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CONTENTS

ESSAYS, REVIEWS, NOTES, REPORTS

SHAKESPEARE

SHORT STORIES, PLAYS, SKETCHES, POEMS

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

SURVEYS

THEATRE AND FILM

MUSICAL LIFE

ARTS

ARCHEOLOGY

DOCUMENTS

CUTTINGS FROM HUNGARIAN DAILIES AND PERIODICALS

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

CORRESPONDENCE

SHORT ENCYCLOPEDIA

Kossuth Nyomda, Budapest

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SHAKESPEARE AND THE HUNGARIANS

by

DEZSŐ KERESZTURY

If all manuscripts and publications of Shakespeare's works, translated versions and critical analyses were added to the literature on the controversy about his person and life, as well as those works of other poets which bear marks of his influence, the resulting collection would fill several library halls. The *Enciclopedia dello Spettacolo*, the largest, most extensive and most thorough-going encyclopaedia of the theatre to be published so far, properly devotes several profusely documented chapters in its Shakespeare article to a discussion of the great dramatist's influence in England, France, Italy, Germany and other countries. Among these chapters, however, none deals with Central and Eastern Europe, an omission that in itself calls attention to this wrongly overlooked area of international Shakespeare research, where the influence of the poet's work has been, perhaps, most varied, since nearly all of its different peoples have ranked him in one way or another with their own national classics and have been responsive to the influence of his works. In interesting and characteristic ways, each of these nations has mingled a sincere appreciation of the emancipated spirit—the same sort of enthusiasm that was kindled by no lesser geniuses than Lessing and Goethe—and a flat repudiation such as was expressed in Tolstoy's world-renowned indictment of blind, unthinking Shakespeare snobbery (though Tolstoy also accused the poet himself). The sweeping adulation of Shakespeare originated in Germany and at the turn of the 19th century spread over Central and Eastern Europe; the most recent widespread wave of Shakespeare appreciation to cover this region started in the Soviet Union. Hungary is situated at the centre, and for this reason all the essential elements of the larger area are reflected in the "after-life" that Shakespeare's work has had in this country.

Of all the giants of world literature, it is perhaps he who has felt most "at home" in Hungary. He ranks with Hungary's national classics for the

reason, if for nothing else, that his *oeuvre* has found able interpreters in such distinguished poets as Kazinczy, Vörösmarty, Petőfi, Arany, Babits, Kosztolányi and Lőrinc Szabó—not to mention the important poets of today. Most self-respecting translators must at least have made an attempt to put one or another of Shakespeare's works into Hungarian. The first effort at providing a Hungarian version of all his plays was made more than a hundred years ago by the three greatest poets of the time: Vörösmarty, Petőfi and Arany; since then, another group of excellent translators has come forward with a Hungarian version of the Collected Works of Shakespeare. The Sonnets—whose German version is by Goethe and which have been translated into Central and Eastern European languages mostly by distinguished poets—found a competent Hungarian interpreter in Lőrinc Szabó, poet and translator; his work on these translations spanned a lifetime, and each time he resumed the task he seemed better equipped for it. Of some of Shakespeare's plays there are as many as four or five adequate Hungarian translations, while several sonnets have found as many as twenty. Except for the four least important, all of Shakespeare's plays have been produced in Hungary, and many of them far outdo the best works of Hungarian dramatic literature in terms of number of productions, revivals and performances.

Shakespeare's plays, as is known, found their way to the Continent through the agency of the "English entertainers"—troupes of strolling players making trips across the Channel or fleeing from 17th-century puritanical England. These players, like the company of the Globe Theatre, bothered little with authorized versions, courtly or dignified aulic styles of acting, and they did not go out of their way to observe any austere puritanical code but conformed to the requirements of the time and occasion. Having settled in foreign countries, among new customs, they soon mingled with the local players and adopted the rude—or perhaps vulgar—style of playing that was current. The Globe company itself was not strictly a court group, and those of the German dukedoms and principalities were even less so. That is why Shakespeare's plays, even as they had been performed in London, can rightly be called popular dramas; their versions current in Germany consequently deserve this term even more. Their popular quality becomes apparent particularly when one compares these open performances (where variety and lack of restrictions were the principal rule and where even the marketplace had free access to the auditorium) with the enclosed model plays of French classicism, written and performed for exclusive audiences at royal or princely courts. Small wonder that, when at the end of the 18th century the German theatre launched its crusade against the prevailing

Gallic taste, it held up Shakespeare as a living popular example in German culture. This early theatrical thunderstorm (which lent a truly resonant note to Lessing's call to arms) became a veritable tempest that swept over continents, accompanied by a torrent of mutually intensifying emotions, awakening nationalism's drive for independence, the bond-breaking passions of emancipated individualism, the excitement of newness and the often revolutionary impetus of social movements. Shakespeare's works came to life in the Germans longing for the Germanic past, the Czechs', Poles' and Hungarians' determination to depict major events of their respective national histories in dramatic works with a magnificent message, as well as in the aspiration of every Central and Eastern European nation to build up its own national theatre, one that would be popularly oriented and have the widest possible communal foundations. Political motives were, of course, important in all these aspirations. It must not be forgotten that the tragedy of the melancholy Prince of Denmark, for instance, which serious literary critics and psychologists even at the turn of the 19th century regarded as an ever-enduring parable of modern man rent by inner conflict and incapable of action, had been soul-stirring reading for restless spirits yearning for revolution a hundred years earlier in this region; it was charged with incendiary political material for the agitated masses.

In that circumstance, under different conditions, a major feature of the social role of these plays may be seen: some of them were from their very inception full of political allusions, issues of topical interest that had been fought out in bloody struggles by the peers of the realm but to which the London populace may have been, at the very least, interested onlookers. In the histories of kings, all-powerful mundane gods appeared human on the stage. Audiences from the market-place were thus enabled to take part, vicariously but with a measure of inside knowledge, in the thrilling struggle for power that was being enacted on the stage. As they saw lives of persons with high positions here brought close, the bitter loneliness of their own destitution could be tempered. This impression of being "let in" on something extended, of course, to other areas of communal life: the social groups that were being mocked joined in the laughter themselves; the gibed-at mannerisms and the fashionable spicy and quibbling conversation of high society were watched and heard by audiences of the boxes as well as of the pit. And when beautiful lines were spoken on the stage, when the human soul was revealed or the beauty of nature depicted in majestic passages, then all received a share of the enjoyment. This was not, of course, a popular element in the modern sense of definite social content, but the flow of the Renaissance, which loosened—and in some spheres of life did in fact wash

away—the tall and rigid class barriers, providing ways and opportunities for the new things to come and preserving of the old only what was vigorous enough to form part of the present. As in life, which gave them birth, the most extreme opposites are mingled together in Shakespeare's plays: reality at its rawest and the fairy tale at its most ethereal, verse and prose, past and present, market-place improvisation and sophisticated poesy, longing for death and full enjoyment of life.

Shakespeare's works breathe the spirit of the Renaissance shading into Baroque—the late Renaissance, which had no sooner emerged in Central and Eastern Europe than it was drowned in the Turkish invasion and the wars of religion, leaving but a few scattered relics. A Hungarian contemporary of Shakespeare, Bálint Balassi, one of the outstanding Central European poets of the late Renaissance, had among his many literary projects the evolution of theatrical art in Hungary; his only effort at play-writing has accidentally been brought to light again recently. The latent, belatedly evolving forces of this unfinished Renaissance came to the surface in the far-reaching reform movements that sprang up in Northern, Central and Eastern Europe at the time of the French Revolution and afterwards. The classic source of Lessing, Goethe, Schiller and their fellow-writers was the German Renaissance. Renaissance sources also fed one of the lifelines of the 19th-century revival in Hungarian, Polish and Czech literature. The social structure of this underdeveloped region, *mutatis mutandis*, showed strong resemblances to the society of Elizabethan England. A restless nobility which, after actively searching for new ways of acquiring wealth, relapsed into despondency, caught between a pack-hunting squiredom that kowtowed to its betters and bullied its inferiors and an absolutistic imperial court that clung to power by every means; an awakening bourgeoisie; and scattered groups of enlightened, revolutionary-minded intellectuals trying to voice the protest of a grievously downtrodden peasantry—could these classes have found a more kindred genius than the author of Hamlet?

Let me enumerate a few factors of the early period of the Shakespeare cult in Hungary. Ferenc Kazinczy published his translation of Hamlet along with his versions of two pioneering works of German drama literature—Lessing's Miss Sarah Sampson and Goethe's Stella. Károly Kisfaludy, who through his comedies (which owe so much to Kotzebue) for the first time recruited an enthusiastic audience for the Hungarian theatre, strove to rise to a higher sphere by learning from Shakespeare. József Katona's *Bánk Bán* —still Hungary's most specifically national, politically explosive drama—would have been impossible without Shakespeare. Mihály Vörösmarty followed in Shakespeare's footsteps in creating the widely popular Hungarian

historico-romantic play. Lajos Kossuth, the statesman and national leader, learned English from Shakespeare's plays while in prison. The poet Petőfi saw in him "a giant of mankind," and János Arany counted him among his major teachers. Through such figures as these, Shakespeare inspired the Hungarian Reform Era in the first half of the 19th century.

Hungarian classicism, which developed in the second half of the century, under the oppressive shadows of the defeated War of Independence, broadened popular subjects, emotions, thinking and forms into national ones. It is understandable that it should have easily moulded Shakespeare to fit its own ideals. That age produced the first Hungarian translation of Shakespeare's complete works. The exponent of this style of poetry, János Arany, was in charge of the undertaking, towards which he contributed his fine translations of Hamlet, A Midsummer Night's Dream and King John. To the extent that this intellectual world, vigorous and animated in the beginning, increasingly turned academic, the constantly growing Shakespeare literature itself became more and more academic. So did the once feverish—if often amateurish—style of acting cool off steadily in the midst of the stately sceneries of the officially representative National Theatre. Plays with a direct appeal to human emotions and imagination were reduced to paradigms of dramaturgical training, which could the more readily be subjected to academic rules the more a free disregard of rules formed part of their essence. A Shakespearean dramaturgy thus arbitrarily formulated fostered the growth in Hungary of a series of hollow historical dramas, encouraged by awards of academic prizes, and of childishly unpretentious, fairy-like comedies. Complete sclerosis marked the Shakespeare cult in Hungary at the turn of the century as well.

The path out of this impasse led in three directions. When Hungary's Shakespearean theatre, bound also by the pseudo-authentic historicism of Meiningen, had reached a state of complete paralysis, a new trend developed, characterized by a return to the hinted-at settings of the original Shakespearean stage, permitting swift changes of scene, by a brisker acting rhythm and by a more natural way of speaking. The innovation, associated with Sándor Hevesi's accomplished and imaginative stage-management, made the Budapest National Theatre company's Shakespeare cycles a remarkable success in the 1920's. The second direction was the rediscovering of Shakespeare's poesy. The literary revolution of the early years of this century produced a body of distinguished poet-translators, who were particularly susceptible to the expressive power of the Sonnets and their construction, which loosened—and, simultaneously, sharpened—the hitherto rigid pattern of this form of poetry. They were also impressed by the dis-

ciplined exuberance and graphic imagery of the great philosophic monologues of the plays. The late, more mature poetry of Mihály Babits and of Lőrinc Szabó—to name but two—is unimaginable without these fertilizing influences. The third fresh departure emphasized the colourfulness, realism, and mass appeal of the popular plays by aiming performances of these ever-new masterpieces at a new audience composed increasingly of workers. These endeavours received much inspiration from Soviet theatrical practice after World War II. The new-type historical realism, imbued with revolutionary pathos, which has brought about a veritable second Shakespearean Renaissance in the Soviet Union, has given a powerful stimulus to the Shakespeare cult in Hungary. This new wave is evident in the fact that, in recent years, itinerant troupes of the State Rural Theatre company have staged 150 performances of The Taming of the Shrew and nearly 200 of As You Like It in almost as many rural communities.

It is noteworthy that, as far as Hungary is concerned, the fierce controversies that have flared up around the identity of Shakespeare have at best aroused the attention of scholars. In this country, his work, not his person, has always been of primary importance. Like the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the Greek tragedies or the Bible, these plays have grown over the years into impersonal creations that are treasured by all mankind. Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Richard III and Macbeth, King Lear, Caliban and Prospero live on in today's world as so many radiant models of human nature, of the human condition—like Ruth or Job, David, Daniel and Magdalen; like Nausikaa, the syrens, Achilles or Penelope. Shakespeare's lines have become household words, repeated even by people who have little idea as to their source and original language or who translated them into Hungarian. Some of his poems rival the best-known poems of Petőfi, Ady and Attila József in popularity. "So are you to my thoughts as food to life..."—it is with the lines of Lőrinc Szabó's superb Hungarian version* of the 75th Sonnet on their lips that young Hungarians of successive generations have declared and declare their love to each other. In vain did Prospero break his staff and cast his book into the sea: his works, having over the centuries achieved a life of their own are now part of the life of mankind.

* "Az vagy nekem, mi testnek a kenyér..."

KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN NATURE IN SHAKESPEAREAN DRAMA

by

ÁGNES HELLER

Shakespeare lived in a moment of history when knowledge of human nature was more crucial and fateful than ever before or afterwards. The strong stereotypes of behaviour as established in the feudal ages were slackening. The old system of conventions and values were being questioned and overturned—witness the "time out of joint" created in the atmosphere of almost every Shakespearean tragedy. The overthrow of the time-honoured order of succession in Richard II, the murderous usurpation of the throne in Hamlet and the infringement of obligatory parental veneration in King Lear are all violations of age-old, deep-rooted traditions. The overthrow of traditions is Janus-faced. It is partly the cause and the medium of crimes, as in the above examples, and partly the source of new virtues, as in Much Ado About Nothing and Romeo and Juliet. But whether the aspects of change as they appear in these dramas are horrible or humane, we always observe that the heroes at the major turning points of the action face the new reality. It is from under the cover of the old stereotypes that the new individual appears. Always to be answered are the questions: who am I, irrespective of my innate position in society? What are the human beings around me like as individuals? We may note Juliet's well-known words:

> 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
> Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.
> What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
> Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
> Belonging to a man. (II. 2)

The direction of the overthrow of the system of feudal conventions and values was determined by that in which financial conditions developed.

The disintegration of the feudal order of values threatened and endangered the order of values in general and led to the overthrow of the whole moral code. Money came more and more to motivate human action. Those who took an active part were mostly such scoundrels as Richard, Edmund, Iago, Claudius, Prince John, Antonio, who turned to their own advantage the opportunities of the new age, putting to bad use their increasing individual liberty. Already in King John, Philip the Bastard formulates the status quo with bitter irony:

> Well, whiles I am a beggar, I will rail,
> And say there is no sin but to be rich;
> And being rich, my virtue then shall be
> To say there is no vice but beggary.
> Since kings break faith upon Commodity,
> Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee!
>
> (II. 1)

The old nobiliary concept of honour became senseless and devoid of substance. As Falstaff puts it: "Can honour set to a leg? No. Or an arm? No... Honour hath no skill in surgery then? No. What is honour? a word. What is that word, honour? Air." (Part I, V. 1). The place of honour is taken by money, the "common whore of mankind," as Timon expresses it in his great monologue (IV. 3).

The unfolding of the personality, of autonomy, of the possibility of using one's wits created the condition of separation and indeed the contrast of appearance and essence, exterior and interior, single and general. Separation itself, which constitued at the same time the foundation of positive development of personality, put knowledge of human nature to the test and called for the development of a new, sharper and more individual knowledge of mankind. Once, however, these possibilities had been realized in a world whose movement was regulated by money and profit, the separation then stiffened to a kind of contrast in which the exterior could cover the interior and the appearance the essence. This situation confronted the heroes whose knowledge of human nature was based on traditional morals with a double, almost impervious mystery. Many of the magnificent Shakespearean heroes therefore fail; Othello, Lear, Prospero as a young man are so easy to deceive because they lack knowledge of human nature. The participants in the conspiracy against Henry IV are destroyed because they have no idea of what we would call political Machiavellianism. Lancaster grants them free and honourable withdrawal if they dismiss their forces; when

they do so, without much ado he chops their heads off, since—in Lancaster's opinion—such political promises are of no consequence. This the conspirators could not foresee—there were no precedents. Even more applicable are the situations of those confronted by the Machiavellianism not of political but of private life (enter Iago, for instance). The Shakespearean scoundrels deliberately operate with that contrast between appearance and essence. The germs of these elements are present already in the first usurper of the throne, Henry IV. He too shows a good face until he becomes king, only to turn against his former supporters. But in him the deliberate play upon others, the spirit of cat-and-mouse, is absent. York comes closer to it, but even in him old and new traits are blended. Thus he would never be able to perform Machiavellian acts in his own family. To varying degrees, with changing personalities, Suffolk, Somerset and their associates, almost the whole court of Henry VI, go the same way. From this soil—similarity—the character of the first Shakespearean rascal, Richard III, develops, who realizes the might of his monstrosity, breaking away from old obligations irrespective of anything and anybody.

In the character of Richard III a deliberate contrasting of appearance and essence develops into acting—simulation becomes a vital principle:

> Why, I can smile, and murder while I smile,
> And cry, "Content," to that which grieves my heart,
> And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,
> And frame my face to all occasions.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> I can add colours to the chameleon,
> Change shapes with Proteus for advantages,
> And set the murd'rous Machiavel to school.
>
> (Henry VI, Part III, III. 2)

And the comedy does not stop where he hides his essence, conceals his wickedness behind an incognito. He constantly emphasizes his honesty, his innocence: "I am too childish-foolish for this world!" he says to Margaret (I. 3). The result of this behaviour is that only Margaret, a skilled hypocrite herself, sees through him, but not his own men. Hastings can still say of him: "For by his face straight shall you know his heart" (III. 4), when Richard has already issued orders for his execution.

From the aspect of deliberately playful use of the contrast between appearance and essence, exterior and interior, the figure of Iago is similar. He thus reveals the duplicity of his personality:

Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so, for my peculiar end:
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at: I am not what I am.

(I. 1)

These Shakespearean scoundrels know moral autonomy; they are aware that man has a comparatively free choice between good and evil and that reason has a directing role in this choice. We need only quote Iago again: "Virtue! a fig! 'tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners" (I. 3). When Iago, Edmund or Richard play with those who trust in them as with toys, their game besides its main purpose—which is invariably power, money—has an ulterior motive. This motive is the pleasure and satisfaction derived from testing their forces, their brains, from the feeling that they have judged the world and people well and can play with them at will. Here the intellectual faculty finds its realization and at the same time is perverted by the negative moral contents. Treating others like playthings, even if it has some purpose in itself and is not intented to wrong those others, does have a negative content, since the other person becomes a mere implement in the hands of the player. The moral autonomy of one person is realized at the same time that others are deprived of it. Thus Iago robs Othello and Edmund robs Gloucester of liberty of action, prompting them to actions contrary to the very essence of their endeavours—transforming persons, at least for a time, into things.

As knowledge of human nature becomes more intricate, those Shakespearean heroes who are clever and also morally great and noble more than once make use of methods and behaviour apparently similar to the playfulness of scheming scoundrels. This is really putting people to the test. Even the greatest of Shakespeare's heroes assume such a role, to find out what lies behind someone else's behaviour. They construct artificial conditions which elicit this or that good or bad response from a particular subject. Thus Hamlet puts Claudius to the test and Prospero, Ferdinand. The line between test and play is, however, perfectly clear—in principle. The object of testing invariably involves a positive moral value (Hamlet, for instance, tries to find out whether Claudius really deserves death). In contrast, play involves itself and the self-service of the player. But it is clear to Shake-

speare that—in practice—the two sorts of behaviour may approach each other and the differences become blurred. Who can decide whether Posthumus is testing Imogen or playing with her? One who tests others—and this is also tangibly demonstrated in Shakespeare—must play a role, although with another content, just as do the unfair players. He must not reveal his true nature either. So Hamlet feigns mental disorder, Prospero acts like a tyrant. Yet, themselves remaining noble and pure, they preserve, however they play, the integrity of their real natures; they do not only identify themselves with their roles, but never play a shameful part, while they remain what cannot be played. As Hamlet says:

> These indeed seem,
> For they are actions that a man might play:
> But I have that within which passeth show;
> These but the trappings and the suits of woe. (I. 2)

Examination of Shakespeare's dramas shows that the good and bad judges of human nature are substantially simile. Let us consider first of all those tragic figures who are characterized by trust bordering on naïveté and who fail precisely on account of their naive confidence. The most prominent of these, in chronological order of composition are: Gloucester, Othello, Lear, Timon. The sources of their blind trust are different and therefore the contents of their catharses too. But they have in common that this naïveté, this absolute trust, is also the source of their greatness. There is no doubt that Shakespeare portrays these heroes with affection. The pure, guileless psyche, not yet affected by calculating intellect, incapable not only of playing with destinies but even of testing, seems to have been in itself most beautiful for the author. He sees clearly, however, that such a character is no longer suited for this world. Not only because of the failure implied but because of the dominance of evil promoted by the naive trust. As Prospero puts it, looking back on his youth:

> I, thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated
> To closeness and the bettering of my mind
> With that, which, but by being so retir'd,
> O'erpriz'd all popular rate, in my false brother
> Awak'd an evil nature; and my trust,
> Like a good parent, did beget of him
> A falsehood in its contrary as great
> As my trust was... (I. 2)

The knowledge that naive trust is the medium of its own antithesis was a perception which slowly established itself in the Shakespearean dramas, progressively modifying the author's attitude towards his great naive figures. Gloucester is still an unequivocally noble character without contradictions. His true, naive humanity is one of the reasons why England becomes the prey of the houses fighting the War of the Roses, though he himself does no evil and his hand and mind remain pure to the very end. Othello, too, has a tragic fault: his naïveté results in murder. But his terrible errror, arising from his trust, is caused by the almost impermeable machinations of another man's intrigues, one who is playing a game; therefore the beautiful moral integrity of Othello does not disintegrate. The situation is different with Lear. At the outset of the tragedy Lear appears as a stubborn, obstinate old man. He is warned—which is not yet the case with Othello—that his trust in his two daughters is unfounded and false. He is susceptible to flattery, a flaw of character in itself, and this is why he mistakes the open sincerity of Cordelia for arrogance. The sort of naïveté found in Lear is thus morally questionable from the start. The king rises to the height of human moral purity only when he is faced with the result of his error and becomes acquainted with anguish. All this is still more true in Timon. While he trusts his friends absolutely, almost the whole of his *entourage* has already realized that his trust is without foundation. Both the Poet and Apemantus repeatedly warn him—in vain. Lack of knowledge of human nature here includes an element of conceit. Timon realizes clearly enough that people generally let each other down, but he is somehow convinced that he himself cannot be let down. He attributes bought favour —blindly—to his personal attraction. In Timon, as a contrast to the previous naïvetés, there is not even a catharsis. Thus, to the degree that the potentials for contrast between essence and appearance and exterior and interior were realized more generally, and the new knowledge of human nature became more exacting, naïveté lost more of its moral value. Shakespeare depicts not only the decline of the world of great naïveté but also the resulting decrease in the possibility for existence of great naive figures.

It is a common and substantial feature of Shakespeare's naive characters that when they suffer disappointment in their trust the whole world falls to pieces for them. Othello, when he thinks the infidelity of Desdemona has been proved, says good-bye to his whole life, not only to love but also to battles and his serving of Venice. Lear, in the storm scene, faces the failure of his whole past. From the disappointment of one man, from the crimes of one or two persons, the conclusion is drawn that all reality is inherently wicked. A sudden psychological swing-over from general trust to general

distrust is common to all of Shakespeare's naive characters. But as their moral problems become more complex, their disappointment sharpens to misanthropy. They do not lose their trust when they ought to and do not trust in whom they ought to, and soon they lose their balance. This feature is best brought out in the last naive hero, Timon. "Henceforth hated be of Timon man and all humanity!" (III. 6.) he bursts out, cursing all mankind.

While Gloucester, Othello, Lear, Timon and the others of their kind are destroyed by their naïveté, the sharp-witted scoundrels are all keen observers of human nature. (The qualification of "sharp-witted" is essential, since knowledge of human nature is by no means characteristic of a Macbeth or Caliban.) In Richard, Iago and Edmund, however, knowledge of human nature turns into a principle of evil. These fellows know perfectly well whom they will deceive. Take, for instance, the analysis of Iago:

> The Moor is of a free and open nature,
> That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,
> And will as tenderly be led by the nose
> As asses are. (I. 3)

This kind of knowledge of human nature has, however, a psychological hitch. It originates from contempt of mankind. The clever rascals consider everybody to be either scoundrels or blunderheads, or at least susceptible of having their good characters turned to evil. They are the carriers of the pessimistic world concept in Shakespearean reality. The source of their contempt is some sort of injury, exactly as in the naive heroes turned to misanthropes. And the greatness and justifiability of the grievance determines, among other things, the weight of these rascally figures. Among the three scoundrels referred to, the injury suffered by Iago is the least, that of Richard the greatest; thus the first is the criminal of the pettiest and the latter that of the greatest specific weight. But whatever lies at the root of the contempt, its substance is the same: nonrecognition of the value and strength of good on earth.

Among the trustful who are disappointed and become misanthropes and the scoundrels who are contemptuous of mankind, the only common trait is the underrating of values. The scoundrels feel at home in a world they suppose devoid of every value, while the disappointed naive heroes are filled with misery. This is easy to understand, because contempt of mankind is a cold passion, while hate is nothing else than love turned wrong side out. The psychological equilibrium of those who are contemptuous of mankind is supplied by the idea that the world is evil; the same consideration causes

misanthropes to lose their spiritual equilibrium. This contrast evolves again and again in the solution of the tragedies: both types err again. The contemptuous must experience that human value still exists in the world and opposes their wickedness. Iago does not reckon on Emily's testifying against him, or Richard on his outraged nobles' (Stanley, for instance) risking everything for Henry's victory. Edmund cannot believe in the loyalty of his brother to his father. So too, in their despair, are the great naive heroes "disappointed." Othello must learn that Desdemona was faithful to him after all, Lear that Cordelia was a loving daughter, Timon that his servant Flavius does not abandon him in his distress, Posthumus that Imogen did not deceive him. For the contemptuous, the survival of values makes their own behaviour and their pessimistic view of the world questionable. They suffer a double disappointment in the world; they die as its enemies. They have lost the game. The great naive heroes, however, find themselves again in this second "disappointment"; their existence regains its sense, becomes justified. Because of this they can be glorified even in their destruction. Are the great naive characters then really the bad and the clever scoundrels the good observers of mankind? Shakespeare's moral world does not suggest that. Those who trust blindly are unaware of the forces of evil, and so it is that they cannot find their orientation in a world that is becoming evil. The clever rascals, however, do not know the forces of good. This is why they orient themselves both better and more exactly, but in the end they must fail. During the writing of the great tragedies, Shakespeare seems still to have felt that in the final analysis those are right who continue to trust in mankind.

It is true, though, that in the last period of the dramatist the contents and direction of representation are modified. Timon is the only naive hero without a catharsis; he remains a misanthrope to the very end and, despite the faithfulness of his servant, does not become convinced of the onesidedness of his suffering. But even here the world has not become hopeless —since Flavius also belongs to this world—nor has existence darkened completely (at most, almost completely); rather, the naive, blind trust that led to misanthropy has lost its former value.

Is there a kind of human behaviour that points beyond the alternative of naive-good-blind and clever-wicked-knowing? Shakespeare creates this *tertium datur* over and over again. There are heroes who learn to know the world by means of their own bitter experience, who live rationally and become neither misanthropes nor contemptuous of mankind, because they can recognize good as well as evil. Among them the most prominent (again in the sequence of the works) are Henry V, Hamlet and Prospero.

The two opposed figures in the story of Henry V are Falstaff and Hotspur. The latter is a personification of the most noble passions of knightly gallantry, but he so little knows people and the changing world that his ardour verges on obtuseness. Falstaff, on the other hand, knows very well how the old norms have become relative—we need only think of his monologue on honour—and from this he draws the conclusion that man must be cynical and cowardly. Henry V, as a prince, learned to know the world but not to adapt himself to it. Warwick justly claims when speaking of him:

> The prince but studies his companions
> Like a strange tongue, wherein, to gain the language,
> 'Tis needful that the most immodest word
> Be look'd upon, and learn'd...
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The prince will in the perfectness of time
> Cast off his followers; and their memory
> Shall as a pattern or a measure live,
> By which his Grace must mete the lives of others,
> Turning past evils to advantages.
>
> (Part II, IV. 4.)

There is no doubt that Henry V does not belong to the best-drawn figures of Shakespeare. All those features with which he characterizes this personality (already in Henry IV) make him suited to become a great king in principle; but that such a man could get beyond the obstacles his epoch had set before him lends a certain utopian atmosphere to the hero. The considerations derived from political realism, which were meant to counterbalance the utopian aspects, are actually detrimental to the consistency of the figure. But, however it may be, here Shakespeare makes the first attempt to create a hero who not only at the moment of victory but during his whole life can preserve the proper "measure" between cynicism and blind, unquestioning confidence. Then, when he creates the character of Hamlet, who finally "fails" (because here Shakespeare is no longer creating utopian conditions), Fortinbras can say at the end of the tragedy—not only out of courtesy but also as expressing the deep conviction of the playwright—that he might have "proved most royally."

Hamlet knows the world he lives in. Partly his studies in Wittenberg, partly the horrible experience that evil was nestling in his own house and the knowledge that he had been robbed, and by murder at that, of his crown, teach him that "the time is out of joint." Right from the beginning of the play he is shown with hostile apprehension about the personages

at the Castle of Elsinore, a kind of suspicion that never arises in the naive heroes who have no idea that the time is out of joint. In the latter, suspicion always develops belatedly and never finds its real object. Hamlet's apprehensions, however, are directed always towards the real causes. From the first moment he proves to be a keen observer of human nature and of the given situation. Neither good nor evil escape his attention. When, for example, in the second scene, he asks Horatio what made him come back to Elsinore and he answers: "A truant disposition, good my lord," he immediately replies:

> I would not hear your enemy say so,
> Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
> To make it truster of your own report
> Against yourself; I know you are no truant.
>
> (I. 2)

Direct interrogation, reading from the answers and from the eyes and emphasizing the "I know" are generally characteristic of the methods Hamlet uses to know mankind. Let us examine from this angle the famous first scene with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. At first he receives his two one-time friends with confidence. But quickly he forms a suspicion, and to make certain of it he interrogates them directly. From the insipid answers the conclusion is ready in no time: beware! these men are enemies!

> Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining?... You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.
>
> (II. 2)

The method of direct interrogation is repeated in the main scene with Ophelia. Hamlet at the beginning of the conversation has no idea that he is being overheard. Therefore in his bitter showdown with his love he accuses himself. Suspicion arises from the behaviour of Ophelia. Then he asks directly: "Where's your father?" And to the answer "At home, my lord," replies with the almost spiteful accusation. It is wholly superfluous for the stage-manager to arrange this scene so that Hamlet at this moment, by accident, catches sight of Polonius and the King, who are on the watch behind the curtain. Such a staging is likely to weaken the essence of Hamlet's character, his prodigious knowledge of human nature. He who could read

an answer to a quick question in the eyes of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, how could he not perceive treason and lies in a better-known and beloved eye!

Hamlet's intellectual knowledge of human nature raises a barrier to the rascals' aim of using him as a plaything. "Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery... 'Sblood, do you think that I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me" (III. 2). The same knowledge of human nature makes it possible for him to play upon others. But this he would allow himself only with petty rascals, with lackeys, sycophants whom he more despises than hates (see his cloud-dialogue with Polonius). Here even the playing is a sort of judging.

In Hamlet's eyes, however, knowledge of human nature is not only an instrument of doing justice but a moral value in itself. In the scene with his mother he accuses her in the first place of the offence of lacking knowledge of human nature:

> Look here, upon this picture, and on this;
> The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> ...Have you eyes?
> Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
> And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
>
> (III. 4)

But now we must face a problem: How could Hamlet, who among the Shakespearean heroes is the best judge of human nature, who sees through good and evil, come to grief precisely by lacking knowledge of human nature, by not seeing through the role of Laertes in the plot woven against him?

We may immediately dismiss the King's words as a key to the solution:

> ...he, being remiss,
> Most generous and free from all contriving,
> Will not peruse the foils...
>
> (IV. 7)

The King, a calculating scoundrel, identifies honesty with naïveté. Besides, he knows only the old Hamlet, the prince as he was before his great disillusionment. The new Hamlet has always played a part before him.

Yet the King turned out to be right. Hamlet does not inspect the edges of the daggers. Why not? Because he is unsuspecting?—a man who is able to sneak in night-time to the couch of his former friends, steal from them the letter of the King, read it and then calmly hand over the two "friends" to the hangman? Lack of suspicion on the part of Hamlet, the first and only failure of his knowledge of human nature, has some concrete and simple reasons. First of all, he had known Laertes for a long time and had no leisure to study him in the excited state of mind he was in after the death of his father. Nevertheless, at Ophelia's grave the boy becomes repugnant to him and this is why he offends him. And now this insult of his becomes his ruin. He who is so careful not to be unjust now feels himself to be unfair to someone whose fate, moreover, is like his own. All this he thus formulates to Horatio:

> But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
> That to Laertes I forgot myself;
> For, by the image of my cause, I see
> The portraiture of his: I'll count his favours:
> But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
> Into a towering passion.
>
> (V. 2)

Regret for his own mistake and the decision "I'll count his favours" makes Hamlet blind and able to accept the challenge of the duel.

Even the most keen observer of human nature may err once, but this error is seldom irremediable (it was not, for example, in Henry V). In Hamlet the irrevocability arises from factors of a much wider range than the problem of knowledge of human nature. For reasons of space we cannot analyse the contents and the motives of his tragedy. In brief: Hamlet, with the aid of his knowledge of human nature, tried to set right the time that had become out of joint. But time out of joint can no longer be set right.

The same conclusion is drawn by Prospero in The Tempest. He too acquired, at the cost of a great disappointment, knowledge of human nature and the truth that trust in the rascals' world brings grist to the mill of the rascals. Almost all the main types of Shakespearean rascals appear on the scene, from Caliban to Antonio. With his knowledge Prospero subdues them and compels them to serve him or to act rightly—against their own intentions. Knowledge of human nature here, as with Henry and Hamlet, is the instrument of doing justice.

With some restrictions, however, Prospero is master over wickedness not in the real world but in the world of art. He changes appearance into reality but cannot change reality into appearance. As soon as he "breaks his staff" the power of recognition is no longer connected with the effectiveness of the action. The unity of recognition and action, which in the real world —in Hamlet—becomes problematical, is restored only in the world of art. Once Prospero is back in Milan, he does not rule and can no longer rule.

At the same time Prospero does not even want to set the times right. Resignation is characteristic of him. To overcome wickedness, which had become general in a world where kindness continued to exist only in the imbecility of Gonzalo or in the naïveté of youth, was a vain hope. Doing justice thus assumes the form of remission: . . . "they being penitent, the sole drift of my purpose doth extend not a frown further" (V. 1) says he about the rascals. Leontes, in The Winter's Tale, had to wait sixteen years for pardon, the scoundrels of The Tempest not a moment. Why, if people are generally so, what else could we do than forgive them—keeping a firm hand on them. Now, for the first time, the theme of Mozart's "Cosi fan tutte" is heard in literature. (By the way, even in the character of Prospero there are many Mozartean elements. Several authors have noted his similarity to Sarastro.)

Those who recognize and follow the middle course between cynicism and blind trust, naïveté and contempt, are for Shakespeare the men who can hold their own with honesty in a world of disintegrating systems of norms. From this viewpoint they are those who are really fit for the world and for ruling—but only in a world where it is still possible and worthwhile to rule. Henry is still a great king, who in reality represents the unity between recognition and action. Hamlet might have become a great king, for he lived in the world of reality, but in him the unity between recognition and action has been interrupted. Finally, Prospero is the king of the world of art, with whom—in imagination—the unity is restored again. The real kingdom in the eyes of the ageing poet was no longer self-realization and rule of great men.

Shakespeare over and over again depicts the intricacy of bad and good knowledge of human nature. Some of his great naive characters, for instance, are bad judges of human nature only as against the new phenomena of the "time out of joint"; they can well measure possibilities offered by capacities and characters in other relationships of life. So Lear recognizes in a moment that the disguised Kent will be a faithful servant, because he has an eye for recognizing the qualities of a servant. Othello could safely choose men for the battle; he easily recognized who would be good and who bad as a

soldier, as is shown by his victories. The dramatist reveals that there is no such thing as all-around knowledge of human nature.

This is documented most completely in Julius Caesar. Caesar and Cassius are keen observers of human nature when the political character of a man is to be judged. At the same time Brutus, as it clearly appears in each case, is not capable of realistically judging his adversaries from the political point of view. As, for instance, Cassius and the other conspirators want to do away also with Antonius, Brutus repeatedly affirms that this young supporter of Caesar is harmless. Cassius wants at all events to stop Antonius from speaking at Caesar's funeral. But Brutus replies: "It shall advantage more than do us wrong" (III. 1). The political blindness of Brutus is not the least reason that the partisans of the republic suffered defeat.

Does this mean that Brutus is generally the poorer judge of human nature? By no means. His moral knowledge of human nature is more acute than that of either Caesar or Cassius. Who is honest and who is a scoundrel, who can be considered as a true friend and who not, this Brutus can qualitatively better comprehend than the other two Roman politicans. This is most sharply emphasized by the contrast between the deaths of Caesar, Cassius and Brutus.

Caesar could measure perfectly the dangerous character of Cassius. He judged him as a politician, not as a friend. But the same Caesar considers Brutus to be his friend, his son. It is quite beyond him to comprehend what a stoic is capable of doing, even against the inclination of his heart. Hence the unfathomable deception at the moment of his death, the desperate exclamation "Et tu, Brute!" Cassius does not suffer such a shock at the moment of his death. Still it is not mere chance that the first servant he asks is capable of killing him in the hope of being freed, even though he had often bought his partisans for money (because he knew the price of men), as Brutus reproached him in the famous scene of their altercation. Brutus himself, however, does not find a single servant willing to thrust his sword into him on his request. And therefore he can draw the final conclusion of his life in the words:

> Countrymen,
> My heart doth joy that yet, in all my life,
> I found no man but he was true to me.
>
> (V. 5)

Shakespeare here tangibly reveals that the development or degeneration of one or the other aspect of knowledge of human nature is not a given,

in-born psychological feature but very much a function of the essence of the whole character from the point of view of morals and world concept. The world concept and behaviour of Brutus are the world concept and behaviour of the moralist. Hence it followed that his political knowledge of mankind became uncertain, while his private moral knowledge of human nature became more refined.

Shakespeare, by illustrating the dialectics of knowledge of human nature, by finding out how this is connected with the whole of the character, the world concept and morals, artistically formulated the double social-moral function of cognition, the inner contrast reflected in the philosophy of the age. Thomas More rejected the fruits of the development of cognition in order to preserve human integrity and the immediateness of cognition, which threatens to get lost. Francis Bacon, in his theory of idols, tried epistemologically to liberate the modern man of the epoch from mere appearance. Shakespeare's belief was that there is no humanity without independent-autonomous cognition, but not all independent-autonomous cognition has a morally positive content. To humanize cognition, to attain from the comparatively direct, simple knowledge of human character the more intricate, more indirect forms of self-knowledge—this postulate and this cognition more and more permeate the Shakespearean dramas. The artist represented this problem more profoundly than the philosophy of his epoch could solve it.

A TRANSLATOR'S REPORT

by

LÁSZLÓ NÉMETH

When I was called upon to do a translation of the second and third parts of Henry VI, I was slightly taken aback.

The contract that was lying on my desk was, I felt, an answer to what I had said in the debate on the translation of Romeo and Juliet. Then, while expressing my appreciation of the immense energy and enthusiasm that had gone into translations of Shakespeare's works, I had attempted to explain a certain dissatisfaction with them. It seemed to me that 20th-century Hungarian versions of Shakespeare represented no progress on those prepared by the three classic poets*, particulary the ones by Arany. Now I was being challenged: "Here, let's see how you can do it." The critic was being summoned to the dock as a creative artist.

I was stopped short by the very title of the work. Some years before, when I had to write an introduction to Zsigmond Móricz's essay on Shakespeare, I had gone through all of Shakespeare's works, and yet this great, three-part play was now practically faceless before my eyes. The Histories are that part of Shakespeare which are most English and least world-wide —or so they are claimed to be as a rule. Still, when I see the title King John I instantly seem to hear the Bastard's voice and Arany's version: "*Kisaszszony arccal, bősz sárkány epével.*" On hearing Richard II, I think of the melancholy king as a draft of Hamlet; Henry IV brings the Falstaff scenes to mind, Henry V the warlike king and the battle scene at Azincourt, not to mention Richard III, which has grown with my life, so to speak, and the thought of which makes the voices of Shakespearean actors and actresses—Mari Jászai among them—that I heard as a child ring in my ears. Yet all memories I had of the three parts of Henry VI were of the squabbling peers of the realm and the horrors of the War of the Roses. Was not this a task like the one that had been assigned to me as my part of the transla-

* See Dezső Keresztury's article "Shakespeare and the Hungarians" on p. 3 of this issue.

tions of Molière?—an improvised flattery written for a royal celebration, such as anyone of Molière's contemporaries might have written, which was eventually, and not without reason, left out of the Hungarian edition.

Perhaps none of Shakespeare's works lies so far from his talent. Would it be right to undertake the translation of two-thirds of a work just because a modern translation of the first part was already available? It would be something like translating *Purgatorio* and *Paradisio* to round off someone else's version of the *Inferno*.

Still, I signed the contract almost without hesitation, although illness had already added itself to the above doubts. The sheet of paper before me was not only a challenge from contemporary translators of Shakespeare but also one from the English to the Hungarian language, whose capacity to compete in this field I had not yet tested. It was also an invitation to carry out some prosodic experiments that I had long been planning, experiments which an author with prosodic theories, and whose poetry dried up some thirty years ago, has practically no chance of carrying out save through translation.

Of all my doubts, the last one—that concerning the disjointedness of the work—was dispelled first. The Histories, from King John, which is a sort of prelude, to Henry VIII, form a coherent cycle: they amount to an English *Iliad*, an epic poem rolling along from scene to scene instead of through a succession of episodes. This would become quite clear if they could be produced in a series of performances such as was given at the Budapest National Theatre many years ago, in which all the best-known plays of Shakespeare were billed (and which Hungarian literature has to thank for Móricz's essay on Shakespeare). That out of the nine parts of this drama-epic three bear the name of Henry VI is explained by the fact that, as he himself says, he acceded to the throne when he was nine months old and his life spans a fairly large part of the age depicted. Undoubtedly the second and third parts of Henry VI are the two which are bound together most closely, so much so that they could hardly be performed separately. On the other hand, these two parts are not linked more closely to the first (which takes place mostly in France) than to Richard III. The depiction of the youthful years, spent apart, of Henry and Queen Margaret is about the only thread that ties them together. For a complete translation there ought to be added not the first part but Richard III, in which lies the real conclusion of the second and third parts and where the fates of the fearsome characters of Margaret and Richard are fully unfolded.

But in the translation, as I warmed to the slow process, my other doubt —that I was going to bury myself in one of a great dramatist's less interest-

ing works, whose appeal to the modern world was almost nil—was dispelled too. No, the story of gentle King Henry is not lost in the tumult of the War of the Roses. What is more, it seems to me that its subject is only too "modern"—one might say, too much of the 20th century. I should think that this was the reason, as well as its length and supposed unproducibility, why it failed to attract attention in the 19th-century cult of Shakespeare. Pirandello created some characters of whom it is impossible to decide whether they are madmen or victims of madness, and whether the significance of the story as it unfolds upon the stage is acquired through them or lies in their very madness. In Henry VI, Shakespeare does not say the final word about the nature of the king. Looked at through the eyes of the other characters of the play, he is a pusillanimous monarch, a henpecked husband, a spineless character who totters about aimlessly, clutching his book, hustled along by the savage impulses of history. On the other hand, looked at from within or from the point of view of eternity, he rises above others in his morality, and his hesitancy is not due to dullness of mind or lack of insight into human nature; his intuitive awareness of good and evil in men and his presentiment of the inevitable consequences of both seems to invest him with a prophetic faculty; his pusillanimity appears to be the defencelessness of a saint who follows the guidance of Christian morality; his being henpecked is rather an affectionate complaisance and loyalty. In a more peaceful age, his righteousness and conscientiousness might make him a good king. He becomes a victim because of the passions that surround him; his gentle disposition turns destructive because of other people's savage tempers. And the poet seems deliberately to withhold his judgement: he leaves it to us to form our own opinion of his king.

And how "modern" and antique is the other leading character, Queen Margaret, who is known from Richard III in the final phase of her mental development. Here, in the second part, she is in her youth, a young queen a-hawking, recently come over from France, hungry for knightly love. It is the husband's weakness and the necessity of making decisions for both of them that makes her increasingly hard, desperate and hysterical and deforms her character. She is an English Clytemnestra with her Agamemnon; at the same time, it should not be too difficult to transplant her into a modern novel as the ancestor of predatory women of today whose lack of restraint, energy as supporters of their families, toughness and endurance often thrive in the same way on the softness of their husbands.

And what an array there is of up-to-date characters to form a contrast for the colours of this ageless royal couple: York and his three sons—diffracted from the father's nature—Edward, a lecher but a born ruler, Clarence,

an argumentative dissembler, and mis-shapen Dicky, later Richard III; then Warwick, maker and unmaker of kings, the most typical hero of the age, its Hector and Siegfried, with chivalrous manners and oligarchical arrogance; and the others in the second part, good Gloucester and his downfall-causing vain duchess, Suffolk, the queen's morally French lover, and beyond them the English nobility, bluff and courageous and, though unbridled, not without some chivalry; and the people, suffering because of the nobility but taking after it in many respects. No, this work is well worth the hours a translator or even a creative writer might spend over it, even if they be numbered. Only one concern is justified, and that is a more serious one: Will he be equal to the task?

Yet Henry demands no wizardry from the translator. The second part has some prose insets; pirates and rebellious peasants twang a Shakespearean prose that is at once popular and diabolical, full of raw juices and quick flashes of scintillating language; in the third part, however, not one prose sentence breaks the flow of three thousand lines of verse. And not only are the enigmatic puzzles of prose parts absent; the translator's attention is relatively rarely diverted, in his effort to render thoughts and emotions, by the occasional verbal somersaults that are performed almost in flight, the high-wire stunts of abstraction.

If the word is not amiss in referring to Shakespeare, this text is almost puritanical. An occasional baroque metaphor or an argument supported by some brilliant imagery are all that reminds one, in form, of the overripe century. The translator, especially in the third part, has but one task, a fundamental one in all of Shakespeare's works: to create the Hungarian musical instrument—I might say position of the speech organs, or tightening of the throat—corresponding to the idiom of Shakespearean passion, to Shakespearean diction.

The dramatist Shakespeare was also a stage director and an actor, and the nature of his texts are determined by the stage-manager's economy of words and by the actor's indulgence in his part and intoxication with his lines. Shakespeare as a man of the theatre aims at effect. As a far lesser poet but equally great caster of spells, the Hungarian Jókai considered the chapters of his novels to be guns of fascination that had to be loaded, cocked and fired, so does Shakespeare the dramaturgist regard his scene-units, with the difference that what he fires sounds like cannons rather than pistols or shotguns and is charged with more than fascination: there is knowledge of human nature, some sort of great discovery, a conviction. But charging the cannon, supplying ball and powder, and firing proceed with admirable swiftness, the operation being stripped to the absolutely necessary motions: the

setting of each scene, the expositing of the situation and the deployment of the characters are all carried through, I might say pushed through, with the utmost simplicity. Only when the stage-manager has hustled his actors out onto the stage—"Go on, say your piece!"—only then does the actor Shakespeare push back the stage-manager Shakespeare and give himself up to the intoxicating verbal luxury of discharging emotions that fascinate the spectator.

This duality, of course, is at the same time as much of an organic unity as that which binds together the atoms of sodium and chlorine in common salt. Shakespeare is economical at the same as he is exuberant; he is at once clipped and rhetorical. And if the words are traced to their roots, where diction is dramatic emotion, the same thing is found: clear and strong, one might say, compact sentiment, which never remains just so, as we see in the modern realists, with the mere expression of itself, but almost from the start breaks into brilliant flourishes and trills of feeling. If it lacked a masterly instinct, it would be rough-hewn, cyclopean, at times clumsy, such as the 18th-century Frenchmen thought it to be; and if this rhetoric were not like grass, flowers and birds on the rocks of profound emotions, it would indeed be superficial, as Tolstoy and, to some extent, Zsigmond Móricz saw it. However, Shakespearean diction, like Shakespearean emotion, is at once compact and wasteful. Driven by a thirst for passion, it nevertheless finds the time to register with rapid reflexes any shades of meaning that are offered.

The translator, too, has to find a suitable musical instrument that will reproduce this wasteful compactness, this free and easy yet steady emotion. The task is partly linguistic, partly prosodic. He has to prove that it is possible in Hungarian to register as much shade of meaning in an equal space, and that Hungarian iambics can be as definite and yet iridescent, as forceful and yet flexible as Shakespeare's.

Henry VI, like the histories in general, on account of its comparative bleakness and ruggedness (arising only from its epic nature), is within easier range of the potentialities of the Hungarian language than the other plays of Shakespeare. There is no doubt that you can get rugged epic force out of Hungarian sooner than airy iridescence, familiar flight of abstraction or feats of wizardry. To me at least, Arany's version of King John seems, if not richer, certainly more perfect than his version of A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Compared with Hungarian, English expresses the same thing in more words but fewer syllables. On the average, Hungarian substantives and verbs are nearly twice as long as their English equivalents; and by using

prepositions where, in most cases, Hungarian uses affixes, English increases the number only of the words, since a large proportion of the latter consists, like the affixes, of one syllable. This difference between the two languages precludes—or at least seems to preclude—the possibility of the Hungarian translation matching the English original in both length and faithful reproduction of shades of meaning. Yet, compared with Shakespeare's other plays, the preconditions in Henry VI are more rigorous still. For whereas in other plays enjambment makes it relatively easy to insert, in the translation, an occasional additional line where the original seems too condensed for Hungarian, with the more "epic" iambics of Henry VI the line-ending represents a pause nearly as well defined as in, say, the Alexandrine verse, and the translator either finishes his sentence by the end of the line or has to carry it along to the extent of another line and thus run the risk of reducing it to prattle. That is to say, in this case the duel between the two languages is fought from line to line; I, at least, could seldom avoid translating line for line, and only at one passage did I insert an extra line—in recognition, as it were, that Shakespeare got the upper hand and that there is a possible solution.

Hopeless as this contest of compactness as measured by syllables may seem statistically, it is by no means impossible actually. To express the difficulty in terms of statistics: in six or seven of every ten lines, the English original will go into the Hungarian with no particular difficulty; in two or three, one has to use some force to squeeze it in; while in one, the translator's headache is how to fill the Hungarian line with the content of the English without diluting the latter. Statisticians ignore one fact: the conciseness of the Hungarian language. The Hungarian language also speaks through its omissions; its grammar aims at leaving unsaid what would be redundant. Not in vain is the objective conjugation its most characteristic inflexional formation; the verb is capable of absorbing not only the subject but the object as well. Its syntax is equally sparing. How many objective, causal, contrasting conjunctions can be saved, for instance, by interpolating or clustering sentences or through a carefully chosen word order! If I were required to condense the rules of correct Hungarian style into a single sentence, I would suggest this: "Never use any word or affix which can be omitted without the risk of sounding constrained or being misconstrued." As a translator I tried to make use of this conciseness, by which I do not mean to say, of course, that I did not have to make some sacrifices in some passages.

The struggle to save syllables may force translators of Shakespeare into compromises of several kinds:

1. The most painful of all is the sacrificing of shades of meaning. This I tried to avoid most of all. Shades of meaning are obviously not ornamental to the text; in most cases they are its very essence. In this respect, sacrifices were frequently made not only by earlier translators but even by Schlegel, who, being Germanic, had an incomparably easier job. I, too, have discarded words, but whenever possible only in keeping with Hungarian conciseness—in redundant addresses, expletives or attributes that are implicit in the substantives. The dearth of syllables which bedevils translators of Shakespeare favours the Language Reform.* The reformers clipped the long Hungarian words, gave preference to the shorter among the old ones, etc. By using a vocabulary of this kind, and employing the corresponding grammatical forms, one can sometimes save two or three words (thus the frequent use of *kéj* for *kéjelgés*, "lust"; *üdv* for *üdvösség*, "salvation"; and *élv* for *élvezet*, "pleasure"). I tried to resist the lure of the short words, and at least ten times used such syllable-squandering and iambus-jumping words as *ellenség* ("enemy") or *ellenfél* ("opponent") before resigning myself to *ellen*** ("foe") once. But I cannot claim to have avoided a disproportionate use of short words while choosing from among synonyms. *Szomorúság* ("sadness") and particulary *kétségbeesés* ("falling into despair") are rather rare with us. I was most careful that the short words I chose should be those that had been current prior to the era of the Language Reform, such as *kín* ("pain") or *bú* ("sorrow"), or were of popular formation, such as *félsz* ("stage-fright") or *mersz* ("pluck").

2. Conciseness in the Hungarian language leads to an inevitable increase in the number of long words. Articles are dropped as well as plural suffixes which increase the number of short syllables, pronouns, etc. Even the most concise poets have often resorted to these means in order to obtain the short-vowel syllables required by classical forms. The more compact the language, the greater is the dearth of quantitatively short syllables. The large proportion of long syllables is, I believe, a characteristic of my translation which is open to criticism. I would bring up two things by way of excuse: for one the true spondee, two equally long syllables, is extremely rare in Hungarian. Most feet accepted as spondaic are actually trochaic or iambic in character. In the second part of the *Szózat* (Hungarian National Anthem, written by Vörösmarty in 1836), among the 28 quantitatively short syllables only 13 are truly short, while in the last two lines only 2 of 7: *Áldjon vagy verjen sors keze, (Itt élned s halnod kell)* "Whether Fate's hand

* Movement in the early 19th century which enriched the vocabulary of Hungarian with many new terms and made the language a more subtle tool of expression.

** One product of the language reform movement and by now archaic.

beats or blesses, (Here you must live and die)." Nevertheless, there is a definite iambus, since the short-long character of the words *verjen* ("beats"), *élned* ("live") and *halnod* ("die") is indisputable. Thus, although the language operates primarily with concision and numerous long syllables, the clean short syllable constitutes the prosodic value of even brilliance; still, a further differentiation within the long syllables becomes necessary.

The other attenuating circumstance is that the form I used is not merely iambic but something far deeper, to use Ady's words, one that is more "rooted," which admits of or even favours long syllables.

The English, German and Russian languages do not have an iambic based on quantity, but the borrowed form has fitted in perfectly with the character of these tongues. Hungarian does posses quantity, but it lacks that reassuring unequivocal relationship, which is proved by the fact that every great poet has devised a different solution to this problem.

This ambiguity of the iambus in Hungarian is most conspicuous where the iambic as a metric device is left to itself, as in the unrhymed iambic of the stage. Two extreme cases can be defined:

1. Being able to render verse only if the lines follow a metrical pattern, the translator aims at "perfection" in his versification. Yet alternating short and long syllables are an alien form that has been forced upon the language in much the same way as trimming can result in conical or cubical shapes in trees and shrubbery. The point is that, like trees, a language never, even in ceremonial perfection, takes on such a shape of its own accord; thus its natural tendency is not strengthened by shaping but is subjected to an abstract formula. This trick performed over hundreds and thousands of lines is depressing: part of the human nervous system begins to concentrate on checking whether the iambics are still good enough.

2. The poet is conscious of the tedium of this spectacle and takes advantage of poetic licence. He creates iambic feet that are mid-way between free verse and standard iambics. The law of this kind of iambic line has been condensed by Babits in the practical instruction that it will do if the fifth metrical foot is pure iambic. The danger here, however, especially in translating Shakespeare's resolute versification, is that either the translator's own music comes through too loudly or the verse comes too close to prose.

In my translation of Henry VI, I found a third, not quite untrodden—in fact, spontaneously very well trodden—path. I have long held the argument that those of our poets who have written the best metrical poetry have had the ancient Hungarian syllabification in their ears, and while writing in the borrowed form they also paid tribute to the more native

one. In my translation, I deliberately tried it: I set one of the oldest Hungarian verse-forms, the four-stress line of the Saint Ladislas song, beneath the iambic as a kind of supporting canvas for the superimposed pattern.

This ancient four-stress line, which, with its twelve syllables and caesura fixed in the middle, becomes nearly rigid as a unit, survives in the rhythm of the Hungarian Alexandrine; it does, I believe, fit well the epic lines without enjambment of Henry VI. Thus I tried to create a form which would combine the suppleness of the iambic beat with the vigour of the Hungarian Alexandrine, while avoiding the artificiality and sweetness of the iambic as well as the slippered shuffling of the Alexandrine.

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

HUNGARY AND WORLD TRADE
Imre Vajda

THE GENEALOGY OF THE NOVEL
Pamela Hansford Johnson

MIDCULT OR MASS CULTURE?
Péter Rényi

PROBLEMS OF CO-EDUCATION
József Fekete

THE CROCODILE-EATERS (a one-act play)
Miklós Hubay

See also p. 89.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE AND PROBLEMS OF CIVIL LAW IN THE RENAISSANCE

by

GÉZA HEGEDŰS

Whether we look at public opinion, stage representation or critical literature, we find opposing attitudes towards that dramatic law-suit in which Shylock appears as the plaintiff and Antonio as the defendant. In the Merchant of Venice, incidents both serious and gay, fabulous and commonplace, are interwoven into a drama pattern, the Shylock *v.* Antonio case composes one element of the plot action, while the two sub-plots, built around the love stories of the couples, Bassanio and Portia and Lorenzo and Jessica, are inseparably associated with the cause and outcome of this legal action. After all, it is Jessica's elopement with Lorenzo which prompts Shylock to put his claim with such preposterous vindictiveness. The involved incidents relating to the marriage story of Bassanio and Portia, which bring the elements of comedy into the play, are partly responsible for Antonio's insolvency; what is more, it is Portia's intervention which turns the scales in favour of Antonio, when he is caught in an adverse legal situation. Such contradictions between the highly tragic tension of the plot and a light atmosphere of comedy must have given rise to the ambivalent interpretations of the play; briefly, and looking only to the essence, the decision pronounced by the court is regarded either as fair or as unjust. To put it more fully, according to the majority opinion Shylock is a loathsome usurer, whose claim to take a pound of flesh from the body of his opponent is revoltingly disgusting, and the judgement which eventually denounces him, declaring the plaintiff a criminal, expresses public opinion and, therefore, is consistent with the spirit of the law. Opposed to this, there is the view held by those well-versed in legal affairs that the sentence is wholly unjust, should be rejected as unlawful on the basis that Shylock was entitled, by the then prevailing system of law, to bring an action against the defendant; that, when driven by circumstances to forgo his claim, his demand for the recovery of his capital is unjustly discarded. Further, the decision was technically invalid, since the individual who decided the case had no legal authority to pass sentence and was using disguise and false documents to make her unwarranted intervention possible. Spectators and readers of the play are thus made to rejoice over a triumphant infringement of law.

One of these two contradictory opinions must be right. It is the position we take in the court action that decides our essential attitude to the play. If we accept the sentence as fair, it implies our moral approval of Portia's intervention—an action open to criticism from a juridical point of view, revealing that we put moral considerations before formal rules. If, instead, we regard the

sentence as unfair and it injures our sense of justice that Shylock, having suffered so many humiliations, should be denied any legal redress, Portia's unauthorized decision, in being given force of law, represents a cynical flouting of legal security. If a sentence passed in this manner is found just, the Merchant of Venice is nothing more than a playful farce, ridiculing an exposed usurer who has come to grief. Again, if the sentence is considered unfair, the Merchant of Venice is a disheartening tragedy on the hopeless state of a man undeservedly treated with contempt. His tragedy is not mitigated by the idyllic, moonlit *finale* in which the two loving couples happily make merry, having flouted the law and stripped a father of his fortune. Furthermore, if the sentence is just and the play is a farce, then Shylock is a comic figure, who gets what he deserves. This was the conception and portrayal in the 18th century, until Kean's novel characterization; indeed the Jew has been so represented in our century in certain fascist-inspired stage performances. If, however, the sentence is found unjust, then Shylock is a tragic hero, who deservedly excites our sympathy and who, beginning with Kean, has become the traditional representation of Shylock for the sentimental, bourgeois school of stage art.

Reading through the play again, and considering these divergent views, it becomes clear that neither of the two interpretations can be fully accepted or, rather, that neither opinion can be supported by the social conditions mirrored in the play. The situation presented in this drama is far more involved, and the implications of the play are not nearly as clear-cut, as might appear from either of the two current conclusions. For Shakespeare, in this drama of many hues, has succeeded in creating a situation that sums up the basic problems of Renaissance man in his everyday life, in that interim period of history that marked the passing of the feudal system and the beginnings of capitalism. There is no question that this transitional state was to play a part in framing Hamlet's philosophical doubts, as it has become manifest also in Romeo and Juliet (and, in a farcical form, in A Midsummer Night's Dream) with its family-law problems. We find it in the Merchant of Venice, whose problems touch upon civil law and relate, in particular, to rules governing credit and loan transactions. The effects of the period can be detected in Antonio's meditative frame of mind and its many resemblances to Hamlet, as well as in Jessica's self-liberating action, expressing the right to the free choice of one's mate. This demand is evident also in Juliet's tragic decision and Hermione's farcical resolve to marry against their fathers' will.

The events that precede Shylock's instigation of th elaw-suit, then Portia's intervention and her decision in the case, certainly go beyond the actual happenings that make up the story of the Merchant of Venice. Behind it all, there is a deeper implication of conflict arising from a serious clash between contestable principles of law in the days of the Renaissance. In Shakespeare's time such controversies over legal matters would frequently have a tragic outcome or, at best, end on a note of comedy in the daily life of the English citizen. Only familiarity with the problems pertaining to the rules of law governing credit and loan operations in those days enable us fully to understand why this play was titled the Merchant of Venice, and why Shakespeare's chief object, perhaps, was to make Antonio the real protagonist of the drama, though the dramatic conflict actually appears in the clash between Portia and Shylock. Yet not they, but Antonio is the hero of the play; it is he who, in the light of contemporary economic conditions of the age, appears as the true representative of a new type of man, heralding the time to come. And it is Antonio who stands in opposition to the very element which seems to be impersonated in Shylock and who triumphs eventually, though his struggle is carried on by another.

Antonio is a nobleman, a merchant by trade: trade provides his only source of income, so that he is connected with feudal society only by birth and family ties. He, himself, pursues the profession of an ordinary citizen.

> Thou knowest that all my fortunes are at sea;
> Neither have I money, nor commodity
> To raise a present sum: therefore go forth;
> Try what my credit can in Venice do...
> (I. 1)

This is Antonio's answer to his friend and relation, Bassanio, when he is asked for a big loan. Bassanio follows the mode of life of the noble *jeunesse dorée;* having squandered away his wealth, he wants to redress his fortune by winning the heart of a rich heiress. But he needs means to carry on his courtship, and once more he turns to his friend for a loan. Antonio is usually ready to assist his friends by letting them have interest-free loans. However, underlying these transactions, there is a definite business purpose on the part of the merchant, aside from his desire to show himself obliging and helpful. We find Shylock hinting at it as money paying no interest, and his words show his annoyance with Antonio:

> He lends out money gratis, and brings down
> The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
> (I. 3)

Seen from the merchant's point of view, business consists not in the lending of one's money, but in obtaining a loan to be used for investments that will serve to raise the stock. The lower the rates of interest, the better it is for the merchant. As for the usurer, whose wealth accrues from the money he lends, his benefit derives from high rates of interest. So whenever Antonio disposes of ready capital, he is acting directly in his own good, with a view to future loans required for his own business transactions, when he grants free loans that would bring about a general fall in the rate of interest on the money market.

But Antonio has run out of his ready cash, and, to oblige his friend, he turns for money to a professional money-lender with cash capital large enough to enable him to grant loans of considerable sums. The amount in question is 3,000 ducats. Although the name, ducat, became widely used for various gold coins, originally the *zecchino,* a gold coin current in Venice, had been its equivalent all over the world. Shakespeare's aim in referring to it seems to have been mainly to enhance the story's Venetian *couleur locale;* the same motive leads his characters repeatedly to refer to the Rialto, the Venetian Exchange built on the Island of Rialto. However, all these external trappings do not tally with the facts we know concerning conditions prevalent in Northern Italy towards the end of the 16th century. The play was written in the second half of the fifteen-nineties, at a time when Venice was so rich in capital that no need existed for a merchant of noble birth to turn to his loathed opponent, if he wanted a large loan. He could have easily acquired such help by means of an ordinary credit transaction at a reasonable rate of interest. Similarly, the medieval code governing loan and credit operations, as presented in this play, had already been out-dated for centuries, as bourgeois ways of life spread rapidly through Northern Italy. In contemporary Spain the retrograde standards of her society made it impossible for a nobleman to pursue any civic activity, for his taking up an industrial or trade profession incurred the loss of his nobility. Though such rigid rules had not been strictly observed elsewhere, a moral taboo existed in many countries where feudalism was still strong, impeding the business activities of the noble. The first concrete example of permitting a nobleman to make a living by entering a profession was set in English society at

the turn of the 16th century, when the medieval forms of credit transactions had already been questioned despite the existing rules of law that governed them. Although trade had developed already into a thriving business, it had, due to a lack of trading capital, come to depend on the money of usurers. Northern Italy was already beyond this difficulty; in France the problem became acute only two or three generations later (Molière wrote his *Miser* in 1668).

Shylock is pleased to learn that Antonio stands in need of his money. For him any transaction in goods, in fact, maritime trade as a whole, is of no interest:

> ...But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, land-thieves, and water-thieves,—I mean pirates,—and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks.
>
> (I. 3)

This is the way a man talks who will risk his money only for money, knowing that his security rests in the law, which provides him every means of recovering his funds at the required interest.

It would please him most if Antonio failed to repay his debt on the day of expiry, because:

> If I can catch him once upon the hip,
> I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
>
> (I. 3)

As if he meant it only by way of a joke, Shylock offers Antonio a loan free of interest, in harmony with the merchant's custom, but on the condition that they sign a bond according to which:

> ...let the forfeit
> Be nominated for an equal pound
> Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
> In what part of your body pleaseth me.
>
> (I. 3)

Antonio agrees to the offer and, after signing the promissory note, obtains the 3,000 ducats, giving it to Bassanio, who sets off to woo Portia.

This is the situation from which evolves a dramatic plot, seeming to promise a tragic outcome but ending eventually on a note of comedy.

There are no indications that Shylock thought of taking Antonio's life from the beginning. Most possibly, he intended to humiliate Antonio, to revenge himself for the humiliations inflicted upon him by the young merchant. He may have wished also to put Antonio under certain pressure, considering him an undesirable business opponent, whose free loans were a constant menace to the interest of the money-lenders. Only when Jessica elopes with Lorenzo, however, and the usurer is running half-mad in the streets of Venice, in utter despair over the loss of his daughter and wealth:

> Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
> Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.

— only then does Salanio, a friend to Antonio and Lorenzo, begin to suspect Shylock's intention:

> Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
> Or he shall pay for this.
>
> (II. 8)

So it is not the usurer but the dramatist who, in Solanio's friendly warning, hints that Shylock, humiliated beyond endurance, suffering an affront this time far greater and more tragic than ever before, is driven to take a preposterous revenge.

But is the stipulation contained in the bond not an outright absurdity? Is it possible that such a clause could have been included in a promissory note and, further, that any court would have adjudicated a claim whereby the creditor had the right to cut a pound of flesh from the debtor's body? Or is it only the skilfully interwoven fabulous elements of the play—the incident of the three caskets, the teasing with the ring, the exotic figures of the wooers—that

lend an illusion of plausibility to that revolting and impossible condition?

Certainly not. The usurer's stipulation presents an extreme case, but medieval law recognized such claims. From the beginning, Shylock appears in the character of the medieval financier against the "modern" businessman represented by Antonio. In their personal conflict the economies of an out-going and an in-coming social system come to grips, and this sharp contrast lends documentary character to this play, raising it in significance to the same rank with Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet.

In Shylock's figure we have the medieval financier, confronted by conditions that foretell capitalism. True, his business methods had become obsolote, consequently wrong and evil, since general progress had made them outdated. Yet what Shylock does is not considered absurd. Usury and usurers had become part and parcel of the feudal anarchy still existing in the vanishing knightly system. In the early centuries of feudalism the production of goods had been unknown; the moral code did not permit a squire to market the yields of his lands, and so he did not press his serfs to produce more than required for his own needs. On the other hand, a demand for new necessities sprang up which serf labour could not meet. Weapons, garments, luxury commodities and, after the Crusades, all sorts of condiments brought back from faraway countries had to be paid for in cash. The only way of money-making open to the vassal in those days was plundering: they got possession of gold by taking it, either as the spoils of war or by robbing travellers on the roads. If cash ran out, they raised more loans in the hope of a coming war or successful plunder. Undoubtedly, the demand for these new necessities had helped towards expanding trade activities around the castles and on the manors, as services were paid for in gold; on the other hand, the demands had created the very conditions in which the money-lenders were always willing to take the risk of lending their gold. At a time when producing for the market had been unknown, these financiers were thinking exclusively in terms of money: they lent money to make more money. The rates of profit were practically unlimited, because the borrower contracted the loans with an eye to his future spoils, and no difficulties ever arose in regard to the rate of interest. In principle, lending money at interest had been prohibited by the Church, which may account for the fact that in most of Europe, at the beginning, the professional money-lenders (usurers), who were to play such an important role in medieval finances, recruited their numbers from the non-Christian elements, mostly Jews and Moslems. Soon their ranks were joined by the Lombard bankers in North Italy, where the early bourgeoisie had established its way of life. Wherever financial competition made its appearance in the psychological disguise of religious prejudice and succeeded in ousting the Jews and Moslems, banking transactions fell into the hands of the Lombard financiers.

On the whole, things were much the same in England: from the year 1287, when Edward the Confessor's Decree was enacted, until the days of Cromwell (middle of the 17th century), Jews were banned from the country. In Shakespeare's time, a merchant needing a loan would turn either to a Lombard banker or an English money-lender. Only a few years before the Merchant of Venice was written, the decree which had prohibited interest was annulled by the government of Queen Elizabeth I, on the understanding that expanding English trade needed ready funds for investments. True, this legalized usury soon produced the most glaring examples of extortion on the part of the money-lenders, and their practices may have induced Shakespeare to build a play around this topic in his Merchant of Venice. The usurer, who lent his money for the purpose of being repaid with more money, had no common interest with

the merchant, who was investing borrowed funds in goods and selling those goods. The merchant's profits were highly dependent upon what interest he had been compelled to pay for a loan. And just like Antonio on the Rialto in Venice, the London merchant too would try through various manoeuvres to break down the rate of interest on the scene of his operations, the newly established Royal Exchange. On the other hand, the London money-lenders, who advanced loans against collateral security, and the Shylocks in all parts of England did not hesitate to hamstring the financially embarrassed merchants in need of their loans. The conflict of these opposing interests had been a characteristic feature of the Elizabethan period. The fact that the scene of the plot is Venice and Shylock is represented as a Jew serves to lend greater interest to the story and to add more exotic features to it. That Shakespeare chose a Jew to represent the usurer may have been due to the fact that Marlow, the famous dramatist, who lost his life in a brawl in 1593 and probably influenced Shakespeare to a greater extent than any other playwright, had, in his tragedy, the Jew of Malta, chosen the monstrous figure of a Jew, Barabbas, to symbolize the excesses of avarice. Moreover, Shakespeare may have sought to penetrate the human depths of such a personality as Barabbas and so made Shylock a Jew. Surely it is unreasonable to speak of anti-Semitic or philo-Semitic tendencies in England around the turn of the 16th century at a time when not a single Jew was in the country. English public opinion remembered only one Jew from the recent past; in fact, he was a christened Jew and had nothing to do with financial transactions, being a well-known doctor of his time. Roderigo Lopez was an ill-fated court physician who somehow became involved in the unscrupulous and deadly strife of the contesting coteries at the court, and as a result was put to death on a trumped-up charge. Soon after the execution his innocence had been proved beyond doubt. By no means can we accept the figure of Doctor Lopez as the original of Shylock, nor does his destiny bear any resemblance to that of the usurer in Shakespeare's play.

Very likely, Shakespeare borrowed the plot of his drama from Giovanni Florentino, whose collection of tales, published in the 16th century, also contained the incident of the three caskets. Conflicts around credits and loan contracts between the usurers (whose activities still constituted part and parcel of the feudal system) and the merchants (already heralding the new methods of early capitalism) were current in 14th-century Northern Italy.

The type of medieval bonds which, in Italy, had gone out of practice already some two hundred years ago, could in England become the object of condemnation in a play only in the 16th century. As long as the rules of the feudal system subsisted, not only did the feudal lords and knights depend on the usurer's services, but his most absurd stipulations were accepted as a matter of course. Under a system deficient in capital, the usurer could not have performed his transactions unless he could lend his money at exorbitant rates and if he had a guarantee of its recoverability. While the usurer was openly treated with contempt for claiming more money than he gave, the strict rules of feudal law protected his claims. Above all, any reference to interest was excluded (the Latin for interest is *usura*; the Hungarian equivalent for "usurious, interest" already since ancient times is: *uzsora*). Consequently, we find in medieval law promissory notes that make no mention of the sum received, but only the amount to be repaid and the date of repayment; further, any facts bearing on the circumstances under which the loan transaction had been effected could not be examined in court, if legal action ensued from a dispute. Once the debtor admitted to having signed the promissory note or (in the event of denial) his signature had been proved beyond doubt,

the law gave legal assistance to the claimant in enforcing his rights. This kind of promissory note was called a bond (in Latin: *cambium*, in Italian: *cambio*). Only the terms contained in the bond were authoritative and executable to the last letter. Since the interest of the ruling classes in feudal society demanded that the usurer have a legal right to make good his claims, thus enabling him to provide funds for future loans, even his most absurd stipulations to insure payment in the amount and on the date specified were legally binding upon the debtor. The surety of a third person could be stipulated in the bond, and, in case he too failed to pay, the creditor rightfully could claim that the guarantor's hand be cut off. (In Hungarian, the words "surety," "stand surety for," etc., are derived from the Hungarian equivalent for "hand.") The milder form of retortion was the humiliation of the failing debtor by having his beard cut off (unless the security involved someone else's beard), or he had to endure the shame of being made to stand on the stump of a tree in public. (In Hungarian, the term for "getting ruined" means literally "going on a stump.") These were the current forms of retortion against a debtor who failed to repay his debt according to the terms of the bond. Even bodily mutilation could be stipulated, and the courts, not only in medieval Venice, but during the English Renaissance as well, rendered legal assistance when the claimant demanded the cutting off of the debtor's hand or nose or ear. The flow of ready capital would soon have dried up if the money-lender had not taken for granted that he could rely on the executive authority of the law, personified by the executioner and the hangman. The Law of Exchange, which developed into a rigid system in the Middle Ages, essentially was based on the *rigor cambialis* (bond-rigour) whose basic principles corresponded perfectly to the juridical demands of a period when production for the market had as yet not been introduced. This juridical concept allowed for no other consideration than rigorous adherence to the wording of contracts and promissory notes and required their execution to the last letter. Under Roman Law, this harsh legal concept was known as *ius strictum* throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The "strict law" adversely affected the growth of production and impeded the development of industries and trade. A merchant whose money was invested in the goods carried by his ships could not take it for granted that the goods would reach port on the specified day or, if they did, that he would be able to sell them at a profit.

Expanding trade practices made it imperative that the merchant be granted a respite, even at the cost of his paying a high interest for default or a subsequent penalty. In case the creditor would not agree to delayed payment, the debtor was allowed to meet his liabilities by paying in goods instead of money. Money circulation means one thing for the merchant and another for the usurer. The latter gives his money in the expectation of getting additional money for it. The merchant invests his money in goods; he sells his goods, and the money received is used for paying off debts, the remainder, for further investments. These activities of the merchant, engendering a money-into-goods and goods-into-money circulation, gave a mighty impetus to industries producing the goods, consequently, they were found beneficial for the economy's general advancement. Throughout the Renaissance trade served as the main incentive to general progress, as opposed to the purely monetary transactions that characterized the outdated economy of the feudal system, encumbered with its own *ius strictum*. The merchant's interest called for a more equitable legal system that would substitute for *rigor cambialis* an examination of the intention of laws and contracts and be more concerned with the human element in a legal dispute than with the letter of the law—in short, a judiciary guided by the principles of

equity. In the nomenclature of Roman Law, this humane approach was termed *ius aequum*, as opposed to the rigid formalism of *ius strictum*. The Merchant Law, based on *ius aequum*, began to take shape during the Renaissance, replacing the medieval Exchange Law based on *ius strictum*. In most of Europe and in England, particularly, where, despite established bourgeois tendencies, many feudal conditions prevailed, the majority of civil law problems arose around the issue of whether, in deciding a given case, the court should use the principle of *ius strictum* or *ius aequum*. This is also the moot point in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice. The plot concerns a bond: had Antonio's ships reached port on the specified day and had he been able to turn his goods into money, there would have been no problem, no dramatic situation. In daily life too, similar legal problems may arise when default in payment has not been a wilful act of the merchant. The Exchange Law, however, does not acknowledge an act of God as a *vis maior*, and in considering a disputed case the principles of equity are disregarded. The usurer does not think in terms of goods, his general attitude is formed to suit the pattern of feudal conditions; it is in his interest that claims such as Shylock's should be acknowledged by the court. Herein lies the play's real significance extending beyond the dramatic problem of the plot. Shylock's absurd, and in our eyes utterly impossible, condition might have been instigated by his personal vindictiveness, but, at the same time, we are made aware of the historically retrograde concept of the money economy of the English Renaissance. This economy was highly dependent upon the activities of the English and Lombard usurers, whose common interest required that such claims be acknowledged by the courts. Instead of a more reasonable stipulation, the dramatist chose this extreme example to illustrate the inhumanity inherent in *ius strictum*. Evidently, the dismissal of Shylock's claim, an application of the principles of *ius aequum* in deciding Antonio's case, not only protected Antonio, but also served the interest of every shipping merchant and of every English merchant adventurer squeezed by the Lombard usurers. And in the theatre, there were—sitting or standing—the merchants and seafarers, the craftsmen who were producing goods for the merchants, and the shipwrights who were building their ships. All of them followed Antonio's predicament with great compassion, hoping for a legal subterfuge that would save his life.

But what sort of subterfuge might a fictitious Venetian court find, when the actual London court of the Renaissance was faced with fantastic claims pertaining to loan and credit operations, the prevailing lack of funds having made loan transactions with money-lenders indispensable for trade. Furthermore, foreign interests, particularly Dutch, French and Italian, had become so entangled with growing English trade that attention had to be paid to such claims, legal or otherwise.

Antonio clearly hints at this in his reference to the Duke's possible objections. He touches upon a problem which was much discussed in Shakespeare's London:

> The duke can not deny the course of law:
> For the commodity that strangers have
> With us in Venice, if it be denied,
> 'Twill much impeach the justice of the state;
> Since that the trade and profit of the city
> Consisteth of all nations.
>
> (III. 3)

Only two generations later, in Cromwell's days, did English trade gain such independence that foreigners holding interest in English concerns were excluded by the Navigation Act. In Shakespeare's time, under the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, foreign interests still were meticulously protected by the English merchant, irrespective of his own advantage. This apparent contradiction in interests may give us a key to Antonio's Ham-

let-like hesitation in his predicament, and the duality of interest characterizing English trade in its relations with usury capital may explain Antonio's inclination towards despondency. Undoubtedly, many of these merchant-adventurers were more like pirates than were their bourgeois or upper-middle-class successors, and there was little similarity between them and the high-principled and resigned Antonio. Nor were the educated young men in Shakespeare's age usually as philosophically minded as Hamlet, or the young women so consistently active in standing up against their tyrannical fathers as Juliet and Jessica. Even so, these characters are typical representatives of certain historically determined tendencies and attitudes that characterized their epoch. We can find it in Antonio's resignation, for despite his hatred for Shylock and attempt to check the latter's usurious practices—knowing as he does that usury capital will not allow a large-scale expansion of his trading business—he is, nevertheless, aware of his dependency on Shylock's money and must accept the usurer's conditions for the loan. What's more, he is expected to approve of the assistance that the law gives Shylock in making good his claims. Should Antonio question their legality, he would be acting against his own interests as a businessman. Antonio represents the man of the future, a forerunner, in the guise of a Venetian merchant, of the future English shipchandler aspiring to rule the seas; at the same time, he still is harrassed by the aberrations of feudal monetary policy as yet unchallenged in the sphere.

Shylock too finds himself in an ambiguous situation. As far as his financial activities go, he can rely on the protection of the law, a protection readily acceptable to the merchants. On the other hand, these very merchants unremittingly try to curtail his profits and to bring about situations that expose him to constant humiliations and a life of moral ostracism. Yet Shylock depends for his existence on Antonio, i.e., on the merchant class, for his connections with traders and craftsmen offer him greater profits than those with recklessly squandering noblemen such as Bassanio and his kind. Contact with the nobility often involved considerable risk for the usurer, even danger to his life, but it had the great advantage that conditions of repayment were always accepted, without any dispute on the part of the borrower, who paid in gold acquired by plunder. Nevertheless, in contracting a loan with the usurer, the merchant was helping to undermine the system of usury. The usurer, on the other hand, did all he could to preserve the existing state of law as established by the feudal system. In stating his unreasonable but not wholly impossible stipulation Shylock was motivated by the hope that Antonio would fail to pay his debt on the specified day, so that, pursuant to *ius strictum*, the merchant would be at his mercy and open to any extortion, even the taking of his life:

> . . .for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will.
>
> (III. 1)

Perhaps Shylock's original aim was to get rid of the merchant, who, in his desire to free himself from the shackles of usury-capital, was attempting to break down the exorbitant interest rates and thus provoked the hatred of the usurer. Both men have good reason to hate each other. But Antonio's hatred is a matter of principle: he hates Shylock as a usurer. His hatred is conveyed in his contempt and in the humiliations he makes Shylock suffer. Shylock's hatred, however, springs not only from the clash of their interests. A man held up to public obloquy naturally would respond with antagonism to a society scorning his human dignity, but his hatred becomes personal, being directed primarily against the person who most directly and strikingly conveys the adverse community feelings. Antonio is that person; he is most consciously aware of the plight of his fellow merchants and gives voice to their sentiments. In the in-

geniously drawn figures of Antonio, a likeable and well-intentioned tradesman, and Shylock, the revoltingly unscrupulous financier, the dramatist represents the conflicting interests of the two forms of capital —merchant capital and capital accumulated by usury—that were struggling for supremacy in the economic arena of 16th-century England. True, Antonio represents the future, but the juridical system surviving from the past, still protected Shylock's interests. For the time being, it is in Antonio's interest that it should protect the usurer. Concurrently new standards are beginning to replace out-dated forms, and the ideal of law, taking shape in the minds of a bourgeoisie engaged in laying the foundations of a new economic system, is represented by *ius aequum*. This new concept does not exonerate the debtor from his obligation, but facilitates the granting of a respite with all the high costs of prolongation it involves.

Over all of Europe progressive trends had made themselves felt in Renaissance jurisprudence by a shift from *rigor cambialis* towards *ius aequum*, paving the way for the development of mercantile law. Later when the bourgeoisie attained a leading role and money-for-money transactions were transformed into banking operations, the Exchange Law and the Mercantile Law were synthetized into an integrated system. In the transition period of the Renaissance the feudal Exchange Law embodied in the rigid principles of *ius strictum* represented an outdated concept, as against mercantile law which, guided by the principles of *ius aequum*, pointed towards the unfolding capitalism of the future.

How could the court make a satisfactory decision in Shylock's case, when, according to existing law, the claim made by the plaintiff was legally valid, but already called into question by a new concept of justice? Obviously, Shylock's claim led the court into a legal deadlock. Dismissal of the case would have infringed the lawful rights of Shylock. On the other hand, by sustaining his claim, and thus consenting to Antonio's death (pursuant to prevailing legal provisions), the decision, from an ideal aspect of law, would amount to judicial murder. This situation was typical not only in the Renaissance, but is always evident in times of transition, when institutions of the old society resist any change in forms, although productive forces outrun production relations. Historically an analogous situation arises when existing rules fail to answer higher standards of law demanded by public sentiment. In the Merchant of Venice the legal concepts of feudalism come into conflict with new concepts taking shape in the minds of the bourgeoisie. Oddly enough, it is Shylock, the usurer and Jew, who maintains the outdated principles of the feudal system, while Antonio, the nobleman, represents bourgeois progress. The resulting tense situation would necessarily end on a tragic chord but for the dramatist's intention of turning the play into a comedy.

Romeo and Juliet die in order to bring home the cruelty of patriarchal tyranny to the spectator and reader, in its complete immorality and inhumanity. Hamlet falls victim to his destiny by being placed in a situation in which the moral code of medieval life clashes with a new morality and with the Baconian life ideals. His death thus serves to justify his actions and condemn his opponents. The plot of the Merchant of Venice leads toward a similar tragedy, since, in the given circumstances, the court could have based its judgement on the principles of *ius strictum* and consented to Antonio's death. Had this course been taken, Antonio's tragic end would have been a striking demonstration of the cruelty and immorality of *ius strictum*. This conflict could have meant the end of Shylock, a typical representative of retrograde and reactionary tendencies, just as Tybault, the belligerent nobleman and reckless advocate of anarchy and feud, loses his life in one of the many

duels fought in Romeo and Juliet, or as, in Hamlet, Claudius, the embodiment of past sins, is made to die. Yet the case of Shylock *v.* Antonio does not end in disaster, because the sub-plot of Bassanio and Portia turns the play into a comedy. However, this is not a haphazard solution, ensuing from the structural demands of the drama, but a deliberate one involving a basic idea that is connected with considerations bordering on the philosophy of law and actually determines the composition of the play. These considerations, flowing from his appraisal of certain rules of law, induced the dramatist to carry his case to an extreme. Shylock's claim before the court is unreasonable, almost nonsensical, but not impossible: it reflects feudalistic, legal concepts. The dramatic events are brought to a climax by Portia's intervention, who, in acknowledging Shylock's claim and by carrying to excess the interpretation of existing rules, shows up the perfect absurdity of this claim. And there the court is up against a legal impasse; a second plot has to be linked up with the story of the litigation. The dramatist has interspersed it with a number of fabulous elements, perhaps to lend greater plausibility to Portia's wholly unauthorized appearance in a Venetian court and to give greater legal validity to her decision. Portia comes into the story straight from the world of fables. She steps out of the well-known tale-motif of the three caskets to become Bassanio's betrothed. This background helps us accept the fact that this beautiful, quick-witted young woman should be an expert jurist, well-versed in philosophy of law and, therefore, qualified as an eminent Padovan law professor in a Venetian court of justice. (The university of Padua was then one of the strongholds of the principles of *ius aequum.*) Portia, disguised as a man and helped by her false documents, now appears in Venice as young Doctor Balthasar from Padua University. Implausible as it may seem, and wholly inconsistent with court procedure, Portia is given a hearing by the Chief Magistrate, the Duke, who transfers to her his right to decide Shylock's case. This infringement of the law on the part of the Chief Magistrate is explained by the fact that the Duke must have been just as reluctant as any other Venetian judge to handle such a case and render a judgment that would be according to existing rules, but hardly consistent with a higher conception of law. So Portia attends to the legal procedures in court. She shows herself a stickler to the letter of the law and acknowledges Shylock's claim without dispute. Indeed, she insists on a literal interpretation of the bond's stipulation, according to which Shylock may cut out a pound of flesh from Antonio's body, not barring his heart. However, he is entitled to have the flesh only. Not a single drop of blood can he take, since the bond contains no mention of blood. Thus Portia, in her adherence to the principles of *ius strictum,* shows even greater rigidity than Shylock himself. When the usurer is willing to forgo this stipulation and accept in repayment the sum offered by Bassanio, Portia rigorously adheres to the dictates of *ius strictum,* declaring that Shylock had already renounced his claim to the capital when he interrupted the proceedings with his interjection and so had forfeited his claim through his own words. What follows next further illustrates the absurdity of *ius strictum:* Portia draws the conclusion that Shylock's claim involved murderous intent and, with a juridicial *tour de force,* turns plaintiff into defendant. True, she spares his life by granting him pardon, but the sentence pronounced involves total forfeiture. Yet even Antonio disagrees with her decision. He is too much of a humanist to take Shylock's money. He renounces immediately his rightful share, contingent upon Shylock's becoming a Christian and leaving his wealth, in legacy, to his daughter and his son-in-law, representatives of a new life philosophy.

So it is Antonio who eventually acts upon the principles of equity in his fair attitude towards his loathed opponent. This is very

important, for Antonio and Shylock are antagonists in the drama. Portia's intervention saves Antonio, but her sentence, though it evokes our sympathy, is felt to be unjust. *Ius strictum*, true, is denounced by the clear reasoning of the pseudo-jurist, but her judgement fails to comply with the dictates of equity in a more profound sense; moreover, she applies a reversed *ius strictum* to Shylock even where he is in the right.

Bourgeois humanism thus prevails over the rigid formalism of feudalistic thinking, which succumbs to rational reasoning. Shylock, together with conservative legal doctrinarianism, is denounced, and Antonio, whose actions are limited in the drama but are always consequential, is set up as the ideal hero. In fact, Antonio's justification is the real topic of the play. With regard to other *dramatis personae*, Shakespeare pays full tribute to the fearless women who, in taking a stand against the moral code of the past, do not shrink from deeds, as displayed in Jessica's prompt action, and who use their wits, as demonstrated in Portia's faculty for reasoning. In the ingeniously-drawn figure of Shylock, the dramatist gives a deeply human and psychological explanation of his character, making us understand that a man cannot but respond with hatred to hatred. Thanks to Shakespeare's great art of characterization we sense in him an authentic human beeing. The loathsome usurer is invested with human qualities that evoke our sympathy. However, Shylock's figure has been greatly distorted by a tendency to use him as a means for anti-Semitic or philo-Semitic propaganda. Wrong as it is to interpret this character as the "typical Jew," it is an equally grave mistake to represent him as a decent and pathetic figure. It is, consequently, just as erroneous to exult, without reservation, at Portia's decision—unacceptable even to Antonio—as to disagree wholly with Portia's decision by declaring it an outright infringement of the law. The problem points to a more general issue, one that is of far greater importance: the conflict between the established system of law of a moribund society and a new and more progressive conception of law, already taking shape in the public mind. It is out of this conflict that the tragic and comic situations of the play arise. If the established standards of the old world prevail over the new ideals, the outcome is inevitably tragic. But if, in the light of new standards, all old principles are shown to be absurd, an infringement of personal rights may result. Both possibilities involve certain misfortunes, and yet it is through these calamities that a new humanity begins to assert itself against the rigorous inhumanity of old standards.

In Shakespeare's England no less than in the rest of the Continent during the Renaissance, merchant capital was engaged in constant fights with the capital of the usurers. Such a conflict is presented in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice. History had progressed towards the standards of *ius aequum*, preparing the way for the development of mercantile law. In his immortal Merchant of Venice, Shakespeare also contributed towards this end, though he may have been unaware of the far-reaching legal implications of his drama. Yet its very immortality lies in this deeper implication. Shakespeare's great art demonstrates that historical advance incessantly creates situations in which the principles of the moribund past are opposed by the unfolding ideas of the future. A time arrives when established but already outdated rules, inseparable from the needs of everyday life, come into conflict with a new, more progressive legal concept, already shaping in the mind, though not, as yet, finding expression in the laws.

HUNGARIAN POETS ON SHAKESPEARE

I

INTRODUCING SHAKESPEARE TO HUNGARY*

by

JÁNOS ARANY

Honourable Society! Following the suggestion of Mr. Anasztáz Tomori, the undersigned Committee has been entrusted with the task of preparing for the next regular monthly session plans for publishing Shakespeare's works and of submitting its proposals at the present session on how this is to be accomplished. Hence the Committee wishes to submit the result of its discussions as follows:

First and foremost the question to be decided was how the Society should carry out the translation of the works, whether by finding and calling upon persons who are known to be able to do it or by issuing an appeal to writers of this country, so as to give the opportunity to all to test their abilities for this task, which is not at all an easy one. The first way would appear to be the more expedient, unless it were feared that the Society would not find a sufficient number of writers to achieve its purpose without set-backs; with the second it may be feared that the Society would be overwhelmed with so great a number of unsatisfactory translations that most of our time would be spent on reading and reviewing useless works. And yet the advantage of the second way, by which hitherto unknown talent might be discovered, has caused the Committee not to exlude the issuing of a public appeal; so it has been decided that the Committee shall recommend both ways with a view to recruiting good translators.

With respect to the principles on which the work of translation should be based, the Committee does not consider it expedient to impede the translators by lengthy, complicated instructions in advance. It would be enough to tell them to strive for a faithful translation with respect to form, material and contents alike by rendering blank verse in blank verse and lyric forms in lyrics but always bearing in mind that the idea, the strength and the flow of the language (particularly in declamation) should never be sacrificed to mere formal trifles. Accordingly the Society would not require

* A report to the Kisfaludy Society, October 1860

the translator to render in rhymed form the ends of soliloquies or dialogues—where with Shakespeare the blank verse becomes rhymed—nor always to adhere to every line as if it had to be reflected mirror-like, or to render the lyrical parts in lyrics of the same number of syllables and the same pattern of ryhmes. But it would require adherence to the blank verse and possibly treatment according to the rules of prosody; it would demand, moreover, that in plays where rhymed forms are predominant (e.g., A Midsummer Night's Dream) the same forms should be followed in Hungarian. In general it would be the task of the judges to decide, within the limits of form outlined above, whether the translation possesses such internal value that some leniency should be exercised with respect to forms, or whether by stubbornly sticking to forms the translator had maimed the spirit, in which case the work should be rejected. It is the desire of the Committee that the rendering should not so much endeavour to satisfy the reader who, with the original Shakespeare in his hand, will compare the translation word by word but should rather be aimed at gratifying the reader who, not being versed in the English language, wishes to enjoy the beauties of this great poet in Hungarian; moreover, it should supply the stage, so lamentably wanting in good translations.*

Another question of importance is whether Shakespeare's works should be handed over to the Hungarian reading public in their original form, with the indecent and not infrequently obscene parts they contain. The question is whether we want to have a complete Shakespeare or only a mutilated, deficient and emasculated one. It does credit to the Hungarian public that its sense of decency does not tolerate the artistic liberty which is often taken to be a mark of great writing, painting, etc. Besides, tender age, the circle of ladies and the drawing-room claim consideration. On the other hand, now that we want to publish Shakespeare, it is essential not to publish his works in a mutilated form, because the Committee would but reluctantly approve of an incomplete translation. For the point is that not only some parts, five or six lines, would have to be left out; there are whole plays that would have to be either omitted entirely or else mutilated to such an extent that they would no longer be dramas. Shall we mention the comedy Measure for Measure? Although its moral tendency is good, the whole play takes place in an atmosphere of pleasures of the flesh and of brothels. Or the first act of King John, which cannot be left out lest the whole drama be spoilt? Therefore the Committee advises the Society to follow the example of other nations, particularly of

* To meet all the three requirements is the principal aim to be striven for, though this aim is almost impossible to achieve completely.

Germany, having the works of Shakespeare translated in full, unmutilated, but to instruct the translators to try to render the indecent parts in milder forms and to omit scandal as much as possible.

In this connexion the question has been raised whether such plays as are presumably first works of the great poet and thus not quite worthy of his genius—for example, Titus Andronicus and Pericles—should be translated or not. The Committee has agreed that for completeness' sake all the plays that are included in the majority of the Shakespeare publications as his works—and thus the above-mentioned ones too—shall be translated. And in order that the public should buy them, the Committee is of the opinion that the works ought to be published in such a way that each booklet containing a famous play of Shakespeare's should also contain a second-rate drama of his, thereby ensuring the sale of the latter too.

The Committee having considered the circumstance that certain works of Shakespeare's have already been translated into Hungarian, has decided that such of these translations as are good enough—unless a copyright binds them—should be revised, improved and included in the present publication. In general, the translators should be instructed not to refrain from availing themselves of the aid of translations that were made for the National Theatre some time ago; for they—although often incorrect and not faithful enough to the original—contain here and there so dramatic a language as to be beneficial to the new renderings.

It would also be desirable that the translations should be made from the best possible English Shakespeare publication and, for the sake of uniformity, all from the same one. For this purpose the Committee recommends the edition in English published at Elberfeld and available from the bookseller Friderichs, with a very good introduction and notes by Dr. Nikolaus Delius in German. (This publication has already been acquired by Mr. Tomori, who will certainly be glad to submit it for the purpose in question.) But the Committee does not prohibit, nay even desires, the translators' availing themselves of as many editions and German interpretations as possible. It would be sufficient to use only as much of the notes as is indispensable for the understanding of the text; the Committee would also recommend a short introduction to every play.

One of the most important questions is still to be solved: how the Committee should perform its right and duty of judging, which has been entrusted to it for this enterprise. If it deems anybody worthy of being entrusted with the translation, will it not be wrong to criticise his work subsequently? Will the Committee be able to appoint from among its members as many critics as are needed to do the judging, particulary if

some of the members—and perhaps just those who would be willing to criticise—will be themselves engaged in translating? And can the Committee ask its members to do the work, which requires detailed comparisons and which takes days and weeks, and particularly to do it free of charge? Moreover, how many of the members will bring themselves to compare the original, line by line, letter by letter; to jot down the mistakes, the deficiencies, the less successful shades and a thousand other such little things; and, having done so, to point them out, to send them to the translator and, having received the corrections, to investigate them again? In view of these difficulties the Committee admits that this kind of criticism is almost unfeasible. An easier way has to be found. So the Committee requests the Society to appoint three of its members who would either continually, or in turns for the separate plays, proceed with the judging jointly. They might meet, and one of them read the translation to the other two, who would follow the original or else a good German translation they had studied before; proceeding in this way they could continually exchange ideas. Although a mistake or two might be overlooked in this way, a general opinion could be formed whether the translation is good, satisfactory or definitely bad. Time and work could be saved and yet the decision could be agreed upon. Even if they wished to return the translation to the translator for correction, they could help him sufficiently by simply underlining parts that were less successful, by making notes on pages that were weaker and by giving advice in other ways.

This is what the Committee, in fulfilling its task, has deemed to be necessary to report on the case in question.

SHAKESPEARE'S RICHARD III*

by

SÁNDOR PETŐFI

Shakespeare. Change his name into a mountain, and it will surpass the Himalayas; turn it into a sea and you will find it broader, and deeper than the Atlantic; convert it into a star, and it will outshine the sun itself.

It would seem as if Nature had once created a genius to be increased by interest year after year, and, having grown into enormous wealth with

* Written on the occasion of a "Benefit Performance" by Gábor Egressy on the stage of the Pest National Theatre, Febr. 13, 1847.

the passage of millennia, this colossal spiritual endowment could crush the canopy of heaven with its weight and so fall into the poor hovel of a wool-trader in the little English town of Stratford at the very moment when that good man's son William was to be born into the world, to inhale with his first breath that which showered down on him from heaven.

Much more could be added which might seem to be ridiculous exaggerations; they aren't, by far. Shakespeare himself is half of Creation.

Before his appearance the world was incomplete, and when creating him God said, "And behold him, oh men, from now on you shall never doubt of my existence and greatness, if ever you dared to doubt!"

Neither before nor after Shakespeare did a bird in flight or human mind soar higher. Pearls hidden in the ocean of the human heart were brought to light, the tallest flowers of imagination's giant tree were picked—all by him. He robbed Nature of its beauty; we have been gleaning and gathering what was left for us by his whim or what he did not deign to take.

No feeling, no passion, no character can be found the image of which was not depicted by him in colours that do not lose their lustre with the flight of time or fade with passing years; he inherited the palette with which the colourful earth, the sparkling stars and the azure skies were painted and which shall remain unchanged in the millennia to come as they have been proved unchangeable during those that have elapsed.

Richard III in its entirety cannot be classed among Shakespeare's most important plays; compared to his other works its sound is flat and one-sided... every act and almost every scene is loaded with curses and violent death... the action itself is less interesting than, for example, that of Romeo and Juliet, and against Othello or Lear it lacks passion; however, in character painting this play ranges among the most amazing ones and is comparable to Coriolanus and Falstaff. Richard is the perfection of villainy. He does not stagger or sink gradually, nor does he step by chance upon a primrose path, but he simply makes the cool decision to turn into a scoundrel—with the casual gesture of putting on or taking off his coat. His aim is to rule; he fixes his eyes on this goal, regardless of means or measures, and he strides cheerfully towards his target, marches blithely towards his aim as if treading on sweet-smelling blooms and not on the corpses of his victims. This merriness, this gaiety, this humour surpasses in horror any knitted brows, gleaming eyes or grinding teeth; the smiling sea softly rocks and plays with sunbeams while wrecks of scattered ships wash in its waves. Yet the play has a scene whose greatness and boldness was never equalled by Shakespeare, and even trying to follow the like would mean utter despair, sheer madness for anyone, except

for the unlimited and all-pervasive force of his creative talent. It is the coffin scene in the first act.

Richard, in spite of his being deformed, lame, humpbacked and ugly, Richard the killer is able to persuade the lady, driven to despair by her husband's death, to accept an engagement ring from him; the widow, well aware that Richard is the one who has killed her husband, utters oaths and curses on the killer's head, on the head of him who has appeared on the spot and whom she intends to stab. Richard hands her his own sword, saying: "Lo! here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword." The lady prepares to stab; Richard encourages her: "Nay, do not pause; for I did kill king Henry"; the lady is about to stab; „Nay, now dispatch," says Richard; "'twas I that stabb'd young Edward, but 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on." She lets fall the sword and before long accepts Richard's ring. This scene is unrivalled in its grandiosity. It must have been conceived in a delirious moment, as otherwise even Shakespeare would not have dared to venture upon such a task.

Gábor Egressy made Richard III into a character expected of him, a character to be expected only of him. Needless to state Egressy's position among Hungarian actors; it has been established by the audience itself, thank God, though at long last; those ne'er-do-wells who dispute his precedence deserve less than words. They resemble a dispersed army, the rear of which falls back shooting their supplies of ammunition not to hit but to ease their burden and thus be readier to flee. Do you know what the difference is between Egressy and the other prominent actors?—all of them are excellent or *mea pace* wonderful in some *genre*. Egressy, however, has given wonderful and exquisite renderings in every *genre*. And it is versatility that is the standard of greatness in art as well as in poesy. This is why Shakespeare is greater in plays than Molière; this is why Vörösmarty surpasses Victor Hugo in lyrical poetry and why Egressy is a greater actor than his contemporaries. While these are but single instruments, each is in himself an entire orchestra.

Richard III is one of Egressy's most unforgettable, best performed characters. Even his features are worthy of a sculptor's chisel, to be cut in marble for eternity. An awe-inspiring face with small eyes and a large hungry mouth. His eyes are charming flowers luring the victims, his mouth an infernal eddy devouring them. It is a veritable Anaconda-look ensnaring the bird into the snake's mouth. Appearing in a dream this face would make your blood run cold before you awaken. And this is only the face and the mute smile. What if it laughs, what an inhuman sound, as if a rusty gate creaked or a tiger cleared his throat, a tiger with parched

lips athirst for blood. His speech is broken, halting; he throws out words one by one as if spitting needles. I awaited with great curiosity the scene in the last act, when Richard starts from his dream after the appearance of the ghosts; I was afraid that Egressy would declame the monologue at the top of his voice, by which he could have won great—though mistaken—acclamations. My misgivings were superfluous, the more so as Egressy is not wont to sacrifice art for the sake of applause. Jumping out of bed he sprawled headlong; crawling a few feet he clutched a chair as if it were an animate being capable of protecting him. Thus, in such a posture, half lying, he said or rather whispered the monologue, catching his breath now and then. What a fine thing to see this veritable rascal, he who had always trod on others' heads, wallowing on the earth in fearful dejection, desperate, miserable, trembling like a snake trampled underfoot. The more does his rise to ultimate resolution come as a surprise, with his determination to rush into battle, that his death be as valient and expiatory as his life was loathsome. That was how it was conceived by Shakespeare, and so was it rendered by Gábor Egressy.

As for the receipts, they were so great that even Petrik or Reszler would not have asked for more. An exclusive audience, few in number, were present. Anyway, intelligence is needed to understand Shakespeare, and you cannot get that in salons. Should we thank Egressy that, although fully aware of the situation, he again chose a Shakespeare play for his benefit performance? Would Egressy be satisfied with mere thanks however ardent in the name of poesy and art? Let us leave it at that; it has been only too often repeated that you get "nothing for something." For all the world's thanks you cannot get a string to hang yourself with in your last despair.

SHAKESPEARE

by

DEZSŐ KOSZTOLÁNYI

People with no imagination usually see in him a demi-god. For my own part, I have ever since my young days tried to fix him in my mind in his corporeal reality. I find it a reassuring thought that this Infinite had its bounds, as we know from his portrait in the First Folio edition the dome-shaped, bald head, the reddish hair about the temples, the thin moustache, the tiny goatee, the starched ruff worn according to the fashion of the time.

I abhor romanticizing, idealizing, the highfalutin words that can inspire none but the dilettanti. My imagination, before setting to work, invariably has to be damped a bit, to be cooled. *En route* to London, I bought a copy of Elmer Edgar Stoll's recently published *Shakespeare Studies*. I like the book. It places before me not the Apostle, not the Prophet, but the Writer-Craftsman who was compelled to tinker with plays at low cost, refashioning other people's works—thirty-six of them—in order to make enough money to enable him, later on, to retire as a country squireling to his property, his mulberry trees, and marry off his two daughters, Susanne and Judith—the former to a doctor of some repute, the latter to a vintner. The fact that in the process he created masterpieces was his own private business. Of immortality and fame he was probably as ignorant as his contemporaries; only present-day literary hacks dream about such things after they have written a book or two. Shakespeare, even in his will, only disposed of his beds and silver cups, when, shortly after the wedding of his second daughter, he died of raging (typhoid) fever at the age of fifty-two.

As I roam these streets, I look for him everywhere. There is no other reason why I should be wandering about in this foreign land. I am only mildly interested in its policies, its institutions and organizations. No more than in my own country do I know exactly who the ministers are. Everything that I see or hear I associate with him. This is the language he thought and wrote in. This is where the Globe Theatre once stood before it was burnt down—these same dank skies overarched it then. He would taste this same kind of bread and this same kind of fruit, and was surrounded by these ancient stone churches and door-handles. Yesterday, as I was crossing Russel Square on my way to my lodgings, I beheld through the mist the moon among crested clouds, his moon, which... * At Covent Garden Station, a pot-bellied fellow got into the tube: bottle nose, shifty fish-eyes, seamen's pendants in his ears—a perfect Falstaff who, in line with changed conditions, might in this latter day well be a huckster of sorts in the fruit market. The African who sauntered past me put me in mind of how Juliet hung upon the cheek of night "like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear." His way of looking at things reshaped the world, myself included. I was hoping that I might run into him somewhere.

I did meet him on three occasions—although I did not press for it, but waited till Life's current should, accidentally and by some caprice, toss up memories of him. The first meeting occurred when I was selecting some socks at Selfridge's. The assistant warmly recommended to me the "Shake-

* The Hungarian text continues with a short phrase in quotation marks, undoubtedly a translated Shakespeare citation.

speare socks," to which, according to local custom, a spool of cotton with a coloured portrait of the poet was attached. I bought a pair and put them on, and from then on, I walked upon that layer of wool as on some pedestal. The second time, he came to meet me at the British Museum. Opposite the Magna Charta, in front of a glass-plate-covered support, there milled a noisy group of schoolboys eight to ten years old; some of them were lifting up one of their fellows—a diminutive chap—so that he too should see what was underneath the glass-plate. Shakespeare's most authentic signature is preserved there—a time-browned signature he scribbled hastily as witness at the bottom of the record of some petty lawsuit on May 11, 1612, four years before his death. At our third meeting, I saw him in his cheap and grimy statue garb in Leicester Square, that important transfer station. The statue is piteously insignificant. Engraved below is his name and this legend: "There is no darkness but ignorance." About the statue, among some flower beds, a number of Englishmen were sitting on chairs, smoking their pipes and browsing through the latest rugby scores or the current rates of exchange in the *Weekly Dispatch* or the *Daily Mirror*. I stopped on the square. A pigeon was circling around the statue. Presently, it alighted on the statue's head, spread itself out upon it and dozed off. Long I lingered there, but the bird did not fly away. The statue bore its presence with an indifference that was more complete even than the indifference of the dead. I read the inscription aloud. There is no darkness *there*, but something we do not know.

(1927)

SHAKESPEARE AND ARANY

by

ALEXANDER SINCLAIR

"Shakespeare is a great Hungarian poet." I heard this remark shortly after I came to Hungary. It struck me as amusing at the time; but, after longer residence and closer acquaintance with the Hungarian literary and theatrical scene, I have come to realise that, in a sense, this apparent quip can be taken quite seriously. I am now more conscious of the extent to which Hungary has taken Shakespeare to itself; has assimilated him into the national cultural heritage; so that he has become, indeed, a great Hungarian poet.

The Hungarian word for naturalisation (nationalisation) is 'meghonosítás' and this, to Hungarian ears, means the naturalisation of Shakespeare. In no other country has a foreign poet attained such a place in the hearts of the people as Shakespeare has in Hungary. It will be interesting to examine the origin and growth of what the Hungarians themselves call this cult of Shakespeare.

No single reason can account for Shakespeare's adoption by Hungary, but one can distinguish several contributing factors. Three in particular are important: (i) the high praise bestowed upon Shakespeare by leading Hungarian writers and literary tastemakers, (ii) the role of the Hungarian theatre and (iii) the work of Shakespeare translators.

As regards (i), although it would be possible to quote, I shall only list some names. György Bessenyei, leader of the great literary revival in Hungary in the 1770's, who first drew the attention of his countrymen to Shakespeare; Ferenc Kazinczy, the great language reformer and literary dictator at the end of the 18th century, who was the first translator of "Hamlet"; György Szerdahely, literary aesthete and Professor at Buda University, author of a eulogium in Latin of Shakespeare which is valid today; Ferenc Kölcsey, who composed the Hungarian National Anthem and expressed astonishment at Shakespeare's genius; Mihály Vörösmarty, a member of the pantheon of Hungary's poet-gods, who declared that a good translation of Shakespeare's works was worth half any nation's literature; Lajos Kossuth —the great Kossuth himself—who began a translation of "Macbeth"; Sándor Petőfi, the Hungarian Burns, who wrote an extravagant paean in praise of Shakespeare, followed later by a whole host of other distinguished names. All of these writers can be cited as having recommended Shakespeare to their countrymen.

Before passing to my main theme, let me say a few words about the work done by the theatre in bringing Shakespeare before the Hungarian public. The first serious effort to introduce Shakespeare on the Hungarian stage was made in 1790. The idea was initiated in Kassa (now Košice in Czechoslovakia) and was launched by Ferenc Kazinczy

with his translation of Hamlet. This was made, however, in prose and from an altered German version in which the Prince does not die at the end. Popularisation of Shakespeare also emanated from Kolozsvár in Transylvania, and a company from this town gave performances of 'Hamlet', 'The Taming of the Shrew' and 'Much Ado About Nothing' in the first decade of the 19th century. These strolling companies did yeoman work in bringing Shakespeare into the public consciousness. This movement received new impetus in 1837 with the establishment of the National Theatre in Pest. The first Shakespeare play to be performed in the new National Theatre was 'The Taming of the Shrew'. The leading part was played by Róza Laborfalvi, the great actress who became the first wife of Mór Jókai, the famous novelist. Since that beginning Shakespeare has been a perennial favourite on the Hungarian stage and all his plays have been acted here with only a few minor exceptions.

The final and important factor in spreading the Shakespeare cult in Hungary was the translation of Shakespeare's plays into Hungarian. The first translation (Romeo and Juliet) appeared in 1786; it was by Sándor Kun Szabó and, like all the early translations, was from the German. For several years, the work of translating Shakespeare was left to chance. It was not until from about 1830 onwards that co-ordinated efforts were made by several literary organisations which together played a great part in translating Shakespeare systematically. Two of these organisations are outstanding—the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Kisfaludy Literary Society. In 1831, the Academy exhorted their members in a circular letter to translate 22 of Shakespeare's plays. In the early 1850's, the work of translation was continued under the sponsorship of the National Theatre. But it was left to the Kisfaludy Society to bring the work to a successful conclusion. In 1860 Ferenc Toldy proposed the formation of a Shakespeare Committee, and as a result of their efforts the first great edition of Shakespeare's plays in Hungarian was completed in 1871 and finally published in 19 volumes in 1878. The work done by the Kisfaludy Society laid the solid foundation on which the Hungarian theatre has built its splendid reputation for correct Shakespearean interpretation, high standards of acting and brilliance of stage settings.

The members of this first Shakespeare Committee were Ede Szigligeti, the great actor-manager and dramatist, Mór Jókai, Károly Szász, Shakespeare translator, the poets Antal Csengery and Móric Lukács; and one who, together with Vörösmarty and Petőfi, forms the great triumvirate of nationally venerated Hungarian poets—*János Arany*.

More than any other individual, János Arany has been responsible for popularising Shakespeare in Hungary. Hence the allusive title of this article, the second part of which will deal with the achievement of Arany in conveying to his countrymen a true reflection of Shakespeare's genius.

Arany's attention was directed to Shakespeare at an early age. When only 19, he left his home in Nagyszalonta, now in Rumania, to join a band of strolling theatre players. Bidding him goodbye, his aged college master at Debrecen, like old Polonius to young Laertes, gave him some parting advice: "Csak Sekszpirt, Sekszpirt, domine!" (Stick to Shakespeare, my boy, and only Shakespeare!"). These words must have reechoed later in Arany's memory, when, early in 1840, his still dormant interest in Shakespeare drew him to study English. Describing his first grammar he wrote: "I turned over the pages. I laughed at the oddities of the language. I grappled with Hamlet's soliloquy (which every English grammar contains) all to such purpose that I felt urged to compare Shakespeare in German with the original. The work was hard but all the more challenging." Then followed his first efforts in translation. "In a Debrecen book market I picked up cheap stereotyped editions of King John and Richard II—the finer works of the great master I was not able to get. And

soon King John began to speak out in Hungarian iambics which I could listen to over and over." Arany translated only three of Shakespeare's plays, "A Midsummer Night's Dream", "Hamlet" and "King John". I have often wondered, perhaps ungraciously, "Why 'King John'?"—which has never been among the "top ten." Perhaps the explanation is quite simply that to begin with, King John was the only one he could get in English.

Arany pursued his study of English to such good effect that in two or three years he was able to read it as well as he could read German. He was never able to speak English properly although he did have for a short time a native English tutor. There is an amusing story surrounding this episode. The Englishman was like the eccentric type beloved by Continental caricaturists. He appeared on the scene just at the moment when Arany had procured from somewhere a bottle of fine old plum brandy. The Englishman proposed to Arany that they have language lessons together on an exchange basis. Arany agreed. Throughout the lesson the bottle lay on the table between them and the Englishman partook of it liberally. (He had appropriately the lion's share.) But when the bottle was finished, the Englishman said very calmly: "Do you know what, Mr. Arany? I've been thinking. These exchange lessons are not fair. Because I can learn Hungarian from any Tom, Dick or Harry; but you can learn English from no one else except me. So I give up!"

Early in 1848 Arany turned to translating Shakespeare really seriously. For this his younger contemporary, the great Petőfi, must claim some credit. The two young poets (Arany was then 30 and Petőfi 25) had become friends and corresponded with one another. On February 6, 1848, Arany wrote to Petőfi: "I hear you have translated Coriolanus. Poor fellow, you have missed the boat. I myself have already translated the whole of Shakespeare..." Petőfi replied with no indication that he had seen the joke: "We're hard at work, Vörösmarty and I translating Shakespeare. In a month I'll finish Coriolanus and Vörösmarty "Lear". Where have you got to with the "Merry Wives of Windsor"?... send me soon a sample of your King John." A few days later, almost certainly with the connivance of Petőfi, a startling article by Gábor Egressy, a famous actor, appeared in a Pest periodical. The title was "A Proposal for the Naturalisation of Shakespeare." This idea was no less than that Vörösmarty, Petőfi and Arany should combine to translate all of Shakespeare. Petőfi wrote to Arany in March 1848: "They've printed Coriolanus and here's the title-page 'Shakespeare's Collected Works by Arany, Petőfi and Vörösmarty'. So get on with it. Have King John and the Merry Wives ready to send when required!" Arany was prompted by this letter and by Egressy's article to take his Shakespeare translating much more seriously.

Arany's translations of Shakespeare are *tours de force* and, I venture to declare, as nearly perfect reflections of the original as is humanly possible. His preeminence is due to his possessing the extraordinary combination of all the qualities of a great translator—thorough knowledge of the original and his own language (Arany was the greatest master of the Hungarian language of all), a profound sympathy, understanding and respect for his subject, and a great poetic genius. From the beginning to the end Arany marches in step with Shakespeare and at the same level—whether it be through the quiet plains of blank verse; or up to the heights of pure poetry; or down to the depths of prosaic pathos. I cannot hope in a short space, and without resort to extended bilingual illustrations, to give more than a few impressions of Arany's mastery.

Unlike earlier attempts, Arany's translations faithfully follow the form and mood of the original. This, as Arany himself admitted, cost him—especially in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," which calls for sustained poetic effort—considerable expense of time and energy. "Hamlet" gave

him less trouble perhaps because by temperament Arany was more attuned to the spirit of the greatest tragedy.

Most readers will be unfamiliar with Hungarian but will know that it is a philological curiosity incongruously imported into Central Europe from South Siberia. It would appear impossible to achieve any sort of marriage between this truly foreign language and our own sweet English tongue. Yet, miraculously, Arany is able to do this. Here are a few examples taken almost at random which may convey some idea of how wonderfully the Hungarian translator reproduces the style, the sentence (even the syllabic) length and manages to transmit, surprisingly, a truly golden echo.

Let me quote first a few lines from the placid blank verse dialogue between Horatio and Hamlet before the Ghost's second appearance in Act I:

1 2 3 4 5
Is it a custom?
1 2 3 4 5
Hát ez a szokás?
(Well) (this) (a) (custom)
1 2 3 4
Ay marry is't
1 2 3 4
Ez ám bizony
(Is) (really) (of course)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
But to my mind though I am native
10
here...
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
De szerintem bár én honos vagyok
(but) (in my opinion) (though) (I) (native)
(am)...

And now the tedious word spinning of Polonius:

My liege and madam... to expostulate
Uram! Királyném... fejtegetni azt
(My lord) (My queen) (to expound) (that)
Why day is day, night night and time is time
Nap mert nap s éj az éj, idő idő
(day) (why) (day) (and) (night) (the) (night)
(time) (time)
Were nothing but to waste night, day and
time
Nap éj — s időpazarlás volna csak
(day) (night) (and) (time) (wasting) (would
be) (only)
Therefore... I will be brief
Azért... Rövid leszek
(Therefore) (brief) (I shall be)

Next the three words of wrathful revenge expectorated by Laertes (Act IV, Scene 7). The English words fall like bludgeon blows:

'Thus diddest thou!'

The Hungarian like dagger thrusts:

Te tetted ezt!
(Thou) (diddest) (this)

Similar illustrations can be given to show how faithfully Arany reflects, for instance, the servile preamble of the players presenting their royal command performance ('For us and for our tragedy, etc.'); the captious, mutua ly mocking word exchanges between Hamlet and the Queen in Act III, Scene 4; the ecstatic poetry which follows the Ghost's appearance in Act I, Scene I:

But look the morn in russet mantle clad...
De ím a reggel öltve bíborát
(but) (lo!) (the) (morning) (clothed) (in
scarlet)

Even in such banal scenes as the amateur dramatics in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and the mock-heroic play within the play in "Hamlet", Arany, albeit he must have found the going difficult, keeps at the same comic level as Shakespeare. Only once can I detect him showing signs of exasperation or resignation. In "A Midsummer Night's Dream," towards the end of the last Act, the Prologue speaks these preposterous lines:—

Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broached his boiling bloody breast

Arany strives manfully to keep apace with:

Mártja kemény kardját kinos kebelében
(plunges) (severe) (sword) (painful) (in his bosom)

I can imagine him saying "That will have to do"—and I do not blame him!

Arany was a great poet but in translating Shakespeare he held himself in restraint and only seldom presumed to improve upon Shakespeare. In the few cases he did so his interpolations were felicitous and justified. For example, in the first Ghost scene Marcellus says:

Thou art a scholar, speak to it Horatio

Arany's rendering is "Te tudsz latinul" (Thou knowest Latin) which shows more understanding than may appear, for in Shakespeare's days it was believed that a supernatural being could only be placated or exorcised in Latin. Again when Laertes tells the King how he would wreak his vengeance on Hamlet in the words

To cut his throat i' the church.
Hát nyakát szelem (Why, I will cut his throat)
Oltár előtt is (B)efore the altar even)

This, too, is a touch of genius. "Even on the altar steps" heightens the sacrilege of the revenge, for it was here that fugitives and malefactors could claim asylum. Arany's improvement also anticipates more naturally the King's continuation:

No place indeed should murder sanctuarise

The best known of Arany's interpolations are worth repeating here:

(i) (To be or not to be) 'that is the question'—
"az *itt* a kérdés"; 'itt' (here) is not in Shakespeare but the phrase reads well in Hungarian

(ii) Hamlet's famous last words:

"The rest is silence", Arany translates as "A többi *néma* csend" ('The rest is dumb silence')

In Polonius's words "That's good!" 'Dumb' 'profound' silence seems justifiable even in English as it makes even more dramatic the awful moment when "cracks a noble heart" and when survivors and spectators stand on the brink of the abyss of Nothingness into which all that was Hamlet has plunged.

I should like to draw attention to two other moments in the play when Arany's genius shines through. At the grave scene, Laertes upbraids the priest with the words:

I tell thee, churlish priest
A ministering angel shall my sister be
When thou liest howling

which Arany translates:—

De tudd meg, durva pap
Szolgáló angyal lesz hugom, midőn te
Ott *lenn* üvöltesz!

The last phrase in Hungarian ("When thou art howling there below") brings out more strikingly the future location of the 'churlish priest' with reference to the fair Ophelia.

And finally Hamlet's soliloquy after seeing the 1st Player blanch and weep:

For Hecuba.
What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba
That he should weep for her?

Arany shows his tremendous understanding of the drama in his attention to a detail like this. "For Hecuba" "Hecubáért" is the literal equivalent but "*Egy* Hecubáért", 'Egy' an addition belittling and disparaging, is the inspired translation of a genius who *feels* as well as simply understands.

As I remarked earlier, Arany knew English well. What is more, he knew Shakespearean English. Words like censure (judgment), fond (foolish), extravagant (wandering), let (hinder), crescent (growing), conceit (imagination), fancy (love) and voice (vote) which have undergone semantic change Arany construed correctly in their now archaic meaning given in brackets. For example, Shakespeare uses the word 'pregnant' twice in Hamlet, each time with a different meaning, neither of which is the usual one. Arany recognises this and translates "the pregnant hinges of the knee" as "hajlós térde kapcsai ('The flexible hinges of the knee') and "How pregnant sometimes his replies are" by "Mily talpraesettek a feleletei néha!" ('How quick witted his replies sometimes are!') In rendering "I must be idle" as "Bárgyúnak kell látszanom" ('I must feign madness'), Arany reveals a meticulous understanding both of the language and of the play.

He was indeed familiar with the plays of Shakespeare which he translated. He may even have acted in them. He certainly directed a production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Hamlet he clearly knew inside out. One can almost feel the translator living it through. In the play-within-the-play scene, Polonius makes the comment: "This is too long" and Hamlet retorts:— "It shall to the barber's with your beard." In one of his few notes on the play, Arany surmises that this apparently inconsequential remark was prompted by the old Counsellor scratching his beard in disgust and boredom. This familiarity with the play saves Arany from many pitfalls.

Some of Arany's translations of famous Hamletian phrases are especially felicitous and brilliant and, like the English originals, have passed into common currency in the spoken Hungarian language of today, e.g. 'ez a bökkenő' 'There's the rub'; 'kemény poroszló' 'Fell sergeant (Death)'; 'csipetnyi por' 'quintessence of dust'; 'hebehurgya' 'rash and bloody'; 'heje huja vér' 'heyday in the blood'; 'bóbás' 'mobled'; 'tagbaszakadt parókás fejű fickó' 'periwigged-pated fellow'; 'pőcsik' 'waterfly'; 'a hivatalnak packázásai' 'the insolence of office'; 'kizökkent az idő' 'the time is out of joint', etc.

Just how confidently Arany could accompany Shakespeare in his wide range of imagery often compressed tightly into a few lines, is well illustrated in the famous soliloquy:

> Thus conscience does make cowards of us all
> *And thus the native hue of resolution*
> *Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.*

Even a bold translator would find the last two lines formidably intimidating (just think of how many metaphors there are herein!); but Arany makes it look easy:

> Ekkép az öntudat
> (In this way) (the) (conscience)
> Belőlünk mind gyávát csinál
> (in us) (all) (coward) (makes)
> *S az elszántság természetes színét*
> (and) (the) (resolution) (natural) (colour)
> *A gondolat halványra betegíti*
> (the) (thinking) (to paleness) (makes sick)

I should like to conclude these illustrations of Arany's quality as a translator with an invidious comparison. Here is a well-known passage from "A Midsummer Night's Dream":

> I know a bank where the wild thyme blows
> Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows
> Quite overcanopied with luscious woodbine
> With sweet musk roses and with eglantine
> There sleeps Titania sometime of the night
> Lulled in these flowers with dances and delight

which the much praised translator Schlegel renders into German as follows:

Ich weiss 'nen Hügel wo man Quende pflückt
Wo aus dem Gras Viol' und Masslieb nickt
Wo dicht gewölbt des Geisblatts üpp'ge Schatten
Mit Hagedorn und mit Jasmin sich gatten
Dort ruht Titania halbe Nächte kühl
Auf Blumen eingewiegt durch Tanz and Spiel

Here now is Arany's version:

Van egy kies part hol kakukfü nő
(there is) (a) (pleasant) (bank) (where) (wild thyme) (grows)
Hol dús virányt rukercz s ibolya sző
(where) (rich) (blossoms) (daisy) (and) (violet) (grows)
Fölötte sűrü lombból mennyezet
(above) (dense) (with woodbine) (cover)
Vadrózsa s gyönge jázmin fog kezet
(wild rose) (and) (slender) (jasmine) (intertwine)
Ringatva ott szunnyad tánccal zenével
(lulled) (there) (sleeps) (with dance) (with music)
Titánia egy kissé minden éjjel.
(a) (little) (every) (evening)

Is it possible not to grasp the difference between the prosaic unlovely:

Dort ruht Titania halbe Nächte kühl
Auf Blumen eingewiegt durch Tanz and Spiel

and the beautiful poetic:

Ringatva ott szunnyad tánccal zenével
Titánia egy kissé minden éjjel.

which far more reflects and reechoes the magic of the original:

There sleeps Titania sometime of the night
Lulled in these flowers with dances and delight.

It seems worth reiterating that Arany (unlike Schlegel) achieves this true reflection and golden echo in a language totally unrelated to English.

I hope that the foregoing illustrations have served to convince English readers that, thanks in great measure to János Arany, Shakespeare is indeed a great Hungarian poet; and that it is not perhaps such a far cry from Stratford on Avon to Nagyszalonta on the Alföld.

Arany has provided a shining example to succeeding generations of Hungarian translators of Shakespeare. Over the last century gifted writers and poets such as József Lévay; Károly Szász; Arany's own son László; Mihály Babits, the great 20th century *poeta doctus* and humanist who translated "The Tempest"; Dezső Kosztolányi, another great poet and master of the Hungarian language ("Romeo and Juliet"); Milán Füst ("King Lear"); Lőrinc Szabó (Macbeth, As You Like It, etc.) have undertaken Shakespearean translation, using the new Hungarian poetic style. Many of the plays have been translated several times—even those almost sacrosanct which were done by Arany's venerated contemporaries Vörösmarty (Julius Caesar, King Lear) and Petőfi (Coriolanus). Since the Kisfaludy edition completed in 1878 several other complete works of Shakespeare in Hungarian translation have been published. The final volume of the latest of these appeared early in 1963. Like all its predecessors this superb edition by Európa Publishing House contains the Arany translations of 'Hamlet', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'King John'—a striking tribute to his preeminence, as few have dared and none has succeeded, even after the lapse of 100 years, in surpassing the work of this master translator of Shakespeare.

ON STAGING SHAKESPEARE

SOME BELATED THOUGHTS ON SHAKESPEARE*

by

MILÁN FÜST

Shakespeare's name has been my constant companion throughout my life. True, it no longer holds for me the topical interest it had in the old days—for instance, in my early youth, when I went to work for three full months trying to prove that his *Cymbeline* was written by someone else. Then I would think nothing of memorizing his works, in Hungarian and in English, and when I had come to believe that it was impossible to know and understand him better, I was still in for some surprises. Thus, with thirty years of Shakespeare study behind me, Kosztolányi** rang me up one day and asked me the following question:

"About Hamlet," he said. "Did you ever notice how majestic the King is in his first scene? How dignified the speech is that he addresses to his subjects?"

Indeed, in thirty years of study I hadn't noticed it, for, until then, I had never paid any attention to the character of the King. I had not considered him worthy of attention—after all, he was the treacherous murderer in the story, and why bother with a treacherous murderer? I had never considered the following points:

How would a lesser playwright, not to say a poor one, portray a treacherous murderer? At his very first entrance, shifty, sneaking, the picture of a villain, every inch repulsive and malicious. Not so Shakespeare. He was capable of showing the murderer, in his first scene, as splendid and majestic. In the same way he was able to introduce that famous chatterbox, Polonius, not as a silly old man but as a man who oozes the wisdom of age. The pieces of advice he gives as a send-off to his son, Laertes, may be said to be the worldly wisdom of a man full of years. For instance: "Be thou

* Talk presented on "Shakespeare Day," April 27, 1962, at the Budapest *Fészek* Club of actors and writers.

** See pp. 51—53 of this issue.

familiar, but by no means vulgar," he tells his son. Or "Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice; Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement." I seem to hear my mother; she used to teach me such things. Then, as the play proceeds, this sage is revealed for what he is—a champion chatterbox. As often in Shakespeare, we come to know the characters only in their *dénouement*. For this reason I would suggest to the actor that he convey right at the outset what kind of man it is that we see before us. Loquaciousness can be recognized by certain distinguishing marks— jabbering, lisping—and even the wise exhortations should be delivered in this manner; otherwise, if the actor adopted a normal emphasis, his words would blend with the other speeches and we should not have the faintest idea that the man before us is, in fact, an idiot who is nonetheless capable of a bit of cleverness.

That was only a digression. The real point I wish to make here is that, although Shakespeare no longer engages my attention as intensively as before, some questions still occur to me now and then which I am at a loss to answer. Thus, I was wondering recently why Hamlet and Laertes leap into the grave to grapple—such a thing would not be done, even at the time. It is because Shakespeare is a pure dramatist who must always have *intensive* action. Action-less moments are not well borne. Another question that has been puzzling me of late concerns Hamlet's letter to Ophelia. Why is it such a poor composition? It's like a grammar-school exercise. Would a man of such excellence write such bad poetry? An answer suggested itself after much speculation. Juxtapose to this one of the world's finest love-poems—by, say, Sappho—and it will be seen that it goes ill with Hamlet. Why? Because we might conceive a loathing for him if he was so excellent a man—like the heroes in some of Jókai's novels—as to be able even to write beautiful poetry. Another: Why does Hamlet start mocking his father's Ghost in front of his friends as he gets them to swear that they will not make known what they have seen?

> Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, truepenny?
> Come on—you hear this fellow in the cellarage—
> Consent to swear . . .
>
> Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so fast?
> A worthy pioneer! . . .

I always had a feeling that it was all right for him to speak this way. I only wondered why. At last I decided it is because he is anxious to hide

his emotion from his friends and loath to let them know what happened to him.

All these questions have arisen in my mind separately, disjointedly, with no particular circumstance to prompt them, and on various occasions, say, while I was sitting at dinner, or telephoning, or at night when I couldn't sleep. In a word, it is no easier to stop being a Shakespeare addict than it is to give up, say, hashish. The "poison" lasts a lifetime.

Here I must confess that I think Shakespeare is misplaced in the theatre —paradoxical though such a thought may sound in connection with a writer who throughout his working life wrote for the stage. For my part, I find that sceneries and costumes—to say nothing of noisy music—detract from the real enjoyment. To me, Shakespeare is nothing if not the magic of his words, and all the accessories—noise and uproar, movement, colours—are detrimental to words. Even the tempo of acting is bad for them. Let us take an example. The Ghost says to Hamlet:

> List, list, O, list!
> If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

What would a lesser writer, or a bad one, make Hamlet answer to that? "How canst thou ask me that?" Or "How can you even suppose that I was so insensitive a son!" Or "How canst thou ask? Have I, perhaps, a heart of stone?" So far from speaking any of these words. Shakespeare's Hamlet responds in two words, two heart-rending words that may make a reader cry out himself. To the Ghost's "If thou didst ever thy dear father love," Hamlet replies "O God!" That and nothing more. He could not have given a more beautiful reply. And I, on my mind's stage, stop the scene for the moment of tears. But what happens on the stage? The actor, even the most excellent of his profession, is compelled to let these two words, like the rest, be carried on in the rolling flood of speech; we scarcely notice what he said, for the play proceeds. The sigh is lost in the flowing stream of the work. So is Hamlet's final sigh: "The rest is silence."

At the end of the great tragedy, these whispered words ought to produce an impression that there is nothing more. A heart is about to stop beating. Instead, on the stage, this sigh shares the fate of the other one. The same thing happens when Fortinbras commands:

> Let four captains
> Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage...

To me, these words represent the height of funeral pomp. Yet is there an actor anywhere in the world who would be able to speak them the way they are spoken on the stage of my mind, so that they will move me to tears? Let us take yet another example. There are passages in his plays which I call "Shakespearean sonatas." Such a one is Prospero's farewell in The Tempest. Another is a passage from Hamlet:

> Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
> Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
> The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
> And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad;
> The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
> No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
> So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Can you imagine a stage-manager in a real-life theatre who would order decrescendo for these "sonatas" and thus give the actor a chance to deviate from the tempo of the play and declaim these lines slowly, almost singing, to render their true flavour? In my inner theatre, no stage-manager would survive unless he did this. Furthermore, Hamlet isn't a plain person—his is a colourful personality, for heaven's sake. Hamlet has a hundred moods, but he is anything but serene. He is capable of a gamut of emotions from sobbing to jeering. He is inclined to seriousness and profound study; at the same time he is capricious and playful. And he likes the fine, vigorous flourish above all things. In addition, he is a *charmeur* of the first order, an extraordinarily likable fellow for all his brooding and sorrow—and that above all. But how can one bring all that into relief on the stage? I'll give you an example. He is with Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern when a flute is brought in at his request, and he turns to Guildenstern and says:

> Will you play upon this pipe?
> *Guil.* My lord, I cannot.
> *Ham.* I pray you.
> *Guil.* Believe me, I cannot.
> *Ham.* I do beseech you.
> *Guil.* I know no touch of it, my lord.
> *Ham.* 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.
> *Guil.* But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think that I am easier to be played on than a pipe?. . .

I am no actor—I only mean to indicate a direction: this ought to be spoken with extreme passion, with ferocious, raging, savage hatred, with suddenly flaring, uncontrollable wrath. How could all that be conveyed in the theatre unless we're prepared to see a production that lasts till two a.m.?

Now let's go on to the famous monologue in Act III, which begins with the words "To be, or not to be." I must begin by saying that I think Miklós Gábor's Hamlet to be a flawlessly excellent interpretation, perhaps the best I have seen in this country or anywhere else. He plays this most difficult of parts with remarkable lucidity and has an admirable delivery. And as for this monologue in Act III—it seems it could not be given otherwise. All the Hamlets take a position near the footlights and, conceiving of it as a noble task, declaim it like a poem, which is laudable in itself. But is this the way it would be performed on one's inner stage? Heaven only knows how it really ought to be done, but I have never found it satisfactory in the theatre. Deep under the surface of this monologue there seems to be sobbing. The man speaking seems indeed within a short step of suicide. This monologue should be, at the very least, a meditation, in no way a recitation, however lucid and beautiful. This man is lacerating his own flesh, tearing his own life to bits. I might mention in passing that at the University we examined this monologue for a full six months and concluded that it may be considered one of the first evidences of infiltration into Europe of Hinduism and of oriental philosophies in general. In them the chief terror is a new life after death, and their basic prayer is "Grant me that I shall not have to live another life." Western philosophies ask the very opposite: Christianity, and even Mohammedanism, dreams of the Hereafter, of Paradise. Not so Hamlet. His monologue is the most outstanding manifestation of hatred for life. It gives expresssion, therefore, to a multitude of things, and one wonders if it is at all possible to render the multitude of emotions by means of a mere recital. This is a meditative monologue, but is it possible to meditate at length on a stage? No. And on the stage of one's imagination? There, yes.

We should not forget about those marvellous invocations in Hamlet, either. Of course, I cannot very well recite them even for myself; still, I must make an attempt here so as to draw attention to them. Horatio speaks:

Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
Speak to me:
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which happily foreknowing may avoid,
O! speak;
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
Speak of it: stay, and speak!

And Hamlet, seeing the Ghost of his father:

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father; royal Dane, O! answer me:
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements...

And when, in the scene in his mother's room, the Ghost reappears to him:

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?

How could all these thoughts and feelings be rendered properly on the stage, where, admittedly, the spoken word always flits by faster than one would wish?

Years ago, my students at the University reproached me very seriously for my failure to go and see Olivier's splendid film of Hamlet. I replied, "I am told that this actor declaims the great monologue at some elevated point, amid the murmuring of the sea. That in itself seems to me prepos-

terous. Then he brutally shoves Ophelia away from him; furthermore, Ophelia's dead body is said to be floating down the river among water-lilies. Heaven protect me from all that. Also from seeing Hamlet among pirates." Hamlet's drama is an artistic composition, and this composition does not admit of such romantic fillings. By employing spectacular devices, one may score a big box-office success but not win the appreciation of a Shakespeare *connoisseur*. Moreover, as I have said, the greatness of Shakespeare does not depend on props and costumes or the murmuring of the sea; it is based on his words. "If thou didst ever thy dear father love," the Ghost says to Hamlet, whereupon he exclaims: "O God!" It is based on that. Now how can you hear those words distinctly amid all that celluloid eye-wash? You can't.

There is another, not insignificant, problem which concerns the direction of Shakespeare's plays (as well as of other authors' dramas in verse). Verse is made to be verse. Some thirty or forty years ago, however, the world got fed up with buskins and emotional performances, and the naturalistic theatre was born. We have by now become used to it, and stage-managers all over the world conform to the habit to the point of fatuity. I will give an example, which is relevant in two ways. Walking in the streets in Berlin one day I suddenly stopped. "Did Goethe think of this too? Did he think of everything?" I asked myself. I had remembered the following lines:

> Leicht bei einander wohnen die Gedanken,
> Aber hart im Raume stossen sich die Sachen.

That evening, I went to the local National Theatre, which billed Schiller's verse-drama Wallensteins Tod. Remember that it is his brilliant artistry in the German langauge, his diction, that is Schiller's greatest glory. Now that theatre gave a naturalistic production of this play: it was performed as if they were discussing a pudding or, say, seamstresses, or the domestic servant problem—in a word, trivial, everyday matters. I was just preparing to leave when one actor let out into the auditorium those two glorious lines that had impressed me so much:

> Leicht bei einander wohnen die Gedanken,
> Aber hart im Raume stossen sich die Sachen.

He spoke these lines as if he were remarking that his shoe pinched. My blood turned cold, for it occurred to me immediately that when poor Schiller had thought of them he must have felt that by those lines he was

managing, just a little, to redeem the world. Then, when he was writing Wallenstein, he would have thought: "I'll put it in right here, for in just this way I shall indeed redeem the world." And after all that had been done, here I came, a latter-day admirer and, after all, a man of letters, ignorant enough to ascribe this fine invention of Schiller's to Goethe. On the other hand, does it matter? Do I, by doing so, wrong Schiller? No, because he stands too high to be wronged. This, then, is the first lesson to be drawn from this matter: that such is the price of being glorified after one's death.

The second lesson is that it is a shame to perform verse-plays naturalistically. That is to say, this vogue must not be pursued thoughtlessly. Verse requires an atmosphere of its own on the stage. But how are we to reconcile this necessity with our ingrained demand for naturalism? That, precisely, is the question.

LADY MACBETH—THE STAGE-MANAGER'S LETTER TO THE ACTRESS*

Dear Margit,

There is little new to say, yet I think it well to set down in writing the battle-targets of our weeks of intensive work and the results obtained so far. Perhaps it is not superfluous to discuss from the aesthetic angle how far you have actually come with your exciting and completely new interpretation, since the aim of this letter is to create full confidence.

Up to now Lady Macbeth has been played on the basis of a preconceived character pattern. The result was not Shakespearean realism but the type of romantic figure we wish to combat. "Ungovernable," "wicked," "eternal woman"—qualities such as these can be rendered only in generalities. From here it is only a step to creating not only the role but also the great tragedienne—again only in general terms—as conceived up to now. This unrealistic conception has given rise also to lack of understanding by critics and aesthetes. Lady Macbeth has been treated by some as a hideous witch, an

* Before the re-staging of Macbeth in the autumn of 1963, Tamás Major, stage-manager of the National Theatre, laid down his instructions in letters to the players. His letter to Margit Lukács, reproduced here in part, describes his conception of the role of Lady Macbeth.

uncomplicated figure, even a fiend, because of their failure to notice the thrilling, colourful, magnificent figure Shakespeare moulded from Holinshed's chronicle. Others again overlook the development of her character, which is also a consequence of the erroneous fundamental conception mentioned above; this led Aurél Kárpáti to state in his Preface that the scene of madness was "unprepared."

However, we know that Shakespeare's aims were different. He selected eminent characters, like Othello or King Lear or Lady Macbeth, to become involved in a tragic conflict at the peak of their careers. Macbeth's crime could be committed only by two people. At the beginning of the drama Lady Macbeth is an equal and worthy partner to a Macbeth who resembles Othello at the zenith of his success. She is a beautiful, clever, attractive woman, who loves her husband wholeheartedly and, beset by the ever-recurring inner conflict of woman, makes immense efforts to overcome ageing. Having satisfied her life's desires and won success, she should have gone into harmonious retirement at their country residence, content to tend her garden and graft rose trees. Lady Macbeth is by nature unable to follow such a course. So far all has gone well, at the opening of the drama even better than might have been expected. The highest honours have been vested on her husband: "...and I have bought Golden opinions from all sorts of people, Which would be worn now in their newest gloss, Not cast aside so soon."

That is what Lady Macbeth is unable to do. She cannot bask in triumph, particularly now that Macbeth has struck in her the chord whose vibrations she wanted to conceal even from herself: the idea of becoming king has come also to her husband. "The eternal woman"! Of course, but this notion is personified in a schematic, accepted form. A Biblical ancestress, or a secluse, sentimental, soft woman, an Eve who tempts Adam to sin. The difference is that with us the "eternal woman" is not a starting point, not the staging of a general, accepted ideal, but an outcome. That Lady Macbeth is worthy of the epithet is not recognized from the very first through a known pattern; only later, at the end of the play, are we reminded by the various constituents of her behaviour of what the "eternal woman" may be. What is she really like? "So far I have lived with a general who hit every goal he set. Now the idea of royalty has come to my mind. He who is unable to get what he wants is not a man." She can live only with a real man.

She is also "ungovernable," but in what way?

In exploiting the possibility of making her husband a success.

In being at once ready for the task to be done.

In knowing that the opportunity must be seized, for it will never return.

In being prepared to do anything for her husband.

In that Macbeth should see in her an ever-changing woman, with constantly new, unfamiliar traits.

Her resourcefulness is unlimited; she plays to the end.

She mocks and exalts.

She promises and threatens.

She instructs, ever astonishes, is ever different.

She doubts the manhood of Macbeth, and then praises him.

She is grateful to him for having done the deed, and she is ready to do a man's work, for if they fail there is nothing to live for.

She is selfish for her husband.

Thus the greatness of Lady Macbeth is in her love, her helpfulness, her indomitable will. Her prayer, not to get rid of but to conjure up the witches that they might harden her, shows her greatness. This is her incredible, dissonant, infernal prayer to stop up the gaps in her conscience. She is made still more powerful by her wisdom and ability to love. She is a past mistress of the art of playing games with a man and changing her colour like a chamelion (precisely what Macbeth is unable to do). The greatness of Lady Macbeth is seen also when she has reached her goal, the king has been murdered and she is faced with an unexpected crisis—in the scene where she volunteers to take the swords back to the place of the murder and then wonders that an old man should have so much blood.

Here a dam bursts, and the barriers to remorse are covered with blood. The formidable figure of Lady Macbeth stands up to the deluge. She can take it, as Macbeth will take it when he has to face hell. Her power of suggestion affects not only Macbeth but also herself, inducing her to persevere in action: this is her greatest force. At the beginning of the play, unlike Macbeth, Lady Macbeth is the perfect mistress of action, activity, acting, directing, even stage management; she is capable not only of dissimulating but also of mobilizing, and she can not only produce a "performance" of exalted artistic level but also organize the whole with ingenuity.

Therefore the greatness of Lady Macbeth, like that of Macbeth himself, lies in her being always ready to attempt the impossible. It is by murder that she tries to restore lawful order—to right arbitrarily derailed time—to demand an order which is not due an usurper and murderer. The greatness of the part is further increased by the ability to make such absurd efforts.

Your sincerely

TAMÁS MAJOR

AN ACTOR'S THOUGHTS

by

MIKLÓS GÁBOR

I derived rapturous pleasure from a recent re-reading of Measure for Measure, and then, intrigued, I took up Professor Marcell Benedek's book on Shakespeare to see what he has to say about this play.

"It belongs", he writes, "to the less mature works, though recent criticism is disposed to find in it the profoundest expression of Shakespeare's thoughts. The play is rife with improbabilities both of a psychological and a logical nature. The borrowed motifs of the source material will at other times supply Shakespeare with an opportunity to humanize them, here they seem to be dominant and conductive to improbabilities."

The clash between this pronouncement and my admiration is cause for reflection. We approach Shakespeare from an angle quite different from that of our predecessors. We seem to have a different picture of the nature and mind of man, we entertain a different view of art. Moreover, ours—it seems—is a more congenial picture than our fathers'.

Nowadays audiences generally revaluate Shakespeare's dramatic pieces. Plays long classed among his less mature productions (Titus Andronicus) are now having a successful come-back on the world's stages. The mixture of burlesque and high tragedy, poetry and sheer nonsense, dismissed by our predecessors as crude and in bad taste, we consider one of Shakespeare's greatest achievements. The musical comedy, Brecht—all strike out for something similar. And does not Beckett mould his tragedies out of the wildest, most absurd humour?

Personally, I see nothing of the 'carelessness' imputed to Shakespeare in Measure for Measure; it isn't that he failed to elaborate this subject-matter or presented it too much in the raw as he found it. In my opinion Shakespeare—just as much as his audience—took this kind of treatment for granted and natural. The character portrayal in Measure for Measure does not differ essentially from that in his indisputable masterpieces.

The Angelo of Measure for Measure is no Tartuffe, he does not aim at exposing hypocrisy, and to that extent Shakespeare is indeed out of line with our common notions of psychology. But with Shakespeare it is never a question of exposure in social or psychological terms. Angelo's sudden and unreasonable change of heart is totally unexplained, and yet Shakespeare asks us to accept the happy ending as if nothing could be more natural and excusable. But is it just in Angelo's character and dramatic representation that we can find such apparently unresolved, unmotivated contradictions?

"I saw Antonius and Cleopatra the other day," an acquaintance told me, "and I seem to have got the hang of Shakespeare's way of characterization. What do I know of Antonius? What of Cleopatra? What will she do next? Will she betray Antonius or not? Is she really in love with him? And Antonius—will he kill Cleopatra or kiss her? Enobarbus, the champion of honour, turns traitor without the slightest hint of a fresh motive. Caesar calls Cleopatra a 'triple-turned whore' and a strumpet but pays tribute to her greatness even in her death. All the characters are liable to produce the most unpredictable and contradictory changes in the course of the plot, and do so without any motivation! Shakespeare keeps his stage people open both to the audience and to each other. Within a particular scene he generally does work with a consummate sense of psychology, elaborated step by

step, but when his hero comes onto the stage in the next scene he may well seem quite a different person! What, despite this, is the coherence of his characters based upon? On the acceptance of a certain basic attitude. Antonius, for instance, says of himself that he is 'the greatest prince o' th' world', and on this basis he can do whatever he likes, without rhyme or reason."

1. Heroes and Clowns

If one reads Shakespeare's dramatic works one after the other, starting from King John and proceeding towards The Tempest, one is gradually overwhelmed by a feeling that one is watching an endless circus parade, a kind of pageant with clowns and zanies, acrobats, strong men, equestriennes and freaks marching to drum beats and trumpet blasts. One could say, in a tone of highest admiration, that this dramatic *oeuvre* is a "gigantic menagerie."

Among these "circus people" we can distinguish two main classes: those who get the slaps, the passive, lowly crowd of clowns, gravediggers and such like, and the higher and more aristocratic company of acrobats, violinists, beautiful equestriennes and magicians. It was on account of this distinction that Upton Sinclair censured Shakespeare for being "undemocratic." He failed to see that all of them were members of very much the same troupe, that Hamlet was of a piece with the gravedigger.

"In the final analysis," remarked another friend of mine, "Shakespeare's vision is a popular one. His audiences were not misled by the silk and velvet, they knew these people to be just like themselves. If anyone wins in the lottery, his clothes may change but his old self remains."

Shakespeare's clowns, these earthy figures, sometimes stumbling on the fringe of tragedy, remind me of Beckett's and Ionesco's creations. With their quips and gags and repetitive antics they represent the extreme, debased misery of physical and spiritual existence. They are like protozoa tossed purposelessly about in the water. Traces of the mouldy humour and death obsession of medieval devils are still to be found in them.

Yet, how well Hamlet and the gravedigger understand each other's language! For it is just as much true that Shakespeare creates his fools out of scraps of wisdom (witness the brief lecture on the physical symptoms of decay given by the gravedigger) as that his wise men are, in turn, composed of follies. The greatness of Hamlet, Brutus and Lear resides only half in their superior intellects and minds; we are always sensible of their hopeless and terrible blindness. What greater insanity can one commit than to stab Polonius to death? When he believes Cassius, Brutus is a fool, when he doesn't, he is still a fool. What sort is Cassius then? And what is commonly called Lear's "senility," is it not the same foolishness in the demi-god as we have seen in the gravedigger?

One of Shakespeare's sources, the succinct Plutarch, depicts his heroes in very much the same fashion. What should one think of his Caius Marcius? Is he heroic? Is he a tribal chief running amuck out of the pages of a Wallace novel? Patriot? Traitor? Tyrant? A man of the people? A successful adventurer or else a general of genius? A carreerist or the saviour of Rome? Is not his apotheosis after his fall a burlesque? And if he is so contradictory, so unpredictable a character, why do I feel that I know him from top to toe? I could, as it were, take him in my hands, as I could a statuette—he is so very real and hewn in the round—and could laugh and cry on his shoulders because he is so much one with me! Just because he is so crazily unpredictable!

It is impossible to psychoanalyse Shakespeare's heroes; or, rather, they can be so analysed *ad infinitum*, and still there ever remains something unaccountable. But when we feel we know nothing about them, not even whether they are good or bad, wise or stupid, even then we apprehend them in their wholeness of being, unmistakably.

Shakespeare does not care to draw permanent character traits in harmony with what the laws of psychology or logic would prescribe; he leaves what is dark in the dark. Hamlet, in a sense, remains a perennial mystery. Yet we see him in his immediacy, body and soul; and as we often find it hard to conjure up mentally some particular feature of our most beloved relative, we nevertheless feel most unmistakably what is most characteristic of him—the integrity and wholeness of his personality. Shakespeare grasps the living as living, as the ever-changing man, the plaything of fate. Compared with this figure seen in its unified aliveness, the one analysed by psychology into "characteristic" components and then re-assembled—how many actors are bent on digging just this out of Shakespeare's creations—appears immovable, mechanical, cut-and-dried and generalized.

However strange it may seem, Shakespeare is the only dramatist whose heroes are really born and really die. The ideal does not fade; type does not die. But Hamlet is mortal, every moment of his life; born of time and prey to time. His death has an irrevocable finality about it, but it is also must natural, something in the nature of things. It is just as much an individual, inalianable part of his being as his life, his throbbing heart and tortured mind.

Art—Shakespeare's art—is perhaps the only cognitive approach to the particular, to the individual.

2. *The Appellants*

Polonius is self-repeating, predictable and therefore a ludicrous marionette; he remains throughout what he is. Hamlet through a thousand turns tries hard to avoid the traps of his own personality and fate, he is ever experimenting with a thousand vatiations of his own self in order to be free. It seems as if he were continually striving to deny himself and his position, to break out of his self and at last be able to reveal something to us in its complete candour, something that has been hidden so far. The whole man is a continual, ceaseless appeal and protest against life and his own self.

Shakespeare's heroes are "great" men, but their greatness appears to be only their resolve and purpose, something to strive for, while they are entangled in a hopeless struggle against their own changeableness and unpredictable humanity, against the fact that they too are just like us and every other member of the human species. They keep stumbling and falling, lie and contradict themselves just because in every situation they keep struggling towards a new one. In a sense it would be true to say that every one of the plays is concerned with a desperate struggle of the hero to carry his own self forward, to pin it down in adequate words and deeds, but that the attempt must end in failure.

It is in this ceaseless effort that the hero's greatness lies, not in his actual deeds. Words rather than lightning-swift acts reveal the greatness of his passions. The "generals" —Coriolanus, Antonius, Othello—are protagonists in the drama in so far as they have this perverse tendency to try to comprehend their true selves in their passions. They are made heroes not only by the greatness of their passions but also by their extremely fine power of perceiving and analysing their predicaments. In other words, their passions are revealed in their perspicacity. They are the ones who continually, in every new successive stage of their lives, ask themselves: "Who am I that I feel this?"

3. *The Unsuspecting Persisters*

I can little marvel at the refusal of Tolstoy (who, by the way, is a man such as could have been penned by Shakespeare) to understand Lear. Probably fewer people believe in the old king's tragic truth than is commonly assumed. Nor is it easy to understand just what it is that touches us so deeply in this play.

Lear? A tyrannical, cantankerous old man. Actors and psychoanalysts usually make out a case for him by saying that he is a great soul, albeit "senile." But how on earth can an old man in his dotage be made the hero of a tragedy? What is the truth of this foolish old Lear?

Our affection for him and all his truth can be shown, when all is said and done, to be mere luxury, superfluous sentimentalism. The play tells all of us: "O reason not the need..." His greatness consists in his unsophisticated freedom from suspicion, his obstinacy and impetuosity, or, if you like, his fatal senile infirmity. As if the poet were about to show how much wisdom, magnificence and agony there are in old age, just as much, indeed, as there are in Juliet's youth and love. In the end his decrepitude becomes in our eyes the rich, overripe, magnificent state of the human mind. Lear's tragic "fault" is identical with his virtue. We must love him for this very fault, as we must love Hamlet for his indecision.

Shakespeare demands of us what no one else does: sympathy with the lot, the sufferings and the greatness of old men in their infirmities, an understanding that makes us of our own accord invest Lear with a right that is not his. We are compelled to look into the depth of situations that we pass by impassively in ordinary life. We are forced to respond with emotions deeper than we commonly possess. Who does not understand Goneril in real life? And is it not this very understanding that inspires so much awe and terror in the face of the fact that madness, horror and death await her at the end of her life? All that is needed is a Lear, a senile Lear, who pays attention, at every moment of his life, even to the smallest things. Indeed, what trifling causes these tragedies spring from! A stolen handkerchief or the quibble whether a retinue of fifty instead of a hundred knights should attend the abdicated king. But Lear goes mad over this trifle, for everything is closely interlocked with everything else on the plane he inhabits.

Lear is unjust (as Juliet, Hamlet, Coriolanus and the rest of them are all unjust and prejudiced). But where do his unwarrantable pretentions in this world, his injustice and tyrannical capriciousness lead him in the end? This blind selfishness of an old man, this extreme individuality bordering on crankiness, gradually becomes a touchstone. Lear's character is open to debate, but once he has made the first foolish step, his personality and the varying attitudes to it determine the value of everybody in his environment. We have to sit in judgement over the sober laws of self-protection, and we cannot render justice only to loyalty. That is the only thing we are sure of in this upheaval. Lear's boundless claim to his daughters' loyalty forces us to bow our heads before both faithfulness and filial affection, more than that, before fairness and charitableness and what proceeds from them, the human and royal dignity of Lear.

It is in his love, his senility, his extreme isolation, one could almost say: his "most private" mode of existence, that the hero ceases to be "private." It is there and then that his slightest gesture, mood, most casual act become at once public affairs for those around him—and likewise for his audience. The most captious taking of offence by Lear thus assumes a moral significance without becoming symbolical.

4. The Organizers of Society

What are Romeo and Juliet after? They want to love each other, nothing more. But this they want single-mindedly and on a level of emotional intensity where the whole person fixes all attention on one thing. They take love as seriously as Lear does filial gratitude. And what happens? The two of them, who would gladly renounce the world in what is after all a passive passion and who would abdicate their earthly throne, at once find swords pointing at their breasts from all quarters. They make their defensive gesture spontaneously, their unwitting hands

clutching weapons—without for a moment ceasing to analyse their plight—and gaze bewildered at the blade: it is dripping with real blood! Both of them are Hamlets, sword in hand and the astonished cry on their lips: "The point envenom'd too! Then, venom, to thy work." They themselves do not realize that their perseverance, which claims nothing from the world, their persistent will to comprehend, is, in fact, aggression against the world and that the world has no choice but to retaliate with aggression.

The love of Romeo and Juliet is enhanced by the fact that it at once forces the environment into a new mould. It is this love that calls into existence both Tybalt and Mercutio, though without Tybalt and Mercutio Romeo and Juliet could not exist either. This "private affair" becomes a public one, just as Richard's or Macbeth's ambition. Shakespeare's chief characters, whether noble or depraved, Hamlets or Macbeths, are all of the type that by their struggles can bring into ferment the society they live in. It is not so much their qualities as this power of theirs to create communities that makes heroes of Shakespeare's "great" people. All of Richard II's weakness and depravity is insufficient to deprive him of the magic of a heroic fate. Macbeth and Richard are not villains but heroes. Beside Hamlet the other hero is not Fortinbras or Horatio but Claudius. ("'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes Between the pass and fell incensed points of mighty opposites.") "Denmark" is Hamlet and Claudius and those who rally round them, one way or the other.

Denmark—or, for that matter, England—is not only a political entity in these plays. Denmark for us is country, home, family, school, betrayals, faiths, double-dealings, loves, friendships—all the co-ordinates between which our life is played out. A Shakespeare tragedy is the formula of the development and disintegration of the relationships within every kind of human community.

The community always takes shape regularly and in concrete detail around the person of the hero, and it collapses in the same way, usually through the instrumentality of some outside force, but invariably as a result of inner laws. The carrion-crows are already on the tree branches, ready to swoop down, when everything still looks full of life, while at the moment of death the life of the new community begins to germinate. Fortinbras comes to bury not only Hamlet but almost all the play's main characters. With the fall of Richard the regime that was organized when he took power topples. Richmond is a hero only in so far as he is Richard's adversary, but we withdraw our interest from him as soon as Richard is dead.

To approach Shakespeare's characters in terms of psychology and the "laying-bare technique" of analyses is doomed to failure; what his plays present is not personal vices and conflicts but events on which the fate of the community stands or falls. That is why his heroes are monumental. Even though they be evil, even if they receive their just punishment, they at all events have done something for us. They consequently all command our respect. The hero—however guilty or demoniac— appears stupendous and terrifying, because he is presented as a formative force in the life of our community, a creative agent who is one of us.

In the auditorium of Shakespeare's theatre we are all one. If the guilty recognizes his own image, like Claudius did in the play-within-the-play, he will reach the point of praying; he will give or try to give himself up, and by doing so share, even if temporarily, our common fate. Is it not surprising that we who have experienced so much of tyranny can still feel abashed and terrified at the fate of such monsters as Macbeth?

The auditorium is the place to feel responsible for the fate of the human community. I mourn for the man I have killed, recognize myself in my enemy and laugh at the man I revere. Whoever takes his seat at a Hamlet performance submits himself to the law, provided he submits himself to the tyranny of art.

SHAKESPEARE ON THE STAGE TODAY*

by

OSSIA TRILLING

Writing over thirty years ago, one of the most distinguished theatrical directors and actors of the French theatre solved the problem of realism in the following words. This is what he said: "If we want to understand a play properly, we have to put it back into its own period, into its own style and into its own manner. Never before Shakespeare or since has the playhouse been organized in a way so vital, so conducive to free movement, to noble theatrical conventions, to the full involvement of the audience in the stage-action. Shakespeare took the Greek half-circle, which had its roots in the circular stage of Epidaurus with its perfect crystallization of the multiple contact between actor and audience, and magnified its original function into an instrument of perfection. The Italian Renaissance took away his instrument and put in its place a wholly different one which converted a solid stage into a plane surface. Ever since your actor has ceased to grow within a realistic three-dimensional space. Instead the scale of what he does has grown progressively smaller. The loss of the Elizabethan playhouse with its peculiar lay-out is irreparable." These were the words of Louis Jouvet, a pupil of Copeau.

It is essential to bear in mind that the playhouse of today, perspective illusion, this rectangular picture-frame of the proscenium arch, as it is called, with all the paraphernalia of the modern stage, and the auditorium with its boxes and circles, and everything that goes with them, come to us not from Shakespeare's England, or Calderon's Spain, nor even from Molière's France, but from Italy, where the architects, designers and machinery experts had the upper hand of the men of the theatre proper. This baroque theatre is still called *le théâtre à l'italienne* in France today. Let me quote what another great man of the theatre of today has to say on

* This text is part of a lecture given by the Author before university and other audiences in Europe.

the subject. Sir Tyrone Guthrie, the foremost British director, many would say, today, wrote this some years ago: "Shakespeare will always have to be butchered so long as his work has to be produced in a sort of theatre for which the plays were not written, to which they are posivitely ill adapted: a sort of theatre designed for effects which are irrelevant to Shakespeare's purpose and inimical to the kind of theatre which he sought."

Let us remember that the theatre in England underwent an eclipse after the executing of Charles I. The two patent theatres, authorized by royal decree after the Restoration, after the return of the Court from France, that is, were built in the Italian manner. Shakespeare's plays were no longer performed except in wholly unrecognizable adaptations. And when they did get as far as the stage they were encumbered in a decorative framework which had never been intended for them. In the place of the 17 theatres that were active in London in 1629, and by comparison in that same year there were only two theatres in Paris, in place of these 17 theatres, London had only 2, both modelled not on the Globe or the Swan, but on the Hotel de Bourgogne or the Palais Royal, which in turn had been modelled on Italian prototypes. The "wooden O," the "cockpit" of the Chorus of Henry V, had disappeared. Instead of the audience's imagination, to which Shakespeare's style and realism make their appeal, you had the simulated perspectives of the Italian theatre. Most of our directors today are fully aware of this stylistic contradiction. Unfortunately the greater part are obliged to stage their productions in old playhouses and on old-fashioned stages that cannot be adapted or only to a very limited degree. Despite this the tendency of 20th century stage production is all in the direction of a form that corresponds more and more closely to the requirements of the text and the author's purpose. This formal reorientation, not to say theatrical revolution, has its roots in the English theatre at the end of the last century, and it has left its mark on the work of the most important directors throughout the world. I need only refer to the numerous open-air Shakespeare-productions throughout Europe today.

Towards the end of the 19th century the performing of Shakespeare was a kind of ritual. Stock companies, as the provincial touring companies were called, used prompt copies in which every line and stage direction was standardized. The actors recited their parts in an artificially rhetorical manner. Actions and stage business was traditional. For years, if not for centuries, the gravedigger in Hamlet were played in the same unchanging way. He wore a whole series of waistcoats of different colours, and these he took off one after the other, just as in the famous music-hall sketch. The stage itself was smothered in scenery, or rather in painted canvas. Every change of

scene given in the printed editions was faithfully adhered to, even if this meant keeping the audience waiting endlessly with a lowered front-curtain, while the set was changed. Incidentally, on the subject of the traditional playing of the roles, it is as well to remember that England has never had a National Theatre for the presentation of the classics in a particular "national style." But despite the lack of a national acting style in this sense, England has never been without a Shakespearean tradition, of a sort, so that it is self-evident that in the wake of the formal revolution, a revolution in the style of performance was bound to follow. However, let us get back to the formal reformation.

It takes its departure from the theories and the practice of William Poel, actor and director, who lived from 1852 to 1934. He made his *début* as actor in 1876 and it is interesting to find his name in the cast of the famous production of Othello, at the Lyceum Theatre, which was noted for the overwhelmingly simulated naturalism of Shakespearean productions. In this particular production the part of Othello was played by Sir Henry Irving, that of Iago by Edwin Booth, and Desdemona by Ellen Terry. The year was 1881. Ellen Terry, by the way, was the mother of the English designer Gordon Craig, author of "The Art of the Theatre," who is still alive—he lives in a bungalow in Vence in the South of France—and who celebrated his 91st birthday on January 16 last. William Poel conceived the notion of putting on Hamlet with amateur actors in a small hall under conditions approximating to those of the Elizabethan theatre, and using the text of the First Quarto. For the first time in 300 years Londoners were able to see a play by Shakespeare performed without scenery, without cuts, and without a host of intervals and waits between the scenes. It is true that this first experiment was inspired by the earlier productions of Benjamin Webster, who had put on The Taming of the Shrew at the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket in 1844, without scenery. But in restoring the character of Fortinbras to the text, to take only one example, for at that time this key character was usually omitted altogether, he was laying the groundwork for a radical revolution in interpretation and production. In 1893 Poel put on Measure for Measure on a wooden platform, with a gallery running along the rear, and a transverse curtain, a technical device of which there is no record previously. Poel's argument, despite the adverse criticism of the papers at the time, has been recognized and accepted today as the basis for all Shakespearean productions, although I regret that it is as often as not ignored. A bare stage, Poel used to say, lays demands on the imagination of the dramatist and the spectator alike. A production without scenery assists the spectator to concentrate his attention on the play: in this way the action

of the play can acquire a sort of reality, in which the spectator can, so to speak, participate. To cut a long story short, Poel founded the "Elizabethan Stage Society" in 1895, put on Twelfth Night, followed by The Comedy of Errors, in the Hall of Gray's Inn, where the play was first put on exactly 300 years before, and by The Merchant of Venice, to which the role of the Prince of Aragon, which was always cut in those days, was restored. Another innovation was introduced into his production of John Milton's Samson Agonistes. In this the Chorus made its entry along the centre gangway of the stalls. In connection with the restoration of the Prince of Aragon, take Marguerite Jamois's production of The Merchant of Venice in Paris, with the troupes of Jean-Louis Barrault at the Théâtre de France. I was very sorry to see that she had left out this character, who is indispensable to the proper balance of the comedy. I think that today this cut is absolutely unjustifiable. As for the proscenium arch itself, Poel never went as far as thinking of doing without it. This was to come much later. What mattered to him was fidelity to the original text. "We no longer spend three quarters of an hour," he said of one of his productions, "watching an unresponsive front-curtain, while they change the sets backstage." Five years ago I was in Bucharest and I went to see a production of King Lear at the Rumanian National Theatre. I spent half the evening staring at this unresponsive front-curtain while the sets were being changed. After the curtain came down I told the director about his fundemental mistake, and I was delighted to learn that for his next production, which happened to be The Tempest, and which he staged after a visit to Stratford, where he had seen a production of the play by Peter Brook, he had adopted a wholly modern approach. Poel and his pupil Granville Barker worked endlessly until the First World War, trying to bring their productions of Shakespeare up to date and doing away with the traditional melodramatic and declamatory way of acting which had prevailed until then. Simultaneously European directors were beginning to take up the same ideas. Granville Barker greatly admired and respected the work of Jacques Copeau along these lines, and as we all know, the tradition has since been handed down to Jouvet, whom I quoted earlier on, and more recently to Barrault and Vilar. Thanks to the two great English innovators, Shakespeare, on the English stage at any rate, is today performed with little or no cutting of the text, and certainly without transposing it, as was the normal practice before them. Today we play the text in the right order. And the stage business is married to the words of the text, from which it arises naturally and without all the traditional hocus-pocus which bore no relation at all to the dialogue.

In going back to the principles of the Shakespearean theatre, we are not

trying to reproduce a Shakespearean production of Shakespeare's own day. That would only be of interest to antiquarians. Besides we would not be able to do so if we wanted to, for we know too little about it. To tell the truth, what has happened is not a return to a theatre of the past but a step forward towards the theatre of the future. Nowadays we try to invest a character with a reality that is both profoundly convincing and up to date. This will depend as much on the individuality of the character as on the individuality of the director, or the actor. It often happens that in trying to be entirely faithful to the original intentions of the poet, the director will introduce into the action outrageous bits of stage business that can only be accounted for by his own lack of taste or balanced judgement. This may even occur in the case of the most experienced director. Take the case of Sir Tyrone Guthrie, whom I have already quoted. Ten years ago he put on Henry VIII at Stratford. He made his bishops wear red noses and stagger across the stage like drunken men, without the least justification in the dialogue. One English critic has explained these aberrations by saying that there are two Guthries. There is Mr. Guthrie the brilliant and imaginative director, who probably has no equal on the English-speaking stage today. And then there is Master Guthrie, the mischievous schoolboy with his uncontrollable pranks. Be that as it may, it must be obvious to everybody that the difficulties of bringing a text up to date in terms of present-day psychology are innumerable. After all, Shakespeare's dramas were written in the spirit of the Renaissance and if you try to stage them in a modern way you run the risk of coming up against irreconcilable contradictions. This is when the good taste of your director, your designer or your actor are so important, at least in maintaining a certain unity of style. Music can often be put to good use in preserving a unity of style and bridging certain stylistic contradictions. But the greatest obstacle to a unity of style is, of course, the shape of the theatre in which you are presenting your play. As long as you cannot adapt your shape to your needs, and that is the case with the vast majority of playhouses today, your hands are tied. And a production, no matter how ingeniously conceived or how faithfully planned, can never be more than a compromise, at best. That is why I am firmly convinced that every new theatre we build today must be adaptable in such a way that the stage can be projected out into the centre of the auditorium. If I had my way, I should do away with the proscenium arch altogether. If you want proof of my contention, go to see almost any one of the growing number of open-air productions of Shakespeare today, in a park, in an open-air theatre, in a public square, in a castle quadrangle, or a cathedral precinct. I am inclined to think that this way of putting on Shakespeare today is not only

one possible way among many others, but actually the ideal way of staging and understanding him.

I believe that the architects who are working on new theatrical projects are gradually coming round to understand the problem. This is certainly true of the United States and of Great Britain. And to a lesser degree of Germany. Thirty years ago a new theatre went up in Stratford on the site of the nineteenth-century theatre that had gone up in flames some years before. The architect was a young woman, who had won the commission in open competition; she had never worked on a theatre before in her life. The result can only be described as a scandal. The stage was set so far back that the actors seemed cut off from the audience by a gulf even wider than that of the superfluous orchestra-pit. For years actors were forced to perform on this ridiculous stage and nothing was done about it. The architect's ineptitude can be instanced in another detail. She had had the excellent idea of building a cyclorama at the rear of the stage, in the manner of the German theatres of the day. It was constructed of plaster, believed to be the ideal reflecting surface, and represented an immovable and rigid architectural feature on a stage that was in other respects well equipped in the way of moving platforms, lifts, and all the other machinery of the 20th-century theatre. Only after the finishing touches had been put to the whole building, was it found that no allowance had been made for bringing on the scenery from the nearby workshops. As a result a hole had to be cut along the base of the cyclorama and that is why those of you who have been there may have noticed a permanent scar, as it were, disfiguring the cyclorama which would otherwise have given you a perfectly realistic illusion of an unbroken sky. In 1951 the gulf between actor and audience was reduced. The orchestra-pit was done away with: after all this was a playhouse and not an opera-house. The balcony, or circle as we call it, was extended so that it now came down along each side of the blank auditorium walls as far as the stage. This helped to give the auditorium an intimacy which it had never had before. Since then this bond of intimacy has been strengthened even more.

Let us take a few examples of recent productions which illustrate some modern idea sin execution. In 1946 the English director, Michael MacOwan, made an attempt to give a unity of style to Macbeth in Stratford, by getting his designer to build him a single permanent setting for the play, on the stage at Stratford. The period selected was Jacobean, partly because that was when the play was written, and partly because this allowed the director to use a spacious Castle hallway with three acting-levels, according to tradition.

I should like to return for a moment to the theory which presupposes the existence of an interior alcove underneath the rearward gallery of the Elizabethan stage; this theory has been discarded by most directors today. There are two outstanding arguments against it. In the first place it is, I think, undeniable that no playwright would place the most intimate scenes of his drama in that part of the stage which is the furthest removed from his audience. Dr. Leslie Hotson, the American professor, has even adopted the theory that the Elizabethan stage was "a stage in the round," with the audience seated circumferentially all around it. Secondly, let us see what Bernard Miles, an experienced authority in Elizabethan production, has to say. Miles is the director of the new Mermaid Theatre in the City of London, which is unique for a London theatre in that it has no proscenium arch whatever and a raked auditorium that slopes straight down to stage level. Before the Mermaid was built, Miles had a travelling theatre, also called the Mermaid, which was built along the lines of an open Elizabethan stage, and he put on a large number of plays both by Shakespeare and by his contemporaries there. Whenever he has tried to stage the scenes in the inner recess, that are supposed to have been acted there, he has found that they are simply unplayable there. Unplayable, not only because the necessary contact has been severed, but for the technical reason that the structure of the stage, its proportions, and especially the sight-lines from the auditorium, make it impossible.

In 1951 the director at Stratford decided to celebrate the Festival of Britain by staging four of the chronicle plays throughout the season on a single permanent set. The plays chosen were Richard II, the two parts of Henry IV, and Henry V. The designer was Tanya Moiseiwitsch, who had often worked with Sir Tyrone Guthrie, and shared his ideas about Shakespearean production. The setting represented the court, the Carter Inn, the town, the countryside, as required, and the acting areas were used according to a predetermined plan both for the battle-scenes and for the other, more peaceful ones. Everything might very well have been taking place inside a "wooden O". The main setting consisted of a large central wooden structure in plain unvarnished oak, placed midstage, with a platform at the top and a set of stairs leading round each side of it to the main stage. In the middle of the structure were two openings, which could be used as entrances or as an inner recess. The principle of the inner recess was, as you see, utilized on this occasion, but it was brought right downstage and as far forward as possible towards the audience. To change the scene, all that was needed was to lower from the flies different props and hangings, such as flags, draperies, and so on. With its three main acting-areas the performance of each

of the plays was allowed to move forward in one uninterrupted flow. And, needless to say, there was no front curtain. In the production of Henry IV which Roger Planchon put on in Lyons some years ago and which his company have performed in different cities of Europe, he put on both parts on successive nights, using the same technique of suggesting the scene by bringing on various symbolical scenic elements. Falstaff was splendidly played, by Jean Bouise, as a vicious old man, but all the same worthy of our love. When Prince Hal is crowned King Henry V, there is the famous scene in which he renounces his former friend in public. Henry appeared to be more than usually priggish and his conduct struck one as unjustifiably repellent for a man of honour. In the play there is a scene in which Prince Henry, to try out Falstaff, puts on a disguise and overhears the old man talking about him behind his back. This scene prepares us for the renunciation scene, the irony of which, however painful, is emphasized by the events of the earlier scene. Planchon admitted that by cutting the earlier scene altogether, as he did, he had left out an essential link in the story and thereby distorted it. This was just another example of the great care which directors must take when cutting the text of Shakespeare's plays.

In order not to distort or to betray the intentions of the poet, the present-day director of Shakespeare must strike the ideal balance between the past and the present. For the most part this can be done by reducing the décor to a minimum while preserving the endless possibilities of visual participation provided by the costumes and the properties. Everything is concentrated on the words of the text, which are cut as little as is humanly possible. In 1956 the Hamlet at Stratford was acted on a stage that was almost entirely bare with only a huge circular surround of black velvet. It reminded me strongly, especially in its use of the narrow beams of the powerful spotlights, of Vilar's productions (of Don Juan) at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris. The essence of these productions was an impenetrable black background, elaborate and ornate costumes, and a highly charged atmosphere enhanced by the beams of light, while at the same time the entire responsibility of bringing out the subtleties of the text devolved on the actors. And, need I say it again? on an open stage, without any front curtain. For the past two years Stratford has had a new director, a young man called Peter Hall, whose ideas are possibly even more radical still.

Mr. Hall had a new apron-stage constructed at Stratford which projects further than ever before into the auditorium. Unfortunately he has not been able to push it as far as he wants, so that he has had to give up the utmost possible degree of intimate contact, because if he pushed it any further, the occupants of the rear circle seats would not be able to see the players who are

right downstage. This problem can only be resolved in one way. Short of having an entirely new theatre built in Stratford, Mr. Hall is proposing to gut the present auditorium completely and to build within its walls a single tier, sloping in a semi-circle down to the stage, which would jut out halfway into the auditorium. Meantime, the directors, young and not so young too, for that matter, are trying to find a way towards a new and satisfactory style of production. This often leads to the most unexpected results, possibly because audiences are always on the lookout for new solutions for their own sake. Since they know that Elizabethan actors were dressed in the costumes of their own day, and that actors throughout the ages were accustomed to dress in contemporary costumes, at least until the middle of the 19th century, why don't they do the same today? they say, or something like it, at all events. That is why we have had As You Like It dressed in the period of Watteau, and very charmingly too, by the way; Henry V in Elizabethan doublets at the Old Vic, and last year in 20th century battledress at the Mermaid; Much Ado About Nothing set in Messina at the time of the Risorgimento; King Lear designed by a Japanese abstract sculptor; and Troilus and Cressida, in which Guthrie, excelling himself on this occasion, had the Trojans wearing the uniforms of (Central European) Uhlan lancers and Helen entertaining her guests at the grand piano. Are all these tricks justifiable? I leave the question unanswered. Sir Barry Jackson, who directed the Birmingham Theatre for half a century until his death last year, and who was the first post-war director at Stratford and really laid the foundations for its international reputation today, was the first British director to put on Shakespeare in modern dress. In his Hamlet in the twenties Hamlet and Laertes fight a duel with revolvers, and the Prince of Denmark, immaculate in dinner jacket, is seen talking to Ophelia, resplendent in an evening gown.

Between 1953 and 1958, the Old Vic Theatre offered its patrons all the 36 plays of Shakespeare that were published in the First Folio of 1623. The first of these was Hamlet. The company had already performed this play in the autumn during the Edinburgh Festival. Edinburgh has a hall, rather than a theatre proper, which belongs to the Church of Scotland and is known as the Assembly Hall, where the Old Vic and other troupes regularly perform each year on its open stage. This is an elongated rectangle which projects right into the auditorium, and the audience are seated on its three sides. Behind the stage two long galleries along each side of it on the back wall serve as additional entry and exit points for the players. The ground the actors have to cover is frequently enormous. It has even been suggested that the actors can be heard panting for breath as they come forward to speak

their lines. But this is nothing exceptional. Three years ago I saw Barrault's Hamlet performed in the Palais des Sports in Paris, in a stadium seating 5,000, on an open platform stage. The distances were greater than those at Edinburgh. The audience sat entranced, hanging on the actors' every word and gesture. You could have heard a pin drop. Here was another evidence, if one were needed, of the realistic conviction which the open-stage method of presentation lends to the works of Shakespeare. When the Old Vic Hamlet reached London, it underwent some radical alterations, because the stage of the Old Vic is the old traditional type of stage, although it has a fairly wide apron-stage as well. What struck everyone most, was the setting provided by James Bailey the designer. He had a triumphal arch, set right down on the setting-line, where the front curtain would normally be, and parallel with it. All the action took place in front of this arch. In the first year all the plays of the repertoire were performed in this way: Hamlet, All's Well That Ends Well, King John, Twelfth Night, Coriolanus and The Tempest. These are all very different kinds of drama, you will agree, but with a given number of props and scenic elements disposed in and around the archway, perfectly capable of being staged in one and the same essentially unchanging permanent setting.

For Othello, the director, Michael Benthall, used two actors, Richard Burton and John Neville, who exchanged the two principal roles of Othello and Iago. The setting consisted of a centrally placed circular disc, with a small number of draped hangings around it. To indicate a fresh scene, the audience saw various scenic elements come into play or being brought on as, for example, for the Council Chamber, which was indicated simply by a throne and large candle-holders and a huge red canopy lowered from the flies; this was replaced by a huge outstretched fishing-net to indicate the Port of Cyprus; for Othello's palace, a centrally-placed bamboo structure, with a strong white light beating upon and through it to suggest the broiling sun; and finally a bed with a single candle-holder and a canopy. Messiaen, the French translator of Shakespeare, asks somewhere, "The scenes follow upon one another so rapidly: how can Othello possibly believe in his wife's adultery?" And many other critics have said that there was no time for her to have sinned, even had she wanted to. To this question there is an obvious answer: if the play is staged in the old-fashioned way, Desdemona will have more than enough time on her hands to lie with Cassio, and half the rest of the company as well. It is precisely because of this rapidity, because of the ingenious stringing together of the successive scenes, that Othello's suspicions remain wholly convincing. Once the action is held up, even for a moment, all conviction goes by the board. Othello's blind credulity and Iago's

devilish villainy are self-sufficient. Once the director gives you a moment's respite in which to analyse the characters' behaviour and their motives, he has handed you a double-edged weapon which may well undermine your willing suspension of disbelief, as it is called. One production of Othello I shall long remember was the one staged by the American actor, Orson Welles, in London some ten years ago or so. The action moved forward at an incredible pace, chiefly because of the enormous cuts in the text and the absolutely unbelievable transpositions. The whole production smacked of the technique of the film studio, which should not have been surprising, since Orson Welles was using the basic script of the film of Othello which he had already made. Continuity was obtained by the use of a fast-moving transverse curtain which was almost in continual movement. Orson Welles made a superb Othello, a huge black monster ensnared in the meshes of his own animal stupidity. He was a heavy, slow-moving and slow-witted brute, an interpretation that was only made believable by the omission of most of his most famous lyrical passages. When the first night came round, he had not yet rehearsed the final scene, and the last few minutes of the play were more or less improvised by the actors. In the event, Welles, about to snuff out Desdemona's life, threw his huge bulk across the actress's frail body on the bed—she was a tiny slender little thing—and it was all she could do to prevent herself from being smothered in dead earnest. This unfortunate incident, and similar errors of judgement, reinforce the argument that a director who also wants to play the leading role in his own production, does so at his own peril.

One of the loveliest productions of Othello in Stratford in recent years was staged by Tony Richardson, when the American Negro singer, Paul Robeson, finally got his passport returned to him by the State Department and got permission to leave the United States. Originally billed to appear at Stratford in the role of Gower, the coloured singing Chorus of Pericles, Prince of Tyre, he finally made the journey to appear on a British stage in the role of the Moor of Venice for the second time in his career. The first occasion had been in the early thirties, in yet another memorable production. This Negro with his magnificent presence and his deep bass voice endowed Othello with the majesty of a lion and the spiritual strength of a primitive being. The production was full of happy inventions on the part of the director, which only served to enhance the audience's excitement. But he made one very unfortunate mistake in placing Desdemona's bed in the final scene on a raised platform, to which a tiny circular staircase gave access. For, after smothering his wife up aloft, Othello comes down to the main forestage to finish the rest of the scene, and this made it necessary for both Emilia and

Othello to crawl up the winding staircase to Desdemona's side where they have to die: no amount of skilful playing on the part of the two actors could prevent the audience from bursting into laughter at this anticlimax. In 1961 Peter Hall asked the Italian designer, Franco Zeffirelli, to Stratford to stage Othello there with the great Shakespearean actor, Sir John Gielgud, playing Othello for the first time in his distinguished career. Zeffirelli, a pupil of Luchino Visconti, had previously directed Romeo and Juliet at the Old Vic. This production had had an immensely popular success and is one of the plays with which a company from the Old Vic toured the United States and Europe two years ago. The most effective aspect of Zeffirelli's Romeo and Juliet was its décor. This reproduced on stage in a typically Italian neo-realistic manner the streets of Verona with their fourteenth-century teddy-boys. This was the first time, by the way, that Zeffirelli had ever tackled a dramatic production: before that he had worked exclusively on the operatic stage. For Othello he used the same basic decorative conception, filling the stage with massive settings that recalled the canvases of Tintoretto or Veronese. But these massive sets simply swamped the stage: they swamped the actors, almost literally, on more than one occasion, and finally swamped the text. It was a step backwards. The first night lasted more than four hours and a half, despite quite a bit of cutting. Perhaps the moral of this sad little story is, to paraphrase Mr. Thomas Rymer, the following: it is a caution to the managers of Shakespearean theatres to avoid employing Italian directors, if they do not want their Shakespeare to be massacred. Ian Bannen, who played Iago, is one of the most promising of the younger generation of British actors. He had already won his critical laurels earlier in the season as Hamlet. But his Iago was the very devil incarnate, not only when speaking his soliloquies, when he has to bare his soul to the audience, but throughout the entire tragedy, when speaking to Othello and the other characters. This makes nonsense of Othello's repeated "Honest Iago!" and it certainly contradicts Iago's own words: "I am not what I am." Another consequence of this was that the audience lost very little sympathy either on Othello or even on Desdemona. And it is, of course, absolutely essential that the audience should experience sympathy with the victim of a conspiracy in a drama. There is a story told about a Shakespearean performance which well illustrates my point, I think. In a small middle-west town in America, a stock company are about to perform Othello for the first time. The saloon is packed to the roof. All tough cowboys! As Othello is about to strangle Desdemona, one of the cowboys draws his gun and shoots the actor on the spot. The manager of the company, horrified, draws his own gun and shoots the cowboy dead. The two dead men are buried in a common grave with the following in-

scription on the tombstone: "Here lie the perfect actor and the perfect spectator!"

Exactly 43 years ago, in Norwich, in the east of England, Nugent Monck built a theatre, the Maddermarket, for presenting Elizabethan plays and others, more or less in the style of the period. With its wooden beams, this was the only permanent Elizabethan-type theatre in the whole country, and it has survived because its actors are amateurs. Today there are several professional touring companies that use a marquee or tent and have an open stage where Shakespeare and even later authors are staged in the way I have described. Outside England, too, the idea is catching on. The production of Hamlet in Budapest which I saw last year made an attempt, so the director told me, to achieve continuity of action by the use of a projecting forestage and self-changing scenery; though he admitted that the execution of the sets proved too complicated and he was obliged to lower the curtain at times contrary to his original plan. Last year Sir Laurence Olivier opened the Chichester Festival Theatre, in southern England, with plays by Jacobean authors (rather than by Shakespeare, though Shakespeare is promised for the 1964 fourth centenary celebrations). Both Shaw's Saint Joan and Chekhov's Uncle Vanya have been staged on its six-sided open stage with as much conviction as on the more usual proscenium-stage. Even at the Aldwych Theatre in London, with its replica of the protruding stage at Stratford, The Cherry Orchard was most successfully mounted by Michel Saint-Denis, with the intimate scenes played on the forestage, without recourse to the illusion of the missing fourth-wall to convey Chekhov's characteristic psychological realism.

The first permanent theatre of this type was the Festival Theatre in Stratford, Ontario, in Canada, opened in 1954 by Sir Tyrone Guthrie assisted by his designer Tanya Moiseiwitsch (daughter of the famous pianist). Tented to begin with, it now has a permanent roof and has become the home of the annual Shakespeare Festival in Canada. A similar Festival Theatre has since been opened in Stratford, Connecticut, in the United States, and Tyrone Guthrie, whose theories and experience enable the Chichester theatre to take shape in its current popular form, has had a new theatre named after him in Minneapolis this year. It, too, is based on the open-stage principle and opened its doors in the summer of 1963 with Hamlet directed by him along these lines.

The new Civic Theatre in Nottingham, which is scheduled to begin working in the winter of 1963, has been constructed on a twofold principle. For the classics, the stage is fully open. The circular auditorium is drum-shaped and the actors will perform on a raised platform at one side, without

proscenium arch or wings. For modern dramas, in the naturalistic convention, the rear wall can open up and, hey presto! you are in a traditional theatre with a peepshow stage. The British National Theatre to be, of which Sir Laurence Olivier has taken charge, and which is temporarily housed inside the Old Vic Theatre, where it opened its first season with Hamlet on October 22, 1963 (on a compromise stage with only a minimal forestage available), is also to be designed in accordance with these principles and with only a single tier in the form of an amphitheatre for the spectators. Now, after four centuries, we are seeing the birth of a new type of playhouse more in keeping with our manifold and multiple requirements. I do not think that we can be charged with having disregarded the rules. For, as always, it is the poet who has made them.

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

Continued from p. 32

A PORTRAIT OF LÁSZLÓ NÉMETH
Gyula Illyés

NANDU—CHAPTER OF A NEW NOVEL
László Bóka

EMILY DICKINSON
Robert Goffin

CONFESSIONS OF A HOMER-TRANSLATOR
Gábor Devecseri

THE HUNGARIAN VIRGIL
István Lakatos

JÁNOS TORNYAI'S ART
Éva Bodnár

CARPACCIO-EXHIBITION IN VENICE
Anna Zádor

GRAPHIC ART OF CENTRAL ITALY AT
THE BUDAPEST MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS
Miklós Boskovics

QUOTING SHAKESPEARE IN HUNGARY

by

LÁSZLÓ ORSZÁGH

One of many measures of an author's enduring popularity is how many of his sayings and verbal coinages become household words or frequently used expressions in the speech and writings of those living in ages after him.

Shakespeare's lasting fame is thus partly attested to by the great number and currency of quotations from his works in both literature and everyday life in English-speaking countries. Such well-known collections as the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* or the bulky volume of *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* list thousands of passages from his works as words and lines that occur constantly in contemporary English literary texts and even in the small talk of our day. Indeed, so deeply embedded have Shakespeare's words become in English phraseology that quite frequently speakers are unaware of the fact that they are quoting him. There is a story, probably apocryphal but still credible, of an uneducated upstart who attended a performance of Hamlet for the first time in his life and found it boring, if not just a heap of plagiarisms, because of its being so full of sayings and stock phrases that were well known to him from common everyday talk.

The fact that some of Shakespeare's lines are frequently quoted even by Hungarians (in Hungarian, of course), a people geographically so very distant from his homeland, and centuries after his time, is indisputable evidence of two things: one is that the way he put a thought was so apt, and so felicitously translated, that it caught on. The other is that the works of the poet are very frequently acted or read in translation in this country.

Towards the end of the 19th century the compiler of the first modern dictionary of Hungarian quotations, Béla Tóth, in his *Szájrul szájra* listed 28 Shakespearean passages that he regarded as part of the Hungarian stock of current quotations. This number may possibly be considered slightly exaggerated, for the most part because Tóth based his collection only on

written sources and the talk of the most educated circles. Today, some 70 years later, we are prepared to settle for a more modest number, especially if we take the talk of average educated Hungarians as our point of reference.

The greatest number of presently used quotations from Shakespeare is supplied by the tragedy Hamlet, as is true in England too. (The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations lists 316 such passages from that tragedy alone, some of them well over 10 lines long, which can, of course, scarcely be called frequently spoken quotations.) Perhaps the best-known, most frequently quoted passage in Hungary is

Lenni vagy nem lenni, ez itt a kérdés, a slightly modified version of the translation by János Arany of the famous line

To be, or not to be: that is the question.

There is yet another line of that great soliloquy that has caught on here:

A hivatalnak packázásai,

the Hungarian version of

the insolence of office,

a term which in Hungary is used to condemn bureaucracy and which was an apt title for a book, published in Hungary a few years ago, attacking that unpleasant aspect of modern life.

Another frequently cited passage from Hamlet shares the fate of ever so many poetic lines, namely, the tendency to improve on the original version. The line

Something is in rotten the state of Denmark

was rendered by János Arany in his meticulously accurate translation as

Rothadt az államgépben valami.

Nowadays this is quoted in the more effective, though definitely coarser form of

Valami bűzlik Dániában,

and is used to refer to rumours of shady deals.

Today, in the age of the emancipation of women, the line

Gyarlóság, asszony a neved!

in the original

Frailty, thy name is woman!

is less frequently heard in everyday talk, yet it remains one of the well-known passages of Shakespeare because the translator, Arany, used it in

the motto of a famous poem of his, entitled *A honvéd özvegye* ("The Warrior's Widow"), which comments on the unseemly haste with which the widow of the great Hungarian poet, Sándor Petőfi, who fell in the revolutionary war of 1849, married another man.

The words

Mit neki Hekuba!

in the original

What's Hecuba to him,

are on the other hand often used by all sorts of persons to castigate someone's negligent attitude and indolence. Similarly the line

Őrültség, de van benne rendszer,

in English

Though this be madness, yet there is method in it,

is also fairly frequently heard.

It is not possible to determine how frequent or how widely current a quotation from, or a coinage by, any author is at a given moment. In the present writer's view the following three passages from Hamlet are of definitely limited currency in Hungary nowadays, restricted to the writings rather than to the talk of the most educated circles:

Ó, az én próféta lelkem!
O my prophetic soul!

and

a nem ismert tartomány,
Melyből nem tér meg utazó,

which is Hungarian for

The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns,

and finally Hamlet's allusive words

Több dolgok vannak földön és egen
Horatio, mintsem bölcselmetek
Álmodni képes,

in English

There are more things in heaven and earth,
Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

The rest of the living Hungarian quotations amount quantitatively to

about as much as the ones from Hamlet, at least in the reading and listening experience, over several decades, of the present writer.

From the last scene of Richard III come the words

egy országot egy lóért!

Hungarian for

my kingdom for a horse!

This again is slightly different from the versions found in the translations of both Ede Szigligeti (completed in 1866) and István Vas (published in 1946). The "improved" version (literally, a country for a horse,) is used nowadays as a semi-jocular if not ironical reference to somebody's desperate attempt to win a relatively insignificant advantage by jettisoning something of infinitely greater value.

Julius Caesar, a tragedy much read in Hungarian schools for the last 60 or 70 years, in the translation of Mihály Vörösmarty, left its mark on the language with two expressions:

Temetni jöttem Caesart, nem dicsérni,
I come to bury Caesar not to praise him,

and the even more frequently quoted line

Philippinél találkozunk!,

in the original as

meet them at Philippi,

from Cassius' words in line 224 of Act IV, scene 3.

When not used menacingly this latter quotation has a definitely jocular ring in Hungary nowadays. It generally means that "the two of us" will meet at the appointed place or when the showdown comes.

Juliet's words in the second scene of the second act,

Ó Romeo, mért vagy te Romeo?
O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?

one hears relatively seldom. To a Hungarian it means: Why are you what you are; why can't you be somebody else?

The very names of Romeo and Juliet are proverbial in Hungary now, by far the best-known personages of Shakespeare, the symbols of ardent young love, the dashing young man, the demure and faithful yet unfortunate young woman. No other Shakespearean character has come to be so universally known by so many people of every class in this country in our days. Only Shylock, whose name stood for heartless extortion and the blackest usury, could, perhaps, have competed with them in the years before the war. But

Shylock's name is fast fading from public consciousness and from everyday language. The Merchant of Venice has not been staged in this country since the last war, and he is practically unknown to the younger generation.

Of all of Shakespeare's works the title of only one has become detached from the play, so to say, to become a proverb, and that one is

sok hűhó semmiért,

in English, Much Ado About Nothing. The Hungarian title was created by the translator, László Arany, in 1876 and has since become proverbial, one of the standing phrases of the language. It is used by millions of people who have never even heard of Shakespeare's play.

The words of Iago to Othello,

A zöldszemű szörny,

the green-ey'd monster (in Act III, scene 3), the symbol of jealousy, are one of the best-known coinages of Shakespeare in Hungarian and serve, among many other instances of occurrence, as the title to one of the well-known short stories by the eminent early-20th-century Hungarian novelist, Géza Gárdonyi.

The colour adjective is noteworthy in this passage. In the English language envy (that archetypal human attitude of which jealousy is merely a special aspect) is traditionally associated with the colour adjective *green*, whereas in Hungarian it invariably goes with *yellow*. Thus the Shakespearean colour adjective adds a special piquancy to a Hungarian listener.

A Midsummer Night's Dream provided our tongue with one quotation only, but its frequency of use compensates for the absence of many other memorable passages. That is

helyes a bőgés, oroszlán!

Arany's ever-popular rendering of

Well roared, lion.

It is used in Hungary, as elsewhere, in mock admiration of somebody's apt answer or clever remark.

All these Shakespearean passages are invariably quoted in this country in their Hungarian form. We must mention, last but not least, the only Shakespearean passage that has always been quoted in English in this country in the last hundred years or so. It comes from Julius Caesar (Act III, scene 1, 189). Not one person in ten thousand in Hungary knows that he is quoting a slightly "improved" Shakespearean passage, and that is nothing other than

last (but) not least.

SHAKESPEARE'S TWO CENTURIES ON THE HUNGARIAN STAGE

In Hungary the roots of the Shakespeare cult go back to the last decades of the 18th century. The first Hungarian translation of a fragment from Richard II, by György Aranka, after Wieland, was published in 1785.

It is characteristic of the first period of acquaintance with Shakespeare in Hungary, which lasted approximately until the opening of the Pest National Theatre (1837), that the plays were translated from German versions and not from the original English text. The young Hungarian theatre lacked not only a permanent home but also a repertory of original Hungarian dramatic works; at best, Hungarian authors produced didactic plays for educational purposes or bookish dramas of literary inspiration. Hungarian actors turned for ideas to the flourishing German theatre in Hungary, partly because the latter presented the most successful plays of the period and partly because competition had yet to be developed in its own field.

As a result of the influence of the German theatre Hungarian audiences soon grew familiar with the name of Shakespeare. Under the impact of social and stylistic forces, before long Hungary became the scene of great appreciation of Shakespeare, which, while noteworthy by European standards, was regarded as perfectly natural by Hungarians.

A glance at the Shakespeare program of the German theatre in Hungary reveals that Hamlet was played for the first time in 1776, Romeo and Juliet and Othello in 1783 and King Lear in 1786. First nights followed each other in quick succession; most of Shakespeare's plays, at any rate the most important ones, were presented on the German stage of Hungary by 1793, the year of the first Shakespeare performance in Hungarian. There can be no doubt about the mediation of German acting. The German texts were badly mutilated, abbreviated adaptations, reduced to the effective, powerful scenes. As a rule Hungarian companies acquired these versions and proceeded to stage the plays, the originals of which were utterly unknown to them, in a form adapted to Hungarian conditions. However, this fact counted for little when the most urgent needs had to be supplied; the demand for plays and good parts was satisfied for the time being. As evidenced by the oldest playbills, Hungarian actors liked to choose for their benefit performances the roles of Romeo, Lear, Shylock, Richard and Othello.

Ferenc Kazinczy, the educator and general factotum of the new Hungarian literature, devoted much attention to the theatre. He consciously endeavoured to enrich Hungarian literary and dramatic language by first-rate interpretations of works by eminent writers. While he recognized the didactic influence of the stage, he also knew all the difficulties of the young Hungarian theatre. The development of well-translated

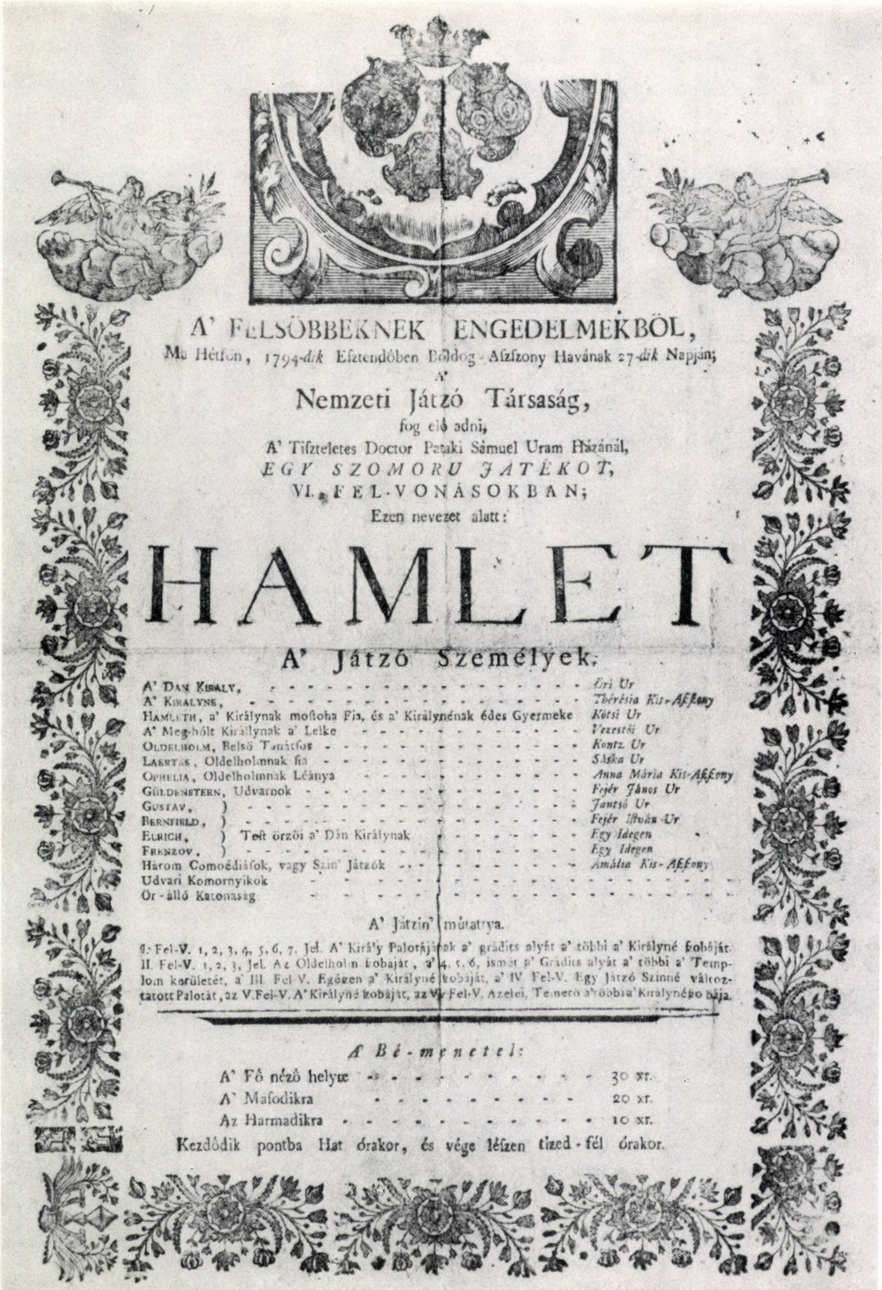
literature was the focal point of his literary program. He himself was an active translator of dramatic works, and still he too relied on German versions, wishing most of all to set an example by careful work of high quality. His translation of Hamlet appeared in 1790 and served as a stage copy for many decades. Apart from the above-mentioned translation of Richard II, in order of time his work was preceded only by a translation of Romeo and Juliet published in 1786.

From the end of the 18th century until the Pest National Theatre was opened, the Transylvanian town Kolozsvár (now Cluj in Rumania) played an important part in the Shakespeare cult. The translation of Richard II was by a Transylvanian. The excellent actors who were to become the members of the National Theatre were still performing as troupes of wandering players, fighting a heroic battle for their existence as actors and for the Hungarian language. Almost every one of them had been to Kolozsvár and was sooner or later given a part in the first performances of Shakespeare. Hamlet (1794), Othello (1794) and a variant of The Taming of the Shrew under the title of Gassner II (1880) were presented first at Kolozsvár, where Richard II (1804), King Lear (1811), Macbeth (1811), and Romeo and Juliet were produced soon after their Pest *premières*. A few plays were presented first at Pest or Buda, when the first organized company of Hungarian players, headed by László Kelemen, tried to gain a foothold in the capital in the early 1790's. This company put on Romeo and Juliet in 1793; Richard III, in a form adapted to Hungarian conditions, in 1794; and Othello and King Lear, also in a form adapted to Hungarian conditions, in 1795.

With the opening of the Pest National Theatre, the Hungarian theatre was given a permanent, representative home. The struggle for language reform was over, and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences became the official forum for deciding questions of the Hungarian language. In 1831 Mihály Vörösmarty, the Hungarian Romantic poet and the first important drama critic, submitted a proposal to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences suggesting that members of the Academy should undertake to translate and publish a selection of Shakespeare's works. Since this proposal failed to produce the desired results, ten years later Vörösmarty took up the subject again in the columns of the journal *Athenaeum:* "One good translation of Shakespeare is equal in value to at least half of belletristic literature." Not only as a leader of literary life but also a critic he watched the success of adequately translated good works. Vörösmarty always strove to promote the Shakespeare cult. In this endeavour he was helped by Gábor Egressy, one of the most eminent actors of the age.

This versatile artist and excellent theatrical organizer also maintained, from his stage experience, that a first-rate complete Hungarian translation of Shakespeare should be made, in order to satisfy and appropriately deepen the increasing interest in the great dramatist's works. Egressy himself named the three best poets of his age as the most suitable for the task. In 1847 it seemed that the project would soon be carried out. Vörösmarty, Arany and Petőfi agreed to produce a volume of selections. Unfortunately the undertaking came to a standstill at the very beginning. Petőfi's short life allowed him no more time than to translate Coriolanus; it was not until 1856 that Vörösmarty was able to finish King Lear; and the translations of János Arany (Hamlet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and King John) appeared only in the 'sixties. Perhaps everything would have taken a different turn had the suppression of the War of Independence of 1848 not interrupted work in this sphere as well as others.

The theatre, however, remained faithful to Shakespeare; series of new translations were made to cover everyday requirements. The most gratifying feature of this development was the growing number of translations based on the original English text—without



A' FELSÖBBEKNEK ENGEDELMEKBÖL,
Ma Hétfön, 1794-dik Esztendöben Boldog-Aszszony Havának 27-dik Napján;
A'
Nemzeti Játzó Társaság,
fog elö adni,
A' Tiszteletes Doctor Pataki Sámuel Uram Házánál,
EGY SZOMORU JATÉKOT,
VI. FEL-VONÁSOKBAN;
Ezen nevezet alatt:

HAMLET

A' Játzó Személyek.

A' Dán Király,	Öri Ur
A' Királyné,	Thérésia Kis-Aszszony
Hamleth, a' Királynak mostoha Fia, és a' Királynénak édes Gyermeke	Kótsi Ur
A' Meg-hólt Királlynak a' Lelke	Vezestói Ur
Oldelholm, Belsö Tanátsos	Kontz Ur
Laertas, Oldelholmnak fia	Sáska Ur
Ophelia, Oldelholmnak Léánya	Anna Mária Kis-Aszszony
Güldenstern, Udvarnok	Fejér János Ur
Gustav,)	Jantsó Ur
Bernfield,)	Fejér István Ur
Elrich,) Test örzöi a' Dán Királynak	Egy Idegen
Frenzov,)	Egy Idegen
Három Comoédiások, vagy Szin' Játzók	Amália Kis-Aszszony
Udvari Komornyikok	
Ör-álló Katonaság	

A' Játzin' mútatttya.

I. Fel-V. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Jel. A' Király Palotájának a' grádits alyát a' többi a' Királyné szobáját. II. Fel-V. 1, 2, 3, Jel. Az Oldelholm szobáját, a' 4, 5, 6, ismét a' Grádits alyát a' többi a' Templom kerületét, a' III. Fel-V. Egészen a' Királyné szobáját, a' IV. Fel-V. Egy Játzó Szinné változtatott Palotát, az V. Fel-V. A' Királyné szobáját, az VI. Fel-V. Azelei, Temetö a' többi a' Királyné szobája.

A Bé-menetel:

A' Fö nézö helyre	30 xr.
A' Másodikra	20 xr.
Az Harmadikra	10 xr.

Kezdödik pontba Hat órakor, és vége lészen tized-fél órakor.

Playbill of the First Hungarian Production of Hamlet (1794)

Nemzeti Szinház.

Pest, pénteken, aprilis 22-én, 1864.

A holnapi **Shakespeare-ünnepély** előkészületei miatt, a szinház zárva.

Holnap, szombaton, aprilis 23-án, 1864.

Általános bérletszünettel,

II-ik rendkivüli előadásul:

SHAKESPEARE VILMOS

születésnapjának háromszázados emlékére

ELŐSZÖR:

SZENT-IVÁN-ÉJI ÁLOM.

Szinmü 5 felvonásban, zenével. Irta Shakespeare, forditotta Arany János. Zenéjét szerzette Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Felix.

Ez azon 12 rendkivüli előadás második, melyeket a bérlethirdetményben az igazgatóság különösen kikötött, melyek alkalmával a t. bérlő uraságok kivétel nélkül, tehát azok is, kik páholyaikat a bérletszünetes előadásokhoz megváltották, illető bérlett helyeiket csupán a napi helyárak lefizetése mellett használhatják, mire nézve holnap, d. e. 10 óráig méltóztassanak rendelkezni; azontul mások kivánata fogván figyelembe vétetni.

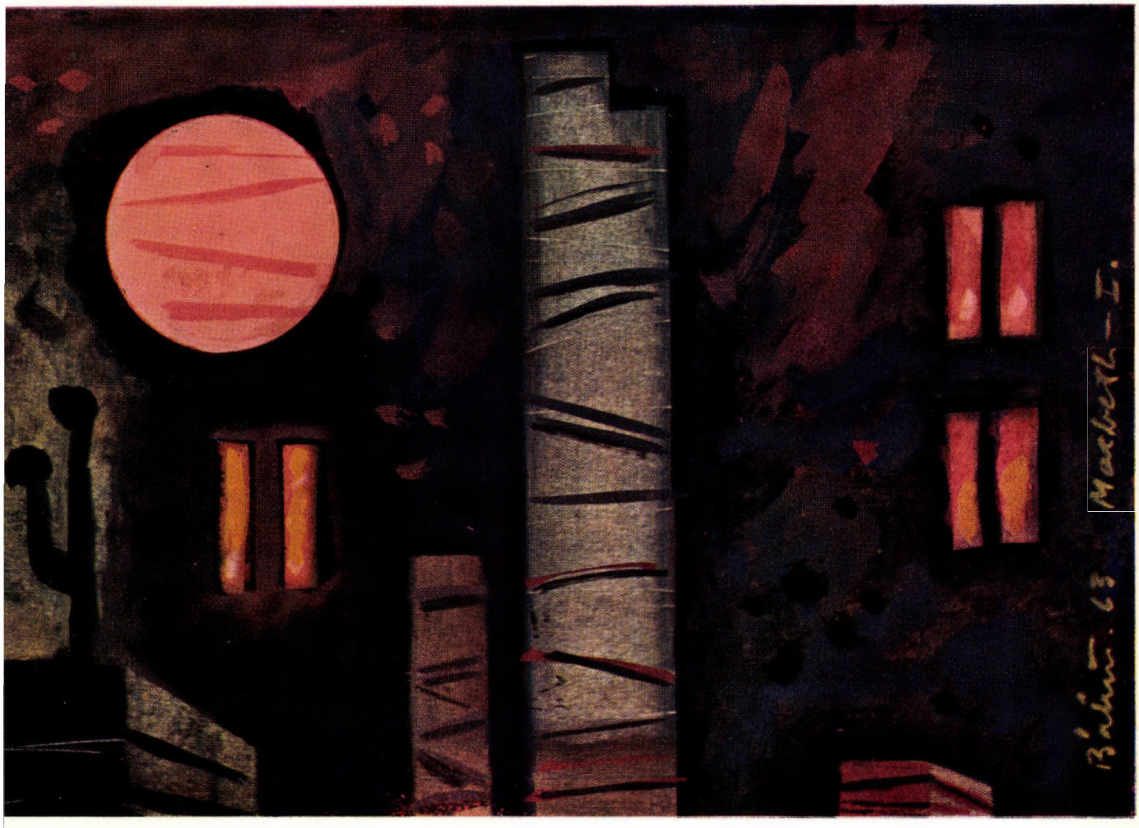
A ki nem bérelt páholy- erkélyszék- és zártszékjegyek iránt rendelkezhetni a pénztárnál d. e. 9-12, d. u. 3-5 óra közt.

Pest, 1864. Nyom. Emich G. m. Akad. nyomdásznál. Z. N. St. G. P. Kiadta CSEPREGI, titkár.

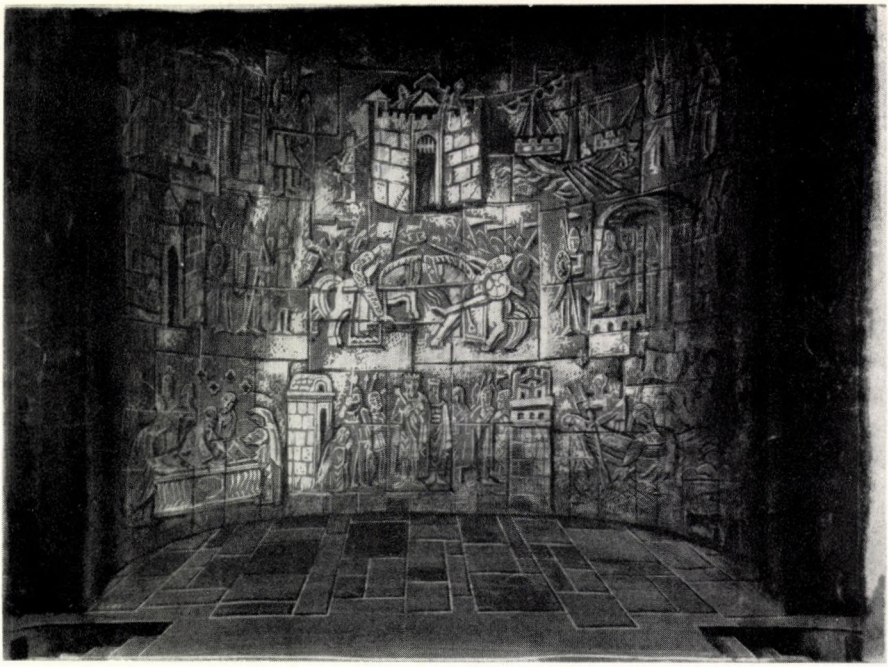
Poster for the Production of A Midsummer Night's Dream (1864)

Anikó Hivatal as Juliet

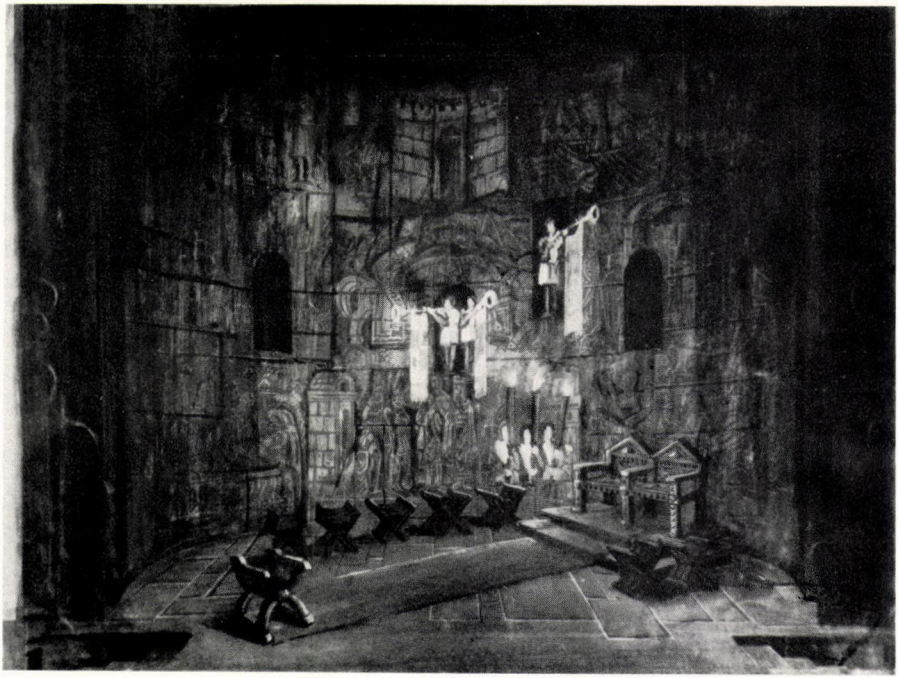
Scene from Romeo and Juliet, at the Budapest Vígszínház theatre.
Stage Design by János Cselényi



Endre Bálint: Stage Design for Macbeth



EMIL SIKI: BASIC STAGE SET FOR HAMLET WITH VARIABLE SECTIONS



any support from German versions, though they were often still written in prose. Still, as compared to efforts in the initial decades, these products certainly advanced the cause of Shakespeare. It was in the year of the three-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, 1864, that the undertaking directed by the Kisfaludy Society was initiated under the leadership of János Arany; the objective was to produce a complete Shakespeare in Hungarian by the end of 1878. Of the translations included in this collected edition only the works of the three great classic poets and those of László Arany have survived. The activities of these men as translators established the imperative need of producing the truest possible text and at the same time faithfully retaining form when rendering foreign works. They initiated the third period of Hungarian Shakespeare translations, which still continues. The principal aim and task have been to replace a good translation by a better one, to exchange obsolete wording for more modern language.

But what was the fate of the dramatic stage while translations went through such a process of fermentation? A brief survey shows that from the time of the opening of the Pest National Theatre the number of Hungarian Shakespeare performances grew by leaps and bounds. In 1838 the only *première* was that of King Lear, in 1839 Hamlet. Productions between 1840 and 1850 were: The Merchant of Venice (1840), Coriolanus (1842), Julius Caesar (1842), Othello (1842), Richard III (1843), Macbeth (1843), Romeo and Juliet (1844) and the first part of Henry IV. The years from 1850 to 1860 showed similar activity: Timon of Athens (1852), Comedy of Errors (1853), The Merry Wives of Windsor (1854) and The Taming of the Shrew (1855). Thereafter first nights gradually grew less frequent: A Midsummer Night's Dream was presented in 1864. The Winter's Tale in 1865 and Henry VIII in 1867. The *première* of The Tempest took place in 1874, that of Much Ado About Nothing in 1876, that of Twelfth Night in 1879. A look at the list of performed works suffices to convince the reader that after the most famous plays only a few attractive pieces were to follow: Cymbeline (1881), King John (1892), Troilus and Cressida (1900), the second part of Henry IV (1916), As You Like It (1918), Richard II (1925), Measure for Measure (1927), and All's Well That Ends Well (1940). Thus the 20th century had to make up only for two important omissions (As You Like It and All's Well That Ends Well), for the 19th century had done efficient work in making known and popularizing Shakespeare's plays.

From the last decade of the 19th century until the First World War the Shakespeare cult grew more and more in Hungarian towns. During the years following the First World War this enthusiasm waned in an atmosphere of ceaseless economic crises; the Shakespeare cult was actually confined almost exclusively to the capital. Data of philological accuracy are not available, but they would hardly call for any essential change in the final results to be quoted below, in the drawing up of which events in tiny villages alone have been disregarded. Any information that may still come to light will scarcely affect the first place of Hamlet and the almost equally leading position of Romeo and Juliet. The permanent, virtually unquenchable thirst of the public for noble tales will lastingly ensure the third place of A Midsummer Night's Dream. Although one or another play may be given special preference for a decade or two, in the long run an order of popularity has come to prevail which may be slightly modified but is unlikely to undergo a radical change—a lesson from the more than 200 years of homage to Shakespeare in Hungary. Such special favour was shown afrer the Second World War to The Taming of the Shrew, Twelfth Night and As You Like It. These are comedies and as such have had immense success on the cultural program marked out for the Rural State Theatre and the ten permanent theatres in the Hungarian provinces. This

explains why Othello has fallen back behind The Taming of the Shrew in the past decade, notwithstanding the obviously high appreciation for this tragedy felt by Shakespeare's admirers.

The following figures give the number of performances of Shakespeare's plays in Hungary, up to July 1962:

Hamlet	1,050
Romeo and Juliet	875
A Midsummer Night's Dream	601
The Taming of the Shrew	586
Othello	494
Twelfth Night	463
Much Ado About Nothing	294
Richard III	293
As You Like It	289
King Lear	276
The Merchant of Venice	262
Macbeth	209
Antony and Cleopatra	177
Comedy of Errors	137
Julius Caesar	130
The Tempest	122
All's Well That Ends Well	118
The Merry Wives of Windsor	106
Henry IV (parts 1 and 2)	80
Coriolanus	78
The Winter's Tale	46
Henry VIII	23
King John	20
Troilus and Cressida	19
Timon of Athens	18
Cymbeline	11
Richard II	5
Measure for Measure	4
Two Gentlemen of Verona	3
Henry VI	1

Love's Labour's Lost, Titus Andronicus, Henry V and Pericles have so far not been performed in Hungary.

Very few reliable data have come down to us about the style and artistic level of the early period. In all probability the performances were not much superior to amateur efforts. Contemporary records mention few actors and actresses for their memorable achievements, paying tribute mostly to Mrs. Kántor, who was among the first and best artists in Hungary to play in Shakespeare. There was hardly any team work at these performances, which were occasions for the display of individual excellence by an outstanding actor or actress who declaimed the lines sentimentally. As for scenery, these companies of strolling players had to be content with the simplest devices; however, they did their best to provide splendour in their costuming.

In the past century the Shakespeare performances at the National Theatre have conformed in style to those of the contemporary European theatres. From the reviews it seems that the sentimental, declamatory diction and style of acting, which were so fashionable at the beginning, gradually approached a more realistic mode of representation. Occasionally a great actor or actress would alter and reform traditions to suit his or her individual appearance or inner constitution. With the passage of time team work became more uniform and harmonious. By the end of the century, when the school of Meiningen had made itself strongly felt all over Europe in acting and in the ambition to present depressingly overdone realism on the stage, this trend found adherents and followers also in Hungary. The Shakespeare audiences which lived, thrilled, and sympathized with the play, however, gradually dwindled, and were finally replaced by schools and members of the educated intelligentsia, where it was considered *bon ton* to know the works of Shakespeare. This led to the academic, didactic style that marked the performances of Shakespeare's plays at the turn of the century. The dense, heavy atmosphere lifted only after the First World War, in the 1920's, in response to the work of Sándor Hevesi, the eminent stage-manager of the period, who developed a new concept. He tried to imitate the original Shakespearean stage and to introduce a more voluble flow of speech and acting. In this

new style, motion and tone became the dominating elements. Sándor Hevesi was guided chiefly by aesthetic and theatrical-technical considerations. He also laid stress on human relationships; where he abbreviated the original text he struck out only what appeared to him to be too obsolete, passages referring to public affairs that had been topical in the distant past. Only one attempt was made to lend Shakespeare political colouring: in 1942, when Andor Pünkösti staged Hamlet in his own small theatre, the former Madách Theatre, the political allusions in the play were given an anti-nazi emphasis which was comprehensible to initiated persons.

The past fifteen years have brought a remarkable upswing to Shakespeare performances. In this respect the National Theatre has retained its leading position; the greatest number of revivals have been staged there. The performances are marked by definite historical realism, a lively presentation of motion and diction, spacious scenery and the endeavour to present texts with the fewest possible delections. Shakespeare's plays still afford splendid opportunities for excellent ensembles and brilliant individual performances. Such famous works as Hamlet are given two or even three casts. In the past few years the veritable monopoly of the National Theatre has ceased. Quite a number of Budapest and provincial theatres have enriched their programs by adding plays of Shakespeare to their repertory, not only in order to offer an eminent artist opportunity for letting his talents shine in the classical style but also because the new, contemporary theatre-going public manifests an intense and healthy interest in these works which have stood the test of several centuries. A well staged and worthily acted Shakespeare drama may still count on resounding success in Hungary.

ERZSÉBET MONORI

THE HAMLET EXPERIENCE*

by

ELEMÉR HANKISS

Literary works are not only products of life but also productive of life. They are not lifeless mirrors reflecting social or psychological conditions, but are also sources of energy that are transforming and shaping man and society. These are old commonplaces, we know, and repeat them only because literary historians are far too frequently unmindful of them.

We selected Shakespeare's Hamlet for the purpose of investigating the effect produced by this tragedy on its audience and critics since the time Shakespeare wrote it. Our choice fell on Hamlet because he is one of those meteor-like literary heroes who impressed not only their own contemporaries, but have remained sources of light and energy down the ages. Therefore, if we can record all those changing experiences that the tragedy produced in the minds of successive generations, we shall have at our disposal, instead of a single, homogenous effect, a whole series of different experiences from which we may reconstruct the tragic impact in its whole complexity.

We hoped at the same time to contribute by our studies to contemporary Hamlet criticism, which since the beginning of the century has deemed it more and more necessary to investigate the impact of the tragedy upon its audience, going even so far as to suppose that the clue to the tragedy, to the Hamlet enigma, is to be sought in the Hamlet experience of people as much as in the tragedy itself.

During our investigations, we tried to clear up the history of the Hamlet experience as reflected in Shakespeare criticism and in the stage-history of the play.

In investigating the present-day effect of the Hamlet tragedy, we are in the advantageous situation of having at our disposal, beyond our traditional sources (reviews and analyses, diary notes and letters, statistical data and personal confessions, book illustrations and stage-designs, and so on), also a new one, which may prove more abundant in results than any of the former ones. For we have the possibility of contacting the reader or the spectator directly, putting him questions that will induce him to reveal and define his Hamlet experience, and even the unconscious elements of it, if the questionnaire is suitably prepared. We have only to pursue this kind of investigation and to extend it systematically to all age-groups and social layers of our time; in the end our notion of the twentieth century Hamlet experience will, presumably, be more differenciated and authentic than that concerning former ages.

The results hitherto achieved by us are, unfortunately, very modest. We were able to issue only 500 questionnaires and could

* By courtesy of "Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich", Cracow, Poland.

circulate them only among arts students of three Hungarian universities. In this way, the 59 questionnaires we got back duly filled in (this is about 12% of the number distributed) furnish us particulars only regarding a few people, who belong, in addition, to the same narrow social group and are, more or less, of the same age. From such data no sweeping conclusions can be drawn concerning contemporary society in general. What is more, the answers cannot be evaluated even as regards this small social group, as they will get their real significance only when they are checked against the answers and views of other social layers in and outside Hungary. But even if the final summing up of our facts and figures must be postponed, this first experimental poll gave us the opportunity of noting the inadequacies of our questionnaires and of elaborating the means and methods of evaluating and systematizing the material which, as a result of further polls, will pour in—so we hope at least—in considerable quantity.

The Text of Our Questionnaire

(The figures and notes in brackets indicate the upshot of our experimental poll.)

Questions relating to the respondent

I. Age .....(56 respondents between 18 and 30 years, 3 above 30)
II. Sex .....(22 men—37 women)
III. Education .....(secondary school certificate for all but three)
IV. Occupation .....(arts students, with the exception of three)
V. Some of your favourite books...

Questions relating to Hamlet

1. How many times have you seen Hamlet?... (2—3 times on the average) When for the last time? ... (months or years before the poll, with the exception of one respondent who read it on the previous day)
2. How old is Hamlet in your opinion?... (37 votes for 23—28 years, and only one for less than 20)
3. Who is more sympathetic? Hamlet or Romeo? Hamlet or Othello? Hamlet or Faust? Hamlet or Don Juan? Hamlet or Don Quijote? Hamlet or Adam in Imre Madách's play,* Hamlet or Monte Cristo? (For results see text)
4. Do you think Hamlet is weary of life? If you do, please give reasons... (39 Yes—16 No)
5. There are experts who affirm that Hamlet has really gone mad. Others believe he only feigns madness. Which of these two opinions do you think is nearer the truth?... (He is mad: 29—He is only feigning: 15)
6. Why does he defer revenge?... (See text)
7. What is his chief characteristic? Intelligence? (15) Agressivity? (10) Scepticism? (21) Melancholy? (10) Love of truth? (29) Irresolution? (19) Possessed of high and noble demands? (9) Indifference? (0) Or?...
8. Some people say that it would be better if Hamlet survived at the end of the tragedy. Do you agree or disagree with this?... (1 Yes—1 Yes and No—57 No)
9. Are there any people like Hamlet in your environment? ...(27 Yes—21 No) Would you like it if many Hamlet-like people lived among us?... (15 Yes—7 Yes and No—29 No)
10. Is Hamlet master of his fate, or is he the pawn of greater powers? (Master: 19—Both : 14—Victim : 20)
11. There are good reasons for thinking that Hamlet is a neurotic. If he is, then average healthy men such as we are, have little to do with him. Do you agree or disagree with this?... (8 Yes—44 No)
12. Is Hamlet a moral man? (55 Yes—4 respondents did not answer) Is he selfish (7) or unselfish (36)? (He is both: 8)
13. Do you feel pity for him (43) or do you think rather that he deserved his fate? (8)
14. Which is the most impressive scene in the drama? (The great monologue: 9; the closet scene: 7; the mousetrap scene: 4; the mad Ophelia: 4; the death of Ophelia: 3; the gravedigger scene: 3; etc.)
15. Which of the following two statements do you consider nearer the truth: The causes of Hamlet's defeat are to be sought
a) in himself, so that he is the victim of himself;
b) in outside circumstances, i.e., he is the victim of society.
(In himself: 11—Both: 20—Society: 26)
16. May we look upon him as a paragon?... (24 Yes—18: In some respects—13 No). We may, because he is... We may not, because he is... (For results see text)
17. May we generalize his tragedy? May we consider it as the symbol of human destiny in general?... (13 Yes—43 No)

* Hungarian playwright in the 19th century who wrote "The Tragedy of Man."

18. Some people regard him as the type of meditating, sophisticated and desperate modern man. Do you agree with this?... (20 Yes—36 No)
19. Would you like to resemble him in something?...
(Only 12 absolute refusals; see also text)
20. What is his real aim and purpose? To take revenge? (16) To correct the world? (15) seize power? (3 votes) To attain self-knowledge? (5) To overcome hopelessness? (4) To find the meaning and sense of life? (28)
21. Is there anything that you do not understand in the play? (54 respondents have no problems at all, 2 respondents do not understand Hamlet's behaviour towards Ophelia; another writes that Hamlet's madness is problematic; according to one, Hamlet's real aim and purpose is uncertain)
22. Hearing Hamlet's name, what is your first thought? The dreariness of life? (2) Meditation? (29) Ophelia? (2) Death? (2) One of your acquaintances? (7) Human destiny? (3) You yourself? (O) The necessity of struggling? (9) Or...
23. What fault do you find with Hamlet? (None: 26. Irresolution, weak will: 2. Revengefulness: 2. Cynicism: 1. Behaviour towards Ophelia: 1.)
24. What is the cause of Hamlet's tragic fall? (Weak will: 1. Cruel society: 11. Loneliness: 7. Love of truth: 3. Murder: 2.)
25. Do you remember the last scene of the tragedy, the marching in of Fortinbras? There are theatres which produce the tragedy without this final scene. Do you approve or disapprove of this? (Disapprove: 41. Approve: 16.) Some characteristic answers:
— It is important, but I do not think that this new world will bring much good to people.
— This is the most beautiful scene. Belief in the future. But it is a commonplace one.
— This is only eye-wash for the audience.
— It is important, because it makes us understand that Hamlet's tragedy is not that of all of mankind.
— It is important only for those who instead of trying to find the substance of the tragedy are eager to find and to smuggle in optimism everywhere (I am an optimist!!!)
— It is important, but this scene in itself does not much change the atmosphere of the play and does not give any real answer to our problems.
— Hamlet is dead. What do I care about anything else!
26. What is the general atmosphere and the final effect of the tragedy? Is it
reassuring (8) — or — upsetting? (23)
comfort ing (7) — or — distressing? (1)
uplifting (27) — or — depressing? (15)
fortifying (12) — or disheartening (6)
27. What is the essence of Hamlet's tragedy? What kind of truth, what kind of human fate is symbolized by it? Underscore answers you agree with and blot out those that are, to your mind, utterly unacceptable. (This was a multiple-choice question with 20 preformulated answers. Instead of their original sequence, we give these answers in order of importance, i.e., according to the number of votes cast.)

a) Answers that got the greatest number of positive votes (positive here meaning that respondents agreed with these alternatives):
— It is the tragedy of a man who does not tolerate lies, foulness and compromise (Positive: 29; negative: 1);
— The tragedy of a man, who has greater and nobler demands on life than average people and strives for perfection in everything (+ 25; — 0);
— The tragedy of a man who breaks down under an unbearable load (+ 17; — 7);
— The tragedy of human loneliness (+ 17; — 1);
— The tragedy of a man who reflects too much and is, consequently, unable to act (+ 16; — 9);
— The tragedy of over-conscientiousness (+ 13; — 3);
— The tragedy of the outsider who has come into conflict with his society (+ 13; — 5);
— The tragedy of over-sensibility (+ 12; — 3);

b) Answers that got the greatest number of negative votes in testimony of their disagreement:
— It is the tragedy of the merciless, self-centered man (— 40; + 0);
— The tragedy of a man who is weak-willed und unable to make up his mind (— 20; + 8);
— The tragedy of the revengeful, unforgiving man (— 20; + 6);
— The tragedy of common human destiny, that of the futility of all human activity (— 15; + 3);
— The tragedy of the faithless, sceptical man (— 14; + 2);
— The tragedy and martyrdom of a man who fights for social progress (— 13; + 6);
— The tragedy of genius (— 10; + 7);

c) Indifferent answers that got only few votes:
— It is the tragedy of the idealist who craves for unattainable ideals (+ 8; — 9);
— The tragedy of one who has lost his confidence in man and his faith in life (+ 8; — 7);
— The tragedy of one who has realized the antithesis between his own aspiration to the

infinite, and the finiteness of human existence (+ 7; — 7);
— The tragedy of a victim of reckless and inscrutable Fate (+ 7; — 6);
— The tragedy of a man who has grown disgusted with the horrors of life (+ 3; — 7);

28. What is the lesson of the tragedy, if any? (This, too, was a multiple-choice question)

a) Answers that got the greatest number of positive votes:

— Even if defeated, struggling man is great, noble and admirable (+ 38; — 1);
— Action is needed, not meditation. Let us defeat hopelessness (+ 28; — 2);
— In the end, truth triumphs over everything (+ 17; — 7);
— I believe in life, because there are people like Hamlet among us who make life worth living (+ 11; — 7).

b) Answers that got the greatest number of negative votes:

— Hamlet is the victim of dark and bygone days. We have overcome these problems (— 20; + 6);
— Evil and wickedness are for ever triumphant. Nothing can be done about it (— 19; + 2);
— Life is hopeless and painful: resignation is the only solution (— 13; + 2);
— Love is more important than truth. Instead of calling people to account, one should love them (— 10; + 4).

c) Indifferent answers that got only few votes:

— Let us live more courageously with greater and nobler demands than we have done hitherto (+ 9; — 4);
— Let us create order and harmony in the chaos of life (+ 9; — 1);
— Common sense and strong will overcome all obstacles (+ 9; — 7);
— Pessimism and scepticism lead inevitably to destruction (+ 8; — 3);
— Life consist of a series of concessions. You have to resign yourself to this (+ 8; — 9);
— He who transgresses the limits of morality has to pay the penalty (+ 7; — 4);
— Life is the supreme good in this world. You must not sacrifice it for abstract ideals (+ 6; — 7);
— Man is weak in himself, he has to rely on greater powers (+ 2; — 9);
— Do not perturb the unknown depths of life (+ 2; — 7).

In the first and general part of our questionnaire we asked for some personal data on the respondents in order to be able, when the time comes, to make all necessary breakdowns. The second and main part of the questionnaire deals with the tragedy itself.

In trying to determine the Hamlet experience of our respondents, we analysed the answers and arranged them in the following groups:

1. Intensity of the tragic impact.
2. Positive or negative nature of the impact.
3. Trend and content of the impact.
4. Final evolution and permanence of the experience.

1. Intensity of the impact

Its numerical measurement is scarcely possible as we have no voltmeters and ammeters for measuring the tension and intensity of human feelings and reactions. Experience has, however, a large scale of intensity ranging from indifference through sympathy and admiration to emotional ecstasy.

The best source of intensity-gauging is, in this case, the style and character of the answers. Mere yes-or-no answers, for instance, or those given only by underlining prefabricated responses, denote, in general, a shallow experience. Qualified answers, on the contrary, indicate a deeper impact, and their vehemence or moderateness, their indicative, disputative or imperative character is a sure guide to the intensity of the tragic experience. The results achieved in this way may be validated by analysing the contradictions between different answers of the same person. Formal contradictions, inconsistencies or logical lapses betray that the experience was not deep enough, so that the respondent gave to every question the first answer that happened to cross his mind. As, for instance, he who underscored first that "Hamlet is master of his own fate" (Question 10), but some lines below, without giving any reason for his change of opinion, underlined the answer that Hamlet is the victim of society (Question 15). Those contradictions on the other hand that reflect the deep antitheses of life are likely to be the products of a strong

tragic impact. Another young man, for instance, gave the following answer to the latter question: "Hamlet is the victim both of himself and of society. Among other social circumstances he would not have gone under, but he would not have been born either." His further answers have the same antithetical character, so that we get more and more convinced of the exceptional intensity of his experience. He writes, e.g.: "It is true that man is weak in himself, but he should confide his destiny to greater powers only when those powers are just and humane" (Question 28). Or elsewhere: "Don't meditate but act! This is a very good motto, if you have the possibility of acting at all" (Question 28).

The intensity of the experience depends in some way or other on the degree to which people identify themselves with the tragic hero. If somebody unreservedly makes common cause with the hero, he is likely to have undergone a deep tragic experience and *vice versa*. This interrelation of intensity and sense of community is important for us, because the degree of identification may be stated in statistical figures. Questions 9, 16 and 19 are diagnostic of one's identification or non-identification with the hero. The result of our sample poll was this:

Identification:	40 per cent
Neutral:	20 per cent
Non-identification:	40 per cent

This proportion is likely to vary according to different social groups, and so it is, or may be, characteristic of them. By analysing some further questions and answers (Nos. 11, 13, 25) we may validate our results. Those respondents, for instance, who have become one with Hamlet, generally do not take him for a fool, and the majority of them judge the Fortinbras-scene as superfluous. Thus one of the girls writes: "I even do not remember this scene. Hamlet is dead, what do I care about anything that may happen afterwards!"

2. Positive or negative nature of the impact

We call the tragic impact positive or negative according to whether it is stimulating or depressing. It is positive if it enhances the vital energies of man, and negative in the opposite case. Analysing several questions of our paper (Questions 7, 9, 16, 22, 25—28), we find that the ultimate and total effect of the Hamlet-tragedy on our respondents was as follows:

Positive	Neutral	Negative
35 per cent	30 per cent	35 per cent

This proportion corresponds, more or less, to that of self-identification (see above), so that we may be driven to the conclusion that the positive or negative character of the tragic effect depends somehow—and among other factors—on the intensity of the experience. Perhaps those who have the chance or the courage of enduring the tragic impact in its totality come out of this dangerous adventure renewed and regenerated. And though they have experienced the stirring and upsetting forces of the impact, they feel it in the last resort to be uplifting and fortifying, and almost never depressing or disheartening as is often the case with those who—out of distrust or anxiety—keep aloof, in advance, from the tragic effect, or become immersed in it only with anxious circumspection (see Question 26).

It would be very important to know those psychological and social factors that influence the intensity and the nature of the tragic impact. It is still a matter of conjecture, but it is more than probable that the Hamlet cult will run high in transition periods, i.e., in nations going through a critical time and in social layers that are struggling against the old and for a new social order. As, for instance, at the turn of the 18th century, from Herder to the generation of Victor Hugo. On the contrary, untroubled and static epochs and prevailing

conservative layers have been biased against Hamlet in the majority of cases. He was considered a subversive, undesirable man, with more faults than virtues, in the mid-eighteenth century as well as in the second half of the 19th; and he was treated in the same negative way by energetic social groups pushing toward safe and well-known objectives, as for example the Hegelians or the partisans of the *Junges Deutschland* movement, while irresolute people, still seeking and only surmising their way out of an unbearable present, felt attracted towards Hamlet's mysterious world and his meditating spirit full of strange and unappeasable nostalgia.

If the exact role of these social and psychological factors is still unknown to us, we can, on the other hand, state with certainty that the tragic effect is always a reciprocal mechanism: it is not an action but an interaction. The positive or negative nature of the final experience is always the result of a struggle that is going on between two centres of energy, i.e., between the tragic impact and the human mind. This fight may run several courses. It may happen that the tragic effect does not at all divert the vital drive of people from its normal course, and it may also happen that it restrains or stimulates their dynamism, breaks it or gives it a new direction.

The diversity in the progress and issue of this conflict is so great that if we want to obtain results that are clearly diagnostic and can be statistically evaluated, we have to systematize the material and concentrate it in some well-defined typical cases. Though we have still very little material at our disposal, we have made an attempt at establishing some of the main types of tragic action and reaction.

a. *No real experience: Indifference.*

This type of respondent is not impressed by Hamlet at all, so that his vital dynamism does not deviate from its normal course. He takes cognizance of Hamlet's faults and virtues calmly, without the least emotional or intellectual reaction. He states categorically that Hamlet is not a man of our days, and so he thinks he has nothing to do personally with the whole problem.

b. *No real experience: Emotional refusal of the experience.*

He, too, is biased against Hamlet but he is not strong enough to pass him by indifferently: he holds back from him with a feeling of horror. "Life would be a series of tragedies," he writes, "if many people would be like Hamlet." It is remarkable that our former respondent (a), for whom Hamlet's world was completely strange, could call it reassuring (those who have experienced a strong tragic effect never feel it reassuring), while this one already touched by the tragic atmosphere of the play, calls it depressing and consequently endeavours to get rid of it.

c. *No real experience: Intellectual refusal.*

Being anxious about his peace of mind and sense of security, he turns a deaf ear to everything that has or might have any connection with Hamlet. A lot of questions he does not answer at all, and honours others with a laconical yes or no. Lest he should get entangled in the labyrinth of Hamlet's world, he does not even formulate his thoughts and feelings. Instead of answering, he writes "Ask Freud." Or he refers us in the same off-hand manner to Schopenhauer.

d. *No real experience: Moral refusal.*

He is already on the way to being attracted into Hamlet's gloomy world. He feels Hamlet's solitude, resignation and disillusionment as his own, but he suddenly recoils upon realizing that Hamlet's blank despair differs from his own bitter melan-

choly. Finally, in order to break all links between Hamlet and himself, he quickly lines up a score of moral objections against the hero.

e. *Negative experience, but unbroken vital impulsion.*

In our experimental poll, this was one of the most frequent types. Sympathy and admiration attract him to Hamlet, he discovers in him a lot of values, he is even moved by his tragic defeat, but his own dynamism is not broken by this experience. He does not identify himself with Hamlet and does not become involved in the mesh of his enigmatic destiny. He makes it clear that this tragedy may and must not be generalized. Looking for the lessons of the drama, he underscores in the 27th and 28th questions all active, optimistic answers. And finally, by three exclamation marks, he lays a particular stress on the appeal: "Action is needed, not meditation!!!"

f. *Negative experience. Vital forces well-nigh succumbing.*

This case is in many respects similar to the former, but the vital drive is not strong enough, so that the respondent finds it hard to break out of the magic circle of the tragedy. Being aware of his weakness, he accepts Hamlet in advance with greater reserve than the former, but he constantly betrays that he feels a certain community of fate with him. At last he succeeds in shaking off this uneasy and frightening experience and on reaching the last question underscores three active and stimulating answers. But his underscoring is faint and fades away between the lines; they do not give the impression of firm conviction.

g. *Negative experience and involuntary acceptance thereof.*

This is one of our senior subjects. He is 32 years old. His attitude is more forced and not as dynamic as that of the younger ones. He confesses that he has something in common with Hamlet, but he knows that this is to his disadvantage. Reality and inclination have already diverged in him more than in the others. Younger respondents are still able, in the ardour of a great passion at least, to break out of their desperation. In him, on the contrary, every occasionally hopeful voice is choked by bitter cynicism. Hope is mere illusion. And the final lesson he draws from the play is not a balanced statement, but an illusory postulate that will, he knows very well, hardly be fulfilled: "Good must be triumphant in the world if you want life to be beautiful and worth living."

h. *Negative experience and unsuccessful fight against it.*

Here we may follow, step by step, the struggle of a young man against the tragic impact. He feels drawn toward Hamlet, but he does not want to share the desperation and the tragic fate of the hero. He turns his back, again and again, but is attracted, over and over again, into Hamlet's world. He denies, criticizes or ignores him in succession, he feigns indifference and the next moment starts a bitter attack on him, but all in vain: he keeps getting under his influence and is swallowed up by the waves of despair. This struggle continues with varying success to the last item on the questionnaire.

i. *Positive experience, but no real influence.*

He regards Hamlet as a noble and courageous spirit, who prefers justice and truth above all and lives for the reformation of the world. But all this means no personal experience for the respondent. He does not need Hamlet's energies. He does not look upon him as an ideal, for he is rushing ahead, sure of his own strength.

j. Positive experience. Intellectual attitude.

The tragedy does not pervade him. He remains, from first to last, a cool observer, taxing the play for a logical problem that is to be solved. Hamlet does not fascinate him. He coolly deliberates his good and bad qualities. He is capable of subtle distinctions: "There is only a surface similarity between Hamlet and modern man," he writes, "as the springs of their irresolution are different. Hamlet wavers because he sees too much of life, while modern man is only weak-willed." The respondent is not a man of moods. He does not reject Hamlet completely and does not idealize him either. All things considered, he believes that the social standing of persons like Hamlet is not very great, but such men are absolutely needed: they are the conscience of the community.

k. Positive experience. Sympathy.

He feels a deep affection for Hamlet but does not become one with him. His experience is strong and personal, his sympathy deep and sincere. But this is only attraction and not identification. As he states himself: "Hamlet is not the symbol of our own destiny, though a thinking person always finds him congenial." Note this: Congeniality, not identification. Only fellow spirit, not fellow sufferer.

l. Positive experience. Admiration.

She admires Hamlet without reserve. Moral greatness and firmness of purpose characterize him. Hamlet is not an average man, because he is able to deny himself in the interest of a higher objective. What is more, he has the strength to renounce Ophelia and love itself. The student girl who writes these lines is so astonished and bewitched by this sacrifice that she feels herself compelled to express her admiration, once more, on the verso of the questionnaire.

m. Total experience. Ecstasy.

This is not sympathy or admiration any more, but complete and ecstatic identification. "I do not want to be similar to Hamlet, but I cannot help it," she writes. "You cannot imitate him. He is the destiny of deep-feeling people." She makes common cause with Hamlet in his solitude and despair, and if they are able at last to rise up from the depths of desperation, this is due to a certain insurgent defiance and to a noble pathos of freely accepting their tragic fate. Whether Hamlet is neurotic or mentally ill? "Yes, he is, if being ill is to meditate upon things that are self-evident to others, or to hesitate when another would draw his dagger, or to renounce a great emotion and accept loneliness and despair."

3. Trend and content of the tragic impact

Beyond its being positive or negative, attractive or repulsive, we have to determine also the exact direction and content of the tragic impact. Here we have to sum up, first of all, those questions (Nos. 7, 16, 19, 24, 27, 28) and answers that betray what people consider valuable or valueless, attractive or repulsive in Hamlet's character. The score of our sample poll was this:

Positive, attractive features

Love of truth	65
Humanity, morality	35
Intelligence	33
High and noble demands	14
Consistency in principles	14

Negative, repulsive features

Meditation, irresolution, weak will	80
Scepticism	32
Melancholy	10
Cowardice	3

This scale of values, in all probability, changes according to variables, such as age, social status, historical period, etc. It is conceivable, for instance, that love of truth, intelligence and noble demands are the greatest values of life only for this younger generation. The fact that two of our three older respondents do not mention any of these characteristics, may be regarded as indicative of this. Another characteristic feature of these young people is perhaps the fact that their answers contain almost no moral motifs. There is even one among them who, to the question whether Hamlet is or is not a moral man, gives the following response: "What is morality? This question is anachronistic." Their judgements as to values are rather vitalistic. They blame Hamlet almost exclusively for his passivity and irresolution and clamour for quick and energetic action. Two of the senior respondents are the only ones to make moral reproaches and to express the conviction that the chief reason of Hamlet's fall lies in the fact that he was revengeful and committed murder.

Hamlet's positive or negative characteristics are, however, only the components of the final resultant of the tragic impact. If we want to determine the ultimate direction of the impulse given by the tragedy, we have to analyse the answers given in the last two items of our questionnaire. The 27th question asked our respondents to state the essence of the Hamlet-tragedy and to say whether they regard Hamlet as the symbol of a certain kind of human destiny. We asked this because the symbol is the final synthesis and result of the tragic experience: everything that the tragedy meant to the spectator is, or may be, incorporated in it. An analysis of the answers is given at the beginning of this article in the Text of the Questionnaire under point 27.

Our 28th question deals with the same issue, this time at the level of practical conclusions (see point 28 of Questionnaire).

The great majority of the answers are optimistic and intimate a steady belief in man and in ideals. This optimism is not a naive, idyllic one, for several of our respondents feel the burden of great and often unrealisable duties; many of them suffer from the fact that Hamlet has got into conflict with his own society and is constrained to accept solitude. But they do not cast the blame exclusively on society. Here are some answers to illustrate the wide range of their different attitudes:

— Society tramples unmercifully on Hamlet and his like; theirs is a struggle and, as always happens, force is victorious, not justice.

— There is no social order in which the Hamlets would feel happy.

— The cause of his defeat lies within himself, though in Fairyland he would not have gone under. But where is such a land?

The respondents do not delude themselves by saying that we have got over these problems, and they are very well aware of the difficulties to be faced. Bitter and cynical voices may be found in their answers, and some of these youths of 20—22 already evince resignation and disillusionment. But, in the last resort, their doubts and reserves strengthen rather than weaken their conviction that the creative dynamism of people who demand much of life and still more of themselves is the greatest value in life and the surest pledge of our future.

4. *Final evolution and permanence of the experience*

The effect of the tragedy upon its audience is not a momentary flashlight phenomenon but a lasting process during which one defends oneself and struggles against the violent and destructive forces of the immediate tragic impact and transforms it gradually into a fruitful human experience. If we intend to specify our knowledge on this interaction between tragedy and spectator, we have to extend our polls not only in space (i.e., to different social layers)

but also in time; we have to check the development and formation of the tragic experience several times, repeating the polls at least in three subsequent stages of its evolution:

1. During the action of the immediate tragic impact, i.e., in the intermissions of a theatrical performance, or immediately after it.
2. Some hours or, at the very most, one or two days after the performance, in order to register the emotional and intellectual elaboration of the tragic impact.
3. Some months later, trying to state the further transformation and final conservation of the experience.

So far we have only been able to measure the third phase, as our respondents read or saw the tragedy months or years before the poll. There was only one among them who read Hamlet the day before the test and, what is more, read it for the first time in his life. Some moments characteristic of the first phase may be registered here.

It is conspicuous that the experience of this respondent is still so immature and unsettled that he is the only one unable to tell what Hamlet's chief characteristic is. Besides, the name of Hamlet evokes in him a mood (sorrow) and not something more definite and formulated, such as a problem or an idea, which is the case with the other respondents. He recalls particulars which the others have already forgotten. "The cause of Hamlet's defeat," he says, "is his antagonism to his uncle," while his fellow respondents formulate the same thing already in a more generalized form, on the level of abstract truths, saying, for instance, that Hamlet is the victim of the conflict between the old and the new morality, or the old and the new social order. His answers show that the process of transforming his experience into a symbol has not even begun.

According to the testimony of the questionnaire, there are many people in whom the process of elaborating the impact came to a stop very early, and their experience rises to a more general and elevated level only in filling out their answer. One of our respondents, for instance, facing the 20th question (What is Hamlet's real aim and purpose?), underscores first the following answer: "To take revenge." But discovering immediately after the more general and abstract responses, he strikes out "to take revenge" and underlines, in the zest of discovery, the two most abstract statements: "To correct the world" and "To find the meaning and sense of life." This generalizing effect of the questionnaires may be observed in the majority of cases.

Let us turn to the figures. The distribution of replies to the 6th question (Why is he deferring revenge?) is the following:

	Matter-of-fact	Abstract
1. He has a brooding, wavering character	19	
2. He is looking for more evidence	17	
3. He has moral scruples	8	
4. He is waiting for a good occasion	6	
5. He has regard for his mother or Ophelia	4	
6. He fears responsibility	2	
7. Conventions hamper him	1	
8. The task is too great		1
9. He looks farther than revenge		1
	57	2

All but the last two answers refer to simple, practical causes that explain Hamlet's procrastination quite well, but only if his purpose is also simple an practical, i.e., if he wants no more than to overcome his uncle. But later on, when our respondents have to state Hamlet's primary aim and purpose (Question 20), the pro-

portion of concrete and abstract answers has changed in favour of the latter. His purpose is:

	Matter-of-fact	Abstract
1. To find the meaning and sense of life		28
2. To take revenge	16	
3. To set the world aright		15
4. To attain self-knowledge		5
5. To seize power	3	
6. To overcome hopelessness		4
	19	52

Here we already have only 19 matter-of-fact answers, referring exclusively to dramatic action in the strict sense of the word. The majority of the answers have already ascended to the higher spheres of philosophy and view of life. If Hamlet's aims are really so abstract and cosmic, it follows that in postponing action he ought to have had quite other reasons than to look for more evidence or to wait for a better occasion. This means that our respondents contradict themselves, but this contradiction is not a formal one: thesis and antithesis indicate here two successive phases of a process, in the course of which the Hamlet experience grows more and more universal.

In the third and last phase of the interaction between drama and spectator, the tragic experience is transformed and finally embodied in a symbol. We write symbol rather than type, to indicate the great emotional intensity that necessarily characterizes this last stage of the tragic influence. Both type and symbol incarnate a typical social tendency or condition, a typical human nostalgia or destiny, but only those social or psychological types become a symbol in our minds that we relate to ourselves and that thus become our personal experience.

This final transformation of the tragic experience is lacking in the majority of our respondents. They came to a standstill in the second phase, when the experience dissolves in a soft, undefined mood, or—if intellectual rather than emotional moments dominate—is formulated and fixed in a problem: people store it away in their memories as a philosophical, moral or historical fact or thesis.

There are many things that may hinder and definitely prevent a literary hero from being transformed into a symbol. Predominance of emotional or intellectual forces, respectively, may drive the experience onto a side-track. No symbol is produced if the impact has been shallow or the receptive soul weak or full of moral or other reservations and objections; if somebody does not accept the hero as a whole but singles out some features of his character and rejects the others. One of our respondents writes: "His good qualities, treated as independent of him, are to be followed, but on the whole, he is not the man whom you may learn from." The "symbolist" attitude is just the opposite of this. It does not abstract, but on the contrary, it embodies in the hero some general human aspiration or destiny.

Our questionnaire unfortunately proved to be undiagnostic in the field of revealing whether Hamlet is or is not a symbol for the respondent. In drafting our form, we committed the fault of giving under item 27 a multiple-choice question, listing almost all possible Hamlet symbols, thus enabling all respondents—even those for whom Hamlet has not been and will perhaps never be a symbol—to underline one or more answers, one or more symbols. In order to avoid this fault, we ought to have asked, early in the list of questions, whether the respondent regarded Hamlet as a symbol and, if he did, whether he could specify this symbol. In this way we would have established in whose minds Hamlet actually lives in the form of a symbol. Some

other questions, however, make it evident that few of our respondents belong to this group. It is even probable that they are in general poor in symbols. The distribution of the answers given to Question 3 (Who is more symphatetic? Hamlet or Romeo, Hamlet or... etc.) indicates this fact:

Hamlet—Romeo	36—11
Hamlet—Othello	40—10
Hamlet—Faust	36— 8
Hamlet—Don Juan	49— 0
Hamlet—Don Quijote	43— 5
Hamlet—Monte Cristo	40— 7
Hamlet—Adam in Madách's Tragedy of Man	15—34

This overwhelming majority of votes cast for Hamlet diminishes their validity. Hamlet is a much greater experience than Don Quijote or Faust. We have to assume rather that all these experiences are more or less of the same intensity, and Hamlet prevails against them only because the whole questionnaire is about him. But if one of the other heroes were more than a mere reminiscence, if he were a symbol, then the mere mentioning of his name would conjure up its impact in its original vigour and would tear the respondent out of Hamlet's magic circle.

Let us conclude by appointing our further tasks.

1. We have to revise our questionnaire and bring it up-to-date.
2. We have to extend our research to all important social groups (also to those of foreign countries, if possible). This will enable us to give a break-down of all variables that may influence literary experience and the impact of the tragedy.
3. In summarizing our contemporaries' feelings and thoughts about this tragedy, we have to select those features of the Hamlet experience that are characteristic of our age.
4. To validate the results obtained through questionnaires, we have to study also those Hamlet experiences that may be unraveled from the Hamlet literature of our time (accounts of performances, critiques, literary studies, etc.).
5. Finally, if we survey the results of our investigations concerning the historical evolution of the Hamlet experience, it will become clear how the Hamlet experience of today links up with the long series of former experiences, which have ever been changing together with the coming and disappearing centuries and generations.

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Collected Editions

The first attempt to publish a complete edition of William Shakespeare's plays is connected with the name of Emilis Lemouton. In 1845 he published five booklets of prose translation, after which his projected series was interrupted. The next undertaking was begun in 1848, on a higher artistic level, with the poets János Arany, Sándor Petőfi and Mihály Vörösmarty as translators, but unfortunately only one drama was produced (Coriolanus, translated by Sándor Petőfi, Pest, 1848, Beimel, 182 pp. Facsimile edition: Budapest, 1921. Rózsavölgyi, 200 pp.). After the suppression of the War of Independence the publication of Shakespeare's works was taken over by the Kisfaludy Society, which issued the first volume of a collected edition in 1864.

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Compiled by GÁBOR ALBERT

FROM MY CHILDHOOD*

by

CATHARINE KÁROLYI

My first act in life was to disappoint my parents. I did not do it deliberately. The wishful thinking of my grandmother, who was the first witness of my appearance in this world, made her see things which were not. Exclaiming "It's a boy!" she dashed down the stairs of our country house to have the good news spread all over the estate.

I was the third girl. My parents fervently wished for a son as, under Hungarian law, daughters could not inherit entailed property. The news went down to the servants' quarters, to the gardeners' cottages, to the stables and farms, to the village, and rejoicing was unanimous.

Then the inevitable happened. The village doctor arrived and, after taking a look at the wrinkled squeaking infant, shook his head and uttered the fatal words: "I am sorry, it is a girl..." All through my childhood I hated that doctor with bitter hate.

It was the 15th of September, under the sign of Virgo.

Tisza-Dob is a small village in the North of Hungary, where the two branches of the River Tisza meet—the Living and the Dead Tisza, as they are called. The Living Tisza, a wide expanse of slow flowing yellow water between sandy banks like a smaller Volga; the Dead Tisza, a cut-off branch, forming a stagnant lake with weeping willows bending over its deep blue waters covered with water lilies. It was here that my grandfather, Gyula Andrássy, had built his residence on the model of a Chateau de la Loire. It was in the round blue damask Tower room, overlooking the Dead Tisza, that I was born. Some years later, when I heard about the villainous role the village doctor had played at my birth, I felt convinced that he had cheated us: I was a BOY. I spent many an hour plotting a suitable revenge.

* Chapter I of an Autobiography in progress. Catherine Károlyi is widow of Mihály Károlyi, President of the Hungarian Republic of 1918.

Later on, when I was told the story of Eve having been created out of Adam's rib, I concluded that the male must have one rib less than the female, and that it was therefore on their number that evidence of sex must be based. So I started feverishly counting my ribs, until in my eagerness I would find I possessed eleven instead of twelve, thus supplying the irrefutable proof that I was indeed a boy. I would then rush triumphantly to my mother and demand to be put into trousers.

It is hard to discern which of one's earliest memories are genuine recollections, and which are tales heard in later years. One of my earliest ones takes me back to an earthquake at Fiume (Rijeka), although I could not have been more than two or three years old.

As my later life was rich in earthquakes, I wonder if this event could have had an occult influence on my fate!

The waters of the Adriatic overflowed the quays and many people took refuge on the boats anchored in the harbour. I remember being taken out of my cot in the night by my father and carried down the stairs wrapped in blankets. I pressed myself against his shoulder and felt blissfully secure. Then came a narrow gangway, rocking like a cradle, and frightened faces. Later I was told that my father had slipped on the wet boards and had narrowly escaped falling with me in his arms into the angry waves. But the whole adventure remained for me a happy memory. At the age of six, when sailing with my German governess on Lake Balaton, I puzzled her by sitting morosely by her side under a clear sky and on calm waters. When she asked me why I was so glum, I replied: "Ich hab' besser gern wenn es aufrührt." This saying of mine remained a standing joke in the family, and was often brought up in later years as proof that I preferred unrest and excitement to a peaceful existence.

My first language was English, learnt from an English nursery governess, Miss Hill. I could not speak Hungarian—a fact for which my mother was bitterly reproached by the nationalistic members of the family. We saw very little of our mother, except when we went to wish her good morning or good night. I loved her with a feeling of mixed admiration and awe. One of the memories of my early childhood relates to a pageant organized by my mother and other ladies during the winter season in Budapest. My mother, wearing a mediaeval costume of heavy gold brocade and riding a white horse, looked magnificent. I was terribly proud of her, convinced that she was the most beautiful of all, and waited with wildly throbbing heart for her to come out at the end of the performance, when I would be able to kiss her hand. We never kissed our mother, only her hand, with the slender fingers covered with rings. She seldom seemed to notice it, and would go on absent-

mindedly with her occupations. She would kiss us but rarely—she was not the kissing sort of mother—and when she did we felt it to be a great privilege.

My mother's beauty was famous, and none of her daughters ever equalled her in that. She had very large grey-blue eyes and, after the fashion of those days, she used to darken her eyelids with soot produced by holding a small porcelain cup over the flame of a candle. This make-up enhanced their extraordinary colour. She had dark hair, an olive skin and classic features. She was tall, very slim and fragile-looking. She dressed exquisitely. During the season her dressing room was filled with dressmakers who formed an interminable procession in the mornings and stood in the corridors with giant boxes eyeing one another with scorn and envy. One of the dressmaking establishments was called "König", and when I heard my mother's maid announce that "Herr König" was here, I used to imagine that Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, had come to call. The Paris models were then brought in, and my mother would try them on, whilst we children sat on the sofa and gazed at her beauty. She would buy six to eight models at a time, for the season in Budapest was a glamorous affair in those days when we still belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. She was the instigator of brilliant feasts and festivals. At one costume ball she appeared as the Empress Theodora, seated on a gilded throne, and I do not think the Byzantine empress herself could have been more beautiful.

She would sleep till eleven in the morning in her completely blacked-out room, behind the heavy damask curtains of her wide four-poster bed with its carved pillars, which kept out the slightest suspicion of air or light. At Terebes we would watch from the fountain garden, with its copies of Greek and Roman statues, to see her maid open the shutters, and then we would rush up to wish our mother good morning and kiss her hand. On Sundays and holidays we attended her "levée". She would lie in her hot bath, clad in a thick linen chemise with long sleeves, giving orders for the coming day. She washed herself without ever lifting the chemise—quite a tricky performance.

When Francis Joseph came to Budapest we were thrilled, for mother would sparkle in her tiara of diamonds and pearls, and next morning, when the time came to go to her room, we would be given small gilded boxes decorated with the portrait of the Emperor and filled with little pink sweets.

One place to which Mother would take me when I had behaved myself was the Polo Club in the Városliget (the City Park). I remember her once telling me—I must have been about seven—to have a good look at the old whitewhiskered gentleman standing near us at the railing where tea was served, for he was the Emperor and he would soon be dead. So I did what

I was bidden, but felt little interest in the bent figure in the so-called "Francis-Joseph jacket" watching the game through large binoculars. He was standing all by himself, as if none dared approach him. I saw him once again in my life on a much more exciting occasion.

In one of the drawing-rooms of our Budapest house there stood a terra-cotta bust of Dante. Since then Dante has always been associated in my memory with the somewhat stuffy dark drawing-rooms, overcrowded with furniture and where one could not move for fear of upsetting one of those mosquito-legged, marble-topped guéridons loaded with china nick-nacks, miniatures, lamps and vases; there were far too many armchairs, tables, sofas, pouffs, too many pictures on easels with lights above them; in Mother's boudoir was a white polar bear with a red jaw and long teeth, and in a corner stood a huge sledge painted all over with Watteau-like dancing figures, birds and flowers—something like a Sicilian cart—filled with evergreen plants. The heavy dark curtains kept out the light and air, and kept in the dust in true 19th century fashion.

It was my mother who had the ingenious idea of utilizing the social snobs to raise money for a political purpose. She started the "Tulip Movement" (the tulip is a Hungarian emblem) in support of national industries, and everyone who wanted to be up-to-date had to wear a tulip brooch or lapel badge and pledge herself—or himself—to "buy Hungarian". The jewellers of the Váci utca produced tulips in rubies and emeralds, milliners made tulip-shaped hats, and the success of the idea was spectacular, though short-lived. However, it did not prevent the society women from buying their dresses in Vienna or Paris, and their children's sailor suits in London.

My mother, Ella Zichy, was the second daughter of seven children, two boys and five girls. The girls were known for their good looks, the boys for their stupidity. My paternal grandmother, Jacqueline, lost her sight at the age of thirty-two, and never saw her two last-born. The family usually spoke French, and my mother's diary, which, after the custom of the time, she kept daily, was written in that language.

When Tivadar Andrássy asked her to be his wife, she was seventeen, and had been kept in complete ignorance as to what marriage meant. It therefore came as a terrible shock to her. Although in love with my father, she felt the predicament of women to be a cruel one, and contrary to all the concepts of her puritanical upbringing. There followed a painful reaction, not unusual in Victorian days, particularly in those circles. During the first years of her married life she refused to go into town unless heavily veiled, or to see anyone but her family. Throughout her life she seemed to harbour a profound contempt for sex, which made her watch over her four daughters

with doubled vigilance. Until we were married we were not allowed to read any books without her permission. Even the classics were censored in advance. Words such as "marriage-bed", "bed-fellow", "concubine", "bastard" or "natural son", in which the classics abound, were put in brackets to enable our governesses to read to us without giving themselves away by suspicious pauses. But it sometimes happened that these works fell into our hands, and what would otherwise have gone unnoticed, now aroused our curiosity. She had another way of protecting us: she would sew up the leaves on which anything about love was printed and, strange as it may seem, her authority was so great that I do not remember having ever undone any of those intriguing pages, though I did try to peep into them when they happened to be loosely sewn.

Until after my marriage I never read a novel about love, never went to a cinema, and only seldom to classical plays or to the opera. I must say, however, that I am grateful for this, for it prevented me from acquiring a taste for literary trash at an age when the emotions are most susceptible. Instead, we had to read Goethe, Schiller, Corneille, Racine, Molière, the German philosophers, and the novels of Felix Dahn and Jókai. Shakespeare was *terra incognita*—as, in fact, were all English classics except Walter Scott and, later, Kipling, whom we enjoyed immensely. Our culture was decidedly Germanic, and for years my *livre de chevet* was "Faust".

As my mother had married so very young, and childbirth, with all that preceded it, had apparently been a cruel ordeal, her children I believe, especially her first ones, gave her no pleasure.

She had made a brilliant marriage, her husband being the eldest son of Gyula Andrássy, the statesman, who was Foreign Minister in 1878 at the time of the Berlin Congress, and she soon fell under the charm of a liberal, intellectual artistic circle, contrasting in every way with the rather provincial county *milieu* of the Zichys. The Zichys were among those nobles who had sided with the Russian Emperor to quell the Hungarian Revolution in 1849, and had since been nicknamed, with many other aristocratic families, "the guides of the Russians". Uncle Jacqui (Mother's youngest brother) once told us that, while on a canvassing tour in the country before the elections, he had begun addressing a meeting, when a rowdy shouted at him: "Your family led the Russians in, we don't want to hear you—sit down!" At which gentle Uncle Jacqui naturally, as he said, sat down to the delight of the audience—and his own—for he was only too glad to get out of making his speech.

My mother had strong ideas about our upbringing, and would periodically get hold of some theory which happened to be the fashion at the moment.

She would then try it out with special zeal on her first-born. In later years she gave up many of these theories, so we, the younger ones, were less exposed to such experiments. One notion was that children should be made immune to the vicissitudes of the climate so as never to suffer from the cold. In the harshest winter, my eldest sister Ilona would be put out in her cot, scarcely covered, and her nappies changed while her red-blue legs were kicking in the frosty air to the horror of the onlookers. For a time, my mother fell under the spell of German professor Kneip, and, every morning, we had to walk bare-foot in the icy water of a brook that flowed through the pine forest. The name of the fashionable exercise was "Wassertreten".

We never were allowed, even in the heaviest snowstorms, to wear stockings or gloves. Once a solicitous uncle, noticing our blue hands and faces, asked if we were not cold, as we were clad in summer frocks in November. I remember finding his remark most officious, and my sister Ilona pulled herself up to her full height and said with great dignity—she had the pride of a Spaniard—: "We are not cold children."

I must admit that this Spartan upbringing seemed to suit us, as we never were ill, and now, in later years, we all enjoy excellent health. Whether this is due to those harsh methods, or whether we simply inherited a strong constitution from our healthy parents, I do not know.

Ideas about food changed more or less every year. We always had to finish up everything on our plates, and any show of preference was something unheard-of. One day at the age of seven, on being served lentils, I heard my German governess say: "Lentils are the meat (Fleisch) of the poor." Horrible, I thought, to feed on the flesh of poor people! But I accepted it as a matter of course. The Poor were there to be eaten, I concluded—and thereupon contracted a strong dislike for lentils. We were never allowed to accept sweets from anyone. My mother kept the sweet-box and gave us two a day, one after each meal; in general, sweets were not in great favour and were not supposed to be good for children. Those delicious Kugler-Gerbeaud boxes were maddeningly tantalizing. Salads and cheese were only for grown-ups, tea and coffee as well.

Our time-table was that of a strict school, but there too, it was my older sisters who got the worst of it for my mother mellowed as the years went by. A sheet of paper pinned on the wall gave the following orders:

"Three minutes for brushing teeth, three times a day. Four for washing hands, seven for dressing." (We were helped to dress by our maids, and even our shoes were put on for us until we got married.) "Six for brushing the hair." A cold bath (15 degrees Réaumur) in the morning, and a *hot* bath (20 degrees Réaumur) in the evening, with five minutes to spend in the bath.

Our governesses were responsible for seeing to it that this schedule was followed to the minute. Mother would forget about it for a time, but, all of a sudden, she would remember and visit the nursery; and if the bath water was hotter, or the time spent on dressing longer than that prescribed, woe to the governess and to us.

An important event in our nursery life was remembered in the family as the Tapioca Rebellion. For months our supper consisted of a single dish—tapioca boiled in milk. One day Ilona informed us that we were to go in deputation to our parents and demand the abolition of that detestable food, otherwise we would go on hunger strike. Ilona's authority was undisputed, and we followed her. Victory was HERS, for she and Boji were admitted the table of the grown-ups, but Caja and I remained on the tapioca diet.

Until the age of fourteen we had our evening meal in the nursery, although we were allowed to attend that of the grown-ups. When there were guests, we would enjoy ourselves in the pantry, eating the remains of the ices and cakes which the kind butler would keep for us. When we were older and took our meals with our parents, we would always kiss Mother's hand as soon as we left the table, thanking her for feeding us.

Ilona once asked Father, "What is a gentleman?" After thinking hard, Father said: "An honest man who does his duty and never lies." Boji, who thought this definition not quite appropriate—she had a critical mind—asked: "Is the gardener a gentleman? He does his duty, is honest, and does not lie." Father answered: "Yes, of course he is." But Mother laughed and said: "Oh Tivadar, he is not," and then started an argument, leaving us more puzzled than ever as to what a gentleman was.

We all felt a deep veneration for "Queen Elizabeth", the Empress of Austria. She was remembered as a remarkably intelligent woman, the guardian angel of the Hungarians, a paragon of virtue. Not so the Emperor. He was considered a wicked old fool, heartless, cruel and selfish, who made his wife's existence miserable.

At the time of the Mayerling tragedy, Grandfather who was still Minister for Foreign Affairs, was one of the first to call on Francis Joseph. He was shocked to find him perfectly composed: his cold blue eyes were tearless and betrayed no emotion. Grandfather was so shattered by the news that he could not utter a word. The Emperor turned immediately to current affairs of state and carried on as usual, following the working routine like an automaton. Was this estimable self-control? Grandfather believed it to be sheer heartlessness.

During the years Grandfather was in office, my father and his brother, Uncle Duci, were the playmates of Archduke Rudolf, who was their age.

They had a great admiration for the strange, remarkable boy, and spoke of him as an exceptionally gifted and independent spirit.

Not until much later, when I was grown-up, did I hear—from outsiders—the gossip about Grandfather and the Empress. How far it was true I do not know, for it was bitterly and emphatically denied by my parents, the slightest allusion to it being *très mal vu*. We had vineyards in North Hungary, from where the famed Tokay wine comes. During the First World War, my brothers-in-law were once told that the husbandman, now an old man of eighty, was fond of sitting in the village pub and blabbering about the good old times and how he used to be the only servant allowed to wait on the beautiful lady who used to come with his master, Count Andrássy, to the little cottage in the vineyards. She was always heavily veiled, but on one occasion he had recognized her. He would naturally never tell a soul who this great lady was.

During his exile in Paris, Grandfather had been nicknamed "le beau pendu", for he had been hanged in effigy by order of the Emperor for having sided, as a young man, with the 1848 Revolution. Later, he profited by an amnesty, returned home, was soon appointed Prime Minister by Francis Joseph, and concocted the Compromise of 1867 with Ferenc Deák. He placed the Hungarian Crown of St. Stephen on the head of his former enemy and made him King of Hungary. If what was said about his affair with the Queen was true, his revenge was a subtle one. He was a dandy, wore corsets to slim his waist, had dark wavy hair and a flashy manner. Envious Austrians used to call him the "Zigeuner Primas" (the leader of a gypsy band). In the family, many anecdotes were told about him. The one which made the greatest impression on me as a child was about how, as a small boy, he had made his headmaster run across the fields after him, pleading with him to return to school. My grandfather, then aged ten, had been placed in a boarding school for a short time, and, for some prank, his ears had been boxed. Incensed by his master's insolence in daring to chastise him, he packed up his kit and left the school, walking across the meadows to his parents' home. In a panic at losing such an illustrious pupil, the headmaster followed him over ditches and brambles, begging him to return. The small boy would stop from time to time and demand unconditional surrender: the master should ask his pardon and give his word never to return to such methods. From field to field, a yelling argument continued between the flustered master and the inexorable pupil who walked on with great dignity. Andrássy, later the Champion of Compromise, did not believe in compromise at that early age. The master had to give in, and Grandfather returned to school triumphant.

When he was on his deathbed in a little fishing village on the Istrian coast, Empress Elizabeth sent him a gold watch. Not a very tactful present for a dying man, I thought. He seldom spoke of her, but adoration and idealization of the Empress became a tradition in the family, and our contempt for the Emperor had its origin in Grandfather's feelings.

Some thought him frivolous in his political dealings, as it is customary for statesmen to be ponderous and solemn, and over-brilliant minds are often suspected of superficiality. But his children knew about the sleepless nights he spent before taking a decision, turning it over a thousand times in his mind.

Alas, I never knew him, for he died several years before my birth.

HUNGARY AND UNESCO

by

SÁNDOR MALLER

Fifteen years ago Hungary joined UNESCO. The anniversary affords a good opportunity for examining this experience and for estimating prospects.

Despite this long association, the aims and achievements of UNESCO are still inadequately known in Hungary. Most likely some believe the six letters to signify some sort of humanitarian research institute or cultural Red Cross, while others, a small minority, will be found surprisingly well-informed on isolated functions of UNESCO. Although in recent years newspapers in this country have often reported on its activities and in periodicals the name of UNESCO has occurred even more frequently, the majority of Hungarians are conspicuously ignorant about it and the general picture remains, in spite of our fifteen-year membership, fragmentary, blurred and superficial.

The fact that this applies not only to Hungary, where the situation is not even the worst, affords little consolation. Hungary has in recent years missed many an interesting possibility by ignoring or misunderstanding the character and aims of UNESCO. Moreover, this country, like several other Member States, showed a tendency not to take UNESCO quite seriously.

Nor could it be taken too seriously in the beginning, because it tended to spread unmethodically in all directions, handicapped by the somewhat artificial and crisis-laden atmosphere then characteristic of other international organizations. However, because of the frequent and decidedly advantageous changes it has undergone in recent years, UNESCO has attained maturity in many important respects. Overcoming its initial uncertainty and the tendency to undertake too much, it has succeeded in channelling its aims and activities in definite directions and has become an institution to be taken seriously.*

* Cf. Walter H. C. Laves—Charles A. Thomson: UNESCO—Purpose, Progress, Prospects. Bloomington, 1957, 469 pp., also Jean Thomas: U.N.E.S.C.O, Paris, 1962, 266 pp.

Simultaneously with its development UNESCO also outgrew its various headquarters: first, within a few months' time, the one in London consisting of a small suite of rooms only, then the second one in the Hotel Majestic, Paris, and finally even the present palace where it installed itself in 1958, also in Paris.

Over the years it has developed a specific "technique" of its own, adopting the working methods characteristic of international bodies, with all the excessive burden of numberless files, the often unnecessarily cumbersome procedures, and the steadily growing staff requirements they imply. In a reasonable endeavour to counterbalance a strong tendency towards centralization by means of energetic measures of decentralization, it has now reached a stage where the number of its staff members and experts in the various Member States outweighs those working at Headquarters in Paris.

True, the frequent changes were in many cases overhasty, leading to the partial frittering away of forces and to often only perfunctory results in this modern Babel, whose 1,300 staff members have been recruited from more than eighty countries. Yet, despite the many difficulties and obstacles UNESCO has faced in its eighteen years of existence—which is, after all, a very short period in the life of an international organization—it has managed to become, in close cooperation with some two hundred and fifty international Non-Governmental Organizations, one of the most important and most highly developed institutions of the United Nations. In conformity with its Constitution—modelled on the Charter of the UN—and by the use of the tools of education, science, culture and mass communication it has grown into a forum of peaceful cooperation and mutual understanding, a meeting-place of ideas on a world level and a kind of spiritual catalyser. Without UNESCO our present-day world would in many respects be poorer than it is.

As an inter-governmental organization UNESCO is operated by its Member States, which brought it into existence to serve their purposes; they are backing it financially through their membership dues and have given it, at different stages and to different degrees, its present shape. It is a reassuring fact that the majority of the 113 countries have come to appreciate UNESCO increasingly and to expect from it considerably more than in the past.

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Hungary's connections with UNESCO date from 1948 when she joined the organization, set up special sections in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Education to deal with UNESCO matters, formed a Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO to coordinate activities at home in conform-

ity with the provisions of the Constitution, and arranged for a permanent Hungarian representation at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. Shortly afterwards, however, relations were for several years severed as a regrettable consequence of the cold war.

When in 1954 a fresh start was made at the General Conference in Montevideo, Hungary found herself faced with an entirely new UNESCO that was continuously changing and developing. The balance of power was shifting in line with the UN pattern, first slowly, then, after the admittance of a rapidly growing number of Asian and African countries in the past few years, at an accelerated pace. General Conferences have become increasingly political in character, and the atmosphere of isolation that prevailed in the early years now belongs to the past. UNESCO, a member of the UN family, now mirrors more than ever before the features of the mother institution, although it would be a mistake to identify the two in every respect.

The Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO was also reorganized in 1954. Subcommittees were set up to deal with educational, scientific, cultural, bibliographical and library matters, as well as with questions relating to the East-West Major Project. The "Unesco Bulletin," a periodical published in Hungarian and French by the Hungarian National Commission since 1959 has been giving an account of the UNESCO program and of activities related to it in Hungary.

Since 1954 Hungary has been regularly represented at the biennial General Conferences of UNESCO and her delegation has grown increasingly numerous over the years. Since 1956 this country has also been represented at the regional conferences of the European National Commissions (1956 in Aix-en-Provence, 1957 in Dubrovnik, 1960 in Taormina and 1962 in Sofia). At the Eleventh General Conference (1960) Academician Imre Szabó was elected Vice-President of the Administrative Commission. At the Twelfth General Conference (1962) Mrs. Magda Jóború, President of the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO, served as Vice-President of the Program Commission, and Hungary was elected a member of the Legal Commission for 1963/64.

Several leading officials of UNESCO, among them two Directors General (Mr. L. H. Evans in 1956 and M. R. Maheu in 1962), have visited Hungary since 1956, as have members of the National Commissions of other countries. It has become clear that Hungary's intellectual export within the framework of UNESCO could and should be considerably greater than hitherto.

In 1957 Hungary directly joined in the work of the UNESCO Secretariat, of which the writer of the present survey was the first Hungarian staff member for nearly seven years. In 1962 Hungary filled a second post at the

Secretariat, allotted on the basis of the amount of her membership dues. Besides these Headquarters posts Hungarian experts are at present working in Algeria, Argentina, Mali, Nigeria and Turkey within the framework of the UNESCO program.

Hungary has so far signed four UNESCO Conventions or one on the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, two on the international exchange of publications, and a fourth on the temporary importation of scientific equipment.

The first UNESCO-sponsored international conference in Hungary, in 1960, discussed the international exchange of publications in European countries. It was followed two years later by a conference on the teaching of mathematics. An eight-month international advanced course in mathematics for university graduates from developing countries started in 1963 in Budapest under the sponsorship of UNESCO. A Hungarian professor is at present writing a manual on the teaching of mathematics, and last year an animated cartoon on the history of numerical symbols was prepared as part of a UNESCO series. Preparations for an international conference on soil research, to be held in Hungary next year, are already in full swing.

While up to the past year Hungary had been only the beneficiary of scholarships (a total of twenty-six, of which the majority was granted in the last six years), in the current year post-graduate training under the UNESCO program is being provided in this country too. Several Hungarian delegates have participated at special UNESCO conferences, especially in recent times. Five UNESCO-sponsored visits of Hungarian workers' delegations to Belgium, Finland (twice), France and Italy took place in 1959, 1960 and 1963. Return delegations of a similar character from Finland and France have come to Hungary.

A grant of 100,000 dollars was voted by the Ninth General Conference of UNESCO for the replacement of Hungarian school equipment damaged in 1956. Five Hungarian secondary schools are at present listed under UNESCO's Associated Schools Project. In 1957 the sum of 7,000 dollars was allocated for the modernization of the microfilm section of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, a collection listed with the Associated Projects two years earlier.

Hungary regularly supplies the UNESCO Secretariat, especially the organization's library, with documentary material relating to the country's scientific and cultural life, and Hungarian libraries are, in return, receiving a great number of useful publications from various UNESCO departments. Hungarian experts have for years participated in a vast UNESCO project for the revision of the work entitled "History of the Scientific and Cultural

Development of Mankind." The first UNESCO-sponsored publication in this country appeared under the title "Bibliography of Hungarian Bibliographies, 1958—1960." Another bibliography of Hungarian works on Asia and Africa was recently printed.

The appraisal of Hungary in UNESCO publications has become more realistic—due primarily to data supplied by Hungarian institutions. Hungarian achievements in the educational field, libraries and bibliographical activities in this country are being given international publicity: a special Hungarian number of the UNESCO periodical "Museum" has recently been issued, and a selection of Hungarian short stories in French appeared in 1962 under UNESCO sponsorship.

In contrast to the exemplary treatment of the UNESCO depository copies in the Parliamentary Library, their distribution through the Hungarian book trade is still in a primitive stage, although adequate publicity could have made the results of many a valuable publication accessible to Hungarian science and culture.

Reference should be made to the travelling exhibitions of UNESCO art reproductions in Budapest and in a number of provincial centres. The 1959 exhibition was rendered still more attractive by the addition of an international show of children's drawings.

Several other activities of the Hungarian National Commission—such as the organization of popular scientific lectures, club meetings, exhibitions and books-shows, the publication of essays, articles and books—were carried out under the East-West Major Project and aimed at the mutual appreciation of the cultural achievements of various peoples.

Hungary's UNESCO activities are enriched by contacts, though still insufficiently organized and exploited, with a number of Non-Governmental Organizations working in close cooperation with UNESCO. Many of their meetings have, especially of late, been attended by Hungarian representatives, and some of their working sessions have been held in Hungary. Thus the International Council on Archives organized its 1963 Round-Table Conference in Budapest, following the example of the International Organization of Measurement and Instrument Technics, the International Organization of Journalists, the International Radio and Television Organization, the Co-ordination Committee for International Voluntary Camps, and the World Federation of Teachers' Unions, which held conferences in Hungary recently. For years now one of the Vice-Presidents of the International Federation for Documentation has been a Hungarian expert.

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Such were the antecedents that have led to the formation of the Permanent Secretariat of the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO which, modelled on similar bodies in other Member States, was set up in August 1963 to coordinate UNESCO work in Hungary. An independent body having its own budget, the Secretariat now organizes practically all the activities of the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO.

It devolves on the Secretariat to collect and classify the National Commission's proposals relating to the program and budget of UNESCO and to various questions of procedure, as well as to forward these proposals to UNESCO; to bring Hungarian institutions and experts into contact—in the manner of a sort of telephone exchange—with the Secretariat and UNESCO itself, as well as with each other, within the framework of the UNESCO program, to maintain relations with other National Commissions and with the UNESCO Secretariat; to keep the UNESCO Secretariat and the fellow National Commissions informed on the work performed in Hungary and to popularize UNESCO in the country. The current tasks of the Secretariat are, moreover, connected with the working out of the UNESCO program and with the preparation and execution of the Hungarian work plan, and are carried out in close cooperation with both official and professional institutions, the permanent Hungarian representative at UNESCO, the UNESCO Secretariat, and such other National Commissions as the case may require.

The setting up of a permanent Secretariat has made it necessary to revise the Statutes of the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO. From now on, the National Commission is to exercise its authority through three organs: the Plenary Session, the Executive Council and the Secretariat. The Council is headed by the Chairman; his deputy, the Secretary-General, is at the same time at head of the Secretariat. The Commission's membership has also been reinforced by co-opting representatives of major institutions working in spheres of activity of UNESCO, as well as several other experts from the capital and the country.

This brief survey of Hungary's UNESCO membership shows a number of new departures and fruitful beginnings, and holds the promise of more to come. The organizational framework is now set up, and the Commission is prepared to participate to a greater degree than hitherto in the international orchestra UNESCO is frequently compared to, irrespective of the importance of the part assigned to it or undertaken voluntarily. We may confidently expect that contacts between this country and the World Organization will in future both deepen and broaden in scope.

THE FAVOURITE

*Second and third acts of a tragedy**

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

(The same room in Maximus' house. Three weeks have passed. Apparently no one has been living in the house, for the servants are opening doors and windows and tidying up in a hurried manner. One of them is about to enter Julia's room but is ordered back by the chief. Fulgentius enters accompanied by a servant, who goes on to Maximus' room.

FULGENTIUS: Did he arrive last night?

1st SERVANT: Early this morning. Without any warning. That's why we're still in this mess.

FULGENTIUS: Did he go to bed? You can see the effects of the spring country air on him, I expect?

1st SERVANT: He didn't go to bed. No, these three weeks haven't done any good to Maximus Petronius.

FULGENTIUS: Your mistress... did she come with him?

1st SERVANT: I wasn't there at the arrival, sir.

FULGENTIUS: But... they went together?

1st SERVANT: I wasn't there at the departure, either, sir.

FULGENTIUS: Has anybody called since? I mean from on high?

1st SERVANT *(after a slight hesitation):* They didn't come in.

(Silence. The servant who crossed the stage two minutes ago returns with Maximus in his wake. While the friends embrace, the servants are motioned out by their chief.)

FULGENTIUS: We have little time to waste. First I'll tell you what I know and then I'll ask you what I want to know.

MAXIMUS: There's nothing to hurry me.

FULGENTIUS: Which shows that you know nothing. As soon as you went on your holiday—or were you sent?—the worst that had been feared came about. He became a miniature Caligula. He's completely in the hands of his castrated minion. For a while they tried to keep up appearances. Accidental fires! Vellius perished with all his household in this way. Then falling into the water became the order of the day. It began with Paterculus; he was thrown into the Tiber from the Narrow Bridge in broad daylight —by "unidentified" persons. Then they reverted to their traditional dagger and rope. *(Stops.)*

MAXIMUS: Go on.

* The first act has been published in Vol. IV, No 12 of The New Hungarian Quarterly. The principal characters in this play, which takes place in Rome in the 5th century, are: Valentinianus, Emperor; Eudoxia, his wife; Maximus, patrician, a leading personality of the realm; Julia, his wife; Palladius, Maximus' son from his first marriage; Heraclius, eunuch, another leading personality of the realm; Fulgentius, a senator of the opposition; Sidonius, executioner, former astrologer; Julianus, a young patrician.

FULGENTIUS: It's only by talking and listening to my own voice that I myself am beginning to realize fully what a pass we've come to! His carriage overturned somewhere in Umbria. The eunuch had the whole village slaughtered to a man. He didn't stop there: he got it into his head that everybody in Umbria was a born regicide.

MAXIMUS: I've heard that.

FULGENTIUS: They've already started to dismiss and round them up. He appeared in Modena one night and had the whole garrison there butchered, beginning with Romius, charging them with lechery! He, who drinks blood, according to rumour, to make his own rise in his loins. That's perhaps why people hate—even more than him—the woman whom he's planted in his luxury villa with the usual secrecy. *(Stops short.)*

MAXIMUS *(quietly)*: Why did you stop?

FULGENTIUS: No one has any idea who she is. Although people have demonstrated against her.

MAXIMUS: Demonstrated?

FULGENTIUS: The hush-hush is unpalatable because of its sensational publicity. "No one's there," but the lamps are burning along the bridge leading to the palace. And there's no end to the revelling.

MAXIMUS: Julia is there.

FULGENTIUS: I didn't want to believe it! But now! So that was your reason for coming back. Sensible! You're in greater security here. But this isn't a safe enough place. Am I to understand that you've made up your mind?

MAXIMUS: What should I have made up my mind about?

FULGENTIUS: The eunuch has publicly censured you. He's blaming you not only for the disturbances in the streets —when didn't we have disturbances?—but also for the resistance of the senate. You should come to the senate, it's still a sacred place. Many people are already spending nights there. And you can issue a proclamation from there saying that the cup is full.

MAXIMUS: No.

FULGENTIUS: Then I will do it. As long as it's not too late. Do you know what he's planning to do? To appoint the same number of senators as we have now, in order to overthrow the last mainstay of the constitution. This in itself, we've sworn on it, would be enough for a revolt. But we'll be there first. Come. I have my armed men with me as everyone like us has, because what goes on up there is followed and copied down here among the little sergeants in the streets.

MAXIMUS: I will not go.

FULGENTIUS: I'll reveal what he's done to you too, and the indignation will speed the lot of them off the face of the earth in a day.

MAXIMUS: I don't want anybody to be indignant about me.

FULGENTIUS: Everybody knows, your "shopkeepers" not excepted, what Julia meant to you and you to her. If it should become known that it was she they demonstrated against and that she's the captive...

MAXIMUS: She's not a captive.

FULGENTIUS: Then why should he keep her in confinement?

MAXIMUS: I sent her there.

FULGENTIUS: Don't drive me mad! Do you still have to cover up for that rotter? Now that... Everything is reversed! You were contemptuous of the people, and now the millions worship you for the contempt itself: you've also had contempt for the oppressors of the millions! And because this is the one that really counts, now they'd go through fire and water for you. Just so. A sign from you and...

MAXIMUS *(shakes his head)*: These three weeks have done their work here. *(Points to his heart.)*

FULGENTIUS: You don't mean to tell me you can still find some new excuse for this brute?

MAXIMUS: Not that. Not at the beginning.

FULGENTIUS: No? He was an angel?

MAXIMUS: He had good qualities.

FULGENTIUS: Of course! "Culture!" "Wit!" He was cool enough. For deciding. For a "leap in the dark."

MAXIMUS: For ruling.

FULGENTIUS: You and your fixed ideas! As if it made no difference whether the captain pacing up and down his sinking ship is rolling because of the storm or because of too much wine. Or what it is that makes him roar or caterwaul so "reassuringly," so "hopefully."

MAXIMUS: There are times when it makes no difference at all. He was in his place.

FULGENTIUS: Which means let him stay there? While we...

MAXIMUS: Keep our mouths shut until we reach port.

FULGENTIUS: And his crime? Which, as even you say, beclouds a little this beautiful sailing for port?

MAXIMUS: It's our crime too. I've looked into it.

FULGENTIUS: And because it's ours as well—we shouldn't spurn it? *(At the throne)* Together with that?

MAXIMUS: Tumbled down, that throne would be a gangway for Genseric. More certainly than ever.

FULGENTIUS: It would not fall. It would not remain empty.

MAXIMUS: You don't know him, nor me either. We were one person, the two of us together. One power. Or might have been. Circumstances have made him what he is. Or my negligence of duty. Fundamentally he is sound. There is much goodness in his heart.

FULGENTIUS: That you put there. What you made him! With your counsel; by your keeping hold of the helm; with your honour. You can't pretend not to know: what is good in him is you! The tanners are right to go about with their gibe: other people make children in their own image once and for all, you do it one day and start again the next.

MAXIMUS: I'm all the more bound in responsibility for him.

FULGENTIUS: You are a madman.

MAXIMUS: I will go the whole way. Destiny has thrown a great burden upon me. Don't make it heavier with your irresponsibility.

FULGENTIUS: But you, I am responsible for you. Come! You don't know where you've returned to.

MAXIMUS: I was summoned. In order to get things straight—whatever our differences may have been—we await the Vandal united.

FULGENTIUS: You were summoned! By them! They're all in a scramble—you might as well know—which of them should make an alliance with the Vandals first, the Empress or the Emperor! But...

(He stops short as someone comes in.)

SERVANT *(with an alarmed look on his face)*: Sidonius, the augur, is waiting to be admitted.

FULGENTIUS: This way, through the garden. He's their chief executioner. Come!

MAXIMUS: I have no other ship than this. I stay where I am.

FULGENTIUS: And if this is going to be—the shipwreck? Oh, that I can't shout this ignominy in every ear!

MAXIMUS: Don't waste your time!

FULGENTIUS: I'll just go into the next room.

MAXIMUS: Find yourself something to read.

(Exit Fulgentius.)

SIDONIUS: I salute you, patrician! I'm bringing you greetings and a present from Caesar.

MAXIMUS: Welcome to you, Sidonius! I regard it an honour to receive them, though I do not deserve them.

SIDONIUS: He knows, Caesar does. *(Turns back to the door and waves his companions in. They are Julianus and the hugely built Saracen officer, met before as one of the inner guards of Valentinianus. The latter brings a covered tray to Maximus Sidonius, uncovers the*

tray, on which there is a short sword. Maximus takes only a moment to understand the situation: he has been sentenced to death. After a slight hesitation he reaches for the sword, but changes his mind and leaves it on the tray. The Saracen officer politely places the tray on the table and at a nod from Sidonius goes off followed by Julianus.)

MAXIMUS: How long before I must die?

SIDONIUS *(of the sword):* They have to take it back. It's the custom you know.

MAXIMUS: You can take it back. I give my word.

SIDONIUS: This one must be shown, with the proof.

MAXIMUS: I have a few things to put in order.

SIDONIUS *(nodding towards those outside):* They can't go away with their job unaccomplished.

MAXIMUS: Half an hour.

SIDONIUS: They're waited for.

MAXIMUS: I have some official duty to see to.

SIDONIUS: So have they.

MAXIMUS: Haven't you brought a letter?

SIDONIUS: It's not done of late.

MAXIMUS: Sulpicius Nato received one.

SIDONIUS: That was the last.

MAXIMUS: So did Taurideus.

SIDONIUS: Did he?

MAXIMUS: And if I should have my doubts that it comes from Caesar?

SIDONIUS: It makes no difference.

MAXIMUS: May I take my farewell? *(Pointing outside.)* Of my son.

SIDONIUS: He's asleep.

MAXIMUS *(of the sword):* May I go out with it, to the bathroom?

SIDONIUS: We have to be present.

MAXIMUS: I'm afraid of bringing shame on myself; I might bungle it.

SIDONIUS: They'll finish it off.

MAXIMUS: Let's have that. Call them in. *(Unbuckles his belt.)*

SIDONIUS: Thank you. I must confess I've always thought highly of you. *(Crosses to the door and opens it. However, it is Fulgentius who enters and goes towards Sidonius, his naked sword in hand. Behind him come a few armed retainers.)*

SIDONIUS *(unperturbed):* I greet you, senator!

FULGENTIUS: Can't you see any further, you seer of the future? At an arm's length? One minute ahead? *(He is about to stab.)*

SIDONIUS: I can. You will be convinced yourself. I beg a little patience.

FULGENTIUS: We'll listen to you, at ease. *(To Maximus)* My men are surrounding the house.

SIDONIUS: I can prove to you that my life is worth more to you than my death. I'd carry valuable secrets with me into the grave.

FULGENTIUS: Start with the most precious one or we're through. *(Points his sword at him.)*

SIDONIUS: I wasn't sent by the Emperor.

MAXIMUS: I knew it.

FULGENTIUS: Who was it?

SIDONIUS: Well, guess. You think it was my idea?

MAXIMUS: Heraclius! That plaguey curse! And yet, what a relief even to utter his name now, to think of his despicable character! What a weight is lifted. Caesar is blameable and given to excess, but if once he's extricated from evil influences...

SIDONIUS: I'm glad that I've already told you: I've always had a sincere sympathy for you.

FULGENTIUS: And how can you prove that you were sent by the eunuch and not by him... the...

SIDONIUS: The living proofs are on their way here. I mean the Emperor's men. We were to get here before them—with this *(pointing to the sword)*. From which it's clear that they're coming on a different errand. On the contrary, Caesar remem-

bers you in most loving words and is waiting for you. A triumphal deputation is coming to fetch you.

MAXIMUS: I too shall go and change my toga. *(To Fulgentius)* You see, despite all, it's worth damming up the pain. *(Goes out.)*

FULGENTIUS: I'm not taken in as easily as that. I do not alter my opinion that you are a rascal. So we'll draw up a document.

SIDONIUS: A document? With pleasure.

FULGENTIUS: Take a seat there. Get ready with the brush. "I acknowledge that for the dastardly attempt on the life of Petronius Maximus, free-born Roman citizen... Got it?... I deserve death by the headsman's axe... no... by drowning... no... crucifixion, as a depraved evil-doer, hired thug, highwayman, er...

SIDONIUS: ...assassin.

FULGENTIUS: ... assassin; and my instigator Heraclius is likewise...

SIDONIUS: I wouldn't include him.

FULGENTIUS: Why not?

SIDONIUS: You might mislay this writing, and it might get into his hands... Why should he get to know about it before his time?

FULGENTIUS: Before you run to him, as soon as we let you free.

SIDONIUS: I will not run to him.

FULGENTIUS: No, but to Caesar directly.

SIDONIUS: Nor to him, either.

FULGENTIUS: Is that so? Can it be that we're already on the winning side? Don't be afraid, I shan't eat your bread and so I won't tell you what I can read in your future. But whoever you may report it to, tell him that the discovery will be made known to every senator in Rome before the day's out. *(Of Maximus)* I don't ask what retort he wants to make. But I shall do my best to make this outrageous act regarded by the senate as a slap in the face, as a challenge to all Rome, as a declaration of war. Yes, "enough!" Yes, "the cup's full!" Up till today only the rabble have pitted themselves against the imperial palace, but from now on I and my friends will also be there in the opposition. Don't fail to tell them this.

SIDONIUS: I won't tell them.

FULGENTIUS: Are you a coward?

SIDONIUS: I am—I'll throw in my lot with you.

FULGENTIUS: Even before victory is on our side?

SIDONIUS: Would you accept me after you've won? You see? Would there be any places left? On the band-waggon? On the box? May I? *(Signs the declaration.)*

(Maximus enters dressed in a toga for festive occasions).

FULGENTIUS: I've taken a security from him. *(Puts away the document.)*

SIDONUS *(to Maximus):* You'll need more farsighted advisers and better informants.

FULGENTIUS: What?

SIDONIUS: And organizers. His intelligence needs quite a bit of supplementing in important details. The Emperor's camp is strong. Not he himself but those who are backing him and betting on him. You don't even know who are your best supporters yet. People of exceptional talent and ability are enthusiastic about you.

MAXIMUS: Enthusiastic? In Rome?

SIDONIUS: Young people! Eager to do something.

FULGENTIUS: You see?

SIDONIUS: They're difficult to hold back.

MAXIMUS: From what?

SIDONIUS: From accomplishing something great. They're so much dissatisfied and fed up.

MAXIMUS: Show me only one.

SIDONIUS *(after taking thought for a minute):* A hundred, if you like. But I've got someone here I wanted to introduce to you anyway. *(Going out)* Julianus!

FULGENTIUS: The man who came in before? You don't want to have *him* in

here again, with that grim hangman's look on his face.

SIDONIUS: But its what he wears under it that counts. *(Shows Julianus in and introduces him.)* Julianus, the son of Hilarius. You know him by sight. He'd be only too pleased if he could speak to you now. *(With emphasis)* With the man of the future.

MAXIMUS: Why are you dissatisfied?

SIDONIUS *(dropping a hint to him as to the new situation):* For the same reason as everybody else.

JULIANUS: We're ignored, patrician. We're slighted and pushed into the background.

MAXIMUS: And you want light?

JULIANUS: Our places. We're tired of the plebeian treatment that is accorded to high-born noblemen. But now we're banded together and ready to resist.

MAXIMUS: Are there many of you?

JULIANUS: All the best of us. We have your son, Palladius, too.

MAXIMUS: Have you? And what do you want?

JULIANUS: A leader. A beacon to light our way, a promise of dawn at the dead of night...

MAXIMUS: You write poetry, do you?

JULIANUS: The truth is I'm a poet.

MAXIMUS: You'll make a success of it.

JULIANUS: People say so. I and my fellows offer you our abilities.

SIDONIUS: Your slogan is also theirs.

MAXIMUS: My slogan?

SIDONIUS *(confidentially):* "Rome is here to stay."

MAXIMUS: I fear not quite like Virgil thought.

1st SERVANT: The captain of the imperial palace guard, sir.

MAXIMUS *(to Julianus):* I must stop listening to your words of consolation. I have a hard task to face. I shall remember whom I can count on. *(Nods.)*

JULIANUS *(loudly):* Rome is here to stay!

(Sidonius and Julianus exit.)

MAXIMUS *(to the servant):* What message has he brought?

1st SERVANT: His Highness the Emperor asks for you.

FULGENTIUS: In the company of the eunuch? In the palace? Because in that case...

1st SERVANT: In the Silver Palace.

MAXIMUS *(after a slight pause):* I'll go. But first send my son to me.

(1st Servant goes off.)

FULGENTIUS: Why do you want to take leave of your son?

MAXIMUS: I'm not taking leave. I shall greet him. I haven't seen him since I returned.

FULGENTIUS *(looking out):* Escort... a whole company to give you a guard of honour! Maximus... what if you didn't go after all? We'll break through them and you can come with me to the senate. What needs must come to pass might as well start now.

MAXIMUS: No, old friend. I'll go along the path that I have chosen. I've come this far with my teeth clenched, and my jaws must bear a little longer my swallowing what concerns nobody else but me, what is my own business alone.

(Palladius comes in; they embrace. Fulgentius is about to go.)

MAXIMUS *(to Fulgentius):* Don't hurry off. Let's see together how much he's grown again. He always makes a nick on the jamb over there.

(He tries to lead his son there.)

PALLADIUS *(slipping from Maximus' arm):* Where's Mother? Didn't you bring her back with you?

MAXIMUS *(after a slight pause):* I didn't take her with me, Palladius.

PALLADIUS *(looking now at the one, then at the other of the two men):* So... it's true?

MAXIMUS: What is?

FULGENTIUS *(to Maximus):* There are wild rumours circulating.

PALLADIUS: They shout things at my

back, and one either flies at the slanderer for it or... or... is it true?

MAXIMUS: No, Palladius, it isn't. But we'll discuss everything later. I must be going now.

PALLADIUS: Where?

MAXIMUS: To the Emperor.

PALLADIUS: Oh, there? Please tell him, tell him...

MAXIMUS: I don't know, Palladius, if I can pass your message on. *(Goes out.)*

PALLADIUS *(from the window)*: A reinforced guard is escorting him?! As a prisoner?

(Runs to Fulgentius. Then both of them go to the window again.)

Curtain

SCENE TWO

(Julia's room in the emperor's villa in town. Julia is lying on a couch. Valentinianus is walking up and down with a satisfied expression on his face. He has been deep in thought, and he stops now as one who has come to the end of a line of thought.)

VALENTINIANUS *(jocosely, trying to be witty)*: And still, when I search the depths of my imperial soul, I cannot but pronounce that you are the person closest to me. You're my best help. If you don't get up, at least you might take up a more dignified posture lying on your couch, when you have such a distinction conferred on you.

JULIA: And must I also say something eloquent in reply?

VALENTINIANUS: Something flattering.

JULIA: You adolescent.

VALENTINIANUS: Thank you. Being that is God's greatest gift.

JULIA: Irresponsible adolescent, that's what you are.

VALENTINIANUS: That goes one better: that's the most heavenly grace.

JULIA: But you, poor thing, have been educated by the world just to be that.

VALENTINIANUS: Not to grow up?

JULIA: An emperor can never be a grown-up.

VALENTINIANUS: You're quoting that too from your husband?

JULIA: Stop saying I've heard everything from my husband.

VALENTINIANUS: Did he hear it from you? Why must emperors be brought up to remain children forever?

JULIA: So that they may forget by evening no matter how many murders they've committed in daytime. That they should not regard men as human beings...

VALENTINIANUS: He said that.

JULIA: All right. *(Becomes silent.)*

VALENTINIANUS: Go on just the same.

JULIA: Nor should they regard them as human.

VALENTINIANUS: Does not even your husband look on me as a human being?

JULIA: Who does? No one.

VALENTINIANUS: Now you're being disrespectful. But frank. I like that. Your words are frightfully outspoken. Do you know why?

JULIA: Because I'm not afraid of someone else's repeating them to you.

VALENTINIANUS: Not even my memory? That's the foulest informer.

JULIA: With the like of you.

VALENTINIANUS: It isn't so with others, I suppose? What's memory with them?

JULIA: A judge, you boy of a man. Or a charwoman. With some people it's an orchestra.

VALENTINIANUS: Judge? That's what I am myself.

JULIA: You? Give me an orange.

VALENTINIANUS: I'm famous for my judgements. Don't you know it? That was my strongest point from the very beginning. The innocent feel guilty at a word from me: they go peacefully to meet death! *(Laughs. Begins to peel the orange.)*

JULIA: You at least shouldn't simper at your own drivel.

VALENTINIANUS: Drivel?! Want to see my muscles? The ones inside? *(Strikes a gong.)* Look here, into my eyes. The eunuch followed me here with the cases of the convicts of the Conciatus prison. Honorius Status is one of them: I hesitated. Jupiter and Jehova both decide matters of life and death with a raising of their eyebrows. *(A body-guard enters.)* Whether you bat an eyelid or not, while I count five the decision will be made. *(After a slight pause to the guard)* Execute all fourteen of them.

(The guard salutes.)

JULIA: Madman! You idiot of a boy, you. *(To the guard)* You stay here.

VALENTINIANUS: Don't take away my confidence. *(Motions the guard to be off. The guard goes out. Valentinianus eats the orange voraciously, then hands a half to Julia.)* By this time of spring they lose their succulence a bit.

JULIA *(knocking the orange out of his hand):* Get out of my sight!

VALENTINIANUS: Like a queen. I don't know what your fate will be. But they say of persons like you: she was born to be an empress. *(Pause.)* I'd like to make you an empress. You have nothing to say to that? Just one sincere word. I have some other sentences to confirm yet.

JULIA: I'm not impressed by the imperial crown.

VALENTINIANUS: Neither am I.

JULIA: All men are, and every child. They all make-believe that their great grandfather was God himself.

VALENTINIANUS: I am *divus*. Pontifex maximus, even the Pope admits that. And I can assure you: I have my heavenly "voices." Maximus believes in them. *(He is about to strike the gong.)*

JULIA: Because he's a child.

VALENTINIANUS: He too?

JULIA: He too.

VALENTINIANUS: And the whole show is just a children's game, is it?

JULIA: Don't you feel it?

VALENTINIANUS: Then you are our mother! Young as you are. You are a woman! An excellent woman, that's what you are! What do you say to that?

JULIA: I shall make a note of it.

VALENTINIANUS: God or no god, I can feel myself a human being in your company—a divine one!

JULIA: You have felt the same with others, haven't you?

VALENTINIANUS: It was you I wanted. To me you're the woman. Not just because you command my respect and I elevate you above myself—a god. But because you're the first in whose company I can forget my shame.

JULIA: You can what?

VALENTINIANUS: Lose my shame. That's the greatest thing. In bed too I'm myself. Do you know why?

JULIA: Is it important that I should?

VALENTINIANUS: You're rough with me. It's natural. You treat me as you do everybody else. You treat me as a human. That's why I receive the prodigious gift of being able to feel human with you in every situation. I adore you! That I can adore you, someone at last, a human body!

JULIA: I ask again: is it important that you should speak about it?

VALENTINIANUS: I'd like to talk about it to everybody, even to him! I was so much alone. I'd like him to understand. Would he, do you think?

JULIA: He would.

VALENTINIANUS: It's a great feeling at last not to have a mirror behind me. When I got into bed with others I could never get free of the absurd thought: Caesar's, Julius Caesar's first successor to live up to his name—in bed! *(Laughs coarsely.)* With you, it is still just as in my mother's naked lap, like pigs in the mud! I'm no Caesar! Every time I see you I feel such frantic happiness *(touches her)* as a...

JULIA: ...a pig, I can see that.

VALENTINIANUS: ...that I could

go unclothed in your company. I have so much trust in you that I could go naked before you the whole day long. And you, Julia?

JULIA: Leave me alone.

VALENTINIANUS: How do you love me? You don't love me.

JULIA: In my own way.

VALENTINIANUS: You love Maximus.

JULIA: You shouldn't undress to that extent.

VALENTINIANUS: But he loves me. Isn't that true? Unconditionally, doesn't he?

JULIA: True, he does.

VALENTINIANUS: And I was grateful to him. He has complete love for me; he said so. I believed him. I'm judicious and by nature suspicious, though. Because for what other reason would he have made me that which he did? Am I right?

JULIA: You're right.

VALENTINIANUS: I was born Emperor of my mother, but it was he that made me ruler. And what a ruler! *(Almost beside himself)* I threw Attila himself to the ground! Who possesses God's courage? I use it as a whip to crack over my bloodhounds.

JULIA: Admirable.

VALENTINIANUS: I was born Emperor, but it was he who made me believe it. It wasn't easy. For I have my head in the right place. But I believed *him*. Can I?

JULIA: Confidently.

VALENTINIANUS: For who must we believe in if not in the man who has faith in us? Until his trust becomes our very soul. The bread of charity does not mean as much to the destitute beggar as his love means to me. That he should love me! He! Just he!

JULIA: He's proved it.

VALENTINIANUS: You should know. No one but you can tell.

JULIA: I know.

VALENTINIANUS: Did he send you to me out of nothing but the respect he feels for me?

JULIA: What else could it have been?

VALENTINIANUS: Grown tired of you?

JULIA: You think so?

VALENTINIANUS: Out of credulity? Since I lied to him.

JULIA *(it dawns on her)*: Did you?

VALENTINIANUS: I didn't keep my word. As a ruler should! Or he simply gave you to me when he was in wine. For I tell you I plied him with drinks.

JULIA: That's just when men never give up their women.

VALENTINIANUS: He really surrendered you out of fidelity?

JULIA *(laughs)*: Fidelity?

VALENTINIANUS: To me.

JULIA: To you.

VALENTINIANUS: Then why didn't he give you up to me completely? Because he didn't. I took you over, but you're not yet mine. You're not what you were to Maximus.

JULIA: Don't let your wits go again.

VALENTINIANUS: They're coming back. To clear up this matter finally: You think, do you, that I don't know you came here yielding only under duress? You did, didn't you?

JULIA: I did! What of it?

VALENTINIANUS: You weren't faithful to your husband. I mean it! You didn't obey him. You came here because you feared I'd have him killed. And not because he loved me more than he loved you. Isn't that so?

JULIA: It is.

VALENTINIANUS: You consent only because you're still afraid for him.

JULIA: I am not. I could be worried about your going completely mad, but I can no longer afford to.

VALENTINIANUS: A pity, because I feel I could be loved for myself too. All my statues are beauties. And they invariably resemble me.

JULIA: And their sculptor.

VALENTINIANUS: Excellent. We shall tell him. He'll appreciate it. How

about inviting him here once? To supper for instance. Supposing he came in through this door.

JULIA: I'd run out at the other.

VALENTINIANUS: But he would come, you think?

JULIA: Yes.

VALENTINIANUS: Here?

JULIA: Here too.

VALENTINIANUS: Wherever I called him to come?

JULIA: Wherever you call him.

VALENTINIANUS: Whenever I called him?

JULIA: Yes.

VALENTINIANUS: I've called him back to town. *(Pause.)*

JULIA: At the advice of the eunuch, I suppose?

VALENTINIANUS: He wants to have him done in. Always fresh arguments!

JULIA: And you?

VALENTINIANUS: Flutter of an eyelid? Let me see. Shall we kill him?

JULIA: As you wish.

VALENTINIANUS: Is it completely indifferent to you?

JULIA: By and large.

VALENTINIANUS: I asked him here for six.

JULIA: I shall go then.

VALENTINIANUS: How should I get you from him, if you're not here?

JULIA: You do it between yourselves.

VALENTINIANUS: You shall stay here.

JULIA: Let me go!

VALENTINIANUS: How shall we convince ourselves that while you love each other, you both of you love me better?

JULIA: Monsters, you.

VALENTINIANUS: Stay, I tell you! Julia! I told you to stay here. You've heard an imperial command! Stay!

JULIA *(from the door):* Imbeciles!

VALENTINIANUS: Stop! If you step over that threshold, I'll have his dead body thrown after you before three minutes are up, blue with poison or scarlet with blood. You're in the hands of the gods! We all are! In my hands!

(Maximus enters.)

MAXIMUS: Hail, Caesar. *(He takes no notice of Julia.)*

VALENTINIANUS: Let me greet you with a kiss. Dear brother! You're my dearest twin brother. *(Laughs wantonly.)* You've given me more than if you gave me back my mother. Which God forbid! I hated her. I like you two. *(Kisses him again and turns him towards Julia. Maximus pretends not to see her.)*

VALENTINIANUS: Did you know? Have you heard? How much?

MAXIMUS: As much as the town.

VALENTINIANUS: Yes?

MAXIMUS: That you have a mysterious woman hidden away in your villa. And she wishes to remain incognito.

VALENTINIANUS: Do you want me to introduce her to you?

MAXIMUS *(smiling):* Later on perhaps.

VALENTINIANUS: You're a splendid twin brother! *(Hugs him.)* Couldn't be better if we'd been nursed in the same cradle. And what's the talk in town about that mysterious unknown female?

MAXIMUS: Caesar, you've called me here on business of State. I have collected some information.

VALENTINIANUS: This *is* State business. She's had her windows pelted with stones. They hate her. But I shall protect her. Meantime I have no idea how to save Rome from the present danger. It's growing daily, isn't it?

MAXIMUS: It is.

VALENTINIANUS: And meanwhile even the oil vendors are already getting intoxicated with playing at constitution. At the bridges and street corners at night the crowds are so big that one can't make one's way through. I know everything. I've become a man who contemplates things on a larger scale. Really large-minded, and full of grand ideas. That's why I had you called

back. Back into the twin harness! I've rendered you a great service.

MAXIMUS: Even without having known it, I thank you, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS *(confidentially)*: Your life's been plotted against. You know how things are in a court like this. I defended you. It wasn't easy. In the meantime public affairs have come to be conducted on a large scale with a high hand.

MAXIMUS: I'm grateful.

VALENTINIANUS: You had protectors too. And I'm popular because I'm strong. Countries, women, only care for the strong arm, let it be ever so rash. With due allowance for the criticism of a senior, you too must realize this.

MAXIMUS: I do, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: Suddenly you came to my mind. No, you were never forgotten! That I might reward you! The eunuch will be nettled. But we can't afford to omit you from the new administration. I need you. I didn't let him lay hands on Fulgentius, out of consideration for you. He's a friend of yours, isn't he?

MAXIMUS: Since we were together at the military training college.

VALENTINIANUS: He organized the senators into a criminal gang! While you were away. In your name! Heraclius—he's all fury and zeal—wanted to do away with him personally. But one shouldn't leave everything to one man. It would put an altogether different aspect on it if you were to have him arrested. On the first day of resuming your office.

MAXIMUS: I didn't intend to return yet, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: I can't trust you? I thought I could. *(To Julia)* Give us something to drink.

MAXIMUS: You can trust me, Caesar.

(Julia prepares the drinks.)

VALENTINIANUS: The army is clamouring for the banishment of my faithful consort, Eudoxia. She's been in collusion with Genseric! She's made quite a camp for herself by appearing ready to sacrifice herself and tame the barbarian—in bed! And the main offence is that by doing so she's pandering to him and making him conceited. She can't show dignity. For the barbarians respect us for a start. A deputation has been here recently from the Vistula region. Their chief could, if he wanted, grind us to pieces more quickly than Genseric, it seems. And what does he ask for? A copper wolf mounted on a stick; and that I should appoint him to the rank of honorary sergeant because otherwise he isn't considered anybody at home. Genseric is also after something of this sort, but not an empress. Even if they manage to invade us.

MAXIMUS: Might they do so?

VALENTINIANUS: The emphasis has shifted a long time ago. To the survival of our way of life. Sidonius has written a superb treatise. The point is not whether they come but how and why. Genseric as despoiler of the throne is a scourge; as a prop to the throne, a blessing. That's clear as daylight. Anyone who doesn't see it will have their heads opened by steel and plain reason put in. *(Laughs.)* Clear?

MAXIMUS: Yes, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: Caius. There's no price too dear to pay in order that our way of life may survive. This is law, order and knowledge; in the darkness of the world this is the light towards which the barbarians are thronging with anything but destructive intent: moths attracted to the candle at night! To the pharos! *(Points at himself; takes a glass.)* Which, luckily, is burning with youthful ardour, with an over-all largeness of design. Don't you think so?

MAXIMUS: You've rarely been like this.

VALENTINIANUS: Never! Only since my mind's been at rest, since I've been with her. I've got colossal inspiration concerning Eudoxia as well. We'll kill two birds with one stone. You, not Genseric, shall marry Eudoxia. Will you think about it? I called you here to tell you this.

MAXIMUS: I'm searching for a good reason.

VALENTINIANUS: If Eudoxia becomes yours, you have her "camp" too; consequently, it's also mine because I can rely on your allegiance in everything. Or can I?

MAXIMUS: In everything, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS *(raises his glass):* To solemnize it! *(They drink.)* I shall have the whole "camp" torn to pieces by famished bloodhounds. And we shall marry off Placida to Genseric.

MAXIMUS: You promised her to Aetius' son.

VALENTINIANUS: We'll make that one alteration to the sculpture. He, the little Vandal, will break the news to the great Vandal—both of them will be honoured and fall into line before my carriage! Governing is like that, you can't help it! Handling the reins. *(Of Julia)* I have big plans for her too. I'll be sharing the power with her. She's worthy of it, isn't she?

MAXIMUS: The worthiest, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: She scorns me, detests me, tells me off, won't speak to me, but I can't get any real rest until I can feel her beside me on the double throne, not just in the double bed. *(To Julia)* Haven't you a word to say to this?

JULIA: I'm nauseated.

VALENTINIANUS: She's opened her mouth! At last. She's never done it in company since she's been here. The mysterious lady's introduced herself! Follow suit.

MAXIMUS: Respectful greetings to you.

VALENTINIANUS: From me too. The better half of my soul. What I was lacking. And what is now... two souls in one body, is one soul in two bodies! But she doesn't respect me. She hasn't become mine.

JULIA: Hold your tongue!

VALENTINIANUS *(in a plaintive voice):* Like the peasant with the nightingale, that's what I am with her. Only she doesn't warble in my hands. What shall I do? Tell me. I'm afraid even to caress her—*(breaking into a short fatuous laugh)* with my imperial hands! Even her. You didn't give her to me, you cheated me.

MAXIMUS: You've had too much drink, Caius.

VALENTINIANUS: She left her heart with you, yet I deserved to possess it. If only for the small achievement that all of this still remains. *(Says this of the town; goes to the window.)* Together with the watch-fires of "the supplicants for rights," which they have the impudence to light here, right under my nose with the vigilants of liberty—the ungrateful, the cowards! Have I deserved that much for the "outstanding" accomplishment? Or haven't I?

MAXIMUS: You have.

VALENTINIANUS: And if I should abandon the town now? I haven't received my wages. Dear, likeable Minotaur, I asked for one woman in it and was denied that one.

MAXIMUS: You've got her.

VALENTINIANUS: Don't joke. With might and main. You know best how women can outwit all kinds of force and get away with it, in defence of their virginity. They grow themselves a new one, a little further inside.

MAXIMUS: You have the power to take that too.

VALENTINIANUS: They grow it still further inside. And yet again further inside. Until it's in their "soul"! And she keeps hers intact in all this. Or rather it's yours. You didn't give me that. You gave me nothing. You didn't give me Fulgentius either, on whose account I called you.

MAXIMUS: He's in your hands.

VALENTINIANUS: But you're sorry for him. What can you find to pity in the likes of him?

MAXIMUS: He's honest.

VALENTINIANUS: Just in being that, he's doing the greatest harm! Let his neck be caught in a Spanish noose until he spits out his tongue and his eyes bulge out of their sockets. Cowardly, scurvy, thieving bastard! I have my reports.

MAXIMUS: You were misinformed, I will answer for him with my life.

VALENTINIANUS: You already staked your life once to save him from being devoured by the pikes in the Tiber last year.

MAXIMUS: Because then too you were misinformed.

VALENTINIANUS: You'd go the length of lying to get him out.

MAXIMUS: I'm not lying, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: Everybody lies to an emperor. Even horses letting the reins loose or pulling them taut with their mouths. Everybody lies to me. Except her. Why don't you lie to me?

JULIA: Because I hate you.

VALENTINIANUS *(feigning to be shocked):* Grrr! Thunderbolt!

JULIA: I hate you and pity you.

VALENTINIANUS: That hit me in the heart, if ever anything did. I've never had it like that before. *(Goes down on his knees)* My grateful thanks!

JULIA: Stop playing the fool.

VALENTINIANUS *(rising):* She really does pity me. As for you—she's afraid! She confessed to me that she only came to me for fear I might have you executed! But later she grew to love me. In gratitude. Gratitude, wasn't it?

JULIA: It's the alcohol that sets your tongue loose.

VALENTINIANUS: Upon the truth! What if we should test the truth? *(To Maximus)* It would be instructive for me. Nothing else would serve. I say it jokingly but I'll say it just the same. What is it to renounce a good friend? What would you say if I wanted more than that: if to test your reliability I'd have you executed?

JULIA: You're raving mad, you really are now. Your mind is all rotten.

VALENTINIANUS *(shaking his head in denial):* It's only my style. There's method in it. If I arrest you and tell you you're going to die—and I convince you that I mean it—are you still on my side?

JULIA: You can still rest assured.

VALENTINIANUS: That's just why I can't, because it's you who say it. *(To Maximus)* Just because—*(holds his head)* I can believe no one except you two. You alone can tell me the truth. *(Almost deliriously)* Tell me the truth, both of you, I want the truth. I implore you on my knees, be sincere to me. I know how hard it is. But—*(to Julia)* you must come to me sincerely, truly. *(To Maximus)* You must give her to me sincerely. She can't be mine, truly mine, in any other way. Not the Emperor's! I too am human. I'll go and leave you to yourselves. Talk it over, quietly, freely. Whatever your decision, it shall be so, upon my imperial oath. I also want a few words with Heraclius before I send him home.

(Goes out.)

(Pause. Julia and Maximus both look cautiously round. Conversation is difficult to start.)

JULIA: Did Heraclius come with you?

MAXIMUS *(shakes his head).*

JULIA: Did you come from home? *(Pause.)* I mean did you drop in at home? How's your son?

MAXIMUS: Well, thank you.

JULIA: Was the sports contest successful?

MAXIMUS: I don't know.

JULIA: If you see him, say the governess sends her love.

MAXIMUS: What governess?

JULIA: The one who served as secretary later. Until she got the sack.

MAXIMUS: She left.

JULIA: She was dismissed.

MAXIMUS: Left.

JULIA: Evidently she got a better place. *(Looks round, indicating what is "evident" about it.)*

MAXIMUS: Then why did she do it?

JULIA: There are some who remain in service even after being sent away—they're so servile.

MAXIMUS *(rushes to her):* Julia!

JULIA *(lifting a hand to stop him, since somebody may come in any minute):* They can

only be discharged from service by death. They have engaged their hearts so deeply.

MAXIMUS: And if they're offered new terms to re-enter service?

JULIA *(puts a finger on her lips in alarm and shakes her head in negation).*

MAXIMUS: Yes! Yes!

JULIA *(shakes her head again as a warning that someone is coming).*

MAXIMUS: I want that! Yes! Yes!

(Valentinianus enters.)

MAXIMUS: I too am human.

VALENTINIANUS *(in the half-lunacy of suspicion, after some silence):* Go on. What do you mean, "I want that"? It came from the heart. What is it you want?

MAXIMUS *(silent).*

JULIA: What you want, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS *(surprised):* There's something in your voice too, something different. You're being sincere. At long last! I can sense the sincerity!

JULIA: We are sincere, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: And will you be so, always? If I asked... Maximus... if I asked you to give her to me. *(Frantically)* For there's been enough fooling! Do you? Embrace her. There. Embrace and say good-bye to her, but say it from your heart, because you can't cheat me, and give her to me so.

JULIA *(in Maximus' arms):* Good-bye, Petronius.

MAXIMUS: God be with us, Caesar. *(Surrenders Julia.)*

VALENTINIANUS *(with Julia in his arms):* Did you give her to me?

MAXIMUS: I did, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: Say that she's mine.

MAXIMUS: Yours.

VALENTINIANUS: Of your own accord.

MAXIMUS: Yes, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: For it doesn't matter to you, does it? You used to give quicker answers, didn't you? You have no answer?

JULIA: You saw him nodding.

VALENTINIANUS: Let the answer creep in through my ears. My mouth, nose, through all my organs of sense. Do I really matter most to you?

MAXIMUS: Yes.

VALENTINIANUS: Unconditionally?

MAXIMUS: Unconditionally.

VALENTINIANUS: It's gratifying to hear. Almost as much as when Heraclius—*(chuckles)* says I'm immortal. But are you sure you don't say it because you think "this fool of a Caesar might be taken by a whim and he might at last cut my head off—*(bowing to Julia)* like a rose"?

MAXIMUS: I've always said so.

VALENTINIANUS: I abhor cowards. It isn't just the "creeps" that make you speak like that? For I am not only capable but also fond of passing judgement.

MAXIMUS: There's evidence, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: What? Where? Tangible evidence? I've got to be suspicious, it's my duty.

JULIA: Here! Me! Have you lost the last shreds of your sense? Who made you what you are?

VALENTINIANUS *(laughs):* But not for my sake.

JULIA: For whom else, you miserable fool?

VALENTINIANUS *(chuckles):* For the dear little men, the underdogs. For Rome. For his sake too, that is. You don't love me for what I am, either. Is it possible as long as there are others apart from me that dare to live? I'd have to exterminate the whole of mankind for high treason. Not only him. Or would he be sufficient? Instead of the poor little devils?

JULIA: I love you for your own sake.

VALENTINIANUS: Because I'm the best-looking man?

JULIA: The wisest, bravest, curliest-haired, the most musical!

VALENTINIANUS: And what about him?

JULIA: This snake, too sluggish even to

crawl? This slimy octopus? I shudder at the thought of even touching him.

VALENTINIANUS: But he loves me?

JULIA: Adores you like a god.

VALENTINIANUS: Then why does he defy me? Refusing to comply with my request?

JULIA: Does he?

VALENTINIANUS: As regards Fulgentius and Euxodia.

JULIA: He doesn't.

VALENTINIANUS: Thank you, my little steed. Just one more run. Tomorrow is the day of the swords. Dress parade on the Campus Martius. I have to go there, make a short speech to the new officers and those of them that distinguished themselves and... as these men are my ardent supporters, we can get everything done to perfection in one day. You cajole Fulgentius into coming here to the state room. Then when he's dispatched, we will go against the senate. As for Euxodia... well, she might turn everything upside down. Yes, you go and ask her today to marry you! I release her! Tell her in such a way that she will believe it. I'll tell her myself. I'll see you to her apartment. Well, I think this not a bad round of inspired ideas.

JULIA: Extraordinary.

VALENTINIANUS: Yes, that's the word. And if I'm declared immortal to crown it all? What about that? Let's go. Will you believe in it? No, you won't. Out of envy? Those who are mortal are envious. I'll come back, soon, dear.

JULIA: Not tonight.

VALENTINIANUS: Do let me come back.

JULIA: I'm tired.

VALENTINIANUS: As my reward.

JULIA: I'd like to sleep.

VALENTINIANUS *(to Maximus):* And not with me! You see how she treats me. I wouldn't dare to put her to the test. As I did with you, to eternity. Would I?

MAXIMUS: It's all up to you, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: Oh, thank you so much. Stand here. And look! *(He closes Julia in an embrace and kisses her long on the mouth, while he fixes his eyes on Maximus.)*

JULIA *(starts to resist for a moment as she is instinctively ashamed, but suddenly realizes that she can prevent Maximus from some reckless, violent act only if she repels him completely and so abandons herself to Valentinianus' embrace with over-acted passion).*

VALENTINIANUS: I'd like you to see us at a more intimate moment. Without our clothes on. As when she lets me come back again and again. *(Laughs.)* Bid her good-night.

MAXIMUS *(to Julia):* Good-night.

(They leave the room.)

(Julia blows the lamps out. The half-dark brings into prominence the light of the watch-fires in the streets of the town on the eve of the revolt, and that of a small sanctuary lamp in one corner. Julia is not a true Christian, she has reachea the half-way mark, and now not only in the matter of faith. She is aware of the lights outside, then, as if to hide from them, she kneels under a picture illuminated by the lamp. A young man jumps onto the window sill from outside. After listening for a moment, he leaps into the room. He looks round. Julia, rising, backs into the dark.)

PALLADIUS *(drawing a sword):* Lead me to your lady! Or else I'll do for you too. Go ahead!

JULIA *(lifting the small lamp and holding it to her face):* You're standing before her, Palladius.

PALLADIUS: Mother! Is it true? Don't come nearer. I've come to...

JULIA: You've said it already, Palladius. I offer no resistance.

PALLADIUS: The young people of Rome have chosen me to do with my stepmother what Brutus did with his stepfather... Don't speak. Don't make it more difficult for me.

JULIA: I shall make it easier. I shall do it myself, right? It's better for you too.

PALLADIUS: Why did you do this? To Father?

JULIA: That... that he may remain faithful. Stand up to all trials.

PALLADIUS: Whom for? What? No, don't answer. I have not come to question you.

JULIA: I know, darling. Do as you please.

PALLADIUS: The decision was not mine. I only undertook it. For it is the Ides of March, and that's Brutus' day...

JULIA: You can go and report to your fellows that it has been done. *(Noise outside.)* For I think you must go now.

PALLADIUS: But you don't say this to deceive me, do you? Well... I don't want to go.

JULIA: You can trust me. Though this new religion forbids just that which in the old gave us the greatest strength, but then I never had much faith in either. *(Smiles.)* Among so many gods I put my faith in one man. And so... Marcus Aurelius said: "There's smoke here. I'll go out." Come, let me smell that nice boyish hair of yours.

(Growing noise from outside. A torch appears in the window-frame; men-at-arms land on the sill.)

A VOICE: Here! He must have got in here.

JULIA: Come, quick. There! No, hide in there!

PALLADIUS: Why, is it a trap? If you, mother, if you too... I will not lay down my sword.

JULIA: No, you mustn't. *(Kisses him.)*

PALLADIUS: I'm not a child.

JULIA: Mother wouldn't betray you even if you weren't.

(Pushes him into the dark. Two armed men jump into the room. A third, who has to be helped in, is Heraclius.)

JULIA *(dignified, outraged):* What's happening here? Who gave you the right?

HERACLIUS: Your own interest.

JULIA: Get yourselves out of here.

HERACLIUS: Haven't you seen the assassin?

JULIA: I saw nobody! No one came here. I was here.

HERACLIUS: Allow us to lend you our eyes. *(Waves to the other two men to search the room.)*

JULIA: Don't take a single step! *(After a short pause she crosses to the door and shouts out)* Caesar, Caesar! *(To the soldiers)* Back to where you were before.

HERACLIUS: I'm glad I can report to Caesar himself.

JULIA: Don't be cruel. Go away. I pray you go away.

HERACLIUS: You're hiding your lover, I presume?

JULIA: Get out.

HERACLIUS: Because I would understand that.

JULIA: And will you go if I tell you he's here?

HERACLIUS: Of course. With him. Where is he?

(Draws his sword. Valentinianus enters, out of breath.)

JULIA: Tell them to get out. They assaulted me.

HERACLIUS: Caesar...

VALENTINIANUS *(still panting):* Did they hurt you?

JULIA *(indicating the window):* They jumped in through there!

VALENTINIANUS *(stepping over):* Came up the ladder?

HERACLIUS: Following after the man who...

VALENTINIANUS: Shut up! *(Embraces Julia with one arm. With a movement of his head orders the man standing nearest to step up on the sill. The man obeys, starts for the ladder. Valentinianus shakes his head. The soldier looks down and winces at the height. Valentinianus glances at the other soldier, who draws his sword and lunges forward towards the one in the window. The latter jumps to his death. A soft thud indicating the height. Valentinianus now orders the second one to step up. The previous scene is enacted again, only this time it is Heraclius who is the bully. Valentinianus, who has gone through all this with a feverish enjoyment, licking his lips, for a few*

moments stares at Heraclius with a burning look. Then he pats his face.) You're a fine steed, you are.

HERACLIUS *(making a strange moan, flings himself before Valentinianus. Julia makes for the place where she hid Palladius.)*

HERACLIUS *(kneeling):* Only me, Caesar. Give your love to me only. *(Stands up.)* Don't believe them. I overheard their conversation. *(Triumphantly)* No one else loves you but me. I'm the only one fit for you. His son is a thug. Himself a traitor. He didn't give her to you. If you put him into my hands, everything will be in such order tomorrow that you can set your feet on the sun, I warrant you. Oh, let him make a confession tonight that he's scheming your downfall! Let me arrest him at once!

VALENTINIANUS: No. Not before the senate.

HERACLIUS *(with lustful pleasure):* But after that I can? Oh, do you feel how much I adore you?

VALENTINIANUS: Only that now it's you who are pulling the more splendidly. *(They go out. Julia enters. Presently Palladius comes with drawn sword in his hand. He approaches Julia slowly. When he has got close to her, he drops the sword, goes down on his knees, kisses the hem of Julia's dress, then almost pulling himself up her, he folds her in his arms.)*

JULIA *(softly):* Oh, if only you could be my death, Palladius, and purity!

Curtain

ACT THREE

(A reception room in the imperial palace. A dual throne on the dais. Maximus and Fulgentius.)

MAXIMUS: So it happened. And now make haste and see to it that my message is turned into deeds. It was madness for you to take a chance by coming here. Take relay horses and go at least as far as Verona.

FULGENTIUS: And there let fall a few solemn sentences about how I left my friend in the lurch, who did nothing more than risk his life for me. While I was myself stealing out of the town, which is at last... *(Listens to the noises outside.)*

MAXIMUS: This isn't the right moment for big words.

FULGENTIUS: There's a time when only big words can fly across a country and find attentive ears. My words did have wings last night. The senate is still crouching, but like a wounded lion getting ready to spring even at the prick of a thorn. Yes, I declaimed myself hoarse. Coming out of the hall I went on haranguing on the steps outside and then I don't know on how many rims of wells in the market places.

MAXIMUS: He may be back any minute from inspecting his troops. He'd ordered all his reliable companies to assemble, and if he should return at the head of them...

FULGENTIUS: You'd be compelled to put aside all other considerations and arrest him.

MAXIMUS: For shame! Get you gone!

FULGENTIUS: I'm proud that it was my cause that brought you round to your present heroic course.

MAXIMUS *(brushing this aside):* Let me take Julia out of his hands safe and unharmed, and my course too will be: away from here, as when a whole town is crumbling during an earthquake.

FULGENTIUS: So you're foolish enough to think you can simply retrieve such a treasure? From that filth? And without consequences? You've embarked on a course, and if you look ahead you must see that...

MAXIMUS: I haven't and I see nothing except that the whole world is falling upon me and I'm merely improvising from one minute to the next. But now at least it's my heart that dictates my actions!... He's coming! They're cheering him. Take my carriage.

FULGENTIUS *(looking out):* These cheers are not for him. Who are they? Not many togas to be seen... *(disappointed)* I thought

for a minute they were the young men from the senate. Your "shopkeepers." Only yesterday they were making a hullabaloo over the high price of oil. And today? Carthage, Aetius?

(From outside: "Maximus! Maximus!")

MAXIMUS: You are getting me into a pretty kettle of fish!

FULGENTIUS: They want a leader.

MAXIMUS: Let them wake Aetius.

FULGENTIUS: They're doing just that when they shout your name right after his. Well, look how they're taking to their heels! The security guards!

MAXIMUS: Then you too should run for it!

FULGENTIUS: There's no more hurry for me than for the plumbers and tanners! What they're shouting I'd like to get the senate to shout in more appropriate forms. You can't stand aside now. *(Points to the throne.)* I've long wanted to say it: there's your place! To save it from crashing down, and burying all forever!

MAXIMUS *(pointing to his chest):* The crash is going on in here, burying all, forever!

FULGENTIUS: If you seat yourself there, that alone will suffice for the vermin to clear out. The vermin that damned wretch planted there.

MAXIMUS: I made a terrible mistake. The vermin are established at its very core. This is what gave that pitiful brute the staggers, and perhaps it's only because of this that he has to answer for becoming so corrupted. Away—away from him!

FULGENTIUS: While in the officers' training camp I was dreaming how nice it would be to be your aide-de-camp in some heart-warming, noble encounter.

MAXIMUS: "Noble"? "Heart-warming"? "Encounter"? Fulgentius!

FULGENTIUS: Well, let it be foul, let it be what the times allow! But the end will justify us! *(As Maximus tries to induce him to go)* No, not to Verona! I'll entrench myself in the senate. Let him come break in there. Let me be there too, as the last drop in the cup.

(Bugles and drums of the palace guard off stage.)

FULGENTIUS: I should wish, if I were mean, to provoke him into trying out now his cunning scheme of breaking us up and to let him put his hand into that swarming hive! I go, but only to return with our most honourable elders. *(He would continue. Outside: whistling and a general uproar. Cheering. Drums. Fulgentius, moved, parting from an embrace, hurries off. The cheers and the drums are getting louder. Words of command. Body-guards come running in and line up.)*

SIDONIUS *(running in):* Long live Caesar! *(Notices Maximus. Says to him)* Long live Caesar! *(Julianus, Cautinus, Avernarius come hurrying in. They also form into a line and cheer Valentinianus. Valentinianus enters in full pomp but quite beside himself, Heraclius in his wake.)*

VALENTINIANUS: Never before has anything like that happened to me! They cut into my words! *(Brushes aside the cheerers.)* They interrupted me in the middle of a sentence! *(Throws down his purple cloak.)*

HERACLIUS: I should suggest...

VALENTINIANUS: You too dare cut in? *(To Maximus)* And you? Where are you going? You stay here! They cut me short! I began a declaration and was interrupted. By the legions aligned for inspection! It was the Burgundians, I thought it was the Burgundians from their vicious accent. Was it they? You stood near them.

SIDONIUS: It was, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: And the scum on the way back! Irreverent rabble! They go to church and don't respect me?

(Nobody answers.)

Can't one make one's way in this town? *(To Maximus)* We could hardly elbow our way across the bridge. Who were they? What was it? Saturnalia of the sewer men? *(To Maximus)* It seemed to me as if they were grunting your name. *(Silence.)*

HERACLIUS: And Julia's.

VALENTINIANUS *(To Julianus):* I'll make you responsible for seeing that every

one of them dangles from crosses set up where they were shaking their fists at me. At *me! (Looks out. The din now sounds nearer: "Death to the murderers of Aetius!" Julianus draws the curtains and stays motionless.)*

VALENTINIANUS *(alarmed for a moment):* I didn't think there were so many of them. *(Listening)* The whole town? *(Solemnly)* I'll show my strength. I'll show them who's to be respected here. *(Fresh outbursts of shouting, yet in confusion: "To the senate! To the senate... Hurrah!")* Break them up! At once! *(Stands before the throne. Everybody remains motionless. Silence.)*

HERACLIUS: I suggest not.

VALENTINIANUS *(beside himself):* It's an order! You also would spare them, would you?

(The outside noise increases in volume and ever more distinctly culminates in: "To the senate!")

HERACLIUS: This is why. Keep order, Caesar. First, the senate. And that quickly, before they can come to agreement among themselves.

VALENTINIANUS: Where's Fulgentius? Did you have him here? Have you taken care of him?

MAXIMUS: He came here, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS *(relieved):* One thing at least I predicted.

MAXIMUS: He was here but went away again. It seemed fit to me that he should.

VALENTINIANUS *(addressing those around him one by one):* Bring him back! You will answer for this! He let him go! His head! His severed head! Or yours!

HERACLIUS: Difficult, Caesar. Keep calm, Caesar.

CAUTINUS: Here we are, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: I command you as imperator primus.

HERACLIUS: Fulgentius may have got across by now, and there in the senate... I suggest an urgent meeting of the privy council.

VALENTINIANUS *(fuming with rage):* Bring the senate here, down to a man, here at my feet! *(To Maximus)* I'll have him executed. I told you that. *(To Heraclius)* All right, let's have a conference, as you suggest. Out with you! *(With the exception of Maximus and Heraclius everyone goes, bowing before those that remain. Each bow differs from the other, however slightly, revealing each person's reaction to the situation and his assessment of how the land lies.*

CAUTINUS: Long live Caesar!

The emptier the room becomes the more Valentinianus' self-assurance ebbs away until he finally all but collapses. Panic-stricken—as vacant as the room—he cowers on the throne, looking helplessly for advice towards the two who have stayed behind.)

VALENTINIANUS *(low):* Has it come to the worst? Just now *(to Maximus confidentially)* when I'm so happy at last! When I've learnt what affection is. Love. Is there anybody who wants my death? Speak first, you, and then you.

HERACLIUS: Time is pressing. The expedient I suggested last week can best be carried out tomorrow. Or could we perhaps do it tonight? *(To Maximus)* To put you in the picture, my plan of dealing with the situation radically was... well, a big reception here in the imperial palace with all the senators invited, with an imperial declaration on the traitors to the Empire and with drinks that would be taken care of by, say, myself and Sidonius. *(Of Valentinianus)* He thought it premature.

VALENTINIANUS *(looks at Maximus questioningly).*

MAXIMUS: Why premature?

VALENTINIANUS: It's copying.

HERACLIUS: He's hinting at the little operation which the evil tongues in Rome have named 'Aetius's party.'

VALENTINIANUS: And which was followed by parties for Fadus, then Fidia, each a repetition of the other. They wouldn't come, to begin with.

HERACLIUS: Then that would be reason enough. But I bet they would come.

VALENTINIANUS: Julia didn't like it either. And she knows what's good for me. What do you say?

MAXIMUS: I wanted to talk about another topic, Caesar. It's Julia. And afterwards let me return to my estate.

VALENTINIANUS: You betray me! I need you badly. Just now I have sore need of you.

MAXIMUS: You've got Heraclius. I don't want any rivalry with him.

VALENTINIANUS: On the contrary, you ought to want it. I order you to emulate him. Have you no longer any care for what's good for me?

HERACLIUS: He thinks the method's beneath his dignity. As if he hadn't known about it all along. Hadn't been deep in it! He is now starting to get squeamish—about his hands. All he gave was his soul.

MAXIMUS: How many people are you thinking of inviting?

HERACLIUS: Sixty. Possibly just fifty. Of course, Fulgentius together with his family. If he should fail to turn up... all his friends, too.

(Pause.)

VALENTINIANUS: What do you think?

MAXIMUS: Not enough. It wouldn't silence them.

HERACLIUS: It did, after Aetius.

MAXIMUS: His name has never been so much shouted about as now.

VALENTINIANUS: Where? Whom by?

HERACLIUS: It isn't true. It's only those who want to stir up discontent. The method is a practicable one, we all know. But for tonight? Difficult.

MAXIMUS: We should consider something else.

VALENTINIANUS: Well, go ahead. But straightaway!

HERACLIUS: Because too much consideration now does nobody any good except *them!* And he who gives them time puts arms into their hands.

MAXIMUS: I haven't thought it out yet. I don't know if I should say it.

VALENTINIANUS: I make it your duty.

MAXIMUS: How many can you trust among your body guards? Two hundred?

HERACLIUS: Three thousand!

MAXIMUS: I'm asking about those who are reliable as far as he is concerned, not you.

VALENTINIANUS: Two. One! *(Raises a finger, then after some thinking bends it towards himself.)*

MAXIMUS: A bit more is needed. I'm thinking of your original plan—I don't know if you've spoken about it to other people—the plan I thought a stroke of genius when you first suggested it as a "constitutional" means of curbing the senate.

VALENTINIANUS: I forget now what I proposed.

MAXIMUS: It was one of your best inspirations. Widening your powers of nomination and sending as many new senators in as...

VALENTINIANUS: I remember now. You think it will work?

MAXIMUS: Supremely well! You make senators of as many of your most reliable guards as are needed to outvote the dissenters. And thereby you nip the riot in the bud by constitutional means. You may as well set about doing it right away. Here's a sheet of paper. Sign it, and I'll write above your signature the names of those who in twenty minutes will bring the senate down in tumultuous applause as many times as they hear your name uttered.

HERACLIUS: I'll put down the names.

MAXIMUS: You do that.

HERACLIUS *(takes the sheet of paper)*: The present senators will never accept these names. They are not so stupid. Even though they are led by Fulgentius.

MAXIMUS: I'll get them to accept the names. I'll go there myself.

HERACLIUS: Sign it, Caesar. I will go there and come back straightaway with

at least a thousand of my most reliable men! I'd like you to stay here till then and not go out.

MAXIMUS: Is your confidence shaken in me too?

HERACLIUS: Perhaps just in your family. Oh, don't let that irritate you! I didn't mean her. You wrote her off heart and soul, I know. But your son's gone over to them!

MAXIMUS: What has happened to my son?

HERACLIUS: An accomplice in high treason, he has managed to escape from the hands of justice and retribution. But if he's caught...

MAXIMUS *(after a slight pause, making a low bow):* I disclaim my son with the same easy conscience as I would disclaim anything else for my emperor.

(Exit Heraclius)

VALENTINIANUS: So you had a son? But you don't mind, do you?

MAXIMUS: After my wife and what you may call my best friend? For you? What do you think!

VALENTINIANUS: I can understand that. But it's for a different reason that I feel you closer to me now. I really feel you're closer to me. The eunuch spoke the truth: you were squeamish. You were with us, but—how should I put it—never gave your soul. Never openly enough, if you see what I mean. You never came to the best executions.

MAXIMUS: I will in the future.

VALENTINIANUS: It's the most manly sensation to see our opponents on the cross or on the wheel. *(Whispering)* That's the true victory which rises here *(shows his chest)* till it makes your mouth water. That's —nectar! To miss it! Well, from now on you'll be one of us. We'll drink on it!

MAXIMUS: It shall be so, Caesar.

VALENTINIANUS: Caius! Thank you. *(Hugs him.)* Thank you, my little steed! This was what I really missed. Now a sense of completeness diffuses throughout my being. This is the best kind of energy. *(Goes to the window; the noise outside increases and becomes distinct: Out with the whore! Out with the whore from the Silver Palace!)* They're running! They're being beaten up. Oh! I feel in my arms how good it is to hold the reins while my coach is flying! *(Laughing at the din down in the street)* Over those rough flagstones. It isn't true that I fear danger. I'm seeking it. When its whole frame rattles and the coach clears a corner with one wheel in the air and only the other touching the ground, the one in the air freely revolving as the sun in the sky! Remember Catalaunum? That was a race course, perilous and breathtaking! But who held the reins and the whip? I can still feel the itch in the palm of my hands. *(Kisses first his palm, then Maximus.)* You were pulling splendidly then, just as now. And as for the future! If we overtake the running hares, and at them! Together. *(Pours out drink.)* To our covenant of yesterday. Afterwards *(chuckles confidentially)* we'll put the seal on it with her.

MAXIMUS: I'm pleased to hear it, Caesar.

(They drink.)

VALENTINIANUS *(listening):* Now all's silent and clear again! *(Stepping to the window)* The street is empty. Heraclius has swept it clean. He took the guards with him.

MAXIMUS: From the Silver Palace as well.

VALENTINIANUS: To the senate. You must cooperate with him better. He has a great advantage over you. His want! Even his mind is insensible to woman. *(Fills the cups again.)* In olden times Hercules used to be the male ideal for women. They say it's all over now. *(Shakes his finger in negation.)* Strength now lies not in the muscles of the arm, the power to pull out the dragon's fangs is not there. But here, for instance *(moves his little finger)*. Or in this *(turns down his thumb)*. Do you know why

I'm so glad of power, so much so *(makes snake-like movements with his arms like a contortionist from the East)* that I can feel the thrill of it even in the marrow? Or when I'm counting money? *(Acts it.)* I'm worth a hundred gladiators! *(With a nod towards the Silver Palace)* She admires me! I come first. *(At noises from the street, which can again be heard)* Whatever happens it will only prove I come first. And you? How did you get along with Eudoxia?

MAXIMUS: She's no friend of yours.

VALENTINIANUS: Sweet woman! Have you won her?

MAXIMUS *(about to answer, but stops to listen to the tumult outside):* They've reached the Silver Palace.

VALENTINIANUS: I'll send the guard over from here. *(Going out)* But who'll be here? Who'll defend me? I'll tell her to come over. Let her come here. I'll send for her. I'll go and fetch her.

(Goes out, indicating with a glance where Julia can come over across the suspension bridge between the two wings of the building. Maximus looks calmly towards Julia's apartment and follows the bridge with his eyes. Then drinks. The noise grows outside. He takes out a poison phial. He does not pour it into the cup, however; he puts down the phial while pursuing another train of thought. Goes to the adjoining room and comes back with a sword. Suddenly running steps are heard. Among others Julianus comes bursting in, with Cautinus, both white with alarm.)

JULIANUS: Maximus! We're besieged!

CAUTINUS: They're calling on us to surrender.

MAXIMUS: The senators? From the senate?

CAUTINUS: Those from the suburbs!

JULIANUS: The people! And that we should hand Caesar out, into their hands!

MAXIMUS *(glances towards the Silver Palace):* And you?

JULIANUS: What do you mean by us?

MAXIMUS: Which side are you on now?

CAUTINUS: What a question! Maximus!

JULIANUS: Your name's written on their posters.

MAXIMUS: A band to the Silver Palace, quick, and bring its captive to me.

JULIANUS: What shall we say to the besiegers?... Can we say that you're here... that you... What are we to say?

CAUTINUS *(urging):* What is it to be exactly?

MAXIMUS: What you like.

CAUTINUS: Ave Maximus Petronius—imperator!

JULIANUS: Divus!

MAXIMUS *(dismisses them.)*

(Valentinianus enters quite beside himself.)

VALENTINIANUS: Horrible. I'm afraid. Afraid for my life. *(Suddenly majestically)* Justly and naturally. I didn't go over for Julia.

MAXIMUS: I'll look after her.

VALENTINIANUS: I expected you to do as much. The gates are strong, luckily. The rats. I'll go sailing in their spilt blood when I've done with them. To rise against their god? They're shouting your name? Wait. *(Taking thought: he has an "inspiration")* You go out to them and quieten them before Heraclius returns. I'll burn the whole town to the ground, nay, the whole empire, if they don't come to heel! Where on earth has Heraclius got to? Can he have betrayed me? But you, my sweet steed, come on! I'm your rider. What, are you afraid? You're not, are you? You know what I am. What are you listening to? What is it?

MAXIMUS *(from the window):* I admire their sense of responsibility for each other and the community! Do you hear what hurts that one. Carthage! As a Cato! And the other? Revenge. For his father? His son? Aetius?

VALENTINIANUS: He's dead.

MAXIMUS: How noble they are! There isn't one among them, I believe, who hasn't had some one dear to him killed by you. Do you hear what they are shouting?

Firmness with the Vandals. Such selfless loyalty! It's for the senate that their hearts grieve. It seems that Heraclius' mission has failed. They're concerned for the constitution. Superb! As far as the eye can see, the streets and squares of Rome are thronged with cheering, roaring, clamouring crowds, tens of thousands of people armed, ready to fight, yet not one single honourable elder among them to tear his grey hair or shout, yes... *(listening to the shouts)* death to you! Because you outraged his parental feelings for a boy or girl or both, for you've carried it on pretty professionally.

VALENTINIANUS: Maximus Petronius! I dare not comprehend...

MAXIMUS: Not a single husband, tempered in valiant battles, to brandish his sword down there and demand, yes, your downfall and destruction, so as to wash off in your blood the stains you smeared his honour and household with.

VALENTINIANUS: In your interest I dare not understand.

MAXIMUS: I can hardly do so either. Why are they shouting my name? Because they want me to cleanse them of the filth which they themselves dare not be aware of wallowing in, but which has spread from me to the whole world.

VALENTINIANUS: Are you mad?

MAXIMUS: I'd like to be. For else *(laughs)* I must go out of my mind for the ridicule of it.

VALENTINIANUS: Traitor!

MAXIMUS: Excellent! How did you say it? Say it again.

VALENTINIANUS: Respect my rank.

MAXIMUS: It's the same to the accent! Just like mine. I taught you that too. How does it go again?

VALENTINIANUS: Maximus Petronius, you're trifling with your life.

MAXIMUS: Just like a mirror. It makes me choke with laughter. Could I be that if I were you? Am I like that? Horrible! That vacant grimace? This puffed up winebag? This insubstantial image in a mirror?

VALENTINIANUS: You're in my hands!

MAXIMUS: You never realized, did you, that *I* was moving your hands, eyes, tongue, mind—even your heart and loins?!

VALENTINIANUS: Blasphemer! *(Starts out.)*

MAXIMUS: You shall stay put! And kindly listen to me, will you. Come down from your Olympus. Sit down on your backside and let's have a quiet talk.

VALENTINIANUS *(sits down)*: I see no point in it. You're not in your right senses.

MAXIMUS: We do something important not because there's reason for doing it. We do it because it's unavoidable. Can you recall your own self? Remember the boneless, marrowless, spineless wretch that you were before I stood by you...

VALENTINIANUS: I pronounce judgement on you: tomorrow you shall cease to be, unless you retract what you've said.

MAXIMUS: ... and that you still are now, if I leave you.

VALENTINIANUS: You! Now *I* am the one to laugh. Who gave you your rank?

MAXIMUS: You'd been nothing. But you were given a task. And we rallied around you. Behind you there was a senate carrying great authority, composed of all the most respectable elders, ready to give wise counsel. On one side, a firm-handed general who won all his battles—for you. On the other, the world's most ambitious politician, who subordinated his own personality to the cause—for you. And you went mad. You came to believe that all this was for your sake; that you were the task. Whoever flattered you once, you took to be yours, you lapped it all up, you stupid mirror! You began to have your fits of blustering and smashed everything. The general of the army lies dead in his grave; the enemy is on the march ready to come in when he likes; the wise elders may

well be busy just now endorsing a solemn declaration on your dethronement, unaware that the shopkepers, the slaves have already done it, and your mainstay, the self-effacing politician who invested all his ambition in you—*(takes up the sword)* must fight himself free of you.

VALENTINIANUS *(drawing, backing):* Help! Madman! Sacrilege!

MAXIMUS: Don't shout. One step and I thrust this steel into you from here. *(Both of them are at a distance from the main door.)*

VALENTINIANUS: I'll have you crucified. Guard! *(Footsteps. The door is flung open.)* I'll have you broken on the wheel. You'll swing on the tree five days! Till you turn black!

JULIANUS *(with his fellows behind him; after a slight pause):* Waiting for your command—*(turning his head towards Maximus)* Caesar.

MAXIMUS: Don't disturb me till I call you.

JULIANUS: I have to report that Heraclius...

VALENTINIANUS: Is he coming?

JULIANUS: Only his head. He was quartered.

CAUTINUS: To be nailed onto the gate.

VALENTINIANUS: The senators?

JULIANUS *(to Maximus):* He never got there. Shall we try and rescue his body?

MAXIMUS: I have nothing to say yet. Only to him. *(Dismisses them. They take reverent leave and go out.)*

MAXIMUS *(quietly):* Take a seat.

VALENTINIANUS *(makes an instinctive movement towards the throne; then backs to the chair and puts his sword on it):* I'm willing to resign.

MAXIMUS *(repeating his gesture of offering a seat, he waits respectfully for Valentinianus to sit down first):* In the marshes of the Nile one gets malaria. On the sea one becomes sick. On that—*(pointing to the throne)* you became insane. No matter. But your insanity is a public menace. It got worse, it got out of control more and more as the days went by. There's no remedy against that raving lunacy except... *(becomes silent).*

VALENTINIANUS *(gradually realizing the truth):* Do you want—to kill me?

MAXIMUS: Everybody does. The situation, first of all, demands it. But I'm reluctant, as you see. Does it help? It is as though this sword through your heart were working its way into mine.

VALENTINIANUS: You want my place.

MAXIMUS: I failed in you. I must free myself from you.

VALENTINIANUS: I don't understand a word.

MAXIMUS: Is it possible that something divine—however small—should not speak through a man in whom the people placed divine trust? The devil spoke through you. He roared.

VALENTINIANUS: I'm not guilty!

MAXIMUS: You only embodied something? The little men in the street believe that the evil may perish with you.

VALENTINIANUS: I'm innocent.

MAXIMUS: The trade of being a god is a dangerous one. Especially when that god hasn't yet quite pulled his feet from off the ground or when they have already started dangling down again. The little men catch at them and—you'd better not go out among them. *(Looks for his sword.)*

VALENTINIANUS *(backing in deadly alarm):* What do you want with me? You of all people, who...

MAXIMUS *(choking):* I must break out. I must be delivered. Of you! A whole country must be reborn. *(Laughs)* Through a Caesarian section!

VALENTINIANUS: No, no, Petronius! *(Shrieks like a woman)* Help! Guard! Julia!

MAXIMUS: I can't touch you if you do that. Don't be so womanish. It's unavoidable. And be thankful for ending your life in this way and not like the other, torn to pieces in the street.

VALENTINIANUS: I'm an evil-doer, fallible, depraved. But a man, I'm a man, Petronius, like anybody else. Throw me into jail, the deepest dungeon, send me to the galleys or to a mine. Anything but this.

MAXIMUS: Do come to understand this. It's just to make us men again. To make me a man. Where did I finally leave off being one? Remember our dice game?

VALENTINIANUS: Forgive me. I couldn't resist. And I didn't know...

MAXIMUS: Where to draw the line between us? The line between power and self-indulgence? There's something I didn't know either. That there is a limit to the power, not of an emperor, but of the gods, nay, the one god. Where already there is no god! Do you understand this?

VALENTINIANUS *(solemn):* The interests of the Empire...

MAXIMUS: Idiot! Where even the Empire must serve the individual.

VALENTINIANUS: Just one moment. One minute! And not like this!

(Julia comes in through a side-door. Stands still, unobserved.)

MAXIMUS: There. Poison.

VALENTINIANUS: Yes. *(Goes over, raises the phial, then the cup, his hands trembling.)* I can't pour it out. *(Puts everything back. Starts imploringly towards Maximus. Notices Julia.)* Julia! *(Heads towards her with arms flung out wide, but before embracing her, stops short, and dropping his head looks askance at Maximus as if to ask permission.)* He's going to kill me!

MAXIMUS: Stand aside.

VALENTINIANUS *(to Julia):* Because of you. He's killing me because of you.

MAXIMUS *(to Julia):* Go out.

JULIA *(after a pause):* Spare him.

VALENTINIANUS *(exultantly, almost amorously):* Oh. *(He would embrace Julia, but she steps clear of him.)*

MAXIMUS *(to Julia):* Turn aside. *(Steps towards Valentinianus pointing his sword at him.)*

VALENTINIANUS: Help! I give her back. I give you back. *(To Maximus)* She never loved me. *(To Julia)* I never loved you.

MAXIMUS: Don't foul your soul.

VALENTINIANUS: One word. Just one word, and he'll calm down.

JULIA: Leave him alone.

VALENTINIANUS: And she's yours again. Yours. Do you hear?

MAXIMUS: I'm disgusted. Disgusted. *(Lowers the sword).*

VALENTINIANUS: I've given her back. See I've given her back.

MAXIMUS: Make me believe it! *(Puts his hands on his chest.)* Put her back here! As she used to be!

VALENTINIANUS *(to Julia):* Go back to him. You're his again.

JULIA *(stepping beside Maximus and reaching for the sword):* We're together again.

MAXIMUS: Not while I have this suffocating caul around me, not until I'm born out of it, not till I've washed off that stain.

JULIA: With a new stain, Petronius?

MAXIMUS: Silence! And let the god too stop his ears. *(Raises the sword to stab. In the deadly silence he drives Valentinianus back to the wall.)*

VALENTINIANUS *(stilled into a low whisper by his horror):* She's never been mine, never. *(Crying)* Nothing was ever mine.

EUDOXIA *(her voice outside, shrill and high in violent contrast to the silence in the room):* They're battering at my gate too! Murderers!

(Julia withdraws behind the table on which the poisoned cup stands.)

VALENTINIANUS: Julia! You are leaving me! My life! My all!

(Almost collides with Eudoxia coming in with her train. Sidonius is also among her attendants.)

EUDOXIA: Is that what you're worrying about now? Order troops to my gate. I never! To abuse me! *(To Maximus)* While they're cheering you. What's going on out there? And what's this here between you?

VALENTINIANUS *(to Eudoxia):* He wants to kill me, he wants to kill me. My lifeboat. Take me from here—anywhere!

EUDOXIA *(sizing up the situation in a minute):* You'd only get what you deserve. But *(to Maximus)* he's of royal blood, you can't spill it.

VALENTINIANUS: Have mercy, Petronius. *(Kneels)* Everything is yours. She's yours. And that *(pointing to the throne)* and this *(the cloak)* too, all I have.

MAXIMUS: Your blood is not enough to wash it all off. What more could I squeeze out of you. Your honour? Your self-respect? *(To Eudoxia)* Come. Tell him to his face what you said of him yesterday.

EUDOXIA: Will you spare him thus?

MAXIMUS: Spare me. Help me to come into the world. Relieve me. Give me air.

EUDOXIA *(to Valentinianus):* I hate you. I've hated you all my life.

VALENTINIANUS: Thank you, for your goodness. *(Kisses her hand.)*

EUDOXIA *(majestically lifts her hand to be kissed, then turns with the same air of majesty to Maximus):* You can count on me. Even though Carthage come—you will be the first. *(Exit.)*

VALENTINIANUS *(to Julia):* Go and appease him, you too.

MAXIMUS: No, there's no relief. There can be no mercy. For you are the living vice. Oh, you miserable wretch... have you to burden me with that too? *(Turns away to gather strength.)*

SIDONIUS: Allow me, sir. *(Bowing low, he takes the sword from Maximus' hand. With a nod of his head tells Valentinianus to go ahead to the door.)*

VALENTINIANUS *(still terrified but slowly becoming quiet, backs towards the door):* You? You! May I trust—you?

SIDONIUS: Till death, Caesar.

(Valentinianus bends to retrieve his purple robe from the ground but Sidonius signals him to leave it. They go out. Suddenly a yell. Sidonius bends back and with an apologetic look closes the door. Another yell—this time fading into a death cry. Then silence. Julia first shudders, then stands in benumbed apathy. Maximus does the same for a while. Then he starts to pace the room. Lifts, then lets drop, Valentinianus' cloak. Goes up to the throne, sits there, rises again.)

MAXIMUS: There's no redemption. No alleviation.

JULIA: Be proud of it. There shouldn't be any.

MAXIMUS: We'll go home.

JULIA *(shakes her head):* Where?

MAXIMUS: We'll lie down in each other's arms and go to sleep.

JULIA *(after a nod):* But how are we to look into each other's eyes, Petronius?

MAXIMUS: I shall work. I'll clear up this situation as I've done others before. What's happened here? *(Smiles)* Not I, nor Fulgentius—but people who have never set foot in this palace have made a clean sweep here. It's our turn now. We shall save, it's up to us to save, this town.

JULIA: Is there no other way of saving it?

MAXIMUS: How?

JULIA: Have you forgotten what you did? For *him*?

MAXIMUS: But why did I ever undertake it? You're my witness what sacred cause I wanted to serve.

JULIA: By making a mockery of man you can't serve god.

MAXIMUS: And what if there is no god? Is there no good cause then? Or only when there's nothing else left but hell to join forces with?

JULIA: Then one can't go on living.

MAXIMUS: Forgive me. Can you forgive me?

(The noise in the street is renewed.)

JULIA: As soon as I can forgive myself.

(A sharp shout rings above the din: Give us the whore from the palace! Maximus hurries to the window.)

JULIA: Can they come here? Let them. It doesn't matter.

(While Maximus stands with his back turned, she drinks the poison.)

MAXIMUS *(turning merely catches sight of Julia putting down the cup):* They're streaming this way—but don't touch that. It's poison.

JULIA: Even this is too late. There was a time for it when...

MAXIMUS: When?

JULIA: I know. I know exactly when. But I've played the game, haven't I? I may finish now... *(Of the noises outside)* For no harm can come to you from this.

MAXIMUS: Nor to you while I'm with you. The fighting has stopped everywhere except around here, at the Silver Palace. It's quite tough, though. A guard with his vizor down is defending your gate... Superbly!

JULIA: And if they should come in before I...

MAXIMUS *(brushes off the idea of danger with a smile):* They'll find you in my arms. Or there, if you want *(pointing to the dual throne).*

JULIA *(now completely calmed):* Here, rather, Petronius. *(Presses into his arms.)*

MAXIMUS *(embracing her):* You've forgiven me. I feel it in your close embrace.

PALLADIUS *(from below):* Go away from here, away, I tell you.

JULIA *(listening to the voice for a second):* Forever.

MAXIMUS: I'll bury my cares in work. And if you stay with me I shall know it's worth it. *(Forces himself to sound enthusiastic.)* We may have to let the Vandals in. But why should we? Only to spring to our feet in Gaul!

JULIA: And the Empress?

MAXIMUS: If only I can have half a year. But I shall have it. With you beside me. And let bygones be bygones. We shall never mention the past. All right?

JULIA: Never, Petronius.

MAXIMUS: I know you from today. I've asked you to marry me today. And it's from today only that...

JULIA... I love you, Petronius.

MAXIMUS: ...You know me *(embraces her).*

JULIA: I know you from today, Petronius.

MAXIMUS *(cheerfully):* What damn fools we've been, simply because we've been like a craftsman and his tool—we thought you could be used as a mere tool.

JULIA: A big mistake.

MAXIMUS: Did you suffer much?

JULIA: I've always loved you.

PALLADIUS *(in the distance):* Not one step further!

MAXIMUS: You said the faithful bear suffering more easily. Did you have faith?

JULIA: In you, Petronius. *(Collapses.)*

MAXIMUS: Julia! My dearest! *(Wipes the froth from her lips, looks at the phial, and understands everything. Springs to his feet.)* Doctor! Hot water! Emetic! *(Kneels, props her head in his lap.)* Julia! *(Julianus and his followers and servants come running in.)*

JULIA *(smiling):* I'm all right, darling.

PALLADIUS *(in the distance):* Not a step forward! *(Noise of scuffling and of clashing arms.)*

(Sidonius comes in, bows.)

MAXIMUS: An antidote! And silence down there. *(Julianus hurries out with his associates in the direction of the din.)*

SIDONIUS *(kneels by Julia):* It's too late, sir. Bear it as it becomes—Caesar.

(Maximus stands erect.)

JULIANUS *(returns, followed by the others):* Your wife was defended by your son—till death. *(Palladius' dead body is carried in on a shield and placed on the ground.)*

MAXIMUS: Palladius too?

SIDONIUS: You are Caesar, sir!

(A burst of military music, hurrahs. Julianus performing his duties with the skill of a royal attendant, takes up Maximus' cloak from the ground to cover Julia, but catching sight of the imperial purple robe he starts to put it on Maximus' shoulders. At a wave from Maximus he

lays it on Julia and covers Palladius with Maximus' cloak.)

SIDONIUS: The senate! The general staff! *(Fulgentius comes hurrying in at the head of a troop of officers and senators.)*

FULGENTIUS: The filth of hell has been drained away, Maximus. Victory is not due to us but to the heavens that have appointed such a man over us! Long live Maximus Petronius!

SIDONIUS: Imperator divus.

CAUTINUS: Long may he live!

(Cheering. Applause.)

MAXIMUS: Do not mock me, Rome.

(Fanfare. Eudoxia enters in state.)

MAXIMUS *(having poured the contents of the poison phial into the cup, raises it high):* To your faith, to Rome, Fulgentius!

(Drains the cup.)

Curtain

Translated by
L. T. András

MUSIC AND MODERN SOCIETY

by

PÁL JÁRDÁNYI

They get on badly. Modern music and modern society get on even worse. But this is mainly a corollary of the first statement. There is something wrong about people's relationship to music in general. It is deteriorating, becoming formal and superficial. The process of civilization, urbanization, industrialization, technological progress, far from mending this relationship, is weakening it.

I am not a prophet of evil. I have confidence in things to come. The forces aspiring to truth, nobleness and beauty lie deep in every human being. They can be brought to the surface. How much will come to light, and when? —that is determined by economic and social conditions, among other things. Not by them alone. It's a smug and hypocritical attitude for musicians to leave a hoped-for improvement to social progress, viewing with folded arms the increasingly gloomy prospects of music in the world. Those who learn music, go to concerts and buy gramophone records altogether represent a small and slowly growing rivulet compared with the rapidly swelling tide of people who go from popular to mid-culture and from the folk-song to the song-hit and those who are simply hepcats. The little green islands of so-called serious music are insignificant specks in an ocean of musical trash.

The comparatively closed world of peasant culture produced works of a high order. There is no objective aesthetic yardstick, but there can hardly be any doubt that the old folk-song sprang from a deeper recess of the soul than present-day dance songs. This explains Bartók's "romantic" enthusiasm for the peasantry. He is not the only one to have ranked the folk-song with Bach's and Mozart's masterpieces. Down below (folk music) and up on high (works of great masters) are riches of the same essence. In the middle (the so-called light music) are the cheap goods, some better, some worse.

Why is the folk-song more substantial than the song-hit? Because the inner world of the singer of folk-songs is more substantial than that of the

twister, the tango-dancer and the operetta-lover. The peasant's life was a hard one, at times almost more than he could bear. He had to struggle with nature and against the powers that be, both local and foreign. But because he stuck to the ancient land, because his way of life was defined by tradition, because he breathed with nature—even while struggling with it—his life had some equilibrium. Poor, wretched it might be, but it was a balanced, natural life.

That the peasant way of life is changing, its closed-in aspect being broken by the increasingly rapid urbanization, is an inevitable and welcome process. After all, this is the road that leads the peasant to a more civilized life, one that is less arduous, more comfortable, healthier, more rewarding, more worth living. And if, meantime, he discards his valuable old culture—well, let him! If life in the village changes, the culture necessarily changes with it. There is no use in trying to conserve the old peasant culture. True, those who have listened to the old folk-song in its genuine, unadulterated form, who have sensed the devoutness of singing in a rural community, realize that with the disappearance of the ancient culture some priceless treasures go through the winnow of time. Hence some would like to see the urbanized villager, or villager-turned-town-dweller, receive new riches for old. They would like to see him rise to higher things as soon as he has come out of the depths.

Things have not happened this way. Inevitably? We do not know, but the fact is that the average town-dweller's musical tastes have spread and are spreading like an epidemic, not only among industrial workers and village people drifting to town but also among those who stay in the villages.

The change in taste is not merely a change in musical type. It reflects a change in mentality. It is a blatant sign of mental impoverishment, of loss of balance.

Aesthetics and ethics are two different philosophical categories. Yet they are not entirely independent of each other. What is truly beautiful is also good. Great creative geniuses in general are also great as moral beings. The beautiful makes a man better. And, if this is so, ought not aesthetics be moved into the educational front as a powerful ally? Art, we should realise, is a powerful aid in making man a better, more altruistic social being. The moral ego is not independent of the artistic one. Teaching people to appreciate genuine art does not have dissemination of art for an end in itself; it is one of the major branches of education for development of moral, truly human beings.

The spirit must be cultivated, not only the mind. It is not enough to impart knowledge to people. Their susceptibility to the beautiful must be

encouraged to grow. Anyone whose sense of the beautiful remains underdeveloped will only half-live his life and will have false, dim notions about what "pleasure" involves and little chance of nurturing the seeds of morality in his heart.

That is why Kodály is forever harping on the same theme: "Introduce regular singing classes in the schools!" Singing is not one subject of instruction among many, but it is almost the only one that serves the growth of the spirit and not reason by itself. Physical training serves the body, and singing (along with drawing and, partly, literature) the spirit, all the others, the mind.

A universal worry of educational authorities is how to squeeze into the old, 30-hour weekly timetable the recent achievements and methods of sciences that are developing and specializing at a bewildering pace. Most divisions of science are, quite understandably, vying for increase of the number of school hours to be devoted to their respective subjects. Which branches have the greatest reason for such increase is difficult to say. One thing is sure, however: such timetable bickering is justified only if the infighting is limited to the various scientific studies. Physics may have a rival in chemistry or biology, but not in singing. You can have mutton instead of pork or beef, but not as a substitute for fruit. Meat is needed in the diet, but fruit is too. Art has some vital vitamins—those of the spirit. If we don't feed it regularly to our children, their growth will be stunted.

What use is it to fill their heads with knowledge but never open up for them the road of art that leads to pure enjoyment? To train intelligent but unhappy and selfish people?

Incidentally, spirit-cultivating singing is opposed to mind-improving subjects only on the surface. It will repay with interest whatever number of hours it "steals" from the scientific subjects. Placed between subjects that set the brain in motion, singing, which exercises the muscles of the spirit, also refreshes the intellect, making it more readily receptive to fresh knowledge.

There is only one way to improve society's wrong attitude towards music: a radical overhaul of singing instruction in the schools. Only genuine art presented to the child at school can form a protection against the rain of arrows of cheap art. Adults would try in vain to defend themselves, for these arrows—the metaphor is not far-fetched—are showering indeed. The air is thick with them. Soon there might be no place left where one can take shelter from them.

The world resounds with music! This incessant, pervasive music is itself the worst enemy of Music. Not only because what is resounding is mostly

worthless trash. Because, and mainly because, it is continuous and covers hill and dale, village and town.

One of the dangers of city and technology is the absence of silence. Silence is to the soul what clean air is to the lungs. Without it they will choke and waste away. Psychologists know this well. And, like air pollution, noise is being combatted. There are silencers, bans against use of horns, etc. But it is a fatal error to suppose that only noise can jar on nerves. Speech and music can be jarring too, if in a different manner. Music can jar or soothe, but in any case it has an effect, engages and absorbs one's attention. In moderation, for festive moments or hours, music is beneficial. But too much music dulls the spirit and befogs the mind. It is not a vitamin but a narcotic. It brings on a slight stupor. It provides "light entertainment" instead of a deeply penetrating experience. It is dangerous because an addiction can develop like that of a chain-smoker. He can't live without cigarettes. He no longer enjoys them at all, and yet he smokes one after the other. And he ruins his system. He tires his body. He paralyses his power of action. Music-addiction kills the desire for higher pleasures. It transforms life into a sort of warm bath of the spirit.

Music is a Sunday-best, not working clothes. It is not an everyday object but an art treasure. It is a key that opens deep shafts of the spirit which nothing else will open. To plumb those depths is a unique experience. Still, it's impossible to tarry there for long. It's possible only if you are there and you aren't there. If you don't give yourself completely to music. If, while listening to it, you are doing something else, with your mind, your attention, your heart elsewhere. Only so is music no more than working clothes, or like an everyday object. One who listens to it this way is ignorant of its real essence. As if it were seen in disguise. As if a shabby ball-gown were hiding its radiant beauty.

Music is an extraordinary experience. To become that, however, it requires extraordinary concentration from the listener. One who is used to splashing about from morning till night in lukewarm musical shallows will have no desire to go into deep water. He won't want to swim and won't be able to, either. If you have music humming away in your ears all the time, you think no more of it than of a cigarette or a wine-and-soda. That it could be more beautiful, more soul-stirring (more dramatic and happier), you can't even imagine.

Yes, music has no more ferocious enemy than too much music.

The radio takes the lead in overproduction. In the interests of music, man and society, radio stations should broadcast less but better music. The broadcasting time devoted to music should be cut, and the share of light music

slashed too. Some types of light music, such as dance-music, ought to be broadcast only during certain hours (in the evening and now and then in the afternoon). Is there anything more out of place than jazz being churned out during the susceptible morning hours, during working-hours? What's wrong with jazz is not that it exists but that it is fed to us at times and on occasions when it ought not to be played. Let young people dance to it. Let it be played at parties where people gather for fun and play. It is, however, a morbid symptom if somebody withdraws into himself to listen to it absorbedly, if people demand it at any and all times of the day, if they have no other kinds of music than it. The worst thing of all is that the majority of jazz fans enjoy music only in a passive way. They listen and never perform. Yet to be a good listener, to listen well to good music, one has to be, as a rule, also an active musician or a singer too. Listening to music is only seemingly a passive condition. When you respond with your nervous system to every vibration of a masterpiece, you experience animated processes and actions in your mind. But if you are only listening (and listening to lukewarm music at that) you will never have any idea of creative listening, the process by which you re-create in your mind the work you are listening to.

An even greater menace than broadcasting of a lot of music and a lot of "entertaining" music is the loud-speaker. Its ancestor and humbler relative is canned music pouring, sometimes, through open windows. Bartók was once compelled to bring an action against his next-door neighbour; canned music had made it impossible for him to work. The poor composer of today might bring actions against half the world—not on account of open windows, but because streets, squares, work-places, outdoor restaurants, summer-resorts, all are engulfed by music from loud-speakers. It's in vain to run away, in vain to try to escape. If by chance you find some retreat on solitary mountain peaks, in the depths of a forest or in the middle of a lake that is out of the range of loud-speakers, those soul-destroying ruthless weapons, you're bound to come upon that snake-in-the-grass, that accursed monster-product of modern technology, the transistor radio. In summer-time—I am not exaggerating—a composer who loves nature and the open air finds himself in a desperate situation. And so indeed do all those who still think that one of the most precious treasures of human existence is silence. But this is cause for despair, well, let us say more modestly, bad for every body: for him who does not know it; for him who demands incessantly resounding "music."

Children long for sweets. If it were up to them, they would be chewing candy all the time. We do not permit them to do so, because they would be spoiling their teeth and their tummies. Adults who keep chewing

music (and who, as far as their musical education is concerned, can be thought of as children, if not infants) likewise spoil their spiritual teeth. They become unable to digest the nutritive musical food.

Freedom is a good and a nice thing, but even it has its limits. Nowhere in the world do six-year-olds "vote" on whether or not they should go to school. From the musical point of view, a large part of the adult population of the world are children. We should rather not waste our time by asking them what kind of music they like, what and how much they would like to hear on the radio. All right, let's do satisfy their demands. One meets the wishes of one's children. But, above all, let's train them. Let's try to direct their wishes towards what is beautiful and good and healthful.

It is time for people to realize that music is a public matter. People should realise that contemporary society's deplorable attitude towards music is bad for the musicians as well as for music, bad for all, bad for society as a whole. This state of affairs has to be improved. First, by raising the standard of singing instruction in the schools. Second, by a radical overhaul of the musical programs of the radio. Third, by a ban on musical disturbances of the peace and a silencing of loud-speakers.

The deplorable attitude of society to modern music is one of the issues that composers the world over find most disturbing. I have enlarged the theme to society's attitude to music in general, because I am convinced that that is the root of the trouble. Two hundred years ago, a few hundred people (and one hundred years ago, a few thousand) would have "voted" for or against new musical works. Even today, we can speak of thousands at best. Hundreds of thousands or even tens of thousands are out of the question. This is an ignominious stagnation, compared with the progress of universal well-being and culture! And we should be careful: it is not only at the first performances of new compositions that the absence of tens of thousands is conspicuous. They are absent from Mozart and Beethoven concerts as well. If it were possible to find out how many more people like Beethoven than Bartók, I think we should be surprised to see that the margin is rather narrow. And I am sure that this margin would be insignificant compared with the startling gap between those who understand Beethoven and those who do not.

Yes, there is something wrong about the attitude of audiences to modern music. But the seething disputes about this problem should not be settled by those few composers and musicologists and several thousand listeners (plus a few hundred performing artists) who make up the musical life of every big city. The forum where these issues are debated will have to be broadened. This depends on a society of persons who are educated musically, human beings who listen to less but better music and appreciate music more.

VARIATIONS ON A CURRENT THEME

by

LÁSZLÓ FELEKI

Atoms for war can serve no peaceful purposes.

That peace is not inevitable is a disquieting political principle.

A nation does not become the greater in order to have the more to sacrifice.

Getting testy at the Nuclear Test Ban hardly indicates a sound nervous system.

Rays of hope do not mean radiation danger.

Who believes in explosive evolution?

Building habitations is cheaper than making the earth uninhabitable.

He who attacks his friends is incapable of defeating his enemies.

Let's stop pestering the unicellular organisms with the prospect that they may have to start it all over again.

Peace cannot only be sealed but preserved as well.

Atomic death is a rather expensive spree.

Lack of humanity may leave the earth without humanity.

Better get knowledge of the world than get rid of it.

Why disappoint the daring astronauts of distant planetary systems who are investigating whether there is life on earth?

Peoples lacking everything will not miss their daily A-bomb.

Ban capital punishment for mankind!

How can you negotiate with radioactivity in the hall?

Price your own skin when deciding if human life is cheap or not.

Let peace serve peaceful purposes.

Let's not destroy the earth. We might need it some day.

SURVEYS

TESTING PEASANT TASTE*

In 1960 and 1961 sociologico-cultural data were gathered by the Budapest Institute for Popular Education in 16 cooperative farm communities.

All communities examined consisted of relatively large villages situated in East, Central, West and North Hungary. Although our analyses do not admit of country-wide conclusions, the observed phenomena pointed to certain main trends characteristic of large villages, even of small market towns.

Questionnaires were filled in by the teaching staff of local schools. There were separate questionnaires for the communities and for some hundred peasant families in each community. The first had been prepared in conformity with municipal records, the second on the basis of preliminary personal questioning of peasant families. The data were then completed and checked by means of diverse statistical records obtained from the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Education.

Apart from certain natural deviations, both the municipal and the individual questionnaires paid equal attention to conditions prior to the liberation in 1945 and those existing in 1960. As regards data on learning, their collection in respect to the two different periods caused no difficulty. Data regarding production could likewise easily be reconstructed for the past. It was, of course, to be expected that answers regarding knowledge in the sphere of arts would be more exhaustive concerning the present than the past. It had nevertheless been agreed that, though scantier, answers touching upon the past were to be accepted as revealing the general trend of artistic orientation, because memory always retains the most impressive creations of the past. Led by such considerations, we had prepared essentially identical questionnaires for the past and the present.

* Abridged chapter from a monograph on artistic taste.

Classification according to social position

Respecting conditions prior to the liberation, those questioned were grouped according to the statistically known size of the former estates, with due regard to land rent. Four groups were formed:

(a) conditions governed by the ownership of large estates;

(b) conditions essentially governed by the ownership of large estates with considerable petty commodity production;

(c) conditions essentially governed by petty commodity production, with considerable ownership of large estates;

(d) conditions largely governed by the production of petty commodities.

To obtain an idea of the rate at which the new conditions of ownership had developed,

we referred the changes to three periods: 24.4 per cent of the subjects examined accepted the system of cooperative farming in the first period (1948—1952), 11.7 per cent in the second (1953—1956), and 64.5 per cent in the last period (1958—1960).

Interconnections between economic and educational conditions

A comparison of the degree of education in the above groups shows significant differences at every stage of schooling. These differences, even in 1960, still reflected the pre-liberation conditions of ownership, the level of production before 1945, and the negative traditions of selective schooling in the past. School education showed the lowest level among members of group *(a)*, the highest among those of group *(d)*. The direct effect of social equalization (distribution of land) after the liberation is not reflected by changes in school education. Differences in the degree of schooling between the various communities do not reflect changed econoic and social conditions after the liberation.

The introduction and compulsory attendance of the new type of 8-grade school counteracts the negative effect of the superseded system and tends to make differences in school education disappear.

Social structure, demographic data and data on schooling

(a) The overwhelming majority of the members of the 1,700 cooperative peasant families examined were farm hands—agricultural proletarians—or dwarf holders (1 1/2 to 7 acres) before the liberation; 41 per cent belonged to the first, 20 per cent to the second category, and only 3 per cent owned land exceeding 35 acres. The land distribution resulted in a radical social reshuffling; the proportion of landless persons dropped to 16 per cent, and most of the peasants (60 per cent) came into the category of 1 1/2 to 14 acres.

The cooperative farm members show the following age distribution: more than 50 per cent are above 50 years of age, and only about 17 per cent of the registered persons are younger than 35 years. As regards changes in school education, only the number of those who have completed 8 grades reveals a significant rise; it amounts to 2 1/2 times the number in 1938 (from 4.4 to 10.9 per cent). The change applies mainly to the young groups. The number of illiterates has remained unchanged, as has that of persons who have completed 4 grades, while those with 6 grades have decreased in number by about 7 per cent.

(b) In grouping the data, we gave special consideration to the managers of cooperative farms on account of the importance of their role. Altogether 136 managers were questioned at random. This amounts to 8 per cent of the total of those questioned, higher than the average proportion between members and leaders (the latter include professional and political leaders, the president, party secretary, agronomist, chief accountant, and the branch managers).

There were 10 per cent more former have-nots among the leading persons than among the average of the 1,700 families examined, while the proportion of middle peasants among the leaders corresponded to the general average. The leading personages of the cooperative farms are thus recruited mainly from two social layers, the quondam paupers and the quondam middle peasants.

As regards schooling, the leaders of the cooperative farms were at a higher level even before the liberation than what would correspond to the average education of the 1,700 families. Thus, their education advanced relatively faster after the liberation: the proportion of secondary school and college graduates is 4 times higher than the average. The situation is still better among the most important political and professional leaders. Every third person in this group has completed 8 grades, every fourth or fifth is a secondary school or college graduate.

Special problems

One of the principal tasks was to ascertain the development of artistic taste among the peasants, and to see how the cultural level of peasant society, its world concept and ethos had fared under the changed conditions. We wished to find out in which respects and to what extent artistic taste was homogeneous, what social and cultural factors made it heterogeneous, what equalizing or differentiating tendencies were manifesting themselves under the influence of the social change, the advance in school education and the government's cultural policy.

While classification based on school attendance means no more than the establishment of a quantitative scale of values, a census designed to ascertain the existence and trend of the population's artistic interests requires a grouping and classification of the collected data according to aesthetic criteria; it further calls for a systematization which, independently of aesthetic considerations, reveals the prevailing artistic criteria and their trend on the evidence of those works in the sphere of art that produced the widest effect on those examined.

The works were divided into two categories: *(a)* genuine works of art, *(b)* artistically worthless products. Within category *(a)* folk art was given separate consideration romantic was divided from realistic art, and the latter was subdivided into critical and socialist realism. Category *(b)* included slush, worthless bestsellers, cheap rural theatricals, operettas, trashy films, pre-liberation films of nationalistic tendency, as well as the so-called "*magyar nóták*" ("Hungarian songs"—amateur pseudo-folklore compositions) and melodies from operettas.

Although the above grouping is in many ways problematical, it served the purpose of approaching the works in question from an aesthetic angle. The sociologico-cultural nature of our inquiries also made it necessary to explore the social, ethical and psychological traits of the contents. This was facilitated by grouping subjective statements contained in the answers and the reasons given for approving particular works.

Supply of institutions and material affecting artistic taste in the communities examined

These large communities already had their own cultural centre, cultural hall, library and facilities for the projection of motion pictures even before 1945, and these important institutions were in operation everywhere in 1960.

The average number of books per head had, by 1960, risen to 0.5 as against 0.16 before 1945. It was only in the wealthy communities with petty commodity production that the pre-liberation average was approximately as high as in 1960. The effect of the central cultural policy is most evident in the least supplied and formerly poorest settlements.

Theatrical performances by professional artists were presented before 1945 only in a few towns and in a very limited number of settlements in the vicinity of towns. The performances of the State Rural Theatre, those arranged by the National Staging Bureau and the countrywide *tournées* of the country ensembles have brought the theatre to numerous larger villages. Local isolation or the limited capacity of cultural centres has deprived several communities of the privilege of enjoying the performances of professional actors.

On an average, each of the communities organized two groups of amateur artists in both periods. Excepting in Besnyő, such groups existed in every community examined, whereas music, song and dance groups were found in 10 villages only.

The number of library visitors has risen about twofold, that of newspaper subscribers fourfold and that of radio owners sixfold.

At the beginning of the 1940's it was only in communities with advanced production of commodities that the average number of inscribed library members was exceeded. By

1960, differences between the various communities were showing a tendency towards equalization not only as regards number of volumes per head but also as regards number of library members. Data on newspaper subscriptions and on families possessing radio sets are vivid illustrations of the equalizing effect of the central cultural policy and the changed financial status of cooperative-farm members.

The quota of families attending amateur performances does not reflect the otherwise observable equalizing tendency. Amateur groups with traditional activities are still mostly found in the communities where they used to flourish before the liberation, i.e., in isolated settlements that had a low level of production and were largely inhabited by poorly educated agricultural labourers. The proportion of amateur performers in towns and in communities used to produce petty commodities is even less than in the past. This opposite tendency in the development of socio-economic and in that of amateur activities makes the inculcation of new and modern concepts and forms imperative.

There is, as can be seen from the answers in the individual questionnaires, a great similarity between the various communities as regards the thematic and stylistic aspects of the plays produced, films presented and amateur performances.

Professional and amateur theatrical groups performed Jókai's *A kőszívű ember fiai* ("The Baron's Sons") and Gárdonyi's *Egri csillagok* ("The Stars of Eger")—both of them stage versions of classic novels—as well as the best known comic operas in nearly all places where such groups existed. Besides, the answers referred to a few comedies and one-acters performed by professional touring companies.

Motion pictures were more or less the same all over the country. They included: *Le Rouge et le Noir*, *Les Misérables*, *And Quiet Flows the Don*, *Szegény gazdagok* ("The Poor Rich"), *A Noszty fiú esete Tóth Marival* ("Young Noszty's Affair with Mary Tóth"), *Rákóczi hadnagya* ("Rákóczi's Lieutenant"), *Gábor diák* ("Gábor, the Student"). The following films contained plots touching on up-to-date subjects and the problems of youth: *Felfelé a lejtőn* ("Ascent of the Slope"), *Égre nyíló ablak* ("Window on the Sky"), *Fényes esküvő* ("Splendid Wedding"), *Csigalépcső* ("Spiral Stairs"), *Virrad* ("Dawn"), *Tegnap* ("Yesterday"), etc.—all of them Hungarian films of varying artistic value.

The repertory of the choirs includes marches, rallying songs, folk songs, dance tunes and the works of a few classic composers.

The chief characteristic of the 1960 programs was a strong tendency to direct interest towards romanticism. A considerable quota of the preferred works had little value. Operettas, recent pseudo-folklore musicals, Hungarian songs and other romantically tinged works filled the repertory of the radio, too. In addition there were a small number of artistic theatrical performances and films in the sphere of realism and socialist realism.

Of the 16 communities examined it was only in six that the cultural scheme included (over and above professional productions) aesthetically instructive lectures or meetings between authors and readers, etc. In two communities there were 100 and 110 lectures, respectively, in 1960, but only 10 of them were aesthetically instructive and concerned with imparting knowledge in the sphere of arts. They dealt with the literary activities of Sholokhov, Petőfi[1], Erkel[2], Karinthy[3], and with the works of Tornyai[4] and other Hungarian painters; there was also a lecture on literary trash.

[1] Sándor Petőfi (1823—1849), outstanding Hungarian poet of the 19th century.

[2] Ferenc Erkel (1810—1893), composer, originator of the Hungarian national opera.

[3] Frigyes Karinthy (1883—1938), writer, humorist, poet and philosopher. (See Vol. III, No. 6 of The New Hungarian Quarterly).

[4] János Tornyai (1869—1936), painter, devoted to illustrating peasant life.

The lectures, in addition, covered Czech Gothic art, as well as French, Greek and early Hungarian literature.

All these were isolated lectures and not part of a well-planned cultural program, nor did they show any interconnection within the individual subjects. We endeavoured to follow the effect of these influences on the artistic taste of those examined.

The most popular literary works, both before and since the liberation, were Jókai's *Aranyember* ("The Man with the Golden Touch"), *Egy magyar nábob* ("A Hungarian Nabob"), *Az új földesúr* ("The New Landlord"); Mikszáth's *Szent Péter esernyője* ("St. Peter's Umbrella"), *Noszty fiú esete Tóth Marival* ("Young Noszty's Affair with Mari Tóth"); Gárdonyi's *Egri csillagok* ("The Stars of Eger"); Petőfi's *János vitéz* ("Childe John"); Móricz's *Légy jó mindhalálig* ("Be Good Unto Death"); Arany's *Toldi*; Móra's short stories; Kodolányi's *Földindulás* ("Landslide"); Fazekas's *Ludas Matyi* ("Mattie the Gooseboy"); Tolstoi's *Háború és béke* ("War and Peace"). Most of the preferred reading matter consisted, however, of literary trash of the pseudo-folklore type. The following works were added to the foregoing in 1960: Móricz's *Boldog ember* ("The Happy Man"); *Erdély* ("Transylvania"), *Sárarany* ("Gold Nugget"). The best-read socialist writers in 1960 were Gorky and Sholokhov. The works of Zola, Steinbeck, Azhaiev, Polevoy, Pál Szabó, Péter Veres and Józsi Jenő Tersánszky were also read, though considerably less frequently. Poems had a very limited demand: the lists contained a few references to Ady[6], József Attila[7]; Kölcsey[8] and Csokonai[9]. Some important examples of Hungary's classic dramatic literature were produced in both periods examined. Of more recent valuable dramas, only Kodolányi's *Földindulás* ("Landslide") was performed before the liberation, in addition to the classics. Interest seems to have veered in 1960 towards plays about village life and operettas.

As regards preferences in the sphere of motion pictures in the pre-liberation era, cheaply sentimental films dominate, thereby, reflecting the low standards of cinematographic art in Hungary before 1945. Only very few high-quality films were mentioned in connection with that period. The films most in demand since the end of the war were *Szállnak a darvak* ("Soaring Cranes"), *Ballada a katonáról* ("Ballad of a Soldier"), *Emberi sors* ("Man's Fate"), *Anya* ("Mother"), *Nyomorultak* ("Les Misèrables"), *Vörös és fekete* ("Le Rouge et le Noir"), as well as a few recent Hungarian films of higher quality. A widespread interest was also manifested in valueless films, primarily aimed at box-office success.

The song category was dominated by folk songs and popular tunes. Sentimental dance songs were likewise in vogue. In respect of the present epoch a limited amount of classic music was mentioned in the answers, especially airs from the operas of Verdi, Puccini and Erkel, known through the radio.

In summarizing the material gathered, let us first present some numerical data regarding those questioned and the works preferred by them. Compared with the past, the number of readers, theatre and cinema-goers showed a considerable increase during the last 20 years:

increase in readers:	77 per cent (from 540 to 927);

[5] Zsigmond Móricz (1879—1942), leading Hungarian novelist of the realistic school. (See Vol. I-II, No. 3. of The New Hungarian Quarterly)

[6] Endre Ady (1877—1919), outstanding poet of the beginning of the century. See also Vol. III, No. 5. of The New Hungarian Quartertly.

[7] Attila József (1905—1937), lyricist of the proletariat.

[8] Ferenc Kölcsey (1790—1838), poet and critic, author of the words of the Hungarian National Anthem.

[9] Mihály Csokonai Vitéz (1773—1805), lyric and epic poet, one of the pioneers of the literary renaissance of the 19th century.

increase in film addicts: 35 per cent (from 276 to 523);

increase in theatre-goers: 72 per cent (from 711 to 1035).

In the past—taking literature, plays and motion pictures as a whole—one third of the preferred works can be said to have been of artistic value, while two thirds were not true works of art. How much artistic taste has developed since then is shown by the fact that this proportion was reversed at the time of our census. Two thirds of the products of the three branches that were popular in 1960 possessed artistic value and only one third was rubbish. Although realistic works were not predominant in terms of absolute figures, the change in this respect was nevertheless most striking. Their relative weight exceeded that of romantic works.

Percentage distribution of works in the four branches of art according to style trends:

	Past				Present			
	Literature	Film	Theatre	Music	Literature	Film	Theatre	Music
Romantic works	29.4	14.6	2.3	—	31.2	9.1	19.2	—
Realistic works	6.4	6.2	6.2	—	34.5	51.5	15.9	—
Folk art	8.2	—	—	38.4	1.2	—	—	25.6
Valueless products ...	29.0	79.0	91.5	61.4	1.4	39.4	85.0	73.0

Reasons given for preference

The filled-in questionnaires gave the following answers as to why certain works were preferred above others:

(a) Motives deriving from Weltanschauung

1. Those rooted in peasant life:

"Because its subject bore on peasant life"; "because it displayed the decline of village life"; "because its theme was taken from peasant life."

2. Those emphasizing past times, historical epochs:

"*Bánk Bán*[10], because it deals with historical events"; "The Baron's Sons,[11] because its heroes lived in an old historcal epoch."

3. "Because it is Hungarian":

"It contained many Hungarian songs." Another liked old recruiting songs because "they are true Hungarian songs"; this one liked gipsy music because "it is characteristically Hungarian"; that one favoured the "Gipsy Baron" because "its protagonist was a true Hungarian."

(b) Ethical motives

" 'The Man of Gold'[12] contains laudable human qualities." In respect of the "Ballad of a Soldier"—"because it serves the cause of peace"; Soviet films—"because they show

[10] Historical drama by József Katona (1791—1830).

[11] Dramatized version of one of the most popular works by romantic novelist Mór Jókai (1825—1904).

[12] This too is a stage version of a novel by Jókai.

humaneness"; about "War and Peace"—"The princess feels that, for once, she may become truly human."

(c) Psychological motives

1. Sentimental motives:

Romeo and Juliet: "It was beautiful, an eternal example of love and fidelity"; Childe John[13]: "One could cry a lot"; La Traviata: "Charming story."

2. Seeking diversion:

Bástyasétány 77 ("77 Rampart Avenue")[14]: "One could laugh a lot"; Kisfaludy's *Csalódások* ("Disappointments")[15]: "They laughed a lot and made merry"; Tarzan: "It was thrilling"; of dances: "Czardas, because it created high spirits."

3. "The first really interesting personal experience":

"All films, whatever their quality, used to please me in the past, when motion pictures were few and far between." At present: "I rarely get into a theatre, so I like all plays."

4. Motives showing no real reason for selection or preference:

"All are interesting and good." About the radio: "It is all right as it is."

5. Participation:

"I was the leader of the gipsy orchestra"; "I like social amusements."

6. Popularity of particular actors.

(d) Aesthetic motives

Csárdáskirálynő ("The Czardas Princess")[16]: "I liked it because of the beautiful scenery, music and costumes"; *Faust* "I enjoyed the spectacle and the lovely music"; *Víg özvegy* ("Merry Widow"): "I liked the excellent rendering."

[13] Musical stage version of Petőfi's epic poem.
[14] Musical comedy.
[15] Comedy by a Hungarian author of the 19th century.
[16] Operetta composed by Imre Kálmán (1882—1953).

Character of artistic taste

Answers explaining preferences reveal features characteristic of the artistic taste of peasants. All answers point to the intensive emotional effect of art.

The group, that is composed of persons who practically disregard the contents of the products heard, seen or read and base their preference on emotions, is much larger than the category in which preference is governed by the plot or intellectual aspects of the novel, play, film, etc. Members of this group approach and react to artistic products from the angle of joy, sorrow, laughter, tears, pity, excitement, gaiety, thrill or fun.

Emotional approach results in the use of quite different subjective reasons in explaining the acceptance of one and the same work. "Childe John," for instance, was given preference because it represented village life; because its hero was a village lad; because one could cry a lot; because its music was so attractive. Or, to take an example from the cinema, "War and Peace" was liked because it represented war; because it represented peace; because it represented love. Aesthetic motivations were very rare in connection with even high-quality works; they were given by persons of higher education and referred mainly to acting and scenery.

Heterogeneity, a characteristic feature of peasant taste as revealed by the answers, arises from the peasantry's social, historical and cultural conditions. Valuable and valueless works are placed side by side with the same emotional justification. One and the same person votes for the "Czardas Princess" and for "War and Peace." This aesthetic medley is rooted in a lack of aesthetic training. Emotional motivation becomes pure sentimentalism. "La Traviata" is consequently chosen because it presented "a charming tale", "Anna Karenina," because it "was a touching story." Although the very choice of such works indicates progress in the

peasantry's aesthetic education, the motivation must nevertheless be qualified as a negative feature.

This heterogeneous selection frequently manifested itself in an identical manner at an aesthetically low level. It can be best followed in connection with the selection of motion pictures, for cinemas are most easily accessible. Even films of high artistic value can be enjoyed without always involving a special mental effort. Although it was in connection with films that preferences were most satisfactory from the cultural viewpoint, differentiation according to age and school education was least pronounced in this sphere.

The proportion of those who expressed their liking for socialist films was the same in the group of former agricultural proletarians with four classes of elementary school as in that of peasants with a higher level of education. It is, of course, still problematic to what extent aesthetically untrained persons are able to understand advanced films and, in general, what types of true art products can be grasped by them.

Forms of art preferred by the peasantry

As regards the *genres* in which feudal peasant society found its main expression, interest in folk tales and folk songs began to fade already in the past, and this tendency was even more pronounced at the time of our investigations. This decline in interest applies to the *genre* itself, i.e., the folk tale, rather than to its heroes, who continue to be sought after in literary products.

Selection not being governed by aesthetic considerations, even realistic works were chosen according to a peculiar romantic taste. This does not merely mean that those questioned had a pronounced predilection for romantically tinged works, but that the selection—all the way from sentimental to realistic works—was determined by romantic criteria. The phenomenon may be due to the fact that the literary style of the young socialist society followed largely in the footsteps of bourgeois 19th-century art. New ideas have to be inculcated in the traditional form, because the undiscriminating public clings to accustomed forms to which it has taken a liking. The preferred works—the artistically valuable and the worthless ones alike—contain much material that has nothing to do with peasant life. Urbanization releases a spate of worthless products that, even when sometimes relying on the true sentiments of the public, try to captivate it through thrill, bravura and sentimentality. This explains why, in respect of the past, we find among the favoured films a number of worthless products with subjects that have no bearing on peasant problems, and among the novels those of the Courts-Mahler or Margaret Mitchell type, as well as cheap musical hits. For the same reason, a more modest but still significant proportion of trashy bestsellers, worthless films and dance songs is to be found among the works preferred today.

That many of those questioned voted for the works of Verne, Dumas and other authors whose books take the reader into fantastic surroundings and unknown regions of the globe, and that many films of this type were also chosen, shows that the mental horizon of this layer of the public embraces a wider range than before. Interest in problems that occupy the whole of mankind, such as the cause of war and peace, was chiefly manifested in connection with Soviet films.

Predilection for classic works dealing with the fundamental problems of mankind and belonging to the highest category of literary values was mainly evident among the few educated leaders who were not of peasant extraction. Their choice fell to the works of Tolstoi, Katona, Madách, Schiller and Gorky, as well as to the great realistic works of Móricz, to Chaplin's films in the past, and to musical classics. No mention was made of Martin du Gard, Thomas

Mann, Balzac, Hemingway, Molière, Ibsen, or, in the sphere of music, of Mozart and Bartók. Realistic works dealing with peasant life were favoured also by less educated groups.

In sum, the peasants were and still are chiefly interested in works representing peasant life, though perhaps to a somewhat declining measure. New forms of the 20th century, as displayed in the poetry of Ady or Attila József, or in the music of Bartók, may have had some effect on the peasantry, but they failed to take root in this layer, a phenomenon doubtlessly due to the existing contradictions between urban and rural life.

The returns have made it clear that the social and cultural position of the peasantry today offers much wider possibilities than before. There is usually at least one among the family's members who works or studies in town. Excepting the oldest age group, there is scarcely a peasant who has never been to the capital or at least to the chief town of his county.

What are the obstacles that, nearly two decades since the liberation, have prevented the peasantry from developing a taste for high-standard works of more universal, socialist content? Several fundamental reasons may be cited.

The capitalist transformation of agriculture disintegrated the peasantry as a social unit, affecting its manner of life and its cultural development. It gave rise to socially heterogeneous small-peasant farming units and tolerated, at the same time, the existence of propertyless agricultural labourers on the large estates. Despite this differentiation the peasantry, compared with society as a whole, remained uniformly backward and isolated, retaining its rural features.

In the realm of arts, the search after reality has not yet been able to turn the ideological and aesthetic interest of the peasantry towards a realistic illustration of peasant life, history and nature. Agricultural labour, social oppression and dependence on natural forces joined in hampering a sound development. This is why peasants invest even realistic works of art with the idealized romantic features of their struggles with production and nature. They still have an aversion to works depicting the real situation as it has resulted from the past status of the peasantry. This real picture is felt by them to be offensive, untrue and alien to the peasants' ethics.

These objective socio-historical elements do not fully explain the negative features of peasant taste. Importance also has to be given to the influence of conscious cultural guidance. A survey of the cultural activities of the village communities in 1960 shows that—especially as regards the stage—they were mainly based on the predominant taste for romanticism and served to advance it. Nowhere did we find references to discussions or lectures dealing with the films and plays presented or the new books of the local library.

Paradoxically, an abundance of cultural treasures was available to all social layers in 1960, while public education—which is able to remedy cultural backwardness deriving from lack of sufficient schooling by adult instruction and psychological means—seems to have been restricted in two directions. Artistic education was limited to the few members of amateur theatrical ensembles; on the other hand, while works of true art were disseminated in fairly wide circles, their emotional and aesthetical reception was left to the spontaneous reactions of the peasant public.

Some sociological factors determining the structure of artistic taste

A survey of the filled-in questionnaires reveals that there is a great similarity between the different communities as regards the peasants' aesthetic knowledge and predilections. The ratio of preference for valuable and worthless products, for romantic works and generally for other distinct cate-

gories, was approximately the same in all communities examined. Nevertheless, there were some characteristic differences, though not wide enough to justify the establishment of separate community groupings based on opposite artistic tastes and aesthetic notions.

We were on the lookout for signs of progress. They were to be seen most perceptibly in the literary category of socialist-realism. The works mentioned in the returns make it clear that the preferred and most widely read products of socialist realism were those dealing with the socialist prospects of the peasantry. This is to be expected in villages where cooperative farms have long been active. The majority of those questioned were accustomed to collective farming, and the socialist manner of life was not new to them. They, accordingly read and like literary works on socialism and a socialist future. Individual farmers (i.e., peasants remaining outside the cooperatives), on the other hand, showed less interest in such works. (Let us add that the continued attraction of folk art is suggestive of earlier socio-cultural conditions even in the cooperative communities.)

Interconnections between schooling, age and artistic taste in 1960

Preferences in various spheres of art	Percentage of readers with 4 / 6 / 8 grades of primary (general) schooling			Percentage of graduates from secondary schools or colleges
Literature:				
Romanticism	63.8	66.2	52.8	45.9
Realism	33.5	30.4	40.4	50.6
Folk products	1.5	1.3	—	—
Trash, cheap bestsellers	1.2	1.5	1.1	1.0
Theatre:				
Operetta	42.0	42.2	44.7	31.7
Plays bearing on folk life	24.0	24.2	21.2	10.2
Romanticism	19.0	21.8	14.8	20.0
Realism	15.0	11.8	19.3	38.4
Motion pictures:				
Realism	56.3	48.5	51.1	74.3
Films from socialist countries	28.0	37.0	33.0	11.0
Romanticism	7.5	9.2	10.2	11.4
Trash	8.5	4.7	5.2	2.5
Music:				
Composition imitating folk songs	60.4	60.7	40.7	26.0
Folk songs, soldiers' songs	28.8	24.6	16.1	33.3
Song hits	8.3	12.1	33.9	26.0
Arias from operettas	1.1	1.2	7.8	—
Classical music	0.3	0.2	0.5	14.7

Communities that had been favoured by advanced capitalist conditions of production in the past and had organized themselves into cooperative farms only at the time of our investigations, manifested hardly any change in their aesthetic tendencies. Here the ratio of tales and trash had been smaller also in the past, while romantic tendencies had always been pronounced. The structure showed no change in 1960, so that preference for realistic works remained below the general average. The political and economic problems of the period of transition, adherence to the principle of private ownership and the desire to achieve prosperity by private initiative, all contributed to a strengthening of interest in the problems of the petty peasantry. The result was psychological inhibition. That the members of these communities showed a very modest demand for realistic works on topical peasant problems was due to their petty-peasant nostalgia, their introversion and reluctance to work in cooperatives.

A parallelism between the level of school education and that of artistic taste was evident as regards both periods examined. There was an unmistakable connection between scholastic qualification and age, inasmuch as the highest level of education was mostly represented by young people, both in the past and—even more so—in 1960. The question arises here as to whether taste is more influenced by age level or by schooling and to what degree the two factors are identical.

Certain data, as revealed by the returns, were characteristic of the younger age groups: (1) A higher degree of literary interest in both periods examined (54.9 per cent of the total of 1,700 against 78.9 per cent of the members of the younger age groups). (2) The percentage of adventure stories—thrillers and works serving merely to entertain—was higher than in the older age groups: 1.1 per cent of the total of 1,700 voted for trash against 1.9 per cent of the young people; the corresponding percentages were 5.6 and 8.3 for worthless films; 14.6 and 31.3 for song hits and dance tunes. (3) Interest in realistic works proved to be very pronounced among young people of today: 41.5 per cent as against 34.9 per cent in the older age classes. (4) It would seem that young people are no longer as much attracted by romantic popular or pseudo-popular plays and compositions as formerly. Although their preferences are fairly divergent, including as they do both works of art and aesthetically objectionable products, there is, in comparison with the older age groups, a more urbanized and more modern trend. To have attended eight school classes meant a comparatively high scholastic accomplishment in the past, when most of the peasants finished only 4 or 6 primary-school grades. Cultural differences were correspondingly wide between the two categories. Since, nowadays, all young people have to attend school during eight years, differences between members of the younger age groups have become much less pronounced. There is, at the same time, a marked change for the better in the aesthetic ideas of secondary-school and college graduates.

Middle-aged peasants showed a greater liking than did the younger for popular-style plays about village life and for pseudo-folk songs and romantic works. This was true in the past no less than at the time of our investigations. So-called popular plays were indicated by 22.2 per cent of the total of 1,700 questioned, by 20.0 per cent of the young people and 24.5 per cent of the middle-age group; pseudo-folk songs and gipsy music were indicated by 56 per cent of the total and 69 per cent of the middle-age group. While 13 per cent of the middle-aged peasants expressed a predilection for folk songs and marching songs, only 9 per cent of the young people showed similar preferences; hardly any young people manifested a liking for folk tales, as against 1.7 per cent of those of middle age. Although realism has made considerable headway among the latter, their deficient education is still

a great handicap, resulting in a favouring of romanticism in every sphere of art.

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The foregoing is an attempt to ascertain, from a sociological viewpoint, the development of artistic taste among the peasantry. Our investigations have convinced us that, in order to obtain more detailed results, a more profound sociological and psychological analysis than has been possible with the methods employed will have to be made.

JUDIT SAS — ZSUZSANNA SIPOS

DIALOGUE IN PROCESS

In the past few years certain terms or phrases have caught on in Hungarian journalistic language which are symbolic of transformation in the international atmosphere, just as particular expressions indicate changes of scene in the Shakespearean theatre. Thus with the breaking up of the clouds that had lain heavily on the international horizon, the word "dialogue" came into use to describe East-West talks and conferences. The idea of a dialogue, as in the dramaturgist's manual, assures both parties of equal opportunities, the balance of sentences guarding an artistic harmony between role and stage.

In an earlier issue of this magazine,* I had an opportunity to recount the beginnings of COMES, the Community of European Writers, an all-European organization that was established in 1958. This organization has devised a new and successful form of the now somewhat conventional parlour game of conference-holding. This summer, an invitation from the Soviet Writers' Association made it possible for delegates to meet at a round-table conference in Leningrad and Moscow; its duration, thanks to the generosity of the hosts, was eventually lengthened to nearly a fortnight. Of that time, three days were taken up in actual meetings at Leningrad, while COMES held a short meeting of its directing council at Yasnaya Polyana. The rest of the time? Well, that was the heyday of dialogue: everywhere, in buses, on walks, in lobbies and museum halls, on board ships, at dinner as at writer-reader meetings and press conferences—this East-West dialogue, a truly new one in its own way, was being carried on.

At our first meeting we recalled Giovanni Battista Angioletti, the founder of COMES. That excellent Italian author and philosopher, who died two years ago, had for many years advocated—often almost by himself—the cause of an East-West dialogue. For it he fought many campaigns in his calm but difficult life. He believed the time to be ripe in autumn 1958 for convening, in his capacity as head of the Italian Writers' Union, a congress of European writers' associations, to be held at Naples. That conference was attended by delegates from 24 countries. Then, so far as I know, the word dialogue was not yet being used symbolically. Perhaps the dialogue as such was not even launched then, although the possibilities of evolving a common idiom did arise.

Since then, ten meetings of COMES delegates, on various organizational levels, have taken place, mostly in Italy but also in Paris and Athens. August 1963, on the banks of the Neva, was the first time that COMES ever met in full assembly, including directing council and delegates, to test the novel

* The New Hungarian Quarterly, Vol. III, No. 7, pp. 194—199.

acoustics of our dialogue. How happy Angioletti would have been had he lived to see that lovely August day! Another thought that occupied the minds of us all was not commemorative: on the very day we were meeting, the partial Test Ban Treaty was being initialled in Moscow. Few international conferences have ever met under such auspicious circumstances.

It is something of a platitude to say that at international gatherings of this kind all delegations and all individual delegates enjoy equal status. All the same, one always looks for the "great names" in lists of delegates and programs, even if they are there merely as guests or observers. Organizers of international literary conferences always fear that the protagonists of intellectual life may not turn up—whether they are reluctant to leave their ivory towers or apt to look down upon writers' conferences as assemblies of outsiders. On such occasions, the more impatient of participants too may be inclined to regard the "field" as rather insignificant and the occasion as a meeting of professional conference-goers and association officers. Yet, a striking feature of the gathering of COMES in Northern Europe was the presence of some of the most remarkable personages of European letters, notwithstanding the fact that we should have gladly welcomed a few more guests who had promised to come but didn't.

By the time these lines appear in print the COMES round-table conference will no doubt have ceased to be of topical interest. For all that, it will be recalled that among the participants were Sartre, Sholokhov and Ungaretti—to name but three of the best known. But there were many other distinguished names: Ilya Ehrenburg, Alexander Tvardovsky, Polevoi, Fedin, Sobolev, Alexei Surkov, Nikolai Bazhan and Constantin Simonov of the Soviet delegation; Alain Robbe-Grillet, Nathalie Sarraute, Simone de Beauvoir, Roger Caillois and Frénaud of the French. The excellent Greek writer Venezis was there too, and Arthur Lundkvist of Sweden; Jerzy Putrament and Matuszewski were two outstanding figures among the Poles. Others included Kate O'Brien of Ireland, Hans Magnus Enzensberger of West Germany, Bruno Apitz—perhaps the most remarkable member of the East-German delegation—Antony Babel of Switzerland, the Flemish writer Albe-Joostens, the Czechoslovak Jiry Hajek, the Yugoslav Mlandenovic and Lalic, Veijo Meri of Finland, Beniuc of Rumania and Kalchev of Bulgaria. The most distinguished members of the British delegation were John Lehmann, Angus Wilson and William Golding, of the Italian delegation, Vigorelli, Debenedetti, Bigiaretti and Guido Piovene. The absence of Spanish and Portuguese delegates was much regretted; their involuntary failure to attend betokened the limitations of the dialogue, as their respective governments had refused to enable them to make the trip to Leningrad. As a distinguished "outsider," M. Mahieu, the UNESCO Director General, dropped in on the conference for an hour. Perhaps it will not be thought pretentious if I introduce the Hungarian delegation: It was headed by the academician Gábor Tolnai, a literary historian and critic, and its members were the novelist Tibor Déry (I shall come back to the contributions made by Tolnai and Déry a little later), Gábor Goda, known in Hungary as an author of satirical novels, and the writer of these lines, most of whose works characterize him as an author of historical novels. (I think it only fair to mention, as integral to the Hungarian delegation, the four wives, who, though they did not actually participate in the discussion of principles, deserve much of the credit for our own part in the dialogue.)

Our round-table conference was more than an ordinary conference and less than ordinary COMES meetings. As a matter of fact, it was an "extended" plenary meeting held in public. It was perhaps the happiest form of gathering of this kind devised so far. The delegates virtually lived under the re-

lentless glare of publicity: flash-cameras and TV klieg lights were a constant accompaniment to sessions as well as to talks, "working" dinners and even relaxation. Yet the cameras faithfully captured the atmosphere of this memorable gathering, often recording—in "sniped" pictures—friendly chats between people who but a short while before would have been thought highly unlikely participants in such discussions; they recorded the gestures of heated debate as well as the relaxed smiles and hugs.

On return from a conference he has recently attended, a delegate is usually bombarded with such questions as "What did you people achieve?" "What were you doing in effect?" "What's the upshot of it all?" People who have attended one or two conferences of similar size know that the principal theme of discussion is, as a rule, little more than a pious statement of the aim of the literary pilgrimage. Or rather it is like the visible part of an iceberg, which never indicates the volume of the part under water. The theme that had been set for the Leningrad conference was the "problem of the Contemporary Novel." Accordingly, a large proportion of the participants were novelists. As no "principal lecture" was delivered, no guiding lines were laid down which might have compelled speakers to keep to some pattern. This was partly good, insofar as it guaranteed the speakers an unrestricted choice of theme; on the other hand, the lack was sorely felt in the case of some speakers who dwelt at length—in the form of soliloquies—on their own principles of literary creation.

It spells the death of any literary conference if there is a "conformist" tendency in the views of the participants, if there is an absence of clashing opinions, of heated debates. Vigorelli, who, making use of his powers as general secretary would intervene either to stimulate discussion or as mediator, or again to sum up what had been said, was always gratified to see the stirred-up embers of dispute rise into at least a minor flame. This concerned mainly peripheral tactics, but a controversy instantly sprang up when, in an initial Soviet lecture, Proust, Joyce and Kafka were referred to as the mainsprings of decadence of the western novel and were contrasted with Tolstoi and Gorky as the great masters of the realist novel. This search for the "intellectual fathers" of the modern novel and evaluation of the predecessors immediately brought the discussion into focus and created at the conference an atmosphere of spirited debate. Soviet writers would often enough fire off the above-mentioned names in their speeches, and quite a few western writers accepted the challenge.

The debate, which was threatening to exceed the boundaries of a dialogue, was wound up in a few felicitous sentences by Vigorelli. We western writers, he said, must necessarily look upon Proust, Joyce and Kafka as fathers of the modern novel. But, he pursued, if we rise slightly above the level of this simple declaration, we must consider that, as a matter of fact, the "big three" are not so much our fathers as our grandfathers. Such a view might bring some flexibility to what would seem to be hard-and-fast theses and might even be adapted to become a pillar for the intellectual bridge we have set out to construct. The influence of the grandfathers is not as unbroken as that of the immediate predecessors: Over the past half century or so, generations of writers have followed one another and a great deal has happened in world literature. It would be difficult to link problems of the present-day novel closely with the experimentalism of the early 20th century.

The second East-West controversy arose about the French *nouveau roman*. This type of novel also was unequivocally classified by Soviet speakers among trends in prose to be frowned on. However, as we found out, a good many of the participants of the round-table conference did not have a clear picture of the precepts, principles, role and aims of the *nouveau roman*. We did not know whether this controversial school of con-

temporary novel-writing had or had not declared its principles in a manifesto of some sort. If one is to take Robbe-Grillet's "Last Year at Marienbad" as a canon for the *nouveau roman*, then there is no definite plot nor, perhaps, are there any characters to speak of. The momentary, physically perceptible order of things and the geometrical patterns expressed form a surface beneath which pass flashing phenomena of human life and soul—successions of events, passions, solutions. And the number of possible solutions was estimated by the director of the film version to be about twenty thousand.

The controversy over the *nouveau roman* was interesting and characteristic of the general atmosphere. It is doubtful that the thesis of a geometrical pattern of episodes of a novel without characters or plot as a formative force can have any appeal for *litterateurs* whose standard can be understood and enjoyed by every member of a readership of many millions. To understand and appreciate the writings of the *nouveau roman* school requires considerable preliminary studies in aesthetics, and this learning must obviously be combined with a taste for experimentalism. Hence the appeal of the *nouveau roman* must be limited to a comparatively small "élite." This fact, incidentally, was brought home to us by a number of western speakers who complained of the small editions of novels in contrast to the socialist countries' record in bringing out library series in hundred-thousand-copy editions. On the other hand, the screen version of "Mariendbad," though no sweeping success, did undoubtedly arouse widespread interest for the author, thus ensuring wide publicity for one of the books that had been written—and read—by members of a small literary coterie (regarded as decidedly leftist, considering the views of its members).

These statements may be a little more succinct, or at least more in terms of "dialogue," than was possible at the Leningrad round-table conference, if only because the *nouveau roman* school is still at an initial phase of its development. Obviously it has not yet "conquered" the novel. But that its principles—mainly through the criticism it has elicited—have come into the forefront of literary interest was proved by the very attention devoted to this movement in the Soviet delegates' speeches. This attention, moreover, pointed up one of the positive values of the conference as an instrument of widening the writers' intellectual horizons.

The development of the contemporary Hungarian novel and its prospects, chiefly in the context of realism, were elucidated in an interesting speech by Gábor Tolnai. Tibor Déry's speech, quite a different sort than the preceding contributions, was listened to with keen interest. He raised the question of the relationship between author, theme and reader as might be reflected in a novel about an anonymous hero of the Battle of Azincourt. Should such a novel be written, among the numerous problems would be that of nationalistic bias. Though he did not undertake to answer the questions thus raised, in his analytical treatment he put his finger on the source of the difficulties that bedevil the contemporary novel. His speech was considered by the participants of the round-table conference to be one of the most significant contributions to the discussion. Again and again, "Azincourt" was referred to in subsequent debates, probably the most remarkable statements coming from Angus Wilson. Pondering over the questions that had been raised by Déry, he said, he had turned to Shakespeare, who in several of his works proves to be an eminent authority on the Battle of Azincourt; and he had found that it was not the anonymous soldier that his great countryman had made the "positive hero"—rather, it was the scoundrel.

The closing event of the meeting was unquestionably the most significant of all: it came when the COMES leadership and

the heads of the various national delegations were received by Khruschchev at his Black Sea villa, and during a subsequent boat trip on the "Sea of Moscow," the canal leading into the Volga. It was an exceptionally fine day, and the beauty of the countryside was made more fascinating by the rhythm of white beech groves that line the shore. In the informal atmosphere on board, the Babelian barriers of language seemed to disappear. I had a chance to read an Italian version of poems of a Georgian poet, and French, which had ruled the conference platform, here was rivalled by English and even by Spanish. The Slavs understood one another enviably well, which can hardly be said to have been the case in Hungarian-Finnish discussions, where German or English was used. I believe it was in the course of this sea-faring "dialogue" that the clashes of opinion in Leningrad—about literary parenthood, the *nouveau roman* and the writer's responsibility—became finally calmed and smoothed out.

The COMES directing council meeting was held in the small school building at Yasnaya Polyana that Tolstoi had built for *muzhiks'* children; it was in a relic-filled room he used to teach his pupils that we sat at the desks. Tolstoi's spirit was present throughout the proceedings, and he himself seemed to orchestrate most beautifully the closing dialogue. The meeting yielded several practical conclusions. One is the realization that the old type of conferences, those rather on the spectacular side, are too difficult to organize and too costly. Besides, they seldom achieve the aims that are set, particularly if the members are supposed to hammer out a common platform on some selected vital issue relating to intellectual life. Short gatherings of people as individualistic as writers can scarcely be expected to achieve such a result. On the other hand, the Leningrad and Moscow meetings have proved that it *is* possible to establish contact between small —but not too small—groups of delegates so that interest, the debating spirit and harmony play equal parts. Of particular importance in this case were the newly discovered countryside, local problems and, of course, hospitality. The abundance of fresh experience would seem to warrant the holding of regional gatherings during the newly set three-year intervals between major COMES conferences. Such meetings provide a possibility for writers of neighbouring countries to discuss business in common and at the same time the presence of the leadership from Rome would guarantee organizational unity and the necessary support.

László Passuth

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

FOUR YOUNG PROSEWRITERS

Formerly, when a young Hungarian author's work was crowned with success, such epithets as "young" or "promising" were at once discarded and he became a writer or poet *tout court*, whose birth date only posterity might properly keep a record of. It was perhaps a decade ago that the new generation of novelists began to elevate youth almost to a special aesthetic rank. At that time young prosewriters beginning their careers adhered to a realism which, though rooted in tradition, nevertheless sought novel solutions that hinted at a coming literary renewal and gave rise to the hope that from their ranks depictors of an ever-changing life would arise who would succeed in inspiring a wide circle of readers. Every successful short story was a promise, but it would be foolish to maintain that all promises were fulfilled. Some of them, on the contrary, came to nothing, and many talents already reached a deadlock in the initial phase of their development. Nevertheless, a new group or writers came into being, more than one of whom has in the meantime gained the esteem of critics and readers alike.

A year and a half ago The New Hungarian Quarterly (No. 7 of 1962) published a selection of short stories by young authors. This choice made it possible for our readers to become acquainted with their most characteristic writings. Since that time the generation then introduced has taken several steps forward, and a number of its members have published collections of their writings during the past year. It may therefore be of interest to discuss a few new books of the younger generation of Hungarian prose writers.

FERENC SÁNTA: *Az ötödik pecsét* ("The Fifth Seal") Szépirodalmi Publishing House, 1963, 300 pp.

The first work of a novelist invariably arouses great expectations, especially if he has stepped so abruptly and with such remarkable success into contemporary literature as did Ferenc Sánta. His first novel, *Sokan voltunk* ("There Were Many of Us") revived with bewildering emotional and literary force a harassing drama of peasant life—the role of necessity in converting a man into an assassin; the fate of old people condemned to death because they are unfit to work and are no more than additional mouths to be fed. It was this powerful start that provided reviewers and readers with the yardstick for measuring the later short stories of Sánta appearing in periodicals and in his first volume of short stories *Téli virágzás* ("Winter Blooming"), 1956. Although the latter again offered evidence of the author's dramatic sense and powerful style, it gave rise to the question: "Which way now?" Ferenc Sánta had to tread the rough

path to genuine prominence *after* a successful start. He is still fighting his own battle for an independent literary outlook on life. This is why his second volume of short stories *Farkasok a küszöbön* ("Wolves on the Threshold"), 1961, no longer met with unequivocal enthusiasm. It was particularly in connection with his cycle of short stories of an antifascist content that reviewers blamed him for the abstract quality of his humanism, which leads him to regard war as eternal and unavoidable, to condemn terror in general, and to represent the conflict between the man-in-the-street and those in power as timeless. This weakness of Sánta's is at the same time his force: he attempts—in the wake of Dürrenmatt and Frisch—to serve truth of a wider validity than the concrete theme would imply. His endeavour, however, is not always successful in this volume.

"The Fifth Seal" is a parable on an antifascist theme in a historical framework. It takes place in the Budapest of 1944, its heroes are every-day people: a book salesman, a watchmaker, a carpenter, a photo artist with wooden legs, and the proprietor of a pub that serves as the scene of the narrative. The story itself can hardly be summarized. A discussion that began in the pub spreads its waves into the homes of the participants, until an unexpected turn—some of the heroes of the novel are carried off to the Arrow-cross House*—affords them an opportunity to answer the debated issue through their actions. The rather strange question, posed by the watchmaker and representing the core of the novel, is this: if after their death they could rise from the dead in a new body, whose would they choose—that of the ruler of an imaginary island, abusing his great power, or that of an oppressed and humiliated slave? This fiction embraces the whole complex of contradictions in human life: assumption of responsibility, relationship between ruler and subject, egoism and generosity, pursuit of happiness, vigilant and artificially lulled conscience—in short, the historically determined issues of humanity and inhumanity.

The dual constraint of decision forms the real conflict of the novel. And the conversation in the pub, which in the exposition of the novel is suggestive of the atmosphere, the odour of beer and the noisy jokes in the Prague "Goblet," the famous inn of "Shveyk," opens even wider intellectual perspectives to the reader rather than to the heroes themselves. What is the meaning of ethics? What obligations does sincerity impose? Do we have the strength to accept ourselves as we actually are? What are we really? What is stronger in us—the desire to escape suffering, or honesty? And is it natural that one should defeat the other? The questions accumulate dramatically until even in the brains of the debating every-day people the accusing truth takes shape: "What kind of world is this, where man cannot be good because he wants to live..." and "everybody would like to be good in himself, and yet society consists of persons of bad conscience and with a sense of malaise." Sánta's heroes at first waver when faced with the ethical test. They hesitate and doubt, lie and apologize, until one of them, recognizing the degree of responsibility of the social and power hierarchy, voices the crisis of conscience of the "little rascals," while another—personifying the ideal virtues of the citizen—lulls his own anxiety to sleep by saying that one must live as one is allowed to.

Only the most cruel trial imposed by the reality of captivity in the prisons of the arrow-cross men makes these average people oppressed by circumstances discover that there is a point where human morality defeats even the human craving for life, where honesty becomes stronger than the desire to escape torment. Though poor in words they are strong in action, because they, all but

* The premises of the arrow-cross (Hungarian nazi) party, the most extreme fascist organization in Hungary, where innocent people were often tortured and slain in 1943 and 1944.

one, prefer to die rather than dishonour the body of a fellow prisoner who has no more than a few hours to live. When the world falls into the depth of inhumanity, the humanity of small grey people rises to unsuspected heights.

The reality of the story of "The Fifth Seal" may be contested from several aspects. The intricate intellectual dilemma and catharsis experienced by what are actually primitive characters is unlikely. If, however, we take the novel to be a parable—as I believe is the author's intention—and analyse the moral issues abstracted from their concrete motivation, the relationship between the literary conception and the world represented at once becomes clearer. The abstract quality of the figures is thereby made acceptable and even justified; it is as if we were confronted with the abstract heroes of Franz Kafka, carriers of thoughts and questions. The symbolism and abstractness of these characters is their force and weakness at one and the same time, for Sánta's novel, thrilling and harassing as is its intellectual content, fails to create a single really memorable human type. Although the novel ends by unequivocally opposing a society that debases man into inhumanity, it never achieves an authentic picture of the epoch represented. More exactly, there are some peripheral flashes from broken pieces of the mirror of historical reality—for instance, the state of mind of the persecuted girl who incessantly asks: "How old must I grow to get killed myself?" But the silvering that would reflect the epoch in its totality is lacking.

ISTVÁN SZABÓ: *A varázslat kertje* ("The Magic Garden") Szépirodalmi Publishing House, 1963, 198 pp.

This author is four years younger than Ferenc Sánta, but their literary careers show a similar trend. Szabó also appeared early in the fifties with stories of peasant life, and he too published a volume of short stories of his own ("The Rebel") for the first time in 1956. The years when their work came to a standstill coincided too. And as in Sánta's case it was the political and literary consolidation in Hungary that enabled István Szabó to get over his crisis and place a volume of his short stories before the public.

In the above-mentioned number of The New Hungarian Quarterly a key story of his new volume appeared under the title "Everything Is as It Used to Be." In it he described the experience of a young Budapest student who pays a visit to his village and feels the standstill and sickening torpor of an immovable status quo. The plates are where they have always been, the door of the kitchen stove is still hard to close, but the world, as well as the youngster himself, has changed fundamentally. This change is so far felt only as a burden and has hardly any effect: the wordless dissension with things at home finds a discharge in helpless intoxication.

The conflict made tangible in the story seems to have been a basic experience of the young author. The crisis of the East-European peasant's way of life is not a simply observable social phenomenon but a drama that fastens onto the fate of everyone. The collision of generations obtains a special social content in the village. Father and son clash not only like rival cocks, as in *Pajkoskodók* ("Making Mischief"), the first story of the volume, but also as the two heroes of *Nehéz téli nap* ("Hard Winter Day"), where in the forced winter inactivity the revolt of the son against the pennyless small peasant's life and the repugnance of the father toward the co-operative farm flare up. The natural direction of the peasant boy's revolt is attachment to a new form of life. This situation is represented in the most powerful writing of the collection, *A szabadság keresztje* ("The Holiday Cross"). The word holiday is used in its double meaning.* In a figurative sense the whole of the story goes far beyond the two-week holiday of the young tractor driver; it is enlarged to epic scope, to what makes a life worth living, to the peasant youth's

* In Hungarian the concepts of "freedom" and "holiday" are denoted by the same word.—The Ed.

real freedom. A holiday unexpectedly comes to the hero of this story when his tractor breaks down, and then he does not apply for other work at the machine station, as is usual. In defiance of home traditions he does not go off to drudge with his father on the peasant's small holding but idly saunters about in the town and at Lake Balaton. The confusion of one not accustomed to rest renders this gift of a holiday a burden, a cross: the boy does not know what to do either with his time or with himself. But still more essential is the conflict that unfolds within the family. The boy is unwilling to share the burden of home work, not out of laziness but out of rebellion. This is why the father is so deeply hurt by the inactivity of his son. He feels that the boy, in his actions but mainly in his demands, is violating centuries-old peasant traditions. The writer himself finally does not know what to do with the energies accumulated in his hero, and just as the latter spends them in senseless rough-and-tumble, he too is satisfied with a grotesque and meaningless epilogue.

Right from the start, István Szabó's most valuable literary asset is dramatic characterization. According to his own confession, he watches the struggle of old and new within the individual in a transitory epoch and is particularly susceptible to the problem of persons wedged in the dilemma of "already and not yet." He attempts to demonstrate what wounds the peasants receive in the struggle for self-knowledge and "how they extricate themselves from old bonds to the sunshine with its promise of other and better things." This struggle is still represented by the author with some insecurity, in a grotesque form that blurs the human faces of the strugglers, such as in the short story *Hazulról-odáig*—"From Home to There," or he is sometimes unable to carry it through, as in the story just referred to.

In some instances, however, he represents his theme with much concision and subtle technique, as, for instance, in *Siratό-dal* ("Dirge"), which tells of the last bread-baking of an old peasant woman revolting against shop-baked bread. This story, even if only in its picture of the 72-year-old Aunt Reza as she relaxes in delight over the accustomed, long-missed work, would be a pastel of high rank. But Szabó takes a further step, intensifying to the level of drama a portrait with lyrical beginnings. For when it is found out that Aunt Reza has forgotten to add salt to the dough, all the bending and stooping, the testing of the worn-out body, all the conservative revolt against the young people become suddenly infinitely hopeless, idle and anachronistic. Szabó represents his characters from the inside to the very end, from the plane of complete emotional identification, but the dramatic "offence" committed in the process of bread-baking suddenly makes it clear not only for outsiders but to Aunt Reza herself that truth is with the young people who buy the bread in the shop. Some sort of sorrowful but still moving authenticity warms this story; the understanding of the representatives of the passing world is never nostalgic in regard to the old world, but neither does the vote cast in favour of tomorrow pass sentence upon the people of yesterday.

ENDRE FEJES: *A hazudós* ("The Liar") Magvető Publishing House, 1963, 178 pp.

Perhaps some readers will remember the short story that gave its name to this volume; it too was one of those published in No. 7 of The New Hungarian Quarterly last year. The book itself went into its second edition of 14,000 copies not long ago. This is a surprising figure in Hungary. The explanation is probably that the interest of readers in the person and works of Fejes has increased a great deal this year. When "The Liar" first came on the market, it was gratifying to witness the attempts and initial results of a promising young author. Now this small volume has become only the antecedent of the greatest novelistic success of the past year, *Rozsdatemető* ("Scrap-iron Yard"). This first novel of Endre Fejes is a

condensed family history. It presents the fate of an average Hungarian worker, the chronicle of people who, though they have obtained freedom and a relatively good life, have not yet arrived at the level of human culture which would enable them to make use of its possibilities and to elevate themselves humanly, morally and spiritually. In a certain sense this novel is related to the one of Ferenc Sánta which is discussed above. Fejes also examines the average man in the current of history. But his work is not only akin to Sánta's; it also contrasts with it: while in "The Fifth Seal" the people set in the framework of an abstract social mechanism struggle with essentially abstract moral problems, here the members of a family, the main characters, are examined within present Hungarian reality.

It would exceed the limitations of the present article to discuss the debates which arose around "Scrap-iron Yard"*; besides, when "The Liar" appeared for the first time, readers could not have been influenced by that book. The general reaction to Fejes's first book derived from its remarkable authenticity, the proximity of the author to the world he chose to portray. Although, in aesthetics, sincerity and factual knowledge are a *sine qua non* of a literary work, it should be noted that, in just the years before "The Liar" appeared, many writings were published with scenes in a worker's *milieu* whose authenticity and authority in terms of the theme seemed to be at least doubtful. Silhouettes of imaginary muscle-colossi, irreproachable heroes exclusively interested in production diagrams, populated the "literary" works of the epoch of so-called schematism. The writings of Fejes, however, are marked with the years that the author himself spent at the work bench and his inside knowledge of factories.

The independent tone of his stories has not quite developed as yet: he is mostly a follower of Andor Endre Gelléri, the pre-World-War-II master of the Hungarian short stories of the suburbs, a great realist who could also be lyrical, but as he turned towards the anecdote in *genre* so has he bent his style towards naturalism. Fejes mixes particularly the brighter colours: humour and poetic language harmonize surprisingly in some of his stories ("The Liar," "The Water Gun"). Already in these writings the sure guidance of the story-teller makes itself felt. Careful editing, however, is not yet the author's strong point; the equilibrium of the work is sometimes upset by tangling up the episodes.

His greatest danger has been presentation on a single plane, but this fault has by now been definitely controlled and overcome. The motif of the stories of this volume is man's disappointment in woman. The tones are varied, but the theme is always woman's infidelity, the *volte-face* of girls and women who sacrifice love for material goods. Some of them fall into a moral morass, while others simply prefer the man who promises more security, but all these characters commit a crime against the man who honestly loves them. The deserted, disillusioned man then leads a life ever more wretched, bitter and lonely. Actually no story in the book fails to reiterate this sort of disillusionment. In the present collection, Fejes made use of what was really valuable in his experience as a short-story writer: a realistic method of representation that is convincing both in its details and in its relationships, the power of creating atmosphere and the art of story-telling. He enriched these attributes later by developing means of condensation and construction.

LAJOS GALAMBOS: *Keserűlapu* ("Burdock") Magvető Publishing House, 1963, 199 pp.

Of the young generation of story-tellers Galambos is the most alert. He seeks out, with constant sensibility, the most burning issues of the day. The struggle between old and new is no abstract philosophical thesis

* Reviewed in our previous issue, by György Szabó.—The Ed.

but reality caught at every turn. His world is therefore not only absolutely today's world but a multicoloured one. While István Szabó writes about peasants and Endre Fejes about workers, Galambos is bound by his basic experience to peasant life, but is attached at the same time to the town and the intelligentsia. Last year, for instance, the education of teachers, who are in turn to educate the coming generation, stood in the focus of his interest.

The two main attributes of his new volume of short stories, besides alert interest and variegated word usage, are probably the elements of passion and interest. The passion derives from his daring, impetuously and self-confidently, to assume responsibility not only for the written word but also for the moral position he takes up. Galambos is not afraid of unmasking petty monarchs—as in *Jobb emberek vakációja* ("The Holidays of Better People")—of being revolted about backward farmsteads, of representing the narrow-mindedness and the intellectual misery of those who live only for themselves. And whenever he takes a stand, he draws the story along in such a way as at least to light up the direction and hope of a solution. So far as interest is concerned, in Galambos this literary asset coincides with those mentioned before: his stories are interesting because they refer to essential issues and topical problems presented courageously and passionately. In *Tirpákok*, for example, he is concerned with the problem of democracy and consistently develops the issue, discussed also in a recent film, of whether it is possible and permissible to make people "happy" against their will, whether the leader is entitled to enforce a theoretically correct will on his community. László Cser, the hero of this story, says yes to this question. He is the son of day-labourers; the ups and downs of his youth and his disappointment in love lead him to fight for his rights. He is the sort of man who always feels that the world moves too slowly, while those living around him, the peasants who had mistrusted the co-operative movement and now simply aquiesce in its rhythm, he regards as uncomprehending, almost as enemies. "I want to create a Garden of Eden," he bursts out, "doesn't anyone understand? These people don't want to fly, they want to creep in the mud forever. How can you force them to fly?" The author, concluding the fate of László Cser in an attempted murder upon him, takes a position against antidemocratic method of leadership. It is to be regretted that finally, in depicting Cser's catharsis, the dramatic intensity of the story slackens and the process of recognition is not entirely convincing. The deficiencies in the story—interruption of the splendid exposition of themes and fast-moving threads and the rough sketching of the characters—are still rather strong limitations on Galambos's literary development.

It is worthwhile, for instance, to examine the "Holidays of Better People" more closely. This story reveals and criticizes boldly and passionately the destructive powers of corruption active even in today's leadership and the spirit of nepotism that can flare up as an ember of the tradition of the former gentry. In the apparently objective tone the author's unequivocal stand can be felt—the critique of a Communist author who feels himself to be part of the system and passionately opposes all mistakes. One misses, however, a broader social authenticity that would deepen the objective genuineness (what makes such abuses possible?), a deep characterization, a dramatic vein. Galambos stops with the precise, true report of the occurrence; he seems unable to create a perspective or to reveal by literary means the heart of the matter.

However, the female characters of these stories are formed with particular care and affection. It is a special merit of the author that the women are not only participants in a love story but, and first of all, persons who have the sense of vocation with which the author is constantly concerned; they are heroines and victims of the struggle for vo-

cation. Two such characters will be remembered with special affection: Erzsi Virrasztó and Tanja, the Russian wife. Erzsi, in the title story, is a teacher, one of those nameless heroines who confront tremendous difficulties with silent generosity and are victorious in the fight against intellectual darkness and indolence in villages. Tanja, on the other hand, was born and educated for a creative, active life, a Soviet girl, who, while a student of forestry, came to Hungary to marry. The glamour of love and the shelter of safe marriage do not, however, dull her sense of vocation, but do fail to protect her from the dreariness of life without purposeful work. Erzsi has to struggle with a whole village, Tanja with herself. The successful presentation of this struggle in the title story, "Burdock", resulted in an authentic social picture, but in the "Russian Wife" the author was satisfied with a general schematic drawing of intellectual processes; by overemphasizing random motifs he left the steeper pathway of realism.

While Galambos's short career has been a successful one, he still has a rough path ahead of him before becoming a full-fledged novelist. With his variegated talent he now handles heavy problems easily. This facility itself is one of the secrets of his success. Common merits of his novels and short stories are the weaving of a thread that is full of surprise twists, and readability. But to be able to penetrate into the depths of the human spirit, this attractively shining talent must gather more strength.

ANNA FÖLDES

AUTHORS OF THE BOOKS REVIEWED

SÁNTA, Ferenc (1927). Miner, officer and, since 1958, librarian of the Institute of the History of Literature. His short stories have appeared in literary reviews and anthologies since 1953. For his first volume of short stories (1956) he was awarded the Attila József prize. The second was *Farkasok a küszöbön* ("Wolves on the Threshold"), 1961. *Az ötödik pecsét* ("The Fifth Seal") is his first novel.

SZABÓ, István (1931). Son of a poor peasant family, tractor-driver and soldier. He came to Budapest in 1953 and has been writing ever since. For his volume of short stories *A lázadó* ("The Rebel") he was awarded the Attila József prize.

FEJES, Endre (1923). Turner for many years and a miner in Belgium; spent several years in Paris; has published since 1955. For his first volume of stories he won the Trade Union prize; his novel *Rozsdatemető* ("Scrap-iron Yard") received the Attila József prize.

GALAMBOS, Lajos (1929). Previously a journalist, radio and television assistant; writer of film scripts. Several of his films have attracted considerable interest, e.g., *Megszállottak* ("Fanatics") and *Isten őszi csillaga* ("God's Autumn Star"). He is an Attila József prize-winner.

A MANUAL ON HOTELS

Although until recently Hungary was not one of the most-frequented touristic areas of Europe, in the course of the past two or three years there has been a definite increase in tourist traffic.

The development of tourism on a large scale depends, of course, on a network of hotels of adequate capacity, which is a question of investment and of a considerable expansion of staff. In 1962, several new hotels were opened—for example, on the shores of Lake Balaton—but this is only a fragment of what is actually needed. Several big tourist hotels have been planned for Budapest and its surroundings, and innumerable problems are raised thereby. What is the best type of hotel? What trend will the public's requirements take in the years to come? Where should the hotels be built, and what incidental investments are to be looked for? How much will the hotel industry be transformed by the steadily increasing camping, house-trailer travel and use of motels? These are questions that hotel industries all over the world are constantly trying to answer and that the specialists in the Hungarian catering and hotel industry are also seeking to resolve in the best possible way.

This complex of questions is the subject of a book by György Rózsahegyi, *Hotel Achievements**, one of the first scientific works on this many-sided subject. Having followed the hotel trade for many years, the author's experience gives him a good grasp of even the smallest details in this vast field. Thus, the book provides answers to many questions that have remained practically untouched up to now. The reader recognizes more clearly, page by page, that, on account of the extent of international tourism being developed at present, hotel trade has been subjected to radical changes; as a particular branch of the service industry which is interwoven with psychological elements, it can no longer be developed and managed by means of the older empirical methods. An up-to-date hotel industry can be built up only on principles of organization and management elaborated along the lines revealed by scientific research.

A chapter in Rózsahegyi's book that is of interest for the non-professional reader is the one dealing with the history of hotel trade from antiquity to our days. In addition to previously unpublished data on the Hungarian hotel industry in the past, the story is given of how the industry began with the retailing of wine and spirits, as mentioned by a deed issued by St. Stephen in 1006. The first inn was mentioned in a contract of sale, dated 1279, in Esztergom. The documented history of the Hungarian catering industry thus covers somewhat less than 700 years.

For a long time, accommodation of travellers was provided mainly by the Church. The monastery of Pannonhalma, founded by St. Stephen in the eleventh century, was able to accommodate 70 guests "of rank" and a vast number of persons of the "lower classes" at the same time—an achievement that is not to be depreciated even now.

The book is divided into four parts, to which an appendix is added. The first part deals with the basic problems of the hotel industry, the second treats of hotel buildings and premises and the third, hotel equipment. The fourth part is the most important from the practical point of view: it gives an analysis of how to run a hotel.

László Huba

* György Rózsahegyi: *Szállodai ismeretek*, Közg. és Ifj. Kiadó, 1962.

FILM

MODERN TRENDS IN NEW HUNGARIAN FILMS

To understand the present status of Hungarian film production its antecedents should be briefly surveyed.

The only film that survived World War II, apart from a few light comedies, was *Emberek a havason* ("On the Alps"), directed by István Szőts. All others have gone under together with the anachronistic epoch that brought them into being. Though Hungary had some outstanding directors in the past, they tried to escape from the choking, insincere atmosphere at home by unfolding their talent abroad, as did Sándor (Sir Alexander) Korda in Britain, Michael Kertész (Curtiz) in Hollywood, or Géza Bolváry in Berlin.

Thus no traditions were left over from the inter-war period unless we regard falsehood and the hushing up of reality as a tradition. In the words of one of our young film directors: "Our younger directors could not rely on predecessors capable of contributing to the development of a young national film art the way Chuhray could rely on Romm or Donskoy, Wajda and his followers on Ford and Jakubowska, who in art as in other matters paved the way for the next generation. This task—in my opinion—falls to our authors."

Literature came to the rescue of Hungarian film art: in recent times most of our good films have been based on some literary work of merit.

In 1947 Géza Radványi and Béla Balázs succeeded in doing so with their "Somewhere in Europe." This film, which drew on the traditions of the French school, was successfully shown the world over and has been sponsored by the United Nations. It was the first Hungarian film to raise a problem of universal import, that of the children and youngsters who became homeless in the war, and it gave a somewhat romantic and sentimental answer. Though this film already touched world-wide problems, the task of putting on the screen the most burning issues of our own country still lay ahead. It was tackled in the first film produced after nationalization of the Hungarian motion-picture industry in 1942. The work of Frigyes Bán and Pál Szabó, *Talpalatnyi föld* ("Soil Underfoot") gave a realistic and still unsurpassed picture of the difficult life of the poor peasants and pick-and-shovel men in Hungary before the liberation.

Subsequently the screen darkened for seven long years in the shadow of the personality cult, and most of the films of this period are characterized by ranting "positive" heroes, flagrant lack of authenticity, and disagreeable histrionics. The complete fiasco of the Zhdanov cultural policy is best evidenced in the fact that in these seven years no significant film could take shape save perhaps for two coloured film-comedies drawn from classic national literature:

"Ludas Matyi" (directed by Kálmán Nádasdy) and "Liliomfi" (directed by Károly Makk).

The turn at last came in 1955, beginning with the promising films of Félix Máriássy, *Budapesti tavasz* ("Spring Comes to Budapest") and *Egy pikoló világos* ("A Glass of Light Beer")—script of the former by Ferenc Karinthy, of the latter by Judit Máriássy—and Zoltán Fábri's *Körhinta* ("Merry-go-round")—scenario by Imre Sarkadi. These three films represented a reaction to the theatricality of the preceding years and were akin to neo-realism. The psychological moment was, indeed, similar to that in post-war Italy at the start of neo-realism with its artistic freedom after a period of compulsory and loud-mouthed clichés.

"Spring Comes to Budapest" deals with the liberation of the capital; it tells its story simply, subtly and lyrically, in the mirror of a tragic love.

"A Glass of Light Beer" was the first film to represent our every-day life in an unsophisticated way, without artificial poses; in its heroes the generation grown up since the war could recognize itself.

"Merry-go-round" was the greatest success both at home and abroad among Hungarian films produced so far. With its lyrical intonation, scenic dynamism and the poetry of a pure love, it is still unsurpassed in Hungarian film art.

Szakadék ("Abyss") and *Hannibál tanár úr* ("Professor Hannibal") were screened in 1956.

"Abyss" is László Ranódy's screen version of a drama by József Darvas. It revolves around the crisis in the life of a village school-teacher, who has to choose between love and prosperity on the one side and loyalty to the people on the other. The bitter fate of the provincial intelligentsia in Hungary between the two world wars is portrayed with strong realistic colours.

In "Professor Hannibal" Zoltán Fábri adapted a short story by Ferenc Móra for the screen. He depicts with great symbolic power the struggles of an oppressed, clumsy professor of Latin and his subsequent transformation into a hero under the growing inhumanity of fascism.

Similarly to romanticism, national neo-realism stimulated in Hungary an awakening of the conscience of the people. It was not so much a stylistic school as a clear view of reality at home. For this reason, it is less poetical and at the same time less inclined towards naturalism than that of the Italians; it also has a somewhat pathetic hue, is charged with symbols, and lacks the playful irony and the Mediterranean colour so characteristic of the Italian variety. Hungarian realism, if we may call it so, is more shadowy and therefore darker than the original; at the same time it is harder and more rigid.

This hard, statuesque Hungarian realism makes *Ház a sziklák alatt* ("House Below the Rocks"), Károly Makk's adaptation of a novel by Sándor Tatay, so memorable. The tragedy taking place in a small house hidden under the basalt columns of one of the most famous wine-growing hills of the country, Badacsony, is dwarfed both in dimensions and significance by the immense social tableau of "Soil Underfoot", but in spirit and style it is just as characteristically Hungarian.

A softer, more resolved and lyrical picture is drawn about the fate of the unemployed in *Vasvirág* ("Iron Flower"), directed by János Herskó, with script by Andor Endre Gelléri. If from Makk's film it is mainly the action, the faces and passions that are retained by memory, with Herskó it is the surroundings, the situations, a staircase, the unemployed waiting on the benches of a square in late autumn, that we recall. The film is woven into a whole from several novels by Andor Endre Gelléri; there is no strictly closed dramatic composition, and its loose series of episodes already reveal—along with a late influence of neo-realism—the first signs of a new cinematic language.

A gentle poetical atmosphere also fills Imre Fehér's *Bakaruhában* ("In Infantryman's

Uniform"). The love story of the journalist who pretends to be a private and of the little servant girl (after a short story by Sándor Hunyady) is justly regarded as the most successful screen adaptation of a short story up to now.

After 1956, the progression of the Hungarian film was suddenly interrupted, and it has not yet succeeded in recovering the heights reached in 1955—56.

The New Era

The first promising film of the new era, the *Megszállottak* ("Obsessed"), directed by Károly Makk, with scenario by Lajos Galambos, appeared in 1961. It deserves more thorough discussion, because it began a process that still has not come to a close. This film does not enchant the spectator in the first place, but compels him to take a stand as regards himself and the world. It is the personal affair of the present generation, particularly of those 30—40 years old today, a rediscovery of faith in a cause that was disgraced so often and by so many. One cannot live without the belief that it is possible to make the world better, truer and more humane. This film is a declaration of faith by the "obsessed" as against the "clever ones," the cynics. It is an inherent characteristic of these "obsessed" that they cannot be tamed into lackeys, whether by force or by money. This is the film of our own generation. How—it may be asked—does a generation come into being? Both psychology and practical experience teach us that susceptibility to the impressions of external reality differs at various age levels. The main period when attitudes towards life evolve, opinions on the world crystallize and one's relation to society and to oneself becomes clarified is between sixteen and thirty. Particular generations are therefore involuntarily preoccupied with common problems. The main requirement of our generation, I feel, is to speak the truth at whatever cost and to strive to put this truth, once recognized, into practice.

The film begins meditatively. A man is going his way. Tram cars and big clumsy trolley buses pass by. An automobile nearly runs the man down. A gay company just leaving a night-club crosses his path and asks him to join. Acquaintances? Strangers? We do not know. He gets out of their way and goes along the street. Over his head neon lights are glittering. Dawn breaks. He goes and goes, and the street becomes empty even of himself. He disappears behind an advertizing pillar. Then we see him from the side as he emerges again and continues his walk. The pavement is shining, the watering-cars must have been passing here not long ago, maybe this also occurs to him for a moment. He goes and goes on.

What is this long initial scene? A tacit monologue of picture and motion. A pictorial thought, which I am trying to formulate in words. The specific cinematic form of expression, which is filled with concrete content through knowledge of later action. It is lyrical and highly subjective, blurring the boundary-line between hero and spectator and compelling me to enter the thoughts of the man walking along the street, without trying to find out why his walk is so monotonous, long and apparently aimless. Who would not remember nights such as this, when we were just jogging along as if out of this world and the street became empty of us. Only thus could we summarize many a thing, only thus decide crucial issues. We were alone in order that we should not be obliged to be alone any longer. This is not the loneliness of alienation, of the disastrous kind of solitude, but rather the introversion of the long jumper before the run-up. Seen from outside, it is the purposeless wandering of Antonioni's intellectuals; from inside, it is just the opposite.

Si duos faciunt idem. . .

The cut clears. An automobile is running in a sea of sand. Engineer Bene—whom previously we saw walking through the streets—has come here to do a levelling job. He is a

"scorched" man. In the period of irrealistic over-fulfilling of the Plan he too made himself overdimensional. But his obsession leaves him no peace even now. He finds water below the sand. And in alliance with the other obsessed, the president of the cooperative, he declares war on the "clever ones," those of the Inspectorate. He nearly fails, almost lands in jail, but finally turns the sand steppe into an irrigated garden.

The story is simple, and it is true to life. What is complicated, is the hero's behaviour. And even if Bene had failed, we could not say that he was wrong. The truth of the "obsessed" is not verified by personal success but by the facts which sooner of later are bound to confirm the correctness of his ideas.

The other important Hungarian film of this period is *Két félidő a pokolban* ("Two Half-times in Hell"), directed by Zoltán Fábry with script by Péter Bacsó. It shows the transformation of a representative soccer player, who has come to the front-lines together with inmates of a forced labour camp; how a professional football addict becomes a hero consciously taking upon himself the fate of others. The final scene, when the nazis triumph over the prisoners only Tommy-gun in hand, is a tribute to the magnificent symbol-creating force of Fábry.

Of the films that appeared in 1963, two should be examined more thoroughly. *Oldás és kötés* ("Untying and Binding"), directed by Miklós Jancsó with script by József Lengyel, and *Párbeszéd* ("Dialogue"), written and directed by János Herskó.

"Untying and Binding", the second film of a young director, caused a strong reaction both among reviewers and audiences. It speaks already entirely the new cinematic language, although still mixing some foreign words into its sentences. Jancsó's remarks on this deserve quotation: "Art devoted to great dramas or actions is not nearest to the man of today... it is the mapping of the remaining white spots—the workdays surrounding the great actions—that is topical... This trend is—falsely in my opinion—referred to as Antonionism, although this creative mode can be adapted to different artistic concepts and different views of the world, of which Antonioni's is only one among many... The charge of imitation is, in my opinion, much more frequently made than is justified. Often it would be more correct to refer to healthy inspiration coming from different quarters, which is only natural, for the fertilizing influence of settled artistic trends and aesthetic systems can be found everywhere in the history of the arts."

The chief character of the film is Ambrus Járom, a young surgeon, who with the cruelty of youth questions the ability of his old professor. When the latter, without sparing his own health and as a result of assiduous efforts brings the operated patient back to life from clinical death, Járom, overcome with shame, becomes aware of his rigid inhumanity. Broodingly roaming about in the circle of his young artist friends, he reaches a sudden decision and jumps in his car to return to his native village and to his father. But even there he does not find himself, and finally, back on the road, the *Cantata Profana*, resounding from the radio of the car in Bartók's own English version, makes him clearly understand his own fate.

As in the initial scene of the "Obsessed," here too loneliness does not mean the fatal condition of being closed in, of alienation from society and from self, but the moment of catharsis. In its loose dramatic composition, its sustained pictures, its representation of man's inner world, its changing rhythm, the film, much as it may be related to Antonioni, of whose influence Jancsó himself is aware, is absolutely different in spirit, in its sense of life.

"In recent times," says Antonioni, "we have reached the point of unearthing, analysing and deepening man's emotions. This we were able to do, but no more." And on another occasion: "I prefer to place my characters in a rich surrounding, because there emotions are less determined by practical

considerations... Emotions can manifest themselves more clearly in their true quality."

These two quotations may convey an idea of why the films of Makk and Jancsó differ from, say, *La Notte* of Antonioni. The *Cantata Profana* coming over the BBC in Bartók's words is more than a "deepening of emotions"; it speaks almost in the imperative: you have left your native house, the old world, there is no way back, you must build your own world. From this moment of catharsis the road can lead only towards the clear springs of the future.

The other essential issue on which we part company with Antonioni is the legend that emotions manifest themselves freely in a wealthy *milieu*. We definitely doubt that they find truer expression there and even claim that great impulses affecting the entire personality are always attached to the whole of reality and point beyond themselves. What Antonioni proceeds from might perhaps be characterized as the provincialism of plenty. We may agree that, in a world where leisure is practically unlimited and people are not restricted by financial considerations, feelings find the road less blocked, but it is just because they are so easily brought into play that they lose their specific weight, their human authenticity and are at the mercy of the interior whims of the individual. In this test-tube world the wanton, distilled sentiment points only towards its own evaporation (as in *La Notte*).

Nearer to us is the emotional world of Wajda's *Kanal* or Fábri's "Merry-go-round," where love is linked with liberty, the birth of a new world, i.e., the most important things in life.

We do not claim that the world of vertiginous or paralysing feelings is unknown to us. But here and now we have more important things to do than to indulge in emotional affectation. "Oh, the poor thing," said a housewife, mother of two, who in addition works eight hours daily in an office, "how unlucky she is to be so outside of everything. Still, it is fortunate that she has enough money for cabs to ramble all about the city!"

A vulgar opinion, this? It comes closer to our view than the otherwise very artistic vagaries of a Jeanne Moreau. Work, we believe, pertains to life here just as much as do feelings, and if we live within a society and not above it, the danger of our burning out is less imminent.

The other film we wish to mention, one that set itself the highest aims, is *Párbeszéd* ("Dialogue"), written and directed by János Herskó. What he attempts here is no less than to present the history of a love and marriage from 1945 to the present.

The film begins with a broad over-all view: across a snowfield redoubtable monsters—Soviet tanks—are seen approaching, rumbling and rattling, and stirring up an immense cloud of snow. They bring not death but liberty: they are crushing the concrete posts of the concentration camp's fencing. Behind the wire fence stands a young girl with shorn hair; in her torment, she can hardly smile, hardly rejoice at her regained liberty.

This series of totals aiming at monumentality runs through the whole film: immense buildings, tanks lining up, supply the background to the story of the marriage. As if we were being shown an intimate play on an immense stage with projected scenery. For the action itself involves few performers and is entirely concentrated on the two main characters. It tells of how two people lose and find each other again. The man is a worker; after the liberation, while the cannons are still roaring, he goes straight to the headquarters of the Communist Party, where, shortly afterwards, he becomes acquainted with the girl who has come back from deportation. In the new world the man becomes an officer, the girl studies to become an architect, and they soon marry. On their wedding day they are sitting on the terrace of a small espresso-bar, while around them the news vendors

shout: "The traitor László Rajk and his band have been arrested!" But they are too preoccupied with themselves and hardly notice what is going on around them.

After they have been living together for a short time, the hall-door bell rings. The young man is arrested on forged charges and convicted. The young wife remains alone, and under the tremendous pressure—these are the darkest days of the personality cult—is unable to hold her head up. She discards her husband's name and cannot resist her one-time suitor, a young poet and former school-companion of her husband.

When the greying husband returns home years later, he finds an entirely changed woman. But he too has become brooding and has lost his assurance. Husband and wife are candid to each other, and try to live together again, but the man cannot bear it any longer and a break-up of their marriage becomes inevitable. The woman lives with the poet, her husband is made director of a factory somewhere in the provinces. The autumn of 1956 arrives. The poet and the woman are more and more swept along by the events, while the husband contemplates what is about to happen with distrust and aversion. When the workers' and peasants' government led by Kádár is set up, he supports it whole-heartedly. He is already a member of the new militia when, during an identity check, he has a chance encounter with his wife, who in the meantime has been deserted by the poet for an actress.

The two of them meet anew after years and find each other again, this time, perhaps, for good.

Herskó in this film not only undertook to span a historical period, but endeavours to create a new style. In pictorial technique he relies on the traditions of Russian realism, but for psychological characterization and more intimate drama he tries to utilize the new cinematic language of Antonioni and Resnais. His efforts may be regarded as exemplary, for we have to find a new synthesis, and the path followed by the new film probably points in this direction.

Such synthesis cannot, however, be brought about from outside, from the aspect of style, because then, even with the best intentions and highest standards, the different style-elements only result in a mixture, not in a new compound. In Herskó's film the synthesis is not entirely successful: tableau and psychological analysis sometimes weaken instead of corroborating each other, due mainly to the lacking emotional fulfilment of the two heroes. A sort of anti-schematism seems to act as a brake on the director in portraying the two characters. As a result, the woman becomes weak and unstable in her emotional life, the man passive and irresolute in both private and political life. The penetrating force of genuine emotions is absent in both of them, and so we cannot identify ourselves with either of them. When the show ends we feel that the two of them might possibly behave as they did, but somehow it was not inevitable.

In its aims "Dialogue" can be ranged beside Wajda's "Ashes and Diamond" and Chuhray's "Clear Sky," but it lacks that something which makes the two others burn with such a consuming inner flame—the fire of genuine passion, the creator's love and, at the same time, severity towards his heroes.

Young Talents

Last, but not least, we should speak of the younger talents. The greatest promise of a rebirth of Hungarian cinematic art is the young generation of directors who have recently left the Theatre and Film Academy and are rallied in the Béla Balázs Studio. These young people started out as directors from the beginning, and the film is their primary means of expression. Remarkably cultured and knowledgeable, they already speak the cinematic language that came into being after the "language reform." The quality of their short films—even of the

weaker ones—exceeds the average product. One of our critics wittily remarked: "There are great small films, but unfortunately too many small great films have been made of late."

Let us examine a few of these shorts.

"Variations on a Theme. Part One: Objectivity." Newsreel fragments. Military parade. Marching military formations. Dive bombers, releasing their bombs. Concise text: "Forty millions died in World War II. Twenty-seven of them are dying now." Tanks. Awarding of the Iron Cross. Bombing. Walls crumble. "This is how a house collapses." Attack. A soldier's arm drops, and he topples on it. "This is how a man dies." "Part Two: Consternation." Museum of Military History. Fathers and sons looking at arms in a glasse case. Mannequins in uniforms of World War II. A father explains to his son how to manipulate a Tommy-gun. They smile, they are in high spirits. The father raises his hand, showing how to shoot. His arms, as if holding a Tommy-gun, rake all along the room. At this moment the machine guns, the arms enclosed in the glass cases, begin to rattle. Ruthlessly, as if war had again broken out. "Part Three: Like a Scream." The broad terrace of an espresso-bar. Sunshine. Young people bask in the sun, each wearing fashionable sunglasses. A saxophonist plays. From far off the low sound of marching. Sunbathing faces. The sound of marching gets stronger, it covers every other sound. Boys drumming on the table in marching rhythm. The sound of marching boots increases until it becomes almost unbearable. One feels compelled to shout: "How can you sit so quietly? Don't you hear?" And at that moment a man tosses up his head and strips off his sunglasses, paying attention. The picture stiffens. The end.

"Variations on a Theme" was the first small film of István Szabó, most talented member of the group of young directors, with the strongest sense for forms. Since that time he has already made two other small films: "Concert" and "You." In "Concert" there is mere fancy, playfulness—"Adventures of a Piano on the Danube Embankment" might well have been its subtitle. "You" is in the category of "love films." It is all rhythm and movement. It shows what a young man sees in his beloved, and what he "sees" into her.

As to technique and viewpoint Szabó has learned much from the young directors of the *nouvelle vague*, nor does he fall short of them in individual approach or in wit.

Of the shorts of the Béla Balázs Studio, Sándor Sára's documentary, "Gipsies," is the most consistent and forceful and deserves to be summarized at greater length.

Newspaper cuttings. "There are 200,000 gipsies in Hungary." Stills. Faces of men and women. Hovels dug in the earth. A gipsy camp. A wild drum solo. Inside the hovels: abject poverty, dirt, semi-animal existence. A gipsy song.

Mothers with children waiting for the doctor. A jet-plane crossing the sky, the children's eyes following it. In the consultation room the doctor examines the children. "Does he receive milk?" "No." "What does he eat?" "Potatoes, this or that, whatever we happen to get." "How old is he? Four?" "No, eight." "Does he go to school?" "No." "Why not?" "He's too weak, can't walk."—An eight-year-old child being weighed on infant scales.

An automobile, a train sweeping along. From the road side, from behind the dam, children looking on. Faces. "Because we were oppressed in the past and are not wanted in the present either. I am alive, a man, and I dwell in the earth."

Mourning. People around the open coffin. Prolonged dirge. *Ave Maria* in gipsy language, sung in chorus.

Old woman, story-telling: "Once upon a time we were birds, we could fly from one place to the other. Where we found something to eat, we alighted, fed and then continued our flight. Once we arrived at a spot where there was a lot to eat. Noon

came, and the evening of the next day. Our wings disappeared, we got arms and hands instead. Many gipsy children were born since then, but none has wings... Yet we still hope we shall fly again one day."

Gipsy blacksmiths. Tinkling of hammers. On an anvil red-hot iron is given shape. The rhythm of the movement and of picture changes, accelerates.

School. Home-work. The voices of little girls reading. "When I grow up, I shall be a school mistress... when I grow up, I shall be a dressmaker... when I grow up I shall be a nurse..." Voice of a little boy: "When I grow up I shall be a conductor and I shall wear a nice suit. The train moves, the rails rattle. But that's a long way off." Children are washing, drawing. They recite verses—Mayakovski, Petőfi.

A long road with a forest on both sides —the children's way home from school. Gipsy song. Drum. Stills. At home, a little boy drawing on the wall of the hovel. A road along which the children go—five, ten, fifteen, more and more of them. The end.

As Béla Bartók with his recording apparatus, so Sára with his motion picture camera visited gipsy settlements and collected the material for the film. In Hungary his method has important traditions. Since Bartók ethnographers and folk-music researchers have used and continue to use it. The results arouse wide interest, and it is not mere chance that one of the books that has seen many editions is *Puszták népe* ("People of the Puszta") by Gyula Illyés, describing life on farmsteads in the thirties.

Like Illyés, Sára too appeals to the nation's conscience, exhibiting the life of the denizens of the hovels not for the sake of *couleur locale*. His film canvasses and agitates: you cannot—it says—live quietly as long as there are people living under such conditions! And that the film rises above propaganda and simple documentation and becomes art is due to Sára's enthusiasm and compositional mastery. He imbues every inch of the film with his individuality.

The short film of István Gaál, "There and Back," similarly outgrows a mere documentary by its artistry and strict composition. It draws attention to the workers who pass much of their lives commuting by rail to and from their place of work. Already in his short study *Pályamunkások* ("Surfacemen"), written as a college student, Gaál revealed himself as an adept in rhythm. This gift is realized in the film. The early slow rhythm accelerates, the monotonous, dark hues brighten in the daylight of work, to slow down once more and flicker away in the cruel, dreary sluggishness of the return journey. As if an antithesis to this film, Gaál created one of our most beautiful coloured shorts, the "Tisza." Filled with glittering plein air this film shows by the mirror of the water, in the play of wind, waves, colour and light, how vanguard, how abstract Old Nature can be, if we but have the eyes to see it.

We have left to the last what is perhaps the most interesting venture—Sándor Sára's "Alone." It is the grand theme of Antonioni embodied in a documentary film. Sára visited homes for the aged and hospitals for suicides with his tape recorder, listened to lonely old people and young girls, attended meetings of the social policy unit of the Budapest city council, sought out a tribunal and spent some time in the children's town at Fót. Then he composed his film, as yet not shown to the public. I shall try to convey his creative method by two examples.

"Why did you attempt suicide?"

"Because my husband died; the machine fell down."

"Did you love your husband?"

"I was mainly grateful to him."

"Have you any children?"

"No."

"You felt left all alone?"

"I was alone before; I was brought up in seven different places."

"Your parents?"

"I have a mother somewhere; I was seventeen years old when I learned that she was alive. I had thought she was dead, because I was told this was why I was brought up at so many places. And when she came, it was not to take me with her. She does not like children. She does not want to be tied down."

"Haven't you seen your mother since?"

"Yes I have. For years she passed my door every day."

"She didn't look for you?"

"No, and I don't want her to come either. This is the one thing I could not bear. She is responsible for my life's being what it was."

"Have you considered what you will do after you leave the hospital?"

"No, I'm tired, something in me is broken... I don't know, I'll never think about anything, and I won't hope..."

The text is accompanied by the sight of tangled, confused branches, as if we were walking under them. Branches in wild confusion; more branches, twisted, tortuous; at the end of the conversation, a succession of mutilated acacias, and behind them the cold white sky...

Picture:

Afternoon of May first in the children's town of Fót. There is a foot race. Alternately, we see the applauding fans, the sprinters. The camera approaches from different angles. Then the tape is cut through.

The goal-shot.

Snapshots of the children at different occupations. These photos are not sad, they are natural, even gay.

Sound:

Cheering. Shouts of encouragement.

"I would be happy, if I could find my mother."

"If my parents were alive, I could go home every Sunday."

"If I could only live as I see others live! Among my family. With my mother."

"I'm already accustomed to loneliness."

"I'm so far from my brothers. My father does not care for me. He murdered my mother. It is his fault that I am alone. If my mother were alive, my father would start a new life and I could be happy."

"I never saw my father. Even my younger brother and my mother only once. I do not blame anybody. But it would be a good thing if my parents would look after me."

"My daddy sometimes writes a few lines, but my mummy never. How happy I would be if I could live with my parents and did not have to stay in an institution."

This film, too, is an appeal to conscience, to parents who abandoned their children, to children who no longer care for their parents. Their loneliness is beyond the help of society, the individual must be stirred up, incited to rebellion against his own indifference. Somebody said to me after the performance: "Next week I am going to Fehérvár. I've an aunt living there all alone. I want to see what she's doing."

Let me add, to avoid misunderstanding, that the film is not a summons to emotional charity; it is hard and objective, rigorously—almost mathematically—composed. But if somebody says in your presence: "Seven times seven"—and waits—you involuntarily answer: "Forty-nine."

Ragosin, Rouch, Reisz? *Cinéma vérité?*

I think it is a matter of parallels. As already mentioned, there are long-standing traditions in this country of such research after truth. This ethically inspired humanist realism will undoubtedly be one of the most important components of Hungarian cinematic art of the future.

So far, these short films are mere studies —preparation for something better. Gaál has already started his first big pioneering film, under the title "In the Current." I have seen parts of it (it is not yet assembled), I have read the script, and find it promising. It has an ethical content, for its subject is responsibility. The scene is the river Tisza. Sára would like to make a

great documentary film on all the gipsies of the world. Perhaps he will succeed if he gains the support of UNESCO. Now he wishes to expand an episode of "Alone" into a big film.

The whole young film generation is boiling and sparkling. Its members are in a more fortunate position than their colleagues in the west. While an essential factor of the realization of the New York school, the "free cinema" or the *nouvelle vague* is their striving to become independent of the film companies and producers, in Hungary the material possibility is provided by the Béla Balázs studio for even the youngest to start with a big film. The conflict with the older generation is not sharp either; their professors, Máriássy, Makk, Herskó, are of the same age as Chuhray and Wajda, and their outlook is undergoing a transformation similar to that of the youngest.

Let me illustrate this by way of a remark of Makk's: "When in the early fifties neo-realism, then in its brightest period, gave new life to the film, we succeeded within a few years in entering the path just opened. Utilizing the achievements of neo-realism we more or less reached the world level. It will not be so easy to repeat this now. It seem to be too far behind the schedule. The present status of cinematic art is characterized not only by such masterpieces as the Ballad... or Hiroshima..., the films of Goddard or Wajda, but by reliable high-quality standard works and even by some commercial films scornfully referred to as trash but which—as to realization, ideas, taste, humour, acting—sometimes give evidence of excellent professional erudition. We took no notice of it, and in the course of a few years film art got such a head-start that it will be difficult for us to catch up.

Both masters and students are striving to make up for time lost. It is difficult to forecast whether the older or the younger generation will first succeed. Freshness of outlook speaks rather in favour of the pupils, technical and artistic practice in favour of their masters. Such healthy competition is, however, bound to promote the evolution of film art.

BÁLINT TÓTH

ARTS

EXHIBITION OF "CONTEMPORARY BRITISH PAINTING" IN BUDAPEST

Contemporary British painting is hardly known to the Hungarian public from original works. The sixteen paintings by British artists—among them works by Reynolds, Raeburn and Gainsborough—in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest give the Hungarian visitor some idea about eighteenth-century British painting. Additional information can only be acquired from reproductions in art books or from visits to foreign galleries in the course of tours abroad. In 1947 there was an exhibition of British graphic works in Budapest, and in the autumn of 1961 a small show of Henry Moore's works—mostly copies or photographs of his most famous sculptures—was held in the Ernst Museum. The profound impact of Henry Moore's exhibition paved the way for the great interest aroused by the present show of "Contemporary British Painting."

The writer of the present article assisted Miss Margaret Luce, representative of the British Council, in arranging the exhibition. The time spent in the company of the works in question thus brought about a sort of personal contact between them and the Hungarian organizer of the show.

The pictures, a survey of six decades of British painting, from 1900 to 1962, were exhibited in the Ernst Museum, a gallery approximately contemporaneous with the early works on show. The *art nouveau* interior of the building, exposed to so much invective in the past, has acquired a certain patina during the half century of its existence and has become a shrine of modern Hungarian art traditions. Its vestibule, its spacious rooms and its distinguished atmosphere made it a most suitable *milieu* for the Exhibition of Contemporary British Painting.

The arrangement of the rooms made it possible for the different phases of British painting as well as the different groups of artists to be displayed in separate units. There was plenty of wall-space for the pictures to be hung "airily" and elegantly, at an appropriate distance from one another.

The exhibition begins with R. W. Sickert's "Dancer in a Green Dress." On seeing a photograph of it one would never have thought that the painting is so small; however, the *petit format* can contain art of the highest level. The range of Sickert's palette is economical; side by side with many hues of green he also used blacks, but probably the paint has since darkened. Seemingly it is an unassuming picture, which at first sight does not reveal its full value. Sickert consciously avoided gaudiness, which he loathed. By no means did this denote a lack of artistic power, which his self-discipline sought to restrain. The tones are soft, like those of chamber music. This picture provides the keynote of the whole exhibition, for in this respect it is related even to those paintings that are remote from Sickert's art in their concept or are diametrically opposed to it. The

"Dancer in a Green Dress"—like his later works, soft and cool in their colour range—is a model of genuine British art, not so much in its external trappings as in its ethical attitude.

Harold Gilman's "Interior," similarly small in dimensions and intimate in theme, and the lavish and full-blooded works of the Post-Impressionist Sir Matthew Smith are more familiar to Hungarian spectators than most of the other British paintings.

Sir Stanley Spencer's pictures, secluded in a world of their own, represent a singular style. Although they might be compared to the works of Henry Rousseau, of the "Naives" or of the Hungarian Csontváry, such comparisons would not be exact. Spencer is a unique artist, specifically British, who cannot be included in any school, English or foreign. Three works of his were exhibited. It is not in order to grasp the surface of things that he so sharply—and perhaps too sharply—follows nature's forms. By means of these clear-cut lines he gains an insight reaching below the surface. It was a pleasure to find in the show "The Eclipse of the Sunflower" by the old warrior of the English *avant-garde*, Paul Nash. The painting is known to Hungarian art lovers from its reproduction in a publication of the 1958 Brussels World Exhibition. This picture (like many another) testifies to the generosity of the British Council, which collected the material to be exhibited, in representing British art by the inclusion of first-class works. In the works of Nash, who, having mastered to perfection the craft of painting, and without disdaining the elements of nature, strives for surrealistic expression, there is again that temperate range of hues, we consider so typically British. The same colouring can be found—of course always in a handling that conforms to the personality of the artist—in the pictures created during the Second World War, whether their subject be the Battle of Britain or a landscape. The war years throw light upon a new aspect of British painting. Mention should be made here of Sir William Coldstream's wartime townscapes, rooted in old English traditions, and of Robert Colquhoun's picture "Weaving of the Military Cloth." The latter's means of expression, with their indirect distortions, show the influence of Oriental, perhaps of Indian, art. And yet, Colquhoun's art expresses the same as Coldstream's, in a different manner, moreover their colours are distant relations.

It is well worth while to spend some time in front of the single painting of the only woman artist represented at the exhibition, Prunella Clough's "Glasshouse in Winter." The subject of the small picture is spread out on one plane. Despite its sensibility the composition is firm and powerful, while the brushwork is naturally fluent. Its "English" colour range imbues the canvas with a muted unity of tone, and one of its most remarkable qualities is the devotion of a *trecento* artist radiating from this work of a thoroughly modern painter.

The sequence in which the pictures are hung leads us to the works of Ivor Hichens, of Graham Sutherland and of Ben Nicholson, representing the vanguard of modern painting. Nicholson's remarkable pictures are suspended on the first wall of the room devoted to abstract painters, although side by side with his abstract painting (March 1949) there is also a still-life, as well as another painting in which landscape motifs are combined with abstract elements. It is interesting to note that, although these three works of Nicholson's are utterly different in style, they unmistakably reveal his hand. No *volte-face* can be felt at all; he has remained true to himself all along.

The principal wall of the largest room carries pictures by Hilton and Scott, including, in both instances, paintings based on realistic elements and others composed of purely abstract motifs. Have the gentle hues of Albion come to an end in Scott's "Orange and Blue," or in the multicoloured pictures of both painters, or those based on black and white contrasts? No, the national character-

istics are there, only the emphasis has been shifted. Hilton went a step farther than Scott. The former's works are colourful but not gaudy; though sober and imbued with cool stillness, they are anything but cold. His is a staid and pleasant art—"pleasant" in the best sense. It is more attractive than, for example, Lanyon's coldness; its well-bred reticence has more appeal than Lanyon's self-confidence. Although Hilton's painting "October, 1960" (Blue)—with its characteristic large blue spot and the black part painted with a half-dry brush to give the impression of a charcoal drawing—though not at all ostentatious, rivets the visitor's attention by its very softness, as soon as he enters the room.

The response the exhibition has had in Hungary will be of interest to the British reader. The fact that some ten thousand people have visited it illustrates the interest aroused.

As with every exhibition, opinions differ. There were those who, having seen Henry Moore's art, expected similar, epoch-marking works. The abstract paintings struck the eye most and gave rise to the most heated arguments.

Abstract art has no deep traditions in Hungary, although there have been abstract and surrealist artists here too, for instance Moholy-Nagy. Their activity was confined mainly to architectural decoration, applied art and garden statuary (fountains, forms in concrete for playgrounds); only infrequently did they have the opportunity of displaying their works on the walls of galleries.

Hungarian newspapers discussed the exhibition within a week of its opening, revealing a variety of opinions. Each of the reviews stressed the significance of the show, but there was censure as well as eulogy, particularly with regard to the abstract paintings.

The Budapest exhibition of Contemporary British Painting is a significant artistic event, whose importance rises far above the formal courtesies called for by the Cultural Agreement and above all opinions on questions of detail. It is a significant milestone in Hungarian cultural history, if for no other reason than that this has been the first exhibition of British painting in Hungary.

And now, after a taste of Henry Moore's art and the present survey of British painting, Hungarian art lovers are looking forward to further exhibitions of British art. It is to be hoped that, within the framework of the Cultural Agreement concluded between the two countries, the Hungarian public will be given a chance to welcome in Hungary an exhibition of today's excellent and powerful British sculpture, including a more comprehensive selection of Henry Moore's original works as well as those of Linn Chadwick, Kenneth Armitage and Barbara Hepworth.

JÁNOS FRANK

ARCHEOLOGY

A FORTIFIED ROMAN PRAETORIAN PALACE IN AQUINCUM

Palaces fortified with towers but otherwise representing sumptuous dwellings were a special type of building in the epoch of the Roman empire.[1] Such villa-fortresses served as private residences of proconsuls, praetorian or consular legates in the provinces, legion commanders, the most wealthy landowners and other comparable personages. Also, emperors on their travels are known to have stayed at the fortified palaces and praetoria.

The land between the Danube and Sava rivers was conquered by the Romans in about the year 10 B.C. The new province was given the name Pannonia. In 107 A.D. it was divided into two parts. Aquincum, on the site of the present third district (Óbuda) of Budapest, became the capital of the province of Eastern Pannonia, in the midst of the Illyrian-Celtic tribe of the Eravisci, at the fortified camp of the legion protecting the *limes* (Roman system of border fortresses) at the middle stretch of the Danube. The legion at that time consisted of more than 6,000 infantry men. Aelius Hadrianus was appointed first *legatus praetorius* of the new province by the emperor Trajan who was succeeded on the throne by Hadrian,[2] in N. A. Maskin's justified opinion the greatest builder among the Roman emperors. Hadrian spent no more than two years in the new province, but in this short time, as recorded by the imperial biographer, he drove back the Yazigians attacking the province from the eastern bank of the Danube, disciplined the procurators administering the finances of the province and restored and consolidated discipline in the military forces.

Among his recorded merits, the commencement of the building of the legate's private residence, the most abiding achievement of Hadrian as the East-Pannonian *legatus praetorius*, is not mentioned. However, the archeological excavations conducted in 1941 and from 1951 to 1956 have brought to light the most monumental dwelling of Aquincum, which must have been partly the means and partly the crown of Hadrian's accomplishments. The building costs were obviously defrayed by improvement of financial administration; the marks on the many thousand bricks found during the excavation prove that every military unit of the province actively contributed to the building of the fortified palace. One may conclude that concentrated work must have had an important role, perhaps combined with army exercises, in the restoring of discipline.

Although the memorial building tablet of the sumptuous villa (83 m wide, perhaps 106 m long) excavated on the Danube island of the present Óbuda dockyard has

[1] *Századok* 70. 1936. 44. (Alföldi, A.)
[2] Schultz: *Leben des Kaisers Hadrian*, pp. 23—24.

not survived, several circumstances show convincingly that this was the private residence of the governor and commander-in-chief of the province: Only he could have had the power and authority to concentrate all military units of the province in the activity of public building; in the middle of the southern wing of the fortified palace (see No. 27 of the ground-plan*), around the sanctuary erected in the closed court, a series of small, votive stone altars were established, all by legates (in a single case by the freedman of a legate).[3]

Literature abroad has generally subscribed to the assumption of Hungarian researchers regarding the destination of this fortified palace. The explorer of the imperial palace in Colonia Agrippinensis (Cologne) regrets that so little is known about the form and other aspects of the *praetoria* of the legates and regards it as a fortunate circumstance that in Budapest the private residence of the governor has been completely investigated.[4] In another contribution he notes that the palace of the commander-in-chief in Aquincum is an important specimen of the villas of military commanders and other important persons.[5] This building is a fully developed combination of the villa-types with corner-projections, portico or peristyle (inner court of honour), as in the case of its later parallel, the private palace of the commander-in-chief of Dura-Europos in the provincial capital on the river Euphrates.[6] Aelius Hadrianus, during his short term as legate, constructed mainly the eastern wing of the representative palace, while some of his prominent successors (such as Marcius Turbo, 117—118 and Aelius Caesar, 137) added more and more to it. The picture of the fortified villa with corner-tower, frontal portico and inner court has come down to us also in mosaic representation.[7]

The fortress-like development of the governor's villa in Aquincum can be easily understood when its location is considered. It was constructed on an island of the Danube between the legion's fortified *castrum* and the bridgehead camp-fortress (Transaquincum)—right along the boundary line—on the banks of the Kisduna (Little Danube) backwater. Although this bridgehead-fortress afforded protection against unexpected assaults and those fleeing from the fortified palace had to pass only the branch—about 80 m wide—of the Danube to reach the shelter of the legion camp, the palace itself was also provided with defense structures. On the border side of the palace, first of all, the two towers would have provided a sense of security; the distance between them was about 70 m. On the northern wing the round structure projecting from the main part of the building, and including a bath with cold-water pool, could, in an emergency, act as a bastion (at a distance of 40 m from the watch-tower; 68*a*). The southern side of the palace was protected by a much smaller, but equally decorative, building next to it, which may have housed the guards of the imperial legate (19—21, 79—80 and perhaps 39—40). The passage between the governor's residence and the castle of the guard (18 and 22) was constructed as a closed corridor secured by a stone wall from both sides—probably of importance in the case of a siege. The working halls of the attendants (slaves) (e.g., 29 and 37) along with their quarters (e.g., 30—31, 35) are appropriately placed in the vicinity of the alert squad of the guard, in the south wing of the governor's palace.

* Figures in parentheses hereafter always refer to the ground plan, unless otherwise specified.

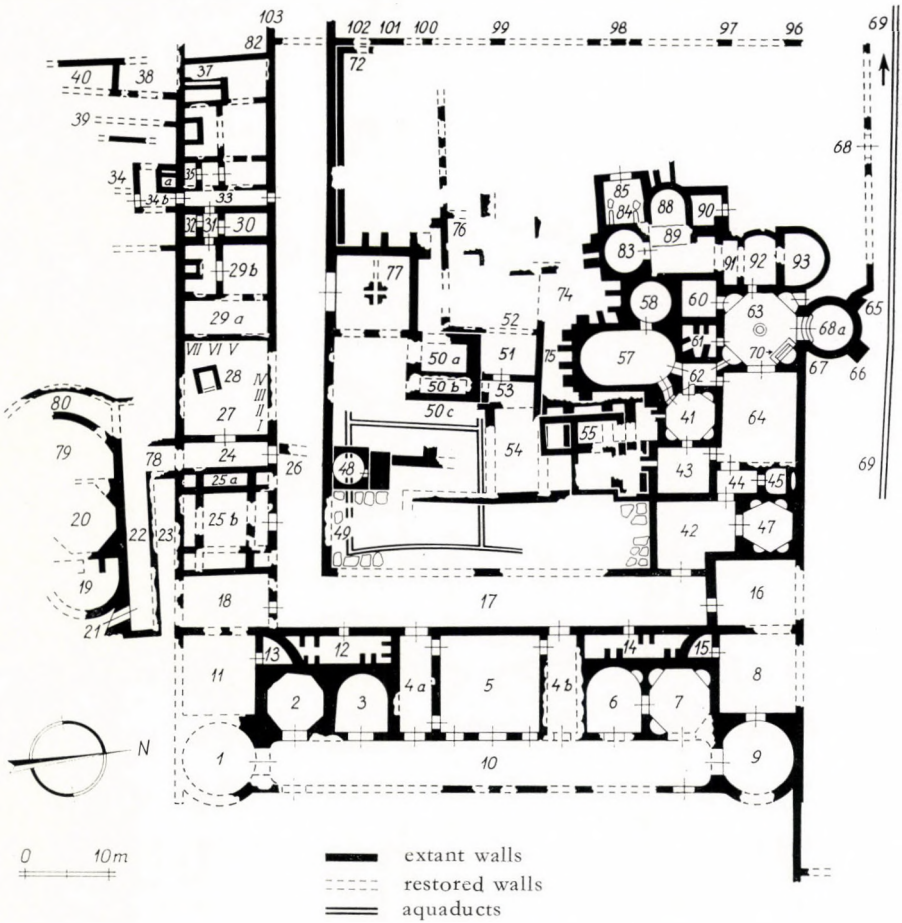
[3] *Budapest régiségei* (Antiquities of Budapest) XVI. 1955. pp. 406—7, 422.

[4] J. Colin, *Antiquité Classique* 23. Bruxelles, 1954. pp. 155—6. Doppelfield: *Germania* 24. 1956.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 155, note 1; p. 160.

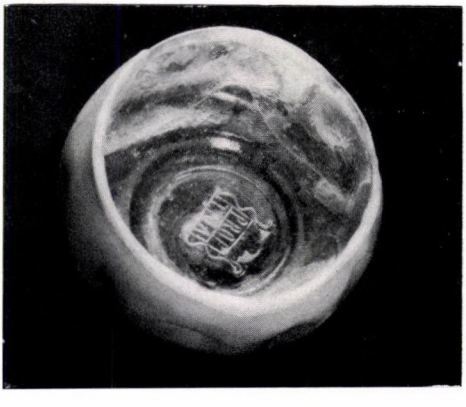
[6] *Ibid.* p. 160, note 4. Rostovtzeff-Bellinger-Brown-Welles: The Excavations at Dura-Europos. III. The palace of the dux. New Haven, 1952. pp. 18, 71, 93.

[7] Daremberg-Saglio: *Dictionnaire.* Vol. IX. Villa, p. 875, fig. 7,483.



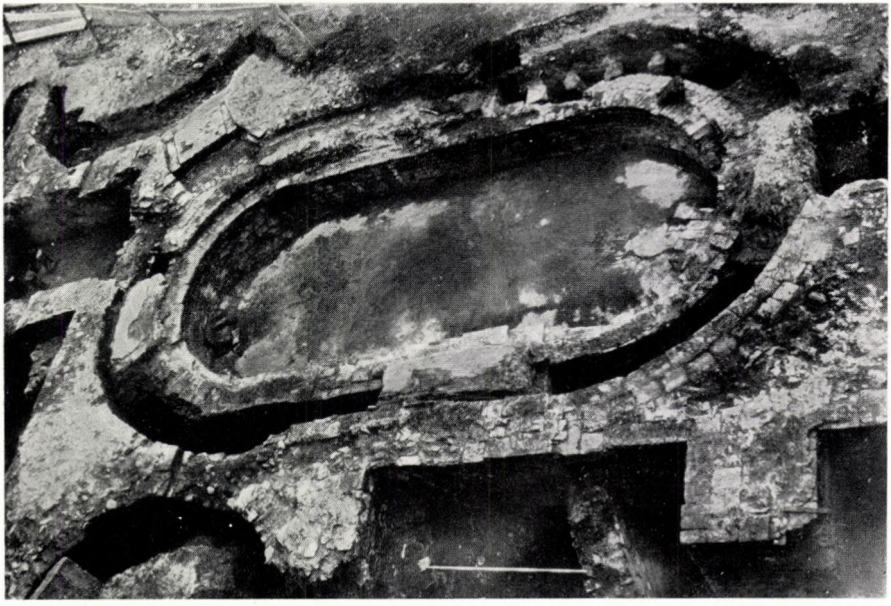
GROUND-PLAN OF HADRIAN'S PALACE IN AQUINCUM

Stone Vase with Relief Representing a Procession of Dionysos



Goblet with Latin Inscription: "Let's Clink"

Limestone Statue of Nemesis



Wall Remnants of the Women's Baths

Entrance to the Round, Tower-shaped Cold-water Pool

It might have been a preventive measure not only against the intrusion of unwanted guests but also against desertion of the slave-servants that a guard-niche (34*a*) projecting from the building and a little tower (34*b*) were erected in front of the gate closing the corridor (33) leading from the wing where the workrooms and living quarters of the servants were located. A defense wall (68) was built in front of the 3 m main gate on the northern side of the palace. Along the eastern representative wing of the main building, between the two watch towers (1 and 9), on the 270 sq. m terrazzo floor, ran a ceremonial corridor for delegations, and there was space enough for festive banquets. On the main front, the traffic flowing through the two wide gates could be surveyed from the watch-tower next to them. All the rooms of this wing (including the great corridors, 10, 17, 4) could be heated from beneath the floor by the so-called hypocaustum system.

The east wing built by Hadrian is characterized, besides the watch-towers and the hall-passage running along the building, by the large central room and other symmetrical structures, e.g., the heating stoves in each court (12, 14). The governor, as representative of the emperor, was surrounded by corresponding pomp, and therefore the floors of the central reception hall (about 12 × 12 m interior space) and of the audience and conference rooms, as well as of the three rooms of variable dimensions on each side (2, 3, 11 and 6—8, respectively), were adorned with mosaics of geometrical design, and the planes of the lateral walls with painting and stucco. The prototypes of these earliest mosaics can be found in Northern Italy, whereas the latest wall paintings were based on Alexandrian patterns in the epoch of Gordianus (238 to 244 A.D.).

If the one or two areas (18, 25 and/or 16) adjoining the main wing at the corners were built simultaneously with the eastern wing (under Hadrian), the first villa-type—with vestibule, corner-projection, great central hall—was of an L or U shape. As may be concluded also from the 1 m thickness of the walls, this must have been a one-storey house.

Although 17 areas have been unearthed so far in the southern wing (household and servants), no traces of mosaic floor or hypocaustum were found. In some rooms the floor consisted of rammed clay or at most of octagonal bricks. Moreover, the wall divisions are thinner (45 to 65 cm) and carry remainders of simple painting.

The two most important areas of the southern wing are next to the guard house. On one side of the corridor leading from there (24), the granary (25) and the food-storage rooms are to be found. The level of the gravel and broken stone floor of the earlier granary (probably on account of the floods about 200 A.D.) was raised by almost 1 m through filling up with earth as in other parts of the palace.

At the other end of the corridor referred to above a 265-cm-wide gate formed the entrance into the court around the smaller sanctuary (27). In this court of about 115 sq. m the servants could gather, but it was also a simplified pantheon, with small votive stone-altars along the northern and western sides, while in the south-western corner, on an earthen substructure 60 cm high, stood a small temple (28), consisting of a single cell with a two-column vestibule. This temple was erected at a traditionally holy spot, since under its foundations the remnants of a differently orientated wall belonging to an earlier sanctuary were discovered. According to the inscription of the little stone altar built into the wall of the temple, the earlier sanctuary was dedicated to the "imperial (majesty of) Mercurius." A Mercurius, identified in many cases with a German or Celtic deity, and who at the same time was designated with the attributes of the emperor, must at one time have fostered the emperor-cult among the original inhabitants. It is perhaps not too far-fetched to assume that the site was chosen for the legate's palace for

the very reason that it had been the centre of a cult since times immemorial. (Below the Roman stratum traces of the second period of the Bronze Age have been found.)

The northern wing (governor's apartments and bath) obtained its final shape only in the epoch of the emperor Caracalla (211 to 217 A.D.). This is not due to mere chance, because at that time the area of Eastern Pannonia was enlarged by the annexation of the other legion *castrum* at Brigetio-Komárom, which augmented the financial resources of the legate residing at Aquincum, thus enabling him to carry out more sumptuous building. The absence of any uniform concept in the distribution of this wing of the palace points to successive construction or radial reconstruction during the two centuries while the palace was in use. The first spaces joining the eastern side (41—47) were parts of the legate's private apartments. A strikingly broad gate led into the L-shaped room (46) which may have served as waiting and reception room (for clients?). Beyond the main front (6, 7) only in the private apartments are there rooms with niches serving as seats and for statues (41, 47). All the rooms could be heated from below the floor, which even in the latrine (45) is adorned with mosaic or at least with terrazzo (lime-mortar mixed with crushed brick). In this section too the walls were decorated with painting and stucco coating.

From the apartment of the legate there was a direct entrance into the bath wing (57—64, 83—93). There were separate dressing rooms (60, 62), as well as warm-water (57, 83) and tepid-water (58, 88) pools, for men and women, since each room or pool was built in duplicate. Beyond these the section for men also included cold-water basins (63, 68, 92), a covered swimming pool of about 9 × 11 m (64) and lounges or assembly rooms (88—93).

The warm-water bathrooms can be easily recognized because they were heated from both sides. Both in the women's and men's sections two areas had mosaic floors (57, 58, 63, 89). Into the men's department a gate led also from the outside of the palace into the lounge with private basin (63), from the western court of the palace, from the legion's camp. This seems to indicate that the officers of the legion were authorized occasionally to use the bathing installations and that their access was limited to that part of the palace.

The hall with exedrae in the four corners and a stone-plated gully in the centre (63) had a special purpose. One of the exadrae was transformed into a sunken bath-tub with three steps. The level of the floor has an inclination of 15 cm towards the centre. The room could not have been heated from beneath the floor. In the canal under the stone plate of the gully a goblet was found, bearing the inscription: "Let us clink glasses!" This hall was probably the scene of orgies. The socles of its walls were covered with marble plates, the floor was decorated with mosaics representing various animals.

The stoves that heated the dressing and bathing rooms from beneath were grouped partly in a small court (61) and partly aligned in the inner court of the palace along the outward wall of the localities. The three stoves figuring under Nos. 84—85 may have served as baking ovens and were probably built as early as about 120 A.D. The semi-circular hall (93) in the northwestern corner of the palace was a common latrine, the sink-hole of which must have lent itself to thorough rinsing, just as in the legate's private apartment, by means of the used water of the bathing pools, while at the main front side the rainwater was probably collected for similar purposes.

The space of the inner courts became more and more filled with buildings, except for the part in front of the legate's private apartment, which remained a garden to the end. For evident security reasons the enlargement of the palace proceeded mainly at the expense of the inner court. Cultivation and irrigation of the garden was made possible by a network of water conduits consisting of

canals formed by stone walls. Even the lead pipings of the junctions have been found at several places. The tower standing isolated in the southeastern corner of the inner court (48) had the structure of a water tower, round on the inside and square outside.

In the first part of the second century the cloister-shaped corridor (17, 26) probably still surrounded the inner court in its full U-form and was also heated from beneath its terrazzo floor. The wall closing the court-side was decorated with paintings. Later not only the water tower was added to the court wall but also a huge hall (77), which could be moderately heated from a thermal canal beneath the floor and where probably the servants gathered on festive occasions. From among the structures of the inner court the major sanctuary emerged (50 *a—c*), also a one-cell temple with a vestibule, as a minor sanctuary at the centre of the southern wing. A larger than life-size stone statue of the emperor must have stood in the cell to promote veneration of the emperor. The walls of this sanctuary were uncommonly thick (145—160 cm) which points to its having been more than one storey high. Of the other objects found, particular importance should be attributed to a half life-size stone statue representing a merged concept of the goddesses Nemesis and Fortuna.[8] (Originally, the upper garments of the goddess were painted red, the lower garments white, the hair dark brown and the skin flesh-coloured.) The statue has been assembled from 22 pieces and dates probably from the middle of the second century.

From the ruins of this sumptuous villa a masterpiece of the art of the province also came to light: a limestone vase (krater) for the mixing of wine. Its relief work commemorates a mythological scene: Dionysos (Bacchus) comes across the sleeping Ariadne on the island of Naxos; the god is accompanied by a dancing procession including a draped female figure with a double pipe in her hand; the Silenos head is also of exceptional quality[9]. The masters of the palace showed more devotion to bronze sculpture. Aside from a passing mention of the small statues of Mercurius and a winged Genius,[10] as well as of two empty bronze statuettes[11], we feel justified in stressing the excellence of the small statue representing Satyros warding off with his right hand the sun shining in his eyes ("Satyros aposkopeuon" in Pliny). The prototype of this figure can be traced back to the fourth century B.C. This figure of the painting of Antiphilos appears also in the *Casa dei Vettii* in Pompeii[12].

Much violence and unlawfulness appears to have occurred behind the thick walls of the palace. An inscription scratched on the wall[13] and deciphered already in the last century reads thus: "... Gratus, you who forcefully detain in your house Grega, the slave girl of Lupus, centurion of the second auxiliary legion of emperor Alexander Severus, although this is to your detriment, will not thereby be able for ever to retain the support of your parents..." (the emperor's name indicates that the inscription dates from 222—235 A.D.). The young man, who dared to defy a centurion the mass of civilians regarded with awe, was obviously the son of the legate and his wife, but is not identifiable among the personalities who had a brilliant career later on.

The following "magic square" (palindrome, *versus recurrentes*[14]—a sentence running the same way when read either forwards and backwards or upwards and downwards),

[8] *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, vita Maximini* 8,5 (Hohl, II. 63). *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum* III. 1125. *Realenzyklopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Stuttgart, Nemesis, column 3782 (Herter).

[9] Paulovics, I. *Archaeológiai Értesítő* ("Archeological Bulletin") 49. 1936. p. 93.

[10] *Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Naplója* (Journal of the Hungarian National Museum), 85/1865.

[11] *Ibid.* 43/1870.

[12] *Budapest története* (History of Budapest). Vol. I. (1942) p. 618 (Nagy, L.).

[13] Torma, K. *Arch. Ért.* 3. 1883. 38. p. *Corpus Inscr. Lat.* III. 10,716; p. 1,728.

[14] *Revue Archéologique* 6e Série, tome 48. 1956 p. 180 (J. Carcopino). *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 1957. Nr. 5, column 391—4 (K. Karner).

scratched in a brick built into the wall of the palace,

ROTAS
OPERA
TENET
AREPO
SATOR

has already provoked authoritative commentaries in pertinent literature abroad. It is a frequently recurring formula that has often been dealt with. An enumeration of this literature would require many pages. In this case, however, the well-known magic square is preceded by another such cryptogram written by another hand:

Roma tibi subit (?) ita (?).

We feel justified in completing this fragment in the sense of the ancient version by Sidonius Apollinaris (fifth century A.D.) reading

Roma tibi subit(o motibus ibit amor)

Commentators are divided into two camps. According to the one, symbols of Early Christians are involved in the case of both palindromes, while the other regards them simply as products of linguistic and poetical playfulness. In the present instance it is highly significant that the stamp impressed on the brick shows the inscription as dating from 107 A.D., so that it may be regarded as the earliest one after the Pompeii case. The following interpretation is given by F. Dölger[15] to the column of script, the drafting of which is at any rate somewhat artificial: "The slave holds the cart, the farmer the plough." The simpler of the two palindromes could be rendered thus: "Rome, sudden love will flow in your direction." If the two palindromes had a hidden Christian meaning, a play on words would also be involved, because Roma = ῥωμη, that is, Force, would have turned into the principle of early Christian love[16] (amor). E. Andrieu gives a different, somewhat artificial interpretation of the magic square:[17] "Le semeur maintient par sa poitrine les roues (du monde) son oeuvre." The interpretation of Th. Velenciner is also among those that deserve more attention:[18] "Dieu tient les mouvements des étoiles et les oeuvres (des hommes) dans sa main depuis le commencement du monde." The most generally adopted view is that the magic square in question is composed of the dismembered and then reassembled letters of the "pater noster."

It is, of course, possible that there may have been bilingual educated Christians among the building labourers (slaves and common soldiers) gathered by the legate Hadrian. But it is a disturbing circumstance that the word "ita" ("similarly, thus") is used, implying search for an example. It is thus conceivable that two slaves who deserved a better lot were competing with each other in knowledge of literary history. To record the circumstances more completely, it should be noted that on another brick built into the palace the primitive contours of three animals—snail, dog and dolphin—have been cut in by another worker sometime between 211 and 222 A.D. (according to the stamp indicating the name of the troop unit). This may also be interpreted as an ideological manifestation, if the animals are taken as symbols of first principles or of some religion.

JÁNOS SZILÁGYI

Special literature

Budapest Régiségei (Antiquities of Budapest). XIV. 1945, pp. 31—153 (Szilágyi, J.); XVI. 1955, pp. 393—409, 421—425 (id.); XVIII. 1958, pp. 53—145 (Kaba, M.—Póczy, K. — Szilágyi, J.).

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[15] F. Dölger, *ΙΧΘΥΣ* 5. 1932. p. 61.

[16] Fr. Focke, *Würzb. Jahrbücher*... 3. 1948., p. 397 and note 1.

[17] *Rev. Arch.* 24. 1945. p. 239.

[18] *Rev. Arch.* 24. 1945. p. 174. Nr. 117.

A COPPER-AGE CEMETERY IN HUNGARY

IDA BOGNÁR-KUTZIÁN: The Copper Age Cemetery of Tiszapolgár-Basatanya. *Archaeologia Hungarica*, Series Nova XLII. Publishing House of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest 1963. With 146 figures, comprising 158 illustrations, 139 plates and 5 supplements, 595 p.

Appendix: The copper of the cemetery, results of spectroanalytical investigations by Edward Sangmeister, pp. 557—564.

The literature produced on the Copper Age by Hungarian prehistorical research awoke the interest of foreign experts long ago. At the Budapest archaeological congress in 1876 Ferenc Pulszky was able to summarize the results of a controversy that had been going on for almost twenty years in Europe.[1] Participants at the congress included all the major personalities of European archaeological research, and the attending experts were surprised to see that the management of the congress had collected the copper implements of a widely controversial period in amazing numbers. The richness of the Carpathian Basin in copper ore, and the large number of copper implements and jewels found, disarmed most of those who had doubted the existence of a Copper Age. Nevertheless, a good many questions remained unanswered, as was clear to Hungarian researchers also. Pulszky himself was well aware that without the excavation of a Copper-age settlement and cemetery his statements would remain unfounded in fact and therefore pressed for the discovery and excavation of such sites.

A good forty years had to pass before such finds were actually made. Only when the cemeteries of Bodrogkeresztúr and Pusztaistvánháza were opened up in the early 1920's, was the existence in the Carpathian Basin of an independent Copper Age proved. Jenő Hillebrand summarized the results achieved at the existing research level and prepared the first synthesis of the Hungarian Copper Age.[2]

Between 1930 and 1950 large-scale excavations, which are of immediate interest with reference to the Hungarian Copper Age, took place in the Near East, the Aegean and the Balkans. The relevant literature filled volumes, and its findings were difficult or downright impossible to reconcile with Hillebrand's views. Hungarian research preferred to shut its eyes to the situation, despite the fact that subsequent excavations at home seemed to contradict the basic periodization of Hillebrand's synthesis. Only the opening up of additional cemeteries and settlements, more fortunate in their composition, could provide the answer to the problems that were accumulating. For the purposes of this type of research, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences made available substantial funds for several years, beginning in 1950. With Tiszapolgár-Basatanya, Ida Bognár-Kutzián chose a site that promised to answer some of the major questions. During the course of excavations carried on for a period of four years she attempted to open up the cemetery, or rather the site, completely.

Altogether 156 prehistoric graves were

[1] Pulszky, F., *L'age du cuivre en Hongrie.* Compte-Rendu de la huitième session, Budapest, 1876. Vol. 1, pp. 220—7.

[2] Hillebrand, J., *A bodrogkeresztúri rézkori kultúra köre* (Der kupferzeitliche Bodrogkereszturer Kulturkreis in Ungarn). *Arch. Ért.* Vol. 41, pp. 50—7; *A pusztaistvánházi korarézkori temető* (Das frühkupferzeitliche Gräberfeld von Pusztaistvánháza). *Arch. Hung.* Vol. 4, p. 41. It was at this time that the concept of the Bodrogkeresztúr Copper-age culture was introduced by Hillebrand into international literature. This culture, in his opinion, marks the first half of the Copper Age in the Hungarian basin. It was preceded primarily by the culture typefied by the material from the Kisrétpart site (Tiszapolgár culture), which J. Hillebrand, together with F. Tompa, ascribed to the transition phase between Stone and Copper Ages (Aeneolithic). Both of them suggested a genetic connection between the Bodrogkeresztúr and the Tiszapolgár cultures.

excavated with the greatest care and the results subsequently published. The total number of graves in the cemetery is estimated at between 199 and 213. The description of the graves indicates that the excavation was done with the most up-to-date technique, which made it possible to draw a plan of the cemetery and have it available for analysis. The author was able to assert that burials in all probability took place in rows, as evidenced both by the relative positions of the graves and—within the individual rows—by the material found in the different graves, revealing a slow but observable change in variants. In this way the author was able to classify the graves in three categories: those belonging to the Tiszapolgár culture, those of transitory character and those belonging to the Bodrogkeresztúr culture. Decisive is the classification of the rows of graves and individual graves of transitory character, which was made possible by the mortuary gifts and the fortunate stratigraphic positions. In this group the superimposition of graves Nos. 56 and 57 provided decisive evidence of their transitional character. On the basis of the plan of the cemetery and the mortuary gifts, the author was the first in Hungary to attempt a determination of the grave-by-grave sequence of the burials. Having estimated the number of graves and the number of skeletons, she determined the length of the period during which the cemetery was in use as between 210 and 225 years. This means that the Basatanya cemetery served as a burial ground for about 220 years.

The results thus obtained make the task of presenting an over-all picture relatively easy. The author's views are definite on most of the basic problems. Let us first examine the problem of origin.

The author agrees with Hillebrand and Tompa in accepting the existence of genetic connections between the Tiszapolgár and the Bodrogkeresztúr cultures. On the other hand, she is of the well-founded opinion that the Tiszapolgár culture belongs to the first period of the Copper Age (Early Copper Age); thus the question of origin has to be posed in connection with the Tiszapolgár and not of Bodrogkeresztúr culture. Here again her stand is definite: the dominant culture is that of the Hungarian Neolithic period—the Herpály-Csőszhalom culture. The probable areas of development were the region east of the Tisza and Eastern Slovakia.

The problem of the development of the Bodrogkeresztúr culture is also dealt with. The fact that practically all its pottery types (10 out of 13) or their predecessors can be found in certain groups of the Tiszapolgár culture (Tiszapolgár-Basatanya, Tiszazug-Kisrétpart, Deszk, and Lucska groups) in itself seems to settle the question. The area of incidence of the above groups—the Great Hungarian Plain and Northern Hungary—may be considered as the region of the Bodrogkeresztúr culture's development.

The author may have been too cautious in her discussion of the milk-jugs of Maltepe (pp. 283—285). True, she knows this pottery only from literature and may not be justified in regarding Anatolia as decisive in the development of the Bodrogkeresztúr culture.

The Basatanya excavations, supported also by the stratigraphic results of excavations on other sites in Hungary, provide indubitable evidence that in the area of the Great Hungarian Plain the Baden-Péczel culture could only have followed that of Bodrogkeresztúr. This stratigraphical position determined the culture of the third and latest period of the Copper Age, which could only have been the Baden-Péczel culture.[3]

The drawing of a clear demarcation line between the Neolithic period and the Copper Age—something neither Hillebrand nor Tompa had undertaken—became possible only on the basis of the information gathered by the author on the Neolithic cultures. The main points of her evidence were: 1) Life breaks off at the late-

[3] Kutzián, I., Die Ausgrabungen in Tiszapolgár-Basatanya. *Conférence Archéologique de l'Académie des Sciences*, Budapest, 1955, pp. 69—87.

Neolithic tell-like settlements of the region east of the Tisza. 2) The character of settlement alters, for, as far as we know, the settlements of Tiszapolgár are not tell-like. 3) In close connection with this a change may be observed in the burial rites, and large, independent cemeteries, separated from the settlements, make their appearance. 4) The significance of animal husbandry increases as against hunting, and, compared with the Neolithic period, there is a change in proportion among the domesticated species. 5) The fashion of painting pottery suddenly ceases.

It may cause surprise that copper implements and ornaments are not given first place among the factors characteristic of the Copper Age. Not that the author underestimates the importance of their appearance. She does prove, however, that the first appearance of the metals brought about no revolutionary change in the life of the society which became familiar with them. The reasons for this, in her opinion, are as follows: 1) The metal first appeared in the form of ornaments and small implements. 2) The processing of metals as an occupation engaged so few people that it hardly affected the economic and social make-up of society. 3) Finally, the trade in copper, either as a raw material or as a finished product, was too small to have a fundamental effect on the life of society.

Metallurgical skills, spreading in all probability from the southeast, affected society only after a longer period of time. This is well demonstrated by the horizons of cultures in Hungary familiar with copper. First horizon: the presence of copper is marked by the Herpály-Csőszhalom, Tisza and Zseliz groups, mainly through the appearance of jewellery but also of small implements, for instance the awl. Second horizon: hammer-axes and axe-adzes indicate the early Copper Age (Tiszapolgár culture). Third horizon: the appearance of larger quantities of copper implements and a larger number of types (for instance, copper axe-adzes) coincides with the middle part of the Copper Age (Bodrogkeresztúr culture).

The Basatanya cemetery, as already mentioned, was in use for an estimated 220 years. The two cultures, of course, lasted longer than this. That of Tiszapolgár began earlier, for it appears in a well-developed form at Basatanya, and the Bodrogkeresztúr culture also survived for a longer period of time, for a later phase is known from other sites. If we add the lifetime of two generations to the estimated duration on this site of each of the two cultures, then 150 years fall to each period and we can estimate the duration of the two cultures at about 300 years. There is little ground for ascribing a longer period of time to the Baden cultures either, and the duration of the Copper Age can thus be estimated as covering some 450 to 500 years in the prehistory of Hungary's territory.

In order to establish the periodization of the Hungarian Copper Age with any certainty, to determine the relative and absolute chronology of these periods, and then to extend her research to the influences to which the territory of Hungary was subjected in this age, the author had to learn a great deal about the neighbouring and more distant cultures of the same age as Periods I through III of the Copper Age in the Carpathian Basin. Her knowledge of the available material is based on first-hand information—comprehensive in the case of the Hungarian material and less complete in the case of foreign material. Her knowledge of the latter was supplemented by study of the relevant literature. The more than 600 volumes and papers listed in her bibliography (pp. 567—584) show that Mrs. Bognár-Kutzián made use of all available sources. This collection, in addition to the full material available on the Neolithic period and the Copper Age in Hungary, extends to all phenomena of those cultures on similar horizons in the Carpathian Basin and in Central and Southern Europe that can be connected with Hungarian cultures. Nor were the relevant rela-

tionships in the early history of such more distant territories as Eastern and Northern Europe and the Near East left unobserved. The author extended her comparative research to finds, customs, funeral rites and living conditions in this vast area. Among the most important contributions of the monograph is this presentation of the foreign interrelations of the three periods of the Copper Age on the territory of Hungary.[4]

The finds from the cemetery permitted extensive employment of the complex method. The author's synthesis is based on data obtained from many kinds of investigation, from which she induced general laws. Her research, for instance, shed light on highly significant components of the economy of the Copper Age. It was possible to determine probably most of the animal species raised and —within certain limits—even their ratio in percentages. The metal finds and particularly the mould found in one of the graves leave no doubt that metal was processed at the site inhabited by the people who used this cemetery as their burial ground. In addition, the observations with regard to the cemetery and the graves point to the population's religion and family life, as well as many other phenomena that determined the life of this community, promoted and retarded its development. It will suffice here to present a random example from among the observations made and the explanations given for them.

When examining the cemetery, from the point of view of the distribution of the sexes, the author made the surprising discovery that, while in the group of tombs belonging to the Bodrogkeresztúr culture the ratio of the two sexes was close to 1 : 1, in the group of tombs representing the early Copper Age, the ratio of women to men was 44 : 100 for adults and 50 : 100 for children. This means that at this period half as many women lived here as men. There was no reason to suppose biological causes, especially in the absence of such discrepancy in the Bodrogkeresztúr culture. This left only the assumption of deliberate interference on the part of the population itself—the ruthless extermination of girl infants. The most likely reason was economic necessity. The people of the settlement were probably forced by the difficulties of life subsistence to check their natural increase in such manner as not to decrease their hunting spoils or reduce the defensive strength of the settlement. In the second period (Bodrogkeresztúr culture) there were 38 woman to 37 men at Basatanya according to accurately determined data. The biological norms were thus restored. At the same time infant death rate was also lower. The probable explanation lies in higher production yields. This seems to be borne out by the fact that in the second period the bones of wild animals disappeared from the graves and their place was taken by the bones of domesticated animals.

Further verification must await the results of the discovery of such cemeteries as that of Basatanya. For the time being, however, no such settlements have been excavated. Material from them would clarify questions relating to the transition stage between the two first periods. Animal bones found in the layers and in the rubbish pits of settlements would provide a valuable complement to the picture of the economic basis of these cultures hitherto formed on the basis of the bones found in the cemeteries.

Nevertheless, there are additional data to support the theory that the living standard was lower in the first period than in the second. A noteworthy gauge is the observation that it was impossible at the time to produce in the Great-Plain settlements goods to be bartered for gold, then a new and valuable metal. Gold made its first appearance in the Bodrogkeresztúr culture. In addition to the above, mention should be

[4] Bognár-Kutzián, I., Zur Problematik der ungarischen Kupferzeit. *Actes du Symposium consacré aux problèmes du Néolithique européen* (L'Union Internationale des Sciences préhistoriques et protohistoriques). Prague-Liblice-Brno, 5—12 octobre 1959. Praha, 1961, pp. 221—232.

made of the fact that the author had metal analysis and mineralogical, (see appendix pp. 557—564), chemical, demographic and botanic tests made in order to gain information on important aspects of life in the Copper Age.

The author was regrettably unable to have tests made that would have shown what organic materials were contained in the dishes found in the graves. Although she had such tests in mind and produced the material necessary, chemical tests of this kind are not yet carried out in Hungary.

In the direction of Mesopotamia and Egypt—the two regions that hold the key to absolute chronology—there are two roads from the Carpathian Basin: the one leads through Bulgaria, Macedonia and Turkish Thrace, the other through the Caucasus and the steppes on the southern coast of the Black Sea. In order to determine the absolute chronology of the Hungarian Copper Age, the author deals with two types of pottery, both of which came into direct or indirect contact with the territory of Hungary by way of the first route.[5]

The first of these pottery types is the Pseudominian ware, which made its appearance in the Bubanj-Hum II (at a site close to Niš) around 1900 B.C. or perhaps somewhat later. It marked the late Baden Kostolac phase of the culture and coincided more or less with the end of the third period of the Copper Age on Hungarian territory.[6] The Pseudominian ware is not known from any Hungarian site, but the chronology valid for the Bubanj-Hum II is applicable to the Hungarian region because of the contacts that are indicated by the Kostolac find types.

In addition to the Pseudominian ware, the two-handled cups—derivatives of the *depata amphikypellon*—provide the other basis for absolute chronology. In Hungary the first certain appearance of the two-handled cup can be put at the Middle Copper Age, that is, the period of the Bodrogkeresztúr culture in its first half (phase of the hollow-pedestalled bowls). The prevalence of this type in the Balkan culture of the corresponding age makes it possible to establish the coincidence of a large part of the Hungarian Copper Age with strata III—V of Troy between 2300 and 1900 B.C. Radio-carbon examinations, also taken into account by the author, place this period between 3300 and 2400/2300 B.C. With regard to the two kinds of absolute chronology, the author, for the time being, bases herself on the data obtained by traditional methods, since there are still irreconcilable contradictions between radio-carbon determination and conservative calculations in this sphere despite the fact that the relative chronological sequence of the individual cultures (Neolithic and Copper-age), has been confirmed by the radio-carbon tests.

The foregoing is only a very sketchy evaluation of Mrs. Bognár-Kutzián's book. This review has naturally concentrated on the book's treatment of the Copper Age, but of equal interest is the outline it gives of a new synthesis of the second half of the Neolithic Age in Hungary; at the same time, it draws attention to a number of apparantly decisive, yet hitherto unanalysed elements of the beginning of the Bronze Age in Hungary.

MIHÁLY PÁRDUCZ

[5] Bognár-Kutzián, I., Über südliche Beziehungen der ungarischen Hochkupferzeit. *Acta Arch. Hung.* Vol. 9. pp. 155—90.

[6] Banner, J., Die Péceler Kultur. *Arch. Hung.* Vol. XXXV. p. 289; Banner zur Chronologie der Kupferzeit das Karpathenbeckens. *Acta Arch. Hung.* Vol. 13, pp. 1—32.

A SHORT ENCYCLOPEDIA

of some places, historical events, personalities and institutions mentioned in this number

ACSÁDY, IGNÁC (1895—1906). Historiographer, a scholar of anti-feudalistic, progressive views, who was mainly engaged in the study of the problems of agricultural policy. His most important work: *A magyar jobbágyság története* ("History of Serfdom in Hungary"); first edition, 1906; new edition, 1948.

ARANY, JÁNOS (1817—1882). Poet, one of the greatest figures in Hungarian literature. See The New Hungarian Quarterly, Vol. I, No. 1, 1960.

BENEDEK, MARCELL (b. 1885). Author, aesthetician, translator, the "grand old man" of literary scholarship. His most important works include: *A modern magyar irodalom* ("Modern Hungarian Literature"), *A modern világirodalom* ("Modern World Literature") and a Lexicon of Literature completed in 1927.

B-LIST: In the early twenties the official designation of civil servants subject to dismissal. (In staff reductions those to be retained were included in list "A", and those to be dismissed in list "B".) Later the expression "B-list" was generally used in connection with the sacking of whitecollar workers.

CAFÉ NEW YORK. The best known literary café of Budapest for several decades from the turn of the century. In the forties it closed down but was reopened again in 1954 under the name of Café Hungaria. In our days it is again a favoured rendezvous of writers and journalists.

EGER. Town with great historical past in northeastern Hungary (35,000 inhabitants). Archiepiscopal residence since the 11th century. The heroic defense of its fortress in 1552 stopped the northward advance of the Turks for half a century. It is a famous wine district. *Egri bikavér* ("Bull's Blood") is a characteristic wine of the Burgundy type.

ESZTERGOM. A town of 34,000 inhabitants on the right bank of the Danube, at a distance of about 20 miles from Budapest. For several centuries, beginning with the tenth, royal residence, centre of the Catholic ecclesiastical organization. In recent years modern machine tool, electrotechnical, optical and metal works have been established in Esztergom. Its Christian Museum is the most valuable collection of Hungarian medieval painting, rich also in foreign works of art of the 14th to 18th centuries. The royal palace of the 12th to 13th centuries has been made accessible through excavations and belongs to the significant architectural relics of the country.

EXPENDITURE ON CULTURE. On the basis of data pertaining to 4,000 families the Central Bureau of Statistics has established representative statistics on expenditure per family for cultural purposes (books, theatre, concerts, radio, cinema, television, etc.) from 1957 to 1962. They show that cultural expenses of workers' and employees' families rose from an average of 846 forints in 1957 to 1,907 ft in 1962. The corresponding figures for peasant families were 270 and 601 ft. Thus in both cases the cultural expenditure more than doubled, but the rural population even today spends hardly a third of what the urban population spends for this purpose. It is remarkable that during the five years in question the share of the total family income devoted to cultural expenses rose from 3 to 5 per cent among workers and employees, while among the peasants it increased from 1 to 2 per cent. Thus

a rising percentage of the increasing family income is used for cultural purposes.

FÉSZEK CLUB. A literary and artist's club established in 1901 in Budapest.

GYULAI, PÁL (1826—1909). The most important Hungarian critic of the 19th century, who formulated the literary and aesthetic principles of national classicism. Referred to contemporary English and Russian literature as examples for Hungarian prose, then in the process of unfolding.

HOUSE OF ANJOU. When the Hungarian Árpád dynasty became extinct, the Naples branch of the House of Anjou occupied the throne of Hungary in the 14th century on the basis of family ties. It gave two kings to the country: Charles Robert (1308—1342) and Louis the Great (1342—1382). The latter was also elected king of Poland in 1370. His reign coincides with the flowering of feudalism in Hungary. He founded a University in Pécs (1367), and his court became one of the centres of early humanistic culture.

INDUSTRIAL CONCENTRATION. For better utilization of productive forces in Hungarian industry a large-scale concentration is being carried out since 1960. As a result the number of the enterprises in state-owned industries has been reduced from 1,314 at the end of 1960 to 962 by July 1st, 1963. The greatest number of concentrations was carried out in 1963, involving about two thirds of the enterprises belonging to the five industrial ministries (Heavy, Light, Metallurgy and Machine, Food, and Building Industries). Thus 93 enterprises of the building industry were in the first half of 1963 amalgamated into 26, 126 belonging to light industry into 28, and 90 of the machine industry into 25 enterprises.

JÁSZAI, MARI (1850—1926). Prominent Hungarian tragedienne, member of the National Theatre, whose principal roles were Mary Stuart, Queen Margaret (Richard III), Electra, Phaedra and Sappho.

KISFALUDY SOCIETY. Literary society founded in 1836 and named in memory of the poet Károly Kisfaludy (1788—1830). The Society carried on valuable work in the 19th century particularly by undertaking the translation of foreign classics into Hungarian. The Society published the complete works of Shakespeare and Molière in Hungarian. During the 20th century it became increasingly a literary stronghold of conservativism and academism. It ceased to exist after World War II.

LENHOSSÉK, MIHÁLY (1837—1937). Anatomist and university professor, whose scientific activities extended mainly to the histology of the nervous system. His university textbook served as a manual for several generations of doctors up to our days.

NATIONAL INCOME. Taking the Hungarian national income in 1949 as 100, its increase is revealed by the following figures: 163.7 in 1955, 225 in 1960, 260 in 1962. Thus the national income in 1962 was more than two and a half times that in 1949. The share of the main branches of production in the national income in 1961 was: industry 60.1 per cent, agriculture 20.4 per cent, building industry 10.2 per cent, miscellaneous 9.3 per cent.

SARKADI, IMRE (1921—61). Novelist, playwright, one of the most original talents among the younger generation of Hungarian authors. In the beginning his realistic novels and dramas were devoted mainly to peasant life and different aspects of the Hungarian village: *Út a tanyákról* ("Road from the Farmsteads"), *Körhinta* ("Merry-go round"), *Dúvad* ("Beast of Prey"). In his latest works *A gyáva* ("The Coward"), *Elveszett paradicsom* ("Paradise Lost") and *Oszlopos Simeon* ("Simeon on the Pillar") he sought

answers to the moral problems and crises of the intelligentsia. After his tragic death by suicide his collected works appeared in 1962 under the title of *A szökevény* ("The Fugitive").

SZACSVAY, IMRE (1854—1939). Dramatic actor, member of the National Theatre, who obtained his greatest successes in Shakespearean dramas (Othello, King Lear).

SZERB, ANTAL (1901—1945). Author, literary historian, translator. His *Magyar irodalomtörténet* ("History of Hungarian Literature"), 1934, and the three volumes of his *A világirodalom története* ("History of World Literature"), 1941, are significant achievements of modern Hungarian literary history; a new edition appeared in 1957/58. Its enlightened humanist view was in sharp contrast to the official concept of literature of the Horthy era. In his *Hétköznapok és csodák* ("Weekdays and Wonders"), 1936, he undertook a comprehensive presentation of the modern Western novel. As novelist he was one of the masters of Hungarian intellectual prose. He was murdered by the fascists in a forced labour camp in January 1945.

TAGÁNYI, KÁROLY (1858—1924). Historiographer. One of the founders of Hungarian economic historiography. His *A földközösség története Magyarországon* ("History of Land Community in Hungary") appeared also in German.

THALIA THEATRE. The name of this theatre, which gave its first performances in the 1963/64 season in the premises of the former Jókai Theatre, revives progressive theatrical traditions of the past. From 1904 to 1907, the Thalia Theatrical Company made the Hungarian public acquainted with the works of such authors as Gorky, Hauptmann and Ibsen. It was the first to establish a link with the working class and to include trade-union members in its regular audience.

TURKISH OCCUPATION OF HUNGARY. After the conquest of Buda (1541) about one third of Hungary was under Turkish occupation. At that time Hungary was divided into three parts: Transylvania in the east, Turkish rule in the centre, Hapsburg rule in the west and north. It was not until late in the 17th century that the Hapsburg-led armies drove the Turks out of Hungary.

VILLAGE SHERIFF *(falusi bíró)*. In pre-liberation Hungary a magistrate elected by the village council, who used to settle minor litigations and disputes arising in the village. As a rule one of the well-to-do, respected peasants.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

KERESZTURY, Dezső (b. 1904). Literary historian and aesthetician, our regular theatre reviewer. (See our previous issues.)

HELLER, Ágnes (b. 1929). Philosopher. At Eötvös Loránd University she was a student of György Lukács's. Her main works are: "The Ethics of Chernishewski—The Problem of Reasonable Selfishness," 1956; "The Dissolution of Moral Standards," 1957; "The Sociology of Morality, or the Morals of Sociology", 1963.

NÉMETH, László (b. 1901). One of the most interesting and important writers and thinkers of today's Hungary. Previous contributions to The New Hungarian Quarterly: The Two Bolyais, Vol. I, No. 1, Schools for an "Intellectual Society", Vol. II, No. 2, and If I Were Young Today, Vol. III, No. 5.

HEGEDŰS, Géza (b. 1912). Novelist, playwright, professor of literature at the Budapest Academy of Dramatic Art. Has published numerous works in every literary *genre;* his novel *Európa közepén* ("In the Heart of Europe") portrays the fate of Hungarian society, principally that of the intellectual class, from 1948 to the present day. See also his A Shakespearean Voyage in Vol. II, No. 2, of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

SINCLAIR, Alexander R., was born at Greenock, Scotland, in 1917. "Since joining the Civil Service in 1935 has worked"—he informs us about himself—"in several departments of Her Majesty's Government at home and abroad. From 1962—63 he served in Budapest promoting Anglo-Hungarian cultural relations. During this period he acquired a knowledge of Hungarian and an affection for Hungarian literature, Hungarian culture and Hungarians in general."

FÜST, Milán (b. 1888). Poet, writer. One of the often-cited and recognized Hungarian authorities on Shakespeare. See Vol. III, No. 7, of The New Hungarian Quarterly, and his essay "The Visual Power of the Written Word" in the same issue.

MAJOR, Tamás (b. 1910). Actor, stage-manager. For a long time director of the National Theatre and now its chief stage-manager. Among his most memorable acting roles are: Tartuffe, Richard III, Iago, Polezhaev in "The Stormy Twilight," Corbacchio in "Volpone," Lucifer in Madách's *Az ember tragédiája* ("The Tragedy of Man").

GÁBOR, Miklós (b. 1919). Actor. Plays in classical and modern comedies, in dramas and in films. His interpretations include: Romeo, Iago, Ferdinand in *Kabale und Liebe,* Don Juan, Hamlet, John Tanner in "Man and Superman," etc. Played in the following films: *Valahol Európában* ("Somewhere in Europe"), *Budapesti tavasz* ("Spring Comes to Budapest"), *Éjfélkor* ("At Midnight"), etc.

TRILLING, Ossia (b. 1913). Author, theatre critic and journalist. Educated at St.Paul's School, London and St.John's College, Oxford. Wrote his first play at the age of 10 and obliged his sisters to act in it with him before an audience of admiring friends and relations. Acted and directed at the University a number of plays that include Aristophanes' "The Peace," which he subsequently translated into English for a production by the State Society, of which he eventually became Hon. Secretary and a member of the Executive Committee. After editing "Theatre Newsletter" for a number of years after the war, he became theatre correspondent of a large number of papers and periodicals the world over. A regular contributor to "The Times," he is on the Council of the Critics' Circle and Vice-

President of the International Association of Theatre Critics. Publications include "International Theatre", 1948.

ORSZÁGH, László (b. 1901). Philologist, literary historian and professor of English at Kossuth Lajos University in Debrecen. Besides several publications related to English and American literature and linguistics his most important work is his Anglo-Hungarian and Hungarian-English Dictionary, wich has appeared in several editions. Member of the Editorial Board of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

MONORI, Erzsébet (b. 1921). Librarian. Obtained her Ph. D. in Hungarian and German languages and letters at Péter Pázmány University in Budapest. During the last ten years she has been working at the Department of Theatrical History of the National Széchényi Library in Budapest. She published a bibliography of 18th and 19th century Hungarian theatrical handbooks, compiled in collaboration with Elemér Hankiss, Budapest, 1961.

HANKISS, Elemér (b. 1928). Literary historian. After acquiring his degree in English and French literature in 1950, worked for ten years at the National Széchényi Library's Department of Theatrical History; now heads the group dealing with English and American literature at Europa Publishing House in Budapest. Published several studies in various periodicals at home and abroad. His article on The Hamlet Experience is the slightly abbreviated text of a study originally published in the Polish periodical "Les problèmes des genres littéraires."

MALLER, Sándor (b. 1928). After completing his studies in English and Hungarian letters at Budapest University and Eötvös College, he was for a time headmaster of the English language Sárospatak Grammar School. Later worked a few years as librarian at Budapest libraries, then obtained the post of Deputy Chief of the Library Department of UNESCO in Paris; has recently been appointed Secretary General of the Hungarian National UNESCO Committee.

ILLYÉS, Gyula (b. 1902). Poet, writer. Leading personality in modern Hungarian literature. His contributions to The New Hungarian Quarterly: "Rácegres Notebook", Vol. II, No. 1, "The Switch-Over", Vol. II, No. 5, and "Ode to Bartók" Vol. IV, No. 11. The first part of "The Favourite" appeared in Vol. IV, No. 11.

JÁRDÁNYI, Pál (b. 1920). Composer, research worker in folk music. One of the editors of the serial publication entitled *A Magyar Népzene Tára* ("The Treasury of Hungarian Folk Music"). Wrote orchestral pieces, chamber music, songs and choirs besides several studies on folk music.

FELEKI, László (b. 1909). Journalist and writer. Formerly worked for sporting papers but since has become a humorist and is now working for the satirical weekly *Ludas Matyi*. See his Little Fish—Big Fish in Vol. I, No. 1 of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

SAS, Judit: Graduated from Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, works at the Hungarian Institute for Adult Education. Her main field of interest is the theory of adult education. She has published various essays on this subject in Hungarian periodicals.

SIPOS, Zsuzsanna: A secondary school teacher by profession, who graduated from Eötvös Loránd University; she is now working at the Hungarian Institute for Adult Education and doing scientific research on the sociology of education, a subject on which she has published numerous articles.

PASSUTH, László (b. 1900). Author of much-translated historical novels. (See Vol. II, No. 2). His contributions to The New Hungarian Quarterly: "Identities Established" in Vol. II, No. 2, "Tihany Antiqua"

in Vol. II, No. 3, "Sexcentenary of Debrecen" in Vol. III, No. 5, "Hungary and the Community of European Writers" in Vol. III, No. 7.

FÖLDES, Anna (b. 1930). Journalist and literary historian. See also her "Heroes and Writers" in Vol. IV, No. 12, of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

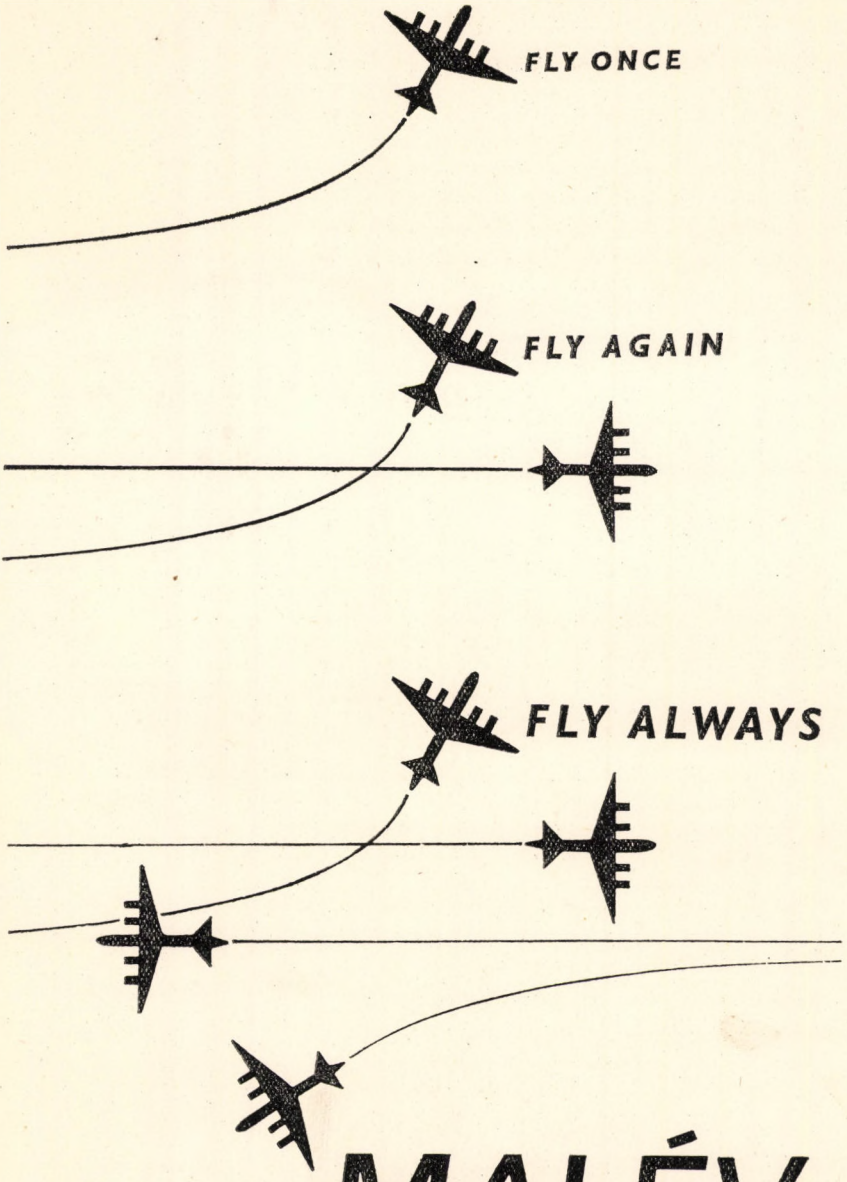
HUBA, László (b. 1922). Journalist, editor of the Hungarian Travel Magazine, author of numerous books on tourism, editor of travel books on Hungary.

TÓTH, Bálint (b. 1929). Librarian, translator. Published translations of poems by Rilke and Petrarca. See also his article Budapest East End in Vol. IV, No. 10, of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

FRANK, János (b. 1925). Museologist and art-historian. Author of articles, reviews, etc., on art. Is engaged in organizing and preparing exhibitions.

SZILÁGYI, János (b. 1907). Senior scientific co-worker at the Aquincum Museum. In charge of the excavations at Aquincum since 1935. Main publications: *Inscriptiones tagularum Pannonicarum* (Diss. Pann. I. Budapest, 1933); *Dácia helyőrségei* ("Garrisons in Dacia"), 1945; Roman Garrisons Stationed at the Northern Pannonian-Quad Frontier-sectors... (Acta Arch. Acad. Sci. Hung. II, 1952, 189—222); *Les variations des centres de prépondérance militaire dans les provinces frontières de l'Empire Romain* (Acta Ant. Acad. Sci. Hung. II, 117—223); *Aquincum* (Acad. Hung, 1956); *Beiträge zur Statistik der Sterblichkeit in den westeuropäischen Provinzen des römischen Imperiums* (Acta Arch. Acad. Sci. Hung. 13, 1961, 125—155); *Beiträge zur Statistik der Sterblichkeit in der illyrischen Provinzgruppe und in Norditalien* (Acta Arch. Acad. Sci. Hung. 14, 1962, 297—396).

PÁRDUCZ, Mihály (b. 1908). Archeologist. He led the archeology department of the National Museum till 1960, since then he is scientific co-worker of the Archeology institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and leads its department dealing with the migration age. His main field is the study of the archeological relics of the first peoples from the *steppe* to reach Hungary: the Scythians, Sarmatians, Huns. His main works: *Denkmäler der Sarmatenzeit Ungarns* I—III (1941, 1944, 1950); *Le cimetière Hallstattien de Szentes-Vekerzug* I—III (1952, 1954, 1955); *Archaeologische Beiträge zur Geschichte der Hunnenzeit in Ungarn* (1959); *Die ethnischen Probleme der Hunnenzeit in Ungarn* (1963).



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