances. This conference turned out to be more than it had started out to be, thanks to the changes in the European political climate, and that though what it had set out to be was also novel and important.

2

Inter-Governmental Conference on European Cultural Policies, that was the official name of the Helsinki Conference. In the press and on the air they said Eurocult for short, but nobody called it that on the spot. Its essence and meaning was that European countries discussed questions of cultural policy and cultural cooperation. The notion of cultural policy, as well as the practice, has been something selfevident in Hungary and the other socialist countries for some decades now. It is part of public life and, as mediated by books, theatres, films, art-exhibitions, writer-reader meetings, schools, museums, houses of culture and cultural clubs, choirs, friends of literature societies and other channels, also part of each and everyone's private life. It does not occur to anyone in Hungary to dispute that culture is a public matter, for the very reason that this is part of the finest national traditions. Literature and the theatre have always been a national cause in Hungary, in the course of history the Hungarian language has been not only the nation's beloved mother-tongue, but also its power stronghold. The Hungarian nation has survived the storms and tests of centuries, and there has always been a Hungarian state since its foundation, and that can be explained by the fact the nation has preserved its language, music, songs, style and all they express, in other words its culture. It owes this largely to the written word, to literature, to poets and writers, to sum up once again: to culture.

The tone of these sentences makes it obvious that this is not as natural for every European country, not to mention more distant continents. That

is why Unesco convened the August 1970 Venice Conference which has since become famous, and which is mentioned as a source. The Minister of Culture of every country on the globe was invited, the aim being a discussion of the democratization of culture as an objective and as a possibility. The word Venice which has stood for art and beauty, the harmony of architecture and decoration, for a refined life rich in every meaning of the term, was now enriched by an added meaning. That is where the representatives of every country on earth first declared that culture belongs to everybody, that culture was a basic human right and that it is therefore the duty, I am quoting the principal Venice resolution, of all the states, to formulate and carry out a clear and coherent cultural policy.

What this Venice also implicibly declared was that the Hungarian view, and generally that of socialist societies on the relationship of art and literature, and the state and the public, that is the nation, is basically sound. Of course every country must implement this according to its own traditions and requirements, perhaps I should again say its style, since this is the only way this can be done. That is why Unesco decided that practical ways and means of this great cultural basic principle should be discussed and submitted as a recommendation to member states by separate European, Asian, African and American regional conferences. The European one was the first, that is why the minister led delegations of thirty countries and the representatives of numerous international cultural organizations, covering the theatre, art, films, libraries and cultural administration, assembled in the capital of Finland at the end of June. Not only politicians and officials acted as delegates of individual countries, but also critics and historians of literature, newspapermen, columnists, sociologists, psychologists, librarians, museologists, cultural administrators and "animateurs", and writers in the first place. The Chairman of the Conference, Mr Pentti Holappa, the Finnish Minister of Education and Culture, is one of the most important contemporary poets and writers, the translator of the French *nouveau roman*. I specially mention this since Eugène Ionesco, the writer of absurd dramas and member of the French Academy, rushed into the Conference on the day before the last one, like a rhinoceros into the china shop, and at a press conference, as the representative of French Television, and totally uninformed of the attitude so far of the Conference, and its composition, declared that the deliberations were worth nought since there were no writers present. The functionary was the writer's mortal enemy, and vice versa, he said, the purpose of the Conference was to tie the hands of writers and put obstacles in the way of the freedom of expression. Ionesco unfortunately repeated all this in *Le Monde*, carefully noting at the end that none of it referred to

Monsieur Duhamel the French Minister of Culture. Thus Ionesco showed that he could write not only absurd plays but also absurd articles.

In fact one could interpret this Conference of the cultural policies and cooperation plans of the countries of Europe also as one of the consequences of Ionesco's activities as a writer. I told him so at that press-conference since, against my will, I got involved in argument with him also over that peculiar problem of who loved Hungary more, he or I. I finally said that Ionesco was himself involved in this Helsinki conference since his *Bald Primadonna* had helped to make the European theatre public aware of an illness of our age, incommunicability. One of the reasons for convening the Conference had been a desire to facilitate communication between the nations of Europe.

The Venice meeting had started this work, in a world wide sense fighting the lack of communication in all five continents. Venice declared cultural policy to be a duty but it did not declare, because it could not, what cultural policy is, it could not even consider touching any such thing as a definition of the notion of culture. Helsinki, in this respect, offered a great and pleasant surprise to the Hungarian delegation. The working paper prepared by Unesco as well as the draft resolutions submitted by a great many Western European countries recommended to the Conference as a great novelty, that a wider definition be given to culture, it ought to mean more than an accumulation of works and knowledge for the privileged. In other words they recommended something that every clever fourteen year old schoolboy knows in Hungary. Part of Pál Ilku's, the Hungarian Minister of Culture's, address which surprised the western delegates referred to this. He said: "That wider interpretation of culture which means in essence that we speak of a new dimension of culture, has not been a novelty or a new idea in Hungary for these twenty-five years. We naturally do not reject that older definition of culture which looks to knowledge as its basis, but we do not merely reject on principle that this knowledge should be the privilege of a few, we have also legislated where necessary. We are not satisfied with taking those aspects of culture which can be learnt to everybody, we have accepted and put into practice an interpretation of culture which is new to many and which is in fact the essence of socialist cultural policy: that *culture is a way of life.*"

The Hungarian delegation naturally did not argue that every objective of cultural policy has already been realized in Hungary, but the recognition of culture as the framework of life, and of art and literature as one of its meanings, turned the deliberations of the Conference as a whole in the right direction.

The agenda of the Helsinki conference was such that it became a methodical collection of all the anxieties, opportunities, demands, doubts and proposals affecting European culture. The agenda had its starting point in the prevailing situation: every minister reported on the extent, position and problems of cultural activity in his own country. All those ministers who spoke for forty minutes fought for a cause that was lost from the start, the delegates went out and had a smoke in the corridors and lobbies of Finlandia House which is a miracle of modern architecture. The Hungarian address took fourteen minutes but it concluded with a sentence which found its way into the text of the Conference resolutions: "Our aim is not a consumer society but a society of culture."

The second point of the agenda expressed the aim of Eurocult as it were as a slogan: "Larger access to and participation in culture." In other words the democratization of culture. Gábor Vályi, the Chief Parliamentary Librarian spoke to this point and said, basing his argument on Hungarian experience and Hungarian achievements, that a larger access to and participation in culture depend on the trilateral relationship of the state, the creative artists and the public. The practice of Hungarian cultural policy derives from this recognition: the relationship between the state, the creative artists and the public is permanent and mutual as regards initiative, as well as in implementation, and criticism.

A special committee dealt with the problem of innovation in culture. Innovation here primarily refers to the speedy and immeasurable advance of television, but we also spent a great deal of time discussing the role of radio and the relationship of culture and the human environment. The first person plural here refers to the fact that right in the first half hour, I really went for the pessimism of a large number of the committee members. Most of them spoke of the dangers of watching television, deploring especially that the box taught viewers to be passive, dumb and indolent as regards culture. I did not deny the danger, but I insisted that the revolutionary nature of the mass media was to be found precisely in the fact that they could induce the widest possible public to participate and join in actively.

I referred to two programmes of Hungarian Television by way of example, one in the field of art, the other in that of politics. The art one is called *Fly Peacock*, these two words are the first line of an old Hungarian folk-song. This programme is characteristic of the new relationship between television and the public, and of its potentialities, in three respects. The first is that

of television as the organizer of cultural activity. Television executives thought of organizing a folk-song collecting and performing competition, making use of the publicity which television afforded, and the keenness of most people to appear on television. Many had their doubts when they first heard of this plan, and it certainly sounded unlikely at first hearing that an unpublished old folk-song or original peasant melody could still be found in the country of Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály, where the Hungarian Academy of Sciences maintains a folk-song collecting group, consisting of well trained and outstanding experts, many of whom are Bartók's and Kodály's disciples.

The result surpassed all expectations and surprised the television people, the ethnographers and musicologists, and also the public. They were surprised by the extent of the participation and the public interest shown, and by the large number of unknown folk-songs and their variants. Hungarian Television, with the cooperation of houses and clubs of culture, first arranged preliminary heats in every village and urban district, and later riding, which were not broadcast, semi-finals were held in county seats, in the town theatre, already in front of the cameras.

That was when the second type of connection was established. Someone in charge led the community singing, by the end of the performance the whole audience had learnt the text and the tune. That particular kind of participation actually went a step further, in numerous families, or other places where they watched television in company, in schools, in houses of culture, in trades union homes of rest and recreation during the summer months, the viewers also joined in the community singing at the end, wherever they were. In this way a passive television audience was turned into active participants in cultural action.

The third type of relationship between television and the public started after the conclusion of the *Fly Peacock* programme, it has been going on ever since, it is in its third year now, growing all the time. The success of the programme encouraged the television executives and the Ministry of Culture and Education to organize *Fly Peacock Clubs* in villages and urban districts. Their activities naturally include the search for and preservation of folk songs and other folk traditions, but also a viewing in common of the best television programmes. They are therefore concurrently television clubs. In this way television turned out to be the initiator and organizer of a significant cultural activity.

The political programme to which reference was made is called *Forum*. Its essence is that, once every two or three months, an important political, social, cultural or economic question is discussed by a panel consisting of

responsible politicians, public servants and scientists and other experts familiar with the issue concerned. They face the cameras and answer questions put to them by journalists who are also present, or by the public, either submitted in advance or 'phoned in during the running of the programme. What I should like to emphasize in this connection is not the political significance of this programme but a new aspect of contact with the public. It is clear that one cannot give detailed answers to every question in the hour and a half to two hours of the programme. Television however collects all the questions and these are regularily and thoroughly answered in the columns of dailies and weeklies, though this sometimes takes many weeks. This is another way in which the passivity of television viewers is overcome and transformed into cultural and political activity.

In order to make sure that television does not lead to a blunting of the intellectual faculties but to active participation, cultural policy, that is the state, must arouse demand and educate taste. I dealt with the demand arousing and taste educating policy of Hungarian radio and television, mentioning that there are programmes which broadcast pieces of higher value and those that are more easily digested in close conjunction, that more complex works are often performed by "public favourites", and that this or that serious piece of music is often given the "pop-treatment", it is performed on a number of occasions in quick succession, and that the step by step reception of cultural policy is part of programme policy, teaching the public, that is trying to teach the public, the key to the system of symbols of art, to enjoy art while understanding it, and to participate in intellectual life in an active way.

In the discussion I called arousing demand and educating taste, these tasks that have to be carried out by society and the state, "teaching the electronic ABC". Which sounds better in French-Unescolese: *alphabétisation électronique*. If someone thought of setting up my marble bust in Unesco I could say, varying the last century Hungarian poet Eötvös somewhat, who happened to be a cultural politician as well, let the victory of my ideas or at least my words be my memorial instead: this not particularily witty expression was finally taken over and used by many.

A special committee also dealt with "the role of writers and artists in contemporary European societies", also a point on the agenda. Professor Péter Nagy of Budapest University spoke on behalf of Hungary. He linked the notion of a changed public to the synthesis of artistic commitment and responsibility and creative freedom. It aroused considerable interest, particularily amongst Western writers, when he said that in Hungary it is artists and writers, who determine in the first place who is to be considered

an artist or a writer. This was an essential point in the discussion since at the Helsinki Conference, both in plenary session and in the committees, the problem of defining culture, and of defining who is an artist or writer, popped up again and again. There was no resolution in this respect, but the Hungarian position was generally taken to heart.

Antal Gönyei, Senior Section Head in the Ministry of Education and Culture was the Hungarian participant in the discussion on cultural administrators and "animateurs", this can be studied at Hungarian universities, and this fact was taken note of amidst a general show of interest. Professor Roy Shaw from Britain said that Western countries had a great deal to learn from those of Eastern Europe as regards homes of culture and cultural clubs, and ways of establishing contact between artists and the widest possible masses.

Finally the Helsinki Conference agreed with Madame Furtzeva, the Soviet Minister of Culture who said that views on the role of writers and artists differ in various European countries, but every creative artist agrees on one thing, and that is respect for human values and a longing for a world free of war and violence.

Following a discussion the committee unanimously agreed that it is hard if not impossible to imagine a writer or artist in Europe today who makes a break with society, withdrawing into the contemporary ivory tower, a week-end cottage on the shores of a lake or on the coast. The Helsinki Conference declared that an artist today cannot be divided from that socio-political soil from which he derives and which gives him nourishment. No earlier international meeting has ever gone as far as this as regards the social commitment of the artist and his responsibility to the public.

Being the chairman of this Committee, I had to give the closing address. I spoke of Europe and the Hungarians, I said that in Hungary the European idea did not mean isolation but an opening to quality. In Hungarian the term European denotes quality. It expresses something in plus, more humanity, more culture, but not as a comparison with other continents, with ancient cultures and present intellectual efforts of Africa, Asia and America, but as against philistinism and parochialism and barbarity. When in 1936, in the years of Hitlerist inhumanity, Thomas Mann visited Budapest, a Hungarian poet whose name is becoming known throughout Europe now, Attila József, welcomed him as a "European."

The point of the agenda which I left till last, because it is the most important, was "The basis and prospects of wider cultural cooperation in Europe". The socialist countries prepared a long, thoroughly worked out and circumspect joint draft resolution. It emphasized the need for European cultural cooperation, it argued that a stand must be taken, with the aid of culture, against all those who wish to spread violence and aggression, and supported all efforts towards ensuring that a climate of security and cooperation prevailed in Europe. The important suggestions regarding a "golden fund" of European literature made by the Hungarian delegation had their place in this joint proposal, that is a series of books that contained its most important values, and which was to be translated into every language, as did European art and literature prizes which were to be established, support for music research, the declaration of 1974 as the year of "European cultural cooperation", and a rethinking and elaboration, as a common European task, of the problem of the relationship of youth and culture. László Orbán, First Deputy-Minister of Culture spoke in this discussion and told of the democratic openness with which Hungary was ready to receive everything that stood for humanism that Europe had to say, every valuable work that served peace and international cooperation.

There was a genuine debate on this point since the acceptance of the joint draft resolution of the socialist countries met with certain transitory difficulties. What the resolution aimed to do was to go beyond obvious common enterprises, and link the principle and practice of European cultural cooperation with general progress in Europe and the détente, that is with the preparation of the European Conference on Security and Cooperation.

One had to argue a great deal and make more than one mutual concession until this was accepted by some of the western European delegations. This was also the principal subject of that midnight nautical conclave. Finally the sort of unanimously accepted resolution was produced which left the proposal of the socialist delegations unmutilated in matters of principle and yet in a European spirit, paid due regard to the views and proposals of other countries as well. The resolution welcomed the initiative taken to convene a Conference on European Security and Cooperation and recommended to the governments of the countries of Europe that "the achievements of the Helsinki Conference be taken note of at the European Conference on Security and Cooperation."

The "spirit of Venice" was frequently mentioned two years ago, that intention to cooperate which was typical of the Venice meeting. René

Maheu the Director-General of Unesco spoke of this spirit at the opening of the Helsinki Conference. At the closing session, Pentti Holappa, the Minister of Culture of Finland coined the expression "the promise of Helsinki".

Helsinki is truly more than a promise. It is the first unanimously accepted common resolution of European countries at governmental level and it promises much for the future. In this way it points beyond the Helsinki Conference itself, and has therefore become much more than it started out to be.

GYÖRGY DÓZSA AND THE 1514 PEASANT WAR

by

ISTVÁN NEMESKÜRTY

The crisis in European feudalism in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which led to peasant revolts throughout the continent, also extended to Hungary. The Hungarian peasant war of 1514, however, had started as a crusade against the Turks, and consequently the demands of the peasants were voiced by an army that had originally been organised by the ruling class for military purposes: the case is unique of its kind and therefore merits the attention of non-Hungarian readers.

The New Cambridge Modern History (Cambridge University Press, 1968) described the crisis of feudalism as follows:

"In the field of agrarian economy ... the soil (the right, that is, to dispose of it) carries great social and political importance. After all, the soil is not only an economic medium, a factor of production; it is also man's living space. This dominion over the soil always involves in some way dominion over the people who live on it ... In the centuries commonly called the age of feudalism, this social and political significance was particulary marked... The governing classes sought their material foundation in landed property, the degree to which the lands were directly exploited by these lords being of secondary importance. The rents and labour services of a tenurial peasantry formed the income of the governing classes, in kind or in money: and this determined the agrarian structure of the age... Social and economic changes came to a particular point in the transition from the so-called Middle Ages to so-called modern times, in the centuries from the fourteenth to the sixteenth. The time was full of fundamental changes both in agrarian society and in agrarian economy. One of the decisive lines of development, which ran through all these centuries and in a way culminated in the fifteenth, was the winning of personal freedom even by those peasants who had not originally possessed it."

In Hungary, however, this change never occurred: the peasants who cultivated the land for the owner never acquired their personal freedom—and therefore in 1514 Hungarian peasants could still not be described as copyholders—villeins who had won their freedom. Theoretically they were free to move, to change their place of abode if they disliked living on a particular landlord's estate, but in practice they were still serfs.

The Cambridge History continues:

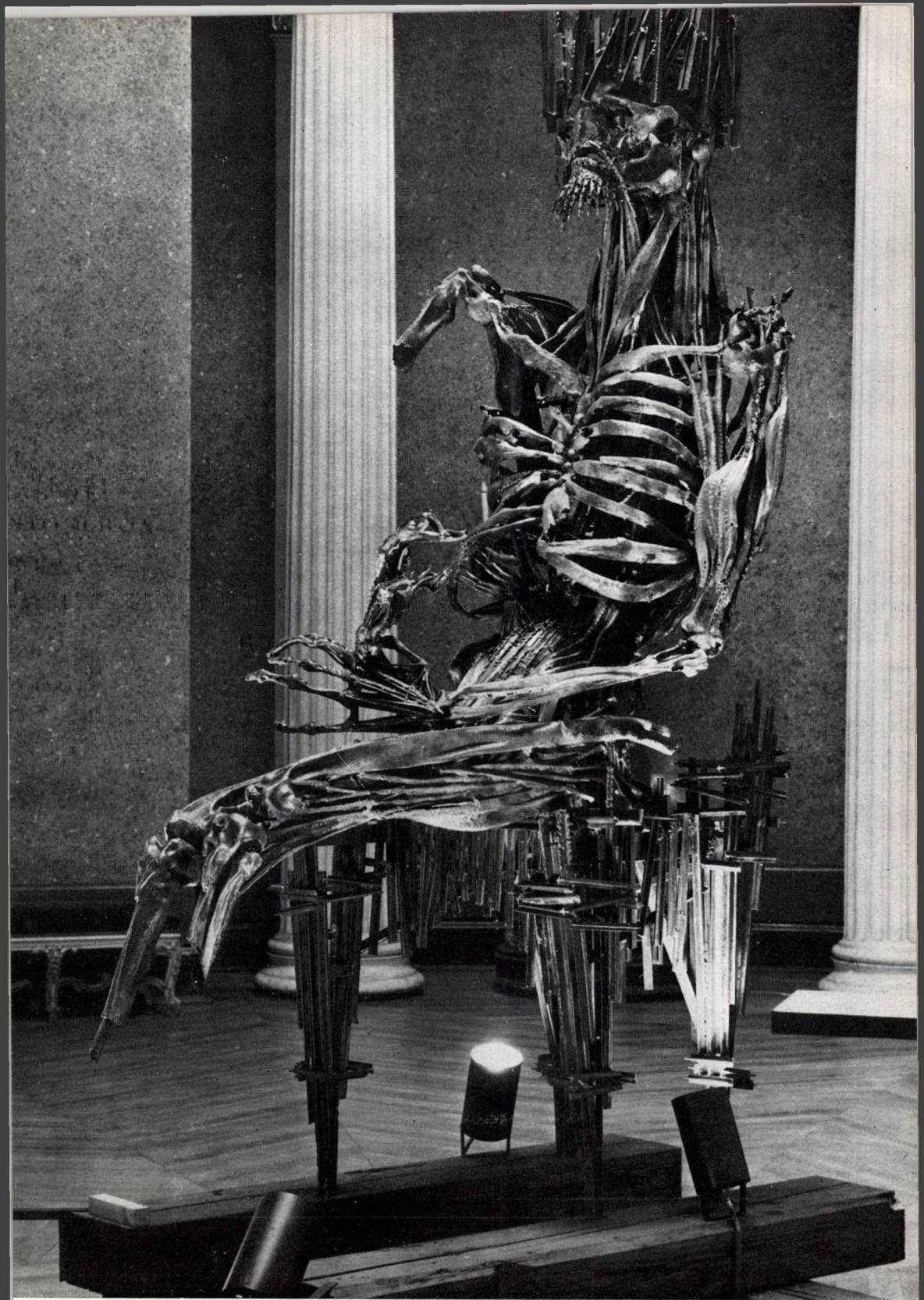
"The peasants thus became bound to the soil and could leave the estate only with their lord's permission; peasants' sons might be forced to take over a given vacant holding; and so on. The servile relationship which developed in this manner is commonly described as hereditary or real service—real because in his person the peasant was free, and the burden of bondage rested on the holding or on the tenant for time being. The economic foundation of all this lay in the easy markets for agrarian produce, especially grain, in the West European and West German markets..." *(New Cambridge Modern History, II. pp. 23–25, 36, 88.)*

In 1514 the Hungarian peasant demanded to be recognized as at least a copyholder who worked as a tenant on the lord's estate: he claimed the right to buy the land he cultivated if he wished, and to bequeath it to his descendants, and to preserve his right to free movement, still existing in principle but in practice abolished since 1496 or thereabouts. As Erik Molnár, the Hungarian historian, put it in a volume published in 1949, entitled *A magyar társadalom története az Árpád-kortól Mohácsig* (History of Hungarian Society from the Árpáds to Mohács):

"The clash in the peasant revolt was between the two basic feudal classes, the nobility and the peasantry. Both classes included a group which combined the general interests of their class with socially progressive attitudes. Within the nobility this group was represented by the lesser nobility, owning medium-size estates: within the peasantry by the wealthier peasants. But the lesser nobles were progressive only within the limits of feudal society as a whole, vis-à-vis the great barons and the dignitaries of the Church. Better-off peasants, on the contrary, represented progress against the whole of feudal society."

The Hungarian peasants consequently did not resort to arms on account of poverty, hunger or extreme deprivation, the struggle was not waged for mere survival; it was as a result of the natural development of history that the peasants claimed their share of power, or at least the same human rights as the nobility, the clergy and the burghers of the towns. They wanted to enjoy the fruits of their labour, to dispose freely of their small possessions; they were no longer prepared to tolerate restrictions on their freedom of

Woodcut. Illustration to Taurinus: Peasant Wars, 1519



TIBOR SZERVATIUS: THE DEATH OF DÓZSA (BRONZE, 1971) *Photos: István Petrás*

GYULA DERKOVITS: DÓZSA ON THE FIERY IRON THRONE (50 × 44 CMS, WOODCUT, 1929)

Photos: István Petrás

movement. Documents of the time make it clear that the peasants who avenged their grievances on landlords and bishops were wealthy men. One of them complained that the landowner's retainers had dispersed and decimated his herd of cattle as it was being taken to the market in Pest. This man—a soldier in the peasant insurgent army—had gone to Pest to sell several hundred or even thousand cattle which were his own property! This equally explains why many of the lesser nobles joined in the insurrection, and some of them even provided soldiers under their command, weapons and guns from their own estates: although they were technically noblemen the greater barons exploited them much as they exploited the peasants. Their theoretical freedom was worth little or nothing, and the few serfs who lived and worked on their land were frequently seized or taken over by the magnates.

Another slight but not insignificant impulse which inevitably led to an attempt to settle the question by swift and violent means, i.e. insurrection was the growing confusion in the rights of ownership of parts of the great estates. This was because the royal deeds of gift, which were a certificate of ownership, were so often forged that it was almost impossible to know who was the real owner of any given piece of land at any given time. A resolution of the Diet passed at the end of the fifteenth century had vainly laid down special regulations against the priests and scribes in monasteries where documents were deposited who forged deeds of gift for money. So when it was recorded that hundreds of manors were burnt by the peasants in the 1514 revolt we have to realize that the insurgents did not fire them from sheer vandalism, nor did the soldiers kill the inhabitants; their purpose was to destroy the records. The rebels in general fought in a purposeful and methodical manner; their plans were carefully considered, they avoided unnecessary bloodshed, and they were entitled to hope that they would achieve certain aims, all the more as the English peasants had achieved the same aims a century earlier, and as they never abjured their loyalty to the king; even in their most desperate and hopeless hours they had stressed that they recognized him as their lawful king and his son as the heir to the throne. They were simply fighting for their former rights, for their quality as human beings vis-à-vis the nobles, who in fact also opposed the king, the central power, and were thus the enemies of the king, and even of the Pope, for although they had never been consecrated as clerics many of them held high office in the Church as laymen.

The Proclamation of the Crusade

The restless peasant masses in Hungary were already ripe for action when Pope Leo X., who ascended the Papal throne in 1513, proclaimed the crusade against the Turks. People in Hungary suspected that Leo X. proclaimed this crusade in order to rid himself as speedily as possible of his "rival", Tamás Bakócz, Cardinal and Archbishop of Esztergom, who had received eight votes in the first round of the Papal elections. He was also Lord Chancellor of the Kingdom of Hungary, that is to say, the head of the Hungarian Government. We can, however, safely assume that, on the contrary, Leo X. was serious in proclaming the crusade. Italy was already being threatened by the expanding power of the Turks, who raided the coastal towns of Southern Italy from time to time, harassed the movement of ships in the Mediterranean, had occupied most of Dalmatia and were proving a serious danger to Hungary. There was another fact, never before stressed, which shows that Leo's crusading zeal was genuine: his choice of a name on ascending the Papal throne. This Medici prince chose a name which had not been in fashion for centuries—the last Pope who choose the name of Leo had been a former German count who had occupied the Papal throne from 1049 to 1054, some five hundred years previously, the great Saint Leo I. had succeeded in driving the pagan armies of Attila from Europe. The new Pope, immediately after his election, ordered Raphael to paint this *scene;* the fresco is in a *stanza* of the Vatican Palace. Raphael, obviously in compliance with a Papal request, gave his portrait of Leo I. a striking likeness to Leo X. Leo X. thus considered it was his mission to prevent any further expansion of the Turkish empire in Europe: on April 27th 1513 he mandated Simon, Bishop of Modrus, to deliver a sermon against the Turks: this Croatian bishopric was part of the Kingdom of Hungary at the time.

Cardinal Bakócz was appointed Papal Legate between July 15th and 17th: the powers assigned him were remarkably extensive. He was empowered to raise a crusading army, and for this purpose to levy taxes within the territories of Hungary, Bohemia, Silesia, Poland, Prussia, Livonia, Lithuania, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Since the commander-in-chief of the crusading army was nominally the Pope himself, Cardinal Bakócz as the Papal Legate was endowed with authority to appoint the military leaders, and organise an army all over Northern, Central and Eastern Europe without reference to the secular rulers of these territories. A similar crusade in the middle of the fifteenth century had once before been successful: János Hunyadi, the Hungarian leader of a mercenary army, had acquired so

much prestige with his expeditions against the Turks, which also possessed the character of crusades, that he was as respected as a king and his son, Mathias (Corvinus) Hunyadi, in fact became King of Hungary. Hence Pope Leo X. had some justification for believing that Turkish expansion could be checked by military action.

This Papal decision came at just the right moment for Bakócz. The King of Hungary and Bohemia at the time was Wladislaw, a Polish prince of the Jagiello line whose younger brother reigned over Poland: in 1513–14 Hungary had no organized army. Hungary, which was no more than a province of a Polish–Lithuanian dynasty intent on conquest, and where power was concentrated in the hands of twenty-nine great magnate families, was on the verge of political disintegration. Bakócz, their avowed enemy, now ruled over an army with which he could hold in check not only the Turks, but also the great magnates in opposition to the central power.

Thus Bakócz forced his will through against the opposition of several of the great magnates in the meeting of the Royal Council, and in March 1514 the crusade was proclaimed. The Franciscan order was charged with the duty of proclaiming it, organising it, and popularizing among the people. The Franciscans, who preached to the people in their own language and had taken vows of poverty, were extremely popular in the country. If Bakócz had considered this order of the Pope as merely a pretext, he would hardly have worked with such enthusiasm for its rapid implementation. In April 1514 several thousand volunteers had already arrived in the camps in Pest and episcopal centres. It was largely due to the energetic work of organization on the part of the Franciscans that the army was so quickly collected. Only one bishop refused to proclaim the crusade: Csáky, Bishop of Csanád, a noble who had never been consecrated, and who later paid with his life for his refusal.

The Appointment of Dózsa as Commander

The army was ready, and now a leader had to be appointed. And here we come upon an interesting and unsolved mystery. Bakócz, despite the fact that there were many capable military leaders in Hungary, including such members of the Church as the Bishop of Veszprém, who was also the Treasurer and Banus of Croatia, appointed György Dózsa, a Székely cavalry officer who happened to be in Buda at the moment. Dózsa had been the hero of a daring exploit which testified to his personal courage, but which was otherwise without significance, and the general under whom he served at the Southern border had sent him to the capital to be personally rewarded

by the king. György Dózsa was a Székely, which is a remarkable fact in itself. The Székelys were a Hungarian ethnic group in the South-Eastern Carpathians of Transylvania, whose duty, since the settlement of Magyars in Hungary, had been to defend the eastern marches. In return they were freemen, and exempt from tax. At that time, however, about the beginning of the sixteenth century, a class system began to appear among the Székely people. The richer Székelys acquired land and began to exploit their serfs. Gradually these lost their freedom and were forced to undertake service as serfs, or become soldiers, as György Dózsa. The central government supported this process of division by all the means in their power, and sent several punitive expeditions among the Székelys, who in the course of the twenty to twenty-five years preceding 1514 had risen a number of times in defence of their ancient liberties. The Székelys were consequently bitterly opposed to feudalism and came out in support of the "old" and, as they believed, classless society of the days when the Hungarians had first settled in the country.

There are some indications that in his youth György Dózsa had also taken part in one of these Székely revolts, so that the motives why Bakócz gave this Székely officer, a man who had never commanded any thing more than a hundred men, the command of an crusading army of many nationalities, remain obscure. He probably knew something of Dózsa's capabilities. At all events his judgment of his abilities as a military leader and organiser proved correct: Dózsa was an excellent commander.

Dózsa needed only a few weeks to train the motley gathering under his command. They had brought their own weapons with them: until after 1514 there was no decree in existence forbidding peasants to bear arms, and they all possessed some sort of weapon, to cut, to thrust, to beat. They were given basic military training until the middle of May, and spiritual guidance and encouragement by the Franciscans. These simple people, who up to that time, although of course they were Christians, had not been much to church and had probably never heard a sermon in their mother tongue, were greatly impressed by the teachings of the Gospel: every man, it seemed, was equal before God, it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter Heaven... It is indeed very possible that the ideas of the Franciscans, always verging on heresy, had a greater role in the peasant war than we imagine. The peasant armies retained their deep religious convictions to the end; they firmly believed they were acting in accordance with the will of God. (Later, between 1527 and 1540, in the first years of the Reformation, the majority of Hungarian Lutheran Protestant preachers were former Franciscan friars.)

What sort of people made up the crusading army? In the first place the herdsmen of the mountains, known as the *Hajdús*, who used to drive great herds of cattle to the larger cities of Germany in the spring and autumn, and in the intervening periods served as soldiers or bodyguards to anyone who would employ them. The *Hajdús* were tough free men; they had been the basis of every Hungarian army for centuries, and jealously defended their freedom. Many of them were impoverished peasants who had fled from their landlords. Others came from the little country towns, not much more than large villages, where the peasants who had fled from their masters concentrated, and who, though they paid taxes to the nearest landowner, paid them collectively and not individually, and hence won for themselves a certain measure of freedom. People whose reputation enjoyed an especial respect were the men of Cegléd, who arrived with their priest and were famous for not having paid taxes to their landlords for over eight years, and the nuns of Óbuda, who killed the bailiff when he came to collect the taxes, and routed the soldiers with him. Thirdly, there were serfs from every part of the country in the army. For them the crusade was a magnificent pretext to escape their landlords, since the crusade had been blessed by the Church, and an anathema placed on all who put obstacles in the way of recruitment. And finally there were a large number of literate men or university students, unwilling to take orders, leading unsettled lives, from time to time working as teachers, clerks on noble estates, or scribes. Hussite ideas, spread through the University of Cracow, found a ready welcome among them.

Considerable unrest was created in the army by the news that the landowners, intent on compelling the serfs to return home and preventing the departure of others, had imprisoned the wives and children of those who left. True, the position of the landlords was desperate. As harvest time came round the villages were empty, there was no one to bring the crops in. So they adopted violent measures. The news brought by the wives and children who escaped from prison and torture and arrived in the camp, often with the deliberate connivance of the landowners, in order to demoralize the army and bring back the recalcitrant farmhands, created so much unrest that it frustrated the landowners' intentions. The soldiers became aware of their strength as an organized army, and the daily sermons in the Hungarian language had taught them that Christ had also championed the poor; they began to feel an inclination to settle accounts with their oppressive lords and masters first, to teach them Christian morals, before adventuring against the Turks. At the same time Bakócz ordered Dózsa to advance with the army to a mountainous terrain, and region full of abysses in Southern Croatia and relieve the fortress Knin there, which was being besieged by

the Turks. Dózsa felt the plan was militarily impractible; his men were plainsmen, unused to mountains and hesitated to start. The king in the meanwhile, fearing the unrest stirred up by the atrocities committed by the nobility, urged the Cardinal to suspend the Crusade. During this period of dispute Dózsa, anxious to avoid further trouble, or an eventual attack by the great nobles, started out for the South with his relatively well-trained and disciplined army: he went through Cegléd–Csanád, the Great Hungarian Plain, where the discontent of the peasants was strongest. (But by that time local groups of crusaders had come into existence everywhere in the country, surprisingly united in their principles and practice.)

Outside the Law

At the end of May, while on his way, Dózsa learnt that Cardinal Bakócz, the Papal legate, had withdrawn the bull authorising the organisation of the crusade. From that moment Dózsa's army was outside the law: any local force was entitled to attack and destroy it. It appears that Bakócz, at that time over seventy, an experienced statesman and diplomat and a master of court intrigue, was nevertheless unable to control either Dózsa or the court. He chose the worst moment for this act: it amounted to delivering the crusading army into the hands of the nobility for their revenge. At the same time he also lost control of the Franciscans, who were reluctant to obey his orders. The task of informing the people that the crusade had been abandoned was consequently given to the Dominicans, which created considerable confusion.

György Dózsa, on learning of the decree, proclaimed that anyone who wished could leave his army without hindrance. Many took him at his word and went home: only those remained with Dózsa who were prepared to face their destiny. About 30,000 peasants remained. They still called themselves "Kuruc", (crux, cross-bearers). This was the moment when Dózsa, probably upon the advice of the Franciscans and lay priests who worked with him, decided to organize the revolutionary rising. His aim in all likelihood was to wrest from the government the right of the peasant to own land, or at least to lease it from the nobility, assuming all along the king's support, who had sent a special envoy to negotiate secretly with him, unknown to the nobles.

It was a remarkably bloodless and disciplined revolution: perhaps the least brutal of all European peasant revolts. Altogether about three hundred nobles fell victim to the people's anger: most of them would have been

condemned for lawlessness under any normal penal code. This military discipline was preserved in the army to the very end. Friedrich Engels, describing the German peasant war, wrote that the ideologically competent German peasant leaders had been extremely bad soldiers, who understood nothing of warfare and military tactics, and, with the exception of Florian Geyer, had walked guilelessly into the trap set by the army of the nobility. Dózsa was a remarkable exception. István Báthori, *comes* of Temes county, the commander of the Southern military district, never won a battle against Dózsa, who for his part took many well-defended fortresses, on occasion without bloodshed.

In June 1514, therefore, the crusading army controlled nearly half the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary, especially the region between the Danube and the Tisza, and the Tisza and the mountains of Transylvania—with every hope of being able to force concessions for the peasants from the ruling class.

Zápolyai's Counter-attack

This was the moment when the wealthiest noble of Hungary, János Zápolyai, *comes* of Szepes county, Governor of Transylvania, came on to the scene. Zápolyai was twenty-six years old at the time: for nine years, when the Diet had decided that after the death of Wladislaw a Hungarian should be elected king in place of the Jagiello line, the lesser nobility has considered him as the heir to the throne. Zápolyai represented their interests, and since many of the lesser nobles had thrown in their lot with Dózsa, he was understandably in disfavour with the king and the ruling élite.

It was on this account that he had not been given the command of the forces against Dózsa and the position given to his worst enemy, István Báthori. Zápolyai's fortresses had successively surrendered to Dózsa's army: consequently the crusaders thought that he would not attack them. Zápolyai, however, realised that the revolt was a fundamental threat to feudalism as a whole, and consequently with his own excellently equipped personal forces staged a surprise onslaught from an unexpected direction against the crusaders, who were then successfully attacking Temesvár, the fortress held by István Báthori. The young captain of his cavalry captured Dózsa alive. György Dózsa was executed; a burning iron band in the form of a crown was pressed on to his head, he was quartered, and the revolt was stifled in blood.

THE NEW ENSLAVEMENT

In autumn 1514 the Diet was convened to bring the rebellious serfs to heel. Inhuman laws were enacted which denied the peasants freedom of movement, a heavy and complicated system of taxation was introduced and the bearing of arms by peasants was prohibited. The peasants were now in a worse position than they had been before the revolt. Gáspár Heltai, Hungarian writer and Unitarian pastor of the sixteenth century, wrote that "the nobles made of the village not only serfs but also slaves." *(Chronicle, 1575)*

This was the true tragedy. It was natural for the nobility to refuse to leave the historical stage of their own free will. In 1514 the time was not yet ripe for the victory of bourgeois or peasant revolutions. Other peasant revolts of the time, on a smaller scale than the revolt of the crusaders in Hungary, were also defeated in Germany and France. But in those countries, as Engels pointed out for Germany, the situation of the peasants remained unchanged: it did not worsen. It might even be said that they slightly improved. In Germany the number of copyholders increased.

The Hungarian nobility, with its passion for unbridled revenge, did themselves considerable harm; in enslaving the peasants they checked the forces of progress and held back productive development. They regarded the peasants as a means of production, no more, but they treated them less rationally than a man would treat his own tools. A heavy price was to be paid for this: 1514 marked the last stage of decline of the prosperous mediaeval Hungarian Kingdom, and was the starting point for the slow but irresistible process which led to the quasi-disappearence of the independence of the Hungarian State. Never again in history did the Hungarian peasants support the nobility, even when they represented the interests of the whole Hungarian nation, not even in the revolutionary war of 1848–49. In 1526, when the battle against the Turks was lost at Mohács, the Hungarian ruling class had another fifteen years in which to organise resistance to the Turks: it was not until 1541 that Turkish army finally occupied the country and Buda, the capital. But the nobility could not and dared not rely on the peasant masses. The Pope also gave no further support to Hungary: after the failure of the crusade the Popes failed to support the war against the Turks until the 1680's. Even worse: István Werbőczi, an avaricious and unscrupulous noble who was a protonotary—*personalis praesentiae regiae locumtenens*—codified customary Hungarian law, and included the anti-serf resolutions of the 1514 Diet in his *Tripartitum*. The Government and the nobles, seeing things in wider perspective, realised some of the objections to this code, and never put it into force; but after the king's death Werbőczi

printed his work in Vienna at his own expense, and distributed it among all the counties, and it consequently came to be considered a *de facto* legal code of law. János Zápolyai, who had defeated Dózsa and who was elected king of Hungary as János I. abrogated it fifteen years later, realising it was already obsolescent, and its harmful effect on economic development, but the impact of the *Tripartitum* remained; Werbőczi had indeed denounced those who had joined Dózsa, and became a rich man from the victims' property.

György Dózsa has remained a great name in Hungarian history, and his movement is the symbol of every Hungarian revolution. From that time onwards all national revolts were described as "kuruc"—cross-bearer movements—if they did not exclusively represent the serfs. On the eve of the Hungarian bourgeois revolution of 1848 Dózsa aroused renewed interest: Mihály Horváth, a Catholic priest and historian, wrote a book on him in 1843 and this inspired a poem on Dózsa by Petőfi; Baron József Eötvös wrote a novel with Dózsa as the hero and later, in 1918, before the bourgeois revolution, the poet Endre Ady referred to him several times. The Socialist Congress held in Budapest in 1901 proposed to set up statues of Marx, Lassalle and Dózsa in Budapest. Gyula Illyés, the grand old man of contemporary Hungarian poetry, has written both a poem and two plays on Dózsa.

We know very little about him. The year of his birth—1472—is also an assumption—his whole historical appearance occupied three and a half months in all. Yet we are entitled to call him a revolutionary of historical significance. We know just about nothing of his life, his personal virtues, his personal failings; we do not know what he looked like: but we know what he did, and from his actions we can deduce his beliefs and purposes. He was no fanatic crying aloud the justified bitterness of an enslaved class, wading in blood to sow and to reap hatred and suffering. He knew his purpose and although the dream of a classless society was not one that he could have envisaged at the time, he might reasonably hope that the ruling class would alleviate the lot of peasants, if only in its own interest, and on these grounds believed he might obtain help from the king and the central power. He did not reject the religious ideals of the Middle Ages, nor exclude himself from the community of the Christian Church; he even preached the rights of the poor on the basis of Gospel teaching. But he was no naive dreamer: he led his army with expert military knowledge and iron discipline, the only peasant army with this discipline and these aims in the history of Europe.

SÁNDOR PETŐFI

POEMS

'FATE, GIVE ME SPACE...'

Fate, give me space to breathe, let me do
something for mankind's sake!
Never let this fine flame burning in me
die with its useless ache.

A flame is in my heart, a flame from heaven
that burns each drop of blood;
and each beat of my heart becomes a prayer
for the happiness of the world.

If I could only say all this with actions
when words are empty forms!
Even if my actions win me at last
new cross and crown of thorns!

To die for all men's good would be a death
most happy and most fair!
Fairer and happier than all the raptures
wasted on living air.

Tell me, tell me, fate, such holy death
awaits me... and I'll make
with my own hands the cross on which I'm laid
crucified, to break.

Pest, April 24, 1846.

'I CAN SEE THE RICHEST . . .'

I can see the richest eastern verdury,
flowers that make a very harem in nature,
a sun with eyelashes that arch like roses,
clouds that divide into smiling features;
I can see the shadows of a palm-grove
where breezes ruffle up a mystery
and birds sit singing in their shining flocks . . .
Birds are they? or maybe stars in key? —
— I can see from my hill-top a blue island
rocked in the lap of distance and the sea;
it is autumn about me, but spring yonder,
migrating cranes drift across the sky
from autumn into spring, and the heart tries
to follow them loaded with all its desires,
and I can be happier in this dream of yearning
than if I found I'd really made my journey. —
— I can see the moonlight of a legend,
it is the sleep of life, the wake of death:
spirits come gliding along the night air,
their shrouds brush the shivering bushes; yet
these are not dreadful visitants from hell;
they are the happy dead, descended here
on the fine gold thread of the moon's rays
from you and your stars, heights of heaven, to see
the ones they love on earth, perhaps to kiss
and seal their lips with the dearest of sleeps
and lying there they can take into their souls
a foretaste of a greater ecstasy.
I can see everything the living eye
never can, but the groping mind at night can . . .
And I see all this in two eyes: in
my lover's eyes dreaming in dark fire.

Szatmár, July 14–27, 1847.

HOMER AND OSSIAN

Where have the Greeks gone, where have the Celts gone?
They vanished like
two cities drowned
by the ocean-streams
with only their topmost pinnacles breaking the water. . .
These topmost pinnacles are two: Homer and Ossian.

One was a beggar and
one was a king's son. Worlds apart!
But in this they come together:
both of them were blind.
Perhaps the light of their eyes
was lost in the fierce fire of their souls,
outshone and extinguished by glory itself?

Great spirits these! enchanted hands
brushing the lyre-strings,
they reenact the divine word
creating a world for men
which is wonderfully beautiful
and wonderfully great.

Can you hear Homer?
In his song the sky's dome
is an eternal smile of the stillness of joy,
and the violet of dawn and the gold
of the midday sun-ray
pour down from it with such grace
on the blond waves of the sea
and their green islands where
gods delightedly mingling
with men and women pursue
your dazzling game, o love!

And can you see Ossian there?
In the land of endless North Sea mists
with storms massed over savage rocks
he roars his song in the chaos of the night-time.

And the moon comes up
as blood-red as
the sun that goes down
and throws its stark light over a wilderness
haunted by roving clusters
of spirits, dead warriors mourning
their last battle.

Everything that is bright,
everything that is blooming
is in your song, oldest of beggars, Homer!
Everything that is black,
everything that is barren
is in your song, king's son, Ossian! —

Go on then singing,
pluck the lyre, the divine lyre,
Homer and Ossian!
The years are waiting —
centuries, milleniums — to set their feet on
everything without mercy, oh but
you escape them like things sacred;
their jaundiced fetid breath burns up the world
except where the laurel on your grey heads is evergreen!

Szatmár, August 1847.

'A SEA HAS WAKENED UP...'

A sea has wakened up.
It is the people's sea.
Earth and sky shake
as its strong waves make
fear swell and wheel.

Is this a dance you see yet?
Is this a music you hear?
Those that never heard it

can now begin to learn it —
how the people roar.

The sea rolls and shouts,
the ships shudder and pitch,
they're slipping down to hell
with shattered mast and sail
jagged inch by inch.

Rage on, great flood,
get that rage home,
bare your deepest bed,
let the clouds be spread
with your relentless foam.

Write on the sky with it —
your lesson ever after:
towering galleys go
over the streams below,
but water is the master!

Pest, March 27–30, 1848.

Translated by Edwin Morgan

PETŐFI — THE BIRTH OF A POET

by

GYULA ILLYÉS

Sándor Petőfi, one of the great poets of the Hungarian language, was born 150 years ago, on New Year's Eve, 1823. The New Hungarian Quarterly *will be marking the anniversary with a number of articles and translations in 1973. — The Editor.*

Great poets do not begin their utterances unexpectedly, out of clear skies, like divine revelations. By searching far back in the life of nations, we can determine when they began their travail to bring forth their exceptional son. The nation, the great family, prepares in advance for the event.

First she instructs the nurses who will tend the new-born babe and put into his mouth the words of his native tongue. She also purifies these words. Then she educates teachers to direct his path. She arranges for school textbooks as carefully as for avuncular gifts and reprimands. She selects good friends and rivals to protect and encourage him. The whole country is in one fever of excitement.

For it is not certain that the babe will come to birth. And even if he does, there is no certainty that he will grow up. How often has the fate of the Hungarian people depended upon one single prophet with the ability to lead them out of their dire straits, and that prophet has appeared! But how often has he not appeared! The people have stood at the parting of the ways, thirsting for a word, a sign; but they have waited in vain. The one to whom history had given both voice and intellect for the great role did not appear. Perhaps he died of diptheria at the age of five. Or he found it impossible to struggle out of the black depths in which millions of Hungarians lived, and remained a cowherd till his dying day; at most, his restless spirit turned

This is the introductory chapter of a book Gyula Illyés wrote on Petőfi in 1936; he recently enlarged it by a third at the instigation of Gallimard, his French publisher. The book, considered a classic of literary biography, is soon to be published in English by Corvina Press in G. F. Cushing's translation.

him into a highway robber. His body had come to birth, but his spirit could not reach the light of day because it lacked care; the nation had proved a bad mother.

Such was the fever that gripped Hungary at the dawn of the rebirth of the nation.

The reason for the excitement was the same as it ever had been. Could the country achieve rebirth? Would she be able to maintain her place in the modern contest of the nations? Would Hungary and the Hungarians continue to exist at all? After so great a past, was death all that the future held in store? After all, only now was Hungary beginning to recover from almost four centuries of terrible exertion and struggle to hold up the Turks as they burst into Europe. In the end she had locked them in combat on her own ground and forced them to a halt, whatever the cost. When that cost was calculated, in three-quarters of the country the most flourishing areas, only the foundations of the towns and villages remained standing; productive fields had become marshes, and nine-tenths of the population had perished. And even now this remnant was threatened by a new and completely unexpected peril: it was threatened with extirpation.

The only reason for this, it now began to appear, was that racially the Hungarians had no relatives in any known part of the world, while they also spoke a language of which nobody outside the country could understand a single word—"not even the Germans!" wrote an indignant German. The fine old saying that Hungary was the shield of Christendom was now repeated only by the Hungarian themselves, with an ironic grimace and a shake of the head, as much as to say "Was it really worth it?"

Some had already given up hope. The hour at which our story begins seems to demand a background sketch of the kind which usually begins literary biographies, and which is certainly not unique in the case of our author. It was New Year's Eve, a time when everyone can easily be found and everyone says or records something whose traces remain extant. Berzsenyi, the greatest poet of the land, for thus we must visualize him, paced restlessly in his house at Nikla. He was forty-two, a good farmer who had certainly made up his accounts for the year and found nothing to trouble him on his estate. But his other concern, the one on which he had staked his life, the fate of the Hungarians, was all the more hopeless. If asked about this, Berzsenyi would have given a bitter reply. The nobility, which he had so long equated with the Hungarian nation, was spineless, corrupt and unworthy of its ancestry. And what of the people, the ordinary folk, of whom the best of the western nations expected so much? What of the Hungarian folk, the serfs? Ignorant, shiftless and backward, they did not even know

how to cultivate the land... He knew them well and could observe them from close at hand. Were these to rescue the sinking ship of Hungary? Berzsenyi, in reply to this imaginary question, would have shaken his head sadly, with a profound sigh from his corpulent frame.

The twenty-two-year-old Vörösmarty was spending this night a few villages away, in the country house of the Csehfalvys at Görbő in Tolna county. He was hopeful... But if one of the New Year revellers there had really pinned him down, he would have discovered that it was only for his own future that he had any hope. He had left Börzsöny in November, and Görbő was his first stage on the way to Pest... He was mulling over great plans and preparing himself for a great task, that of rousing the nation, which in his eyes—those of a poor estate-bailiff's son—did not consist solely of the landed nobility. But rouse it to what? To a realization of its own worth and finally to action. But what action? That remained to be seen; perhaps, indeed, this was not to be his care. Like all who are enflamed by really great endeavour, Vörösmarty regarded himself merely as a pioneer; he could envisage only the immediate task ahead. This was what gave him hope. If he could fulfil his own task, someone would surely be found to carry on.

The thirty-two-year-old Széchenyi wrote a few sentences about horse-breeding in his diary for this day. Some pretext must be found to mobilize and organize the magnates, and this was his task. And the twenty-one-year-old Kossuth? And all the young men who were preparing for something, though they themselves did not know exactly what? What were their thoughts as they toasted the New Year, as the heat of the wine prompted them to think of something greater than their own destiny? "Now is the time for someone to give voice and body to all these desires," they may well have thought. It is unlikely that they were thinking of themselves, or only of themselves. Youth is unselfish. And what may have been the thoughts of Metternich, the man who was regarded by both young and old, almost without exception, as the arch-fiend of Europe? He knew more than all of them, a foolish politician, but a cunning diplomat. Cold and objective, he seems sadly out of place in this grandiloquent assembly. Let us imagine, for the unity of the picture, that at this hour he too was thinking of how to stifle Hungary. He saw the future clearly. He knew that the affectation of nationalism, which had overrun the Monarchy as it had done the rest of Europe, was the first symptom of the disease called liberty. He knew what would follow; he was acquainted with the history of France. It was the Hungarians who were most afflicted by "renascence." What would happen if it spread, if the Hungarians were to flaunt the new idea and gather around

them the other small nations? That would be the end of Austrian hegemony and the end of the dynasty also.

And what of the benign father of his people, the thirty-year-old Ferdinand V, who at this time, it is true, was still only heir to the throne but already a confirmed idiot, as genuine written medical records certify? What were his thoughts?

"Who is going to look after this poor child?" may well have been the thought of an elderly peasant woman and her still more aged husband in a poverty-stricken mud hovel in Szalonta. At the foot of the bed lay a puny little five-year-old boy, whose destiny was to be a great poet, but to remain throughout his life as abnormally sensitive as he was now in infancy. By the time János Arany reached adulthood, when the words only of parents or of good friends have influence, they would both be in their grave. Would he ever find a friend to speak to him like his own brother?

"What is going to happen to us?" was the common thought of thousands of peasants in all parts of the country as in their novels they saw in the New Year. Each of them thought only of the year ahead, but together this represented ten million years of suffering.

Outside the bells tolled as the new Year, 1823, arrived. They herald our story too, like the gong as the curtain rises in the theatre.

In the little village of Kiskőrös, on the Great Plains, in a peasant house which was no different from the thousands of such dwellings throughout the country, a small, black-haired woman cried out in labour. She cried in Slovak. By day she normally spoke Hungarian, but prayers and tears brought forth the language of her childhood.

Her husband listened from the kitchen. The unsought words, forced upon his lips by worry and helplessness, were in Hungarian.

At last there came from within the sound of a child crying, the universal complaint of the baby against the sharpness of the air, against the cold, against life, and against birth itself. A boy was born, the hero of this book. According to his mother later, he was a minute infant. He was wrapped in a napkin and weighed on a pair of hanging market-scales; he was very light indeed. Then they rapidly bathed him, putting a little spirit into the lukewarm water, for one of the neighbours said that this would keep the spark of life alive in the weak infant. He was a red, wrinkled little creature, no different from any other newborn babe. Yet he was the long-awaited one, the choice of history. What was to become of him? Though we know now, we can still follow his destiny with excited interest. I am delighted to be able to write about him.

Translated by G. F. Cushing

THE SEVENTY YEARS OF GYULA ILLYÉS

by

MIKLÓS BÉLÁDI

It is a rare, but in Hungarian literature not unprecedented, occurrence for a poet to be regarded as a national classic during his lifetime. This semi-official status means more and also something other than the somewhat similar public regard and almost unchallengeable repute which, for example, T. S. Eliot enjoyed during the last decade of his life. The difference and its explanation is to be found in the fact that, primarily for historical reasons, the poet, and especially the national poet (and this is where the difference begins, because this notion itself is unknown in modern Anglo–American literature) is greater, more important in this part of the world, or at any rate, it has a different role in literature and in the life of the nation. Illyés as a poet and as a man and as one of the most interesting and important figures in the Hungarian literature of the past forty years exemplifies and expresses to the utmost, in his work and life alike, this difference, in other words how remarkable talent advances and becomes transformed if it commits itself, unconditionally, for a whole life to serve the people, the nation.

It is probable that it was the singularly individual synthesis of "high" and "low", in other words of the two extremes of pre-war society, the merging of poor peasant origins and the highest intellectual-artistic sophistication in the personality and work of Illyés that, for a long time, has drawn around him a certain enigmatic aura. This is how a fellow poet, György Rónay described Illyés:

"In the lines around the eyes, the mouth, in the slightly ironic glance there is the characteristic expression so well known to those who know him; in that slight movement of his shoulder which is both evasion and "I don't care", both mocking and doubting. There is some thing in this face, in this gesture, even in most of his poems that says: perhaps you do not understand correctly what you understand; perhaps what I said is not what you think. . .

Cutting, but ironic, often crusty wisdom." Many have asked with György Rónay: who is Gyula Illyés? His contemporary and fellow thinker, László Németh, wrote of him almost thirty years ago: "In the eyes of future ages Gyula Illyés will be, I think, the enigmatic writer of our generation." Today there is less of an enigma about his work and person. We see what distant, even apparently contrary, points are linked by his life's work; we sense the stubborn consistency shaping his career.

The first thing to strike one is that his life's work is indelibly stamped with twentieth century modernity. Whether one looks at the facts in his biography or thinks of the spiritual and moral contents of his works, one sees the face of the son of a small Central European people that has lived through wars, revolutions and counter-revolutions, that of a writer who has lived creatively with his age; who could not, even had he wanted to, have stayed outside it. Though occasionally he would have liked to free himself to be a writer, the tasks of his age did not release him. He professed with Lautréamont: *La littérature n'a qu'un ennemi — c'est la littérature.* Which one can only interpret this way: poetry, novels and plays should not serve the fancy of the connoisseur of literature, but should stand on the side of life and even of practice.

Illyés understands the "intellectual despair" of modern literature, even values some of those who stand for it. But he regards a writer's work as a moral service. He always accepted commissions from his age, more precisely from the position of his nation. Even as a young poet, he was preparing reports on the depths of society, he warned of national problems and dangers; clarified intellectual misunderstandings and illuminated questions that had remained in the dark. At the beginning of the thirties he seemingly reached back in three longer poems (Three old people; Youth; I speak of heroes) to the descriptive style of last century epics, but he arrived at the very modern and concrete demand for revolution. His works serve the good of society, the functioning, in the right direction, of the feelings of community, of national consciousness. His ideal is the cheerful, active man in a free and educated community.

He is much too sober and sceptical by nature to nourish romantic utopian dreams. He accurately determined where literature stands in the present imbroglio and what role the writer may play. He has no illusions, he does not believe in the panaceas of the prophets, promising instant cures. He knows the limits of the human word, expressed in print or from the stage. And yet he is led by the faith that "if only one pea emerges from my hand, even if it falls on the wall, my life has not been lived in vain."

This task-accepting determination is of a *moral* nature: it makes no

distinction between individual, human and national tasks. It demands that the writer should act according to the requirements of the time and place, that he should serve the good cause—in every situation. Naturally, this type of constant awareness does not merely give wings. It also burdens the bearer with many risks, renouncements and disappointments. The determined advocates of the success of human struggle, the unshakeable believers in saying yes to life suffer most in their disappointments. Whirlpools of disillusionment and hopelessness revolved in Illyés's work. There were periods in his life when he would have liked to stand aside. Occasionally he too was attracted by the idea of exchanging useless talk for a silence that says more. Yet the most decisive, fate-turning experience of his life—and everything that grew from it and became absorbed in his nerves—carried him through even the most bitter moments.

This consistent believer in *engagée* literature was born on All Souls' Day 1902. He is a descendent of peasants, or rather of agricultural labourers. "The father of my father—it was not without pride and not without bitterness that I had heard the family tree mentioned so often—was Prince Eszterházy's senior shepherd. My father was only a blacksmith and only on a count's estate"—he wrote. He spent his childhood in a godforesaken place which only appears enchanting to tourist romanticism—in truth the *puszta* is a reservation for poverty and backwardness. He had not even seen a large village before he was ten, but thanks to his ambitious grandmother he had learned French from the governess in the House. Knowing his whole career we can presume this biographical fact to be a symbol. Illyés has always been able to be at home in two places at once. Both in the lowest reaches of society, in the thick of social and national problems, and in high culture. Having completed secondary school, while at university, at the beginning of the twenties, he found himself in Paris—and directly in the company of the surrealists. He met the avantgarde writers, Eluard, Aragon, Tzara, Breton, Crevel and Desmos, worked for their papers, in the name of the surrealist world and literature redeeming slogan: *révolution d'abord et toujours!* As an enthusiastic, young revolutionary he threw himself into the adventure of the avant garde, that was so attractive because it promised intellectual freedom. He also wrote one of the manifestos of Hungarian surrealism. One might toy with the thought: he could have been a French writer, as he spoke and loved French as a second mother-tongue. He also wrote poetry in French.

Why his life did not take this turning, what is more, why he abandoned the avant garde is something he wrote about on a number of occasions. The experience that turned his fate occurred in 1926. Returning from Paris he

visited his birthplace: "I arrived from Paris, with eyes that had become accustomed to Paris, with western European demands as regards truth and literature. A great shock came upon me as I looked round my birthplace, the *puszta*. I had not carried a particularly painful memory from here, and abroad even this painful memory—like all memories—softened. But these new eyes saw only horror now... I did not recognize my homeland... Then I did not know, I only now tracing back dare to express my feelings. I knew: I would be a traitor if I wanted to be a writer only. Innovation, courage is in place not only in literature but also in society, and first and foremost there."

"I would be a traitor if I wanted to be a writer only"—this consciousness as a moral imperative weaves through his whole career, it determines the theme, and even the tone of his works. It is unnecessary to muse on the question, was this the more difficult road, because history had answered that long ago. There is a more difficult question, however: what about world literature, European fame, respect abroad? One could quote countless examples—and not only from Hungarian literature—to show that there is a road leading via the expression of local, national colours to universal value. The preservation of character, the sizing up of the situation, the search for correct solutions to individual and communal problems: these belong just as much to the panorama of twentieth century literature as those works which depict "the lack of security, and a phobic absence of existence and air", showing the other face of the century.

Between the two World Wars Illyés was one of the most respected writers of the Hungarian "populist" movement, that was concurrent with *populisme* and shared certain features with it. The writers of this movement were mostly of peasant origin, but exceptionally, they remained faithful to the aspirations and the spirit of the world they came from. In Hungary, just as in neighbouring countries, it was literature that, as the doctor of public life, undertook the registration of all those problems, together with the suggested cures, that in healthily developing countries is the task of public institutions. These writers, as the living conscience of the nation, fought social, demographic, sociological and political problems, they provided the democratic parliament that debated the issues of national hygiene and put them before the country.

Illyés, who was by then a well-known poet took part in this work with all his heart and soul. His work best known abroad, the autobiographical *The People of the Puszta* (1936) prepared a startlingly sharp and valid report on the life of downtrodden agricultural labourers. He drew the outline of a dark and hopeless world; he accurately surveyed the environment and the

bleak facts of physical, spiritual and material defencelessness. Yet some rays of humour and cheer keep running through the pages of his book. Its subject is dark, the tone often bitter, yet the book itself does not radiate the bleak view of life of the naturalists who dip their pens in bile. Being a conscious writer he used scepticism, criticism, satire, cutting irony as his tools. He wrote applying the same artistic standards as Mallarmé writing of a fleeting sailing boat.

"To harmonize progress that moves in the same direction but at different rates: that of the mother country and that of Europe"—this high requirement permeates his works of descriptive sociology in the villages. It tells a great deal that, when writing *The People of the Puszta*, he mentioned Pascal as one of his ideals. This duality was not understood and for a long time was regarded as enigmatic by literary public opinion, because the author of peasant sociographies, national "problems of fate", has remained faithful to the world of his origins and at the same time he is the translator of Molière, Racine, Reverdy, Eluard and Follain, the learned transmitter of modern trends in poetry and the compiler of the best Hungarian anthology of French literature. In his collection of translations almost every nation of Europe is represented, as well as America and two great Asian nations. It is not merely the scope and the firm foundations of his interests that are conveyed by this. His cultural standards have deeper roots.

The student in Paris was a fervent internationalist; French language and culture became not merely his second tongue and home: it also promised him the chance of joining the international camp of progress and freedom. Moral and intellectual motives moved him to acquire a wide education. This is why in his work the study of national "problems of fate" merged with the ideal of the equality and brotherhood of nations, races and religions, but also with the purest artistic ambition. One might demonstrate with two quotes the content of this "Europeanness" with a humanist commitment. In the preface of his French literary anthology, published in 1942, he concluded with these words: "As a sign of our gratitude I wish to present this collection of translations to the French nation, in this difficult moment of their destiny." And in the preface to his collection of translations he wrote: "It is a fortunate national tradition of our education in modern times to demand that our literature should continue to be a little branch on the communicating vessel of world literature; to signal, however modestly, its position!" He endeavours to ensure that the progress in the same direction, at home and in Europe, should, as far as possible, march in the same rhythm, in the spirit of mutual respect. The unity of Hungary and Europe, of the homeland and the great world is one of the most valuable

ideals, and most radiant thoughts in Illyés' life's work. In his poem *Oceans* he professes that it is in the community of humanity that he seeks and finds his place: "Between the banks of my narrow Hungarianness, my homeland and my years it is from you ocean of peoples, that this heart awaits a new path and, having travelled it, a new harbour."

His poem *The Poet Answers* begins with this line: "I am working: in struggling shaping myself". The thought "in struggling shaping" is the frame of a feeling of life opposite to alienation and human disintegration in Illyés' lyric poetry and in his whole life's work. His poems, studies, novels and plays all call upon us to live this "earth distanced" existence and thus make it our own, to endeavour to shape every situation in life and every state at various ages "fit-for-ourselves", the most extreme just as much as the most mundane, the loneliness that excludes from life, the hellish stirrings of the inner ego, the convulsions of the nerves, the anti-human anger. The opposition to alienation is expressed not only in the value-choosing lines and sentences, such as "The greatest courage is hope" or "Through everything, the people, life, will conquer everywhere" and "death chases to fight, to act, to create: there is no end!" He simply cannot sense the world otherwise: in every movement of life he discovers signs for man. As a poet and writer it is an almost bodily need to extract something useful for himself—and thus for others-from everything. He wants to take in as much as possible of the world, he gives himself to the most contrary feelings, because in the long run he expects something good and uplifting from that. Because this also belongs to the wisdom of "in struggling shaping myself."

The poetry of Illyés can be regarded as a fact of the age, one of a validity that acts as a summing up, in his poems innovation in form breathes together with versatility of subject matter. Even in the midst of free experimentation it is the expression of a message that excites him: it is the problem of formulating the laws of a human life that stimulates him. He struggles with the awareness of death, the horrors and humiliations of old age, by wanting to take in as much of life as possible. He is not willing to bow his head even to the impossibility embodied in death.

One of the main arguments of Illyés' humanist view of life is work which organizes and recreates the continuity of life. In his eyes man doing his work is the greatest good and consolation, even the preserving essence of human history, and thus its goal as well. He places physical work that conquers nature, that is indispensable to the maintenance of life, that creates simple goods, into the same category—and this is not being profane—as artistic activity. The well-digger who makes water spring up creates value

just as the writer, musician, painter does—and there are separate poems about each of them. Work does not only create goods, the small and great matters of life become organized around it. The fixed point in the increasingly fast changing life is the original sound human activity: the type of work activity where the goal and the means have not yet become separated.

Everything that I have tried to say is summed up in one sentence by Illyés: "Every good poem is an appeal for the perfecting of truth and life." As Eluard said of Supervielle: "His poems help to live."

GYULA ILLYÉS

ON CREATION

At the tip of my pen—
more myopic than an ant's eye—
the thing I work on
stirs and watches;
spies, searches
out the most minute opening
through which to storm space
with a message,
for a message.

. . .

I also create—
can, if I like.
Since I began, the Rival Creator
has seemed to draw back.

In jealousy? Or in shame?

As I was weaving a sheat of reeds
on four beams into a roof
the sky started to come thundering
down; impossible to hold it up.
Like a hailstorm on the first garden.
That now is lost.
But not the eternal craving for it,
nor the—memory—of it.

. . .

Terrible is orphanhood,
terrible that I possess no foster father
other than the one I foster.

Terrible is loneliness,
terrible that no one can love me
but the one I teach to love.

And to face nothingness,
the simmering secrets of—Hell, is it?—
the labyrinth of our monsters.

Setting to work at last,
slowly, toughly, with skillful movements,
to shape our features,
divine features,
to work on self-confrontation.

In our children we've found each other.

Translated by
William Jay Smith

THE COWARD

(Short story)

by

ENDRE ILLÉS

The author's name could, in the course of the years, be frequently read in The N.H.Q. *under stories as well as essays, and also a scene from a play. Now seventy, an essayist, critic, translator of works of Stendhal, as well as managing director of the Budapest publishing house Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, Endre Illés is a widely read and respected figure among older Hungarian writers. His medical training—which he abandoned before the final examinations to take up writing—shows through, especially in his early fiction and criticism, in the shape of an incisive style, clearcut formulation, and a constant attempt to provide a sort of diagnosis. His essays—mostly on literature and writers—are remarkable for their sharp observation, wide learning and deep insight. His stories and plays are peopled by skillfully drawn figures of the pre-war Hungarian ruling classes, the disintegrating gentry and also of intellectuals, confronted with situations in which they somehow invariably fall victim to their own illusions, snobbery or cowardice. His work as a publisher for over forty years has been a decisive influence not only in the shaping of publishing policies but, and this is perhaps even more important, in the discovery and encouragement of young talents. The story published here, on the occasion of his 70th birthday, was published in 1943 and is a still valid account of the way cowardice encouraged Fascism to bully innocent people.*

The Editor

The man looked up from the menu.

"What about shellfish soup?"

"De-li-cious!" said the woman, smiling.

She always said things like that: "Super"—"Terrific!"—"Just as you like, darling." He regarded the woman with irritation. Was this the woman he'd been in love with for half a year? She did not deserve her beautiful, lively eyes, her delicate bones, her exquisitely youthful skin. Her bones —one night—ought to be changed for the thick, unsightly bones of a calf and the whole woman deluged with a bottle of cheap scent. Her very skin lied and so did her dark, eager, merry eyes, so gay, so shining as if lit up from within; and inside her a goose cackled. Yes, she had to be fed and stuffed like a hungry goose.

He suggested the crab soup with the same malice—let her eat that thick, rich, red liquid with cream, eggs, butter and perhaps a dash of cognac in it as well as the scooped out flesh of crab claws; let her shovel it in, gulp it down and say: "Yummy-yummy".

He was now relishing her.

She ate unsuspectingly.

They ordered roast duck as a second course, with a mixed salad in olive oil. The man poured red wine into the glasses.

"A sweet?" he pressed.

"I'm ready to burst!" she said, laughing.

This "I'm ready to burst" was bound to come. He considered how beautifully her regular white teeth gleamed. He felt as satisfied as a conjurer after his act was over. He ordered coffee. Satisfaction ran over him, having eaten and drunk a good deal himself. The cool white of the tablecloth was pleasant to his eyes; the woman never stopped talking, and the people around them were also laughing, eating, chattering away. The air in the crowded restaurant shimmered hazily; he looked at women's faces, bare arms, men in evening dress, swift waiters—felt generous, suddenly thought of a lie, and produced it:

"It's my fortieth birthday today."

He spread it before her as a present.

"Oh, darling!" she piped. "And you only say it now? How sweet of you to have supper with me tonight!"

*

This fashionable restaurant had been a night-club. The new owners had the unsavoury old place done up but had left untouched the row of boxes as well as the hidden lighting from the walls and floor, and also remaining was the smoothness on the waiters' faces and a kind of darkness, or rather blueness, as if each of them had been slapped in the face and the effects of the blow had not had time to wear off. He leaned back in the comfortable, upholstered chair. First he ran his eyes over the people eating supper in the boxes, then he studied their neighbours.

Near them were sitting three men, who returned his stare.

He promptly turned his eyes away; somehow he did not like their looks. One of them, square-chinned, wearing a blue suit, looked very much like a wrestler. The one sitting in the middle was stroking his pockmarked face. The third was smiling in a sinister way, and he seemed to be nodding as he grinned.

He caught a waiter. "Another cup of coffee."

"I'll be sending the coffee-girl along in a minute, sir!" The waiter hurried on.

*

But it wasn't the coffee that came.

The bread-girl stood by their table and put before him, on a white plate, a light-baked white roll.

"Hey, what's this?" He looked up and tried to be friendly. "I didn't ask for rolls. I want a cup of coffee!"

But the bread-girl was gone.

Only then he noticed that on the plate, by the roll, lay visiting-cards. Three thick cards. He picked one of them up and wondered at the foreign-looking name. Under it were the words:

Eat it at once!

The four words were scribbled in pencil and the word "eat" was written with the pencil dug into the paper, and also underlined.

"What's that?" the woman leaned closer.

At this he quickly slid the other two cards from the plate towards him, instinctively covering them with his left hand as if to protect them.

"Nothing."

They looked steadily into each other's eyes; she laughed with a forced stridency:

"All right, all right, I won't pry into your secrets."

Nonetheless a little later he stole a glance at the other cards. On the second was written: "We've squashed it a bit for you." On the third: "Eat it or there'll be trouble!"

"Do you know them?" She looked towards the man in the blue suit.

"Me. . . ?" he stammered stupidly, reluctantly. "Me?"

He felt a violent wave of nausea pass through him.

These three men were drunk, undoubtedly dead drunk. Heavily, completely, aggressively drunk. The one who had been smiling and nodding a short while before was now fixing him with a frozen stare. This time the wrestler was doing the nodding for him. Only the pockmarked one went on stroking his face as before; they all stared at him and the man in the blue suit pointed his finger towards the roll.

"What do they want?" wondered the woman uneasily.

That moment there came a blinding light in the restaurant. It poured from above like a shower. The man became aware they were being watched by everyone around: them, the Gypsy band leader in the corner, the women at the neighbouring tables, the head waiter at the entrance. The woman was at last able to read the cards, and went pale in the face.

"Clods... drunken clods!"

How nice she is! He looked at her. After all she was a nice, decent, respectable woman. Suddenly he felt exposed and helpless, like a small boy; he felt himself very small as he looked around, hurt and bewildered: wasn't there anybody to cuddle up to? How lovely if he could only close his eyes, bury himself in eiderdowns, curl down into a fluffy featherbed.

His shivering gaze, longing for eiderdowns, was arrested by the pock-marked face. The man was wearing a broad, leisurely-knotted tie of diagonally striped black silk. One of his jacket buttons glittered as if he had sewn on the silver of a broken mirror. He gazed at him but the pockmarked one was merciless. With a hard, straight stroke that hissed through the air he drove the question across like a tennis ball:

"Well, what are you waiting for?"

He said it loudly, almost shouting.

What am I waiting for? the man wondered to himself.—What am I waiting for?

He stood up at last—if there had to be a row—all right, there had to be! Shivering, yet still hoping he looked all round then picked up the squashed roll, and stiffly, with an uncertain movement lightly tossed it amongst the three men.

They sprang to their feet on the spot; around them three or four tables also rose. But by then the head waiter was there, with all the other waiters thronging round him. There was a clatter, as when a plate drops to the floor. Somewhere at the back an excited old gentleman asked inquisitively: "What's happened?"—A group of customers in high spirits replied: "Someone's going to be ducked." The old man was satisfied. No one at the back paid any further attention.

In the front, however, the three men stalked out. Apparently completely at home, they filed out past the Gypsy band, the pockmarked one leading the group. The wine-waiter flung the door wide open before them.

"Let's stay!" the woman pulled the pale, roll-throwing man back. "We ought to stay a while."

From the neighbouring tables four or five people looked at the scared couple with curiosity. He poured out some wine, first for the woman, then for himself. He drank, but it wasn't his hand that trembled, he felt his

throat choked and quivering. Then an old waiter came up to their table and stood beside them.

*

The old waiter stood, then he spoke.

"Don't you know those three gentlemen, sir?"

"No," said the man hoarsely.

The waiter stood there, as sad, tall and limp as if he had been hung from a coat-rack.

"A pity, sir... I might have told you..."

"What would you have told me?" the man jerked up his head arrogantly.

The old man brushed the bread-crumbs off the tablecloth on to a plate.

"You really don't know the gentleman in the blue suit, sir?... He's a lieutenant... on half-pay... He left the army, he did, sir, because he slapped a private... Then he had the lad tied to a tree with his toes just off the ground... The lad later hanged himself. So that was why... But the medical officers found the lieutenant not guilty. He's a very hot-tempered man, oh, good and hot. We know him very well..."

He finished brushing up the bread-crumbs and stood there again with nothing further to do.

"And the gentleman with those marks on his face? You'll have heard *his* name, sir... His dogs win all the prizes. He has a big place for training dogs up on the Gellért Hill. He is great at training good retrievers. They say his method's the best."

"We don't want to buy a dog," she said, with concealed nervousness.

But the old waiter remained placid.

"A pity, ma'am. All the noble ladies buy their dogs from him, ma'am."

As if he'd been talking to birds like a St. Francis, he mused:

"And that young H. ... He always smiles. He's very attached to his family, particularly his sister. He beats anyone up who says a bad word about her. Miss H. is a beauty?... When she's here she always sits at a large table, with seven or eight men making up to her. They say she has a model estate, grows rice there. About 50 hectares. She bought it recently... Young Mr. H. looks after his sister jealously. The other day he hit someone so hard that the fellow's arm was broken.

"Listen," the man jumped up angrily, "what're you telling me all this for? What have I got to do with the young Mr. H. or with the lieutenant or with the third... what's his name?"

"You threw the roll across at them, sir... It was a pity, I should have told you, sir... The roll must be eaten sir..."

He was trembling with suppressed emotions.

"I'm not having people sending me rolls!"

"You're right, darling," she agreed. "No one's going to send us rolls."

"And what do you want now?" he shouted at the old man. "Why're you trying to recommend them to me?"

The old waiter blinked.

"Because they're waiting for you, sir, in the cloakroom. They sent me to you. They said would you please come."

"No, don't go," the woman got up quickly.

"Just for a minute," the waiter quoted the message.

He suddenly felt as if his legs were giving way; he looked round uncertainly.

"I'd like to speak to the head waiter. . ."

*

"Through the kitchen," the head waiter simply said.

The man looked at him, stupefied.

"You disappear, sir, through the kitchen. There'll be no fighting, no scandal."

He was happy and relieved. Of course, through the kitchen—how simple, how plain a solution. At last somebody talking to him intelligently, like an adult: there'd be no scandal, no row, no words or scuffling in the cloakroom, he'd be spared another war of visiting-cards—they'd get out unnoticed through the kitchen.

He turned round hesitantly for the woman. But another waiter was already arriving with the woman. They stumbled out hurriedly. Four steps to go down, a corridor, then two steps again; he settled the bill with the head waiter as they turned—and there they were in the kitchen.

A silence fell behind him.

The escaping man turned. Where was the woman? He could not see her anywhere. But then, suddenly, he saw them. Now he understood it all; the head waiter and the old waiter had set a trap for him. Those two were in league with the thugs. In the middle of the kitchen stood the three men, the one in the blue suit, the pockmarked one and the one who nodded. They'd been waiting for him. The waiters had guided the woman somewhere else.

"Bend forward!" the pockmarked one ordered.

Suddenly he felt very tired, soft and submissive. The man in the blue suit and the nodding fellow siezed him; one of them held him by his shoulders,

the other by his head and back of his neck. They ducked him into some sourish, thick liquid. Tomato sauce was cooling on a bench in a vessel, very like a pail. He was ducked into this, twice.

They were not angry. They were happy and satisfied, hard and busy. Their muscles felt better for the little exercise.

When the ducked man stood up again the tomato sauce clung to his face like a mask; the rest trickled in little streams down his shirt and jacket.

The pockmarked one patted him on the back almost genially:

"It's not blood," he said, amiably.

Out in the street the man was still wiping his face. His hat had rolled away, his coat was folded on his arm. It was a warm spring evening. He stood alone in the narrow, dark side-street.

(1943) *Translated by L. T. András*

IMPACT OF THE NEW CHILD CARE ALLOWANCES

by

EGON SZABADY

In the past fifteen years Hungarian demographers have given a great deal of attention to the investigation of fertility trends. This was largely due to the peculiar tendencies in fertility rates in Hungary in the years following the Second World War, when fertility rates continued to decrease—a tendency which had been characteristic of all European countries in the interwar period. In the early 1950s, in the wake of the war, a temporary increase occurred in Hungary, but this was followed by a decrease in births up to 1962, when the birth-rate reached its lowest point. For some years the rate stagnated at around 13 per thousand births, and in 1966 it began to rise, the upward tendency continuing into the late 1960s.

From its early beginnings Hungarian demographical research has also undertaken the investigation of economic, social and socio-psychological factors in fertility trends. Profound economic and social changes took place in Hungary after the Second World War, and these changes also affected the birth-rate. There was, for instance, an enormous increase in social mobility as compared with the preceding decades, and this not only brought about vertical changes attaining a new stratum but—due to the size of the movement—also transformed the different strata themselves, setting new ideals and norms of behaviour for those belonging to it; the number of gainfully employed married women increased suddenly; the educational level of the women of economically productive age also rose; as a result of internal migration, the number of the rural population constantly decreased and urbanization just as constantly increased. These changes are, of course, not only characteristic of Hungary, but in this country the transformation was compressed into a comparatively short period of time.

Hungarian demographers did not limit themselves to the traditional methods of fertility study, that is, the analysis of the fertility data in

censuses and vital statistics, but, based on questionnaires among the population, also investigated the concepts and practices of family planning, as well as the social and political factors which affected such ideas. The first specific fertility and family planning survey took place in 1958–1960,[1] and later—in 1965–1966—another similar survey was carried out by the Hungarian Demographic Research Institute. In the period between the two surveys in 1960 and 1964, the Institute and the Central Statistical Office collected information among women in hospital for induced abortion or childbirth —this survey was repeated in 1968—and Hungarian demographers also carried out a careful analysis of the fertility data in the 1960 census and the 1963 micro-census. The 1970 population census provided a great deal more information on the development of fertility than the previous censuses. For the fourteen-years-old and older female population—i.e. for 25 per cent of the population listed in the census, figures are available on the number of children born, children living with the mother, children living separately from the mother, and children deceased. The main data on the total number of children born as well as the history of the marriage(s) of the mother are known, and will be analysed in a short time.

From the demographical point of view, the most important conclusion derived from the 1965–1966 fertility, family planning and birth control survey[2] was that at the time of the survey young married people in Hungary were planning to have so small a number of children as to endanger the

[1] *A termékenységi, családtervezési és születésszabályozási vizsgálat fontosabb adatai* (Major Data of the Fertility, Family, Planning and Birth Control Survey). Central Statistical Office, Budapest, 1963.

[2] The 1965–1966 Hungarian survey formed part of an international comparative survey series initiated by the IPPF's Commission for Europe. The plans of the survey were worked out by Hungarian demographers commissioned by IPPF, and it was in Hungary that the programme was first carried out, after co-ordination with the countries concerned, thus providing a basis for surveys in other countries.

Several publications have dealt with the programme, the methodological and organizational problems and the major results of this survey; the present study is intended to deal only with the findings relevant to the selective role of social factors.

The publications on the 1965–1966 fertility, family planning and birth control survey are the following:

E. Szabady: "Tervezet a nemzetközi összehasonlító születésszabályozási és családtervezési vizsgálatra" (A Programme for the International Comparative Birth Control and Family Planning Survey). *Statisztikai Szemle*, 1965, No. 8–9, pp. 898–901.

E. Szabady–Dr. A. Klinger: "Az 1965–66. évi termékenységi, családtervezési és születésszabályozási vizsgálat" (The 1965–66 Hungarian Study on Fertility, Family Planning and Birth Control). *Demográfia*, 1966, No. 2, pp. 136–161.

E. Szabady: "A családtervezési vizsgálatok egyes kérdései" (Some Problems of Family Planning Surveys). *Demográfia*, 1967, No. 2, pp. 219–237.

E. Szabady: "Családtervezési trendek: a magyar vizsgálat" (Family Planning Trends: The Hungarian Study). *Demográfia*, 1968, No. 3–4, pp. 333–346.

E. Szabady: "Hungarian Fertility and Family Planning Studies. Social Demography and Medical Responsibility." Proceedings of the Sixth Conference of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, Europe and Near East Region, held in Budapest, September 1969, pp. 12–13.

maintenance of the present level of the population. From the sociological point of view, on the other hand, the results of the investigation, which explain this attitude, are important. The young married couples interviewed gave the following three factors as the main reason for resorting to contraception: (1) a recently born child, (2) housing problems, and (3) material difficulties in the early stage of married life, partly due to the problems of setting up a home for the new family. Of the young married couples using contraceptive measures 63 per cent in the first and second year of marriage, and 54 per cent in the second to fourth year of marriage gave these reasons. In the course of married life, the importance of the three factors gradually diminishes.

There were comparatively few who, when asked about their reason for using contraceptive measures, declared that the mother was inhibited from giving birth to more children because of the difficulties of bringing up the child. Even among the economically active women there were only 2 per cent who gave this reason for the use of contraceptive measures; of the inactive women less than 0.5 per cent gave this reason. In the case of economically active women this low percentage is surprising, since here caring for, providing for and raising the child inevitably increases the burden laid on the women.[3]

Gainful activities obviously put a strain on women to an extent that must in fact be one of the main factors in family planning, even if the fact does not appear from the subjective replies of economically active women.

The figures of the 1965–1966 survey relating to total desired live-births clearly indicate the role of economic employment in family planning by women.[4] According to these figures, in that space of time desired live-births per 100 economically active women interviewed totalled 201, whereas for 100 economically inactive women the total was 245: the planned fertility of the inactive women was thus some 20 per cent higher than that of women gainfully employed. The difference between active and employed women, and inactive women showed itself also by socio-economic groups: it was highest in the case of those employed in non-agricultural manual work compared to the inactive wives of non-agricultural manual workers who did not go out to work, and lowest in the case of those engaged in manual work in agriculture and the inactive wives in this group.

3 For the problems of gainfully employed mothers in Hungary, see E. Szabady: "Gainful Occupation and Motherhood—The Position of Women in Hungary". *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, 1963, No. 34, pp. 51–63.

4 Desired live-birth = children born + further birth planned.

Desired live-births per 100 women

Socio-economic group	Economically active	Economically inactive
Agricultural manual workers	255	257
Non-agricultural manual workers	200	243
Non-manual workers	175	206

Not only did the economically active women plan a smaller family, they also gave birth to less children at the time of the survey and in previous years. In 1949, for example, in the case of the non-agricultural stratum the fertility-rate of economically active women was only one-third of that of the others, and although the difference diminished in subsequent years, in 1960 the birth-rate among economically inactive women exceeded that of economically active women by 68 per cent. Even in 1965–1966, the birth-rate among dependent women was still higher. Then, in 1967, a significant change came about with the introduction of the allowance for child care.

The allowance for child care was instituted by the Hungarian government at the beginning of 1967. Under the government decree introducing the system, economically active mothers are free to choose whether they will continue to work or will ask for leave without pay, during which period they receive an allowance of 600 forints monthly until their child reaches the age of three.

The introduction of this measure, novel in character even by international standards, was prompted by policy considerations of demography and public health. The aim of demographic policy is to increase the number of births. The public health aspect of the measure was based on the realization of the fact that the morbidity rate was much higher among the infants of economically active mothers placed in nurseries, than among infants nursed at home. The majority of economically active mothers, moreover, could not even make use of the nurseries, since the nurseries were unable to admit more than 10 per cent even of the children born in low birth-rate years. The need for nursery places was several times higher. Most working women were thus obliged to leave the child in someone's care over the day, generally a person who usually just minded the child and fed it the food prepared in advance; the majority of tasks connected with child care was left to the working mother to carry out after working hours. Obviously this double burden had

a bad effect on the working standard of many mothers, and this fact, as well as the inevitable frequent absence from work of mothers with a small child, was also detrimental to production. In addition, while many a mother with a small child made great efforts both to carry out her work and to care for her child, an untapped supply of female labour was coming to the fore in various settlements. All these factors, as well as labour policy itself, had their place in the decision to allow the temporary interruption of the employment of normally economically active young mothers.

The effects of this measure—primarily one of family policy—were followed up by the Demographic Research Institute from the beginning of the child care allowance system with the aid of a collection of figures giving complete coverage and now, on the basis of two years' experience, it is already possible to evaluate the results. The information acquired has made it possible to draw an inference on the demographical efficiency of the allowance system and to examine the social factors influencing the young mother in her decision whether to avail herself of the allowance and give up work temporarily or not.

The experience of the first two years shows that the allowance system is more popular than expected. In both years, about two-thirds of the economically active young mothers availed themselves of this opportunity. At the time when the Demographic Research Institute closed the collection of information for the second year, more than 100,000 mothers with small children were already staying at home, taking advantage of the allowance; their number amounted to 144,000 at the beginning of 1970 and to 167,000 at the beginning of 1971. According to the latest available figures in September 1971, 175,000 women were already on child care leave, which means that about 10 per cent of economically active women had stopped working.

In these two years, taking advantage of the allowance for child care varied by social strata. It was primarily the employed women engaged in manual work who made use of it. Nearly two-thirds of the female manual workers took advantage of the allowance, whereas in the case of non-manual workers the rate was already significantly lower in the first year (58 per cent) and decreased further in the course of the next year (to 45 per cent). In the case of co-operative farm members the rate was somewhere between those of the two other strata, and here its use increased in the second year as against the first year (from 60.5 per cent to 65 per cent).

The differences in the rate of use reflect the degree, which varies according to social stratum, of the dilemma facing the economically active young mother when she has to decide whether to consider caring for her child as

her principal task over three years and to accept the drawbacks of interrupting her work and career, social connections and, last but not least, financial situation, or to continue working with caring for the child as an additional burden. The majority of women engaged in manual work choose to stay at home: in their case, a two or three years' interruption does not mean a major break in their career and the nursing allowance of 600 forints monthly amounts to at least half their former monthly earnings. Where non-manual workers are concerned, for those engaged in clerical work the position is similar; those, on the other hand, whose occupation demands higher qualifications, a sense of vocation, and with higher earnings, will be more reluctant to interrupt their career, and in their case the rate is therefore lower. The specific choice of the non-manual stratum with higher qualification can be clearly seen by the data broken down according to the level of schooling: those with only elementary, i.e. general school education made use of the allowance at the rate of 72 to 73 per cent in both years; for those with secondary school education it was 60 to 61 per cent; and of the university graduates only 30 per cent temporarily gave up their job.

The type of occupation and educational attainments itself also shows in the proportion of women giving up the allowance before its expiry (i.e. before the child has reached the age of three years) and returning to their former job. According to figures collected in the first two years, 18 per cent of those drawing an allowance renounced it before its expiry; in the case of non-manual occupations the proportion was nearly double (27 per cent as against 14 per cent). The rate of discontinuance was lowest in the case of co-operative farm workers, where it did not even reach 10 per cent. Analysis of the data according to educational attainment shows that there is a direct relationship between the rate of discontinuance and the mother's educational level: in the case of those with general education the rate was 15 per cent, with secondary schooling 25 per cent, and of university graduates 46 per cent. It is clear that those with a higher qualification are not only reluctant to make use of the allowance, but also give it up at an earlier date to return to their career as soon as possible.

The Demographic Research Institute has analysed the rate of use and its changes according to a number of other factors, such as the husband's occupation, income, educational attainment, the age of the non-manual mother, the duration of the marriage, the number of mother's live-births and live-born children, the type of settlement in which she resides and in which she works, or her type of employment. None of these factors, however, made the same differences as the educational attainment and occupation of the non-manual women. The other factors at most completed and

coloured the overall picture, leading to the conclusion that it is primarily the young newly married, and especially the manual workers, who are interested in the child care allowance.

In 1967, the year the allowance for child care was introduced, the birth-rate rose by 8 per cent, followed by a further 4 per cent rise in 1968, whereas in 1969 it stagnated essentially on the 1968 level. From the middle of 1970 to the middle of 1971 a slight decrease occured. By the second half-year of 1971 the number of births was practically stabilized on the 1969 level. The fact that after a consistently low level for years, a comparatively significant rise occurred simultaneously with the introduction of the allowance for child care obviously raises the idea of a causal relationship.

The detailed analysis of the data reveals the fact that the increase in birth-rate varied by social stratum. The greatest difference, however, shows itself between economically active women and dependent women: whereas the birth-rate among the former increased, that of the latter continued to decline.

Up to 1966, we repeat, the birth-rate among housewives or dependant women, despite the tendency to decline, exceeded that among gainfully employed women. The change came about in 1967, when the birth-rate among gainfully employed women rose significantly, while that of housewives declined, and this tendency continued in 1968. In 1969–1970 the birth-rate among gainfully employed women was still higher than that of housewives, but as compared to 1968 it shows a certain decrease in the last two years. The declining trend in the birth rate among housewives continues.

On a detailed analysis of the data it appears that the 1967 and 1968 increase occurred among the women working in non-agricultural branches, and here also a slight decrease can be observed in 1969–1970. Within the group of economically active women, a significant rise, or in the last two years, a fall, manifested itself primarily in the stratum where the use of the child care allowance was highest, i.e. among women doing manual work, where the birth-rate by and large reached the level of women engaged in non-manual work.

It should be pointed out that the difference in the birth-rate among economically active and dependent women can be attributed in the main to the different age distribution of the two female groupings. In point of fact, the age pattern among the dependents is older. In the age bracket which is most important in terms of fertility—that of women below 30 years as also with those belonging to the same age-group, the rate among economically active women is higher.

Birth rate trends among economically active and dependent women according to social stratum

Socio-economic stratum and economic activity	Number of live-births per 1,000 women of 15–49 years						
	1960	1963	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Agricultural (gainfully employed and housewives together)	63	50	53	54	51	48	47
Non-agricultural (gainfully employed and housewives together) of which	63	56	55	59	61	61	59
gainfully employed	48	50	51	60	67	66	64
of which							
manual worker	45	48	49	60	66	65	64
non-manual worker	54	53	55	60	68	68	66
housewife	78	64	62	7	40	49	44
of which							
wife of manual worker	87	73	73	68	60	59	3
wife of non-manual worker	42	31	25	21	17	17	19

The average birth-rate among the female agricultural population has again decreased in the second year of the child care allowance. The low birth-rate among the agricultural population is, however, exclusively due to the aging of the female agricultural population, to the increased growth of the age-groups above 30 and 40 years. Even is present-day Hungary the birth-rate is highest among women of the agricultural population who are below 24 years of age, and also within certain higher age-groups the birth-rate among women engaged in agriculture is higher than among women of the corresponding age, engaged in non-manual work.

Also related to differences in the age pattern is the higher birth-rate among non-manual workers than among manual workers: with a standardized age distribution, the birth-rate of manual workers becomes higher. A particularly significant increase in the birth-rate can be found among women under 30 years of age engaged in manual work; and it is also in the age-groups under 30 that the birth-rate among women engaged in non-manual work shows the greatest increase.

The figures, consequently, clearly show that the introduction of the child care allowance played a significant role in the movement of the birth-rate in 1967 and 1968. And in fact, the increase in the birth-rate occurred precisely

Age-standardized birth-rates by social stratum

Social stratum	live-births among 1,000 women of 15–49 years		
	1960	1968	1970
Agricultural	59	64	63
Non-agricultural of which	59	58	56
manual	66	64	61
non manual worker	44	47	48

in those strata where greatest advantage was taken of the allowance. The change or stability of trends up to 1966 in the various groups making up the population primarily reflects the degree to which they made use of the allowance and the extent to which it affected their demographical behaviour. The fact that, for example, in the case of the agricultural population the birth-rate trend did not change is certainly due to the conditions attached to the allowance, which exclude a section of the women engaged in agricultural work from its benefits. For one condition of the allowance is either one year of continuous employment, which is not the case with many seasonal agricultural workers, or—in the case of co-operative farm workers—120 days of participation in the collective work. A number of co-operative farm workers working on their private plots, too, and having been already pregnant over the major part of the period in question, do not meet this condition.

The effect, therefore, of the introduction of the allowance for child care was to produce a comparatively sudden change in the birth-rates characterizing the different social strata. It is too early at present to determine whether these changes are only due to the fact that women have their first and second children at an earlier age, but even if this were the case for the present, the fact is still favourable in terms of the actual increase in the birth-rate. Postponing the birth of the first child does, as a matter of fact, involve the danger that finally no first or further children are born; conversely, it may be assumed that the birth of the first and second child increases the chance of further children.

Under the effect of the child care allowance the birth-rates of the different social strata have come essentially nearer to one another. In fact, this is a continuation of earlier trends, which can be observed in the results of the mobility investigations carried out by the Demographic Research Institute. This research project, which described the inter-generation and intra-

generation mobility of men between 1938 and 1962–64 on a nation-wide basis, also provided data for an analysis of the interrelations between social strata, mobility and fertility.[5]

The figures on the number of children of the men show that the average number of children of those interviewed in the first half ot the 1960s varied according to social stratum· in the younger age-groups, however, the differences were considerably smaller than in the older ones. For whereas in Hungarian towns (with the exception of Budapest), for men of 60 years and over, only 1.5 children had been born to men of professional status, 2.0 to other non-manual workers, 2.7 to non-agricultural manual workers and 3.3 to agricultural workers, in the case of men of 20 to 29 years the corresponding figures were 0.7, 0.7, 0.9 and 0.0.

Average number of children in the main social strata, by age-group

Age-group (years)	Urban			
	Professional status	Other non-manual workers	Non-agricultural manual workers	Agricultural workers
20–29 years	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.9
30–39 years	1.4	1.5	1.8	1.8
40–49 years	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.2
50–59 years	2.3	1.7	2.2	3.1
60 years and over	1.5	2.0	2.7	3.3
Age-group (years)	Rural			
	Professional status	Other non-manual workers	Non-agricultural manual workers	Agricultural manual workers
20–29 years	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.4
30–39 years	1.6	1.7	2.0	2.2
40–49 years	2.0	2.2	2.6	2.5
50–59 years	2.0	2.4	2.9	2.9
60 years and over	2.6	3.5	3.3	3.4

5 *Társadalmi átrétegeződés Magyarországon* (Social Re-stratification in Hungary). Publications of the Demographic Research Institute. Budapest, 1970.

The trend is less marked with the Budapest men interviewed. Men of professional status in the higher age-groups have more, and in the lower less, children than other non-manual workers. This may in part reflect the general tendency observed in economically advanced countries in recent years, namely that, in contrast with earlier periods, it is not the stratum with the highest income and level of schooling that has the lowest number of children, but the lower income group, composed mainly of medium-level employees and clerical workers with 8 to 12 years of schooling.[6] The effect of the introduction of the child care allowance is to act against this tendency since, as pointed out above, the allowance has become popular mainly with those with a secondary school education, whereas it has only slightly affected those with higher qualifications.

One of the most important final conclusions of the mobility investigation was that social mobility—from peasantry to working class and non-manual workers, from working class to non-manual workers and within the latter group from the employee group to the professional class—has led to a decreased fertility in the sense that the mobile persons and families have in most cases adopted the concept of the family prevalent in the new environment and adapted their family planning to the ideal of the new stratum, i.e. a lower number of children. Those of working class and peasant background, or former manual workers and peasants, who have moved into the professional or other non-manual stratum, as well as those of peasant background and the former peasants who have moved into the working class in provincial towns and in villages, have completely adopted the lower fertility principles corresponding to the new social environment.[7] With the decrease of the differences in the birth-rate between various social strata, future movements of the population as envisaged at present are not likely to cause further essential changes in fertility trends. As a matter of fact, from the mobility investigations of the Demographic Research Institute it has become clear that the fact of movement itself does not—apart from the difference in fertility between the original stratum and the later recipient stratum—lead to a decrease in fertility. Those moving, therefore, will not have to make increased sacrifices in terms of reducing the number of their children in order to pass into another social stratum.

The introduction of the child care allowance marks an important phase in Hungarian demographic policy, and, further developed, it may, together

6 G. Z. Johnson: *Differential Fertility in European Countries. Demographic and Economic Change in Developed Countries.* Princeton, 1960, pp. 36–72.

7 The only exception found was in the Budapest working class, where those with peasant background had a somewhat higher number of children than those of working-class background.

with other measures of family policy, contribute to the solution of the Hungarian demographic situation. It may also claim international interest among the sociologists and demographers engaged in the problems of fertility, since its effects can be observed under almost unique "laboratory" conditions in the extensive survey of the Demographic Research Institute.[8] The results achieved up to the present still fail to provide an answer to a great number of questions, but it can be assumed that the data of surveys to be carried out in the next years will contribute to the solution of further problems.

8 *Gyermekgondozási segély* (Allowance for Child Care). Periodical Statistical Publications, Vol. 147. Central Statistical Office, 1969/3.

Gyermekgondozási segély (Allowance for Child Care). Publications of the Demographic Research Institute, Budapest, 1970.

For an evaluation of the significance of the allowance see E. Szabady: "A gyermekgondozási segély társadalmi és demográfiai jelentősége" (The Social and Demographic Significance of the Allowance for Child Care). *Társadalmi Szemle*, 1969, Vol. XXIV, No. 7–8, pp. 99–105.

LÁSZLÓ NAGY

LOVE OF THE SCORCHING WIND

To Margit

Wind, O you wind who storms my blood
sigh of she-lion, sudden southerly
clash, you coppery-breasted brilliance
you buffet my eyes, you dance, you kiss; it's a distemper,
the green hill of my youth is yours forever,
I look back to where it is furrowed from your fire-passage,
guerilla wind, you stretched horizontal scream
sawing ribbon-silkily at my shoulder, fiddlestick
my veins' vibrator, playing my bones' membranes,
what orbiting star ordered you against me
to so fever-flood me, with restlessness fill me,
glaze my eyes with the wild lace of lightning, your voice
for which angry star does it pass sentence: "There is no mercy,
there'll be no mercy"?—but serves me right, serves me right,
I chose to begin my life in your corrupting superstition!
Here you are circling around my throat, chasing a tail,
phosphorescing with cyanide and arsenic fury, you've haltered me forever,
ah, my throat's your axis, you blurred disc aglow,
my wide collar of drought, plate spinning of hallucination—
full-blown with sacrifice you run amok in howling
intimidation for my raped early treasures, you bring wild-tasting
bunches of green love and kisses, my daybreak squeals in you,
so too the lamb of innocence, my chaste verse, gold hair,
my exhorbitant foam, the sugared chain of my sins,
and in the middle my fool head—I'm singing for you,
whirlpool of whirlpools, wreath of Babylon sand stifling me,
you scorching, you yellow gypsy wind—you gypsy!

Stop now or slaken, I'd like to see my treasures!
All my happy years kick in a bundled foetal membrane,
I untie it with my mouth's strength, I sniff it nervously—
as a tired animal its litter—my jaw drops at my memories.
Blood and eyes are remembering faery light's leap,
the court of torments where lives a certain little king
at the world's centre in the sour-cherry tree, and wind
blows through it, a bell alive in passion's green-red tree—
that bell is I, both love and alarm
are booming in me, but no one hears, no one can see me—
look over here, dark girl! Only her necklace
throws flashing copper-coin suns in my face, she won't raise
her eyes from the cornflowers, though all the sanguine troop's asleep,
radiant the dreams of cowbell-hammerers, copper-kettle men,
they lie in the field all beard and hair, black nails in the grass,
the women dreaming too on their backs with bared breasts gaping,
springy hillocks where curly-haired babes are slithering
in milk and sugary spittle—oh, is there a God?
Look at me, dark girl! Only her helmet-pointed breasts are looking,
she binds herself with a cornflower wreath, with azure chains,
though the gypsy king in the tumbril snores bible-darkly
the tower of judgement's leaning, his unharnessed donkeys
and iron-shod hares are musing in the golden barley;
but blessings on the Moses neck over the tumbril's backboard,
let his keg-shaped head dangle, let the sun come between his snoring lips,
let the wind play over his thousand showing teeth, his hair
that touches the grass, and his wine-soured bubbling spit!

Come here, dark girl! She's standing, she's turning towards me,
small copper-oven hips tense and from between her thighs
—like a golden capiton from a saint's ecstatic lips—
a miraculous bright ribbon issues. Don't be scared! I close my eyes.
Your wreath's nice. You're lovely. And like the wind, scorching.
My balls and everything burn like mad, my teeth are chattering for you,
I'll kneel for you, I'll use bad words—oh, this afternoon is but
damnation in disguise, a death's-head's feathered bonnet!
Do you hear this row? Old bags and know-nothing virgins
rattle off a litany to Mary in the silk-snowed grove of flags.
Its noise makes me sweat; banners, tinkling little bells,
hateful bells coming to me through the cornfields;

you'll die you villain, snaps the priest, and the swords
sprout enormous and some swelling Hungarian kings ride
erect over me—oh, their curses befoul even my dreams!
Dark girl, you have left me. Your wreath's a dear blue-scaled snake
here on my numb asleep arm shivering as it dilates,
the long-haired tribe advances in the white dust down the highway,
and the scorching wind lets fall your song upon my sorrow.
Sitting on the yellow ramparts restless with desire for you
I hum awhile smoking myself into a tupor because of you;
by the time my fingers and lips ripen to gold you arrive,
I laugh and cry, what a fright! your poor little head's bald,
and you throw the bound sheaf of your hair at my feet bawling.
Who sheared my faery girl? Death—the song's "old man death"
because she stole a small hand-mirror—"that bloody old death,"
caught by his dog, held by his son, that's how death sheared her.
I'll die if you cry: look, here's a little fleecy cloud
to drink your tears, from a smacking kiss your hair will grow again,
as for that old man with his son and dog, I'll castrate the lot
and add salt and red pepper seasoning; he won't shear any more faeries.
I sprinkle your dead hair upon the wind, there's a bird
to bear each strand into the blue air where they'll all sing sweetly
and a heaven of birdsnests will rejoice at your gleaming hair.
Lion-maned faery, my blood's corridors are clanging from you
when the town's green belt begins to droop in the heat,
when towers everywhere sigh away colour and turn pale,
the tar-paper shanty roof gyrates like a leaf, and
emaciated horses are panting diamond-studded with flies
at the time of the wind when starred enamel flakes off
grass-overgrown thrown away pots and laths come away from fences,
at the time of wind and flame when a stray glimmer is enough
to pierce the violin to the heart and God's yo-yoing balls the larks
flying up and down shriek through superheated gullets,
and when I've fallen on my back and crickets chirr in my hair
and a blade of grass smokes between my teeth and catches fire,
for fire is waiting for fire and should not wait in vain:
then in a yellow skirt you step over my head, you delight, you mourning!
At the Grand Hotel B., I confess to the old waiter:
The wind of Balchik, grandpa, the Bulgarian Balchik
eats my blood, dries up my bones, but there's no mercy
nothing, neither refrigerator nor North Star protects,

and here is her letter of fire: If you are brave, you can come again!
Her message flickers with a yellow flame in my darkened room,
my eyes in vain contend with the blackmail of visions;
the last green crown is burning over the sandpit,
love consumes it at the stake of our two selves,
icons flush with fever, from the trees a glowing caravan
and a hundred Persian stallions from Dobrudzha run roaring
into the Black Sea to cool off—oh, what of me?
Before the gun-barrel gaze of the airport customs man I confess:
Yes, I took out with me a rose but brought only its ashes home.
I've arrived—what a place! What martial stone men,
a cold wind from every bored hole in their stone heads:
turning you to stone, turning you to stone, turning you to...
No! I shall not turn to stone, you stone faces; too bad, stones
for the scorching wind is my religion, I'm shouting for her through my tears,
with my fiery knife I'll fight against your frost, you moguls of stone.
Your smile sears me, come with me Streaky Haired Girl,
our singing shall be the scream of blood against stone,
I shall be good at suffering—fate killed the idyll,
but the scorching wind will walk me over the waters of horror
and razoring rocks even, for she marked me for herself long ago.
It's a miracle that the lightnings of your teeth
and dancing streaky hair can fit into this tiny rented room—
my suffocating delight! You are like the wind, scorching!
The best man whom we selected turned prematurely to stone,
your bridesmaid's lace dress is nothing but limestone,
we are marrying in your rose-embroidered blouse and my only shirt humbly,
it's nineteen fifty two, our wedding banquet's a plate of sour black cherries
and breadcrusts our landlady set up on her kitchen cupboard to dry.
Your lips and eyebrows are writhing into my white shirt: first sickness
and your womb's fruit ripens at the golden trumpet call!

Wind, o you scorching wind guarding my grave,
you faithful bitch of mine—my faithful wolf rather,
who can the star be that created you to sit here at my head,
who sent you that I should have even here no rest?
Though no shred of my flesh remains, only bones, lonely
poor bones, thick hair and uncrumblable crown!
Wind, conjuring wonder wind, ushering prophesy,
it's you who will whisper, murmur, howl: Resurrection's here!

You are first to stand up, you kill off the damp
and the dark frost, you start digging the earth, you fiery
gypsy wind, you'd scratch up carrion even;
wind, you wild angel blowing your own soul into me
you set my crown on and drive me into Eden swords-flashingly
up the green grassy hill to meet every night with her
under the huge moon, she whom you've chosen for me,
so that the world should be stunned at each sunrise
to see blackened places on the glistening hillside:
Look there, where again Love was lying all last night!

Translated by Kenneth McRobbie and George Gömöri

SEMPITERNIN

(Short story)

by

LAJOS MESTERHÁZI

He had to make a detour: the square was under co nstruction. Behind the hoardings an excavator lifted its dragon he ad at regular intervals: yellow, blue and red shades of steel, and cables and pipes. The subway was in the making. He'd never travel on the north-south underground, he thought, though how many thousands would, how many would throng the platforms every morning. That moving staircase, the place which the excavator might be biting out of the earth that very moment, would never carry him up and down.

As a child he was religious and he prayed a lot; a lot, and desperately. Because God anyhow knew better what was good for his eternal bliss. If it pleased him he would grant his request, if not, not. He prayed with tense desperation because he needed the thing he was praying for very much; it was a matter of life and death to him. And he knew he wouldn't get it anyway.

There was a new doorkeeper. His name rang unmeaningly as he repeated it through the little window. The doorkeeper asked for his identity card, pored over it, fiddled about, rummaged around, telephoned. Then at last he got down to filling out the entry slip. Like a bad dream. It wasn't six months since he'd retired. He felt the pang of the desperate childhood prayers—'Oh God, don't let old Snoopy test me today!' There was no point anyway...

But Szterényi greeted him with a wide gesture, patting him on the shoulder. "Béla, what brings you..."

"A request..."

"Go ahead. Sit down... Could you give us some coffee, Teri? I'll have a cup this time."

No good, he must get it out. Or should they start with 'how are you's' and the weather? The best thing would be to come right out with it.

"Sempiternin."

Szterényi's face clouded with discomfort. He went back to his desk and sat down. Go on quickly, before he says no.

"My doctor in the central hospital would undertake the treatment. He can guarantee me a room right now. This is the best time. All I have to do is bring the medicine.

"All! Hm, I could have sworn... Nowadays if anybody wants to speak to me on the phone or in person, it's almost without exception Sempiternin. You know they've put a strict embargo on it."

"That's why I've come to you."

"But you should take it as meaning there isn't any. There isn't any for the time being, and I can't get hold of any. There were a few thousand phials of it, and in the central offices, and here too we were only allowed to go as far as department heads. The fifteen, twenty most important men in every county—the districts weren't even mentioned—the leaders of about fifty big plants and special state farms and the very best cooperatives—but only the chairman and the chief agronomist, and they had to pay the production costs—academicians, outstanding actors and artists... A few thousand phials. I don't have to tell you how little that is. Nothing. Manufacture is going on at full capacity but you surely understand that we have commitments abroad too: it's our speciality in CMEA, and as for the Western market, there isn't another export which would bring us in such an unrestricted amount of convertible currency... We're gradually replenishing our home supplies right now, in order to distribute another instalment."

"But I'm one of you. I retired from here less than six months ago. I retired, they didn't retire me. They wanted to keep me on, you know that."

"Yes, I know, Béla. But the rule very clearly only applies to certain members of the active staff."

"But I don't understand. What is Sempiternin? Is it so complicated? Is the processing so expensive? You say it's being manufactured at full capacity..."

"In principle it isn't complicated at all. Once somebody, which means Professor Gergely, has discovered it. After all, ageing, as we have known for a long time, is the result of special programming: our cells are constantly dying by the millions, and are constantly being replaced by inferior ones. Just as if a car were always repaired with scrap. The programming has to be changed; our organism has to produce perfect replacements: we didn't breathe a different air when we were twenty, we didn't eat or drink differently from what we do now, as a matter of fact most of us had a pretty deprived childhood. But the whole plant has to be reprogrammed to produce

parts of unchanged quality. Just as if everything on a car were to be renewed with original spare parts: in principle, the car would still be brand new after a thousand years, wouldn't it?"

"Well then? Since Gergely, I gather, gave us the licence free?"

"I'm coming to that. In theory it's simple. In practice, however, it's complicated and expensive. To start with, at the moment we can't synthesise the stuff. They're working on it, in fact, they're even doing research in the field of radio-physics. According to the prognosis it may take twenty years to solve the problem. You know how these things are: someone may get a brain wave tomorrow, or it may take twenty-five years. For the time being we've got what we've got: the pineal glands of seventy to eighty new born animals are needed for one single cure. The Pharmaceutical Works has huge rabbit farms all over the country as well as contracts with cooperatives and individuals to breed tens of millions of rabbits—this is the big racket nowadays. The rabbits can't be given just anything to eat: they get vitamins and hormones and there's constant veterinary supervision... Then come the delicate screening and cleaning procedures. Think of it, the sex-curbing effect of the baby hormone alone has to be neutralized by eleven different processes. And the cure itself. I don't understand why, people talk about it like, let's say, having a tooth filled. It's two months in hospital, strict medical supervision and check-ups for six months after that."

"Are you through it?"

"Last winter. You know, at our age everybody has the beginnings of arterial sclerosis. I've only just learned what that is! When the regeneration of the vein walls started I had such headaches and sometimes my whole body was in such pain that I had to live on pain killers for two weeks."

"Well, after all, you did get eternal life in exchange."

Szterényi shrugged. "In principle! It isn't all that simple... But you can see that whether you consider the expenses or the hospital capacity, the question of gradual distribution has to be taken very seriously."

"I've got hospital capacity, I told you. All I need is Sempiternin."

"There isn't any. I'm telling you as one of us. Right now I wouldn't be able to conjure up a single phial of it."

"And the next instalment?"

"I don't know; it depends on a lot of things. Even the National Bank. And when we get it, according to word from above—after all, we are a people's republic of workers and peasants—a certain contingent has to go to the workers actually working on machines, first of all to miners and construction workers and peasants in co-operatives. A certain contingent very naturally has to go to young people and women. And to those various

branches of services which have come very much to the fore recently. Yes, and in the meantime we are under pressure from all directions: from the armed forces, from college teachers, officials of mass organizations, and even here, within the works, from those who were left out. I can't tell you the kind of pressure we have to put up with."

"Believe me I wouldn't pester you if it wasn't urgent. My blood pressure is 220, my diastole 140... That's why I had to retire."

"My dear Béla! Hypertonia nowadays! You surely don't need me to tell you—it's like diabetes. There are dozens of excellent medicines to choose from. Once you are set up by your doctor and take your dose, you can live happily till you are eighty. Especially now, since you're retired. Apropos, so that you shouldn't envy us, length of service for those treated with Sempiternin has been extended to 150 years. You understand? not age, but length of service. For the present! Which means that I, for instance, can retire in 120 years when I'll be the ripe old age of 180! Just so that you know."

"Tell me, even so, when can I count on..."

"I don't want to raise any false hopes, Béla. Don't make me do that."

"Just roughly."

"Roughly? I would say that unless there is a significant structural change in the manufacture of the drug and the treatment, the whole population will be sempiterninized—gradually of course—by the first decade after the turn of the century."

"Turn of the century? Where will I be by then? You say whole population. Should I take it to mean that I am 'whole population'!"

"Well, you see... according to the plan, yes. As a pensioner."

"But I'm... I'm practically one of you. I retired from here... not even six months ago!"

"The date limit is January 1st of this year. Anyone who retired on December 31st falls into the 'pensioners' category."

He exclaimed desperately: "Don't try to tell me that I have to pay for those few wretched months with my eternal life!"

Szterényi tried to hypnotize him with his own calm.

"My dear Béla! You have been sitting in this chair for all those years. You know what it entails. Guidelines and rulings and directives, there's 'yes' and there's 'no', and no back doors, and no beating around the bush. I'm only doing what you'd do if you were still here."

If he were still there...! Where would Szterényi be? Still working at the district TB centre if he—yes, he himself—hadn't taken notice of him and hadn't brought him to Budapest. And here? He'd be deputy head of

a department and wouldn't have got Sempiternin—you bet he wouldn't—he'd have been just outside the circle if *he* hadn't retired and handed over his position!

The secretary brought the coffee. "Cognac?" said Szterényi. He shook his head. They helped themselves to sugar, stirred their coffe and drank it. He ought to talk about something else now.

"And how are you? I mean, since the treatment?"

Szterényi laughed.

"It's marvellous. Very peculiar. Being almost sixty one suddenly becomes a twenty, twenty-five year old. Outer regeneration—the skin, colour of the hair—takes one or two years. Though you feel the effect in all other respects... I can see that like everybody else you're thinking of the regeneration of sex. Well, yes, that too. And what tact: in the case of married men the wife gets the cure too. They don't want to condemn anyone who is eternally young to wait for the death of an old woman, and they don't want to have five thousand divorce cases in one go, especially not in our circles. And how right they are, too. Incidentally, I know of some cases where the wife's dose of Sempiternin didn't go to the wife." And he chuckled. "But that's not what I want to... First of all, sensory perception. One realizes how differently young people see things—understand? Not look, but see. How differently they hear, taste, smell from us middle-aged, or whatever we are. The spectrum is different! It has more nuances and is broader. Then, for instance, the feel of your muscles. Every morning I find myself not stopping to wait for the lift, but running up the stairs. Three steps at a time, and I enjoy it, see? As if an old pleasant memory had come to life again. In everything else too: in the smell coming from doorways, which I hadn't smelt for a god-awful long time; in the colours of the evening, which for years have just been black and white for me, or more accurately, black with disagreeable glitters... I'm making notes, in preparation for some sort of article. Because this is something even Professor Gergely didn't write about in his report."

"Interesting."

"That reminds me, did you know Gergely was coming home for a visit next spring? We're holding an international symposium on Sempiternin. That's where I'd like to read my study. But..." and he laughed uproariously.

"What happened?"

"What happened? The organizer of the symposium..." he could hardly speak from laughing. "Thoma has been appointed... You don't see it?"

"Tell me."

"Well, it was Thoma who had his knife into Gergely. It was because of him Gergely defected in '56. He applied for the post of head of one of the departments of internal medicine at the Cegléd hospital. And Thoma wrote to the Ministry that Gergely's father was a cantor or something in the Jewish community of Sajószentpéter, and that Gergely wore a thingummy... what they call a tzitzit under his shirt. It's like the scapular with us. And worse than anything, that he owned a kulak rabbit farm in Vecsés. Which in fact was true. He was already experimenting with Sempiternin, and was keeping rabbits at his own expense..."

"Incredible!"

"Gergely pointed it out too. There was a very thorough investigation, but the Academy said that a rabbit farm is a rabbit farm and Sempiternin was an illusion. So he defected, poor chap, in '56... 'Poor chap', says I, idiot that I am... And now Thoma! Isn't it fantastic?"

"Fantastic."

"By the way, I think the symposium will be very interesting. After all, there are observations now from all over the world. The Swiss with their Athanatin, the Dutch with Antimortin, the West Germans with Nixexitin, the Americans with Regenerin..."

"I'm sure... You must see, for the very reason that I've been sitting at this desk for all those years, that I know what an 'iron reserve' is. Even where the rarest drug is concerned. It's only natural. A foreign head of a state can come along, or something like that... Well... one dose, one single dose! Don't tell me there isn't one."

"Well, yes. In that sense, there is. Of course there is. But it's strictly embargoed. Very strictly. Every milligram of it. More strictly than morphium. I can't do a thing about it."

"Well who the hell can if not you?... I'm sorry!"

"It's quite all right. I understand how you feel. But you have to see my point too. Economic planning is at its strictest here. In an absolutely unique just and humane way, I assure you. Look at what they're doing in the West, for instance. There are two methods. Let's call them the English and the American. The English sell it on the open market, as do most of the Common Market countries, and at a price which in itself cruelly narrows the circle down. Ten thousand dollars a dose. With the treatment—depending on the hospital—from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars. Who's got that kind of money? Do I have to tell you a what kind of class considerations come into play? In America a political filtering is added to the financial one: distribution is supervised by the FBI; the actual distribution is done by the individual States. I need scarcely add that in twenty-one out of the fifty

states coloured people, recent immigrants or 'Red suspects' can't get Regenerin... And here? First of all Sempiternin is more or less free. We don't even ask the normal national health percentage because a simple worker wouldn't be able to pay even that. The fee for the hospital treatment is negligible. Forget about the first five thousand doses. Those were an important social distinction to make sure of a disinterested attitude within the administration, and that's the way the process has been started all over the world, if only to maintain the stability of the domestic order. There are places where this is designed to perpetuate oppression, and there are places, like here, where it opens up new vistas of governing and planning. And don't forget that we're, so to say, the clinical experiment, which is our duty, after all, if we are to start an all-country campaign. But wait till you hear this! Not that I want to give you, of all people, a political speech but this is where the superiority of our system shows. Right now even the richest capitalist country can't plan the treatment of the whole population. Think of what kind of new social tension this means! There isn't even the equality of the death dance between master and servant any more. The exploiters are immortal, and on top of everything else the dispossessed die. Like two different types of animal: this isn't just class antagonism any more. Whereas here we are already working on a plan for the immortality of every citizen. Think of it. It isn't only a matter of being just and humanitarian. Humanism this time is being achieved on a higher level, in a wider sense, and it's only here, only in our system that it can be achieved! What's it all about? Nothing less than the deliberate formation of the mankind of the future, and the distant future, as well. I could put it another way: the realization of a strictly scientific eugenics. After all, through Sempiternin we are ourselves, to a great extent, our own successors, as it were!... Do I make myself clear?"

"Of course."

"Well, now you can see why it's embargoed."

"To pile up stock?"

"Partly. The main reason, though is because a scientific committee is now at work drawing up the criteria of preference. You see, in this country a man dies every three minutes. In other words, loss is constant. The newborn, of course, numerically make up for the loss, but their quality is uncertain, and for years they are only a burden to society. True?"

"How many people can you treat?"

"By concentrating our forces and setting up emergency hospitals with a staff who've been through crash courses, by expanding the pharmaceutical works and the rabbit farms, I'd say a thousand a day in two years' time.

But think of the organization! And if we offer Sempiternin as an attraction, we won't have any labour shortage."

"A thousand a day, that still means... twenty-five years for ten million, and with the natural increase..."

"There will be some, though to a gradually diminishing extent."

"How'd you mean?"

"Parallel with immortality population planning has obviously got to be more and more rigorous. Partly through regulations—abolition of family allowances, progressive taxing of children—but partly spontaneously too: the eternal twenty-year-olds will hardly want to have other progeny than themselves."

"Even so, a certain number of children will still be born..."

"That's why I said the first decade of the next century. By then we will have finished treating the whole population, and the natural increase will get Sempiternin when they are twenty just as every child to-day gets a small-pox or Sabin vaccination."

"And in the meantime a man dies every three minutes."

"This isn't simply a matter of saving lives, its saving social value as well. Priorities have to be determined, so that even from tomorrow the least possible social value should go to waste."

"How?"

"With machines. Computers. The committee is working on the criteria now."

"What kind of criteria?"

"The criteria of social usefulness. Public morals, intelligence quotients, biological value, everything, down to the minutest detail. I've heard that even beauty, even the aesthetic value is being taken into consideration. And of course the demands of the division of labour, so that there shouldn't be any hitch en route... After they've finished comes the programming, and the computer can get going."

"With the data on every single citizen?"

"You can imagine what a terrifying job it is! And now you can see why I have to appear so callous. Why, any pulling of strings is most strictly forbidden?"

He understood. Of course he did.

"I wouldn't have come to you if... You know what hypertonia means. You're right, though, maybe I'll last out till I'm eighty. Very unlikely though... Our generation with its exhausted, tortured organism and nervous system... I may live, but it may just as well happen that the next violent change in the weather will bring on a fatal coronary. The next

excitement or physical effort, apoplexy. I wouldn't have come otherwise. My diploma, my theoretical knowledge and practical experience... I could still do a lot..."

"It'll all be on your punch card!"

"Apart from that, I'm a member of the Party."

"O Béla, how often did you hear and how often did you yourself say that this means more responsibility, but not more rights! With one exception: you can be a Party official. Just think of the political tension that would be created..."

"But... after all, an old member of the Party, a veteran..."

"You're the last person I should have expected to bring that up."

"I never do usually."

"Anything that's good in you will be included in your moral qualification. And besides... your work in the Party before Liberation? Béla, I can be frank with you: would it be in the interest of the society of the future to have people who even after ten thousand years can only bring up the work they did in the Party before 1945? I'd only say this to you. If you were to quote me, I'd deny it." He laughed.

"Everybody in the private sector is through the treatment already."

"Everybody? That's a bit of an exaggeration."

"Every factory buyer."

"Oh, come on!"

"Every garage attendant."

"Not 'every'."

"Every doughnut-seller, every soccer player, every pop song writer, every cooperative chairman, every market seller, every city whore."

"Hold on, don't let's exaggerate."

"Doctors are rigging up private hospitals in their homes."

A gesture of helplessness. "We know about that."

"The road is blocked with foreign cars outside their houses."

"In Vienna they give two schillings for one forint. We know that."

"The hard currency shops have Sempiternin in the window."

"That's different. It's like exporting. With the money we get we import light construction buildings for emergency hospitals. You were working here, you surely understand that."

"I can't understand how it's possible to buy Sempiternin for four hundred thousand forints on the Grand Boulevard in front of the National Hotel. In the original factory packaging."

"You can't understand! How naive can you be, Béla! Yes, unfortunately, it's true. We know. But these are all only marginal phenomenon."

"Relatives living abroad send Regenerin and Athanatin as presents. Just as they sent cars before. Well, do you believe that? That it's really a present?"

"Why, did you believe the cars were presents? Was there a single fool in Hungary who believed that? We still have our shortcomings. We've never denied it."

"In front of the Royal Hotel there's quite a stock exchange. Sempiternin, Antimortin, Regenerin. And every Budapest kid knows that Nixexitin is the best. It's the most expensive too: five hundred and fifty thousand."

"Well now, you know, that's a real joke. I'm not letting any top secret out: Nixexitin is manufactured here in Újpest, and carted away in tank-waggons. All they do is put it in phials and label it: 'Nixexitin Bayer'. According to the specification they refine it once more. Against an allergy occurring in one out of three hundred cases. But as far as the active ingredients and the degree of efficiency is concerned there's no damn difference at all. That's a good one —'Nixexitin is the best'. Because it's West German!"

"How on earth do people get hold of half a million forints just like that?"

"Look, this is really a matter of life and death—many people sell everything they have."

"I would too. Everything I've gained through a lifetime's work. I might get fifty thousand forints for it if I'm lucky, but not five hundred thousand."

"Not everyone is like you or me. There's money around. There is. We've seen it before. Hungary has the highest proportion of Mercedes to every thousand cars. Not to mention anything else..."

"Are the workers, the teachers... all the honest, sweating labourers here sheep that they put up with this?"

"Stop being a demagogue, Béla. It's beneath you. And don't look at the problem as if you were some sort of a dragon of dogmatic virtue. Look at it with the eye of an economist. If things are as they are that lets us out of several commitments in the first place. We don't have to give Sempiternin to those who've already got hold of it. Secondly, just think how much buying power is deflected by Sempiternin from other areas, especially private building. The great part of those half millions would otherwise go into villas and cottages at Lake Balaton. Do you know what this means in the way of materials and labour capacity released for other things? For one thing it means that we can fulfil the housing plan? For instance... And by the way, this gives you an idea of the kind of pressures we are under, how much temptation there is all around us, and how seriously we have to take discipline nowadays. You see, if we let up anywhere, if there is a little crack somewhere, the whole great campaign collapses!"

"I haven't got five hundred thousand forints, or four hundred thousand

at that, so I can't exchange my forints illegally for hard currency. I shall just have to drop dead tomorrow."

"Now this is something you really mustn't do—get yourself all worked up. You can afford to wait with dropping dead for a long time, Béla. But you mustn't work yourself up like this."

"Fine. So I should die nice and peacefully and quietly. For the simple reason that I retired not quite six months ago."

Szterényi reached for the bell. "Won't you have a cognac after all?... Terike!... I mustn't drink unfortunately, but you go ahead. That drop won't do you any harm, on my doctor's word." And after the secretary had poured out the cognac and gone again, he went on: "You know, Béla—don't think I'm pretending—I so often daydream nowadays about the good old human life with an end to it. All this fuss here. And for another 120 years—as it stands at present. It isn't such a bad thing after all to grow old, to get tired, and then—yes—one day to drop dead. And sleep, just sleep. I don't understand, I honestly don't understand this rush for the wonder drug. Do you know what eternal life is? I've got a suspicion what it's like. Maybe you remember what Engels wrote about it: dreary, grey boredom... The age limit for pensioners has been raised to 150 years of service. For the present... We know what that means... A ruling is under preparation: all diplomas lose their validity every fifty years; or according to other proposals, every thirty years. I have to go back to school again... Then... I don't even want to talk about it.—Sempiternin doesn't solve the problem of the decay of the brain and the limitations of its storage capacity. That's why I mustn't drink, I mustn't smoke, I mustn't take sedatives or sleeping pills. Well that's all right. But after a while the storage capacity will be exhausted anyhow. In a thousand years? According to some there's no problem: the human brain is good for three or four thousand years. And after that? My eyes will be all right, so will my ears. But I won't be able to see or hear. I'll be able to perceive but not to apperceive. Because my brain will just hold memories. I'll look at a tree in bloom, and instead of seeing it, I'll have memories of it. D'you understand? Terrifying! Worse than any death: to be buried alive within myself... Futurologists say that science will solve the problems of the brain in fifty years. Okay, make it five hundred years. But what if they aren't solved? And even if they are: will that regenerated brain be *me?* How will they solve that?... Then this whole business of 'eternal life'—isn't it merely an illusion? The regenerated organism can't as yet resist poison, loss of blood, suffocation. I might die as well as you, only it would have to be a violent death and therefore more painful. They're not even sure yet to what extent Sempiternin protects one

against radiation. I don't read the news in the papers in the same way as you. A conflict here, a crisis there. By the way, the Chinese have been foaming for weeks against Sempiternin, 'the biological paper tiger of the united capitalist and socialist imperialist front'. The question of war or peace makes my flesh crawl. How long can we go on dancing on a razor's edge? You've only got to worry for the span of one generation... How can I ever explain it to you, Béla? You know that you'll die. Your only gamble is 'how' and 'when'. But for me there is a real alternative: life or death. I'm meant to be 'immortal', but, for instance, I'm still not foolproof. Can you imagine how I feel when I board a plane? And it's something I have to do at least six times a year. Can one fly like this *for ever* without crashing? Or can one walk, say, along the street without eventually being run over by a lorry? And if I miraculously manage to escape all these things, how will I ever escape the cosmic disintegration of the world? Well? Death, just because it's farther off is still death. And not being certain makes it even more horrible."

He stood up. After all, he'd outstayed his welcome as it was. He'd drunk the cognac alone too.

"If I have any time in this short little life of mine, any spare time, I'll feel for you. D'you know how the whole thing sounds? As if I were waiting in the death cell for my hour to come, and you, a nice, sympathetic visitor, are complaining about a stomach ache." And he couldn't stop himself shouting again: "It's all because of six months, not quite six months! I'd be sitting there, in your place!"

"I don't understand you!" Szterényi too stood up. "I don't understand this whole world. Have you all gone mad? 'Death cell'? Be reasonable: haven't you lived your whole life in that 'death cell'? Haven't you known ever since you were conscious of yourself that death is inevitable; didn't your father and mother and your thousands and millions of forebears die, right back to the protozoa; wasn't that the fate of all of them, and didn't you accept it too, long, long ago? Did you ever aspire to eternal life? Wouldn't you have branded anyone who whimpered about it as crazy? What's happened? What's made this impossible demand suddenly break out in people, and so aggressively? That they even feel offended if somebody explains to them reasonably and patiently that there's nothing to be done. And the great problems of the world, the really great problems, are they just 'stomach aches'?..."

At the end, of course: 'I'll do all I possibly can'. That was the way he used to shake off his visitors too.

He felt the tense despair, the tense despair of childhood prayers. When he knew there was no point anyway.

He took a walk round the centre of town to get a bit of fresh air. He looked at the people in the street. It was striking how different were the ones who'd already changed, even in outward appearance. And there were a lot of them in this district. Their movements were different, their look, their assurance. In the old Vörösmarty coffee house—he still called it Gerbeaud—every table was packed. They were all the changed ones. How could someone who hadn't changed sit serenely and calmly on the terrace of Gerbeaud?

On the way home he stopped again at the building site. He watched the red-blue-yellow steel dragon lifting its head at regular intervals from behind the hoarding. And he'd never travel on the north-south underground. Though how many would, how many would throng each platform. The platform that would be just here. How many!

Suddenly he felt as lonely as the last specimen of a dying species.

Translated by Elizabeth Szász

SOCIALIST REALISM— STYLE OR APPROACH?

by

PÉTER NAGY

I do not know if there exists, or has ever existed, another aesthetic term which, for long years, could evoke as much argument, passion, misunderstandig, misinterpretation, good and evil intention as socialist realism. The fact in itself indicates how timely and how vivid this expression is, or rather the much desired, feared or wished for artistic reality that is involved in, or at least has ever been imagined as part of this term. Seeing that, since its beginnings, it has stirred so much passion, and that all the arguments and misunderstandings have not yet died down, one may presume that it denotes something that is lively and efficient even apart from the name. And exactly that is why it must be given a name, why it should be named. Endowing things with names is, after all, a primarily human business which manifests itself in every human sphere, but nowhere else in a better, subtler—and therefore sometimes quite confusing—form, than in the theoretical field of the intellect, ideology and the arts.

The anthology* published two years ago is, in my opinion, of pioneering significance not only within the borders of Hungary. Two hundred and fifty essays by nearly one hundred and fifty authors deal with the history of the term. The book traces the hundred and fifty years old story of the concept and the reality behind it: the story of the term is transformed, by the anthology's "montage" techniques, into a kind of fascinating motion picture; the reader is allowed to follow, step by step, the concept's birth, its development into domination, and later, its becoming problematic once again. This historical motion picture is not solely the professional delight of the historian, it is also a considerable contribution to the process of knowing our age, and its literature. It is a plastic presentation of the way in which a working class movement slogan was transformed into an aesthetic category, this new quality's influence on its source, and of their never fading dialectical interaction.

* *A szocialista realizmus* (Socialist Realism) ed. Béla Köpeczi. Gondolat, Budapest 1970.

The intellectual history of these stirring years makes clear that the notion of a new art and literature has been present, right from the first theoretical founders of socialism, in socialist thought, though not always in socialist practice. They firmly believed in the need of the working class for an art with a new tune and a new subject-matter, for an art that would be different from that of the preceding ages and ruling classes. The fact that this need can be found, ever so feebly outlined, as early as Fourier and Saint-Simon, shows that the social responsibility and vocation of the arts has been present, from the very beginning, in every mind preoccupied with socialism. This idea, like so many others, finds its fullest, theoretically richest expression in Marx's and Engels's remarks concerning literature and art. Would the new society create its own art automatically or should the new art have to be constructed by consistent work so that it could efficiently prepare the way for a new society, a new power? This controversy which came into focus in the theoretical and political debates of the 1920s and 30s appears as early as the aesthetic thinking of the first socialist theoreticians. It was latent in early writings, and became more apparent in the difference between, say, Belinsky's and Mehring's view; and, finally, developed into an open conflict between Lenin's and Trotsky's ideas on art. The theory and practice of the communist parties was settled, of course, by Lenin's decisive position, somewhat extremely expressed in 1905 owing to the prevailing situation. It did not obviously eliminate the other standpoint. All that can be definitely established is that whenever Marx's and Lenin's concept of literary partisanship was arbitrarily distorted for the sake of voluntarism, regimentation, or for the sake of presenting an ideal future as a present reality, the demand of spontaneity appeared, aroused by the need to defend organic development that had been violated, and it led irrevocably, through a mechanistic interpretation of the theory of reflexion, to the claim, or rather the exclusive acceptance, of an art that should only register, that is to say follow, social development.

It was not chance that the relation between literature and the Party, as a problem to be solved, first occurred to Lenin in 1905; 1905 and 1917, the two great revolutionary landmarks also produced a fundamental change in the socialist concept of the arts. Before 1905—for the very reason that proletarian dictatorship was a mere theoretical notion having no immediate practical prospect—there was a complete confusion in that field; uncountable variants emerged and disappeared in those years: from Heine's and Wagner's famous fear of iconoclasts to Owen's Utopian views, from G. B. Shaw's demand for an ideology to a new postulate of culture formulated by Romain Rolland. Two facts, however, rise above the others at

the time: the intermezzo of the Paris Commune on the one hand, which, first while in possession of power, tried to face the interdependent relations of the working class and culture. On the other hand, there was the extraordinary depth of random remarks by Marx and Engels. Mention should be made, in addition, of Franz Mehring, who, though on a considerably lower theoretical level, served the culture of the working class with great critical sense and polemic talent.

The period between the two revolutions was a period of preparation for the work to be done and of the elucidation of notions not only in Russia, but also throughout the European labour movement. In this field the contribution of Hungarian Marxists—Ervin Szabó and József Pogány, for instance—was of considerable significance. The greatest work was, of course, done by Lenin once again, who wrote his essays on Tolstoy and expounded his views concerning national cultures. At his side, however, Gorky and Lunacharsky also appeared; as well as, partly supporting him, partly in opposition, Plekhanov and Kautsky, Clara Zetkin and Gramsci, Verhaeren and Vandervelde.

The October Revolution—one cannot elude the commonplace for it happens to be true—produced, just as in every other respect, a revolutionary explosion even in the field of culture; this reverberated, on a small scale, in the cultural seething of the 1919 Hungarian Republic of Councils. Everybody was looking for something new, and all the tendencies, hopes and claims that had been covered by the initial, passionate enthusiasm, only came to light much later.

An immediate conclusion of the revolutionary rapture was the blooming of Proletkult and all the related movements. In Hungarian conditions this appeared as the monopolistic claim made by *avantgarde* artists led by Lajos Kassák and his review *Ma*, and, by György Lukács's and Béla Kun's reaction. All these led, deliberately or not, to a kind of cultural self-maiming, to a radical left-wing iconoclasm, to the denial of a great part, if not the whole, of the national and international cultural tradition. One is amazed, when reading the old documents, at the foolishness of revolution at all costs, at the tendencies, representing a considerable force during the 20s, which were unwilling to acknowledge any other trend in arts but that of directly agit-prop compositions. They did not want to place poster-verse and marching songs at the side of classical poetry and symphonic music, but to substitute them completely. In all those endeavours there was, as usually happens, the inevitable mischief done by sectarian ideology, hypocritical swagger and sneaking personal interests pushing their way in under the guise of disinterestedness.

Few periods in Europe's intellectual history were more fascinating than the 20s and the early 30s. The intellectual life of the Soviet Union in process of consolidation accumulated and overheated all the turbulence, confusion and pathos of the period. Turbulence was followed in due course by clarification: romantic revolutionarism by a reappraisal of classical values. This tendency was expressed by the birth of first the idea, then the slogan, and later the doctrine, of socialist realism. In the special Soviet circumstances, socialist realism also meant a doing away with the cultural self-maiming, and a return to classical values, but in an entirely new attitude. Today, as a result of the bad practice of a period of mistakes the slogan "Socreal" is equal, in the eyes of many, with sheer dogmatism, voluntarism and "varnishing". In addition to bad practice and its arrogant "theoretical generalization", this is also due to hostile propaganda which, out of political or simply artistic opposition, was eager to exaggerate and generalize every mistake. The proclamation of socialist realism in its time, however, meant precisely an extension of horizons. Theoretically this is vivid in its fundamentals even today, as we can see in the works of all those who, since 1956, have spoken out in support of socialist realism: artists and thinkers from Aragon to Lukács, from Siqueiros to Churay, who were all pioneers and agitators of the enrichment and widening of possibilities.

Before the birth of the notion of socialist realism and its taking root there were two tendencies current in the Soviet Union: on the one hand, a demand for artistic realism, most firmly proposed by the 1928 platform of the "peasant writers", on the other hand, the demand for an art of socialist disposition and Marxist essence. This latter appeared in certain "Proletkult" groups as a definite demand for "dialectical materialist art". Early in the 30s these two combined in a natural way, without any forcing or outside interference. This process was codified by the 1934 Congress of Writers, when the writers' association formulated the demand for, and the definition of, socialist realism as a basic rule.

One might wonder if it was right to officially codify the artistic method of socialist realism. Perhaps "Lenin's standards" were still much more alive in the 1925 Party decision, making it unmistakably clear that the Party should not bind itself to any particular literary or artistic trend. And did not an official acceptance of such a method logically lead, though not necessarily and unavoidably, to party decisions, which making use of—and compromising—the Central Committee, directly interfered with questions concerning matters of taste in the field of literature, film and music? But even brooding on this could not make one forget the fact that in its time—at the end of the 20s and the beginning of the 30s—there was a strong tendency to return

to traditions, that is to realism in Soviet art, and indeed not exclusively in Soviet art, the same process could be observed, in changing circumstances, but strongly influenced by Soviet development—almost anywhere in Europe; a return, not against, but for the sake of, socialism. One reason for this was that people, artists of every kind, who came from various directions, having lost confidence in the spectacular fireworks of all kinds of avantgarde tendencies, were eager to approach, and to serve socialism. Another reason which we are inclined to forget was that the fifteen years between the triumph of the revolution and the declaration of socialist realism as a doctrine were the first great cultural revolutionary period of the Soviet Union: in fact millions emerged from a state of illiteracy, and a demand for the pleasures afforded by art appeared in the hearts of many thousands. The acceptance of socialist realism shows the artists' tribute to these facts: the case of art ceased to be an affair of small exclusive circles, it was well on the road of achieving a wide mass base. And perhaps this was the greatest of latent forces that made possible the general acceptance, and the urgent demand, of the slogan of socialist realism.

A demand for realism, as shown above, had emerged long before the slogan of socialist realism was born, and kept on being given greater and greater emphasis; but it is a remarkable fact, connected with the demand for a new culture and art, felt by everybody at the time, that its name could hardly ever appear without an attribute; most people were demanding a concrete or social, not yet socialist, a heroic or even "monumental realism", as an expression solely worthy of the greatness of the period. Similarly, but irrespective of, and in an indirect argument with, the case of realism, the demand for revolutionary romanticism also appeared early on in Soviet literature: Gorky spoke of it as early as 1909, and it regularly occurred since. In the above-mentioned 1928 platform of peasant writers the two terms—realism and revolutionary romanticism—emerged together.

The reader of proclamations, declarations and theoretical treatises will suspect that the theoretical mistake which later caused all the practical mistakes and their theoretical generalization and monopolization was made when revolutionary romanticism became part of the programme. A more or less negative proof of this can be found in György Lukács's theoretical and practical conduct, who, in the 20s and 30s, fought in defence of realism mainly against a flat tendentiousness, none the less, as far as I know, he never committed the term "revolutionary romanticism" to paper with approval. Lunacharsky's theoretical road serves as positive proof. In 1926 he was, when speaking about an exhibition of Western revolutionary artists, a follower, or at least, a sympathizer, of the "left-wing" revolutionary

attitude as regards form, but in 1931 he already supported the parallel development of realist and stylizing techniques; whereas in 1933 it was he who, by a theoretical elaboration of the idea of socialist realism (he was right when protesting against its being considered a style; it is in fact a creative method determining an epoch), made room for revolutionary romanticism and "monumental realism", and by doing so, opened the gates to voluntarism in art. Unfortunately Gramsci's excellent analysis of the relation between politics and art, written in 1934, was in its time, probably unknown to most. Gramsci foresaw, on theoretical, almost on psycho-typological grounds, and called attention to, the possible dangers of such a relation. Communist aesthetics, however, chose not to follow the way suggested by Gramsci, but another, a good example of which is an essay by the Hungarian Béla Balázs, written in 1935. He openly proclaimed a programme of idealization. His point of view was, of course, symptomatic, not only, and not primarily, of him, but of a general artistic atmosphere prompted from above.

A reaction soon arose within the block of socialist realism. At the end of the 30s Bloch, Brecht, Aragon, Ehrenburg, Lukács—each in his own way and from his own point of view—began to seek, to insist on, a real enlargement of the method. Their experiments and trials came to an end, of course, with the beginning of the war: art and its theory used the weapon of socialist realism in the struggle against fascism. But the political leaders tried to eternalize the utilitarian-didactic character of wartime art even after the war, it was all the more convenient for them, Zhdanov was the high-priest of this tendency, his simplest verdicts were proclaimed as holy writ. One is amazed today at the transparent tendency, manifest not only in the field of art, of forcing theory into the service of momentary tactics, of the immediate and permanent generalization of many an *ad hoc*, and therefore often arbitrary, opinion.

The rigid armour of pseudo-theory round the body of art began getting loose only after 1953. It is not by chance that theoretical writings, trying to define socialist realism in a more vivid and colourful manner, became more frequent after that time. There is a return to the 1937–38 initiatives, and in fact our present decade witnesses a ripening, a consummation of the process. The method's competence, the theory's validity, just as its followers' persistence, can be proved by the fact that in spite of all the difficulties, defeats and struggles its old followers remained, almost without exception, true to the cause; after all, it shows that it is capable of continous development, revival and enrichment without casting off its essence.

In the ever-increasing correspondence of theory and practice it becomes more and more apparent, and impossible to misinterpret, that socialist

realism is not any tendency of style or school, but a collective term, indicating a special approach or attitude to artistic creation, so that various parallel and even competing styles and schools may properly go on within its limits. In fact, any creative artist or work of socialist principle, originating from a soil of concrete social reality, trying to react on it with the aim of developing it towards socialism, may find a place within the frame of socialist realism. It is in this way that socialist realism is realizing, in a much more manifold and colourful way, the principles which Lenin in 1905, hastily and in the heat of a party crisis and debate, committed to paper.

MY MOTHER'S DEATHS

(Short story)

by

DEZSŐ KAPÁS

"I charge myself with matricide on six counts," he said, and lit a cigarette. "Before I was six years old I pushed my mother under a tram. This would qualifiy as manslaughter by negligence, since I didn't do it on purpose. It was a rash, impulsive movement.

"Dusk had fallen. I always used to stand on a chair in the window, propped up on my elbows. For once I had even done the washing-up—as it was her name-day—and I couldn't understand why she was already an hour late: it was usually half an hour at the most. I rushed out to the kitchen, to the row of drying plates; I looked out into the yard too, then back to the chair: I rested my chin on my folded hands on the window-sill and watched the corner. Nothing. Then it occurred to me that may be she was home already, and was creeping about silently behind my back for a joke. I turned round suddenly. Nothing. I started to cry at the window, and kept it up for a good twenty minutes, and it was nice when people stopped in sympathy. Then my eyes dried up, no matter how much I rubbed them; I had a go with the well-tried sobbing and whimpering—nothing worked. I just stared emptily at the lamps lighting up in the darkness, and then, in the distance, I saw mother coming with her two big loaded shopping bags. But all of the sudden she stopped and started back the way she had come. It was then I pushed her under the tram. To be more exact: I tripped her up, and she fell flat on her face—on the tramlines, as it happened, and as it happened the tram was coming. No one even noticed the accident; the tram didn't so much as slow down, it went on, and that made me very angry. Mother lay there helplessly on the tramlines, the contents of her bags scattered: the watermelon was ripped in half by the fall, and the juice slowly trickled out of its red flesh on to the stone. The next tram stopped in surprise; people began to cluster around, but by then my mother was no longer there. She was talking up to me underneath the window. Leaning out slightly,

I looked down on her, but even so I couldn't see her legs. 'Hi, Mum. What's up?' 'I just want to tell you to heat up your supper; it's in the blue pan on the gas stove.' 'Can I touch the matches?' 'Of course.' 'Thanks. Aren't you coming home?' 'No.' 'Ever?' 'Never.' 'What's for supper?' 'Potato stew.' 'Oh, good.' 'Don't cut more bread than you can eat.' She didn't so much as mention that I'd pushed her under the tram and she didn't say why she was so late, either. So I didn't tell her I'd done the washing-up.

"I was ten when I killed her for the second time. Out of possessiveness; jealousy, to be more exact. I wanted to give her a fright, that's why I peered in cautiously through the open kitchen window. My mother was kissing some chap. I could only see the back of his head, but that was enough for me to tell exactly who it was: Snoopy, the hairdresser. He had a scruffy little ladies and gents outfit on the corner; one of my older brothers had named him Snoopy because he was always snooping around the working-class wives. Mother was a widow, it's true—father flaked out in the war—but mother said she'd go through life with us on her own to the end, that she loathed stepfathers (so did we), and that she was still in love with papa. 'Oh, for Heaven's sake!' As soon as I saw the back of Snoopy's head, I didn't hesitate. In I went and flung open the kitchen door. They gaped at me, the fear of death on their faces. I snatched the razor out of the top pocket of Snoopy's dirty white coat, and pushed it in between his ribs. Then I hacked away at his neck, and carved a heart shot through by an arrow on his forehead. Since I didn't really want to shed the blood of a woman, I took her out into the yard, where the day before I had built a deep tank trap, expertly concealed with twigs, and turf laid over on top. After she had crashed down into the trap, I buried her with great care: only her head was showing by the time I had trodden the yellow sand down over the turf clods, now at the bottom. I sat down beside her, not looking at ther. 'What did you get out of it? Even his white coat is dirty! You were always so clean! And papa? Or if it was only a fleeting romance you were after, you could have asked me for advice.' I didn't go on because I accidentally looked at her and burst into tears because, well, after all, she was my mother—and I went on crying till I closed her eyes.

"The third time I was sixteen. I acted in the heat of passion and anger, while under the influence of drink. It was the day my buddies and I showed the world what we were made of. We drank and smoked, drank and swore; even our rowdiness was a success: two lamps in the park, a window at the hairdresser, barking at the moon in chorus, flight from two special constables. After a riotous, manly farewell, I started to kick an empty can on my own down the middle of the street; then lurching on to the pavement, I examined

myself in my secret pocket-mirror to see whether I looked debauched enough. I looked dead pale in the hall mirror, too. The light on mother's bedside table had been on for some time. I opened her door boldly, with a great deal of noise and still holding the doorhandle, stopped on the threshold. I smiled derisively. My mother, lying there in bed, looked scared—she had already sensed her unforgiveable mistake in receiving me with the light on. But she went on to make matters worse: she sat up and spoke. She didn't say what I expected her to: 'Where have you been?' which of course would have been quite enough of a sin as it was, but she said something even worse: 'What's happened to you, dear boy?' I hit her immediately. With the chair. That one blow was enough for her. The chair broke into pieces. Nonetheless she staggered out of bed, stumbled after me into the kitchen, and, with the death wound in her skull, held my head as I retched, groaning painfully, into the sink. She had hardly any voice left; she kept saying weakly: 'Dear boy, dear boy, my darling boy'. I didn't consider these words demanded any response. Then she let go of my head; I sprinkled myself with water, threw off my jacket—I may have left my tie on—splashed myself to the waist with cold water, watched the wild play of my chest muscles in the hall mirror as I panted, and drank the glass of milk put out for me. I opened the door of the room softly: the lamp on the bedside table was still on, of course; mother was back in bed. She was no longer alive.

"The fourth time it was poisoning. In our kitchen there was a large decrepit garden deck chair which you could tilt backwards. We'd got it from Mrs. Bernath: our family used to work a lot on a fifty-fifty basis in the orchard which was left her after her house had been requisitioned by the State. Of course, she didn't actually give us the deck chair, we were only minding it till the Americans came in. Gizi and I crept in after half pats eleven at night. That afternoon I had carefully greased the doors, and I didn't turn the light on, either, but I managed to pull Gizi in so that she didn't bump into anything. I had had lots of practice in walking around the house in the dark. By this time we were both in a good old state, so with no preamble, no transition, there was Gizi standing in the dark in the middle of the kitchen, while I gingerly began to open out the deck chair. (Oh, and I should have added that I was still a virgin. Gizi wasn't, but she wasn't a tart either, she was a nurse at the Railwaymen's Hospital, and really great, only she simply wouldn't agree to it in the open air—not out of cowardice or fussiness, but it was the end of the winter: she didn't want to catch a chill; she said she wouldn't mind in the summer, though even then she'd prefer the daytime.)

"Of course, I had forgotten to grease the deck chair: it rattled like a submachine gun. The more carefully I tried to open it out, the noisier it got. After about fifteen or twenty clicks I gave up for a while. In the silence my mother's voice from the other room: 'Is that you, dear boy?' (At that stage I was the only one living at home: my brothers had done a bunk into marriage. It obviously had to be me.) I stiffened in the silence and clutched the half-opened deck chair. Whereupon my mother's tone changed; 'Who's that?' (This meant she would be up and out in no time.) I beat her to it. I went in with an 'It's only me'. (*Her* light was on.) 'Have you drunk your tea?' 'Yes.' 'Did you cover up the bread? We don't want it to get dry.' It infuriated me that she acted as if she hadn't a suspicion in the world. 'Yes, I covered it up. How are you?' 'Fine. The meat wasn't fatty?' 'No. Have you taken your sleeping pill?' 'Not yet.' 'I'll bring you a glass of water.' That was when I started the daily dose of arsenic. For three weeks. Every evening in her tea. I never managed to lure Gizi back again, but after a lot of fuss Saci agreed. She, on the other hand, was a nervy type: she refused to do it in the kitchen. It was the middle of March: I took the folded deck chair out behind the shed. And when she finally said, 'Come on now, stop messing around, what is it you want?' I heard mother's voice: 'Who's that?' And again: 'Who's out there?' She came out into the yard, though by now she had been considerably weakened by the arsenic. 'Is that the two of you, my boy?' She even talked in the plural! I knew that if she came any nearer I'd kill her. But she went back inside; the concierge woke up, Saci dashed out of the back gate, and I dashed into the flat. It occurred to me that I had insulated all the windows and doors with the new insulating tape. I turned on the gas. I locked the hall door from the outside with a key, and only came home five days later. I acted as if nothing had happened.

"Then it was out of material greed. This was altogether too petty a business. I married Zsizsi; mother insisted that we sleep in the one room while she had the deck chair in the kitchen. But the deck chair still rattled, and, for that reason, mother tactfully left the tap running all the time, whereas we had the radio going non-stop to smother our own noise; but after ten o'clock we had to turn it down because of the neighbours, which also meant, however, that we had to stop our own noise, although we hadn't even begun it yet, because mother only started to open out the deck chair at half past ten. And so when we went off to Budapest for a week's substitute family honeymoon, and mother, leaning against the railings, looked down at the river from the middle of the Chain Bridge, all it took was the slightest flick of my finger and there we were alone in the flat, which even if it only had one room, was good enough for a start: later we could swop it for a bigger

one, and drowning, after all, is the most pleasant way to die. I was thirty, she sixty: she had reached a pretty good age—perhaps it wasn't that old, but if only I can survive as long. All the same, in my innermost self I knew very well that this was the first really mean act of my life. All those stupid newspaper items made me confused.

"The sixth time was not a legal offence: death by lack of sympathy. Mother lived on another eight years, in other words, till she was sixty-eight. We'd all left her: each of us one was married, each of us counted on the others to have her to live with them. I got a job in Budapest; for two years I called her every month long distance, after that, every other month; if I couldn't get home for Christmas, I sent her a telegram as well, and a parcel. She was forever sending letters; I didn't have time to answer them; later on she ended every letter by asking me just to write and say whether I was well or not: that was enough for her. I sent a telegram: 'I'M FINE, LOTS OF LOVE.' Next time she wrote that she was seriously ill. I only managed to get time off a month later, but then I simply rushed home like a madman. I opened the door: she was in the process of spring cleaning, as fit as a fiddle, juggling the furniture around. I wasn't taken in by tricks like that again. The telegram went: 'SPEEDY RECOVERY. MILLIONS OF KISSES.' Then she, too, caught on to telegrams: 'MY DARLING BOY I WANT TO SEE YOU SO VERY BADLY THAT IF I WON'T BE DISTURBING YOU TOO MUCH THEN I'D LIKE TO COME AND SEE YOU BY THE SUNDAY MORNING EXPRESS TRAIN TILL THEN I SEND YOU MUCH MUCH LOVE DARLING BOY OF MINE GOD GRANT YOU GOOD HEALTH YOUR LOVING MUMMY.' I told her to send short telegrams because every word cost money. Whereupon she obediently accustomed herself to short telegrams: 'FRIGHTENED ALONE ARRIVING BY EXPRESS SUNDAY.' And she came again and again, however much I told her not to exert herself, even I get exhausted by the journey. Then the baby came along and Katika wasn't the least bit pleased when mother kept on coming and interfering, and I told her so with due tact: of course we were pleased to see her at any time, but she should write two weeks in advance so that we could see whether it was convenient for us, and if it wasn't, we could let her know. For a year she didn't come, she didn't write, and I didn't write to her. "And then she died. No letter, no telegram to say that she was ill or something—no, in fact, a notice of death did come. I honestly thought she'd written it herself, the text was so short. We could only agree on the time of the funeral by means of incessant long distance calls. I travelled down there. I stared for a long time at my mother's face, trying to engrave it forever

on my memory, but within a few minutes I realized it was hopeless. Up till then mother had held the family together, tooth and nail; on the day of her funeral, however, the whole thing fell to pieces. On the way home, at the cemetery gate, my brothers and I in our dark suits went for each other about who, when and why had behaved so rottenly towards mother; the good boy was always the one who was talking: if I was talking, it was me. Then someone had the crazy idea that mother was living on here amongst us: her memory should hold us together, etcetera. There followed a great reconciliation and embracing, but we knew that it was all a load of crap; the family was a load of crap, brotherly love even more so. And what remained of mother? A few lousy photos. Oh, that reminds me, I happen to have some of them on me. One or two are quite passable in fact. But they're only photos. Nothing more. It's over a year now, and I'm still quite incapable of realizing that this time she's really . . ."

He suddenly fell silent; he looked towards the entrance and smiled. He stood up and kissed the cheek of the newcomer. 'Hi, mum. Come and sit down. What would you like?'

The grey-haired woman smiled exactly as she did in the photographs: 'Marrons glacés.'

Translated by Elizabeth Szász

SURVEYS

LÁSZLÓ ORSZÁGH

UPS AND DOWNS IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

I

"Nor is it for nothing that the grave and frugal Transylvanian send out yearly from as far as the mountainous borders of Russia, and beyond the Hercynian wilderness, not their youth but their staid men, to learn our language and our theologic arts".

Hungarian schools were teaching English as early as the seventeenth century, a time when English–Hungarian intellectual relations flourished. There were a great many Hungarians in England at the time, as Milton bore witness in the excerpt from the *Areopagitica* quoted above, and the first diaries of Hungarians who travelled in England date from that time. One of the best known is that of Márton Szepsi Csombor, an impecunious young student. He visited not only the obligatory sights, London Bridge, the Palace of Westminster and St. Paul's and Canterbury Cathedral, but also London's public parks, ate her tasty chops and commented on that curious black stone, emitting stinking fumes when lit, that the practical English burnt in their fireplaces.

Hungarians travelling to England were prompted to learn the language by the knowledge that Latin was no longer enough. Latin at that time was the language of higher learning in Hungary and Christian Central Europe, and the lingua franca of the professions and the gentry when talking to men of a different tongue. Márton Szepsi Csombor in 1618 and Miklós Bethlen in 1663 were shocked to discover that Latin could not be used in conversation with anyone in England. Szepsi Csombor not only could not make himself understood to "merchants, furriers and tailors," but even in Oxford "priests and professors considered it torture to have to speak Latin," Bethlen wrote. And around the same period, in 1669, Edward Browne, later President of the Royal College of Physicians, was surprised by the general use of Latin found in Hungary. "I have even met with Coachmen, Watermen, and mean Persons who could make themselves understood thereby." But visits to England and the study of English were not prompted by curiosity, or an interest in either the country or its literature, but chiefly and perhpas purely by the need to establish intellectual connections. Hungary, still partially under Turkish occupation, and the Grand Duchy of Translyvania were then the furthest points east where Protestant communities could be found. Hungarian Calvinist theologians from 1620 onwards increasingly took the opportunity to continue their studies at English and Scotch universities which enjoyed a high reputation, after periods of study at German or Dutch universities. Following their return home they not only propagated the ideas of Puritanism but encouraged the spread of the English language in a number of ways.

The first school where English could be learnt in Hungary was the College of Gyulafehérvár (Alba Julia) where it was taught in the 1640s. Twenty years later English was

also taught at the College of Debrecen; the text-book used there has in fact survived. The *Anglicum Spicilegium* of the professor György Komáromi Csipkés, published in 1664, is not only interesting as tangible proof of contemporary English teaching, but also because it was the first to appear in any Eastern or Central European country, including Germany, where the first English grammar was only published twenty years later.

After such an encouraging start one would have imagined that English was taught with success in Hungary in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But in the event things fell out otherwise. Politics took a hand, as so often in later days, in the history of the teaching of foreign languages. Like true love the course of English teaching never did run smooth in Hungary. At the close of the seventeenth century Hungary regained all its former territory, but paid for the help it received in expelling the Turk by the loss of its independence. Following the Turkish wars the Hapsburgs acquired dominion over the whole of the country, and this great Counter-Reformation power made contacts between the Protestants of Hungary and Britain as difficult as possible. By the eighteenth century English teaching in Hungarian schools was dead. Even at the beginning of the nineteenth century it could only be learnt with the help of a language teacher or a handbook. As a result of the efforts of the Anglophile generation of the 1830s, of what is known as the Age of Reform, the situation improved to the extent that English courses were available in ten Hungarian towns in the 1840s, but none of them in schools. The Lutheran Gymnasium in Pest was the first of offer English as an extra-curricular subject in 1844. Austrian oppression, following the failure of the 1848–49 revolution, swept away this promising beginning. The situation was similar in the early twentieth century when, after a long struggle by progressive intellectuals to introduce the teaching of English, the government was reluctantly forced to capitulate. The 1915 planned syllabus introduced English as an optional secondary school subject in addition to long-entrenched German and recently introduced French. But the plan was never implemented in law, politics again interfered, war, as is well known, broke out, with the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy opposed to Great Britain and her allies.

The real introduction of English came a decade later, with the Education Act of 1924, making English an obligatory subject in the four upper classes of nearly thirty secondary schools (gymnasiums). It is worth noting that the majority of these schools were located in the predominantly Protestant eastern half of the country and were mostly denominational schools. The curriculum of the two top classes laid a heavy stress on English literature from Shakespeare to the end of the nineteenth century. It was only with the reform of the curriculum in 1938 that a shift in emphasis became noticeable favouring British life, civilization and institutions in modern times.

*

In the years 1945–1948 English rose rapidly in popularity as a school subject. Classes doubled and trebled in number. But far-reaching changes occurred in Eastern Europe, following the Second World War and its aftermath, with the advent of Socialism. Around 1950 English, together with German, French and Italian went into rapid decline. Official opinion in effect regarded these so-called capitalist languages as unnecessary subjects of secondary school instruction. The number of schools, classes and classroom hours in which these languages were taught was drastically curtailed in favour of Russian and science subjects. Hundreds of experienced language teachers specializing in Western tongues, as well as in Latin and Greek, found themselves without work overnight, and were left to

sink or swim. To swim meant to qualify in crash courses as full-blown teachers of Russian, chemistry or biology, etc., which was of course essentially a political decision. In the years of the Cold War, therefore, it looked as if the teaching of English would finally become extinct.

A SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The eclipse lasted nearly ten years and English eventually began to re-surface in the late fifties, again as the result of a political decision. Today, a further ten years or more later, it is a flourishing school subject, going from strength to strength. Exact statistical data were not available at the time this was written, but it may safely be assumed that about one out of ten Hungarian children will be receiving some sort of instruction in English at school between their fourteenth and eighteenth years.

On first hearing this sounds rather reassuring, so let us look a little more closely at the facts. The Hungarian educational system is three-tiered. Elementary education is compulsory from six to fourteen and goes under the name of "general school". In these schools the only foreign language taught is Russian, obligatory for every pupil from the fifth class onwards. On the second level are the secondary schools, the gymnasiums and various types of vocational or trade schools, formerly called *technikums*. Throughout the four years of this second level, Russian is the compulsory first foreign language, three classroom hours a week. On the third level are the universities and various other types of institutions of higher education. Russian is obligatory in these as well for at least one year.

In all the gymnasium-type and many vocational secondary schools students are required to take a second modern language. English seems to be the most popular choice today, with German following closely behind. French also can be taken as a second language and in a few schools Italian or Spanish. (In a handful of schools Latin fights a brave rearguard action, favoured by students who plan to study medicine, history, etc.) The relative popularity of German is not surprising in view of the fact that up to the end of the Second World War it was the first modern foreign language for Hungarian children who went to secondary schools. For the then underprivileged and semi-literate masses German possessed a great prestige value. It is today the obvious western language choice for the children of those who never went further than the elementary school (where no foreign language was then taught) thirty or forty years ago.

The number of classroom hours for English as a second foreign language is today (as with German, French, etc.) two a week for four years, a total of 256 hours. In these four years the pupils are expected to learn and be able to use at least 1,200 "lexical units", i.e. words and locutions. Obviously this is an extremely modest goal, not much more than a smattering of English.

Aware of the meagre and practically negligible results of this teaching, the government established a growing number of "language gymnasiums" (or rather gymnasiums with a language side) in the mid-sixties. Here Russian continues to occupy three hours a week, but the classroom hours of the second modern language are considerably increased, from two to six in the first two years of the gymnasium course and to five in the remaining two years. This amounts to about 700 classroom hours in English (or French, etc.) in four years, with a minimum of 2,300 lexical units as the goal. The remarkable success of these language gymnasiums led to the experimental establishment of two gymnasiums with even more developed language sides. One is in Budapest, another at Sárospatak (with a third one in the process of organization). In these there are two English hours every schoolday (one in the morning and one in the afternoon) in the

first two years, i.e. 12 hours a week, 10 hours in the third year and 9 in the last year.

The small but charming market-town of Sárospatak in the Tokay area, the north-eastern corner of Hungary, was chosen as the place for this experiment for very good reasons. One is that the school there, founded in 1531, with a shining roster of eminent alumni through the centuries, has always been one of the most prestigious centres of learning in Hungary. In the inter-war years it achieved a special reputation with the particularly high level of its English-teaching methods. The other reason is that it is organized on boarding-school lines, and such an organization and atmosphere are well suited to intensive daily English-language training. According to present plans the Sárospatak English college will include one or two native English teachers as well as its Hungarian teachers of English as soon as the thorough-going architectural renovation of the ancient college buildings, now in progress, has been completed.

A gradual awareness of the fact that the fourteenth year is too late for a child to begin to learn a language really effectively induced the highest educational authorities to decide on an attempt to make a much earlier start. The attempt was made with very good results in a number of elementary schools or "general" schools. Since about 1963 children have been able to start learning English in the third class, at the age of nine. For them Russian is the second foreign language, beginning with the fifth class, when they are eleven years old. In the present school year (1971–72) there are already over thirty general schools with English classes, mostly in the principal county towns, and in the capital. The number of these schools is likely to increase, depending among other things on a steady supply of well-qualified teachers. Children attending them will be expected to possess nearly 2,000 lexical units by the time they are ready to enter the gymnasium. At present the number of children learning English in general schools is, of course, still very small, probably less than one per cent of the total national enrolment. Yet it is a very promising beginning.

Method and Content

Questions of method and content are of basic importance in any curriculum, not least in language teaching. In the interwar years fluency in conversation and proficiency in oral communication was given considerably less importance than it is today. Translation —into both languages—was regularly practised. Nor was good old-fashioned parsing and grammar neglected. The contemporary approach is heavily speech-oriented. The aim of classroom work is to enable pupils to express themselves orally in good English, to understand simple spoken English and also be able to translate into Hungarian with the aid of a dictionary, as well as write brief compositions in English. To produce these oral results no word is allowed be breathed in Hungarian during the English classroom hour. Every effort is made to explain in English the meaning of the new English words encountered in the Reader, as well as explaining grammatical rules exclusively in English. In the hands of a resourceful and tireless teacher and with extrovert types of pupils who are highly articulate this method can produce spectacular results. And yet on occasion a certain regrettable waste of valuable time and energy occurs when, for instance, basic grammatical rules have to be explained in English to mere beginners. Fortunately the bolder teachers frequently transgress the rules, not without considerable advantage to their pupils.

In recent years tape-recorders are increasingly employed in classroom work. Everything in the prescribed readers is available on tapes, recorded by native speakers of English. But those rather expensive innovations, language laboratories, are still few and far between in secondary

schools. Neither are the language classes of schools adequately provided with visual aids.

Apart from the primarily practical aims of language teaching, and underlying the whole approach, stand the clearly defined secondary educational and ideological aims of school studies. These are unequivocally laid down in the latest (1965) official guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education. The language learning process, they enjoin, should aid the pupils in acquiring information about the countries, ways of life and culture of the English-speaking nations, and should contribute to the formation and consolidation of the moral qualities characteristic of Communists, such as, principally, socialist patriotism and internationalism. Part of this is, of course, relatively new. In the lean years after 1949, when it was asserted that West European and American civilizations were dying and consequently there was little value in studying their languages, aquaintance with those civilizations was minimal. The writer, indeed, who began teaching English forty years ago, well remembers how he and a score of his colleagues were lectured, towards the end of 1949, by an ardent young stalwart sent "from above" and directed by him to teach English, French, etc. in such a way that the students in their care should come to hate those capitalist countries...

So much for the method. The content of the exercises, on which the teacher's classroom work is built, may best be studied in the English readers. A fair number of these have been published in the last fifteen years or so. One or two characteristics are common to them all: the subject-matter of the lessons and exercises are laid down, albeit fairly loosely, in the official guidelines, and the symbols of the International Phonetic Association are used in the pronunciation of English words. This system was first introduced by the bold young editor of the 1939-1944 series of English text-books, no mean innovation in Hungary at that time. The variety of reading matter provided and the freshness of approach was outstanding for those days, but the text-books were rather short on systematic and grammatically oriented exercises. They also left too much to the inventiveness and discretion of the teacher. The later Hungarian text-books, published after the resuscitation of English teaching in the sixties, were basically different in structure as well as reading matter. In the fifties they overstressed the building of socialism in Hungary, underplayed life in capitalist England, and were somewhat inadequate in the provision of exercises (but what can you do in two classroom hours a week?). Those produced in the sixties show a marked shift in emphasis. The most recent and advanced of these, published in 1971, is used in the third form of the language gymnasiums (five hours a week) and is the work of two very able young schoolmasters, Abadi-Nagy and Virágos from Debrecen. Both of them spent several years of postgraduate work in Great Britain and the United States. Theirs is far and away the most interesting—one may even venture say the most exciting—English text-book ever published in Hungary. Not only is its wealth of carefully graded syntactical exercises, subjects for composition, texts for translation into English and Hungarian respectively unsurpassed in variety, but the selections from English and American authors are no less fresh and up-to-date. There are passages from the novels of William Golding, Iris Murdoch, John Braine, Kingsley Amis, Hemingway, from the plays of O'Neill, Albee, as well as poems by Robert Frost, W. H. Auden, and others. Together with the usual material on life in Hungary the pupil is offered a very good choice of vividly written passages two or three pages long on various aspects of contemporary life in Britain and the United States, besides a generous sprinkling of anecdotes, riddles and songs. Here, at long last, is an English school book for the Hungarian young—the concluding volume for the final forms of gymnasiums with an English side is due to

appear late in 1972—that it is a pleasure to use in teaching and learning.

Few can travel—more go to refresher-courses

There are now a greater number of schoolchildren in Hungary than ever before who have the opportunity to learn English, with an impressive number of classroom hours in which to teach them, and precisely-constructed text-books to ensure their progress in the language—in other words many of the requisites for a renaissance of English studies on the secondary school level. Only one ingredient, and a very important one at that, is lacking. There is, alas, a painful shortage of competent teachers of English. The shortage is both absolute and relative. The three university English departments in Hungary turn out about a hundred or more graduates in English a year, fully qualified to teach that tongue. But few of them, less than half, can be induced to take up teaching after graduation, particularly if the school happens to be out in the provinces. These young potential teachers seek out—and find—more lucrative jobs in a number of other fields where a solid knowledge of English is at premium nowadays (foreign trade, publishing, etc.).

The relative deficiency is caused not so much by the fact that not a few of present-day language teachers are the products of university crash courses in the early sixties, but more by the very small number of those teachers of English who possess a direct, first-hand, personal experience of England and of the language as spoken there. About a dozen secondary school teachers a year, the most successful ones, are offered the reward of spending four weeks during the summer in Great Britain, free of charge, attending British Council courses there. Four or five more manage on their own to get to far-off Britain in the summer. Not a large number if we compare them with the teachers of other languages. For every single Hungarian university student majoring in Russian or German is given the opportunity of spending an entire term at a university in the Soviet Union or in the German Democratic Republic. Even the summer scholarships available to teachers of French or Italian are considerably more numerous than the ones for teachers of English. Let us hope the new Anglo–Hungarian cultural agreement will bring the long overdue change in this connection.

To mitigate these disadvantages for English teachers, the highest educational authorities organize refresher courses every summer. These last a fortnight, are attended by about thirty active teachers, and are held in Hungarian provincial towns, where there is an opportunity for the teachers and the three or four British lecturers, sent by the British Council and the Anglo–Hungarian Society, to spend the days in friendly collegiate intercourse.

The big exam

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The eating comes once a year in the Easter recess and is called National Competition in Proficiency in English. It was first held in 1967, organized by the Ministry of Education. Any pupil—it is an entirely voluntary affair—who has learned English in Hungarian schools and is still in one of the two top forms, the third and fourth classes, may enter. Automatically excluded are all children who have been to school in English-speaking countries (e.g. the children of diplomatic personnel serving abroad) or who have spent more than six weeks in such countries.

The first stage of the competition is a written examination held on the same hour in all Hungarian secondary schools where English is taught. They first have to answer a stiff written paper with a grammatical test of some fifty questions. Immediately after an

essay has to be written in English. Those pupils who have had only 256 classroom hours in English in the four years of gymnasium write on a different subject from those who have had 700 hours in the language side of their school. In the first three years (1967–1969) essay subjects for the weaker group were: "Town and country yesterday and today", "People I should like to meet"; "People, things or events in my life I shall never forget". The subjects in the advanced group were: "What are the great inventions of all time and how have they affected human life"; "What constitutes an educated person in the modern world"; "Luxuries of yesterday are the necessities of today and tomorrow."

A small committee, made up of the representatives of the three university English departments, pick the best twenty-five out of the several hundred successful tests and well written essays, after a long and careful scrutiny. The young authors of these papers are then invited to the second stage, the final oral proficiency examination in Budapest, lasting two days. In the course of this yearly competition all the weaknesses as well as the strengths of English language instruction in Hungary show up clearly and indicate where improvement is to be effected.

The national proficiency examination—the only one held in a Western language—is the memorable event, the great incentive in the scholastic career of hundreds of teenagers. The prizes are worth competing for: the ten best are admitted to the university without any further entrance examination should these winners decide to take their degree in English. They are also given money prizes and English books. The two boys or girls who come out on top in each of the 256- or 700-hour categories, the best of the best, are given a free trip abroad.

LÁSZLÓ PASSUTH

MEXICO—THE FICTION AND THE REALITY

My first historical novel *Esőisten siratja Mexikót* (The Rain God Weeps over Mexico) was published thirty-two years ago, six months before the outbreak of the Second World War. It has since been translated into ten languages and repeatedly reprinted, particularly in Spanish and German. Let me tell of this by way of introduction to my first trip to Mexico—some thirty years after I wrote this best-selling book.

By a stroke of great good fortune I was able to visit London between the two World Wars, when I was no more than 26 years old. Strolling outside Selfridges I noticed an advertisement for a book fair and exhibition. I was more than amazed to see tens of thousands of books on display. It was mere chance that two thick volumes caught my eye. William Prescott, the author, was unknown to me. The two were: *History of the Conquest of Peru* and *History of the Conquest of Mexico*. I started turning the pages and bought the one about Peru. I could not put it down till the small hours and decided to buy the other one, too, even if it meant going without my dinner. The fair, however, was over and I found the huge display reduced to a few shelves. Prescott's work was not there. An

elderly shop assistant, however, kindly searched for it in the store and in half an hour or so produced the volume on Mexico. I still have it on my shelves with its dust jacket slightly torn; that is why it had not been on display. This book put a Pre-Columbian spell on me. Prescott quoted at length from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish sources. I realized that I would only penetrate this wonderful material if I were able to read the documents in their original language. I had earlier lived in Italy for two years and had become an admirer of Mediterranean culture. I thought it would not be too difficult to learn Spanish knowing Italian. I gave it a try anyway. The first work I read in the original was Cervantes's masterpiece. Cervantes was followed by full-blooded sixteenth-century Spanish chroniclers. The most interesting for me were the thick volume of letters by Hernando Cortés, the conqueror of Mexico, to the Emperor Charles V, and the report by Bernal Diaz del Castillo, a young lieutenant of Cortés who was described as El Galante. This was written some fifty years after the Conquest when the author was one of the persons in charge of Guatemala. I translated the essential parts of the letters of Cortés and they were published in Hungarian.

At that time, and until 1970, Mexico seemed to me to be an imaginary land rather than an existing geographical fact. However, it was possible to unearth quite a few remnants of the ancient Central American culture even in Europe. I found the most essential part of the sources of the Conquest in the excellent Fővárosi Könyvtár (Budapest Library). On a trip to Vienna I gained access to the sources there in what used to be the Secret State Archives. I was given to read three original letters by Cortés bound in parchment. He must have dictated them, for the first and third were in the same hand, but the second was in a different one. The signature, however, is his own on all the three letters. There too, I was able to look at a facsimile of the Codex Vindobonensis, the Indian codex. That was the first time I saw the artistic, colourful and tiny ideograms of the only writing from the New World, symbols and stylized representations, so many of which I saw recently in Yukatan and Teotihuacan in the vicinity of Mexico City. In the Vienna Museum für Völkerkunde I admired Montezuma's crown made of the feathers of the green Quetzal bird and ornamented with golden suns and silver moons, a present sent to Charles V by the tragic Indian Emperor.

That was the way the Mexican panorama opened up in front of me, I mean I found out more as I went from town to town, looking for material of this kind in museums, archives and libraries. In some ten years an enormous heap of raw material assembled in me, an amorphous mass without any real force. That period saw my first steps as a writer. The great Hungarian novelist Zsigmond Móricz gave me a grave look on hearing of this subject. "Write it out of yourself," he said, "make a novel of it and then throw it into the depths of your drawer. And then go on," he said.

Most of the major European publishing houses participated in a British international novel competition at that time. Something I had written earlier, *Eurasia*, finished second in the Hungarian section. The immense interest and the publicity contributed to my book's success. This led to my publisher asking me what was going to be my next one? When I told György Sárközi, the principal reader and a writer of exceptionally refined taste, what I would like to write, or more exactly when I explained that I wanted to attempt a novel showing the collision of two civilizations alien to one another so that I would be seeking the sense of events at the roots of both civilizations, all he said in reply was this, "Try it, perhaps you'll succeed."

Luis de Caralt, a Barcelona publisher, offered me a contract as the end of the Second World War was drawing nearer. He is in

charge of my books even today. When the siege of Budapest ended in early spring 1945, the International Red Cross made it possible for every writer to send one cable to any part of the world. I took advantage of it by sending a cable to Caralt in Barcelona saying, "Alive, what about my book?" They wired back from Spain in a few days, "Warmest greetings, it's being set up in print."

They say Hungarians tend to cover the world in a web as a result of their dispersion. It is true that Hungarians who have drifted far from home generally help one another. Some three years ago I got to know a publisher, Jenő Fischgrund, a man of Hungarian origin, who has been living in Mexico for the past forty years, whose nostalgia drove him to visit his native land in the company of his beautiful Indio wife of Zapotec descent. We made friends. Many had told me: "You should go out to Mexico some day! You should see the country you have written about!" Fischgrund who publishes mostly books of art history and archaeology said the same. The fact that my book celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of its first publication and that it had been published in ten languages rendered my visit timely.

It was a beautiful spring night when the telephone rang, "A call from Mexico, sir"; and this, in fact, was no routine long-distance call. Half asleep I heard my friend's voice from the other end; "Government invitation's O.K. When can you come?" "Early November." The voice agreed; that was really the most pleasant, slightly cool and dry season.

The rest was mere routine: correspondence and preparations. The invitation was for two lectures in Spanish. One was to be delivered at the Bellas Artes cultural centre and the other at an even more exciting place: in the building of the Museo de Antropologia of Mexico, one of the most wonderful museums of the world. My friend offered his beautiful picturesque home to be mine in Mexico, and his family became my family during my one month stay. I arrived in Mexico after a seventeen-hour flight on the eve of All Saints' Day, a two-day holiday during which ancient rites are revived. I would have liked to absorb the essence of this wonderful world in the first forenoon. I visited places of interest one after another: the Cathedral lying beyond the avenue of Paseo de la Reforma, the University Town which is called Ciudad Universitaria and "Tres Culturas" Square where there is a colonial Baroque church to serve as a background to the Aztec structures excavated in honour of the Mexico Olympic Games, with the new quarter composed of colourful skyscrapers lying in front of it. I visited the covered market with its magnificent fish and heaps of flowers, I just managed to drop in at the Museo de Antropologia for I was all out to take possession of the pearl of the Chapultepec Park right on the first day.

I was helped by two new Mexican friends, the historian Jose Luis Marinez, Director General of the Ministry of Culture at the time, and an Ambassador today, and Antonio Acevedo, a writer and member of the Spanish Academy who headed the Public Education Department. They extended their kindness to me throughout my trip.

I wanted to visit Yucatan the place offering comparatively easy access to the most beautiful ruined towns of the "new Maya Empire". My host accompanied me. I had the privilege of admiring the enormous archaeological and other scientific work that has been carried out there in the past three decades mostly by relying on Mexican efforts, but with international assistance.

When I returned to Hungary I was of course asked by practically all my friends, "How did all that you described in The Rain God compare with what you experienced on the spot?" I told them that the archaeological picture of Mexico at the time of writing The Rain God was much more primitive than today. Archaeology in the New World has made tremendous progress in a quarter century. Works dealing with even the most minute details of Pre-

Columbian research are numerous enough to fill a library. Excavation projects have been completed. In Yucatan, I saw Chichen Itza and Uxmal in perfect condition. I had the privilege of seeing Mayapan, the third city of what was called the Maya League between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, before it was restored. My contacts with the Merida Museum section of Yucatan University were especially interesting. Here the students must learn the Maya language which is a living one even today. The Maya peasants living in the villages on either side of the road leading to Mayapan speak no other. They look as though they had just come down from the reliefs of Chichen Itza.

I paid a visit to Cuernavaca which lies along the road to Acapulco. The palace Cortés ordered to be built for his descendants is there even today. Taxco the "silver town" which is reminiscent of the towns of Umbria lies not far away from there as though it acted as a foreground to the reputed silver mines. The places I visited included Puebla, a provincial capital where I saw the huge campus of the new university which was just under construction in the American style. From there I travelled along the road leading to Cholula. The Pyramid of Cholula is considered to be one of the biggest buildings ever constructed by man. Excavation inside is well under way. A little train drawn by a small engine took us from place to place inside the huge mountain of rocks. Lastly Teotihuacan, the ancient religious town, the place from where, according to present scholarship, civilization is believed to have spread to the whole of Anahuac, the word used by the Mexicans of the day before yesterday to denote their own world. It was there that the only writing of the New World was born along with elements of painting, and the technique of architecture. And it is most likely that the bloody cult of human sacrifice was also established there. The Teotihuacan culture lasted from about 200 B.C. to A.D. 800, that is it covered roughly a thousand-year period. And then it disappeared for practically no discernible reason. This continues to be one of the major mysteries of the New World. And yet it exercised an influence which was accepted and preserved by successive or sometimes parallel Maya, Toltec, Zapotec, Mixtec and finally Aztec cultures which are all called Mexican.

"I've Met Rain God" that was the title I selected for the book I wrote about my impressions of my trip to Mexico, or, I should say, about the enormous civilization I had the opportunity to see for the first time, in its living reality.

Visitors approaching the entrance of the Museum from the direction of the Chapultepec Park see a huge stone statue of Tlaloc, the Rain God of Mexicans, right in front of them. It was an unforgettable moment when I caught sight of this strange idol. At last I had got to Mexico.

MÁTÉ KOVÁCS

THE UNESCO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME IN HUNGARY

UNESCO is convening a conference of international specialists in the autumn of 1972 to discuss the theoretical and practical questions of training abroad and the scholarship programme. In the course of preparations a survey was drawn up centrally on the experience of the first twenty years, at the same time the competent institutions of a number of member nations, including the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO, were requested to prepare studies of their experiences, observations and suggestions in connection with the scholarship programme.

I should like to outline the Hungarian position in what follows.

Ninety-two UNESCO individual scholarships were granted to Hungarian citizens between 1948 and 1971. According to UNESCO's figures some 10,000 specialists of the 125 member nations travelled abroad on field trips with the help of the Agency during the first twenty years of the scholarship programme. Therefore, approximately 1 per cent of all scholarship holders were Hungarians. Eighty-four per cent were however granted to developing nations (Latin America 28 per cent, Eastern Asia and Oceania 27 per cent, Black Africa 20 per cent, the Arab states 9 per cent), whereas the member nations of Europe and North America were allotted only 16 per cent of the field trips, the number of Hungarians within the latter amounted to almost 6 per cent.

UNESCO granted the first scholarships to Hungary in 1948, when this country was admitted to membership. But the early start was not continued between 1949 and 1958, and the development of the programme became continuous only from 1963 onward.

The number of scholarships examined (92) is insufficient for a respresentative statistical survey, nor does it permit conclusions of general validity. It is sufficient, however, to make certain observations.

Seventy-one of the 92 Hungarian UNESCO scholarship holders were men, and 21 (23 per cent) were women; 79 live in Budapest, and only 13 work in the provinces. The proportion of women among UNESCO scholarship holders as such has been 16 per cent, only 17 per cent as regards Europe and North America, Hungary therefore ranks relatively high on the list of UNESCO scholarship holders as regards the proportion of women.

If we examine the areas of study of the scholarship holders, that is, distribution according to fields, it turns out that the major part (32 per cent) were in education. Social sciences and culture followed with 29 (31 per cent) and the pure and applied sciences with 17 (18 per cent), only 12 (14 per cent) in the field of communications and 4 (4 per cent) in other categories. Research subjects show considerable diversity within individual fields, the teaching of foreign languages being particularly prominent. This composition differs considerably from the overall proportions (education 43 per cent, pure and applied sciences 31 per cent, social sciences and culture 14 per cent, communication 12 per cent), which express primarily the basic requirements of the developing nations. In a comparison of the distribution of European and North American and Hungarian scholarship holders the most striking difference may be found in respect of the pure sciences: 30 per cent of all the European and North American scholarship holders worked in this field but only 18 per cent of the Hungarians.

Among 412 scholarship months granted to Hungarians 148 were used in the field of

the social sciences and culture, and 110 months were spent on studying the pure sciences. Education with its 103 months ranks only third, and communication themes were allotted only 41 months, all other categories altogether 10 months.

The average duration of scholarships in the pure sciences was about two months, twice the length of field trips in education. In the field of pure and applied sciences a considerable part of the scholarship holders pursued their researches in only one country, often in a single institution (of 17 scholarship holders 15 studied only in one country), in other fields holders visited two or three countries in a much shorter average time.

Hungarian scholarship holders went to 31 countries on five continents. Most of them visited the following ten countries in the enumerated succession: France (43), Britain (28), Sweden (18), the German Federal Republic (16), the United States (10), Italy (8), Denmark (6), Austria (5) and the Netherlands (5). (The figures in parentheses relate to the number of scholarship holders who went to the given country.)

The great majority (73 persons) remained within Europe. Not one Hungarian UNESCO scholarship holder went to South America. North America featured in the programme of 11 candidates, whereas Asia was listed by only one Hungarian UNESCO scholarship holder.

The Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO administers UNESCO scholarships. In most instances contact with the earlier scholarship holders is kept up. Fifteen of them are members of the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO, some became members, following their scholarship, and six are again listed among the Commission's "clients" and UNESCO specialist-candidates. Contact with others is established through their participation in international UNESCO conferences. Everyday working relations are maintained with many since they work for organizations in contact with UNESCO.

Former scholarship holders help in entertaining guests from abroad.

At the request of UNESCO the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO carried out a survey in 1969 by submitting a questionnaire to those who had held UNESCO scholarships. This covered the present occupation and employment of scholarship holders, the way experience gathered was made use of, and the form in which it was passed on to others. The Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO supplemented the questionnaire, and asked former scholarship holders to report on their difficulties, make recommendations for the solution of problems of organization, finances, language and time.

Forty-four of the 61 questionnaires sent out were returned. Those who did not reply had, for the most part, completed their studies prior to 1963, that is, before the setting up of the Secretariat of the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO.

The National Commission's report was then incorporated in the UNESCO Scholarship Department's publication: "The Reports of UNESCO Scholarship Recipients (Europe)", which has since been published. It gives a list of the names of UNESCO scholarship holders and provides the following information: the year of the field trip, profession and employment at the time of the field trip, present employment, the subject of the scholarship, duration, details of finance and the country visited.

Of the 92 on the list 67 still hold the same appointments (often leading posts) as at the time they applied for the scholarship. A number of them noted that although their duties and authority had not changed, their work had become more significant and more influential thanks to the experience acquired through the scholarship. They are also aware that their field trip had greatly contributed to both a better understanding of the general position of their branch of knowledge, and orientation and development.

Numerous former scholarship holders

were given new official, public, or professional assignments retaining their old duties; they deliver lectures at institutions of higher education, or take part in the editing of professional periodicals.

Among those who hold higher appointments than at the time of their field trips we might mention Dr. István Láng, formerly the Scientific Secretary of the Biology Department of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, who received a three-month scholarship in 1965 for a study of science policy and the organization of scientific research. After his return he was asked to serve on the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO, in 1970 he was appointed Deputy General Secretary of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and assigned to represent the Academy in the Executive Council of the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO. In this capacity he participated in the Hungarian government delegation that attended the 16th Session of the UNESCO General Assembly in 1970.

Eight former scholarship holders no longer work in their old appointments, but their present activities are now closely linked with their UNESCO scholarship subject.

All Hungarian scholarship holders returned to Hungary after their field trips, but several of them are abroad at present. Lajos Szalay, the painter, has lived in New York for some time, in 1970, however, he took part in the exhibition of Hungarian artists living abroad. Others have accepted work in other countries, such as Dr. Alfréd Temesi, who is carrying out his second UNESCO assignment as a specialist in Madagascar, and András Bodrogligeti, a specialist in Turkish studies, who is teaching in Los Angeles on a two-year invitation as a guest professor.

With regard to utilizing and handing on the acquired knowledge, scholarship holders said that they were able to make good use of it in their work, but it would be extremely difficult to make an objective evaluation.

Nevertheless, in a number of cases, the value of one another field trip is quite tangible. Zoltán Máthé, hydrologist, chief engineer of the Hungarian National Water Authority, declared at the General Assembly of the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO in 1969 that 4,000 million forints had been envisaged for investment in the development of the Hungarian flood control. This would be done bearing in mind the experiences he had gathered on his field trip in the previous year.

A considerable proportion of the scholarship holders (31 persons) are educators who regularly give lectures on their subjects and have the possibility of applying their acquired knowledge in the training, or advanced training, of specialists.

The control of handing on knowledge is perhaps somewhat more concrete than that of making use of it. In accordance with generally accepted practice scholarship holders report verbally to those in charge at their place of employment, as well as to specialists interested in the subject, by giving lectures, participating in discussion, and of course in informal conversation.

Beyond a written report for UNESCO we also asked for a detailed account in writing from scholarship holders, which summarizes the results of the field trip, evaluates the work performed, lists the institutions and personalities visited, and which also contains the scholarship holder's recommendations.

A number of the scholarship holders remarked that UNESCO itself could make better use of their experience. The scholarship department should draw the attention of the specialized departments to those holders who were in a position to participate in UNESCO's activities, from whom articles could be requested for the Agency's periodical, and who could be invited to conferences of specialists, and who, after a lapse of a number of years—when they could be spared by their own countries—might be employed as UNESCO specialists in the developing countries.

The Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO as a receiving institution co-operated in the organization of Hungarian field trips for 90 UNESCO scholarship holders, mainly from developing countries, between 1963 and 1971. Among these 71 were individual scholarship holders, the others, altogether 69, took part in international extension training courses arranged in Budapest under the aegis of UNESCO, and spent some 430 months in the country.

Forty-one representatives of trade unions, co-operatives and youth movements, in four groups, visited Hungary on UNESCO travelling scholarships as the guests of other Hungarian organizations.

The first of the individual scholarship holders arrived in Hungary in 1965. Their number increased rapidly, particularly in 1970, when we arranged for the reception of 13 of them. The largest number, eight altogether, arrived from Syria, five were librarians. One or two specialists from a further 11 countries included the study of Hungarian institutions in their programmes.

The first to arrive from developed countries worked in brain and neurological research. They had applied for scholarships offered by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences under the aegis of UNESCO and the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO). All the local expenses of these field trips are borne by the Hungarian authorities, whereas travel expenses are paid by UNESCO.

The specialized institutes who maintain contact with scholarship holders are primarily those where scholarship holders worked for several months. There have been instances when the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO initiated concrete action in co-operation with former scholarship holders. In 1970 an Italian headmistress studied questions of education for international understanding in Hungary for a month. In the course of this visit an agreement was concluded for an exchange of students in 1971–72, with the participation of teachers and students of Italian and Hungarian UNESCO associated schools, and the support of the two UNESCO commissions. As a first step a 25-member group arrived in Hungary from the Northern Italian town of Saluzzo in August 1971.

The greater part of the scholarship holders from abroad are those who attend the generally half-year international post-graduate courses arranged in Hungary with UNESCO support. Since 1963 five such courses, with English as the language of instruction, were held in Budapest: two in mathematics (1963 and 1968) and three in water resources management (1966, 1968 and 1970), with the participation of 69 university graduate specialists from 32 countries. The financing of the courses was undertaken jointly by UNESCO and the Hungarian authorities.

The subjects of the two mathematics courses were the calculus of probabilities and the practical application of mathematical statistics. The greatest number of the 24 participants (11) came from Asian countries, 7 from Latin America, 5 from Africa and 1 from Europe.

The members of the staff of the Mathematics Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences prepared English-language notes in advance; lectures and individual tutorials were held on their basis.

Courses in hydrology have been arranged every two years since 1966, within the framework of the International Hydrological Decade, on behalf of UNESCO and the Research Institute for Developing Water Resources Management. So far 45 hydrologists from 25 countries have participated: 12 from Europe, 15 from the Arab states, 10 from the rest of Asia, 4 from Latin America, 3 from Black Africa and finally 1 from New Zealand.

The notes for the course were published in mimeograph form in English, in thirteen volumes, a total of some 1,000 pages. The publication had considerable success among specialists. The lectures were delivered

generally by Hungarians, but on each occasion an invited foreign lecturer was included in the programme. In 1970, for example, a young Nigerian university professor, a student at an earlier, 1968 course, gave a lecture on how he used the knowledge he had acquired in the course of his post-graduate training in Hungary in his country.

The students were also shown various aspects of water resources management in actual practice. In 1970, on the occasion of the largest ever flood of the River Tisza, students took part in control work at the most threatened sections of the river.

They studied the application of thermal spring water in agriculture, defence against internal waters, as well as construction work on the Second Tisza Dam, going on with the support of the United Nations Development Programme and the FAO.

To supplement the knowledge obtained in Hungary, those who attended the course visited Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia as a group, where they were able to acquaint themselves with the problems of water resources management in high hill and karst regions. In Yugoslavia they toured the sight of the joint Yugoslav-Rumanian Iron Gate Hydroelectric Power Station construction.

Scholarship holders soon grew accustomed to life in Hungary. A number of them learned Hungarian quite well in six months. Their adaptation was made easier by the fact that Hungarians helped them in both their studies and in everyday life. The organizers of the courses arranged club afternoons in which young Hungarians took part, visits to museums and theatres and excursions and social gatherings.

One of the universities in the Argentine that had sent two teachers to a mathematics course invited Hungarian mathematicians, each for a year, as guest professors. The Thailand participant at the hydrological course, following his return home, was put in charge of the centralized direction of river regulating work. He invited one of the lecturers of the course to collaborate in the implementation of the plan. In addition to the regular course in hydrology, two others will be arranged in Hungary in 1972 with participants from the developing countries, one in soil research and the other in technical documentation.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

HUNGARIAN AND RUMANIAN BALLADS*

Hungarian Folk Ballads

This unique book**—a contemporary collection of Hungarian ballads of unparalleled perfection—deserves the attention of scholars throughout the world. Such a complete and rich selection of extant folk-ballads full of vitality is, one might say, unprecedented, and one's sense of wonder only grows if one realizes that Zoltán Kallós's book is only a selection from an immensely larger material on tape collected in the course of the past twenty years.

The two hundred and fifty-nine ballads and eight epics in prose, more precisely, texts mixed with epic poems that are organically linked to the ballads, were published in 1970, in Hungarian, by the Kriterion Publishing House of Bucharest. The introductory study, notes, etc. are the work of Attila T. Szabó; János Jamagas supervised the scores. The cover showing Kalotaszeg patterns is the work of Mrs. Árpád Czirmai, Mrs. Ferenc Farkas, Anikó Dávid, Mária Jankó and other peasant artists.

The work of Zoltán Kallós is particularly noteworthy for his unflagging collecting activity. He has spent 20–25 years, that is almost half of his life, doing field-work: the hitherto most complete collection of Transylvanian folk-poetry is the result. Those who have done similar field-work know best how valuable the intensive type of field-work is. Attila T. Szabó rightly points out in the introduction that Kallós has chosen areas for collecting material which complete the work done so far in Transylvania with the aim of preserving as many variants as possible. This is also shown by the fact that—inspired by his forerunners—Kallós has also recorded the fairytale-like variant (that is, not the sung version) of one or antoher ballad. These transitional forms are also very significant. Kallós deserves credit for his efforts aimed at completeness and for his ambition to display the material in full.

Another merit of his work is of more general character. This volume is a positive proof of the inner unity which holds together and synthesizes historic contexts, stylistic characteristics and themes of Hungarian folk-ballads. It is true that lengthier variants of certain ballads (consisting of 40–45 verses) now came to light, although since the Faragó–Jagamas volume was published (*Moldavian Csángó Folk Songs and Ballads*, Bucharest, 1954) it has been known that the Moldavian variants point to more extended versions and also reveal hitherto

* The ballads of two selections here discussed originate in Transylvania which is part of Rumania. Many nations differing in culture and background have lived there side by side for centuries, not only Hungarians and Rumanians, but also Saxons and Armenians. The cultures of these nations always interacted and fertilized each other.

** *Magyar Népballadák* (Hungarian Folk Ballads), ed. Zoltán Kallós. Kriterion Publishers, Bucharest, 1970, 677 pp.

unknown archaic types. The longer versions raise problems I shall have more to say about at a later stage.

The main point in this respect is not the increased length of certain ballads, but the fact that Kallós's collection also confirms a view I have expressed for a long time, that a deep internal unity determined the historic contexts, genres and groups of subjects of Hungarian folk-ballads, arguing that this country was once a centre of balladry. This is not the right place to analyse the evolution of the historic background of this centre,* one thing is certain though, that Kallós's collection—precisely because he has investigated neglected, hitherto untrodden areas—provides conclusive proof. The group of ballads of a new style are decisive proof. It is, of course, a great joy to read the many archaic ballads for their poetic beauty, however, the fact that there existed a uniform circuit up to the age of capitalism is best shown by the new-style highwayman ballads as well as factory and hospital ballads. The Book of Ballads reveals unknown treasures of Hungarian poetry in Transylvania and Moldavia, on the one hand, and proves the unity of Hungarian folk-ballad poetry, on the other.

The affinity between Hungarian and Rumanian folk-ballads, worthy of further study, is an illuminating experience provided by Kallós's collection. In addition to certain formal characteristics, the shift of epic interpretation towards the lyrical-epic one—the typical manner of rendering Rumanian ballads—corroborates this affinity. The tendency of amplifying the recital of ballads also suggests a peculiar feature of Rumanian ballads, although some pieces of Kálmány's collection might give rise to contrary views. It seems that in the course of narrating the plot, Hungarian ballads strive for conciseness and a more concentrated manner of presentation of dramatic events (this does not refer to the erroneous aesthetical category called "obscurity of ballads") in contrast to a digressive, more lyrical mode of interpretation with a preference for repetitions. This much is certain: Kallós's book shows more than one sign of a close relationship between Hungarian and Rumanian folk-poetry.

The poetical beauty of the book cannot be too highly praised. Hungarian reviews welcomed Kallós's collection with that whole-hearted enthusiasm which the publication of János Kriza's collection met with in the last century.* At that time each of the "hedge-roses" Kriza had collected were known by the reading public and Pál Gyulai, the leading critic of the age, encouraged Kriza to publish the entire material as soon as possible. No complete Kriza has been published so far, a fact Attila T. Szabó rightly objects to; I for my part gave up the idea of publishing a complete Kriza on hearing that there were plans afoot in Transylvania itself.

The poet László Nagy—positively enraptured by the poetic beauty of the ballads collected by Zoltán Kallós—has expressed his delight in an article with countless exclamation marks. Although collections by the late Ince Petrás and Péter Pál Domonkos as well as some recordings made between the two world wars and the work of Faragó and Jagamas have already given an inkling of the beauty and particular wealth of the Transylvanian and Moldavian Csángó poetry, all these properties, however, only become apparent now revealing the delicacy and charm, the rhythm and rhyme pattern and the archaic features of the verses int heir fullness.

The somewhat restricted introductory study should be commended and although some of its propositions are disputable, it appropriately sums up the history of Hun-

* A number of attempts have been made to discuss this question. See Lajos Vargyas's article on this subject in No. 40 of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*.

* János Kriza (1811–1875), Unitarian Bishop of Transylvania and a poet, whose anthology *Vadrózsák* ("Hedge-Roses", published in 1863) was the first, and is still the basic, collection of Székely folk-poetry.

garian folk-poetry research in Transylvania The folk-music scores are very well done.

By way of conclusion I would like to make a final comment—although it is not closely connected with Zoltán Kallós's book. Credit is due to Hungarian folklorists living in Rumania, particularly to the present and former fellows of the Kolozsvár Folklore Institute. Their conscientious field-work and well-documented books are of importance and come up to the standards of Hungarian research. We are happy to have books and articles by Júlia Szegő, József Faragó, János Jagamas and Gabriella Föő for they open up new areas in research on Transylvanian and Moldavian Hungarians; the volume of their work exceeds earlier publications, providing the opportunity to study the interesting results they have arrived at. The collection of tales *Fehér Virág és Fehér Virágszál* (White Flowers) as told by János Balla (Kriterion, Bucharest, 1970), is a moving book the material of which has been collected by the youngest folklorist, the not yet 18 years old Tamás Balla. It was published together with a study by József Faragó. Our debt to Faragó as a collector of tales is immense, but only a fraction of what he has collected has been published. The value of the material collected is imposing as is the passion inspiring Hungarian research in Rumania. I think it is not out of place to mention all this when speaking of Zoltán Kallós's volume of ballads.

Kallós's volume, as well as the work of Hungarian folklorists in Rumania, confirms the words of Bartók who was the first to draw attention to the many ties uniting not only Rumanians and Hungarians but the people of Eastern Europe as a whole: "how much pain and suffering but also how much creative strength".

Rumanian Folk-Ballads

Scholarly research and translations through which Transylvanian Hungarian folklorists made the Hungarian reading public acquainted with Rumanian folk-poetry forms an important part of their valuable and successful activity. József Faragó—who compiled the volume *Szarvasokká vált fiúk* (The Boys Turned into Stags)* and did much in making the two nations better acquainted—rightly establishes in the introductory essay: "According to bibliographical research Rumanian folk poetry is—of all languages—most widely read in Hungarian."

This statement—interesting for more than one reason—refers to a more than hundred years old process, and to consistent efforts on the part of poets and scholars; it was not even interrupted by the bitter Hedge-Rose on the contrary, it encouraged Hungarian poets and folklorists to examine reveal and make the reading public aware of the relationship and kindred features of, and differences between, the folk-poetry of the Rumanian and Hungarian nations. It is a laudable and touching feature of these efforts now going on for a hundred years that the main aim was always appreciate and to get to know each other better and to reach a better mutual understanding.

This was so in the time of Károly Zilahy (1856), the first translator of Rumanian Kolindas, and it is still true today. It also becomes clear from József Faragó's study mentioned above that Béla Bartók's life-work was the peak, the culminating point. Rumanian folklorists have told that Bartók did pioneering work on the Rumanian Kolinda; the research he has done in this field preceded everyone else's and achieved completeness. Bartók did not translate, he carried on independent research work on behalf of Rumanian culture.

He collected four hundred and eighty-four Kolindas, these enchanting compositions of Rumanian "ritual poetry", in thirty-three villages of ten Transylvanian counties. Bartók had his work published at his own

* *Szarvasokká vált fiúk*, edited by József Faragó, translated by Jenő Kiss. Kriterion, Bucharest, 1971.

expense by the Vienna Universal Edition when chauvinistic trouble-making was at its height; Bartók was attacked by both Rumanians and Hungarians in spite of international acknowledgement and appreciation of liberal-minded Rumanians and Hungarians.

We know by now that the "popularization" of Rumanian Kolindas on the highest level was artistic reinterpretation in the *Cantata profana* which was composed on the basis of the Kolinda *The Boys Turned into Stags;* it expresses through soaring music and closely knit choirs Bartók's teachings, that deep humanity which culminated in the outcry: "from pure sources only". The categorical order *from pure sources only* came at a time when all sources became tainted and muddied, the spreading mud of fascism began to flood the world. This summit of the Rumanian–Hungarian relationship in poetry conveyed an international message and was addressed to humanity as a whole. This teaching will never become obsolete and is a memento for ever.

This process in itself aiming to explore and disseminate knowledge of Rumanian folk-poetry is highly noteworthy. The new volume of Rumanian folk-ballads translated into Hungarian should be highly commended. Its high standard is due to the translations of Jenő Kiss and to the conscientiuous work of József Faragó, the linguist and folklorist. The book was published by the Bucharest Kriterion Publishers in 1971 with exquisite illustrations by Sándor Plugor. A study by József Faragó concisely describes the Kolindas, ritual songs attached to archaic popular customs at the winter solistice. These customs and ritual songs point beyond Europe to the Mithras cult and to rites worshipping the sun in the form of Osiris as well as to their Old-European variants as they became known throughout the Roman Empire. It appears from Gábor Lükő's partly unpublished writings that Rumanian Kolindas have preserved motifs pointing to ancient Finno-Ugrian elements.

Here I leave off for it would lead too far afield were I to expound this subject which has prompted a number of scholars to write important monographs, Tekla Dömötör for one, who has revealed many hitherto unknown interconnections in the sphere of ritual songs and poetry. Nor do I want to deal here and now with monographs exploring the history and characteristics of Rumanian Kolindas, including Bartók's impressive monograph which is one of the first experiments in classifying texts and melodies and also contains an introductory study Bartók himself has written. Let me, however, point to the important Rumanian comprehensive studies by Birlea, Fochi and others and mention that in the view of Sadoveanu, the great Rumanian writer, one type of Rumanian Kolinda, the Kolinda (ballad?) Miorița (The Lamb), is one of the greatest works of literature in any language.

These songs which were rewarded by villagers with modest gifts, are one of the most valuable genres of European ritual poetry. Kolinda songs are the more valuable since they, so to speak, sum up the characteristics of Rumanian mythical fairy-tale poetry and Rumanian epic-lyrical songs and ballads. More than once they show typical transitional forms, and Kolindas become ballads, dramatic narrations imbued with the peculiar lyricism of Rumanian folk-poetry, conveying tales in verse form, sometimes requiring dramatic interpretation while the "mendicant" features dim and the poetical beauty of the text comes to the fore.

Another peculiar feature of this genre also appears from the collection, that is that Kolindas were disseminated by highly talented singers. This was therefore the collective work of teaching and of keeping up both tradition and the individual marks of the creative personality. Kolinda poetry delights, for it represents the sacred traits of centuries-old traditional forms, established poetical structures and formulas and personal authenticity of poetical magic. This epic poetry is both gentle and fiery but the

gentleness of the lyrical interpretation softens dramatical situations and tragic crisis. One, so to speak, feels the cheerfulness and bubbling spirit of the winter solstice feast. Imbued with art and the collective spirit of custom and due to their faculty to survive and create poetry, Rumanian Kolindas represent a peak of European folk-poetry.

By way of conclusion I would like to repeat what I have said in the introductory part. Both Hungarian literary translation and folklore research have acknowledged the importance and beauty of the Kolindas. The poetic beauty and appropriate expressions which hit the nail on the head of Jenő Kiss's translations deserve full credit. He avails himself of the force of Transylvanian Hungarian folk-poetry without being populist in a forced way. Occasionally he brings out with an apt dialect word or expression, sometimes even with a single adjectival construction or verbal suffix, the alien yet familiar popular intonation and the poetic tonality of another rhythm.

József Faragó has written—as mentioned earlier—a number of books popularizing the culture of the two peoples; in the wake of Béla Bartók he concurrently investigated kindred and differing features of Hungarian and Rumanian poetry. The two can only be investigated jointly, the analysis will be a correct one if the kindred and deviating processes and methods of writing poetry are compared. This is the right method for the investigation of national and international interconnections, it has been adopted in the case of the present volume and this is why the collection at issue is so valuable.

GYULA ORTUTAY

MAN AT THE END OF THE WORLD

In memoriam Alexander Lenard

In a passage in *Valley at the End of the World* Alexander Lenard tells of all he has done. He had been an apprentice chef and the doctor of the Hungarian Academy in Rome, he had begged on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius and he had assembled skeletons while employed as an anthropologist by the U.S. Army, he had written dissertations for people who were working for doctorates in archeology, history of art and medicine, he had played the piano to earn his supper. His patients included a number of pickpockets, he treated the piles of a bishop and the flat feet of the head of a religious order. In Brazil he started as the medical officer of a lead mine.

All Lenard modestly left out of this bitter-sweet soliloqui is that he also happened to be a writer, and outstanding deeply human writer, a Hungarian writer for a painfully short time, five years in all, the last five of the sixty-two he lived. We in Hungary got to know him very late, though his name had occurred in the news columns before then: "A Hungarian doctor living in Brazil has translated Winnie the Pooh into Latin..." "A doctor of Hungarian birth won a large sum in a Bach competition arranged by Sao Paulo radio." We got to know him late, we really never had time to weigh him up properly, nor were we in a hurry to do so, he lived a long way off, as the doctor of a settlement on the edge of the Brazilian jungle, our imagination could hardly grasp the distance. *Valley at the End of the World* the first novel he wrote was

received by the Hungarian critics with well-intentioned praise, though a little as if it had been translated from a foreign language. And yet he wrote this wise and tart biographical and sociological novel in Hungarian, in an illuminatingly beautiful Hungarian, with typically Hungarian idiomatic turns of speech, it was worthy of being included with the best Hungarian prose. It is true, he first wrote the book in German, in an illuminatingly beautiful German, but he wrote it once again, in English, with typically English idiomatic turns of speech. He wrote the same book three times over, with a differing mood and atmosphere, adjusted to the temperament of each language. The title page of the Hungarian edition still showed his name as Alexander Lenard, I also thought at first that it was a translation. This was done very much against his will. "You can imagine me" he wrote to a Budapest friend, "like the king in the fairy tale who laughed with one eye and cried with the other. I laugh as one who after half a century and still this side of the grave succeeded in making his only real plan come true, in fact I did not want to do anything except write a Hungarian book sooner or later. The eye that cries is the one that noticed they turned me into Alexander Lenard! But why isn't the same name on the title-page as was on the first form exercise book, back in Budapest?" (The Hungarian form of the name is Lénárd Sándor).

*

A non-literary sensation first aroused attention in the chronicle of the Life and Hard Times of Alexander Lenard. In 1968, shortly after the appearance of his first Hungarian book, a rumour took wing in the world's press that Dr. Mengele, the notorious Auschwitz camp doctor had been found, he was living in the state of Santa Caterina in Brazil, in a valley in the middle of the jungle, using the name Alexander Lenard. A confidence man of German origin, by name of Erdstein, had spent his holidays in the vicinity of the settlement where he heard that a rich old German gentleman was living in hiding in the Donna Emma valley. The young man's imagination got to work. He had found Borman! The old gentleman was a doctor. Then he must be Mengele! Half a million Deutschmarks and headlines throughout the world! He set out straight away but he looked for the German doctor in vain, Lenard was at the time lecturing on Latin and Greek literature in Charleston, so he questioned the housekeeper. The good Mrs Klein, all unsuspecting, told that during the war he had worked in Hamburg, in one of the factories of the Hermann Goering works. Her innocent chatter was next day reported as follows in the daily of Curitiba, a small market-town: "Her war-criminal lover constructed the V-1 and the V-2 and worked on the atom bomb in the Hermann Goering Institute." Hell was let loose, soon banner headlines appeared in the Brazilian and then the European tabloid press: "Erdstein the Secret Agent has found Mengele's hiding-place. The criminal wrote a children's book in Latin." The Brazilian police did not remain inactive either. "On the night of December 6th thirteen motorized men with automatic weapons surrounded my house." Lenard wrote later. "They wanted to catch me at dawn and they would have done it too if I had not been in Charleston. So all they could do was to question poor Mrs Klein again on how she made atom-bombs (she can cook very good dumplings), then they searched the house and found eight volumes of Goethe (so he's German after all), a Bach portrait (Hitler in disguise) and a picture post-card with the following message: *I shall look after the flowers and the seeds* (a coded secret message). They looked for gold and diamonds in vain, they did not even find any in the chicken coop or the small hut in the shade of the gum tree (on the contrary. . .)"

The swindle did not last long, it was an unpleasant, stupid affair, though some good came of it, true facts could be sifted from all

the corrections and denials printed in the papers, facts which threw some light on this life that was so much like that of wandering scholars, itinerant preachers and travelling apothecaries.

Alexander Lenard was born in Budapest in 1910, he moved to Austria with his parents in 1918, he studied medicine at the University of Vienna. Following the *Anschluss*, in 1938, he fled to Italy. The end of the war found him in Rome, he migrated to Brazil in 1951. In 1956, using the money he won in the Bach competition arranged by Sao Paulo television, he bought the dwarf holding in the Donna Emma valley where he later built his house hidden in the foliage. Years later he used I AM IN A GOOD PLACE, in block capitals, as the epigraph of his *A day in the invisible house.*

*

Ridentem dicere verum, quis vetat. Who forbids what we tell the truth laughing, the Romans said, and Lenard in *Roman Stories* laughingly tells the truth about everyday life in Fascist Rome. He laughs in wise superiority, sometimes his laugh is bitter, but he always looks on the bloody absurdities of history from the heights of human dignity. Should he not have laughed seeing that a system stumbling on the edge of the abyss was, right up to the last moment, energetically proclaiming its prohibiting regulations?! It is prohibited to wear a top hat with a black shirt... it is prohibited to raise the arm in fascist salute while sitting ... no more than four persons may sit at a table in a restaurant... Was it not a subject for amusement that the party's leader, showing his puritanism, cantered through the streets of the city astride a pony? Or that the Black Dictator, shouting "I loathe picturesque Italy", turned Rome into a market-garden? Cauliflower grew in splendour around the statue of Julius Caesar and Augustus looked down on heads of cabbage. And was it not right to laugh with all one's heart when a flat-footed provincial journalist, hand on hip, chin pushed forward, screamed from the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia: "Voglio far tabula rasa con tutto quello che si chiama civiltà umana." I want to wipe out everything that goes by the name of human civilization.

Not much has been written of daily life under Fascism that is more movingly amusing, that shows such sad understanding. In one story only does this clear human look as the absurdities of this world darken into inconsolable night.

An official at the Royal Hungarian Legation to whom Lenard and other fellow exiles turned in the hope of getting papers which would give them a certain security cut him off by saying: "You are not Hungarians, you only talk Hungarian."

*

Did the gastronomic day-dreams of those hungry Roman years perhaps inspire Lenard to write his famous cookery book *The Roman Kitchen?* Is it a cookery book? True, it is full of appetising recipes, but Lenard adds a thought to every recipe, or anecdotes, customs and supersititons. The reader forgets that he is turning the pages of a cookery book, the exciting story of the pizza arrests his attention. How did the many flavoured products of the pizzeria grow out of the ancient Romans' oil covered pie, which used to be munched with figs? "Two or three sardines, 100 grammes of tunny...", that is how he starts his chapter in cultural history disguised as a recipe, and before we know where we are we have met Marcus Gravius Apicius, who wrote a cook book at the time of Tiberius which has survived to the present day, whom Pliny called *altissimus gurges*, exalted larynx, and about whom Juvenal wrote an epigramm *Exemplum gulae*, an example for gluttons. "A kilogramme of veal, six tomatoes, a glass of dry white wine..." The splendid recipe playfully associates with the starvation diet of

Mussolini's Rome, or with the story of that ancient cookbook, the *Deipnologia* of Archestratos, which perished in the flames at Alexandria.

Splendid reading, a humanist cookery book, what is more, and in this respect it is perhaps unique the world over, an anti-fascist cookery book.

*

Curiosities.

His first volume of verse *Orgelbüchlein*, a cycle of ten poems, was illustrated with linocuts by Amerigo Tot.

He later wrote a series of talks for the Berlin radio on languages spoken by very few, from Botokud to New Latin. These were later published in Germany under the title *7 Tage Babylonisch* (Seven days at the Tower of Babel).

Working on perfecting New Latin absorbed him to the end of his days, he spent night after night in the invisible house huddled over his editions of the classics. What would be right for "pipe", *infumibulum, infurnibulum* or *infundibulum*, "aeroplane" *velivolum* or *aeroveliculum*, "radio" *sirmium undisonum* or *radiphonicum instrumentum*. Unfortunately the age demanded Latin words for the atombomb *(pyrobulum atomicum)* and the hydrogen bomb *(atomicus hydrogeni pyrobulus)*.

His Latin version of Winnie the Pooh was rejected by publishers who argued that children did not read Latin and adults did not read children's books. Finally an enterprising American publisher was found and he sold 250,000 copies in two years. The *Times Literary Supplement* published a review in Latin.

His Latin version of Françoise Sagan's *Bonjour Tristesse*, *Tristitia Salve* was already published simultaneously in four countries. He translated Wilhelm Busch's *Max und Moritz*, the favourite reading of Central European youth, into Latin, another exalted new-humanist, a certain Steinl, had translated it into Ancient Greek before him. The Latin translation is enchanting. The typically German, somewhat earthy tale is given charmingly grotesque wings by the domesticated classic language:

Quantum est mandatum scriptis
Nebulorum de delictis!
De Mauritio et Maxo
Egomet fabellam faxo!

*

"In my young ambitious days, I dreamt of a Roman mausoleum next to the pyramid of Cestius, there where the wanderers of ancient roads rest under a strawberry carpet. I have become more modest, I am waiting for the ferns."

He died in April 1972. The peasants of the Donna Emma valley and the Botokud Indios of the neighbouring reservation mourned at his graveside, in the garden, overgrown with ferns, of his invisible house. Their loss was practical and tangible, they had lost the doctor of the valley whom they could go and see without a cent in their pocket if the spell, the snake-oil, the gunpowder soaked in vinegar and the water fetched from a well at midnight, by a maiden, did not cure their pneumonia, eczema or hepatitis. I hardly think the Santa Catarina peasants cared particularily that the man who pulled out the fern fragments in the skin of the soles of their feet, or who lanced the painful swellings produced by spider stings happened to be an important humanist writer. But they were truly happy when, after finishing surgery, and getting all the beans out that had got stick in the ears of the children, he repaired to the church of the valley and played Bach fugues on the organ. At night, alone in the invisible house, he continued with *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*. Bach was his companion all his life, more than once, in adversity, the two volumes of *Das Wohltemperierte* were all the luggage he had, this harmony came to suffuse his

writing also. The master organbuilders of old had calculated the proportions of even tempering in music and he did so in his prose.

After the jungle fell silent, he wrote ruminative letters by candle-light and sent them to the distant world. Should New Latin hexameters have rhymes?... These letters were sometimes in Portuguese, more frequently in German, French or Hungarian, sometimes in Norvegian, and not so rarely in Latin: *Humilis eremita celeberrimo poetae S.P.D.* The humble hermit warmly greets the famous poet. That is how he addressed Robert Graves. Peculiar and extraordinary people answered his letters: New Latin poets, cigar collectors, sailors, literati whose aim in life was to translate Alice in Wonderland from their own native languages back into English, or Shakespeare into contemporary colloquial English. These eccentric souls, who tried to stay firm in their own reservations by hanging on to the small change of the humanist world that lived on in their dreams, undertook some wonderfully useless enterprises. The amazement of one of the characters in *A Day in the Invisible House* is typical of the odd logic of their lives and thought: how could Lenard bear to live in Santa Caterina, he wondered, where they so distort Castilian, that splendid language. Why doesn't he buy a hacienda in Mexico, where the idiom is kept pure?

The letters multiplied, as did the reservations of solitude in the big cities. Lenard had hidden his own reservation in the jungle in time, the paperchains of the bureaucracy did not hold him captive there, and he could reach the world all the same, with the help of the mails. The Latin edition of *Hermann und Dorothea* got there all right, from afar, and so did the Schubert scores, and then, one fine day, two handfuls of seed-peas that had travelled 10,000 kms.

The settlers in the Donna Emma, who were getting used to the somewhat unusual life going on in the invisible house, were nevertheless astonished that he should trouble to naturalize strange plants in the tropics where there is too much vegetation as it is and a tree grows where you spit out a seed. Not even the medicine men of the Botokuds could know that those few yellowish green small balls were a magic potion against nostalgia, as was the rag soaked in brandy on the ulcers. The magician "planted them, then, one fine day there were two handfuls of green peas, that would not merely make a plate of soup, a lost world would rise from the vapours they gave off, and nostalgia would give way between the first and the last spoonful, the anxieties of a wanderer would be laid to rest, who knew in his dreams also that, whichever direction he might take, he would never get home. The only home was in pea-soup, and in a Schubert quintette."

He cured nostalgia in the ancient way, as the Romans cured illness. *Herbis non verbis.* With plants and not words. "I would love to see trees that lose their foliage in July, which is the representative of a short winter here, and reach for the sky with bare branches. A little morning mist on bare branches and dusk behind stiff black twigs would abate nostalgia."

*

It did not take long for the settlers to realize that this odd bearded doctor had not come to them in the hope of getting rich. They soon got used to not-paying, or rather paying for treatment by telling a tale. But they did not suspect how princely a reward they proferred. Lenard used these tales to write masterpieces, in sober, lucid sentences, like the writers of the Ancient World. "Once there was a woman in Ephesus," that is how Petronius starts his tale: "Once there lived an old woman between Timbo and Mirador" that is Lenard's way. Wherever we open his books, everyone of his sentences could be a saying, both in structure and intonation, just as in Latin writing. "Dosage is what matters in human relations. Few words wake you and excite you, many paralyze you and put you

to sleep. Taciturnity is a rare illness, verbosity a commonplace disease. The small languages disappear and the big ones grow. Thought does not get a chance in a mass of words."

As if one were turning the pages of a collection of Latin proverbs.

We will never know why Lenard maintained his original native language, keeping alive the image of the native heart when that could only survive on the fringes of his memory at most. He only spent one eighth of his life in Hungary, eight years all told. He was fluent in twelve languages besides Hungarian, some of them he spoke as well as any native. He published seven volumes of verse in German and two medical treatises in Italian, he translated his own works into English. Not to mention the books in Latin. He kept up with thirteen literatures in the original language, nevertheless, even when illness barely allowed him to read he did not let a day pass without picking up a Hungarian book. "I must read all the same, at least in Hungarian. Our daily Hungarian words are needed. Those who live a long way off are lost without their companion and tempter. The Hungarian language is like a musical instrument, those who want to play it must practice every blessed day. It is impossible to think in an Indogermanic way and to speak in Hungarian. The geometry of the Hungarian language differs from that of the others as much as Bolyai's geometry differs from Euclid's. Everything can be translated into Hungarian and so to speak nothing from Hungarian. One can even forget Hungarian and that is frightening!"

*

I read a letter he wrote the day he died. He knew already that *una ex illis ultima*. One of the grains of sand would be the last. He had that day arranged with the circuitious authorities that he be buried in his garden. At the end he already spoke of himself in the past tense: "Who while he still lived. . ." But he still thought it important to tell in the short letter, written in a throbbing, heavy hand that he had received two Hungarian magazines and that there was an article on Bach in one of them.

This sober preparation for death was part of the humanist heritage. *Disce mori*, he wrote quoting a *De arte moriendi* treatise. "Those at peace with death live better, they do not depend on the solace of the imagination! Just as the fish accepts the Ocean, accept that our lives are but a passing show, not only our last minute belongs to death, every one of our minutes is one of his grains of sand, every one of our bright moments is a flash of his scythe."

Disce mori. Learn to die. This always also meant: *disce vivere*. Learn to live.

There is no difference between the *ars moriendi* and the *ars vivendi*.

GYÖRGY G. KARDOS

THE SECOND LIFE OF SYLVESTER II

MIKLÓS SZENTKUTHY: *II. Szilveszter második élete (The Second Life of Sylvester II).* Magvető Publishing House, Budapest, 1972, 428 pp.

Miklós Szentkuthy has been entertaining his readers and annoying his critics for nearly forty years with novels which are full of witty ideas and linguistic bull's eyes. Professional reviewers have been perplexed by the astoundingly different standards of the rapid succession of his books. It seems that as soon as they hit upon the adjective which is most to the point, he had already invalidated it with another work. His first novel *Prae*, which appeared in 1934, is an uninhibited self-analysis which he permitted to grow to a monstrous size, with a deliberately provocative tangled structure whose only principle of arrangement is the associative linking together of details. He preserved this kaleidoscopic structure later but his subjects bound him increasingly to history, or more precisely to the perversities of history. Highlighting a section of the history of mankind, he likes to make marginal comments on the inexhaustibly sweeping eccentric figures and grotesque events in it. He treats even his own material with complete arbitrariness. The events of episodes, or parts of episodes, set next to each other at his pleasure are connected only by his subjective commentary; he himself refers to his method as "infinitely microscopic surface analysis". It is not difficult to notice Joyce's influence in the early Szentkuthy novels, but even more striking—especially in the second part of *Prae*, is his emulation of Proust's manner, with which he snubs the so-called educated public.

In the fifties and sixties Szentkuthy wrote a number of biographical novels, but his principal characters—Haydn, Goethe and Luther—seemed more like a pretext for the presentation of history in the Szentkuthy manner. The only methodological exception was his *Divertimento*, which exposed the psychological motivation of Mozart's music. In the case of this book the aim of the writer was to paint a picture of Mozart rather than a self-portrait, and the result turned out to be a masterpiece.

Further evidence of Szentkuthy's versatility lies in his volume of essays, containing witty, though sometimes affectedly original writings, and also in a number of novel translations from the English, including his brilliant Hungarian rendering of *Gulliver's Travels*, *Tristram Shandy* and *Oliver Twist*.

Szentkuthy found the form which most closely reflects his literary personality in his *Szent Orpheus Breviáriuma* (The Breviary of St. Orpheus). Under this title—that of an entire series—six books appeared (Széljegyzetek Casanovához — Marginal Notes on Casanova; Fekete Reneszánsz — Black Renaissance; Escorial; Europa Minor; Cynthia; Vallomás és Bábjáték — Confession and Puppet Play), each of them the sparkling fireworks of a history-depreciating frivolously cynical spirit. In these pseudo-novels, myth-destroying disrespect and play-acting with the intent to build a new myth (his own!) are harmoniously fitted into each other, for Szentkuthy's literary approach suits his admitted aim.

Now, after a pause of thirty years, with *II. Szilveszter második élete* (The Second Life of Sylvester II)—the series has been enriched with a new set of "devotional exercises"—as the author calls them. This new Szentkuthy book—let us for simplicity's sake call it a novel—is trussed up by an easily comprehensible structure. The body of Pope Sylvester II, who died in 1003, is embalmed by one of his priests and fellow-scientists of Arab descent with the help of Esther, a Hungarian girl wearing boy's clothes. The embalming of each part of the body is

followed by a chapter from the life of the Pope—as rendered by the Arab. Then comes the theme indicated by the title: the scholarly Arab revives the Pope, who then lives his brief second life in the court of Romanos II, the perverse Byzantine emperor. Pope Sylvester, together with his companions, submerges himself pretty well in the mire of the depraved court, and soon has to submit to his second death as he is mistakenly stabbed, mistakenly because he is taken for a spy. But this story, of course, serves merely as a pretext; there are no genuine popes and emperors of historical authenticity in it. For this author, history is the stage on which he can play roles chosen at will, and in this particular work he happened to put on the guise of a pope who lived a thousand years ago. But as such play-acting would eventually grow tedious, he prefers to retain all his present knowledge and store of information, enabling him to flit back and forth a thousand years from the end of the tenth to the late twentieth century. Anachronisms are the natural medium of this book, but the essential thing in it is by no means that the one-time Pope speaks about Jung's archetypes, or TV. Sylvester connects the concepts and objects of the thousand years since his death as would an educated man of our day and age, though the way he speaks is not at all customary or natural, it would be bewildering even today. The true anachronism is not that he knows things he could not have known in his times, but the manner of his thinking, the spiral of his associations. In Sylvester—Szentkuthy's history book, figures from Mme. Tussaud's and battles soaking in blood and wine alternate in quick succession, but there are two permanent elements. One of them is the unbridled desire for power. Analysing the meaning of *homo ludens* Sylvester asks whether the wars of the *homo*, who fights murderous battles, are moved by his passion for play, or just the other way around: even his innocent games and sports perhaps conceal the beast of prey in man, and not even very hypocritically. Another source of history, sex, has such a definitive role in the novel that the Pope is an exalted priest of Eros rather than an ascetic servant of God. Using the phraseology of a natural scientist and psychologist, Sylvester sings hymns of praise on love, or more precisely on love-making, and its essential objects of devotion, women, whose charms a man never gets tired of. Esther's actual role in the novel is that wherever she is present the sexual associations of any topic come naturally, and she—thanks to the author—accompanies Sylvester wherever he goes and sex is consequently omnipresent in the book.

In the meantime Szentkuthy keeps surprising readers with his inexhaustible store of witty or whimsical plays on words and language, sticking out his tongue at them, as it were. The Byzantine empress versed in psychoanalysis is Psychobasilissa; the Apostle Paul, Theo-voyeur. In fact the second half of the novel overflows with ideas and turns of phrases; the writer is obviously troubled by this plenitude, and the Breviary, continued after a break of thirty years, seems to be bursting at the seams. But the substance of the matter has not changed: today, as in his earlier books, Szentkuthy turns the pages of history before us with a scornful and cynical smile, and writes with sufficient force and credibility to justify his glee. Writing about the Empress Theodora of the novel, he provides a barely concealed self-characterization—just in case someone has missed the point: "she wanted to turn Clio, that vestal-virgin blue-stocking muse of history, into a satirising and parodising Bacchante—in keeping with the 'Metamorphoses' of Ovid."

GERGELY RÁKOSY: *Fülüket lebegtető elefántok* (*Elephants Flapping their Ears*), Szépirodalmi Publishing House, Budapest, 1971, 274 pp.

This writer can only write satire. This writer has not been able to acquiesce even at

the age of forty-eight in the fact that the world recreates in plenty the self-important failures, the block-headed bureaucrats and annoyingly ridiculous situations. After three novels, two volumes of short sotries, and a few radio plays, his volume *Fülüket lebegtető elefántok* (Elephants Flapping their Ears) is more than a collection of satirical pieces; it presents the notion in experience, showing the birth of satire, in a way both encouraging and thought-provoking. His short story *Themes* is the platform speech of a fiction writer. The editor of a periodical is sick and tired of the many gloomy and desperate writings he gets, he would like to read something more cheerful. Renoir paintings with soft floating colours, something like "Young Girl with Parasol". "Why has he painted things like 'Young Girl with Parasol', 'In the Garden', 'Women Bathing'. Instead of them why not 'Old Woman with Shroud', 'In the Morgue', 'Women Lamenting', or heaven only knows what. Why??" The author admits that all his life he would have liked to write just that: "Young Girl with Parasol". One night he sits down at his typewriter, sheets of white paper in front of him, and tries to visualize the colours of the parasol, the pure light creating an aura of brightness around the girl, and her casual happiness. The smoke of his cigarette turns into light mist, the lamp into filtered sunshine, and he is waiting for the Girl with Parasol to enter his bleak room... He suddenly hears a nerve-racking noise from the dark staircase, and although he is only disturbed by the next-door tenant, the magic he had conjured up suddenly vanishes. It occurs to him that to write about her he should have seen her, he should have met her at least once. Why does the writer write so many glum stories? Because he has never seen the young girl he would like to see; and before she comes he has to write about things he has seen, things he has come across. What these are is shown by his short stories.

His "Report from Terra" is the same sort of exercise in form and structure as "Themes" is in philosophy. A research agronomist of exceptional talent is not permitted to do constructive work, people less gifted than he drive him out of the research institution because of their jealousy.

The theme itself is transmitted by a prose striving to be dryly factual, but it is interspersed with commentaries bursting out in an angry, passionate tone, which establish the presence of the wirter at each turn of the story. He makes no attempt to reconcile these two levels of the text, in fact he exposes their lines of contact to the light, as the seams of welded pieces of sculpture are made visible; and thus, with this deliberately crude structure, he compels his readers to concentrate on the essence. He employs his characteristic and effective mode of composition repeatedly and always with success. Sometimes, however, as in the case of the story mentioned, he is not satisfied with this, he wants to generalize and sets his plot in a background story which always points to the "eternally human". And this is something the supporting pillars of a short story cannot bear: if the individual plot does not have enough in it for generalization—and this is not something extra that has to be added—then the efforts of the writer are in vain. On the other hand, if the properly picked theme has been worked out in an artistic fashion, then even the most individual story is pregnant with the possibilities of generalization.

The title story starts out as the capricious caricature of a young man who is obsessed with cleanliness, and a witty turn makes it the confrontation of two basic attitudes, permitting the playful and ironic presentation of the writer's philosophy. The young man is so afraid of bacteria that whenever he is forced to come into contact with an unfamiliar object or person he begins to clean his contaminated clothing, or if he has to shake hands with someone, he washes his hands. But as he wants to pass on this obsession to other people, he is forced to seek people to talk to. Again and again he

meets an acquaintance with whom he fights a duel of words at the end of the story. Whatever is not rational he regards as redundant—bacteria, and horse-races where too great a percentage of the winnings are deducted. The arguments of his debating partner turn the caricature into a conflict of types of behaviour. He asks what is the sense in an elephant in the Zoo which just flaps his ears, it is not in its place, it is "afunctional". "What is the sense? When somebody gazes intently at the heavy-legged elephants flapping their ears at the very second when the favourite comes in first, there is nothing else, everything is forgotten. And if time and again there were no such senseless moments, many people might find themselves unable to go on doing the things which are rational."

These few sentences throw light on the reason for Rákosy's obsession with the writing of satire. He writes satire because he is an incorrigible moralist.

LÁSZLÓ VARGA

ERECTING BARRIERS TO POETRY

Micromegas, Vol. 4, No. 2, A Hungarian Issue. Dept. of English, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, U.S.A. 1971. Editor: Frederic Will.

One good poem is sufficient to suit a hundred occasions. What makes a poem work is the fresh and peculiarly personal approach of one writer to emotions and situations common to many, crystallized in words that will find an echo in other people even in remotely coinciding circumstances. A romantic line taken from a well-translated poem written a hundred years ago in another country can thus sound original tonight on lovers' lane. To me, a poet is a man wearing no armour and only a thin skin against his own passion who, knowing himself, can introduce on the basis of common humanity his well-armoured fellows to their own feelings. It sounds magic, but really it is a painful business rewarding to the poet and immensely useful to his readers.

This makes poetry translation particularly difficult. For it is not enough for the translator-author of the work to adopt a fresh approach in order to create an eternally fresh piece—he must join the poet of the original and make his own the latter's passion and stance; he must intimately involve himself with the poet emotionally and intellectually sharing, as it were, his heartbeat and, most of all, he must allow the original work to take him where it will. The sole objective of poetry translation is the successful recreation in another language of the original work without losing that precious, magic quality that has made it unviersally meaningful and worth translating in the first place. This can be done in many ways, the point of departure in each of them being the nature of the original poem. One does not set out to translate ancient Greek poetry to sound like Latin verse. One should not set out to translate contemporary Hungarian poetry to sound like modern English verse.

All this, you might think, is old hat in a country with a strong poetic tradition in a language unrelated to most others, the best of whose authors have made it their business to bring home in excellent translations the most precious literary treasures the world has to offer. But I have just read—and asked my friends to read—a strange booklet compiled by Frederic Will of the University of Iowa, containing a collection of Hungarian poems in English translation. This edition of *Micromegas*, Professor Will explains in the

introduction, is a result of "a carefully planned translation programme. In the summer of 1969, I worked—both in Budapest and at the Writers' House in Szigliget, on Lake Balaton—at turning recent Hungarian poetry into something like recent English poetry... A number of people—especially those listed as translators on the first page—gave me their time and intelligence. With each of them I sat down for long talks and detailed discussions: the chief arranger of these encounters, and in fact herself the chief translator and ally, was Miss Júlia Kada of the Hungarian PEN Club. She worked with me in staid conference rooms, on the broiling balcony of the Esterházy Mansion at Szigliget, and in beer halls. Her intelligence, discernment and irony never left her..."

A carefully planned translation programme? Miklós Radnóti, one of this century's best Hungarian poetry translators, described his working experience in these words: "...I have recited in my mind many of these original foreign poems often for several months and sometimes for years, their odd lines accompanying me while I tried over and over again to re-tune them to the Hungarian language at home bent to my desk and sometimes at dinner parties, in strange rooms and on the highways, in cattle trucks, amongst my snoring comrades and in libraries, in concert halls, awake and even in my dreams. They comforted me in the difficult years of my life, they tormented me and they protected me... They protected me, these Greek, Latin, French, English and German poems, even against myself. It was the melody that seized me in one, a picture in another, and the apparently insoluble problems in the third; but in most cases I was, of course, moved by all these things, by the poems themselves... The translator-poet knows that it is impossible to translate. He can only take a foreign poem and write it anew. In this sense, every poetic translation is merely an attempt."

He has a lot more to say, but nothing about conference rooms. Indeed, popular though they are with the organizers of carefully planned translation programmes, I have yet to come across a poem translated in committee which has managed to convey the original tension of the work which should give wings to the pedestrian words. And this is not surprising. One poem conveys one man's passion which can only be imitated by two writing in unison. Even collectively composed, preserved and through the centuries translated poetic works, such as the Scottish ballads that Hungary's János Arany managed so successfully to draw on, are no exception to this. For each one amongst the ablest of the bards chanting the old poetic tales, altering them slightly and handing them on, poured his own personality and fervour into them and committed himself entirely and alone to the work at the time. Nothing less than that must be demanded from the translator-bard of today for his task is in fact much greater. The people responsible for the Hungarian issue of *Micromegas* fail to give anything of the sort.

*

The committee aspect of the collection is emphasized by grouping the five translators without identifying the poems for which they are responsible. The choice of poetry in the collection* largely betrays good taste and shrewd judgement. Many of the poems lack the sort of problems that would obsess a Radnóti for years or make a lesser poet-translator throw up his hands in despair. But on the whole the collection fails because the translators have given Prof. Will little more than their time and intelligence.

I must admit at his point that my renewed concern with Hungarian literature is of fairly recent origin after an absence, both physical and emotional, of a decade and a half. I am also a contributor (as translator)

* By Lajos Kassák, Milán Füst, Gyula Illyés, István Vas, Sándor Weöres, Ágnes Nemes Nagy, Amy Károlyi, Gábor Garai, Sándor Csoóri, Ágnes Gergely, Ágnes Keresztes and Imre Oravecz.

to an anthology of modern Hungarian poetry in English to be published by the University of Iowa Press under Prof. Will. For both these reasons, I have approached the Hungarian issue of *Micromegas* with great caution and much self-doubt. Hence my asking my friends—sensitive, artistic English people well-disposed towards Hungarian poetry—to read the poems; the test of literature being, after all, in the reading. They were specifically the kind of audience towards which, I believe, the Hungarian PEN's translation programme is aimed. I am sorry that these readers found nothing moving in the poems except, perhaps, an occasional original picture which the translations failed to obscure. My response to the collection varies from theirs only in that I have read and enjoyed the Hungarian originals and can thus appreciate the poems against which the English translations now act as successful barriers. Yet we can still profit from the translations by noting aspects of the work to be avoided in the future.

Let us take Gábor Garai's "A Message Abroad", for example, a gripping account of the invisible chains by which an exile is tied to his native land. A longish poem, it is written largely in iambic pentameter (a metre particularly natural to the English tongue) and it employs no rhymes. Technically, there are really no difficulties for the translator, save perhaps the need to take good care of the metre because it lends itself to symbolizing the rapid pulsebeat of a feverish man, with abrupt breaks coinciding with new sequences of a nightmare. The English version, however, inexplicably fails to employ rhythm of any kind. The name of a Budapest street of significance in the context of the poem is omitted from the first line. The final line of the poem is a potent, cruel verdict, a declaration that "there is no escaping from here" but the word "here" is dropped and with it the whole point of the poem.

Or take "An Evening Prayer" by Ágnes Gergely, a lovely, simple poem of tranquillity, love and yearning, comprising three quatrain stanzas written largely in iambic tetrameter (again a natural English metre) each of them with a single pair of feminine rhyme ending the second and fourth lines. This is a poem of treacherous simplicity requiring great sensitivity by the translator because each word opens up whole worlds of meaning. Poems of this sort are rare in the English language since William Blake and are on their way to become popular once again. In fact the translator probably saw all this clearly and attempted to attain the Hungarian original's delicacy of texture by a skilful repetition of a simple figure of speech. But the rhythm stumbles; the soft, feminine rhymes are replaced by an imperfect rhyme (matching an accented syllable with an unaccented one) in the first stanza, a dissonant rhyme in the second stanza and a hard, masculine rhyme in the third; and thus the carefully erected structure of the Hungarian poem crumbles in its English version from lack of conviction.

Yet the paradox of this poem and some others in the collection is that the translator might have succeeded had there not been an attempt arbitrarily to impose a modern English poetic style upon the works. Imperfect and dissonant rhymes are not only unsuitable for Ágnes Gergely's piece; they are also popular amongst modern English poets and were presumably the vehicle intended to "turn" this piece of "recent Hungarian poetry into something like recent English poetry". Quite properly, the attempt has failed; for contemporary Hungarian poetry is not anything like modern English verse, and nothing but falsification can make one look like the other.

Besides, contemporary English literature has no need to import from Hungary "something like recent English poetry" while well-translated Hungarian poetry is welcome. The reason is that current English poets and literary editors tend to be dissatisfied with their course and are searching for new directions. Hungarian poetry, still

close to its roots in folklore, could possibly give an impetus in that search.

The search for new poetic directions in England is expressed by the exploding popularity of public poetry readings and the proliferation of "underground", "little" and "alternative" magazines devoted to literature. Poetry readings nowadays attract young people whose cultural and social counterparts a few years ago might have been embarrassed at the thought of being seen near such places. The small-circulation new magazines are often mimeographed, exuberant and irreverent. Much of the new poetry is experimental. Anything now goes in style and much bad poetry is being published along with the occasional gem. "The more I read of European poetry, albeit in translated form, the more I realize the dearth of good poets in England," the editor of one such literary journal wrote to me recently. "Somehow European poetry seems more mature and committed than does that in England. We have too much Romanticism and not enough reality. Perhaps it's because the European experience has been tragic over the last 60–70 years in comparison with the pastoral placidness of England. . ."

Poetry, of course, has been traditionally an academic and aristocratic pursuit in England (Scottish poetry being specifically excluded here) where much of the population still feels the effect of the uprooting by the first industrial revolution. It has been brought to common young people in any meaningful sense for the first time only recently by a group of Liverpool poets who have torn the frills off poetry and sung the ballads of the docklands and the slums. Their works, and those of many other poets by now influenced by them, are teeming with vitality and meaning for huge audiences who had never known poetry before. But their poems are still self-conscious, refraining from refinement and sometimes resembling what might to a mature poet elsewhere amount only to rough notes to be tidied up later.

Clearly, this is a transitional stage leading to works of much greater sophistication as poetry again becomes a tradition for many. Poems of great simplicity and sensitivity would now be welcomed, I believe, not unlike the original of "An Evening Prayer"—but only if the translations are composed with love, passion and humility, and with the translator-poet allowing the works to write themselves, as it were, rather than setting their course in advance.

THOMAS LAND

SOCIOLOGY IN EASTERN EUROPE

The State of Sociology in Eastern Europe Today. Edited by Jerzy J. Wiatr, foreword by Herman R. Lantz. Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1971. 273 pp.

Herman R. Lantz, the author of the preface, who is also the general editor of the series "Perspectives in Sociology", and thus one of the editors of the present volume as well, pauses thoughtfully at an interesting phenomenon. Of what other contemporary area of science could it be said—he asks—as, unfortunately, it is possible to say about sociology, that a sound, high-standard sociology course could be given in which texts dating from the thirties and forties are used, and in which a few recent results are merely added by way of lip-service.

While sociological methods have advanced significantly, substantial results affecting the lives of individuals and peoples

have remained on the level of the thirties. According to the foreword, written by a Western sociologist, this is the stiuation of sociology in the West. What is the answer given by Jerzy J. Wiatr, the Eastern European (Polish) editor, as he surveys the contributions which he has gathered together.

"One may ask what are the perspectives and difficulties which East European sociology will encounter in its future development? In my opinion they are basically the same as the ones contemporary world sociology is confronted with: the gap between more and more refined techniques of research and inadequate theoretical concepts and models; the disproportion between the rapidly growing body of factual information and a very limited ability to interpret them in a way which would be something more than a complicated way of saying platitudes..."

This basic stance of self-criticism assumed by both sides resembles to some extent the spirit of Alvin W. Gouldner's book, "The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology", which describes the many problems and weaknesses of Western sociology on similar grounds, and expects the new Eastern European sociology to be one more area to be overcome by these problems. "Functionalism goes East"—states Gouldner in slogan-like fashion, and what he means by this is what Lantz and some of the contributors of the present volume put this way:

"If we address ourselves"—writes Lantz—"to at least one point of possible convergence for East and West, concern for the human condition, which in the West is identified under the rubric "relevance", the following dilemma appears. Is there a possibility that so long as sociology remains superficially concerned with important social issues, sociology will be considered relevant and will be supported by the Establishment? When sociology becomes seriously and systematically concerned with vital issues, could sociology become irrevelant in the eyes of the Establishment?"

Among the authors from the socialist camp the Hungarian contributor, András Hegedüs, raises the question of functionalism in a similar vein:

"In the European Socialist countries, including Hungary, the kind of social science which treats the present faces the dilemma of whether to become an apologetic science influencing behaviour, or to provide the analysis and at the same time the criticism of the conditions that have developed."

The substance of the accusations directed at sociology from this quarter is that it foregoes its mission of improving conditions by producing methodologically elegant, precise research results which do little to benefit society. In the West Mills, Gouldner and Lantz take this line; in Eastern Europe there is a wider spectrum of emphases and the various authors of even this limited survey arrive at rather different conclusions.

The two Polish authors, Wiatr, who covers the whole Eastern European scene, and Markiewicz, who gives a closer analysis of the Polish situation, both regret the lack of a specific middle-range theory of the development of socialist society and contrast it with the empirical data that is increasingly accumulating here, which urgently needs to be interpreted theoretically.

"When speaking about the unsatisfactory development of theoretical studies"—writes Markiewicz—"one cannot ignore the fact that the lack of comparative material from other socialist countries has also made it difficult to work out a sociological theory of socialist society in contemporary Poland. It has been felt for quite a long time that co-operation between sociologists from the Socialist countries should be based on more solid organisational foundations than has been the case till now. A joint scientific research institute working on the basis of a concerted, uniform plan should be set up; its main task would be to integrate all efforts aimed at working out a general theory of the development of societies building socialism in a world divided into two socio-political systems."

The Soviet contributor, Elena V. Osipova, moves even further from the line which, under the influence of the Mills tradition, associates scientific precision with irrevelance and a fear of social action. Osipova also sees the danger of the sort of empirical research wich disregards important connections:

"Without due development of the whole complex structure of sociology as a science, concrete sociological researches could be but flops."

But this careful statement is directly followed by this statement:

"A certain conversion of sociology into a precise science due to over-increasing utilisation of mathematics and cybernetics is, to our mind, the main trend of its development which will enable it to become a mighty weapon of social prognostication, planning and management. This is the only way for sociology to meet the requirements and hopes reposed on it by the society, and to take proper stand in the socialist society. History of science shows that a science becomes a precise one when there is a demand for its precise results."

Thus in this view the "way out" opens "upwards", in the direction of greater scientific exactitude.

The Bulgarian contributors, Stoyan Michailov and Radi Vassilev, recommend a programme which is not even afraid of being suspected of "scientism". They emphasize the fact that

"Bulgaria is the motherland of the concept of Marxist sociology as a non-philosophical, special science for society, because this concept was formulated for the first time in the Marxist literature by the prominent Bulgarian philosopher and sociologist Academician Todor Pavlov."

The question that emerges is how far the authors who have been asked to contribute to this volume are representative of their national sociologies. Michailov and company emphasise the unity of Bulgarian sociologists on the platform outlined by them. The Yugoslav author, Oleg Mandic, is engagingly honest in reporting on shortcomings in communication and co-operation:

"There are no contacts between institutes, or if they are contacting reciprocally with reference to the actual projects, these exchanges of opinions do not extend to their methodological and methodic experience. In short, their work is carried out in isolation, often oppressed by professional jealousy."

As regards the Hungarian study, its representative position can be questioned from several aspects. First of all, it was not what the author designed. András Hegedüs, with a candour that is worthy of respect, has declared on several occasions, and once in a special article on the subject in the Budapest *Valóság*, that he represents his own individual views at the forum of international scientific exchanges and does not wish to act as the spokesman for the nation's sociology. Secondly, the nature of the study published here in itself excludes this possibility. This is the shortest contribution in the volume and is not meant to give a detailed and comprehensive picture of the past and present of Hungarian sociology. While, for example, the Rumanian article mentions twenty dead and fifty living sociologists, the Polish thirty dead and eighty living, the Hungarian mentions only three from the past (Ervin Szabó, Oszkár Jászai and Róbert Braun) and fourteen living. These are Mária Márkus, Ágnes Heller (mentioned several times), István Monigl and Iván Szelényi (twice), András B. Hegedüs, Heleszta, Kéri, Konrád, Naményi, Nemes, Rozgonyi, Szántó, Szesztay and Iván Varga. Although all of them are undoubtedly good and talented sociologists, it is probable that they were not representative of Hungarian sociology even in 1968, the year the article was written. Since then Hungarian sociology has been transformed both from the organisational point of view and as regards those who practise it, mainly due to the high intake of talented younger sociologists. There is no scope within the framework of this short review to introduce the sociologists who have been "left out"

of the study, while a mere listing of their names would probably convey little to the reader abroad. The director of the sociological Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Kálmán Kulcsár, is mentioned in the volume by the editor, Wiatr. He also mentions the two Hungarians of classic fame, Georg Lukács and Karl Mannheim.

If the Hungarian contribution were written today no doubt Osipova's point would receive greater emphasis: "a science becomes a precise one when there is a demand for its precise results". Social and economic planning and management makes demands on contemporary sociology which sociology can only fulfil by imposing stricter standards as regards its own methodological criteria. For instance—to mention just one among many—and perhaps even more important—projects, the project examining the sociological problems in the technological utilisation of Hungarian chemical research shows the "functionality" of our sociology, which is designed to increase adaptability and infuse new life into the present system.

In the introduction Professor Lantz rightly points out:

"The role of sociology, as commitment to the improvement of the human conditions, is consistent with the historical tradition of Eastern European sociology. Sociology in the East was more intimately associated with an ideology of radical social change..."

Those difficulties, referred to in the survey of the editors and in the contributions of the individual authors as obstacles standing in the way of the fulfilment of this progressive and committed role by sociology both external obstacles such as possible conflicts with the sense of professional obligation felt by sociologists, and internal ones such as shortcomings in theory, methodology and in the logic of research—are genuine dangers. Who should give an example in self-knowledge and in the recognition of the influences exerted by different social forces on one's work if not the sociologist? And this book under review reveals understanding. At the same time, while duly noting the subtleties of the individual contributions, beyond this Gouldner-type "sociology of sociology" approach it is possible to discern the tendencies in Eastern European sociologies moving in the opposite direction, directed against attempts to make the results of social science relative. It is not true of the Eastern European sociologies that they are "proud of their methods" and only complain of the lack of the substantial results. The Marxist sociology of today, as a strict scientific discipline (perhaps to some extent as a contrast to the Eastern European sociology of "yesterday") is clearly aware that more valuable and socially useful, substantial results can only be reached through more reliable, more scientific methods.

The quotation from Professor Lantz at the beginning of this paper, to the effect that sociology differs from other sciences in that the latter have produced genuinely new results in the last few decades, while sociology has not (which in itself is only true with a great many reservations) can be quite simply explained from this point of view. Those "other" sciences—for the sake of illustration one might think of such disciplines as molecular biology and genetics, neurology and experimental psychology, or even atomic physics and rocketry—differ from sociology perhaps not least in that their methods and research processes are incomparably stricter and more demanding in terms of work. One might almost say that while the sociologists that lean towards the essay, giving their thoughts added elegance through the employment of empirical data—of course a rather primitive empiricism—have not made much progress, those deploying a scientific mentality, combined with consistent hard work, can form part of that development of science which is one of the most characteristic features of our age.

KÁROLY VARGA

AMERICA IN EUROPE

GYÖRGY ÁDÁM: *Amerika Európában — vállalatbirodalmak a világgazdaságban* (America in Europe—Business Empires in the World Economy). Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1970, 514 pages.*

It is not without reason that the spread of the influence and activity of very large companies, whose corporate operations disregard national frontiers, has recently been reflected more and more in an impressive array of economic and political literature. Although the various commentators, students and critics of this new phenomenon could not—as yet—agree on the name to be given to corporations of this type, they all agree that their arrival onto the economic scene is something novel, and something that has come to stay. Whether called international companies, multi-national corporations, giants, or simply large firms—it is agreed that they mean a new dimension on the scene of the world economy and no scenario for either the present or the future can neglect them.

The growing importance of the international operation of these companies, presents many problems at various levels. To governments, to the less international, the not-quite-as-large national companies and to the average man in the street as well. Naturally, these are of a different kind and nature.

No government likes if, as a consequence of foreign investment, an ever increasing share of the national industry—or indeed any other sector of the economy—is owned by "foreign hands", by operators who make their decisions in faraway lands—and whose decisions, precisely because of the growing weight of foreign-owned investment, may have important implications on the national economy. (There should be no misunderstanding: some governments may welcome the inflow of foreign capital—but all governments dislike the consequences.)

The dislike of these companies is of course well justified: the invaders are formidable competitors whose financial power, technological expertise and managerial experience is very difficult to match and better knowledge of the *couleur locale* offers but a poor balance as compared with these advantages. Nor are the potential problems of the man in the street, arising from the penetration of international companies, to be belittled: in more than one case have we seen social questions emerging soon after the foreign company started operating; these are not restricted to the frequent situation in which higher executive jobs in the new company are, in the main, reserved for foreign nationals. Not infrequently some local or wider disequilibrium is caused by the different wage system, in the lower ranks, or some other factor which the foreign company imports, may not always be easy to adjust to local methods and habits.

Then comes the question of power. No doubt, most of these international companies represent considerable financial and managerial power arising from their worldwide operations, and even if in some recent cases the local national governments have found the ways and means to stand up against them if their case required—as, for example, in the recent negotiations between the oil-producing Arab states and the international oil companies—it cannot be denied that the two negotiating partners are on almost equal terms.

But each coin has two sides. Local interests can stir up feelings against multinational companies, and since most international companies are American and therefore a certain America versus Europe conflict has also understandably emerged—some

* An abbreviated version of Chapter XIII appeared in No. 39 of *The N.H.Q.*

"points of merit" can be listed in favour of the multi-national corporations as well. Precisely because they have enormous financial means at their disposal—quite apart from the width of international human resources—many of them have been in the forefront of technological advance. No doubt this was no altruistic approach on their part and many of them—though not all—knew how to turn technological progress into financial benefit.

We can take several views concerning the merits and de-merits of technological progress. More recently, especially in the American literature, those views have come to the fore which are focused on pollution, on the gradually increasing speed of the destruction of a natural environment and all the well-known allied questions. No doubt, these are all well-founded and have come right in time as a warning to mankind—pointing to the urgent need of harnessing technological progress and steering it in a manner which ensures that not only this generation but our children and grandchildren as well should live in an environment which is worth living in.

The recognition of these dangers, however, does not alter the basic state of affairs. For land and manpower have both become increasingly limited and have been lagging behind the rate of growth of man's needs and requirements. In the past, the most important source for the satisfaction of man's needs was the advance in production methods. It is important that this advance should continue—and continue at a rapid rate. And it is undeniable that most of the international companies have not only promoted technological progress, but in many instances pioneered it. Pioneering usually is not free from taking considerable risks; no doubt, these big companies could afford to take the risks which would have appeared unacceptable to smaller, or less enterprising, companies.

These and similar thoughts must have been in the back of the author's mind when he started this important book. In Chapter I, he begins with an analysis of the development of science and research-intensive industries in the contemporary world economy. Indeed, what is called scientific-technical revolution provides not only the background to the analysis, but it permeates the whole volume. Of course, scientific and technical development and the growth of business empires go hand in hand. Research and development have become extremely expensive—therefore the large companies, with easier access to finance, have a a flying start in the race. Often their R and D efforts secure a lead and support their penetration in other markets: i.e. foreign countries.

The author carefully analyses the whole process of the expansion of research-intensive industries on the domestic and foreign markets, stressing the overwhelming importance of the vast internal market in the United States, as well as the role of government-supported research projects. His statistics and the sections on the size and significance of US involvement in foreign industry and business well reflect the importance of the question.

No treatment of any question which requires an America/Europe comparison can be complete without mentioning the so-called technological gap. Ádám's book contains a long section on this question, based on the newest literature (e.g. the OECD "Technological Gap" reports, etc.). The most important areas are specially dealt with, such as the making of electronic computers, the aircraft industry, space research, the peaceful use of atomic energy. Ádám's statements are impressively supported by references to the literature of the field; and his thorough survey is not to be blamed if the reader still is left with his doubts in certain areas. It is said, for example, that West Germany is "lagging behind considerably in space research" (page 106). This certainly is true if Germany is compared with the two superpowers, the USA and the USSR. (It is not lagging behind anybody else, since the others

have not done much.) But then: is this really such a bad thing? To go into further details would exceed the scope of this brief survey. However, this is of secondary interest; the question which comes to the fore is whether or not Europe will be in a position to retain —or regain—at least some of the commanding heights of the modern economy? Or will the European nations have to accept US domination across the board, which of course implies that they—the Europeans—will have to become resigned to the role of some second-line force in industrial development and competition.

Those who have ever been seriously involved in this important question can conveniently be split into two groups. Every attempt to classify opinions runs the risk of oversimplification and this tendency cannot be avoided here either. The pessimists—seen from the European side—simply say that the US leadership in most sectors, but especially the sectors of rapid growth, is so great that in the foreseeable future there is no hope for Europe to catch up. It is therefore a good thing if more and more American companies settle in Europe, because they bring the most up-to-date technology with them. The optimists do not accept this; in their view one has to start from given and unalterable facts of which the most important—from this point of view—is that the US economy accounts for almost one half of the world total in terms of either national income or industrial production. (This, of course, is a truncated world total, since it does not include the USSR, Eastern Europe and China, mainly for statisitcal reasons, since despite many endeavours there are still difficulties in identifying the national income calculations in the Soviet type MPS material products system with the system of national accounts SNA used elsewhere. This fact has to be accepted and it follows that if any country's economy has such a huge weight—it must have approximately the same share in everything, including, for example, major innovations which secure the leadership in the often quoted science-based growth industries. If this is the starting-point—so the optimists say—the US leadership boils down to something much smaller than it would appear when our basic data are crudely compared—or much smaller than accepted by the pessimists. The OECD's studies of the technological gap listed, for example, the most important postwar innovations. This amount important postwar innovations. This amounted to well over a hundred items and although it is true that somewhat more than half of these originated in the USA, one should not forget that US industry accounts for one half of the industrial production in the so-called "Western" world. If then, say, 60 per cent of the important postwar innovations were of American origin, the US eadership still was unchallenged, but it didl not amount to more than the difference between the 50 and 60 per cent.

The optimists have further weapons in their armoury. They refer to the brain drain and to the fact that many of the "American" inventions and innovations were the brainchild of Europeans; some of them say that the American penetration at the scale of the last two decades would have been impossible without the huge balance of payments deficits that many of the European interests were acquired with the help of credits or loans raised within Europe, etc. Often it is difficult to see whether these—otherwise legitimate—arguments are meant as an apologia for European attitudes, or as praise of American management.

Ádám himself includes a brief but concise chapter in his book on "West European counter-actions", where he attaches some importance to the process of industrial concentration which has been going on in Western Europe. But, he rightly adds, so far these have in the main been financial mergers and amalgamations which do not necessarily mean increasing efficiency—this is important to remember—and whether or not the national and supra-national concentration in

Western Europe will indeed result in added competitive strength of the larger European companies versus their American competitors, remains to be seen.

The first two parts of the book—altogether about 230 pages—concern "America in Europe". The third and longest part refers to the sub-title: Business empires in the world economy.

(A point of criticism may arise here on behalf of those who—like the present reviewer—begin to feel extremely humble when facing any book which exceeds 200–300 pages: Ádám's work could have been successfully split and produced in two separate volumes. It would have made the reading easier, reduced the sheer weight of the book—and certainly the present volume contains such a wealth of material which could itself have justified the two-volume approach.)

The apparent strategy of the author was this: first, see the present situation: the disease caused by the penetration of American companies and the resulting condition of the patient, the European economy. This is shown in great detail in the first two parts of the book. Secondly, let us now consider the "bug" which caused this condition: those multi-national companies which played the part of the invader. This second "volume" reflects the same characteristics as the first: extremely careful documentation, a very rich bibliography and expert grouping of references in order to support the text. Statistical tables, diagrams and charts, as well as maps have been included in adequate number, and this abundance of facts and figures may be considered as an extra merit of the book for those who value convenient presentation of otherwise rather inaccessible information.

The "bug" is the multi-national corporation—and there are many such companies in Europe. This part of Ádám's work deals with the "type", whatever its nationality. Of course, in both number and—especially—in turnover or some other volume indicator, the Americans stand out: there are more of them and they are bigger than most European companies (although among the ten largest business concerns of the world there are apart from eight US companies, two British-Dutch corporations: Shell and Unilever). Ádám lists the hundred largest companies in 1967 and two-thirds of them are American:

67 USA
6 British
2 British-Dutch
7 French
5 Swiss
4 German
3 Italian
2 Swedish
2 Belgian
1 Canadian
1 Dutch

It is, of course, hazardous and misleading to draw any other conclusions from this list: it is simply a ranking of the largest corporations according to Ádám's definition, and does not define either the importance of the various national economies, or export success, or any other aspect. Otherwise, the West German economy surely ought to be better placed. Also, this ranking does not reflect the order of the biggest industrial companies either—because, if so, we would find eight Japanese corporations.

After a sketchy historical survey the author offers a longer chapter on the organization of the world corporations. He must have felt like everybody before him who attempted to set up rules in this area: it is like walking on quicksand. There is hardly anything in the field of business organization which is as irregular as the organization pattern of these huge corporations. The differences stem, first of all, from the different technologies, but these variations are relatively modest in comparison with those caused by the different policies which these companies follow. One can just as well find textbook examples of centralization as those of decentralization. Some large com-

panies appoint local nationals into higher executive positions in their wholly-owned or associated companies (retaining, of course, the final control), others "export" their own men to every corner of the world where they have interests. In many other respects, too, the practices of these corporations can differ widely—and Ádám gives a good and objective survey of the many allied questions.

Quite apart from the discussion of many topical items, one of the great merits of Ádám's book is that he is in full control of the formidable bibliography listed in the back of the book. And this is very up-to-date: the author's preface was dated December 31, 1969, and indeed not only the bibliography but the actual text as well includes references to very recent works of many Eastern and Western writers, from Galbraith to Perroux, and from Reddaway to Servan-Schreiber.

The book is an excellent survey of the huge subject well defined by its title. It reads well—but unfortunately only to those reading Hungarian. It is this point which gives rise to some criticism, though this may concern more the publisher than the author.

First, a book of this kind deserves a well-edited subject index. A book on economic subjects is no bedtime reading—certainly not when it contains 514 pages! This book will certainly be used as a reference book, and for this purpose a subject index would have doubled its usefulness and its value to scholars, researchers, and even for the average interested reader. The useful and detailed bibliography and the authors' index is no compensation for the missing subject index.

Secondly, the Russian and English table of contents obviously aims at informing the reader who cannot read Hungarian, but—at least in may view—it cannot go very far and will probably satisfy nobody. It is too little to convey even the basic ideas of the book. A much better solution seems to me what has become quite a custom in other countries—such as Sweden—and this is to attach to the text in the original language, a longer summary in English. This usually is no longer than perhaps 5 per cent of the number of pages of the original text. It should also contain at least a list of the tables (which at present is missing in the book anyway), or a translation of the table headings. These and the summary will generally enable anybody who is really interested in the subject and does not speak the language, to follow the text and to select those parts for translation which affect most closely his field of interest.

This latter remark becomes naturally invalid if there are any intentions for publishing Ádám's book in other languages. Indeed, this is the kind of book which gives an analytical survey of a relatively new phenomenon of international interest; its translation and the publication of an English version—perhaps in an abbreviated form—would make it accessible to a wide readership outside Hungary.

G. F. Ray

ARTS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

THE LUDDITE ETCHINGS OF BÉLA UITZ

The death of Béla Uitz, the outstanding Hungarian painter and graphic artist, occurred in February this year at the age of 85. His death closed a life of hard struggle and many difficulties, a career denied complete fulfilment by the vicissitudes of history.

Uitz was born in 1887 at Mehala, a suburb of Temesvár, today Timisoara in Rumania. His parents were peasants, farming a few acres. Having found enjoyment in drawing as a child, continued in the drawing lessons of the secondary school, Uitz decided to become a painter, studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest, where one of his teachers was Károly Ferenczy, the well-known *plein-air* painter.

His work was shown for the first time in 1914 at the collective exhibition of the Union of Young Artists in Budapest, where it achieved considerable success. The Union embraced other young artists of a like mind, such as the "activists" József Nemes Lampérth, János Kmetty and others, who later grouped themselves around Lajos Kassák in search of a style of their own, something akin to the French Fauves and the German Expressionists. Uitz's further development as an artist took place within the ambience of the seminal reviews founded and edited by Lajos Kassák, *Tett* (Deed) and *Ma* (Today). His drawings in charcoal, and later in Indian ink, had a passion in them held in check by firmly controlled rational design with a unique synthesis of Expressionist and Constructivist elements. The Hungarian Revolution of 1919 turned Uitz into a political radical, and spurred him to a burst of passionate artistic acitivity. After the defeat of the Hungarian Republic of Councils he was forced to emigrate, and lived first in Vienna (1919–1924) and then in Paris (1924–1926). It was during these years that he became a committed Communist, committed for the rest of his life.

In 1926 Uitz settled in the USSR, where he became a professor at the College of Fine Arts in Moscow, and later Secretary of the Revolutionary Artists' Internationale (1931–1935). He was given a number of important commissions. In 1934 he painted panel portraits of Marx and Lenin for a new theatre in Kharkhov, later destroyed. In Frunze, the Kirgizian capital, he designed the decoration of the Government headquarters (1935–1938) together with the painter Axana Pavleno, who became a permanent collaborator of his. In 1939 as the head of a small group of artists, he began work on the preliminary drafts of frescoes for the Palace of the Soviets then being planned. This preparatory work was finished in 1948 but some of the preliminary drawings, including the cartoon of a big composition, were later lost. In the early '50s Uitz painted the frescoes for the Russian and Bielorussian pavilions of the Soviet Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow. The paintings were badly damaged by defective

plumbing and completely covered over when the pavilion was renovated at a later date.

A great many sketches and designs, few finished works, fewer still preserved, constitute the balance of Uitz's Soviet period. Hard outlines, careful modelling, a style which bore witness to a profound study of Italian Renaissance art, but adapted to new social demands and new tasks, were the hallmarks of his late monumental works.

After the success of an exhibition of his works in Budapest in 1968, Uitz decided to come home to Hungary.* As a tribute to his work and his contributions to the working-class movement, the Presidential Council of the Hungarian People's Republic gave him a high decoration about this time. His works were shown in Berlin and Prague in 1970.

The copperplate engraving entitled *The Luddites* was the principal work of Uitz's stay in Vienna and summed up the major ideological, emotional and artistic experiences of this period. In Vienna Uitz was still attempting to come to terms with the profound effects of the defeat of the 1919 Revolution, and this political and ideological crisis in his life was only solved by his trip to Moscow in 1921 and his participation in the Third Congress of the Comintern.

In Moscow he came into contact with the Proletkult and the Constructivists. Both these movements left a deep impression on him. Uitz was in agreement with the aim of Proletkult to subordinate art to the service of proletarian ideology, but wanted to combine this ideological commitment with the achievements of Constructivism. He was influenced above all by Malevich's "suprematism". He made a series of lino-cuts entitled *Analysis*, in which he attempted to work out the elemental relationships of artistic forms. He experimented with the creation of "ideological form" —trying to determine the abstract elements of form and relationships within a given composition which would embody his ideal of socialist society as perfectly as Church art once expressed the socio-religious structure of bygone ages.

In 1923 Ernő Bettelheim, one of the leaders of the Communist Party of Hungary, a member of the Sallai group, suggested that Uitz should do a series of graphics on the Chartist movement. In collecting material for this project, Uitz became fascinated by the history of the Luddites and decided to base his series on these destroyers of machinery instead. Subscriptions were collected to enable him to work without financial worry. He spent six months on the series and completed them before the end of 1923.

The history of the Luddites is a sequence of repetitive episodes. The same type of events occur against various backgrounds of place and time: riots, the destruction of machinery, and police action against the rioters. The loosely connecting links and lack of dominating motifs in the "story" did not encourage a dramatic presentation, or the construction of the individual episodes into an orderly ascending climax. For this reason Uitz decided on a form like a rondo. The sequence of variations in the centre of the series consists of five etchings portraying "General Ludd", the legendary leader of the movement. The first and third etchings of these five illustrate the destruction of machinery as an individual and instinctive act: in his anger against the factory owner Ned Ludd breaks up the stocking-frame. The fifth and seventh etchings show the evolution of the idea of deliberate acts of sabotage against the machine-monsters—General Ludd pondering. In the eleventh drawing General Ludd, as the leader of the movement, carries out his ideas and attacks the machines. The other etchings, dealing with some of the more striking aspects of the movement, such as child labour, the oath of "The Ludds", the Blanketeers marching to London in 1817, the Nottingham captain, the secret alliance, the mass destruction of machinery, the attack on the procession of rioters, imprisonment

* See Lajos Németh's article "The Art of Béla Uitz" in No. 29 of *The N.H.Q.* pp. 176–180.

and police terror—fit into the framework established around the central sheet.

This makes for a very interesting structure. To quote an observation of Éva Körner's in a different context "Although the pictures make up the scenes of a connected story, they are not interdependent. Each composition is an independent entity in itself, carrying the impact of the basic message of the work. The etchings are variations on the same theme. It is not the primary object of these etchings to tell the story in a full consecutive time sequence; instead, like parts in a chorus, they ring out together, varying and reinforcing one another. Regardless of whether the individual etchings show rebels preparing, or triumphant, or whether they show defeat and slaughter, they are full of the same tortured anger, the same emotion bursting into action." This description by Éva Körner of a different artist's different work could have been written about the Luddite series. Uitz's work is a sequence with a dramatic character, within which each etching can be interpreted in itself without the help of the others, because each is a sovereign representation of the key idea of the series.

In this series Uitz has not merely told the story of the Luddites. The elemental machine-destroying anger of the English workers here mingles with his own anguish, with the emotions of an anarchist set on smashing up the old world. From the material of history and from his own experiences he designed a model presenting the psychology of revolution and the human passions explicit in it through visible flesh and blood figures.

In working on "The Luddites", Uitz planned to create a work of art with a definite message, to be used for political education and propaganda. With revolutionary traditions in mind, the need for graphic works which can be easily reproduced and circulated, he chose the technique of copper-plate engraving. A great deal of careful work preceded the etching. Uitz made preliminary drawings in purple ink, sometimes several variants for a single plate. These drawings as a rule fall short of the long-matured economy of the final compositions, but they express with unusual directness and great sensitivity the emotional condition and character of the figures. They are drawn with vibrant, forceful lines, suggesting precisely the essential forms of the body, the clothing and the surrounding space. The tension created by rhythmically recurring lines plays an important part in them and is preserved in the finished engravings. In the seventh etching the arched brows of General Ludd and the lines of his forehead, shooting upwards in compressed anger, are etched into the face and herald the forthcoming outburst of rage; they are repeated on the chin and echoed in the curves of the collar. In the twelfth etching, the rippling lines of General Ludd's shirt as it breaks loose from his belt seem to burst beyond the limitations of objective portrayal. Uitz gives emphasis to the heated gestures and emotions of the figures by a forceful exaggeration of some of the forms. The dynamism and concentrated emotion of the drawings give authenticity to the misshapen limbs, the deformed bodies, and the contorted expressions of fear and anger. Occasionally, only occasionally, the drawings miss their aim; in such instances the planned impact on the emotions degenerates into the effect produced by grotesque caricature.

Uitz learned the technique of copper plate engraving in Vienna. He often used zinc alternatively with copper, etching the cheaper zinc plate with hydrochloric acid to speed up the traditional process. This was the technique used in his series *Versuche* (Essays). For the Luddite series, however, he preferred copper because of its harder effect, more in keeping with the theme.

Some of the formal characteristics of the Luddite series derive from the technique of copper plate engraving. He avoids, for instance, lines suggesting depth and foreshortened perspective. He sets the scenes parallel to the plane of the picture, or dis-

plays them as seen from above projected on to a plane. This flattened portrayal is held together by the mass and substance of the figures and objects. For this purpose he uses a wide variety of handling effects, enriching the thinning-thickening hatchwork in his earlier engravings with the solutions he developed in the *Analysis* series.

The composition of the Luddite etchings owes a great deal to the intellectual influence of Constructivism. The geometrical forms of the *Analysis* series are here repeated in a factory background reduced to cogwheels and beams, which serve the double purpose of stressing the architecture of the planes and the interrelationship of the figures within the composition as a whole. There is likewise the tension created by a certain antagonism between the expressive force and exaltation of the figures on one hand, and the logical forms of the composition and the geometric abstraction of the background on the other. The contradiction between emotional spontaneity and intellectual speculation was strongly marked in Uitz both as a man and as an artist. Prior to 1919 these contrasting forces were successfully balanced and integrated in his work as a whole. In *The Luddites*, the intuition of the artist, instinctual expressiveness and the geometrics of the composition are by and large in harmony with one another; the geometrical elements fusing successfully into the overall structure of the work. On occasion, however, the balance tilts in the direction of the cerebral processes, and the composition then tends to become formalistic, and the figures lifeless, like distorted puppets.

A series of the etchings of *The Luddites* made their way to London, where it was shown at the British Museum. In 1924 the Labour Government invited the artist to England to paint a fresco on the same subject. The news that the Labour Government was defeated reached Uitz in Switzerland, on his way to London, and he consequently decided to go to Paris instead. A sketch recording the main outlines of the composition Uitz planned for England is all that has remained of the fresco on the Luddite movement, which the course of history again prevented from coming into being.

ZOLTÁN NAGY

HUNGARIAN VARIATIONS ON GRAND ART, OP ART AND POP ART

Variations on Architecture and Politics

In 1928 in La Sarraz, Switzerland, the *Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne* was founded by Le Corbusier, his cousin and collaborator Pierre, Jeanneret, Lurçat and others. As a recently published monograph shows, four years later—in 1932 in Budapest—the Hungarian members of the same organization were denounced by the police, convicted of subversive activity; their exhibition was banned and their tableaux demonstrating the principles of Le Corbusier were confiscated.

Those familiar with modern Hungarian art believe this event to be according to law.

Now, this law does not declare that the Hungarian State between the two World Wars instinctively and systematically persecuted every kind of modern intellectual or artistic trend as every fascistoid or fascist system did. This also holds true, but it would be an oversimplification to consider the criminal case of the Budapest architects of 1932 merely as an early and provincial rehearsal of the prohibition of the Berlin Bauhaus in 1934. For the seven Hungarian

architects actually were involved in subversive activity. The spiritual leader of the group published his biting articles in compromised, in fact, semi-legal socialist periodicals which could not be explained merely by the conscience of an architect; another member of the group was found after the Liberation to have been an illegal communist for many years, in fact, to have been working as the secretary of a group of socialist artists directed by the communists; in the golden age of the group every one of its members was linked with invisible or visible bonds to the ostracised Left or the labour movement.

In other words, the Hungarian group of CIAM has reversed in practice the theory of international CIAM, and this is what seems to be conformable to law, i.e. inevitable in the sight of those who know something about the history of modern Hungarian art. The activity of this century's grand architects, such as Le Corbusier and the masters of the Bauhaus, could be reduced with slight simplification to the hope of changing human society by means of the architect's mild violence since, in spite of setbacks, they believed that their groups of buildings designed for community life will force the individual—and finally the whole of society—to actually live a life of community. Their Hungarian allies, on the other hand, gradually and spontaneously changed the order of succession without even realizing the turning-point: with devices far from architectural they tried to change society first in order to serve the interests of their architecture.

The example they followed was set by artists. Only academic pedantry can speak of Hungarian expressionism in full knowledge of the facts, since the greatest Hungarian masters involved in the international movement at once engaged their expressivity in the service of the labour movement; the purity of style was at once transformed and "deranged" with cubistic-constructivistic gestures according to their ideas. But Hungarian art history lacks a pure cubism. In neighbouring Bohemia the first decade of the century witnessed the development of a regular, sublime and uniform cubism on the pattern of French cubists, the Hungarian future cubists brought home at the same time the theses of Cézanne and the other French masters with the full knowledge of the absolute impossibility to carry on their experiments in an isolated studio; they felt, they had to launch their immature constructivism into spiritual and political public life straight away.

That's all about the examples. What can be deduced as generalization is this: born in bourgeois cultures par excellence as spiritual movements, certain trends were, in the hands of Hungarian artists and under Hungarian conditions, mostly charged with social explosives or given at least certain moral aspects; they were transformed and began to serve. Fine formal experiments became agitprop gestures, or at least an art heavy with human care, with solidarity or discontent—the opposite of their genuine international counterparts.

All this cannot be explained by the good intentions of Hungarian artists, nor—and even less so—by some "national character", much rather by the prosaic and realistic historical conditions determining both of them. All this is but law, and no indication of value—unsuitable for deciding whether Hungarian art is more or less for that than the Western European inspiration that was pure in style. It is simply different. It is most certainly no subsequent actualization, no self-justification of actual trends engaged to social ideas. But the fact is that the phenomenon is still valid to-day, the tradition is alive and the example is working: for the most part, the actual inventions of present art are adopted by Hungarian artists in a way that gives them a function or at least a character. Not simply an attitude of opposition, of course, but an *attitude*. Even to-day, when fine arts are often tossed about between absolute abstract content and ab-

solute direct engagement in politics, the Hungarian artist follows the example of his predecessors and mostly reserves the right to express his opinion with responsibility in his own genre on a subject which concerns the whole community. He is ready to bear the consequences resulting from such conduct. However, instead of generalizations here are a few examples taken from exhibitions of the Budapest season of spring and early summer 1972.

Kondor: Variations on Grand Art

The epoch-marking art of 41 years old Béla Kondor was readily accepted some ten years ago both by art criticism claiming to be Marxist, and the other side, as a kind of political opposition, as a direct spiritual resistance that could be translated into words and situations. In reality, Kondor did not argue with any political system, still less with the actual form of a system. (An artist, if committed to *grand art*, has no possibility of making gestures relevant to the politics of the day—except in extraordinary situations —without losing what is the quintessence of *grand art:* its universality.) Kondor had graver conflicts with the *entire world*, he had dramatic visions projected on world history and leading to a catharsis or a tragic failure of equally universal validity. They derive from the fourty-one years that educated Kondor to be a master.

Béla Kondor was born two years before Hitler came to power, in a country that was going to become Hitler's ally and that itself drifted towards fascism. He was fourteen when the war was over, and in Hungary this marked not only the end of the war. In 1951 the twenty-one year old shipyard worker was discovered by the talent scouting of the new socialist cultural policy and helped into the Art Academy. However, these very years were marked by frame-up trials in general, and in cultural policy in particular, by schematic voluntarism. Kondor started his independent artistic career in the year 1956 which was the most tragic year of recent Hungarian history, and he had his first show in the years when the regenerating Hungarian arts made their first attempt to establish their genuine human and aesthetic order of values. All these events acted on Kondor's art. At first sight it seems to be rather unimportant that his birth almost coincides with the birth of international surrealism in France, that the year 1945 is marked by the beginning reign of the second generation of abstraction, that Tapié proclaimed in 1951 the theory of the *informel*, that 1956 was the year when Jacques Villon and Afro were awarded the Grand Prix in Venice, and that 1960 was already marked by the triumph of pop art.

These moments had a lesser impact on his art, as I said, but they had an impact nevertheless. And so did the masters of the German and Netherlands Renaissance and Gothic art, the prophetic poetry and art of William Blake, the Hungarian constructivists of the beginning of the century (who, as already mentioned, were prevented by their social engagement from achieving perfect cubism), the fragile and bold forms of the heroic age in the history of aviation, the symbolism of the circus, the epics of the Bible, the apocrypha of Negro spirituals and the canonized legends of canonized saints. For Kondor's painting and graphic art amounts to a monumental and congenial eclecticism, not to be ranged in either a formal or substantial category, but presenting the fragments of innumerable formal and substantial trends and amalgamating them into a closed and accessible myth.

Like every artist of the 20th century disillusioned by universal myths and petrified iconographies, Kondor created a myth, an order of pictorial values and an iconography of his own. As opposed to the majority of this century's artistic creators of myths, however, this private myth is comprehensible for the outsider and the spectator also; at the same time, its comprehensible essence is an

imbroglio of universally valid ideas and feelings concerning both the spectator and the outsider.

This holds true, even though it is motivated by painfully deep individual struggles, defiances and fights. Due to his maturity, his talent and his moral and aesthetic maximalism, Kondor was the first of his generation, in fact, in the entire field of Hungarian art, to realize the ideological and professional crisis which most profoundly afflicted his own generation on account of the political, social and artistic functional disturbances in the first half of the fifties. Still a student, Kondor was already up against that simplifying over-ambitious optimism, while the other members of his generation were still marching, as under a self-destructive spell, towards their own crisis. Of course he was received with animosity and lack of comprehension due to premature arrival although he started with no opposition programme, nor was he—at first—plunged into philosophical pessimism or cynicism by the raving optimism of his environment. In one of his subsequent periods he experienced such profundities also, but in those times his compositions expressed in their essence merely a conviction he has atoned for, and a desire for harmony all the more authentic as it had filtered through griveous struggles. At the beginning even his subject-matter was that of his generation. His diploma work which stirred the first tempest was a series of copper engravings on the theme of the Hungarian peasant insurrection of 1514, made in 1956; one of his cycles has the same Hungarian Republic of Councils of 1919 for its subject which an entire generation worked on in 1959 although, in the jubilee year, it was cut dead like something to be ashamed of. His first exhibition included panel paintings on *Architects* as well as heart-rending and merry mural designs, passing almost unnoticed or creating violent and uncomprehending protest. It is characteristic of the obtuseness with which his art was received that it was attacked from the formal and stylistic side (it was soon going to be protected by others on the same basis), and was accused of surrealism and abstraction, all of which were still regarded as impeachable in Hungarian art around 1960.

As for Kondor, he had neither the time nor the energy to care for formal trends of the hour or of yesterday: he had an urgent and important message to convey about tormented twisted and smoothed souls, about death-defying pioneers of transatlantic flight meant to suffer a most likely death, about bombs, rockets and war engines augmenting their horror to the uttermost and turning ridiculous in their very extremes. With the natural and almost chance superiority of great sovereigns he availed himself of the artistic heritage of the recent past as well as of many thousand years; it would be difficult indeed to demonstrate what was inspired in his concentrated symbols and ghastly visions by the late Middle Ages and what by early surrealism, to reveal in his constructive pictures and organized motifs the contribution of cubism and constructivism and that of Dürer's heritage he had studied for many long years. It is hardly possible to say whether his drawings and pictures, where the constructive structure becomes a senseless disarray and the vision a nebulous blur, result from a wish to be *informel* rather than from a spontaneous gesture.

It is as a sovereign that Kondor handled not only the artistic heritage but also spiritual traditions. At the beginning of the spring season 1972 he arranged, with two other artists, a short-lived exhibition in a gallery in Budapest. His picture *Stage-design for a Bartók Opera* was a striking proof of his natural ease in turning traditions into authentic apocrypha. Bartók had composed only one opera, Bluebeard's Castle, but the said picture is as little connected with it as it is a stage-design. It reflects far more the restless, stylized and warmer atmosphere of Bartók's ballet, The Wooden Prince and of his pantomime, The Miraculous Man-

darin, all that world full of yellow potentates, golden dramas and urban vibrations. With its suspectly magnificent colours, its suspiciously optimistic, almost frolicking carnival, with the fanatical zealots in the procession and with the saints acquitting their glorification with mercenary contentment, *Entrance of the Saints into Heaven* naturally handles the heritage of Negro spirituals in the same way, amalgamating it with all the stylistic elements Kondor was willing to take from his overabundant arsenal.

Pásztor: Variations on Surrealism

Kondor is an extreme and unique example within the individualizing tendency I have just mentioned which may assert itself in different degrees. Kondor's fellow exhibitor, the 39 years old graphic artist Gábor Pásztor, uses the results of universal trends in a quite different way and with unequal efficiency. Pásztor took part in the *Grafica d'Oggi* show of the 1972 Biennale of Venice; to those who had seen his work in this international environment, it may seem odd to find here certain reflections on transformation or individual formation in connection with his work. In Venice, Pásztor's sheets were arranged in the same hall of *Cà Pesaro* as the representatives of spiritually and formally cognate graphic art, in the display of a trend that could be characterized by many different technical terms none of which would fit it perfectly.

His art results from the late encounter of op art and pop art, from a surrealistic subdued eroticism, a vegetative poetry, a queer symbiosis of organic and inorganic—it is a subtle, slightly enervated art. Its features are so elusive and volatile that the critics hardly dare to risk their verbal fixation, its motifs cannot be interpreted unless their description begins with „perhaps". Perhaps these sheets combining in themselves an unprovable yet unquestionable eroticism and a provocatively emphasized geometrical discipline, yes, perhaps they are the magnified reproductions of sleek and sluggish oil drops thickening up to suicide, perhaps they are the supernaturalistic fractions of a blown up balloon glittering in the sunlight, or perhaps the monuments of buds germinating out of the prison of seeds, the memorials of copulating cells.

It would be difficult anyway to deduce these works from the same concrete moral and militant basic position as that of Kondor. Any sort of concrete moral substance floats only indirectly in these works, reduced to recollections. In his new period Pásztor carries on and develops the international trend of becoming detached from concrete situations rather than transforming it in the way Kondor does. Only those who know his former career discover, with good reason, in his present work the confusing duplicity of his previous period, the memory of something very rational and very intuitive, of playful lightmindedness and profound sadness. These earlier Pásztor plates combined the gestures of classic surrealism with Hungarian poetry of the first half of the century that was far from being surrealistic—its Parnassian discipline was represented by the lyricism of Mihály Babits. His lithographic illustrations—self-contained and autocratic paraphrases rather than illustrations—grasped simultaneously the classic and disciplined Hungarian lyricism of fifty years ago and the international surrealism then thirty years of age, twisted and distorted them and amalgamated them into a new entity worthy of both the Parnassian Hungarian metrical structure and of proliferating universal surrealism.

This period of Pásztor was preceded by another adapting itself with more ease and less stir to international tendencies; and so we have good reason to suppose that his present, more universal period is about to develop a further and more personal note. It seems reasonable enough to say that the law we believe to have discovered is neither static nor absolutely and equally valid; it

exists in a jumble of tendencies and counter-tendencies, supposing sometimes a minimal coalescence in order to create the possibility of separation.

Attalai: Variations on Op and Pop and Conceptual Art

A sound proof thereof is another Budapest exhibition of the spring season, organized in the same City Gallery where Kondor, Pásztor and Miklós Melocco—their mate whom I shall deal with later—presented their art. It took place a few weeks later, a 42 years old textile designer, action artist, concept organizer, land artist and object maker Gábor Attalai was its central character. His catalogue included thirty symposia, meetings, "Aktionsraum" and "Project-Concept-Action" ranging from Reykjavik to Budapest, from Belgium to Hamburg, where Attalai has exhibited, participated and cooperated; his present spring exhibition demonstrated at first sight that he keeps closely in touch with the most topical international trends.

Comparable in spiritual respect to Pásztor, these trends were probably also born from an earlier and almost forgotten fusion of op art and pop art; however, their enervated idiom, with its intensely provocative pure colours and refined harmonies, ows its existence also to the rediscovery of *Art Nouveau* and to psychodelic art; all this is combined with the most drastic moments of *conceptual art*.

All that Attalai does is to cut into pieces large and thick felt boards of glaring colours; he lets them hang from the wall or coils them up with amazing simplicity and almost cynical primitiveness.

He cuts a flaming red felt board, two square metres in size, into parallel rectangular strips and suspends the material fixed at the top; the gravitational pull abolishes its rectangular forms and compells it to obey its own properties actually incapable of maintaining any geometrical form. With just a stitch he pleats aggressively green and aggressively endless felt strips, hangs them nonchalantly on the wall and lets them make the impression of huge green cartridge belts; black felt oblongs look like slovenly slashed funeral palls. Yet, his "felt statues" were his most impressive pieces. Thick and narrow felt strips were coiled up very closely and the coils put on a thin chromed stalk and a metallic base of course, the coils were of different colours and the coiling was not equally concentric. Due to the colourful inserts and the capricious coiling his "sculptures" began to remind us of something and to evoke remembrances; intricate curls of faded colour seemed to show from afar the cross section of the brain, others recalled with their colours and organic forms the structure of a nut or a flower split in two, or the fine arabesques of a printed power circuit.

We find here a peculiarly refined duplicity of the organic and the geometric, of luxuriant proliferation and sophisticated artifice, which reminds us slightly of the contradictions in Pásztor's works. These weary forms and coarse materials, these aggressive colours and inconstant gestures are carrying most directly that intellectual neo-enervation, that omnivolent idleness and sham activism most characteristic of some contemporary philosophers and so convincingly reproduced by psychodelic art.

Still, Attalai managed to reshape and to turn upside down all these international and universal features and gestures. For anybody outside Hungary felt, this clumsy, thick, vigorous and rustic material, may stand as a symbol for earthy sobriety; and so it acts, more than anywhere else, in Hungarian culture, since—by using felt—Attalai avails himself of the main raw material of Hungarian peasant tailoring and folk art; he revived the stuff of the traditional grey cloak still used recently by the hersdmen of Hortobágy, that very felt, known as the vehicle of an ancestral tradition ranging from

the nomadic tents to the horse-furniture of yesterday. In fact, he seemed to be dissatisfied with that much of individualization, with concrete attachment to a concrete culture; as though illustrating the law, he invested all of his works with a most practical function to be accomplished in interior decoration. All this sounds rather amazing to-day, when a single gesture, a drastic fission, the rediscovery of uncommon stuff or the contrast of organic and geometric is already considered in universal art as a composition of full value. Casually, but without outraging the essence of his works, Attalai nevertheless engages his "concepts" in an everyday service. Due to their size, their basis, their presentation and their colour, the lively statuettes of coiled felt presumed their use in a home; they were obviously made with the purpose of replacing, sneering at and doing away with the procelain knicknacks and senselessly importunate "objets d'art" of bourgeois interior decoration, in conjunction with geometrically patterned furniture.

Attalai's classic step could be explained by several historical antecedents and still more present inducements. Being contradictory a priori, his formal gestures were given still another contradiction, i.e. a further substantial layer by this last, functional twist.

Melocco: Variations on Pop

The sculptor Miklós Melocco was the third participant in the March exhibition I discussed earlier. He is a pop-art sculptor, as demonstrated by his plastercasts remindig of Pompeian mummies and by his plastic works fixing frightfully natural forms in frightfully unnatural material. His *Thirty years old woman*, with her pudendal details and partly truncated members, was lying under the show-case like a gypsum model that was brought just for a moment, before casting, from a casting-house manufacturing naturalistic statues; it was not difficult to find out that the precursor of this work must be looked for somewhere in George Segal's studio.

Where is the individual feature in all this? It is the object for which he used this almost classical method and it is the formal array finally transformed by that very object. Melocco's glass-cases presented three further half-figures, standing in day-dreaming torpor; two of them represented the poet, Miklós Radnóti, a victim of fascist racism, and one was the portrait of another Hungarian poet, Attila József, who remained forlorn in his struggles and loves, and died by his own hand. Radnóti is shown as a lifeless man, with closed eyes and opened lips, with the utter physical and mental resignation of the inmates of concentration camps and of those forced into the death march; maybe he is already dead. With his unearthy smile and his fearfully unmotivated bliss, Attila József changes an amazingly precise psychopathological report into accusation and apotheosis.

This is what may have resulted from the invisible, though present in the spirit, series of statues made in recent decades with Radnóti and Attila József as their subject. Due to an international derangement of conscience, Hungarian memorial sculpture wants to show in the great martyrs only what is great, in predecessors failing with magnificence, only what is sublime, and in the giants of spirit, only what is gigantic. This was also the case with the monuments of Radnóti and Attila József. They were so consistently one-sided that the present series of statues could safely rely upon the non-present heroic monuments, while appealing to biographical facts and presenting with brutal bluntness the historical and psychological ones. And so it was able to become monumental, particularly with the help of Melocco's masterful formal array evoking almost Bernini's poetry of drapery. Pop art, which in accordance with its own programme, was neither monumental nor sublime, thus finally became both monumental and sublime, its own contrast, as it were.

Varga: Variations on Monumental Art

Pop art has attacked and transformed Hungarian memorial sculpture, while the memorial function has transformed and enriched Hungarian pop art. A member of the middle-aged generation like Melocco, Imre Varga has assembled a one-man show in Tihany, a famous health-resort and hundreds of years old cultural centre on the shore of Lake Balaton, bringing several monuments of this kind from different towns of the country. His starting-point is classic and international, his bewigged *Professor*, sitting at a real marble table at the light of a real bronze candlestick, is not difficult to relate to Segal's plaster-cast sitting at a table. However, Varga's Professor was not made for the showroom, but for the town park of Debrecen, the traditional centre of Calvinist learning where it actually stands, right on the lawn under the trees, without any base. István Hatvani, a scientist of the 18th century, professor at the schools of Heidelberg, Magdeburg and Leyden, proved to be a somewhat unnatural figure in his provincial native town; it is with the same amazingly tragicomical suddenness, that the Hatvani monument appears sitting under the trees, a bizarre bronze figure with many different meanings. This oddity is certainly greater than that of the "classic" plaster-cast: placed in a concrete environment and referring to concrete phenomena, it becomes a general memento of provincialism and a far-reaching memorial of the creative spirit.

Varga's *Derkovits memorial*—the monument of the great Hungarian painter between the two world wars who literally starved to death—avails itself similarly of facilities offered by *environment* and *assemblée*. The four meter high figure stands before an open window, evoking with amazing accuracy the artist's extreme poverty. Like the windows of the slum tenement where Derkovits lived (shown on contemporary pictures and photographes), the broken-down metallic windows open on a partition-wall made of real bricks and real mortar; the rickety iron stove and the pot it is warming have also obtained their startling realism from classic pop art furniture compiled of chairs, radiators and telephones. However, this startling realism becomes at once the more startling truth of historic fact. It is extended like pictorial truth while being reshaped. Manet's well-known picture in the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, *Baudelaire's Mistress*, was transposed by Varga into a coloured statuette; the very idea is as good as a persiflage. Varga used the favourite material of the figurines standing in bourgeois homes—coloured porcelain—and applied their favourite size: thirty centimetres. So he simultaneously added to the effect of the materialized painted figure the respectful irreverence towards impressionism and the mordant satire of the petty-bourgeois illusions, including petty-bourgeois illusions attached to Manet's picture.

*

If it is still possible I shall try to re-establish the balance, although I am afraid that all my demonstrations and examples may have given the impression as though Hungarian artists were the most sovereign and the most independant creators in the world, furthermore, as though every *ism*, trend and international tendency would have no other reason for existing than to be born and then to arise as an individual variation in Hungary.

There are such opinions, explicit and implicit, there are in Hungary theoreticians of art and even artists professing such views. And there are works of art born from the constant and even application of the aforesaid law. They too confirm the law. The law that is an aesthetic law asserts itself through contradictions and spontaneously; its complementary paragraph reads like this: "Hungarian variations" can only be born if their becoming Hungarian variations is not part of a programme.

GYULA RÓZSA

VASARELY REVISITED

After 25–30 years of strenuous work Vasarely is beginning to be recognized: not many twentieth-century artists have been loaded with honours and prizes in such quick succession. In a very few years, art critics likewise have changed the tone of their judgements. Earlier, opinions differed: some critics (Herbert Read in 1959, Nello Ponente in 1960 and recently, Dora Vallier in 1967) saw in Vasarely's art only a revival of the geometrical abstraction which was in vogue at the beginning of the century, while others (M. Brion in 1960) recognized the specifically supported body of favourable criticism in recent years (H. H. Arnason, 1969; R. Huyghe-Jean Rudel, 1970; Klaus Hoffmann, 1970; E. de Keyser 1970). Vasarely's own somewhat propagandist writings (Vasarely–Marcel Joray, Brussels), 1965; Jean-Louis Ferrier: *Entretiens avec Victor Vasarely, Paris*, 1969; Vasarely: *Plasti-cité, l'oeuvre plastique dans votre vie quotidienne*, Tournai, 1970; *Le Musée Didactique Vasarely au château de Gordes*, 1971) have also played a considerable part in bringing about a more positive attitude in books on the history and theory of art. Therefore, it is worth taking a closer look at the components of his art, the intensity of his adherence to tradition, and such new features as already point to the future.

Vasarely is amazingly conscious as an artist whose aims are bolstered by theories which represent an amalgam of ideas by artists, theoreticians and scientists and it is, sometimes, not at all easy to separate out the various concepts. Like many other artists, Vasarely makes up his theories for his own use which do not necessarily have general validity in all respects. It could well happen that there were earlier precedents for things he believed to be his own invention. A theory—whether it is a preconceived one or comes into being in the course of artistic activity—takes time to coalesce into a whole with the gradual enrichment of his oeuvre. In his writings, by now we are interested mainly in the ideas which are of direct relevance to his work and which explain why he is so much better appreciated today.

When Vasarely left Hungary in 1930, he explored first Berlin and then Paris, and found to his satisfaction that at home he had acquired a large proportion of the skills and attitudes which an artist of European ambitions could have found at the time. Before leaving, he had been a pupil of Bortnyik's private school, the *Műhely* (Workshop) during 1928–29 and absorbed, in addition to practical skills, an artistic atmosphere which —as he himself noted—had a decisive effect on his later years. During his stay in Vienna, in the early twenties, Sándor Bortnyik had belonged to the circle of Lajos Kassák's avant-garde journal *Ma* (Today); Farkas Molnár has drawn his attention to the newly established Bauhaus movement. In Weimar, Bortnyik came to know the ideas and the teaching method of this School. After his return home he founded the *Műhely*, with a programme by and large modelled on that of the Bauhaus. Of the subjects taught, applied graphic art was most important, and Bortnyik himself was an eminent poster designer. When the master and his pupils arranged a collective exhibiton at the Book and Poster Exhibition in 1930, the press noted, among others, Győző Vásárhelyi (Vasarely's original Hungarian name).

In the final analysis Vasarely's concept of art is rooted in the teaching of the Bauhaus. The basis of his theory, the idea of the unity of arts, can be traced to the tenets of the Bauhaus; the theoretical and practical activity of the latter centred on this idea, which was formulated by Walter Gropius in his programme of 1923; in this he refers to Gothic art as a fine example of the unity which inspires all branches of the arts in the centre of which the cathedral towers towards the heavens. This attractive image recurs in

Vasarely's writings, though differently expressed, involving the higher standard of scientific knowledge of our day and in accordance with the wider horizons revealed to architects after the Second World War. He thinks in terms of urban planning when he flashes the image of a polychrome town to a reader who believes in the fruitful cooperation of the scientific, technical and artistic. One of his books mentioned earlier also bears the title: *Plasti-cité*, that is, "the artistically developed town". The polychrome town is in Vasarely's eyes a work of art, the kind of "architectonic synthesis" which a single building or residential district may have represtented to a progressive-minded architect years ago.

The importance of the artist as maker has been particularly emphasized by teachers of the Bauhaus. The school broke away from traditional academic teaching methods; Gropius declared straight out that what was needed was not imitators of Raphael but craftsmen in precise command of materials and technique who would know how to translate their ideas and plans, based on useful practical foundations, into objects. The scientific approach of the Bauhaus has also left its mark on the contemporary painting of Klee and Kandinsky; the former has even taught projective geometry. On the other hand, the *direct* relationship between basic principles of modern physics and Vasarely's works—stressed by Kandinsky—is debatable, indicating at best the significance he attributes to the exact sciences in his creative work. Later he is not as interested in this relationship but rather in the doctrinarian standardization of the process as a whole; this is the clue to the development of both the individual work and the polychromic town.

The comparison can be carried further. The eminent Bauhaus professor, Johannes Itten, has worked out a "general theorem of contrasts" formulating the various contrasts indispensable to the successful effect of a composition. In the mid-fifties, considering the possibilities of the "plastic unity" or "Oneness of colour and form", that is, how "form nucleus" and "background" could be successfully combined, Vasarely relies finally on the theorem of contrasts. He attaches particular significance to black-and-white contrast and refers to one of his creative periods as the "Periode noir-blanc"; others such as the cold-and-warm contrast, the supplementary contrast, the simultaneous and qualitative contrast are references to his world of colours and methods. Attempting to further refine his technique, he works out a permutation system consisting of six colour scales. The basis of this was probably acquired in Bortnyik's *Műbely*, the "Budapest Bauhaus", where rhythmical accentuation of form, colour and line was emphasized. In retrospect, it is not out of indifference that under the influence of the Budapest Bauhaus he doesn't cultivate natural forms—as reported in his writings—but is drawn towards the cube projected on a plane, representing the original spatial configuration in axiometric perspective—which is more akin to the "constructivist" spirit.

In his writings, artist and didactician blend, the latter ready to assume the role of a social reformer. In the Bauhaus, Moholy-Nagy stressed the importance of collaboration—which Vasarely practised in his workshop at Anet-sur-Marne—and severely criticized the deficiencies of capitalist production. Vasarely is one of the few West European artist who condemned those art-dealers always searching for novelty. But both Vasarely and Moholy-Nagy understand man's inherent artistic inclinations. Indeed Vasarely wanted to give pupils building elements similar to dies—"plastic units" of various colour and form—thereby encouraging original compositions. Vasarely endorses "folklore of the globe," the application of "plastic units" as a way of interpreting the artistic character of entire cultures. The release of man's creative energies and the interpretation of architecture as a dialectic

process were important in the programme of the Bauhaus. Employed as a graphics designer in Paris for fifteen years, Vasarely grew quite proficient in the graphic arts. Eventually he opened his own workshop. He did not associate with specific artistic circles but professionally met the standards of the *Abstraction-Creation* or of the *Cercle et Carré*. His work of this period could be considered studies or optical games at best. In 1943 he proceeded to study Futurism which he says influenced his work of the next few years. He also experimented with Surrealism which may have been due either to the depressing atmosphere of the war or to the possibilities it uncovered for freer expression of colour and form. He refers to this period as "a blind alley" believing that his artistic "renascence" started with the Denfert period leading straight to the synthesis of later aims.

And, yet, he owes a great deal to what he calls a "blind alley". The tenets of the Bauhaus made a lasting impression on Vasarely leading directly to his development of the idea of the "plastic unit". According to Vasarely, experience that inspired the Denfert period was his observation of the hairline cracks on the glazed tiles covering the walls of the Denfert Metro station in Paris. He applied this surrealistic technique first in smaller drawings and later in large-scale painting in a manner similar to Max Ernst, the difference being that Vasarely left nothing to chance—rather the principle of systematism prevailed in his work. The early pieces of the Belle-Isle period (1947) were pseudo-Dada, pseudo-Surrealistic collages, and material studies of a frequently recurring oval form patterned after the fine pebbles found on the Belle-Isle beach. In shaping, the oval is further processed in the same manner as in the case of the Denfert-Rochereau hair cracks, the ovals being transformed into simple standard elements.

The divorce from natural experiences and the elimination of latent Dadaistic-surrealistic motives begins with the Crystal period. At the end of the forties he reverts to the "constructivist" spirit of the Bauhaus, and to the use of colour and form as he studied in the Budapest *Műhely* and refined during his career as a graphic designer. Gradually a kind of optical kinetism becomes the driving force of his art due to which Vasarely is generally rated among the representatives of Op-Art. The works of the black-and-white period fit into this initial process, the optical kinetism breaking out with elemental force striving for maximum contrast.

He begins to crystallize his method of design accentuating, compacting and overlapping colour and form in a manner to the montage technique taken over from Dadaism and Surrealism. During this time Matisse made his large-scale compositions out of tinted paper. All this, however, is of secondary importance, his affinity to Malevich and Mondrian was far more influential in the development of his "plastic unity". Well before Vasarely appeared on the scene, these artists led the way to the gradual simplification of scientific methods and apparatuses. Vasarely employs Malevich's idea of composition in the "architectonic movement" he created for Caracas University by projecting the composition, originally a plane, into space. Vasarely attributes his inspiration for the "plastic unit" to Malevich's series: *black square on white ground* and *white square on black ground*. Mondrian's "pure compositions" were apparently too simple for Vasarely's use.

The functional—mural—application of abstract painting is associated with Delaunay who took a simple distribution of geometrical forms, and arranged them in a mobile design. The theoretical and practical work of Herbin, similar to that of Vasarely, should be noted. Herbin also conceived a "plastic alphabet" seeking the addition of corresponding letters and sounds to colour and form. Vasarely, of course, did not follow suit. His painting grew increasingly kinetic characterized by the striking use of colour and form. It appears that pioneers of the plastic unit preceded Vasarely but they sought to convey

human-visual experiences in activity while he was concerned with the creation of standard elements. In this respect it suffices to point to the work of either Malevich or Mondrian.

With his variable yet simple "plastic units" Vasarely provided for an endless series of compositional possibilities. The advent of mechanization made it possible to realize the precision and accuracy of such primary importance to the "constructor". Design and execution involve "flawless quality", an unlimited number of copies and formal representation according to individual taste. The dream of the polychromic town becomes a reality in this light. Vasarely has certainly progressed beyond Malevichian and Mondrianian impulses and through his adaptation of the latest scientific and technical developments he has even transcended the original impulses of the Bauhaus.

Much can be learned from the study of optical kinetism and its most classical representative, Vasarely. Optical kinetism is distinct from original kinetic art—which includes such artist as Marcel Duchamp, Tatlin, Naum Gabo, Moholy-Nagy and Calder, who have not made "snapshots" of motion but rather materialized movement in the form of machines, structures and models of buildings whether movement has been induced by man, electric power or a gust of wind. In the last decade attempts have been made to establish a morphological classification of the types of movement depicted by these structures, on one side are the mechanisms realizing movement with formula-like purity, while the structure itself is absorbed in the phenomenon of movement and seems to wipe out its material existence. On the other side are the objects inducing phenomena; these are stationary objects and sensation results from the viewer changing his point of view or through movement of some part of the mechanism Vasarely's optical kinetism and Op-Art set an example from the viewpoint of *morphology*. Kinetic art is a phenomenon of the twentieth century, only very few earlier experiments are known; this school of art is the manifestation of *physically measurable* time of the fourth dimension. Often mentioned in connection with the painting of our century, it has generally been narrowly interpreted and is the manifestation of a *real*, morphologically developed sense of time akin to music and dance. Kinetic art, originally inspired by nature, owes its realization to technical civilization. Ceaseless motion, active life materialized on a physical plane, is the basic law of life and the world, forced into static shackles by human intellect for simplicity's sake.

Vasarely is and has been aware of this from the beginning. In his writings he reconstructs perceptions of movement from the naive, instinctive games of his childhood. Graphical experiments of later years were attributed to optical illusion. Peculiar though it may seem, this has been the basis of optical kinetism. As far as he can remember, the varied "form nucleus" of "plastic units" owes its existence not only to direct sensation but to the movement of bi-dimensional figures. Thus, the square becomes rhomb, as presented *in statu nascendi*, his composition paying homage to Malevich's spirit, the circle as an ellipse, etc. He is not interested in producing plastic objects in motion, his "deep kinetic works" consist of planes with lattices placed behind each other. And although one plane moves, the visual force of the object relies on an optical effect.

It was interesting to learn from a conversation with Vasarely that a lattice applied on two plexi-glasses projected into space made him realize the presence of physical space which he was able to depict without depending upon either the Euclidian or the axonometric perspective. In the final analysis he thinks in planes even today. He had no other choice but to "strain to the utmost" the shock effect of colours. This he continues to do and in this lies his indisputable force and significance.

Thus, Vasarely ranks among the kinetic

artists such as Duchamp, Calder, Agam, Soto, Schöffer, etc. and although they arranged a collective exhibition in 1955 and 1965, common aims do not yet mean complete identity of principles. He remains, by and large, within the pale of what he learnt from the *Műhely* and the Bauhaus, but has expanded his knowledge and style through his attention to innovations of science and technique. Vasarely's art is a marginal case: he draws upon abstract panel pictures imbued with meaning, at the same time joining the battle line of kinetic art possibilities provided by machine technique and mass production. He does not really conquer space or become the absolute master of four dimensions, he only gives an illusion of space produced, however, with wonderful force. It is up to the viewer left in a state of uncertainty and convenient freedom of decision, to establish the unit of time. His achievement is truly significant even in his peculiar marginal case. He does not exclude other possibilites and aesthetic endeavours, those which continue to aim at a more fuller human meaning and another kind of emotional and intellectual content; however, the path of kinetic art is unimaginable without his pioneering work and propagative activity.

OTTÓ MEZEI

LAJOS SVÁBY — A MERCILESS PAINTER

Lajos Sváby was born in 1935. He graduated from the Budapest Academy of Fine Arts in 1960, János Kmetty and Bertalan Pór were his teachers, both of them outstanding Hungarian painters. Kmetty had been a member of the poet-artist Lajos Kassák's constructivist group, associated with the magazines *Tett* (1915–1916) and *Ma* (1916–1925), Pór had been one of *The Eight* (1908–1911). *The Eight* could be said to be related to the Fauves.

Sváby was first a member of the Studio of Young Artists. In 1963 he was awarded a Derkovits-scholarship—a grant given to young artists for a period of three years—and he settled in Dunaújváros, a centre of the iron-smelting industry. He continued to take part in the Studio's collective exhibitions, his portrait of the poet Árpád Tóth being awarded a prize. In 1970 his portrait of Lenin received the first prize in a competition arranged on occasion of the Lenin centenary. He also designed the decorations for two buildings, cartoons for the culture house in Mezőcsát and sgraffito work for the façade of the general school in Sárospatak. He had a one-man show at the Budapest *Műcsarnok* in May 1972. This showed that the past ten years had been a period of preparation. The hard struggle to develop a formal language of his own lent his paintings a latent tension and burdened them with a disturbing heavyhandedness.

The exhibiton includes work done in the last three years. It appears that he has changed both his style and also the subject of his works. He has transcended his dulled world of colours and heavy forms and replaced monochromes and dark hues by eye-catching mauves, whites, yellows, reds and greens which seem to argue with each other. The backgrounds of his pictures are frequently divided into large colour surfaces often reminding of the daubing of the outside wall of a house. These strips of colour, despite their texture, seem lifeless on occasion and the preponderance of horizontal elements stops them from being organically linked

with each other and with the figures on the picture. Sváby's more recent work shows a better arrangement of forms with closer links, replacing the large rustic surfaces by interwined multicoloured spots. He has learned to be more economic with colours, his lively, brilliant hues are now accompanied by blacks and darker tones. This ensures a balance of colours and avoids the risk of gaudiness.

He still paints many self-portraits but traditional poses are now complemented by elements taken from sport—swimming, racing, weight-lifting—with fantastic situations and with literary associations. The expressivity and colour combination of faces still play a major role but they are no longer predominant. Dynamics and the movements of figures gained in importance. The subjects and structure of the pictures have also changed. His latest work, especially pictures painted in 1972, does not express clear-cut feelings any more: the faces are anonymous, grotesque masks, empty of feeling. The change of the role of faces is partly a sign that the structure of the paintings is becoming integrated but it is also a symptom of the impoverishment of his art. Perhaps this will lead to the disappearance of representation as his "Portrait of a Tin" allows one to suspect.

Sváby is a poetic personality, he expresses himself in a sovereign manner with the help of tools inherited from expressionism. His most attractive quality is his merciless attitude toward himself, the unvarnished revelation of his inner conflicts. With a growing mastery of his craft he is becoming more balanced, he takes a calmer look at the world, pathos has been replaced by self-irony and mockery. This change becomes clear if the excruciating, brutal erotism of his 1971 pictures is compared with the grotesque 1972 figures. His grotesques, however, are also very varied. In "Rembrandt's Small Angel" the source of grotesqueness is the exaggeration of the poses of the pantomime-like figures. The same grotesque poses are mere formalities, devoid of all significance, in "Curious procession."

Z. N.

THE COPPER AGE FINDS IN THE CARPATHIAN BASIN

IDA BOGNÁR-KUTZIÁN: *The Early Copper Age Tiszapolgár Culture in the Carpathian Basin.* (Arch. Hung. XLVIII. Akadémiai Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1972, 253 pp. 36 figures, 74 plates, 2 supplements.) (In English.)

The book deals with the appr. 1500 years long history of the copper age in the Carpathian basin (IV–III. mill), those who lived then and there, their dwellings, burial customs and way of life. The first chapter describes the two hundred and fifty sites of the *Tiszapolgár* culture. The descriptions of the sites and findings are complemented by drawings or photos of all worthwhile objects. In addition to drawings of burial places and burial ground maps there is a map of all the sites provided as a supplement which helps general orientation; it also shows the Great Plain prior to the regulation of waterways and drainage works, this giving an approximate picture of the network of water-courses in the prehistoric age. Easier orientation is helped by a bibliography with about 500 entries and an index.

The analysis of all the sites, of the

circumstances in which they were discovered and the possibilities for study they offer provides a sound basis for the classification of sites. Scholarly conclusions could be drawn only from sites worked by up-to-date excavation methods. Chapter II. answers pertinent historical questions, by classifying findings and comparing them. What was found here proved decisive for relations with other cultures, and as regards origin and chronology. The finds in question are mainly pottery sherds and metal objects of the early copper age (copper and gold). The third chapter contains a complex analysis of individual burial grounds and of scattered burial-places found near dwellings. Chapter 4. treats matters related to the life of the people of that culture. Problems of their way of life (the character of dwellings, etc) and the role of geographical factors are discussed. The fifth chapter determines four groups of the Tiszapolgár culture, dividing it into four ethnic regional units. The author discusses their characteristics and their chronological relation. The sixth chapter studies problems concerned with the relative and absolute chronological situation of the copper age as a whole and the late neolithic period, including relations with neighbouring regions. The seventh chapter determines the origin of the Tiszapolgár culture and its groups.

All this information is based on the finds and their observation. The author made use of both classical inductive and modern interdisciplinary methods, the application of these methods allowing for a wider interpretation of the findings. Information is supplied not only by the remains of the products of human activity (pottery, metal and implements made of bone); much is revealed by their evironment: reconstructable flora and fauna, mineral resources, etc). The specific morphology of the surface, the network of watercourses, climate, etc. also furnish data.

Interdisciplinary methods enable the author to go beyond the typological examination of the findings and to examine the structure of their material, their chemical composition, etc.—these studies enabling her to provide information on phenomena of prehistoric life which would have been inconceivable in the past.

Modern methods made it possible to determine of the relative and absolute chronology of the cultures of the era, including a number of subdivisions. The author was able to identify the past cultures of Central-South East and Eastern Europe establishing relations that existed with these regions. These levels also serve to determine the historical order of the dominant cultures of the copper age.

It thus proved possible to determine the cultures of the Carpathian basin with all their significant and minor differences. The evolution of these differences and their changes could be observed clearly in the state fixed by the levels. Hence it was possible to reconstruct the process of the coming into existence and later history of the copper age. Perhaps the most important result of these investigations is the observation of the process of integration which had started in the Carpathian basin after the end of the neolithic period or in the early copper age which involved the association of many small population groups and finally appeared as a unit in its fully developed form in the Tiszapolgár culture (shown by the findings in burial places and dwellings).

A detailed analysis is provided of the Tiszapolgár culture which represented the early copper age in the Carpathian basin. Radio-carbon examinations set the limits of the period at 3600 (3500–3300) 3200 B. C. The Bodrogkeresztúr culture of the middle copper age 3300 (3200–2900) 2800 shows a longer period of dominance and the late copper age, the Baden culture which flourished for 600–700 years (2900/2800–2300/2200) lasted the longest in this area. The important and basic questions of the cultures of the middle and late copper age (origin, periodization, levels) are discussed

and answered by the author but the book does not intend to enter into details in this respect.

The author has raised every major question concerning the copper age in the Carpathian basin. In all chapters the synthesis of data obtained with the application of the abovementioned methods served as a basis for the author's statements. This procedure convinces us of the soundness of her results.

Starting with the early copper age the population of the plains imported not only ore and salt but also copper and gold. Beside a general hypothesis of trade by barter the author recognized a new (concrete) form of supplies: the basis of this were dwellings built by the culture on the foothills of the mountains which sorrounded the Great Plain.

The tide lands of the Tisza and its tributaries had been populated earlier but in the Tiszapolgár culture the dwellings were so concentrated that there must have been a reason for this. The explanation is that the population recognized the fertility of the region ensured by hydrographical, morphological and climatic factors. Apart from the growing role of animal husbandry the tide lands assured similar advantages for plant cultures as in the potamic cultures.

This was the time when copper, the second man-made material, became important. Data about the spreading of the types of objects made of copper and about the stratigraphic location of these types show that in our region copper processing existed in its initial form. This was limited however to determined regions of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and the Eastern Carpathians (Lucska group). It appeared earliest in Bulgaria and one phase later in the two other groups. The technology of the process was probably imported from the Near East.

One can only touch on the question of the origin of the Tiszapolgár culture. The author prepared her answer in an earlier book discussing the outlines of a synthesis of the earlier stone age in the Carpathian basin, including its later period. Going on from this she now argues that the Tiszapolgár culture (and within it the three older groups: Basatanya, Lucska and Deszk) were in genetic relation with the late neolithic groups of Csőszhalom, Herpály and Gorzsa.

All I could do was to hint just how valuable this book is. The applied methods, and scientific results are of considerable significance to archeological research in Hungary and abroad and they are employed in an exemplary fashion in a number of ways.

MIHÁLY PÁRDUCZ

THE BATTLE OF MOHÁCS IN TURKISH MINIATURES OF THE OSMANLI PERIOD

The two Hungarian scholars, József Thúry and Imre Karácson, when they produced their series on historical recollections of Turkish–Hungarian times *(Török-Magyarkori Történelmi Emlékek)* in the closing years of the last century and the beginning of ours, had already brought to light most of the important Turkish sources.

Turkish and Western libraries, however, and in particular the Top Kapu Seraglio in Istanbul and the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, preserve a good many works that may usefully supplement our knowledge, and the investigation of their illustrations still remains to be undertaken.

The primary source of Turkish history in the Osmanli era, from the fourteen century on, are the various chronicles, the most important being those of Naima, Raşit and Çelebizade Asīm Efendi, in which the writers gave a detailed account of the events of their time. The works of other historians, such as Aşīkpaşazade, Ibrahim Peçevi, Kâtib Çelebi, and the traveller Evliya Çelebi, throw further light on various stages of this history.

Different historians, the best known being Arifi, Elatun, Ahmed Feridun, Seyyid Lokman and Ali Talīkīzade, gave elaborate accounts of the significant events in the reigns of the sultans, which are brought vividly to life by the miniature paintings illustrating the main episodes. The Sultans were anxious to hand down portraits of themselves to posterity as well as a record of their reign, and would therefore give orders that the "şehnameci", or court chronicler, was to write an account of some sepcific and outstanding event, or a life of the Sultan in question, or narrate a series of his victories, which would then be appropriately illustrated. The illustration in court chronicles of the deeds of the Sultan is indeed, in the context of the general culture of Islam, exclusively a Turkish-Osmanli practice.

Following his approval of the text, with any additions to be made, it was then handed over to the calligraphers. Certain pages of the fair copy—which the writer chose—were left blank for illustration. And the painters of the court studio filled in the empty pages with miniatures which had been ordered on designated subjects. Some of the chroniclers indeed were able to give eye-witness accounts of events, and more than once the miniature painters had themselves been present at these events.

These miniatures were painted in studios which as a general rule were under the control of a single master painter. It is almost impossible to connect the various miniatures with any individual artist. It also appears from the archives that both Western and Persian painters also worked in the Sultan's studios. Most of these were brought to the Court by conquest and capture, others were themselves drawn to the capital by its fame as a cultural centre.

Certain references to the painters working at the Sultan's court, known as the Seraglio, is given in the "Ehl-i Hiref" *defter* (or lists of tax-payers). The miniature painters specialized in different types of work: the "muşavvir" and the "nakkaş" painted the miniatures themselves, the "teshipçi" was responsible for the surround and the gold ornamentation of the pages.

It would be extremely difficult, I repeat, to associate the miniature of any given episode with the name of any of the painters listed in this *defter*. It is more correct, therefore, to speak of a studio made up of a community of painters. The studio of Nakkaş Osman, flourishing in the sixteenth century, is probably the best known.

The illuminators entered the service of the court studio as apprentices; in due time they emerged as fully-fledged painters, some specializing in the decoration of codices, others in figure-drawing or composition. Unfortunately relatively few facts about their training or their way of life are available.

The collections of the Seraglio have preserved to this day what is practically a complete series of the works of the court historians. In the course of five centuries the books and the manuscripts in the Sultan's library were increased by gifts of others, richly illuminated, from foreign rulers, nobles and ambassadors, and—by no means an unimportant source—the libraries confiscated, with the rest of their property, from the great men who fell from grace. In this library, therefore, a priceless source of material on Osmanli-Turkish history has survived for posterity. All the major events and episodes of Turkish history have consequently been preserved in illustrations running into several thousands.

The school of Osmanli-Turkish miniature painting, naturally, followed the course of the history of the Empire, and invariably reflected its position at the time. The great rulers of the Ottoman Empire, while intent on extending their domains by conquest, were also great patrons of art and culture. The consolidation of the conquests of the Ottoman Empire, and its subsequent decline, were reflected in the development and decline of literature and the arts. It was, therefore, only natural that the great period of Turkish miniature painting in the Osmanli era began in the middle of the sixteenth century and reached its peak in the reign of Murad III (1574–1595).

As early, however, as the days of Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566), a type of miniature painting unrelated to other Islamic school of painting was introduced. In this, the most glorious period of the Osmanli era, not only literary and philosophical works such as the Ṣahnamē of Firdevsi and the Divans of Cami and Nevai, were illustrated, but portrait painting also flourished and continued to develop. The representation of historical events, however, was still in its experimental stage, the characteristic Osmanli-Turkish style had not yet emerged, and even on the miniatures foreign influences of various kinds can be perceived.

*

The miniatures I am proposing to discuss here—three paintings of the famous battle of Mohács in 1526—were painted some twenty, thirty and sixty years after the event. An analysis of these paintings, therefore, can be of considerable value in understanding the various stages of development in Turkish historical painting.

A few words of history are indicated. The conquering Turks had barely established themselves in the Balkans before they were directly threatening the frontiers of Hungary by the end of the fourteenth century (Battle of Nicopolis, 1396). For a long time, despite Turkish pressure, Hungary maintained its independence; on the southern frontier in fact, János Hunyadi won a remarkable victory against the numerically superior enemy at Nándorfejérvár (Belgrade) in 1456. Following him, his son, King Matthias, with his centralization of power and his highly effective military force, continued to preserve Hungarian independence.

But after the death of Matthias (1490) the centralized state disintegrated, continual conflicts occurred between the great nobles and the lesser nobility, the peasant rebellion of 1514 was brutally crushed and all the while the construction and organization of defences against the Turks were completely neglected.

In 1520 an outstanding figure in the person of Suleiman the Magnificent ascended the throne of the Ottoman Empire. The consequence of the criminal neglect shown by the Hungarian ruling class was that when the Turkish forces, equipped with modern

weapons, marched on Hungary in the summer of 1526, the Hungarian army suffered a decisive defeat at the battle of Mohács that year.

The greater part of the Hungarian army perished on the battlefield, the king died in the retreat, and the country found itself split into three as the result of the election of two disputing kings and the Turkish occupation.

Hungarian, Western and Turkish sources alike are at one in pointing out the social causes of the lost battle at Mohács, as well as the strategic errors committed at the time.

*

Among the Turkish representations of the Mohács battle, one—in all probability the earliest—is only known to scholars, since the end of the last century, by a copy. I date the original around 1545, since Celâlzade Mustafa's chronicle—in which this illustration is to be found—deals with the campaign of 1543.

In József Thúry's work this chronicle is listed as preserved in the Viennese Staatsbibliothek. It is the earliest version—tradition has it that the copy was made in Szolnok in 1575—as in the Istanbul Seraglio only a late copy made in the seventeenth century exists.

In addition to the two versions of the Mohács battle known earlier, the one in Vienna, and the scene in the Hünernâme version of Seyyid Lokman, I was successful in finding a third in the Seraglio in Istanbul, which chronologically fits between the two. The date of its painting is probably between 1555 and 1557.

The original of the miniature of the battle of Mohács in the Celâlzade Mustafa chronicle in Vienna, already referred to, must, I repeat, have been painted around 1545. This is likewise indicated by its composition. But in so far as the details of the illustration are concerned we have to remember, when considering the development of Osmanli miniature painting, that it was copied in 1575. The second version to which I refer above, the Hünernâme representation of the battle of Mohács of Seyyid Lokman, published earlier than the miniature from the Viennese chronicle and used to compare with it, was made around 1588.

It is possible, therefore, through these three versions of the battle of Mohács, to follow the course of development of Turkish miniature painting of the Osmanli period from the forties of the sixteenth century to around 1588 or so.

The Mohács miniature from the Celalzâde Chronicle is distinguished by the crowded, rigid composition of the two armies facing each other in serried ranks, and the fact that the landscape elements are relegated to the background. Almost the whole field of the picture is filled with figures; the small sections left empty of figures are treated superficially, almost sketched in. With the two armies standing face to face, about to give battle, the picture records the starting phase. On both sides the rulers and their retinues are placed in the centre, in positions of prominence. A large role is given to the musicians in the picture: behind the Turkish armies the army band numbers many players, but the band behind Louis II is small.

The illustration I discovered takes up two pages of the Süleymanname preserved in the Istanbul Top Kapu Seraglio. It is a representation of the battle of Mohács, painted between 1555 and 1557.

According to Zeki Validi Togan the sixty-nine miniatures it contains were painted by Ali Ṣirvanī, but I must stress many of these splendid illuminations were undoubtedly the joint work of a number of hands. Ali bin Amir Dayk Ṣirvanī, moreover, was not a painter of miniatures, but the author of the chronicle in question.

Persian influence can be clearly seen in the composition of this two-page miniature, in which the landscape plays an important part. Among all the Turkish representations

of the battle of Mohács it is this miniature which appears to be the most authentic in terms of landscape. It is the only miniature in which the Csele brook is shown. In the centre of the right-hand painting Suleiman the Magnificent is shown surrounded by his bodyguard and soldiers. The cannons in the foreground are opening a path for the Sultan, and the cavalry and their banners behind him. The left-hand picture is more animated, as the Turkish cavalry are shown clashing with the Hungarians in the lower half. The central, smaller group appears to hesitate, and the upper, larger group of Hungarians is retreating in the face of the enemy attack.

Miniature painting of the Osmanli period, as most art historians agree, reached its peak in the Hünernâme illustration of Seyyid Lokman, the last of the three. Earlier scholars unanimously attributed no less than 110 miniatures in this two-volume work to Osmanli painters. As I have, however, pointed out, the illustration of large historical works in the Osmanli period was generally done in the court studio. Recently documentary proof has been provided that six artists illustrated the first volume of the work; among its 45 miniatures only 19 can be linked with the studio of the painter Osman.

Among sixty-five miniatures in the second volume, which interests us more directly, is to be found the lively, brightly coloured representation of the battle of Mohács. Here the victorious Turkish army is handed down to posterity, confirmed by the inscription: "The overthrow of the king of Buda by Sultan Khan Suleiman on the Plain of Mohács is the magnificent achievement of the victory of the 'Jihad' (or Holy War)."

The figure of the Sultan is prominent in this resplendent composition, and the heads of the enemy lying at his feet symbolize his victory. But the battle is not yet over: sporadic fighting is still going on in the foreground of the picture. Essentially, however, the painting shows a victorious army marching in orderly ranks. The hills and valleys shown in the picture are conventional; the topography is in fact entirely different.

A painting of similar composition, designed on the same lines as the Hünernâme Mohács picture of Seyyid Lokman, appears in the history of Ahmed Feridun describing the Szigetvár campaign, as well as in the "History of Sultan Suleiman" preserved in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin. We cannot, therefore, consider this fine composition as original or unique. It is only one of a series based on the same design which evolved between 1565 and 1590, few of the details corresponding to the facts.

After due consideration of all the facts revealed by research into the Osmanli chronicles and miniature-painting chronicles, the three Mohács battle pictures have been fitted into the period when the Osmanli culture was at its peak. Events in Hungary occupy a place of importance in the most significant manuscripts, and the illuminations in these works were executed in workshops directed by the finest artists of the time.

GÉZA FEJÉR, JR.

MUSICAL LIFE

NEW RECORDS

BEETHOVEN *String Quartets, 1* (Op. 18 Nos. 1–6), Bartók Quartet (Péter Komlós, Sándor Devich, Géza Németh, Károly Botvay), Qualiton LPX 11423-25 (stereo-mono)

The Bartók Quartet need no introduction. They have given many concerts in England and the United States and are well known to all amateurs of chamber music.

The album under review consists of three records and it is the first part of a complete series of the Beethoven string quartets. In June 1972 they began to record the last quartets. The repertory for their concert tours for the 1972–73 season will include all the Beethoven string quartets.

This first series was a delicate task. Everyone knows that the later quartets of Beethoven demand more technical virtuosity from the performer, but the six pieces of Op. 18 pose the most problems. Beethoven's technique of composition here is closely allied to that of his great predecessors—there is relatively little novelty in the musical forms he employs, nor are his harmonics superior to Haydn and Mozart. But the germs of the real Beethoven are present even here, as for instance in the obsessive, mordant repetition of the main theme of the first movement in No. 1. F major, which breaks out of the classical conception, and is so characteristic of the late Beethoven.

The reason why the performance of the Op. 18 series presents difficulties is that all the elements that are in fact outside the scope of classical forms must nevertheless be duly represented. This combination has probably never been completely achieved: the performers usually decide on an exclusively classical or exclusively romantic manner of interpretation. On occasion the Bartók Quartet have chosen the simpler solution—but for the most part their performance is astonishingly mature and shows them aiming at this duality of interpretation.

The playing of the first quartet of the series, the above mentioned F major, is, I think, the best. Though the slow movement—a programme piece on the grave-scene in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet—is somewhat too restless, this fault shrinks into insignificance when compared to the beautifully spacious curve of the melody in the main part. The *Scherzo* is excellent: it is dynamic and fascinating, and in the last movement the vrituosity of the playing is remarkable.

But this is the moment to raise a more general question, one which is especially crucial with the other quartets in the series, and which is closely connected with the question of style.

The Op. 18 series stands at a crossroads in the history of music, when chamber mu-

sic for mostly, even or indeed almost completely, domestic use gave place to concert chamber music. Those who know Beethoven's quartets will agree that the dimensions and problems of the Op. 59, Razumovsky quartets go far beyond the intimate atmosphere of domestic chamber music. The Razumovsky quartets are not really suitable for home playing, even when the amateur performers are indeed able to play them.

The Op. 18 series—if that is the right expression—are betwixt and between. They belong partly to the world of domestic music making and partly to that of the concert stage. The performance of the Bartók Quartet is dominated by the demands of the concert platform, characterized by the maximum of technical perfection and telling effect. I mention this to protect the buyer from possible disappointment.

This completely professional concert manner of playing is most fascinating, and most compelling, as in the last movement of the G major quartet (No. 2) which in its diversity, in the solo parts, and in the composition as a whole, demands professional musicians. The performance of the first movement of the D major (No. 3) on this record is perhaps somewhat less nervous —you might say gentler, softer—than we are entitled to expect, but the courageous and successful playing of the passionately expressive slow movement provides an enduring experience.

A detailed analysis of the twenty four movements, taking two and a half hours in playing time, is of course impossible here. But the first album of the Beethoven string quartets contains finely-wrought and splendid perfomances, fully justifying the reputation of these four distinguished musicians.

JOSEPH HAYDN: *Concerto for Horn and Orchestra* in D major, Hob. WIId: 4; *Concerto for Horn and Orchestra* in D major, Hob. WIId: 3. (Cadenzas by Ferenc Tarjáni), Ferenc Tarjáni (horn), Liszt Ferenc Chamber Orchestra. Conducted by Frigyes Sándor. Hungaroton LPX 11513 (stereo-mono)

I do not intend to continue here the long fruitless debate as to whether the first piece on this record, Haydn's concerto for horn in D major, is Joseph Haydn's work or not. It does not really matter: it is a beautiful piece —Haydn or not; and that is enough.

And the recording of the piece is a delight, especially through the playing of that miraculous Hungarian horn-player, Ferenc Tarjáni. The only reason why Tarjáni is not so famous as he ought to be is that horn-players practically never are. (Dennis Brain was the only possible exception.) But Tarjáni knows everything there is to know about playing the horn—the American critics thought the same when they heard him as a soloist last year in the United States with the Hungarian Radio Orchestra.

If great instrumentalists have any tricks at all, Tarjáni's is his first original desire to be a violinist. He is now thirty-five years old, and has played the horn for nearly twenty years, with the constant aim of achieving the singing sound of the violin with his horn. In fact one of his most attractive skills is the ability to produce wide resounding cantilena, or melodies consisting of long, crystal-clear notes.

The Baroque elements in the concerto on the first side of the record—which lead some experts to deny its authenticity—give Tarjáni every opportunity of displaying his sparkling cantilena. Special attention should be paid to the Adagio in A minor with its melancholy beauty. The quick movements are better in the concerto on the other side of the record, and they are closer to Haydn's symphonic masterpieces. The handling of the horn, moreover, is straighter and shows more virtuosity in these movements, especially in the high notes of the horn. It is as if the instrument is his to do what he will; every note is effortless. And he obtains a marvellous variety in the sound; it is full of delicate nuances; at one moment it might be a cello,

at another a flute. The cadenzas by the soloist are simple, short and modest, and form an organic part of the given movement.

Those who know Hungarian records will be well acquainted with the Liszt Ferenc Chamber Orchestra, which provides a fine and vivid accompaniment to the soloist under the baton of Frigyes Sándor.

ANDRÁS PERNYE

NEW PUBLICATIONS BY EDITIO MUSICA

For nearly a decade now material from the music collection of the National Széchényi Library of Budapest has been coming off the presses being published in a series called Musica Rinata. A large part of this material stems from the archives of the Princes Esterházy, in whose service Joseph Haydn spent many years. The most valuable part of the Esterházy archives is the eighteenth-century manuscript collection, of which a few fragments only had previously been published.

The nineteen volumes that have already appeared are linked by many strands with the dominant musical tradition: the Esterházy palaces rivalled even Vienna in this respect.

Johann Georg Albrechtsberger (1736–1809) is known primarily as the man who taught Beethoven counterpoint around 1794. He was a contemporary of Joseph Haydn but his works lie half a step behind those of the master: they are a transition between the baroque and Viennese classicism. Albrechtsberger's works are extraordinarily interesting: their richly counterpointed musical texture often appears embedded in the framework of Viennese classical form while showing great fugal inventiveness. Three of his concertos have appeared so far: *Concerto for Organ* (No. 1.), *Concerto for Harp* (No. 2.) and *Concerto for Trombone* (No. 10.) (The numbers in parentheses are the series numbers of Musica Rinata.) The *Concerto for Organ* can also be performed on the harpsichord or the piano, the *Concerto for Harp* on a baroque harp, as well as the modern instrument, but the *Concerto for Trombone* can only be performed on the small instrument of the composer's time. They are welcome additions to the sparse classical literature for the harp and the trombone. All three have also been recorded. Albrechtsberger's *Due partite per violino, viola d'amore e violoncello* (No. 19.) can only be performed with the viola d'amore playing the middle voice—the modern viola's range and playing technique, not to speak of the too few strings (only four) make it unsuitable. A further work by Albrechtsberger in the series is the *Partita in F per arpa, 2 corni e archi* (No. 17.). The description "partita" refers to Albrechtsberger's relative conservatism, rather than the real form and the meaning of the work. The form is the classical Viennese four-movement one, Allegro–Adagio–Minuet–Final/Allegro and the musical material reveals no baroque features whatever. The harp part accompanied by two horns and violin, viola and cello is considerably heightened and effective in the concerto manner.

Johann Michael Haydn (1737–1806) was the younger brother of the great Haydn. So far four of his works have appeared in the Musica Rinata series: the three orchestral inserts of the *Mythologische Operette* (No. 3.), the *Sinfonia in D* (No. 4.), the *Divertimento in D* (No. 7.) and the *Serenata a più stromenti, tutti obligati* (No. 11.). Any of these works are up to Joseph Haydn's average standards,

particularly that of the orchestral works of his youth. They are lively, virile works of symphonic ambition and with a masterly texture. Their composer was held in high esteem even by Mozart, on whom Michael Haydn had a decisive influence in his youth.

Giovanni Paisiello (1740–1816) was the greatest Italian composer of opera buffa of his time. His vivacious, spirited work, *Cantata comica*, up to now inaccessible, has now appeared (No. 9.).

Franz Xaver Süssmayr (1766–1803) has so far been know most one-sidedly, only as the composer who completed Mozart's *Requiem*. Listening to Mozart's masterpiece, one might well ask what kind of musician the man could have been who after the death of his master went on with this work showing such a degree of continuity. According to *Riemann's Musiklexikon (Personenteil L–Z, 1961)* and Volume 12 of the encyclopaedia *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (1965), not a single work from the exceptionally prolific master has been published up to now. The Musica Rinata series has therefore done pioneering work in publishing *Das Namensfest* which dates from 1799 (the full title is: *Grandfather's Name-Day Celebration. A play for special occasions for child soloists, children's choir and orchestra, in one act*), and an *Overture in C Major*. (The former is No. 8, and the latter No. 6.)

Süssmayr's music is most enchanting. The *Grandfather's Name-Day Celebration* is in the tradition of the Viennese *Singspiel*—and even today it appears suitable for introducing the world of the Viennese classics to children. The vocal parts can be easily performed and the work is comprehensible—therefore it can play an important role in the musical education of young people and the general public alike.

The *Sinfonia in A flat* by Florian Leopold Gassmann (1729–1774) appeared among the latest volumes of the series (No. 18). The composer is one of the masters of the transitional period to Viennese classicism.

Georg Druschetzky (1745–1819) is a little known master. Two of his works, both *Oboe Quartets* (in E flat Major, No. 14; in F Major, No. 15), can claim to be of interest to oboists. The instrumentation is identical to that of Mozart's well-known *Quartet in F Major* (K. 370), that is, in addition to the oboe, the score calls for a violin, a viola and a cello. The woodwind instrument is given a virtuoso role and is handled in a modern manner. Druschetzky does not neglect the low register either.

Editio Musica has published instrumental parts for every chamber and orchestral work in the Musica Rinata series.

Not all older music was published as part of this series.

The *Seven Compositions* of Guillaume de Machaut (1300?–1377) contain nothing new from the point of view of music history—yet it is extremely important to bring them to the attention of enthusiasts. A complete edition of de Machaut's works was published in Leipzig in 1943 by Fr. Ludwig and H. Besseler (reprinted in 1954). This complete edition is a remarkable publication, but it is unbelievably costly, and it employs the old clefs, being most difficult to read. Furthermore, instrumental parts are not included, and they are not suited for performance by chamber music ensembles. In the new edition we find 4 *Ballades*, 2 *Rondeaux* and 1 *Motet*—two and three-part Machaut compositions—with recommendations for modern instrumentation with musical texts faithful to the original Ludwig and Besseler edition.

The *Sonata in Re Maggiore per violino solo* by Giuseppe Tartini (1692–1770) is first published by Editio Musica. Tibor Ney edited it on the basis of a manuscript copy in the *Archivo Musicale della Basilica Antoniana* of Padua. It is a four-movement solo sonata of astonishing beauty in which every single bar bears the imprint of the performing artistry of the remarkable virtuoso violinist. The third movement of the four is none other than the richly ornamented arrange-

Béla Uitz: The Oath (from the Luddites series, fourth etching, 426×331 mms, 1923)

Photos: István Petrás

Overleaf:

Béla Uitz: General Ludd (From the Luddites series, seventh etching, 425×332 mms, 1923)

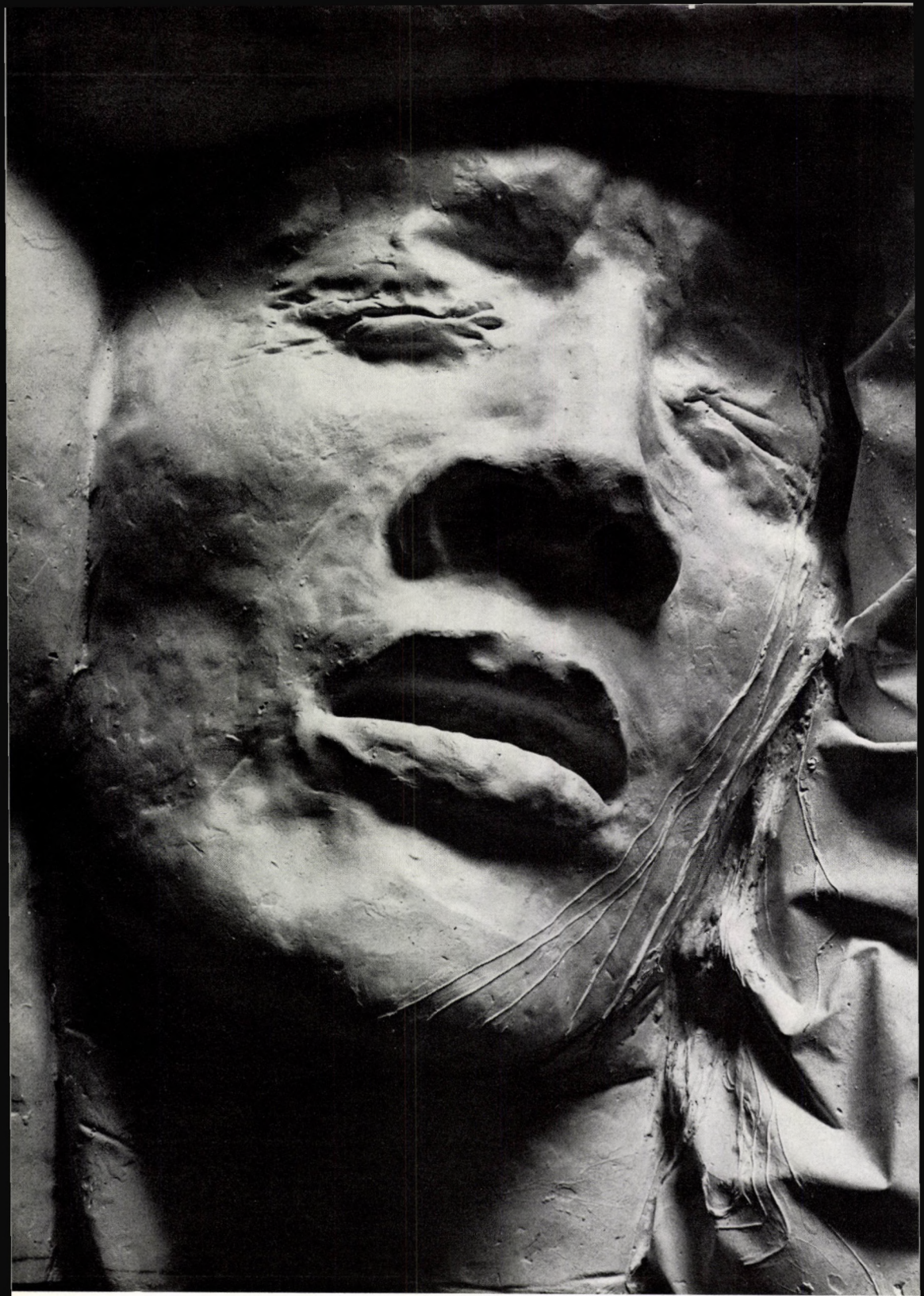
IMRE VARGA: DERKOVITS (46×70 CMS, BRONZE AND MARBLE, 1970,

IMRE VARGA: HOMMAGE À MANET (PORCELAIN, 30 CMS, 1968)

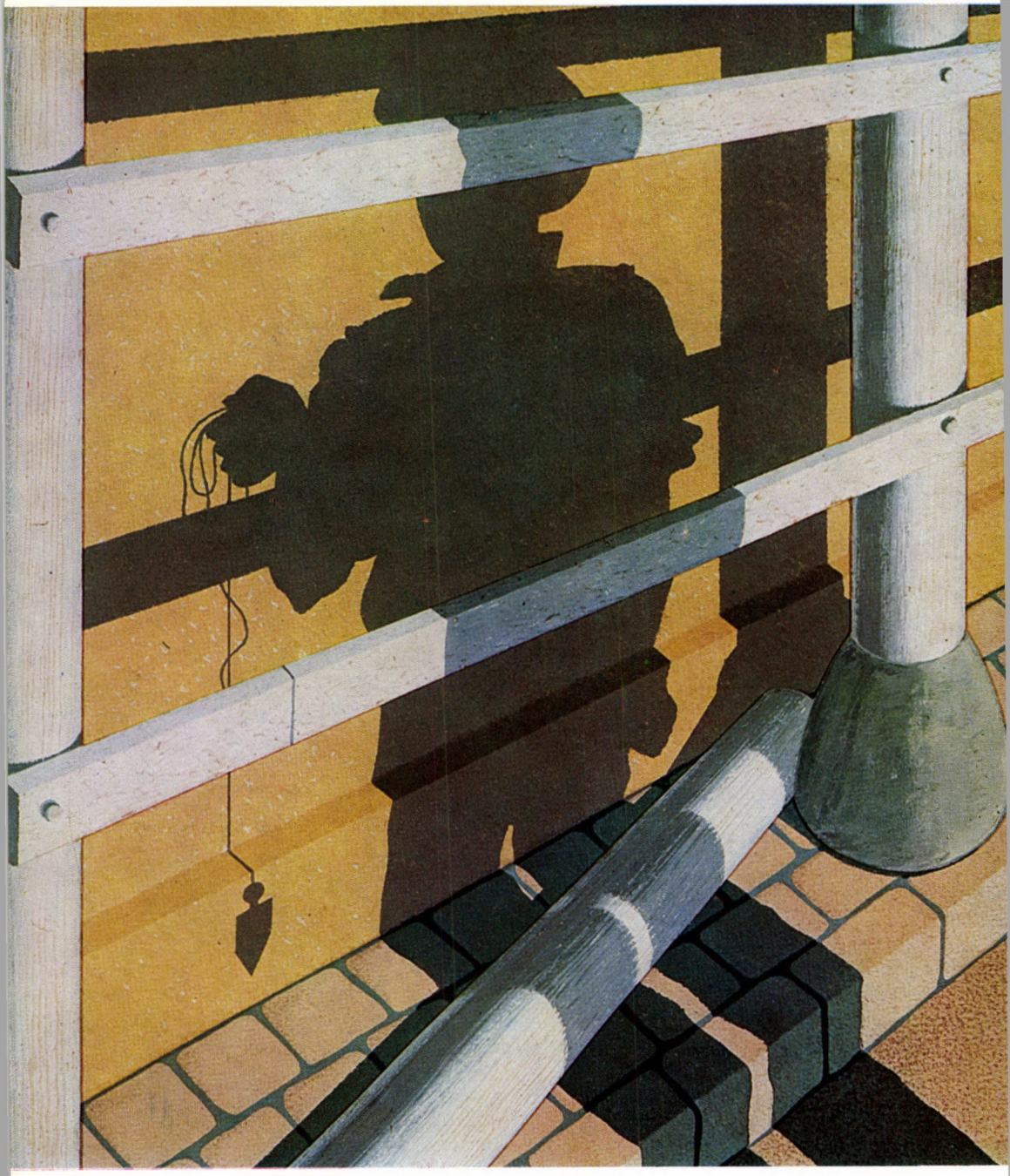
GÁBOR ATTALAI: FELT MONTAGE

Photo: Károly Szelény

Overleaf: MIKLÓS MELOCCO: FACE (PLASTER, 50×70 CMS, 1972



GÁBOR PÁSZTOR: LITHOGRAPH (60 × 120 CMS, 1971) ▶



VICTOR VASARELY: DELUSIVE STUDY (36 × 34 CMS, 1936)

Photo: Károly Szelényi

LAJOS SVÁBY: SELFPORTRAIT (OIL, 90 × 120 CMS, 1970)

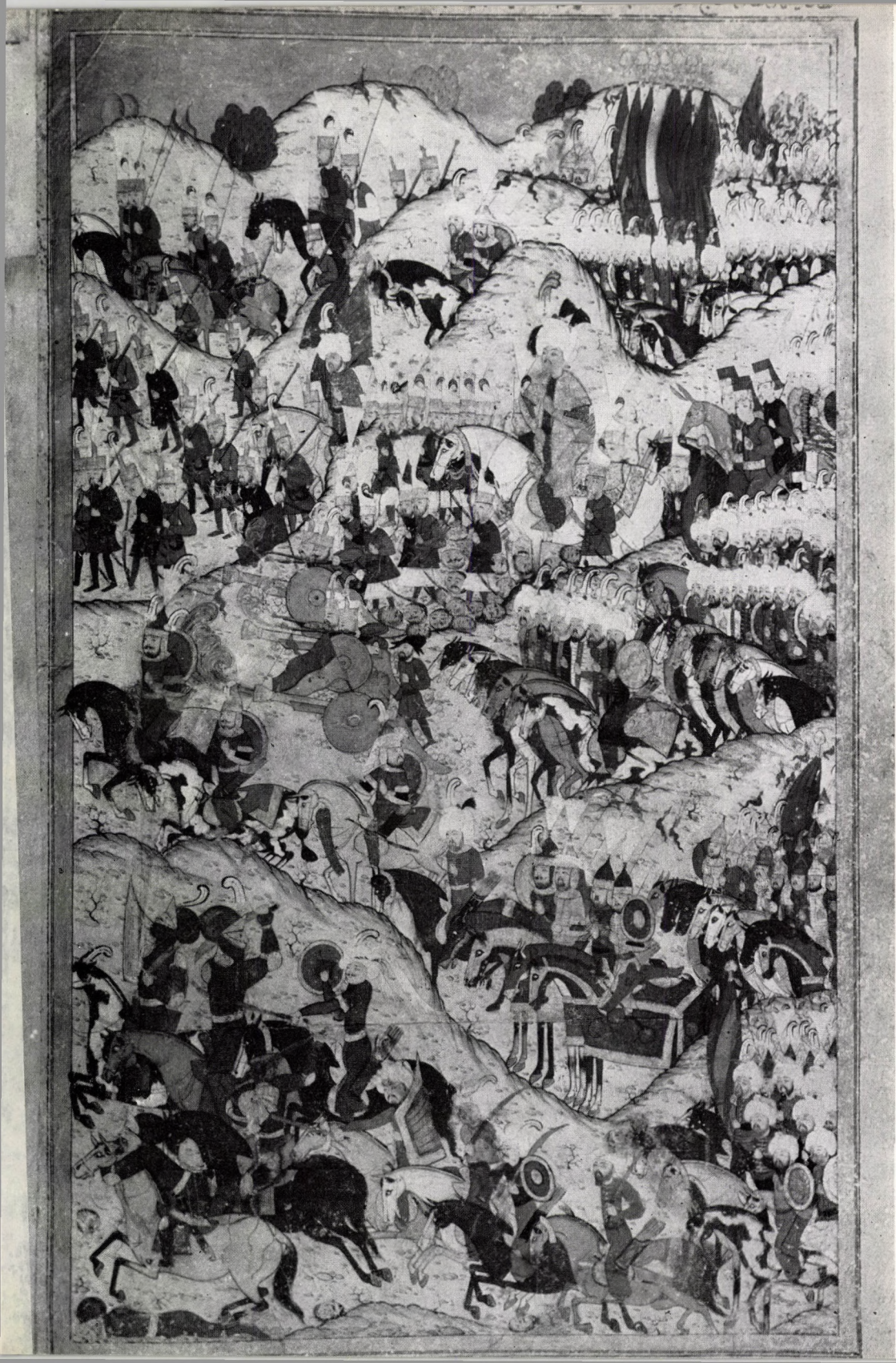
Photo: Ferenc Kovács

LAJOS SVÁBY: REMBRANDT'S ANGEL (OIL, 110 × 120 CMS, 1972)

Photo: Ferenc Kovács

The Battle of Mohács. Miniature in colour on paper. Illustration to the Chronicle of Ali Sirvani. Istambul, Topkapi Serail Museum. ▶

Overleaf: The Battle of Mohács. Miniature in colour on paper. Illustration to the Chronicle of Seyyid Lokman. Istambul, Topkapi Serail Museum.



ment of the gondolier song attributed to Torquato Tasso.

J. S. Bach (1685–1750) himself transcribed the fifth of his Solo Suites for Cello (BW V 1011) for the lute (BW V 995). Ferenc Brodszky arranged this same work for a modern guitar. He retained Bach's original musical text note for note, and in places where the guitar offers greater possibilites for polyphonic playing than does the cello (even if only because of its more numerous strings!), Brodszky boldly makes use of these opportunities.

Last but not least, *Libera me Domine* for mixed choir and strings (Viola I–II; Violoncello I–II; Double Bass) by the Hungarian composer Mihály Mosonyi (1815–1870). It was edited by Ferenc Bónis. The work has a lovely, dark and romantic tone that may well arouse the interest of choirs in many countries.

A. P.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF HUNGARIAN COMPOSITION

GYÖRGY KROÓ: *A magyar zeneszerzés huszonöt éve* (Twenty-five years of Hungarian Composition), Zeneműkiadó, Budapest, 1971, 240 pp.

During the last ten years following Bartók and Kodály, new trends and new young composers have appeared in Hungarian music. Apart from the two operas, *Blood Wedding* by Sándor Szokolay and *Crime and Punishment* by Emil Petrovics, orchestral and chamber music by György Kurtág, Zsolt Durkó, and Attila Bozay can quite frequently be heard these days in the concert halls of London, Paris, Vienna and Moscow. A new generation of composers has grown up which studied under Kodály at the Academy of Music in Budapest, or under teachers who were Kodály's disciples: but the way they have chosen to follow is no longer that of the two great composers. For ten years now a number of Hungarian composers have been breaking through the old barriers and have expressed in their music all the achievements —such as the products of the new "Viennese classicism" or the experiments and discoveries of various centres of avantgarde music— which bear witness to the changes taking place in this century.

The confrontation between the Bartók and Kodály school on the one hand and the new orientation towards Europe on the other is the theme of György Kroó's new book: "Twenty-five Years of Hungarian Composition."

*

The title of course merely indicates the scope of the work, but the author's intentions and courage in expressing them are shown by the fact that Kroó is prepared to pass judgement on the present. He has surveyed the past—very complex—twenty-five years at a time when its composers are still with us and able to challenge his statements.

The value of the book is guaranted in the main by the method Kroó has chosen to employ: he does not begin with subjective opinions, but with the compositions themselves. His achievement in this respect is quite imposing. He has studied nearly five hundred musical scores, not always very readable or easy to tackle, in order to give his considered view of them.

The fixed Archimedean point whence Kroó takes his stand, not to move the world, but to take his bearings, is firmly anchored in the works of Bartók and Kodály. Folk

music research and the combination of folk songs with written music began some years after 1900. The influence of Bartók and Kodály has been a liberating influence not only for the kindred arts but for a whole string of composers as well, let alone whole classes of Hungarian society. György Kroó investigates the scope of the way opened by the two great artists. No matter how important was the seminal work of Bartók and Kodály at the turn of the century, he writes, fed by the twin sources of authentic folk tradition and the most modern European composed music, offering the best prospects "for the future"—support for the new line was by no means unanimous. Some people—László Lajtha for instance—accepted the new forms, while Hungarian folk music gave only a colourful characteristic undertone to the compostions of Ernő Dohnányi.

Not only the beginnings and first appearances of Bartók and Kodály were similar, but equally their careers as a whole. In 1919, during the time of the Hungarian Councils' Republic, they served together at the Musical Directorate, providing musical guidance. After the failure of the revolution their lives took different courses: Bartók eventually emigrated from fascist Hungary and settled in America, while Kodály remained in Hungary. Kodály's opposition to the Horthy régime, based on his patriotic feelings, gave a legitimate claim for composers—seeking a model for themselves after the 1945 Liberation—to find it in him.

But by that time twenty-five years' musical development in Hungary had been arrested. The example of Kodály was chosen too late by those composers—says Kroó—who imagined that by imitating Kodály they were writing a genuinely modern music. These well-intentioned illusions coincided with the concept of "socialist-realism" both at home and abroad, which demanded that every kind of music be addressed directly to the masses and be based on a traditional world of melody with clear and comprehensible themes, in the sincere hope of many people that serious music would at last be enjoyed by the masses.

Between 1949 and 1955 this effort matched with Kodály's "Hungarian conservativism blossoming upon world culture", to quote his own words.

*

Many composers closely followed Kodály and some of them speedily developed into Kodály-imitators. There was a time—fortunately a short one—when the majority of compositions were almost identical in intonation, melody material, means and themes.

The analysis given by Kroó of these few years is perfectly acceptable. He can perhaps be criticised for over-simplifying the problem a little; on the one hand he categorically condemns practically the whole musical output of that period and on the other hand he makes Kodály responsible for the situation.

There is no need nowadays to stress that many a poor composition was written in those days, nor that most of the composers concerned have long ago transcended the level of those works. But in that difficult period outstanding compositions were also produced, like Gyula Dávid's lovely Viola Concerto. There was also Endre Szervánszky's Concerto for Clarinet and the Vörösmarty Symphony by Pál Járdányi, all of them produced in the fifties. The men who wrote them were impeded by the cultural and political prejudices of the age; nonetheless the works are not without a certain value.

As for Kodály's role, there is no question but that as his professional as well as his political authority, resulting from his earlier political opposition, was enormous. It is also a fact that he firmly insulated himself from any avant-garde experiments, both as a composer and as professor at the Academy of Music. But despite his commanding position in musical life the inhibiting influence of his views would have been less effective if the ideologists of the era had not resorted to cultural and political means of reinforcing it.

*

It clearly follows that the value of Kroó's book lies precisely in the independence of its thinking and the sharpness of the criticism. It is easy to utter indifferent commonplaces about five hundred musical scores, but Kroó has undertaken the task of carefully analysing a short historical period not as yet fully explored by others, with particular reference to the influence of the personality cult and its accompanying ideology upon musical composition. It would be a mistake to imagine that Kroó, while dealing with the imitations of Kodály and his conservative influence, does not give him his full due at the same time as composer and teacher. What Kroó does is to express his regret at the retardation of other influences, which meant that Hungarian composers could only profit from the achievements of the modern musical world after a period of delay, rejecting or accepting, criticising or developing the various tends.

Kroó gives 1955 as the date when widening horizons opened for Hungarian composers, and fixes 1960 as the definitve year of change of style, following a short transitional era. Imre Vincze, who died young, composed the first typically dodecaphonal work in Hungary in 1958; since then more and more composers have turned to applying and developing new experiments learnt at Darmstadt, the Warsaw Autumn festival, and elsewhere.

In the meantime another, newer generation has grown up, free of the peculiar anxieties of its predecessors, known as the Thirties group. The name came from the fact that when, in 1969, the music historian Imre Földes made an interesting series of interviews with young musicians, it turned out they were all about thirty years old. To Emil Petrovics goes the credit of taking the first steps toward a new trend in opera with his *C'est La Guerre;* Sándor Szokolay, his contemporary, has achieved his greatest success so far on the operatic stage, also attracting attention by his vocal inventions and composing techniques, rejecting traditional methods and experimenting with dodecaphony. Then there are György Kurtág, Zsolt Durkó, Attila Bozay, István Láng, Kamilló Lendvay and the younger Zoltán Jeney, as well as the two Sáry brothers, representing the youngest generation of Hungarian composers of the day. It would be difficult to analyse them en bloc; the common feature in their music is the fearless search for their own place in the world, with no rigid patterns or dull traditions restraining them.

*

In an appendix to Kroó's book we can read the text of a recent interesting discussion on the wireless. In this debate, chaired by György Kroó, representatives of the various generations of Hungarian composers took part, from the nearly seventy-year-old composer Pál Kadosa to the young Zoltán Jeney. Amongst other things the traditions at present underlying Hungarian musical composition were mentioned. Rudolf Maros, an experimental composer, said that in those of his experiments which the critics had most approved he had strictly followed compositional principles learned from Kodály. "I think none of us has abandoned tradition," he declared. To this statement Zsolt Durkó added: "At least the tradition that music without content simply cannot be composed in Hungary."

These are not traditions in terms of style, and even less so in terms of themes. Forced traditions in the technique of composing are un-Hungarian. Those Hungarian composers whose works are frequently performed abroad have one common characteristic, they are linked with the Bartók–Kodály tradition in rejecting artificially constructed, deliberately sensational, dull music. Progress has its problems too, but as György Kroó writes: "Behind style and meaning there is sometimes a personality speaking to us, seeking our hands and calling to us in his own unmistakable voice."

ISTVÁN GÁBOR

THEATRE AND FILM

THE PANGS OF CHANGE IN VILLAGE LIFE

Two New Hungarian Films

A poetic approach to, and a passionate interest in, the forms and trends of peasant life are nothing new in the Hungarian cinema. The generation whose formative years were passed in the last twenty-five years of swift social change focused predominantly on the problems and conflicts of peasant life, responding to them with such passion that this question determined their ethical approach. A traditional example was not lacking, they had easy access to the half-sociological half-literary works written in the inter-war years by men like Gyula Illyés, László Németh, József Darvas and Géza Féja, whose books and articles inspired a great many of the newer generation. But not all. Some were unable to adapt these ideas to a fundamentally different social structure. The greatest difference was in the historical situations of the two generations. In the inter-war years the Populist movement inevitably demanded political attitudes from writers—political attitudes expressed in a committed attitude; they had to fight a war against a reactionary government which they could not hope to win. Such experiences gave a strongly political character to the writing of that generation. The position of the present generation is in sharp contrast: the tension of the former conflicts disappeared, the sociological ideas of the populists had received a new content after the war, and the transformation of society developed far more swiftly in certain respects than the political development of the second generation. What in fact they preserved in its full purity was the same consciousness of their responsibilities and the same passionate interest in the changing social problems of peasant life.

This is the tradition behind many of the middle generation of Hungarian film-makers, men who greatly contributed to the international success of Hungarian films. They are, of course, men of varying personalities, with different styles, treating their subjects differently, and with different visual approaches. They share a certain distinctive poetic yet intellectual attitude, a sensitivity for social problems, an artistic approach to the characters and happenings of peasant life. István Gaál's *Dead Landscape* and Imre Gyöngyössy's *The Legend about the Death and Resurrection of Two Young Men* are both recent releases, and both show this distinctive blend of the poetic intellect working with documentary intent.

István Gaál won international acclaim with *Current*, his first film. From the time he made his début as a director practically every one of his films has been shown at some festival or other. His principal characters are usually intellectuals of peasant descent who find themselves in some sort of conflict—often sparked off by their over-sensitive conscience—which reflects the tension between a lucid and cool intellect and suppressed emotions burdened by the traditions

of the past. Although the principal character in Gaál's new film is a young farmer, the roots of his conflicts go back to the same experiences as those of the intellectuals in Gaál's earlier films, and this is stressed through the situation in which the story is set.

This situation owes its existence to social developments and accelerated changes in the social structure, which probably affect the traditional village way of life more than any other aspect of life in Hungary. The new economic developments led to the creation of new settlements of a more urban character, and the little villages remote from the main currents of life became isolated and depopulated. This is a rapid process today; what used to be spread over the lives of several generations in the past now confronts a single generation, the young people in their twenties and thirties today, with a dramatic dilemma: will they go with the tide and change their way of life, or do they prefer to shut themselves off from the new currents? *Dead Landscape* takes us to such a depopulated village, perhaps at a moment too late for us to be fully aware of the social tensions of the drama, but still in time to experience the moving poetry and elegiac beauty of the passing of the quiet rustic life.

For one can react rationally to the reasons for the process, one can find it sensible and progressive, but nonetheless stand with troubled anxiety in the quiet of the desolate village, be filled with melancholy at the sight of empty streets, little boarded-up windows and crumbling walls. Despite all reason, the human instinct to preserve the past protests against the passing of anything bearing signs of life. *Dead Landscape* awakens a poetic mood, unsatisfied, regretful, a conflict between rational consciousness and uneasy instinct.

The autumnal colours and plaintive beauty of this nostalgia run like a golden thread through István Gaál's film. They pervade the deserted village and the existence of the three people still remaining who, for different reasons, think they can continue to live amidst the forms of the past. One of them—a lonely old woman, on the threshold of death—sounds the elegiac key of the film. Subtly drawn, softly spoken, she moves quietly through the tale in contrast to the young couple, creatures of the present, isolated in the prison cell of the deserted village, who play out between themselves the conflict of that earlier society.

The poetic elegy and the psychological drama, however, do not easily integrate. All the less as István Gaál's greatest strength is not in the starkly dramatic, as his earlier films made clear, but in the poetic. He paints best in cool, misty colours, in suggesting strains of tension under a calm surface, in evoking the nostalgia after the storm has passed. And indeed the film is pre-eminent in its evocation of the still country beauty of that dying world, best expressed in the subtly-drawn portrait of the old woman, in her natural devotion to the old village.

Unfortunately, the more dramatic sequences, constructed around the psychological conflict of the young couple, appear fabricated rather than observed. The director himself wrote the script, but the intention of the creator and the original experience from which it was drawn seem to be at odds. The story of the young couple is not a genuine continuation of the early social drama that took place in the depopulation of the village. It seems to be implanted from outside, and lacks an integral connection with the actual episodes. The elegiac tale ends in the middle of the film with the death of the old woman, and survives only as a romantic motivation, a background mood, in the drama of man and wife. If the director had genuinely evoked a more dramatic atmosphere at this juncture, arousing tension, creating a crescendo, he might have succeeded. But he maintains the elegiac mood, stressing the muted beauties of nature even at the point of climax, and consequently has to force the drama himself. In fact the story shifts more and more from the social and ethical toward the psychological, to end finally on a patho-

logical note as the young wife is driven to suicide—or was it accident? And this solution—even if presaged by the oppressive desolation of the empty village, by the anxiety-ridden silence of the nights—remains as an accidental conclusion, an effective dramatic ending but out of harmony with the basically poetic tone and nostalgic mood which, one feels, are an expression of personal experience.

Mari Törőcsik faces an almost impossible task as the young wife. She is supposed to run the gamut of emotions—from idyllic nostalgia to psychopathology, and although she is one of the greatest contemporary Hungarian actresses, her more dramatic scenes reveal that she, too, has failed to find a convincing inner motivation for her behaviour. The subtly-drawn, tender figure of the lonely old woman has been submerged in the somewhat crude playing of a newly-discovered long-retired old actress. As the husband who resolutely clings to the land and the village, who represents the sober tenacity of the materially-minded peasant, István Ferenczy, an actor with something less than suggestive force, made his début. He plays it with more modernity and urbanity than the part warrants. Had he been more boorish, vulgar, narrow-minded and greedy than he appeared, it would have explained part of the wife's tensions. János Zsombolyai, the excellent cameraman, was obviously unimpressed by the dramatic episodes—he preferred to concentrate on the nostalgic mood of the dying village, the deserted streets, the crumbling courtyards and the autumnal landscape.

Imre Gyöngyössy's *Legend of the Death and Resurrection of Two Young Men* is an even greater mixture of poetry and sociological description. His poetic approach is, however, far from elegiac—the muted tones of contemplative regret are entirely absent. It is a poetry which is tough and emotional, a kind of anxiety-ridden surrealistic ballad. The producer fitted the realistic episodes of Gypsy ways and a sociological description into a symbolic sequence of the hero's visions; to make it more authentic, he used professional actors and actresses exclusively for the principal roles, the other parts being played by the men and women of a Gypsy settlement —the subject of the film.

At least at first sight, the *Legend of the Death and Resurrection of Two Young Men* appears to be about Gypsies and the Gypsy problem. But this is only the exotic, glamorous surface, covering the broader, basic theme: the delicate relationship between the people and the intelligentsia and the problems of conscience involved. How far must intellectuals assume responsibility for awakening the revolutionary consciousness and self-knowledge of the people, for teaching them to appreciate their true potential? The plot serves Gyöngyössy merely as a pretext to give a moral answer: the responsibility is absolute for the intelligentsia of any people, especially if the people in question have not yet reached a state of political and social independence and maturity. This is undoubtedly a fashionable topic, and so are Gyöngyössy's moral deliberations over it. It is easy to be convinced that the position of the Gypsies, their nomadic customs and superstitions preserved in the midst of a modern environment, is a particularly suitable subject for a Central European director to expound as a problem of conscience. But in *Legend of the Death and Resurrection of Two Young Men* the romantic approach endangers both the poetic symbolism and the factual documentation, leading to confusion.

The chief character is a gifted Gypsy painter; the flaming colours of his paintings, their savage exotic flowers and dark-skinned figures, arise spontaneously from the thousand-year history of his people. But the culture which surrounds the Gypsy painter and gives him fame is alien to him. He retreats to the Gypsy community again as to a thirst-quenching spring, to discover with a shock that he is already looking at them from the outside, with ever more impassioned criticism. Nor does the community accept him. They watch him with suspicion, and

finally cast him out. At this point the painter conceives the idea of a Gypsy Messiah; by sacrificing himself he will redeem his people. The redemption will not come through rational means, by advocating reforms, but in some primitively mystic, ritual manner. And this happens in the painter's feverish visions, while the story as it continues on the realistic plane becomes rudimentary and accidental. It becomes very nearly a simple documentary, picturing in alternatively naturalistic and formalized, stylized sequences the Gypsy way of life, the peculiar position of the gypsy in a society which half accepts, half rejects him, and the conflicts between conservative and progressive attitudes.

Gyöngyössy's concept was to lift—or reduce—vision and reality to a common plane, and he has succeeded, largely due to the inspired photography of János Kende—but strangely enough the final effect is the very opposite of the director's intentions. The more perfectly vision and reality blend, the more sharply the figure of the hero—the Gypsy Messiah, the painter who is at odds with himself and his people—appears split in two to the audience. The two do not even make up a schizophrenic whole, their connection is arbitrary. There is plenty of room left for guesswork, but the basic poetic notion integrating the whole remains obscure. As a result *Legend of the Death and Resurrection of Two Young Men* is only effective in parts, some of them indeed, very fine. The poetic intention may be understandable, but in fact the philosophic alcontent gets lost.

This could hardly be otherwise. The film could have perhaps made its point on a purely poetic level, in lavishly romantic colours. But, in attempting to achieve documentary authenticity as well, Gyöngyössy has overloaded the film with documentary fact, too much for a background, too much for the accompanying symbolism.

It is, however, remarkable for the generous humanity with which it displays the human values and complicated problems of a scattered ethnic group known, for the most part, only superficially and through its less sympathetic characteristics. And although his poetic subjective attitude takes Gyöngyössy beyond the factual truths of the subject, yet it is remarkable what he has nonetheless managed to record on celluloid about the true nature of the gypsies and their semi-nomadic style of life.

ZOLTÁN HEGEDŰS

COMMONPLACES AND EXPERIMENTS

New Plays

Gyula Hernádi: *The Phalanstery* — László Gyurkó: *Electra my Love* — Boris Vassiliev: *Dawns are Quiet Here* — Tibor Gyurkovics: *Consultant's Round*

The closing weeks of the 1971/72 Hungarian theatre season produced a success, perhaps not quite unexpectedly, in what one might call the irregular theatre. The "mainstream theatre" has not produced any more than a series of harmless, decent successes nowadays characteristic of Hungarian dramatic performances. The directors busied themselves mainly with productions of this "well-made-play" or that, each full of flashes but lacking in excitement. Barry England's *Conduct Unbecoming*, well performed by the Budapest National Theatre, was followed by an equally splendid *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial* by Herman Wouk, produced on a high professional level by the Budapest Madách Theatre, and by a pleasant and spec-

tacular *The Swan*, though there was no more tart irony than Ferenc Molnár, the author himself, had added to the romantic love story of the princess and the private tutor. On the other hand, a non-Hungarian audience is hardly likely to understand Dezső Szomory's *Bella* (1913), performed by the Budapest Vígszínház; the performance does not tell them that it is much more than a well-made romantic drawing-room piece, with a naive Budapest bourgeois girl at the centre who, in turn, becomes a great singer and a demoniac man-eater. Szomory was in fact a *fin de siècle* writer deserving international attention; he could alienate, in the most modern sense of the term, a commonplace story by his eccentric, unparallelled individual cascade of words, at the same time he had the power of ironically querying his own eccentricity. But unfortunately all the theatre did, using Szomory as a pretext, was to put on another Molnár play. Seeing that Molnár himself makes a better Molnár than Szomory, the performance was useful only in showing the limits of the best the present Hungarian mainstream theatre can do.

No one in the audience is likely to have regretted the way they spent the evening, but those who anxiously keep an eye on the present and future of the Hungarian theatre are likely to have found much more pleasure in three other, more irregular plays. The most significant of the three was performed in the country: by the Pécs National Theatre, which has been well-known for years for its initiative and for many foreign and Hungarian first productions. Gyula Hernádi who wrote *The Phalanstery* is best known for his collaboration with Miklós Jancsó in writing the scripts of the Jancsó films. Not many people know his prose, but those who do highly appreciate it. This is his first play. The setting is historical, but the intellectual content is all the more modern. The main problem is similar to the cardinal question underlying each Jancsó film, the mutually presupposing dialectic of despotism and revolution. The play is set in America in the first half of the nineteenth century, in a pahalanstery founded by Fourier's supporters; it shows the failure of an idealistic and generous enterprise. The author has summed up the reasons for the failure as follows: "A community, however progressive it might be, is always full of opposed interests. These can, in a hostile environment, grow into their respective extremes, and, if the community does not succeed in unifying its seething energies and turning them against the outside enemy, the hostile enemy will gain such 'strategic' positions as can easily become fatal to the community's survival."

The members of this Tennessee phalanstery live their collective lives in an idyllic-euphoric mood and, at the beginning, they achieve considerable successes even in the field of collective production. The outside executive power, which had been, for a long time, a passive disapproving spectator, begins its active assaults when the members of the phalanstery step out of their happy isolation and begin redeeming and liberating Negro slaves. Their actions appear dangerous to the interests of neighbouring farmers. The brutal murder of a white priest in the neighbourhood comes in handy for the outside authorities; they impute the crime to a Negro slave who is a protegé of the phalanstery, and a kangaroo court, held in the presence of the community, sentences the Negro to death and he is hanged on stage. The next turn is unexpected: one of the phalanstery's most sympathetic leaders, a young anarchist lawyer, announces that it was he who had killed the priest. By doing so, he wanted to draw attention to the revolting and unlawful treatment of Negroes. The murder leads to others. The young lawyer also dies on stage, and the members of the community, frightened of the consequences, abandon it and the phalanstery fails.

At this point I must say why I think the performance irregular. One can often in

Hungarian theatres witness barely adequate performances of good or even excellent plays. Happily enough, it happens, though less often, that a play not without mistakes is improved by the performance, which sublimates its virtues and hides its shortcomings. Ferenc Sík, the director of the Pécs theatre, realized a total theatrical idea, his artistic vision keeping to, but at the same time going beyond the text of the play. Hernádi created a sparklingly dialectical, though in form rather puritan, disciplined pamphlet, Sík on the other hand succeeded in endowing the phalanstery's people with life. Through this sympathetic but easily impressionable, dynamic community, which is liable to get exhausted by its own throbbing rhythm, Sík created an early model for associations of considerable ecstasy but less firmness and theoretical certitude, suggestive of Western hippie-communities of our time. Luckily for him, he had the country's best modern dance ensemble, the famous Ballet of Pécs, at his disposal.

The audience, leaving the theatre with such a captivating theatrical experience behind it, only becomes aware the next day that there might be something not quite right with the play itself. For instance: did an arbitrary mixing of such too specific phenomena as the colour bar and phalanstery-utopianism spoil the play's nature as a model, did it overcharge the conceptual frame of the work? Or: Is the play's model-character compatible—even in the case of an anarchist-terrorist, and therefore critically described, hero—with such an unnecessarily horrible action as the murder, purely for demonstrative reasons, of an old innocent priest, who, to make matters worse, sympathizes with the phalanstery and the Negroes? However, none of these objections have anything to do with the performance's double significance: it was a fascinating, an excellent evening at the theatre on one hand, and on the other, the theatre has gained a significant playwright who promises much.

*

The Budapest Twenty-Fifth Theatre's closing night of the season can equally be regarded a double irregular event. It was irregular partly because any sort of initiative of this tiny theatre, experimenting, in Hungarian conditions, with entirely new forms of expression, is surely something specific and good, and partly because it was for the first time that a Hungarian play, written within the last fifteen years, has been revived, and, what is more, in a rewritten version. László Gyurkó's pseudo-mythological thesis-drama *Electra my Love*, has already been reviewed in these pages and part of it was published in No. 31. Now it has been brought to life again in a new production, enriched with new conceptual features. The production is able to give, as was the case with Hernádi's play, a sense of total theatre and, with the help of spectacular, choreographic-pantomimic effects, a puritan and bare text is here given a richer and fuller existence. In Gyurkó's present interpretation the thesis has been further narrowed, right down to its basic elements. Orestes cannot help killing his ally, sister and love, he cannot help killing Electra, who must go on, whose thirst for revenge will never cease. Orestes commits what he does commit in the hope that the tormented people is given the possibility of a new start, in peace at last. The number of roles has been decreased (Clytemnestra, for instance, has been omitted); the earlier dramatic situations of traditional construction have been reduced to their basic gestures; and the four characters, Electra, Orestes, Aigisthos and Chrysothemis—each of them extensively characterized traditional dramatic figures in the first version, have become, so to say, mere abstract symbols for the political attitudes represented by them. Their points of view, and all the corresponding results, have been given a much deeper and more clear expression—thanks to the chorus directed by Károly Szigeti—than those of the first version. The chorus, twelve young boys and girls representing the people of Mycene,

keep on dancing, singing and shouting round the amphitheatre-like auditorium, along its passages, and on the central stage. The same people also rejoice and dance at the behest of Aigisthos, but then they intersperse compulsory ecstasy with suppressed desires of their rebellious youth, later it is they who, after an interval of alarm and hesitating shudder, drown the tragedy of Electra's painful but necessary failure in a by then spontaneous ecstasy of utmost relief. One can measure the true social content and social effects of Chrysothemis' pragmatic opportunism, of Aigisthos' clever and cynical aristocratic terrorism, of Electra's fanatic negativism and above all, of Orestes' humanist democratism. By the reactions of this modern, indeed Greek choir, interpreted with novel methods Gyurkó's earlier subtle, intellectual-polemical drama did not really lose in this exchange. In fact—and he, the director of the Twenty-Fifth Theatre knows this better than anyone he had a chance for a much more dynamical, more theatrical elaboration of his message in the new form without affecting the validity of the first version.

*

Last, but not least, Boris Vassiliev's lyrical play, *Dawns are Quiet Here* must doubtless be regarded as an irregular performance. It is an occasional enterprise by the Budapest Microscope Stage, a political cabaret, performed between 10 p.m. and midnight. (Tickets were overprinted: *No cabaret! An historical requiem.*) The dramatization of the short novel of the same title was a great success in the Moscow Lyubimow's Taganka Theatre. Vassiliev presents, with extraordinary simplicity, and a quiet poesy of poseless humanity, the death in the Second World War of five young, Soviet girl-soldiers. The Hungarian adaptation chose a different road from that of Lyubimow; István Iglódi, a talented young actor-director, member of the National Theatre company, made a virtue of necessity: he made good use of the tiny stage of 15×21 feet. His only décor is a huge net, representing first the camp, later the various places of the forest—from arbour to marsh—in which the girls are defeated by German superior force. At the same time, the net is of course pregnant with symbolic meaning: it suggested the idea of inhumanity enmeshing and drowning young lives. Iglódi had a free hand in selecting the most suitable actresses, all Budapest theatre companies being available to him. Young, inexperienced actresses were collected and what they offered was the season's most genuine interpretation. They succeeded in presenting the heroes of a great struggle in intimate surroundings.

Mention should be made of another Hungarian new play, Tibor Gyurkovics's *Consultant's Round*. The play at the Pesti Theatre, was called by many, not without some irony, the "Hungarian *National Health*". The comparison is justified even though there is no way of knowing whether Gyurkovics knew Peter Nichols' play. *Consultant's Round* is also set in a hospital ward. Four hospital beds face the public, with four male patients of various ages and temperaments, and with illnesses of varying seriousness. An old man who is not likely to get out of his bed any more, a fifty years old man suffering not only from the consequences of a painful gall bladder operation but also from memories of the Second World War, a stuntman, aged thirty, a pleasant confidence man with a broken leg, and a lorry-driver of around twenty, hurt in a particularly embarrassing area, his arse. These four men speak throughout the play—interspersed by occasional intrusions by the hospital staff and three visitors—they speak about sickness, life and death. When the audience begins to recognize, roughly at the middle of the first part, that, against their expectations, there will be no "proper drama", no spectacular event, plot, or explosive turn; they rest content with what they get, and that is not to be despised, the various virtues of Gyurkovics's writing, the witty dialogue and the really

live characters. All these literary values, however, cannot help the fact that Gyurkovics's way of looking at things is not dramatic. The ward dialogue could have begun much earlier, and could have come to an end much later; it could last as long as in real life: in a word, the condensation is perhaps sufficient for literature but not for the theatre. In the view of some English critics *National Health* is a symbol for the Welfare State. Gyurkovics's symbolism—for no doubt, he also wanted to show something more than a ward scene—tries to compare Life itself and his subject: the ill are miserable, the healthy are indifferent, and the only comfort one can draw is that, after all, health is but a transitional state, and all roads lead to hospital beds. The picture is merciless in both cases. A healthy man has some right to protest against the view that his attitude to life, all his problems, whether they be existential, social, mental or spiritual, should be expressed by injection needles, purgations and bedpans and all they imply from constipation to the deathrattle. This protest, which is, in my opinion, not at all baseless, has been expressed both by English and Hungarian critics.

The Pesti Theatre turned the play into a sort of farce by concentrating on the comic aspects of failing physiological processes. This satisfied some of the audience but it meant that the challenge of the play's real problems was avoided.

JUDIT SZÁNTÓ

PLAYS ON THE HUNGARIAN STAGE JANUARY TO JUNE, 1972

Number 43 contained a short survey of Hungarian theatres, as well as a list of foreign plays performed in the first quarter of 1971. The repertory of the first half of 1972 is listed below, including new Hungarian plays.

NATIONAL THEATRE, BUDAPEST

Chekhov: *Ivanov*
England, Barry: *Conduct Unbecoming*
Brecht, Bertolt: *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan* (The Good Woman of Szechuan)
Miller, Arthur: *After the Fall*
Molière: *Les précieuses ridicules; Amphytryon*
Shakespeare: *Romeo and Juliet*
Stoppard, Tom: *Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*

KATONA JÓZSEF THEATRE, BUDAPEST

Anonymous: *Arden of Feversham*
Albee, Edward: *Everything in the Garden*
Molière: *L'avare* (The Miser)
Pirandello, Luigi: *Come tu mi voui* (As You Desire Me)
Simon, Neil: *Last of the Red Hot Lovers*
Weiss, Peter: *Gesang vom lusitanischen Popanz* (Song of the Lusitanian Bogey)

VÍGSZÍNHÁZ, BUDAPEST

Albee, Edward: *A Delicate Balance*
Feydeau, Georges: *La puce à l'oreille* (A Flea in Her Ear)

Galambos, Lajos: *Fegyverletétel* (Surrender)
Lorca, Federico García: *Donna Rosita*
Simon, Neil: *Plaza Suite*

PESTI THEATRE, BUDAPEST

Coward, Noël: *Blithe Spirit*
Gogol–Coggio–Luneau: *Le journal d'un fou* (The Diary of a Madman)
Gyurkovics, Tibor: *Nagyvizit* (Consultant's Round)
Örkény, István: *Macskajáték* (Catsplay)
Páskándi, Géza: *Vendégség* (A Guest to Stay
Sarkadi, Imre: *Ház a város mellett* (A House near the Town)
Simon, Neil: *The Odd Couple*
Tersánszky, Józsi Jenő: *Viszontlátásra, drága* (Goodbye Darling)

MADÁCH THEATRE, BUDAPEST

Chekhov: *Chaika* (The Seagull)
Gorki, Maxim: *Na dnie* (Lower Depths)
Ibsen, Henrik: *Peer Gynt*
Shaffer, Peter: *Black Comedy*
Shaw, G. B.: *You Never Can Tell*
Sophocles: *Oidipos Tyrrannos*
Vészi, Endre: *A hosszú előszoba* (The Long Vestibule)

MADÁCH KAMARA THEATRE, BUDAPEST

Achard, Marcel: *L'idiote* (A Shot in the Dark)
Hartog–Jones–Schmidt: *I do! I do!*
Moliere: *Le Misantrope*
Shaffer, Peter: *Sleuth*
Williams, Tennessee: *The Night of the Iguana*
Wouk, Herman: *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial*

THÁLIA THEATRE, BUDAPEST

Ramayana (stage adaptation by Károly Kazimir)
Csurka, István: *Szék, ágy, szauna* (Chair, Bed and Sauna)
Heller, Joseph: *We Bombed New Haven*
Illyés, Gyula: *Bál a pusztán* (Ball on the Puszta)
Kristóf, Károly: *Bartókiana*

JÓZSEF ATTILA THEATRE, BUDAPEST

Beaumarchais: *Le mariage de Figaro* (The Marriage of Figaro)
Betti, Ugo: *Il Diluvio* (The Flood)
Kertész, Ákos: *Makra*
Roschin, Mikhail: *Valentin i Valentina* (A Boy and a Girl)
Simon, Neil–Bacharach, Kurt: *Promises, Promises...*

THEATRE 25, BUDAPEST

Fekete, Sándor: *Hőség hava* (Thermidor)
Hernádi, Gyula–Jancsó, Miklós: *Fényes szelek* (Confrontation)
Kuan Han-Ching: *Tou O* (Snow in Midsummer)
Plato: *The Apology* (stage adaptation by László Gyurkó)

MIKROSZKÓP STAGE, BUDAPEST

Vasiliev, Boris: *A zori zgies tihie* (The Dawns Are Silent)

MUNICIPAL OPERETTA THEATRE, BUDAPEST

Bernstein–Robbins–Laurents: *West Side Story*
Bródy–Semsey: *Elfelejtett keringő* (Forgotten Valse)
Jones, T.–Schmidt, H.: *The Fantasticks!*
Lerner–Loewe: *My Fair Lady*
Leigh–Wassermann–Dario: *Man of La Mancha*
Strauss, Johann: *Eine Nacht in Venedig* (A Night in Venice)

JÓKAI THEATRE, BÉKÉSCSABA

Baranga, Aurel: *Interesul general* (The General Interest)

Chekhov: *Lesi* (The Troll)
Csokonai–Görgey–Stark: *Lilla és a kísértetek* (Lilla and the Ghosts)
Fredro, Alexander: *Dami i husari* (Ladies and Hussars)
Niccodemi–Behár–Brandt: *Scampolo*
Shakespeare: *Henry IV*

CSOKONAI THEATRE, DEBRECEN

Miller, Arthur: *The Price*
Taar, Ferenc: *Sírkő pántlikával* (Tombstone with Ribbon)

KISFALUDY THEATRE, GYŐR

Gerencsér, Miklós: *Isten városa* (God's Town)
Kövesdi Nagy–Tamássy: *Beszéljünk a férfiakról* (Let's Speak of Men)
Lope de Vega: *El perro del hortelano* (The Gardener's Dog)
Twain, Mark–László, Anna: *The Prince and the Pauper*

CSIKY GERGELY THEATRE, KAPOSVÁR

Brecht, Bertolt–Weill, Kurt: *Dreigroschenoper* (Threepenny Opera)
De Filippo: *Filumena Marturano* (The Marriage of Filumena)
Giraudoux, Jean: *La guerre en Troie n'aura pas lieu* (The Trojan War Will Not Take Place)
Weöres, Sándor: *Szent György és a sárkány* (St. George and the Dragon)

KATONA JÓZSEF THEATRE, KECSKEMÉT

Niccodemi–Behár–Brandt: *Scampolo*
Shakespeare: *Hamlet*
Shaw, G. B.: *Mrs. Warren's Profession*

NATIONAL THEATRE, MISKOLC

Betti, Ugo: *Delitto all'isola capri* (Crime on Goat Island)
Feydeau, Georges: *La puce a l'oreille* (A Flea in Her Ear)
Goldoni: *La vedova scaltra* (The Wily Widow)
Méhes, György: *Noé bárkája* (Noah's Ark)

NATIONAL THEATRE, PÉCS

Gorki: *Poslednie* (The Last Generation)
Hernádi, Gyula: *Falanszter* (Phalanstery)

NATIONAL THEATRE, SZEGED

Bárdos, Pál: *Úriszék* (Manorial Court)
Niccodemi–Behár–Brandt: *Scampolo*
Scarnicci–Giulio Tarabusi–Renzo: *Caviale e lenticchie* (Caviare and Lentils)
Williams, Tennessee: *A Streetcar Named Desire*

SZIGLIGETI THEATRE, SZOLNOK

Brecht, Bertolt: *Der Kaukasische Kreidekreis* (The Caucasian Chalk Circle)
Molière: *Amphytryon*
Shaw, G. B.: *Heartbreak House*
Sophocles: *Antigone*

PETŐFI THEATRE, VESZPRÉM

Dobozy, Imre: *A tizedes meg a többiek* (The Corporal and the Others)
Illyés, Gyula: *A különc* (The Eccentric)
Németh, László: *Győzelem* (Victory)
Száraz, György: *Víztükör* (Water Surface)

Á. Sz.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

BOGNÁR, József (b. 1917). Economist, M.P., Professor at Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest. Heads the Council on World Economy and the Center for Afro-Asian Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Member of the Editorial Board of, as well as a frequent contributor to, *The N.H.Q.* See "Economic Reform, Development and Stability in the Hungarian Economy" in No. 46, and "European Cooperation and the Economy" in No. 47 of *The N.H.Q.*

BÉLÁDI, Miklós (b. 1928). Literary historian, on the staff of the Institute of History of Literature of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences since 1956. Graduated from Debrecen University in Hungarian and French. Since 1956 works at the Academy. Edited, in collaboration with György Bodnár, "History of Hungarian Literature from 1905 till Now" (1967). His book on Gyula Illyés is about to be published.

FEJÉR, Géza, jr. (b. 1917). Art historian, archeologist. Studied in Budapest and Istanbul. 1946–47 did research work at the Topkapi Sarayi in Istanbul. Has been with the Hungarian National Museum since 1948 where he now heads the Museum's Turkish Occupation Period Section.

GÁBOR, István (b. 1928). Journalist, specializing in education and cultural subjects, on the staff of the national daily *Magyar Nemzet*. See "Music for Young People" in No. 41, and "On School Administration—In Three Volumes" in No. 44 of *The N.H.Q.*

HEGEDÜS, Zoltán (b. 1912). Critic, our regular film reviewer.

ILLYÉS, Gyula (b. 1902). A major figure of contemporary Hungarian poetry and literature in general. See his poems in Nos. 33, 35, and 46, as well as his reminiscences of György Lukács, "On Charon's Ferry," in No. 47 of *The N.H.Q.*

KAPÁS, Dezső (b. 1940). Theatre director at the Budapest *Vígszínház*, where he has staged plays by G. B. Shaw, Feydeau, Arthur Miller, Ödön von Horváth, Federico Garcia Lorca, as well as numerous Hungarian playwrights. Also teaches acting and directing at the Budapest Academy of Theatre and Cinematography. The story printed here is his first published piece of fiction.

KARDOS, G., György (b. 1925). Novelist. Spent a number of years in Palestine, as a member of the British forces, and in Israel before returning to Hungary in 1952. Published his first novel, *Avraham Bogatir hét napja* ("The Seven Days of Avraham Bogatir") in 1969; it has since appeared in half a dozen languages and is soon to be published in English by Doubleday in New York. His second novel, *Hová lettek a katonák?* ("Where Have All the Soldiers Gone?"), published in 1971, was equally successful. (See a review of the book by Pál Réz in No. 43.) See "You Must Like Théophile Gautier," a short story, in No. 39 of *The N.H.Q.*

KOROM, Mihály (b. 1927). D.L. Minister of Justice, member of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.

KOVÁCS, Máté (b. 1941). Secretary of the Hungarian National Committee for Unesco. Graduated from Eötvös University in Hungarian, French and Spanish.

LAND, Thomas (b. 1938). Poet and journalist of Hungarian birth living in London and writing in English. See his translations of poems by Miklós Radnóti in No. 45 of *The N.H.Q.* part of a volume recently completed. His translation of a

historical work by George Spira is about to be published by Akadémiai Publishers, Budapest.

MESTERHÁZI, Lajos (b. 1916). Novelist, playwright, journalist, author of filmscripts and radio plays, editor of *Budapest*, an illustrated monthly. Studied at Pázmány University and Eötvös College in Budapest. Held various editorial posts and began publishing his writings in the early '50s. See "The Centenary of Budapest" in No. 46 of *The N.H.Q.*

MEZEI, Ottó (b. 1925). Art historian. Graduated from Eötvös University in linguistics and art history. For some years taught at a secondary school. Has been a scientific research worker at the Academy for Applied Arts since 1968. Published a book on Marcel Duchamps. His main field is 20th century modern applied art.

NAGY, László (b. 1925). Outstanding poet of great influence in present day Hungarian poetry. Art editor of the weekly *Élet és Irodalom* in Budapest. The poem printed here is from a volume to be published by Cambridge University Press. See poems in Nos. 37, 40, 41, and 42, of *The N.H.Q.*

NAGY, Péter (b. 1920). D. Litt. Literary historian and critic, Professor of Comparative Literature at Eötvös University in Budapest. Recently spent a year as guest professor at the Sorbonne in Paris. See "The Discovery of George Steiner" in No. 36, and his review of Susan Sontag's "Against Interpretation" in No. 37 of *The N.H.Q.*

NAGY, Zoltán (b. 1944). Art historian. Works at the Institute of Art History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Graduated at Eötvös University in Budapest; spent subsequently three years at Moscow University where he did research in the work of the Hungarian painter Béla Uitz, who had spent most of his life in the USSR; has written a thesis on the work of Uitz.

NEMESKÜRTY, István (b. 1929). Literary historian and cineaste. Heads a film studio in Budapest. Has published numerous important works on 16th century Hungarian history and literature, based on his own research, as well as a book on the history of the Hungarian cinema, also published in English. See his film review "The Falcons" in No. 40, and Neville Masterman's review of a book of his, "The Decline of a Great Power" in No. 36 of *The N.H.Q.*

ORSZÁGH, László (b. 1907). Professor Emeritus of English at Kossuth University in Debrecen. Author of a book on Shakespeare (1948), of a history of American literature, editor of a large Hungarian–English, English–Hungarian dictionary (1963). Toured the US on a Ford Foundation grant in 1965. Is a member of our Editorial Board. See "The Life and Death of English Words in the Hungarian Language" in No. 31 of *The N.H.Q.*

ORTUTAY, Gyula (b. 1910). Ethnographer, Professor of Ethnology at Eötvös University in Budapest. Heads the Institute of Ethnography of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, is also President of the Society for the Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge. Conducted extensive ethnographic research in the thirties. Was Minister of Education 1947–1960. Main works: *Parasztságunk élete* ("Life of Our Peasantry," also in English, 1947); *Magyar népmesék* ("Hungarian Folk Tales," also in German and English, 1957); See "Aims of Education in a Socialist Society," in No. 30 of *The N.H.Q.*

PÁRDUCZ, Mihály (b. 1908). Archaeologist. Research fellow at the Institute of Archeology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, head of a group dealing with the Migration Age. His main field is Scythian, Sarmatian, and Hun archeology, on which he has published several volumes, some of them also in German. See "Sarmatians from the

Danube Basin in Roman Britain" in No. 42 of *The N.H.Q.*

PASSUTH, László (b. 1900). Novelist, his historical novels have won him great popularity in Hungary and abroad. His works have been published in German, English, French, Dutch, Italian and Spanish. See "The Six-Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of Hungary's First University" in No. 29 of *The N.H.Q.*

PERNYE, András (b. 1928). Musicologist, our regular music reviewer.

RAY, George F. Economist, Senior Research Fellow of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research in London. Member of the editorial board of *Economic Review*, author of monographs and economic studies, among others "The Diffusion of New Technology," "The Competitiveness of British Industrial Products"; co-author of "The British Economy in 1975."

RÓZSA, Gyula (b. 1941). Journalist, art critic on the staff of *Népszabadság*, the central daily of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. Graduated from Eötvös University in the history of art.

SZABADY, Egon (b. 1917). Demographer, Vice President of the Hungarian Central Bureau of Statistics, head of the Demographic Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Editor of *Demográfia*. See "Making a Living and Motherhood," in No. 34, and "Social Mobility and the 'Openness' of Society" in No. 43 of *The N.H.Q.*

SZÁNTÓ, Judit. Our regular theatre critic.

VÁLYI, Péter (b. 1919). Economist, Deputy Prime Minister, a chemical engineer by training. Has been active in the comprehensive central planning of the national economy for fifteen years. See "Planned Economy and Financial Planning" in No. 31, "Financial Cooperation within CMEA in No. 38, and "Hungarian–Austrian Relations Today" in No. 45 of *The N.H.Q.*

VARGA, Károly (b. 1930). Sociologist. Fellow of the Sociological Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, where he lectures on the methodology of sociology. See "The View of Life of Hungarian Students" in No. 35, "Leisure and Divorce" in No. 40, and "The 'Trash Tax' in Hungarian Cultural Policy" in No. 46 of *The N.H.Q.*

VARGA, László (b. 1939). Literary historian, one of our regular book reviewers.

"The Moral Mission of the Philosopher," by Ágnes Heller, published in No. 47, p. 156, was written and first published in 1965 on György Lukács's 80th birthday, and not in 1970, as indicated. It first appeared in German translation in the Festschrift *published in Lukács's honour on the occasion, and also in Hungarian in 1969, in the author's book* Érték és történelem *("Value and History".) The N.H.Q. regrets the error.*

TIME IS MONEY

You save time
by flying
to Budapest.
Direct flights
from 35 cities of
Europe
and the Middle East

MALÉV
Hungarian Airlines

THE NEW HUNGARIAN QUARTERLY

may be obtained from the following distributors:

AUSTRALIA: C.B.D. Library, G. P. O. Box 4886, Sydney, N.S.W. 2000

AUSTRIA: Globus, Vertrieb Ausländischer Zeitschriften (VAZ) Höchstädtplatz 3, A-1200 Wien
Rudolf Novák Gmbh, Köllnerhofgasse 4. A-1001 Wien

BELGIUM: Agence Messagerie de la Presse, 1, rue de la Petite — Ile a Brussels 7.

BRAZIL: Livraria Bródy Ltda, Rua Conselheiro Crispiano, 404, São Paulo

CANADA: Pannonia Books, 2 Spadina Road, Toronto 179, Ontario

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: P. N. S. — dovoz tisku, Vinohradska 46, Praha 2
P. N. S. — dovoz tisku, Leningradska 14, Bratislava

DENMARK: Ejnar Munksgaard Ltd., Prags Boulevard 47, Copenhagen S.

FINLAND: Akateeminen Kirjakauppa, Keskuskatu 2, Helsinki

FRANCE: Agence Littéraire et Artistique Parisienne, 7 rue Debelleyme, Paris 3[e]

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC: Zeitungsvertriebsamt, 1004 Berlin, Strasse der Pariser Kommune 3-4

GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC: Kubon und Sagner, 8000 München 34, Schliessfach 68,
Kunst und Wissen, 7000 Stuttgart I, Wilhelmstrasse 4.
W. E. Saarbach, 5000 Köln, Follerstrasse 2

GREAT BRITAIN: Collet's Holdings Ltd, Subscription Import Dept.,
Central Books Ltd, 37 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C. 1
Denington Estate, Wellingborough, Northants
Dawson and Sons Ltd, Cannon House, Macklin Street, London, W. C. 2

INDIA: Globe Publications, C—35, Uizamuddin East, New Delhi—13.

ITALY: Libreria Rinascita, Roma, Via delle Botteghe Oscure 2
Libreria Commissionaria Sansoni, Via Lamarmora 45, 50121 Firenze

JAPAN: Maruzen Company Ltd. International P. O. Box 5050 Tokyo
Nauka Ltd. 30–19, Minami-Ikebukuro 2-chome, Toshima-ku Tokyo

YUGOSLAVIA: Forum, Novi-Sad, Vojvode Misica broj I
Jugoslovenska Knjiga, Beograd, Terazije 27

NETHERLANDS: Swets and Zeitlinger, Keizersgracht 487, Amsterdam C.
Pegasus Boekhandel, Leidsestraat 25, Amsterdam
Meulenhoff and Co. N. W. Beulingstraat 2, Amsterdam C.

NORWAY: A/S Narvesens Litteratur Tjeneste, Box 6140 Etterstad Oslo

POLAND: B. K. W. Z. Ruch, Warszawa, ul. Wronia 23

ROUMANIA: OSEP, Bucuresti, Gara de Nord
OSEP, Oradea

SOVIET UNION: Sojuzpechatj, Moscow, Proszpekt Mira 112-a
Pochtamt-Import, Moscow
Pochtamt-Import, Leningrad

SWEDEN: AB. Nordiska Bokhandeln 10110, Stockholm, Drottninggatan 7–9

SWITZERLAND: AZED AG Zeitungsagentur, Dornacherstr. 60/62 Basel 4002

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Stechert-Hafner, Inc. 31 East 10 Street,
New York, N. Y. 10021
Center of Hungarian Literature, Inc. 1538 Second Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10028
FAM Book Service, 69 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10003

VENEZUELA: Luis Tarcsay, Calle Iglesia, Edif. Villoria, Apto 21,
Sabana Grande, Caracas

or

Kultura Hungarian Trading Company for Books and Newspapers,
Budapest 62, P. O. B. 149.

Index: 26843