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Quarterly*

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CULTURAL POLICY IN PRACTICE

This is the first issue to appear in what could be called the post-Helsinki period. Frigyes Puja discusses some of the resulting developments in his "International Relations in Europe after Helsinki" written for this paper. It is here published in the awareness that it documents Hungarian foreign policy in a manner truly deserving of attention. *Détente* dominates this situational report of post-Helsinki Europe, and Helsinki was made possible by the growing success of a policy of peace and coexistence. To quote a statement by the Hungarian government commenting on the Final Act: "... this meeting opened a new stage in the process of *détente*... The implementation of the provisions of the Final Act will further improve the atmosphere of mutual trust and create new possibilities for broadening and developing fruitful cooperation." What Frigyes Puja has to say is particularly noteworthy since, while his basic optimism regarding the further deepening of *détente* is always present, he clearly points to confrontations over the interpretation and implementation of the Helsinki Final Act which can already be discerned. There are efforts in the West, as Frigyes Puja points out, to train the searchlights on what is one section only of the Helsinki Final Act: the question of personal contacts and exchanges of information and cultural products. This is a biased way of looking at things which becomes clear when one remembers that economic questions are not without importance, and that a number of Western countries discriminate against socialist ones in international trade. That must be said though Hungarians feel that they have every right to claim to have long acted in the spirit of Helsinki when it comes to personal and cultural contacts. Nine million foreign visitors in 1975, three of them from the West, and three million Hungarians who travelled abroad, speak for themselves.

The book-review section of this paper is not put together with the aim

of documenting foreign contacts, and yet readers can see for themselves that this issue ranges all the way from English literature to that of the Finno-Ugrians who dwell East of the Urals. There is a review of a Hungarian book on America, as well as of one on Hungarian linguistics published in English in Hungary. One might add that translations into Hungarian published in 1975 alone, included plays by Ed Bullins, fiction by Joyce Carrol Oates and Donald Barthelme and verse by e.e. cummings and Robert Graves. Plays by Arthur Miller, Eugene O'Neill, Ronald Millar, Leonard Gersche and Alan Ayckbourn are part of the current repertory of Hungarian theatres to mention just a few names.

Getting back to the current issue of the NHQ: a notice of the 3rd Biennale of Small Sculpture held in Budapest, discusses the work of artists from twenty seven countries who exhibited there, from Claes Oldenburgh to Nikolaos Dogoulis. It is only natural that this "openness" which characterizes Hungary's attitude—and which is exemplified by the fact that the state not only favours, but supports financially as well the exchange of information and works of art, rests on firm principles. To quote the Puja article again: "...we want exchanges of information, exchanges in culture and education and human contact of the kind which bring the nations closer together, and do not separate them."

So much for the outside contacts of the Hungarian arts. Miklós Óvári's "Problems and perspectives of cultural policy" outlines those ideas and objectives which are of vital importance within Hungarian culture. Óvári stresses that socialist cultural policy supports all that furthers "the great meeting of the arts and the people." Support for socialist trends does not however imply any sort of one-sidedness. "This cultural policy", he argues, "affirms the indissoluble connection, the close unity, of creative freedom and commitment to socialism and progress." No over-simplification is desired by Hungarian cultural policy when it does its best to take art and literature close to the people. What is desirable is that as many works as possible should be created which display contemporary Hungarian reality, though there is no reason why a good work which does not directly deal with the building of socialism should not be considered outstanding, and treated as such. It is desirable that art and literature should be accessible to the public and be understood by it, such a criterion must not, however, be defined too rigidly, the public of the time after all was required to make considerable efforts in order to understand the works of Endre Ady, Attila József and Béla Bartók in their time. Óvári clearly argues in favour of stylistic freedom in art in that sense of the term, going on to support artistic freedom as such, which logically follows from the afore-said. Pointing to

the fact that the 11th Congress of the Hungarian Party made a point of guaranteeing creative freedom he states: "... our society is interested in getting to know reality, and for this very reason supports every honest and responsible creative work promoting this." In a socialist society such freedom is unthinkable without social responsibility, which certainly does not exclude the freedom to experiment and innovate.

Miklós Szántó in his "Levelling and inequalities in cultural development" deals with the changes which Hungarian culture underwent in the thirty years since Liberation. The approach is that of a sociologist. He goes into a great deal of detail regarding the implementation of that principle of cultural policy which insists on making culture the business of the masses and of the people as a whole, taking a close look at the effects of more time off, the media revolution and urbanization, as well as the educational and cultural level of the social classes and the strata and sections that make them up.

It is up to readers to judge whether the literature and art published in sixty issues of the NHQ properly documents that the ideas outlined above found expression in the warp and woof of contemporary Hungarian culture. The parallel existence of formally conservative and formally modern Hungarian works reflecting past and present Hungarian reality is characteristic of the present situation. This number presents a number of works from the current crop that are well worth the reader's attention. Let István Vas's poem "Nagyszombat, 1704" be mentioned first. It refers to a sad day in the early 18th century "kuruc" fight for freedom against the Habsburg dynasty. William Jay Smith, who has fortunately made a habit of translating Hungarian verse, is responsible for the English version. The collaboration between the two poets is doubly welcome since publication will now coincide with the 300th anniversary of Ferenc II Rákóczi's birth. Béla Köpeczi writes on Rákóczi's importance touching on political, philosophical and human interest aspects. Köpeczi is the author of a number of works on Rákóczi, based on research in French and Hungarian archives, and here includes a number of hitherto unpublished facts which lend authenticity to his view of the Prince.

Of the short stories István Eörsi's "To the end of logic" requires a special gloss. Eörsi, a writer, poet and dramatist studied under György Lukács and remained the philosopher's friend and assistant up to his death. Eörsi and other Lukács disciples had made tremendous efforts, as he had reported earlier in the NHQ, to produce a typescript ready for the press of Lukács's *Ontology* at the time of his terminal illness. The present short story tells of a final meeting with Lukács, of a last sad intellectual

victory over a failing organism. The other story, "The Dance" is by Miklós Vámos, a young writer of prose fiction. A review ought to be mentioned in this connection as well. Ervin Gyertyán discusses *The Clown* as a self-portrait of the artist, a work on the clown-figure in modern literature and art, interpreted as the artist's spokesman, by Miklós Szabolcsi.

Sándor Szalai's "The Extended Present" deals with a cardinal problem which has already troubled a generation or two throughout the world, but which has seldom been discussed in a scientific way, and not at all faced up to in practice. The fact is that science and technology have changed the world at an unprecedented rate, all the way from energy production to agriculture, in every field of production and consumption, leisure and entertainment, radically transforming life as such, and yet those social sciences whose business it is to ensure that these truly revolutionary changes are put to proper use by society, were not able to keep up with progress. In many cases, for instance regarding certain aspects of public administration and social organization, the methodology used is still one which is more appropriate to 19th century conditions, and not to those of the age of computers and nuclear power stations. Szalai concentrates on three major areas: organization that ensures optimum exploitation of the scientific and technological revolution, the modernization of public administration and social organization, and a scientific reexamination of the social system of values, drawing the appropriate conclusions. It is obvious that none can find unambiguous final answers at first go, but the outlining of the main trends is in itself a great intellectual achievement, and a challenge to further questions and answers.

The interview with István Huszár, who is President of the National Planning Office, and one of the Deputy Prime Ministers, exemplifies the way a man living and working in the thick of things reacts to some of the problems raised by Szalai. Huszár is the child of poor peasants. He studied at the ancient Calvinist College at Sáropatak, and later, following the Liberation, graduated in economics in Budapest. He was the Head of the Central Bureau of Statistics for many years, right up to his appointment as Deputy Prime Minister. He told István Lázár, who interviewed him, of the fast rate of change in Hungarian economic life. Huszár showed at the hand of concrete examples how those in charge of the economy reacted to changes at home and abroad, including the 1973/74 oil crisis. The governing apparatus of the Hungarian economy is shown in operation, and he touched on those ideas which guide the way in which the Hungarian economy is being coordinated with the new world economic facts of life.

Another interview is based on a conversation between A. J. P. Taylor and

the Hungarian historian Éva Haraszti. It will appear to coincide with Taylor's 70th birthday. A paraphrase of his brilliantly witty look back on a long life would be out of place, one ought to mention however that, contradicting the resignation of his remarks customary on a seventieth birthday, he talked of future work. One can only wish him good cheer, health and the long life that befits a historian to allow him to complete it all. An already completed work, his history of the Second World War, is reviewed by György Ránki, who has written a history of the Second World War himself which is a best-selling work in Hungary.

Mari Kuttna, a frequent contributor who lives in England reviews András Szekfü's book on Miklós Jancsó, the director of the Round Up, Red Psalm and other famous films. Graham Petrie, a Canadian film-critic, writes on István Nemeskürty's history of the Hungarian film.

Levente Osztoivits, writing on current plays, concentrates his attention on a monodrama by István Kocsis based on an 18th century subject. Erzsébet Vezér writes on Bartók in Oberlin College.

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN EUROPE AFTER HELSINKI

by

FRIGYES PUJA

The importance and possible effects of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation are already the subject of lively debate and there is every indication that the discussion will continue for some time. It may well be that differences of opinion will arise regarding the interpretation of the wording of the Final Act and the determination of what remains to be done. There is therefore every justification for an attempt to clarify a number of connected issues.

I

It is a matter of common knowledge that the convening of the Conference on Security and Cooperation was preceded by a protracted struggle. For many years now the governments of the socialist countries have advocated the establishment of a security system in Europe. They had proposed a conference on European security on a number of occasions and it was no fault of theirs if nothing seemed to eventuate. At long last the Appeal issued by the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Organization at its Budapest meeting in March 1969 elicited a positive response on the part of the governments of Western countries, and concrete preparations for the Conference could get under way. Preparatory consultations begun at Helsinki in the autumn of 1972, and after the success of the Conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in the summer of 1973, the drafting of the Final Act of the Conference could start in September 1973. This was done by mid-July 1975, and the way was open for the third stage of the Conference and its signing.

The importance of the Conference on Security and Cooperation can be judged rightly and objectively only if it is examined in the context of the

major trends in international affairs. It is only too obvious that the Conference on Security could not have taken place if the international situation had not improved thanks to the policy of the socialist community and particularly if détente had not made great headway in Europe. For that very reason one must discuss the most important trends in the international situation if one wishes to examine the Security Conference and its results. The 11th Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party thoroughly examined the international situation and arrived at the following conclusions: A substantial change has taken place in the international situation since the 10th Congress. As a result of the peace programme adopted by the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of the common endeavours of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, détente has become the main trend in world politics. The policy of peaceful coexistence is increasingly gaining ground, and the governments of an increasing number of capitalist countries strive for well ordered relations with the socialist countries. All this exerts a favourable influence upon the destinies of the peoples.¹ In the spirit of peaceful coexistence between states of different social systems, the international situation is now undergoing a change from the period of the Cold War in the direction of political and mutually favourable economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation of states of differing social systems.²

Détente is thus the principal and basic trend in world affairs. The process is made up of a number of factors. Let us take a look at some of them, particularly such as affect Europe.

Concurrently with and prior to the preparation of the Conference on Security and Cooperation bilateral relations between developed capitalist countries and socialist countries underwent considerable expansion. Political contacts were extended, and raised to a higher level; in economic cooperation considerable progress was made for the benefit of both sides. Cultural relations, personal contacts, holiday travel, family visits, etc. all broadened over a wide front. The improvement of relations between the Soviet Union and the United States proved of decisive importance in the way in which bilateral relations between socialist and capitalist countries shaped. As a result of the efforts of the governments of the two major powers, a good number of important agreements of great significance, promoting bilateral relations and international cooperation, were signed in 1972-74. The agreements on the basic principles of mutual relations between the Soviet

¹ *Information Bulletin* of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. Special issue, Budapest, 1975 March, pp. 40-41.

² *Information Bulletin* of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. Special issue 2. Budapest, 1975 March, p. 6.

Union and the United States, on the limitation of antimissile systems and strategic offensive arms, on the principles governing talks on a further limitation of strategic arms, on the restriction of underground nuclear tests and on the prevention of nuclear war should be given high priority.

At present as well the governments of the Soviet Union and the United States are making efforts to deal with important problems, in the first place to reach agreement concerning disarmament. Soviet—U.S. talks are held on the limitation of strategic offensive arms. In the Geneva Committee on Disarmament the representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States have worked out a draft convention on the prohibition of ecological warfare.

All these steps help not only bilateral relations between the two great countries but also the solution of controversial international issues. It is obvious that the extension of cooperation between the two countries has considerably contributed to the success of the Conference on Security and Cooperation as well.

The settlement of what is usually called the German problem has decisive importance for *détente* in Europe. The treaties between the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia and the Federal Republic of Germany; the treaty on general relations between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, the quadripartite agreement concerning West Berlin; the establishment of diplomatic relations by Hungary and by Bulgaria with the Federal Republic of Germany have assisted the normalization of relations between the socialist countries of Europe and the Federal Republic of Germany. The German question, which for twenty years after the war poisoned the international atmosphere has ceased to exist. One cannot of course presume that there will be no more related disputes but the major problems have been solved.

Events outside Europe have also contributed to the improvement of the atmosphere in Europe and the strengthening of the readiness to cooperate. It is beyond doubt, for example, that the end of the war in Vietnam has been an important factor in the change for the better in the relations between the two major powers, but also between other capitalist and socialist countries, and in the international atmosphere as such. A constant point of friction which had earlier handicapped cooperation came to an end.

All these factors have played a fundamental role in the creation of a favourable international atmosphere. In the long run they made it possible to convene the Security Conference in Europe. At the same time the calling of the Security Conference, and preparatory and substantive work, have become an integral part and a contributory factor of *détente* in Europe. The last stage of the Conference, the signing of the Final Act by the highest-

ranking politicians of Europe and North America, closed a most important period in the postwar development of Europe, opening up a new one. It tellingly indicates that the Cold War, with the ever present danger of acute, sometimes even global, armed conflicts, is drawing to a close, and that peaceful coexistence and cooperation are steadily gaining ground. Such developments will be greatly promoted by the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation. This has become one of the most important factors for détente in Europe, making it more thorough and irreversible. One has to underline as well that the trend of developments in Europe will continue to influence the international situation as a whole. To a certain extent the reverse is true as well: world events have an effect on developments in Europe, but the situation of Europe and North America continues to be a determining factor in world politics. There is therefore every justification for calling the signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation an event of historic importance.

II

Immediately after the Conference the competent Hungarian bodies evaluated the Final Act and underlined the importance of the Conference. The First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, János Kádár, head of the Hungarian delegation to the Security Conference in a statement made to the press at the airport, on his return from Helsinki, said: "The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is of historic importance in many respects. It is that because, as has been pointed out on a number of occasions, not since the 1815 Vienna Congress following the Napoleonic wars, have representative of European countries met in such a way. Since the Second World War socialism has become a world system and the countries of Europe have come to belong to two different social systems, the socialist and the capitalist. It is of historic significance that representatives of the nations of Europe have now for the first time since the Second World War met in this way. I consider the Conference to have been of great significance also because, both in name and true meaning, it was a conference on security and cooperation in Europe. If we bear in mind that the Soviet Union, the United States of America and Canada were represented there, we can rightly say that the thirty-five countries participating in the deliberations—visualizing their geographical location—actually encompass almost the whole northern hemisphere."³

³ *Népszabadság*, August 3, 1975

The Council of Ministers issued a statement on August 13, 1975: "The Council of Ministers concludes that with this meeting opened a new stage in the process of détente. The deliberations in which top-level politicians from thirty-three European and two North American countries took part, made a major contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security. The implementation of the provisions of the Final Act will further improve the atmosphere of mutual trust and create new possibilities for broadening and developing fruitful cooperation."⁴ The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Hungarian Parliament, at its meeting of August 15, discussed the Foreign Minister's report on the Conference on Security. In its policy statement it stressed: "The Foreign Affairs Committee states with satisfaction that the third stage of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe has closed successfully. The holding of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is a victory for the peace-loving forces, for all those who support détente. Its historic importance lies in the fact that it has ended an important stage of European development following the Second World War and has opened a way towards fruitful cooperation between states with different social systems. . . . The Foreign Affairs Committee emphasizes that the strengthening of international peace and security calls for further unwavering efforts. The Hungarian People's Republic continues its tested foreign policy and does its utmost to strengthen peace and security in Europe, and to broaden European cooperation, by implementing consistently the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference."⁵

These statements besides stressing the historic significance of the Conference on Security and Cooperation can be summed up as an expression of Hungary's readiness to implement fully the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation.

I cannot undertake even to touch on all essential points of the Final Act. There are a few problems to which I wish to direct special attention.

1 The first part of the Final Act contains the questions relating to security in Europe. That in which the principles guiding relations and cooperation between participating states are summed up is of especially great significance. There are those who argue that the same principles have already been laid down in a number of internationally valid documents among them the Charter of the United Nations, and they have also been expressed in several bilateral or multilateral statements, that it is actually not entirely clear why

⁴ *Népszabadság*, August 16, 1975

⁵ *Népszabadság*, August 16, 1975

they had to be included in the Final Act of the Conference on Security. That is not quite true. First, the principles guiding relations between states have never before been formulated as fully and clearly in any document adopted by socialist and capitalist states as in the Final Act of the Security Conference. Secondly, a conference in which questions of the relations and cooperation between countries belonging to different social systems are at issue must discuss the principles governing such relations. Thirdly, this recent formulation of principles offers something new as well. The principle of the inviolability of frontiers, to give an example, is not contained in any other international document jointly drafted by socialist and capitalist countries.

What then are our duties in respect of these principles?

Greater efforts than before, have to be made to get the principles of cooperation to spring roots in the consciousness of the nations of Europe. These principles should be reflected in day-to-day work, in different international documents, in statements and declarations. Efforts should be made to let them become real rules of conduct for all nations and in the practice of all states.

Another important duty is to keep vigilant watch over the strict observance of these principles. As formulated in the Final Act they constitute an organic whole, one cannot choose those which favour one, and no one can violate those which appear less so. In international political practice due regard must be paid to all the principles contained in the Final Act; it is inadmissible to observe one and demand its observance by all while violating another.

Though not in any way selecting among the principles, attention has to be called to three which must be taken into consideration from the point of view of further cooperation among the states of Europe and North America.

One is the principle of the inviolability of frontiers. Acceptance of this means that those at the head of Western capitalist countries recognize also those changes which have occurred in Europe in practice, changes in social systems as well, after the Second World War. They recognize the frontiers of the new socialist countries, including the state frontier between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, the latter renouncing claims to former German territories now part of other countries. This principle means that the signatory countries will not try to have the frontiers of any one of the countries of Europe changed by the use of force. Consequently, compliance with this principle excludes the use of force in the so-called reunification of Germany. True, the signatories have

formulated and accepted the principle that frontiers can be changed by peaceful means including this in the basic principle of state sovereignty but only with the full agreement of the countries directly concerned in accordance with international law. This means that every country has the sovereign right to change its frontiers by peaceful negotiation and in agreement with all the other countries concerned. This however is no justification for those who do not like these changes to continue agitating in favour of revision, using this for revanchist propaganda. The leaders of the countries concerned do a disservice to the cause of peace and security if they do not raise clear barriers to all endeavours of this sort.

Another most essential principle is that of non-intervention in domestic affairs; without strict observance of this no sort of international cooperation on the footing of equality can be imagined. As in the past, the socialist countries will in the future as well resolutely reject any Western attempt at intervention in their domestic affairs, and will, on their part, refrain from any intervention in the domestic affairs of Western countries. They expect those in charge of capitalist countries to act the same way, abiding by the principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries. It is important to observe this principle and to get it observed especially at the present when some prominent Western politicians are inclined to ignore the principles they themselves have accepted. Let us take the case of Portugal, for example. The people of Portugal have the right freely to choose or change their social system as they think fit. No one has the right to prescribe the way the Portuguese interpret democracy and freedom, or to bring political and economic pressure to bear upon them with a view to having them reject a socialist orientation and choose bourgeois democracy. Regrettably, certain Western politicians and especially the leaders of some of the Western European Social-Democratic parties openly meddle in the domestic affairs of Portugal trying to influence trends of development. But it is impossible in principle to condemn foreign intervention and, at the same time, in practice to interfere crudely in the domestic affairs of another country. Where is the unity of words and action there, particularly after Helsinki?

The principle of non-intervention in domestic affairs and that of respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty pervade every point and every provision of the Final Act. And this is fully understandable. Solid progress cannot be attained anywhere if the partners do not respect each other's sovereignty and laws, traditions or customs, trying to force their own on others. Cooperation between states is two-sided, one either has regard for the interests, prospects and aims of the other or cooperation is impossible.

2 The second part of the Final Act summarized the principles, methods and concrete tasks of cooperation in economics, science and technology, and environmental protection. It provides for measures to develop trade and industrial cooperation, to coordinate projects of common interest and to improve cooperation in other fields. The Hungarian government fully agrees that bilateral and multilateral economic relations between socialist and developed capitalist countries should be furthered by all possible means. The practical implementation of the principles and methods expressed in the Final Act by the Security Conference would greatly help to expand economic relations between socialist and capitalist countries. It is of great importance to the socialist countries that the principles and methods of economic cooperation should reflect international efforts to eliminate discrimination. Representatives of capitalist countries have also recognized "the beneficial effects which can result for the development of trade from the application of most-favoured-nation treatment."⁶ The socialist countries have always professed, and they still profess, that the acceptance and consistent application of the most-favoured-nation principle in international trade is indispensable, that economic cooperation between countries with different social systems can rise to new heights only on this basis. We know, however—and this is no secret—that some prominent politicians in capitalist countries do not share this view; on the contrary, they advocate economic discrimination. At the second stage of the Security Conference representatives of capitalist countries rallied in the Common Market were for a long time opposed to any mention of most favoured nation treatment in the Final Act; and when they could no longer evade the issue, they wanted to force upon the socialist countries a formula which would essentially have meant recognition of the admissibility of discrimination against them. In return for advantages and favours to be offered to the socialist countries, they tried to obtain unduly high compensation. But they could not attain their end.

3 The Final Act contains detailed descriptions of the principles and tasks of cooperation between states in "humanitarian and other fields". This chapter includes the following major sections: (a) interpersonal contacts, (b) dissemination and exchange of information, (c) cooperation and exchanges in culture, (d) cooperation and exchanges in education. During the second stage of the Conference, Western press and other propaganda agencies tried hard, with a zeal worthy of a better cause, to prove that the socialist countries are not interested in cooperation in these fields, but that, on the

⁶ Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation

contrary, they are "afraid" of it. They claimed that the socialist countries could not afford the implementation of the provisions of this chapter, the establishment of close contacts between the broad masses since their population would thus get to know the "truth" about the capitalist system, that is, they would form much more favourable notions of capitalism and its institutions than the official version. True, owing to the serious troubles which have been increasingly manifest in the capitalist system in recent years—economic and monetary crisis, the stagnation and even recession of production, the decline of living standards—this propaganda has died down but one still meets with that sort of absurd view.

No socialist country, including the Hungarian People's Republic, has ever been afraid of cooperation in humanitarian and similar fields; on the contrary, all socialist countries consider it desirable. In our view the extension of peaceful coexistence in any case improves human contacts and favours exchanges all round. It has been shown in practice that citizens of Western countries generally gain favourable impressions during their visits to socialist ones, they find reality to be much better than Western propaganda would have them believe. Citizens of socialist countries on the other hand, when they come into contact with capitalist reality, usually find it far less pleasant than described by Western propaganda. We were not opposed to the extension of relations in this field, we only emphasized that this was not the most important among the items on the agenda of the Security Conference from the point of view of improving relations between socialist and capitalist countries. The reason why we put greater stress on questions relating to security was that we held and still hold that these are the most essential elements in the cooperation of European and North American countries. If we do not define the basic principle on which we can cooperate, it is difficult to imagine how cooperation can become closer. This does not mean however that we do not deem it important to improve relations in humanitarian and other fields.

I should also like to note that we have to examine the concrete substantive aspects of cooperation outlined under this point, otherwise genuine cooperation is hardly conceivable. We say: we need information from the West, but we have no need of the slanders and invectives showered upon our system; we need the genuine cultural values of the West, but we have no need of the *débris* of the culture of Western countries.

In other words, we want exchanges of information, exchanges in culture and education, and human contacts of the kind which bring the nations closer together and not separate them. The best way of promoting the closer cooperation of countries is to enable people to get to know one another better, to form a proper notion of one another, of each other's life, ambitions

and goals. This is also in the interests of politicians striving to strengthen peace and security. Those who insist on exchanges of culture and information that disturb mutual understanding show themselves to be no sincere supporters of peace, security, and better cooperation among countries.

There are a number of other questions to be considered in this respect.

The practical implementation of cooperation summed up in the Final Act cannot be imagined otherwise than through the conclusion of separate bilateral agreements between the governments of particular countries. When negotiating such agreements they can clarify precisely in which field and in which way the provisions of the Final Act can be implemented, which country wishes to do what, how the details of the exchange of information and cultural values should be settled, etc. From time to time they can agree on measures to be taken by both sides to intensify cooperation and to remove any possible obstacles to further action. The Hungarian government is willing to conclude such bilateral agreements with the governments of all the capitalist countries of Europe and North America to facilitate the concrete implementation of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in accordance with the principles adopted there.

Another important principle for cooperation is the assurance of reciprocity in all fields. Hungary takes much in the way of culture from Western capitalist countries, making this available to the Hungarian public. This cultural exchange however is one-sided and lacks reciprocity. While Hungary strives to propagate the best of its culture abroad, certain Western countries do not stress the export of their valuable culture but of such products as are called trash even at home. Furthermore, while we encourage and endorse the propagation of Western culture the capitalist countries do nothing, or only very little, to make their public familiar with the culture of Hungary. The Hungarian state goes to great lengths to import and propagate Western culture; on the other hand, the official organs of capitalist countries mostly decline to support cultural exchanges, saying that this is not the business of the state. To put it plainly, some Western politicians want the socialist countries do their utmost to make Western culture known to their people, but they do not think that they have to act similarly with regard to socialist culture. In this way they make it difficult, almost impossible, to arrange for genuine cultural exchanges.

Certain Western politicians tend to pretend it is not their fault there is just no interest in Hungarian culture. But a people can show interest in the culture of another only if that interest is aroused. The Hungarian masses would equally lack interest in much of Western art and literature if Hungarian dailies and even more the periodicals, did not regularly report on the

culture of Western countries, thus awakening interest. The Western press however, with few exceptions, has precious little to say about the culture of socialist countries and what it reports is usually full of malice. But this is beside the point; what matters is that official and non-official organs of some Western countries tend to ignore the cultural products of socialist countries, thus circumventing the effects considered undesirable from the official Western point of view.

Reciprocity must also extend to the exchange of information. Since the media in Hungary supply Western countries with an objective picture of the internal conditions, achievements, and domestic and foreign policies of Hungary, one should be able to expect the news services of Western countries to do the same. It can hardly be called reciprocity when the Hungarian information services refrain from intervening in the domestic affairs of Western countries, stressing only Hungarian achievements in building socialism, while Western propaganda directed towards Hungary, predominantly radio transmissions, does not give an objective picture of the situation in the capitalist countries but "evaluates"—i.e. slanders—socialist construction. The spirit of Helsinki demands that, in the interests of an exchange of information to promote a rapprochement between nations, substantive changes should be made in Western propaganda. Experiences so far cannot, unfortunately, be said to have been encouraging. The principal objective of Western propaganda is to undermine the social system of the socialist countries. Nothing proves this better than the frequent press campaigns which Western propaganda agencies organize against the socialist countries. They could really come to understand in the West as well now, after Helsinki, that the Hungarian nation is not curious to know reactionary Western judgements of the situation in this country. Hungarians are better informed, and are more competent judges of that.

The Hungarian people want none of the thoughts and long obsolete ideas of medieval knights-errant such as Solzhenitsyn or Mindszenty. The people are interested in what goes on in the capitalist world, what the social system is like, what they have achieved, what difficulties they have, and how working people live and think. Only this kind of exchange of information can promote cooperation between countries, improve relations and strengthen mutual trust.

At the second stage of the Conference on Security and Cooperation the Western countries laid great stress on human contacts. They generally mean facilitating emigration from socialist countries and the reunification of families. Some politicians in the West also think of this in their one-sided way of continuing the former practice of enticing highly qualified

people from the socialist countries. They want to go on with the reunification of families, but only keeping in mind the interests of those living in the West. The Hungarian authorities have shown great flexibility. There are therefore only an insignificant number of such cases.

In accordance with the spirit of Helsinki measures ought to be taken to facilitate the mobility of citizens between countries with different social systems, including holiday travel. This would largely promote knowledge of the life of nations and their countries and contribute to the strengthening of mutual trust. Practice shows however that Western politicians who speak so eloquently about human contacts often raise obstacles to the free movement of individual men and women. Hungary guided by the desire to facilitate better knowledge of each other, issues a tourist visa to any citizen of a Western country who needs it within 48 hours. On the other hand, Hungarian citizens, as a rule have to wait several weeks to get a Western tourist visa.

Finally another most important point. In the course of cooperation between countries, especially under the heading "humanitarian and other fields", as has already been pointed out, great care must be taken not to infringe the sovereignty of countries, and to avoid intervention in domestic affairs, or to offend the laws, regulations, traditions and customs of the partner countries. It is impossible to give way to Western endeavours which, particularly with reference to these points, want to force Western rules, customs and methods on the socialist countries, showing unwillingness to allow for their laws, customs and traditions. It is impossible to approach cooperation in such a one-sided manner, this does not produce fruitful results.

4 The last section of the Final Act lays down the follow-up to the Conference. In this part the signatory states undertake to implement the provisions of the Final Act by unilateral action, bilaterally through negotiations with other participating states, and multilaterally also within the framework of international organizations.

This section provides for a meeting of representatives of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to be held at Belgrade in 1977, and for a preparatory meeting to take place prior to that, on June 15, 1977. It is obvious that the meeting will discuss what progress will have been made by then, the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation, as well as the agenda of possible further meetings.

I have committed to paper only a few thoughts concerning the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation, enough though to show that the implementation of the Final Act will be most complex, requiring

great efforts. The socialist countries, the forces fighting for peace and progress, and all those who support the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems have to keep a careful watch over the observance of the provisions of the Final Act, promoting further progress by showing initiative again and again. Hungary will do all in her power to implement the Final Act of the Conference on Security, giving effect to its provisions.

A great deal depends, of course, on whether the governments of Western countries are willing to draw the right conclusions from the failure of Cold-War policies, striving sincerely to implement the provisions of the Final Act. The Western politicians who took part in the third stage of the Conference on Security and Cooperation have on the whole expressed themselves favourably. We could not really understand why some people insisted that the Final Act has no standing in international law. Is there a suggestion that it has no binding force? It would be wrong to approach the question in that way. This is not our interpretation. Let me quote János Kádár: "There has been some argument on the obligations the Final Act imposes on us. Lawyers may discuss the point, but thanks to the press, radio and television the Hungarian public had direct knowledge of these events and could see that the Conference has been unanimous in that all the nations represented there sincerely desire peace. To what extent there is a legal obligation to this effect is a matter of secondary importance. But the politicians who spoke officially on behalf of their countries and peoples committed themselves politically and morally to the strengthening of peace and to putting peaceful coexistence into effect!"⁷ Let me add only that those who signed the Final Act accepted a political and moral duty on behalf of their governments to implement its provisions, and this we think is a strong enough obligation. We hope this view is shared also by those in charge of Western countries.

III

As I emphasized the successful conclusion of the Conference on Security and Cooperation and the signing of the Final Act, opens up a new chapter in European affairs. The implementation of the provisions of the Final Act will increase trust among countries and nations, and will extend the basis for the improvement of bilateral relations between states as well as for the solution of still outstanding international problems. All this will substantially improve the chances of détente. One should not believe however that the process of détente is not in any way threatened. The success of the

⁷ *Népszabadság*, July 3, 1975

Security Conference exercises a positive influence on this process, but if no barriers are raised against reactionary forces threatening détente, if no progress is made in other important fields, if no headway is made in doing away with certain focal points of tension that still exist in some parts of the world, détente might come to a halt, and the results of the Conference on Security and Cooperation might be jeopardized.

It follows as a matter of course that the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation, though fundamental and important, is still not enough. Efforts must be made to solve many other international problems in order to extend the effects of détente making them irreversible.

During the consultations preparatory to the Helsinki Conference there was much talk about the military aspects of European security. Initially, for procedural reasons, we did not agree to the discussion of military aspects at the Security Conference. We thought that it was not right to confuse disarmament with bilateral relations, that it would be more appropriate to deal with them separately. Nevertheless, we are pleased with measures that improve trust. If such results are to be consolidated however one must necessarily make further progress in disarmament. It is indispensable that further and more substantial steps be taken in order to curb and stop the arms race, it might well become a barrier in the way of the peaceful economic development of some countries. The Hungarian government therefore supports all efforts towards the attainment of this objective. There is something else that ought to be taken into consideration. It is impossible to make progress in slowing down and stopping the arms race if one leaves out of account the principle of equal security, i.e. that the security of no country should be jeopardized as a result of such steps. Western countries must renounce moves designed to obtain one-sided military advantages, and must understand that no propaganda can change the real situation. The real position today is that there is a military balance of power between the socialist and the capitalist world. This is one of the cornerstones on which the process of détente is based. When some in the West try to upset this equilibrium, this means that the peace they want is not one that is to the interests of all countries but one which secures the West one-sided advantages. It ought to be understood at long last that the socialist countries cannot be forced to make unilateral concessions. The governments of all NATO countries must realize—and this sort of recognition is already met with in some cases—that the only way in which one can negotiate on disarmament with the Soviet Union and the socialist countries is on a footing of equality, that is on the basis of mutual advantage, and that

power-politics are worthless in practice today. It is due to this that pertinent agreements have been reached between the Soviet Union and the United States, that the two countries have agreed to the prohibition of ecological warfare, and that they negotiate on the further limitation of strategic arms. The governments of the capitalist countries of Europe should revalue their outmoded ideas in this respect. It is they that hinder agreement on the reduction of armed forces in Central Europe. No agreement is feasible as long as moves violating the principle of equal security are concealed by the steps taken by the West. When the governments of capitalist countries in Europe show that they have recognized the principle of equal security not only in words, it will not be long before an agreement is reached.

In recent times Portugal has, to a certain extent, become an international issue. What takes place in a country cannot in itself be a subject for international controversy. Every people has the right to decide on the road it wishes to follow and can introduce any system that suits its purposes, and to choose its own methods in the exercise of power. If a nation wants to abandon the capitalist system in favour of a socialist one, and bourgeois democracy in favour of socialist democracy, this is also the affair of the people concerned and no business of outsiders. The domestic changes in Portugal have become the subject of international controversy because certain Western politicians want to change the course of this development by outside intervention. Some exert undisguised pressure on the government of Portugal. Barely had the ink become dry on the Helsinki Final Act when leaders of some of the West European Social-Democratic parties met at Stockholm, and then at London, to work out measures to influence developments in Portugal. We know that the C.I.A. and the fascist régime of Spain also took steps relating to Portugal. The aim of Western intervention is obvious: to prevent progressive social changes, and to ensure that Portugal keeps to the capitalist course. Western political circles do not in the least disguise their intervention, they pretend to be entitled thereto in the name of "pluralist democracy". They must understand that the time of intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries has gone. The spirit of Helsinki demands this as well.

Cyprus is another European problem. The NATO countries—who knows on what grounds—treat the Cyprus situation as an internal NATO affair, though the most interested party, Cyprus, is not a member of NATO but a non-aligned state. It is therefore right to demand that the Cyprus question be detached from behind-the-scenes NATO manoeuvres and a solution be attempted calling on the participation of many countries. Those who are scheming to divide Cyprus do a bad service to the cause of peace, since

it would in fact result in a double enosis. This is probably the aim of aggressive NATO circles. The Hungarian government has committed itself in a number of statements to the safeguarding of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus and to the maintenance of her non-aligned status. On this basis alone, and following the withdrawal of all foreign armed forces, one can hope for a solution. New efforts should be made to this effect in the spirit of Helsinki.

The dragging out of a settlement of the crisis in the Middle East has also affected the situation in Europe. A new war in the area would certainly have a negative effect on relations between the socialist and capitalist countries. There are some precedents for this. It would therefore spoil the European atmosphere of the post-Helsinki period. It could be argued then that one should look with favour on the recent interim agreement between Egypt and Israel. Let there be no mistake about it: we are not opposed in principle to such an agreement, but in the given case there can be wisdom in it only if it is closely related to a comprehensive settlement of the crisis, creating, as it were, the conditions for a final settlement. The truth is that the latest Egypto-Israeli disengagement deal does not meet this requirement. The withdrawal of the Israeli forces of occupation to a position few kilometres in the rear of their present one in exchange for significant political concessions may help to put off the outbreak of a new conflict between Egypt and Israel but it does not eliminate the danger of war on a larger scale. The agreement does not touch the key questions of a settlement of the Middle East problem—the withdrawal of Israeli troops behind the 1967 frontiers, the recognition of the lawful rights of the Arab people of Palestine, and a guarantee of the security of the countries of the area. It weakens the position of the interested Arab countries and the Palestinian Arabs and the unity of action of the Arab countries, and at the same time strengthens the positions of Israel. The thousands of millions of dollars received from the United States government enable Israel to improve her war machine and practically allow her a free hand to continue her political manoeuvres, to prepare attacks on Arab countries and the Palestinian Arabs. The involvement of American technicians in the supervision of the agreement makes it still more difficult to achieve a solution.

The strengthening of peace and security in Europe demands that a comprehensive and substantive settlement be reached in the Middle East. Israel should implement all relevant resolutions of the U.N. Security Council. Further efforts should be made to convene the Geneva peace conference with the participation of the representatives of all interested Arab states, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Soviet Union and the

United States. Should a solution of the Middle East crisis be attempted in one or another way, one thing must be understood: no enduring Middle East settlement is feasible today without the participation of the socialist countries, especially that of the Soviet Union.

In Latin America imperialist circles try to turn back the course of progress. In alliance with the domestic oligarchy and part of the bourgeoisie, they plot to oust progressive governments and to put their servile puppets in power. The example of Chile shows clearly that reactionary changes in domestic politics have an effect also on international affairs, introducing a new poisonous element. This is why the interests of peace and security in Europe and the entire world demand that these manoeuvres be foiled.

The peace-loving forces in Europe and all over the world cannot merely be passive spectators of events taking place in other parts of the earth. Relying on the results of the strengthening of peace and security in Europe, they have, on the one hand, to contribute thwarting the forces which oppose détente and, on the other to take the initiative with a view to spreading détente to other continents as well. An increasingly timely issue is the creation of a collective security system in Asia so that peace and security should prevail on this long-suffering continent.

IV

The struggle for the conclusion of the Security Conference and the process of détente in general, particularly in the past two years, have often been troubled by the hostile actions of various Cold-War circles. It would be a major mistake if the socialist countries, and all the forces fighting for peace progress and security, underestimated the threat posed by the strength and influence of the foes of détente. There are anti-Soviet and anti-Communist forces which are still very influential in the capitalist countries. They continue to occupy positions of strength in capitalist society and dispose of considerable resources. They are especially strong in the media, a large number of radio and television stations, and of periodical and daily papers being under their control. Their influence in certain political associations and organizations is great. As a result they are still able to spread their views and they help to form public opinion. Over and above this, they are even listened to by governments, and thus able to create tension in international affairs.

Their desire to trouble détente is not based on subjective reasons only,

they have vested interests in a Cold-War policy. One ought just to remember the profits of armament manufacturers and no more need be said. This lot had lately secured more scope for its machinations since they are backed by others who, using the old recipe, try to stir up international tension in order to find a way out of the crisis of the capitalist system, and their own troubles at home. On the other hand, the enormous successes of socialism and the forces of progress lead to anxiety even in politicians who are not explicitly opposed to détente but are ready to listen to arguments of taking a hard line when dealing with socialist countries.

The revival of Cold-War and anti-détente forces manifest itself in a number of facts. It looks as if a brake has been put on progress in bilateral relations between socialist and capitalist countries. The West does not seem to do all it could to solve still existing international problems. They do not slacken the arms race, on the contrary they intensify it by enormously inflating the military budgets of NATO countries. In the capitalist countries new and new campaigns are started against socialist countries. Things which Western propaganda overlooked earlier are now exaggerated out of proportion and used against the socialist countries. Owing to subversion by Cold-War forces those, especially in West Germany, who attack the treaties concluded with the socialist countries, the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin and in general the eastern policy of the Federal Republic of Germany, have become more active. They try to distort and misinterpret what has taken place, standing things on their head, as it were.

From Western declarations following the signing of the Final Act, and from Western propaganda statements, it is possible to discern how the policy line and course of propaganda will be followed in the time to come by the reactionary, Cold-War forces of capitalist countries.

—In official statements made after the signing of the Final Act a number of prominent politicians from capitalist countries generally evaluated the results of the Conference in a favourable way. But already at that time, and particularly later, part of the Western manifestations, statements by politicians and newspaper articles, reflected a sort of turning up one's nose indicating that they belittled and disparaged the results of the Conference. Cold-War forces on the other hand, openly attack their governments for having signed the Final Act of the Conference on Security.

—Some present the results of the Conference on Security one-sidedly, arguing that those are favourable only to the socialist countries while the West has ultimately nothing to gain from them. For this reason they demand that the socialist countries make concessions in other spheres. This way of thinking has found expression in some of the official statements

as well for example, in the case of a number of Americans. It is however untenable. As Leonid Brezhnev said at the Helsinki Conference, everyone has gained from it and the signing of the Final Act. Of course, this includes only those who sincerely strive to strengthen peace and security. It is clear that the Cold-War forces those who think in terms of international tension, and conflict with the socialist countries, were the losers.

—It must be considered likely that Western opponents of the improvement of relations with the socialist countries will, by every possible means, obstruct the implementation of the Final Act. One must also reckon with Western politicians stressing those provisions of the Final Act which are favourable to them. Attempts of this are already present. Our position is that the participating countries have to strive for the full implementation of all the provisions of the Final Act.

—Another thing is that, even after the signing of the Final Act, there are people in the West who wish to pursue policies inconsistent with the principles of cooperation. A striking example is the afore-said intervention in the internal affairs of Portugal. This cannot of course be tolerated. Any step that violates the principles laid down in the Final Act must be categorically rejected.

—Imperialists exploiting the atmosphere of European détente, take pains to turn the situation to their own advantage in other regions of the world. Activities of this sort can be experienced in the Middle East and in Latin America, but elsewhere as well.

—Such action is carried on to the tune of a large-scale antisocialist and anti-Communist campaign. The advance of socialism, the imperilment of "freedom" and "democracy", and the military might of the Soviet Union are used to frighten in the West. Every opportunity is taken to smear the socialist system, its institutions, achievements and politicians. The propaganda of imperialism is aided and abetted by Chinese propaganda, which outdoes imperialist smears when the Soviet Union and other socialist countries are the subject of discussion.

—The West has lately taken up the notion of the preservation of the social *status quo*. Earlier, when Western politicians thought that the capitalist system could possibly be restored in the socialist countries, they were against any kind of *status quo*, territorial or social. Now, when they are afraid that the ideas of socialism might materialize in the Western world as well that social change is becoming something to be expected within the foreseeable future their talk is of the need to maintain the social *status quo*. It must be put on record that the socialist countries and the Communist Parties have never subscribed to the social *status quo*; they have always held

the view that every people has the right to choose the social system it wants, and that no one on the outside has the right to object.

The policy and propaganda line of the reactionary circles of Western countries is ultimately aimed at making impossible the full and strict implementation of the provisions of the Final Act of the Security Conference thereby hindering efforts to make the process of détente more thorough, and irreversible.

Such efforts are surely condemned to fail, but only in case the socialist countries, the forces of progress, and peace-loving humanity do their best. All this calls for resolution and hard and protracted efforts.

Now that the accent is on politics one has to reckon with a sharpening of the ideological contest between socialism and capitalism. There never was and never will be peaceful coexistence when it comes to ideology. That has always been our position. We think this goes without saying and it loses none of its validity in the post-Security Conference period. Certain Western politicians have suggested that the socialist countries put an end to the ideological struggle, proclaiming this as one of the conditions of détente. The capitalists of course do not seriously contemplate stopping their propaganda activities, but they would dearly love the socialist countries to do so. We know full well that the ideological struggle cannot be stopped, being well aware that there is no vacuum in ideology. Where there is no socialist ideology the capitalist ideology will find a way in. If the socialist ideological positions were given up the gates would be open to capitalist thinking. This sometimes takes place indirectly, but it is of the essence. Western moves aimed to produce an ideological truce are thus ultimately no more than a smokescreen designed to put socialism off its guard.

V

Summing up the results and prospects of the struggle for peace and security in Europe, and generally assessing the chances of the application of the Final Act of the Security Conference and of the process of détente as such one is entitled to a certain optimism. The firmest basis of this is the steady and irreversible shift in international power relations in favour of socialism and progress. An analysis of the past twenty to twenty five years shows that, although industrial and agricultural production has increased in the capitalist countries, which have also become stronger militarily, socialism is gradually getting the upperhand over capitalism. Add the growing instability of the capitalist system, the growth of socialist forces, and those of peace and progress in the capitalist countries and progressive

trends in the developing countries, and it becomes clear that optimism is well-founded. The influence of forces which see the international situation realistically and accept peaceful coexistence as the only alternative to a thermonuclear war is growing, within the ruling classes of capitalist countries. Their conviction is becoming stronger that they can do better in conditions of peace than in a world war with all the enormous risks involved. The activity of these forces is something new in international affairs: in one or another country they come to play a very important part in certain cases. These forces played an important role in the fact that favourable steps are taken by governments of capitalist countries after the signing of the Final Act of the Security Conference.

What has to be done follows on what I have argued above: the socialist countries, have to cooperate with those members of the ruling classes of capitalist countries who see world events as realists and who are ready to implement fully the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security. This will give a new impetus to the process of international détente, helping to increase its effectiveness and making it irreversible.

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PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES OF CULTURAL POLICY

by

MIKLÓS ÓVÁRI

The 11th Congress decided that the main policy line the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party had thus far followed should continue. This can be said, with even more emphasis, of cultural policy.

Continuity in Cultural Policy

What then are the more general and more important features of this continuity in cultural policy? It spares no effort to imbue the arts with Marxism-Leninism and the ideas of socialism, and to create for the first time in Hungarian history a situation in which all obstacles in the way of the encounter of the arts and their public, the people, are cleared away. To this end active and varied assistance is given to socialist trends. This cultural policy affirms the close and indissoluble unity of creative freedom and commitment to socialism and progress. It grants a large—and, one may well say, growing—degree of independence to creative workshops, at the same time requiring more emphatic political and ideological responsibility on their part. Fostering and propagating the cultural assets of the past, while allowing a certain latitude to works that reflect ideologies that are not Marxist in every respect, but which express persuasive, humanistic values, is a continuing element of cultural policy. This basic position is closely related to the duty of critics to analyse such phenomena as Marxists, absorbing their values critically, and objecting to such of their features as are inconsistent with Marxism. At the same time, politically hostile, antihumanist and taste-perverting products will continue to be excluded.

These characteristics were directly or indirectly confirmed by the 11th

A somewhat abridged version of an address on "The Arts after the 11th Congress", delivered at a meeting of the Hungarian Artists' Association, on 26 May, 1975.

Congress, activities will therefore have to continue according to the same principles. This should be taken for granted, since these basic principles have stood the test of time and yielded good results, they have been justified by practice.

The Congress dealt in detail with questions of ideology and culture. The ideology of Marxism-Leninism has a dominant role in Hungarian social life as a whole. It pervades the workaday world, and determines the course and perspectives of socialist progress. The Party, state, voluntary and mass organizations are all active in the application and further growth of Marxism-Leninism, extending its influence and range. At the same time, we well know that, for a variety of reasons, petty-bourgeois, nationalistic, cosmopolitan and unscientific views are still present and influential,—ideas that are irreconcilable with Marxism-Leninism. All these make themselves felt, in a more acute form, what is more, in culture, since culture is not isolated from society but is an integral part of it.

The Congress took the view that the great majority of creative artists identify themselves with the people doing their share in the building of socialism. They agree with the major social objectives. It is true at the same time that there is no consensus as yet among writers and artist on ideological questions. Here, too, the influence of socialist ideas is growing, but it is also clear that as a result of new problems and contradictions in the building of socialism in Hungary, the survival of unsound conventions, and problems connected with the international working-class movement and foreign policy, uncertainty, confusion and a loss of perspective have found their way into culture and into certain works of art. This manifests itself in the world view reflected by certain works of art, the choice of subject or form, *l'art pour l'art* ideas, the evasion of the contemporary scene and formalism. The Congress pointed out that these are of no benefit to either art or society. For that reason it demanded that creative artists should better identify themselves with the people, and that their works should intelligibly address the people and be about the people, expressing the life, work and struggles of the Hungarian people building socialism. "The central problems of the working classes, of the building of socialism," to quote the resolution of the Congress, "should be given a scope appropriate to their importance in works of art."

The most important tasks follow from this situation. The evasion of reality can be attributed to some creative artists being unfamiliar, or not sufficiently familiar, with life today, and current problems. There are those who, in only partial possession of the truth, and without proper ideological guidance, react to reality spontaneously. With others turning to the past,

parables, formalism are all an expression of an uncertainty of judgement when facing current problems. The causes may be manifold, but the task is the same. Creative artists must be helped to get a better knowledge of society and reality. Training in the social sciences and ideology must be improved, that is the ideological influence of Marxism-Leninism must become greater. This is the most general and most important precondition of a sound understanding of the present, avoiding misinterpretations, knowing it in its essence and context, and not only as it appears in certain phenomena, allowing the central issues to be apparent to creative artists.

Of course, this is easier said than done. In practice it is a most involved difficult and job.

The Arts and the Problems of the Age

Great artists, whatever their art, were able to produce really important works because they knew the problems of the age and recognized the social forces able to cope with them. This is why they could speak with enduring validity to their contemporaries and to the future as well. They did, of course, express their own selves on the most obvious level. To be able to express themselves, however, they had to form an authentic image of the world. It is vital for a writer or artist to show himself. The public, that is society, judges a writer or artist by the reality they were able to present and make their own, using their talents and sensitivity. The artist expresses himself, but the extent to which self-expression becomes an authentic portrayal of the world depends on how much of a society's basic problems he is able to absorb, identifying himself with the people. This, of course, is determined by a number of factors, primarily his knowledge of life, his ideology and the way in which he is able to transmit and detail the knowledge he has. A lasting work only results if the creative artist, working hard, knows no rest in his exploration of reality and study of the workaday world, endeavouring not only to understand but also to interpret it. I do not believe that talent without painstaking work can create anything lasting for mankind.

When it is said that the positions of Marxism-Leninism should be extended and consolidated in art, when it is stressed that writers and artists should acquire a wider, more varied and more conscious knowledge of society, all that is expected from them is that they should dispose over the most essential, and personal, very much "aesthetic" resources of creative work, that is knowledge of the world and a modern and scientific ideology. This is not, therefore, something demanded by outsiders but a general requirement that serves the specific inner progress of art as well. To be

familiar with the age, to transmit to the people the ideas of progress, to take part in the life and struggles of a society—this is where the artist's creative responsibility is manifest, and this is at the same time the condition of mature, enduring works of art.

Knowing something of the present state of society, and current problems, as well as forming sound judgements of them, presupposes a high degree of awareness of social processes and history. There are times when one can and should answer simply yes or no. Men who bore responsibility for the destiny of whole societies and even of mankind took this on themselves even at the price of great sacrifices. They dared to say no to capitalism and fascism, and yes to socialism and to antifascism. After the liberation there was a clear choice again: to say yes or no to the division of estates or nationalization. The alternatives were clear in the more complicated question of the organization of cooperative farms as well: do we want to take agriculture onto the road leading to socialism, or shall we carry on with small peasant farms? It was possible each time to give an unequivocal answer for or against. Today, however, the basic question is settled, and those who have chosen socialism—which includes creative artists together with the vast majority of the people—are now daily faced with the far more complex "how"? That is why I am stressing that creative work and the portrayal of society in works of art requires steadily improving knowledge of society and greater social consciousness.

Two Aspects of the Petty-bourgeois Attitude

Artists just love telling one how much they despise the ways of the petty bourgeoisie. How right they are. The petty bourgeoisie, quite apart from other aspects of its character, has no understanding for the social role of culture, rejecting genuine culture because it does not want to risk becoming part of the main stream of society even through culture. Let me add though that, however right it may be to condemn petty-bourgeois attitudes in art, there is a certain art attitude which is just as petty-bourgeois as the thing condemned. That is exactly what an artist is who shuts himself off from the most important and most burning questions of interest to society, who could not care less about the community, turning his back on the social revolution of our time, who seeks or creates the new in form alone. Form for form's sake is also backed by a kind of substance: its essence must be approached from this angle if it is to be properly grasped. I am inclined to call this attitude petty-bourgeois as well, and will do so even if the artist

concerned, sincerely and to his bones, despises the petty bourgeoisie. The evasion of social questions is not the only way in which petty-bourgeois ways manifest themselves in art. The fact is that the most important public questions can be approached from the petty-bourgeois point of view as well and not only from that of the working class, that is the people building socialism. The ideological terms used to describe this way of thinking are subjectivism and voluntarism. A man who thinks in the petty-bourgeois way disregards the objective laws of social development, and is susceptible to illusions. When his dreams do not come true, he is inclined to blame genuine socialism, talking of a crisis in the latter, and yet all that happened was that the bankruptcy of his way of thinking became evident. In politics such attitudes manifest themselves as opportunism and ultra-radicalism. They can be reflected in works of art as well. Petty-bourgeois ways can also appear as conservatism, and a fear of further progress. Obsolete ideas occur as well, from time to time, more than once in the guise of a demand for a greater social role of art.

It will prove necessary in the future for workshops, artists' associations, Communists and Party organizations, to critically and self-critically examine the most important aspects in the creative activity of artists, exposing and criticizing negative phenomena. It is only natural that in this case as well as in others one cannot stop at merely criticizing certain phenomena: what is most important is the positive, well-reasoned and argued exposition of the Marxist-Leninist position. To begin with, paradigmatic works are needed, works which by their very existence and their effectiveness strengthen socialist public commitment and its prestige, works which intelligibly and truly tell of the people and speak to the people. Such works must be made accessible to the masses.

There is a thing or two I should like to say in this connection. I do not think a radical change can be produced overnight in this field either. The Congress reminded us that much work had to be done over a long period, demanding close attention and a good deal of patience. Forcing the pace in this respect would be as great a mistake as taking it easy or doing nothing at all.

What Does "the People" Mean?

It is also vital that tasks be uniformly interpreted. If one argues that art must tell of the people and address the people, then it is essential that the term "the people" should be used with identical meaning. In my view it is natural that "the people" covers the working class, the peasantry and profes-

sional men and women. Creative artists are included as well as those who take delight in their work. It would be a mistake indeed if anyone interpreted "in the people's service" too narrowly. The people is evidently not identical with the co-operative peasantry, let alone with the peasantry of fifteen to twenty years ago. But obviously the concept cannot be restricted to the working class or to any other section of society either. When I hear the word people, I always understand it to mean all the classes and sections of society who work, who day by day are engaged of the job of building a socialist society in Hungary.

The way in which the working classes should be portrayed in art is also a much debated point. It was said at the Congress, and at various discussions in the past as well, that Hungarian working people justifiably wished to see their own lives reflected in art. I think there is no doubt that in this respect the people today do not get as much as they give, directly or indirectly, in their relationship with the arts. Literature and art still owe the working classes a portrayal of their lives, commensurate with their importance.

It would obviously be wrong to measure the leading role of the working class by the proportion of working-class subjects in art. Here, as in every other aspect of life, what counts in the first place is the degree to which thought and action are imbued by Marxism-Leninism, the ideology of the working class; the extent to which Party policy prevails, and how much the work of art expresses the objectives of the working class. In culture as well, this above all is the standard which serves as the index of the political performance of the working class.

It would be equally wrong to demand that every work of art showed the direct presence of the people building socialism. A work can be outstanding though the principal character is not a worker as long as it was conceived in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism. This, however, is only one side of the truth. The other side is that the overall picture is not as it should be. We do not demand that working man building socialism be present in each and every poem, short story or mural, but society justifiably expects that the worker and the peasant alike, that is working men building socialism, shall find and receive the place due to them within artistic production as such. Works of art do not as yet sufficiently reflect the best qualities of the working class and of the people, that is a community spirit as against inward-looking selfishness; confidence in what the future may hold as against a feeling of alienation, pessimism and despair. I am convinced that all this depends on art as a whole identifying with the people, that is on art having done its ideological homework.

I think Attila József's poetry expressed the working class at the highest

level not only because József was familiar with it or because he was a really great poet. He identified himself with the working class, that was the point. His way of thinking and view of the world allowed him to see what was most essential in life at that time, that is the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the working class; and he was able to place this awareness right at the centre of his art. Others could not do what he did, not simply because they lacked the talent or knowledge of life, but rather because of their ideological blinkers. In the long run, the closeness to life and reality of literature and the arts, including the portrayal and expression of the life and experiences of the working classes, depends on the ideology professed by the artist, the degree to which he is able to identify himself with the people, and with the reality of contemporary socialism. For this reason it remains a permanent duty, while building on existing foundations, to do even more to make everyone conscious of the relationship between ideology and subject, and attitude and method.

There are those who argue that writing about the people and for the people, discussing contemporary problems, is something that ought to be done all right, a great and worthy cause, but there are risks and therefore the appeal of more abstract methods is greater in practice. I won't say there is nothing to this. True enough it is more difficult to deal with contemporary problems; it is certainly a much more tricky job than tackling some sort of abstract subject. Whoever touches the hot stove of contemporary problems risks getting burnt. He is likely to stir up debate and might well provoke harsh criticism. Nevertheless, in my view if one wants to create something truly important one ought to be prepared to accept such risks. Of course, if you want a quiet life you had better not wrestle with the important questions of the day. But those who find their pleasure in creative work—and this applies not only to writers and artists but to all working people—must strive for the new. Artists must show something essential about life today, a society that is making progress. Let me add that these risks I have been speaking about are not really great. Writers and artists in Hungary know that there is public confidence in their work; they also safely can place their trust in society, and a cultural policy designed to ensure that we shall know ourselves better through art.

The Problem of Style

Thanks to the Congress, questions relating to style, more precisely to the intelligibility of works of art, are being discussed once again. It was empha-

sized at the Congress that the people expect artists to have something intelligible to say about contemporary problems. One might ask then whether the requirement that artists be intelligible does not offend an earlier proclaimed principle that the Party should not interfere in matters of style. I am convinced there is no contradiction here.

The creative artist's work, his portrayal of society, is profoundly influenced by whether he can identify himself with the people, whether he participates in the solution of the people's present and future problems, how he evaluates social processes, whether he understands and can face up to contradictions inherent in social progress. A lack of knowledge of social processes, their conscious Marxist evaluation not having taken place, can stop the artist noticing that revolutionary changes today are spreading to newer and newer areas in economic and social life, to the workaday world and the consciousness of people, resulting in new conflicts which are only in part like the earlier ones. If a creative artist fails to see this, it can well happen that he seeks the new and revolutionary not in society but merely in art, in form. He substitutes—or rather thinks he substitutes—a revolution in form for what he has been unable to grasp in substance. This way leads to a blind alley in art and the artist may well become a follower of passing fashions.

Every good artist seeks the form most suitable to content in the course of his work. The report to the Congress stated once again that the writer or the artist himself chooses subject as well as form and means of expression. Speaking of intelligibility, however, I should like to stress what the Congress laid down in very clear terms: "In the course of time forms of expression as well necessarily change but artists have to understand that the revolution takes place first of all not in form as known by artists but in society." The Congress did not call in question the free choice of method and form, still less their necessary change and development. All it did was to remind of a basic truth of Marxism that is demonstrated by the entire history of the arts to this day, that the revolution always takes place in society, this is what acts upon the arts, and this is what is reflected in the content of works. The changes that occur in society and in the content of art lead to change and the renewal in form.

The question of form can thus never be separated from those of content. This applies also to intelligibility. What is intelligible and what is not ultimately depends on the content. If the artist speaks realistically about complicated problems of real life, he will be intelligible even if his work is formally and methodologically highly complex. Perhaps he will not be intelligible immediately and to all, but in this case it is worth struggling

with unaccustomed formal qualities, since this leads to a more profound knowledge of reality. This is how a growing public has acquired a taste for the works of Endre Ady, Attila József and Béla Bartók, and numbers are still growing.

Reference is often made, and not even without reason, to the fact that Ady and Bartók, in their time were also "unintelligible". One ought to remember those, however, who understood them. For there were such people, and in no small numbers, in the working-class movement, that is among those who understood the age itself. And there were those as well who precisely because they understood them very well refused to accept the novelty in content and in form. Intelligibility therefore does not depend on style or on form. Form may be quite conformist, the means may be widely and immediately intelligible, but since the content they convey has nothing much in common with reality, or the work has nothing essential or new to say about reality, the work becomes unintelligible and uninteresting. It is only another variant when the artist substitutes or covers up the shallowness in content by a "revolution in form". Reservation and antipathy towards the form of expression are also in this case directed at content, the fact that it is alien to life. The public strives to understand in vain, burrowing ever deeper, he finds no socially, artistically valid content behind the peculiar form.

We therefore ask creative artists to make constant efforts to improve the closeness to reality of their work, that is their authentic realism, their life-likeness. This is an indispensable condition for a fruitful interaction of art and the people.

And we, the public, demand of ourselves that we should never cease in our struggle to make works of art our own. Nothing, not even the enjoyment of art, can be obtained free, without effort. Therefore we continue to reject the arguments of those who demagogically demand that art be intelligible. This would make superfluous the demand for continuous self-education, and by encouraging mental sloth and lethargy, question the beauty and value of the effort to understand art. We shall not, therefore, make concessions to demagogic or dogmatic interpretations which simplify intelligibility, to any approach in general which thinks it possible to achieve specified aims at the price of compromising standards, or by disregarding the nature of art. A two-front debate is required for the sake of a systematic interpretation of the Congress resolution. The report of the Central Committee stated: "Allowing a place to all humanist values, we reject both the dogmatic view of art and the negative attitudes which evade social questions or falsely generalize mistakes."

Creative Freedom

A few more words, partly in connection with the foregoing, about creative freedom. Dealing with science, scholarship and the arts, the 11th Congress, just like earlier Congresses and other party documents, put on record that the Party guarantees creative freedom. The recurring emphasis on creative freedom is an important expression of the fact that society wishes to know reality, and that for this very reason it supports every honest and responsible work which promotes such efforts. At the same time, it is an expression of the trust which the Party and the people put in creative artists, the conviction—justified also by experience—that no one, or only a few, will abuse this freedom, so few that it is not worth-while or even permissible to squander those enormous energies which are released by this trust.

Of course, freedom here, just as in all fields, must not mean irresponsibility and chaos. The freedom of the individual in a socialist society can come to full flower keeping with the public interest. When we link creative freedom with social responsibility, we, to our best knowledge and belief, do not limit freedom but make it rational and meaningful.

In addition to a responsible stock-taking, there must be freedom for experiments as well. Attila József's maxim "let him also play" is valid with double emphasis. This principle is right inasmuch as the creative artist should *play*—trying his hand, experimenting—and we shall guarantee him this freedom for the future as well. But he should play *also*—that is, he should not *only play*, not only experiment, since the meaning, the essence of life is work, creation, and the possibility of "playing" in all fields of life can only be the fruit of responsible creative work.

I think one should equally point out that creative freedom does not limit, but presupposes, serious and responsible debate. Creative freedom is not a one-sided privilege of particular sections of society, let alone of individuals, nor is it an appropriation of the truth; on the contrary, it necessarily goes with the acceptance of criticism, of the freedom of debate, with the duty to shape and represent the Marxist position.

FERENC RÁKÓCZI II

by

BÉLA KÖPECZI

Who was this prince the anniversary of whose birth will be commemorated in Hungary on March 27th 1976? Was he a backward feudal lord fighting against centralized power in the Danube Valley, against a power that stood for progress? Was he a nationalist trying to secure the supremacy of the Hungarian ruling class over other nations living in this land?

Was he the "Saint of the Country", a "Champion of Liberty" trying to create the political conditions necessary for social progress, the friend of the people who placed himself at the head of the peasant host in revolt fighting for their rights?

Or was he a political day-dreamer thinking as a Jansenist who was a stranger to this world might?

All this can be asked, has been asked about Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II.

Basing myself on recent research I shall try to give as true a description as possible of this much debated man.

The youth of a Hungarian aristocrat

Ferenc Rákóczi II, the son of Prince Ferenc Rákóczi I. and Ilona Zrínyi was born on March 27th, 1676 in a country whose central part was still occupied by the Turks while the west and north were ruled by a Habsburg prince, crowned Holy Roman Emperor and King of Hungary as well.

Transylvania, to the East, still flourishing in the early 17th century had fallen prey to Turk and Tartar following the fateful Polish campaign by György Rákóczi II. Growing much weaker it just managed to retain its semi-independence in the shadow of the Ottoman Empire.

Vienna and the Porte had signed the Peace of Vasvár twelve years

earlier, an agreement highly disadvantageous for Hungary, under which two important fortified towns, Várad and Érsekújvár, were relinquished, following a war in which the armies of the Holy Roman Empire supported by French volunteers gained the day.

This was after Vienna gave top priority to its West-European interests and not to driving the Turks out of Hungary. The aristocratic plot named after the Palatine Ferenc Wesselényi by historians, an ill-prepared conspiracy which ended so sadly, followed logically. That treaty ran counter to both justified national and obsolete feudal interests, this bathing the defence of the latter in the shining light of moral glory as well.

Prince Ferenc Rákóczi I was among the plotters, and if it had not been for the intervention by his mother, Zsófia Báthory and the Jesuits, it is almost certain that he would have shared the fate of his father-in-law Péter Zrínyi whom the Vienna Court had executed together with his fellow-conspirators. He had little enough time to suffer his ignominious survival, and died shortly afterwards, leaving his mother Zsófia Báthory, notoriously under the influence of the Jesuits, to look after his wife Ilona Zrínyi his son young Ferenc Rákóczi and daughter Julianna. After the death of her mother-in-law Ilona Zrínyi abandoned the retired life she had led and married Imre Thököly, a love match which was also politically inspired. Thököly emerged in the late 1670's as the head of those who took to arms being dissatisfied with the policies pursued by Vienna. He wished to establish an independent principality in northern Hungary, counting on the support of the Turks, France and Transylvania. The idea was to create a force that would compel the Court in Vienna to respect the privileges of the Hungarian nobility and to allow Hungarian protestants to practise their religion without let or hindrance.

Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II had got to know what war meant as a boy, in particular during the siege of Munkács, successfully defended by his mother for two years against the forces of the Emperor winning admiration from the whole of "gallant Europe". In 1688, after the surrender Ilona Zrínyi and her two children were taken to Vienna. Young Ferenc was placed under the guardianship of Leopold Cardinal Kollonich. He was separated from his mother and sent to Neuhaus, a small town in Southern Bohemia (Jindřichův Hradec in Czech) where, in a Jesuit College the Cardinal's nephews were being educated as well. To quote an 18th century historian of the school the young prince was sent there to "learn to respect Divine and human authority in the company of loyal subjects of the Emperor." One of his teachers described the boy shortly after his arrival at Neuhaus: "He turned 12 on March 27th, but he is so tall and has such a well-

developed body that he looks three to four years older. He speaks Hungarian and has an almost perfect command of Latin. He has a ruddy dark complexion and dark hair, which is far from short. His long locks fall on his shoulders. There is nothing mediocre about him. The way he speaks, behaves and moves is dignified as befits a prince, but without the slightest presumption; he is as human as he is noble though he always preserves dignity."

In 1690, following the completion of his secondary school studies, Ferenc Rákóczi was sent to Prague where he read philosophy. He attended lectures on logic, metaphysics and mathematics, later ethics and physics, and he was also allowed to study architecture, especially military architecture. He spent his summers visiting Jesuit houses in Bohemia and he established contact with some of the Bohemian aristocrats who supported the Habsburgs but were fostering local culture as well.

In 1692 his sister who had married Count Ferdinand Gobert Aspremont-Reckheim was granted permission by the Emperor to invite Ferenc to Vienna in connection with legal proceedings over his father's estate. His guardian Kollonich encouraged him to oppose his sister, but Ferenc chose the alternative proposed by Julianna instead. He put an end to his studies, stayed on in Vienna leading the hedonist life of the court aristocracy. He agreed to his brother-in-law's suggestion that he marry Princess Magdalena of Hessen-Darmstadt whose family had ties with the French Court. The Emperor and his aides, however, were not particularly happy about the match and in an attempt to intervene they sent Rákóczi to Italy on a Grand Tour. In much later confessions he deplored both the moral laxity in Italian cities and the absence of his own religious zeal. At the time, however, he was most keen on seeing the world and learning. In Florence he took lessons in dancing and etiquette and went the round of museums and galleries. In Rome, he studied history, geography, geometry, architecture, and warfare and looked at palaces and churches. It was also there where the false news of the death of his wife-to-be reached him. This was spread by the Vienna Court in an effort to abort the marriage. Rákóczi hastened back to Vienna.

The Emperor declared him of age and allowed him to visit his estates in Hungary. This was done to win his support, since even if the attempt to turn him into a high church dignitary through education had failed, he was still thought to have the makings of a good courtier. That was exactly what he was considered to be in Hungary. At his inauguration as Lord Lieutenant (Comes) of County Sáros, the main speaker wished him further new offices "under the protective wings of the royal Austrian eagle".

After his return to Vienna his marriage plans occupied him again. A match

with Charlotte-Amalia, daughter of Prince Hessen-Rheinfels, whose family was also believed to be pro-French was suggested. Accompanied by his brother-in-law, Ferenc Rákóczi joined the campaign against France, but this was only a pretext. On September 26th, 1694 he married Charlotte-Amalia without first obtaining the Emperor's permission. On his return to Vienna he was placed under house arrest. Following the intervention of a number of prominent persons the newly-weds were eventually allowed to leave for Hungary. In any case the behaviour displayed by Rákóczi attracted the attention of influential people at the Court and they suspected rebelliousness. Rákóczi was well aware of this and he avoided political activities. When the revolt led by the supporters of Thököly broke out in the area of Tokay in 1697 he left immediately in the obvious effort to escape possible charges that he had something to do with the uprising.

The Preparation of the Uprising

When the situation calmed down he returned home but he found it increasingly difficult to deal with the affairs of the country. Being a morally sensitive person, he protested against unlawful oppression and exploitation by the Emperor's military forces, first of all against the serfs. Miklós Bercsényi, the Lord Lieutenant of County Ung told him of the grievances of the nobility who also suffered from the military and were afraid that Vienna would eventually take measures to the complete loss of what remained of their privileges. All that contributed to Rákóczi coming out in opposition to the policies pursued by Vienna—in keeping with the family tradition. He knew only too well that without support from abroad he would get nowhere. The War of the Spanish Succession, however, seemed to create favourable conditions for embarking on an opposition venture. The Emperor was forced to withdraw his forces stationed in Hungary in order to use them against France in the West. In agreement with his most intimate friends Rákóczi decided to seek support abroad. He sent letters by Loungewalt, one of the Emperor's officers who enjoyed Rákóczi's confidence, and went on leave to Liège to the French Defence Minister (*secrétaire d'Etat*) on two occasions, appealing for support from Louis XIV.

The officer, however, delivered a copy of the letters to the Vienna Court, as a result, Prince Rákóczi as well as all the plotters except Miklós Bercsényi who had fled to Poland were arrested in April 1701. Although he denied all charges brought against him he was certain to have been sentenced to death or life-long imprisonment if he had not been able to escape to Poland on November 7th with the assistance of his wife, the Jesuits

close to the Emperor and, last but not least, Captain Gottfried Lehman, the commander of the prison at Wiener-Neustadt.

His arrest and subsequent exile finalized his decision to do all he could against the Habsburgs. He could not reckon with support from Augustus II of Poland who had already allied himself to the Emperor. All he could reckon with was assistance from some of the Polish aristocrats by taking advantage of the feudal anarchy prevailing in that country. In that endeavour he received substantial help from Elizabeth, the wife of Adam Sieniawski, the palatine of Belz. She belonged to the Lubomirski family and became not only Rákóczi's political adviser but also his mistress. However, he expected real encouragement from Louis XIV who was hesitating to help in spite of the fact that the Marquis du Héron, the French Ambassador to Poland gave a very warm recommendation to his king. This is what he wrote to him of the Hungarian prince:

Le Prince Ragotsky est bien fait, il a beaucoup d'esprit et infiniment plus que je n'avais ouï dire. Il conserve dans ses malheurs une fermeté dont peu de personnes seraient capables.

Bercsényi had informed the French Court about the possibilities and methods of an uprising earlier in a detailed memorandum and following the arrival of Rákóczi they sent another, more complete one, to France. The withdrawal of the Emperor's forces from Hungary, the bitterness of the people and the intolerable yoke of oppression were, in their view, the factors that were bound to lead to success provided they would be backed up by a foreign force running into several thousands. Prince Rákóczi and Count Bercsényi worded their principal objectives as follows:

Notre intention est, à l'occasion de ces conjonctures, de venger la liberté injustement opprimée et de délivrer des misères de la servitude le peuple qui gémit et n'aspire que ce moment, et par ce moyen servir le Roi par une diversion et mériter l'éternelle protection et alliance de Sa Majesté, pour le maintien le plus solide du Royaume procurer l'élection d'un roi qui convienne à Sa Majesté.

Louis XIV was ready to assist them but he was not hopeful about the outcome of the uprising. He went only as far as permitting the Marquis Bonnac, the French Ambassador in Warsaw, to give a modest grant to be confined to one occasion and he decided to monthly grants available only after the overwhelming majority of Hungary's territory was in the hands of Prince Rákóczi.

Heading the Uprising

While diplomatic moves were in progress abroad, the serfs and the minor nobility organized themselves against the Habsburgs and sent successive

letters to Rákóczi who stayed in the castle of Brzeżany, in Southern Poland, appealing to him to come home. Following prolonged hesitation the Prince crossed the Hungarian border on June 16th 1703 before his friend and aide Count Bercsényi who had gone to Warsaw to see the French Ambassador Bonnac returned with some help.

The question of the relations between Rákóczi and the serfs has been a matter of continued debate. The Prince was well aware of the fact that there was "instinctive hatred" (*haine naturelle*) between the people and the nobility and it was beyond any doubt that he himself stood for the interests of the nobility. Nevertheless, he was prepared to accept the overtures of the serfs in the hope that this would help him to win the nobility's support for the cause of the war of independence. Recalling the conditions under which the war of independence commenced he wrote in his *Memoirs*: "I was inspired by the passion of a young man and a love of country" (*animé par l'ardeur d'un jeune homme et par la zèle de la patrie*) and added, "I was encouraged and strengthened by the intention of winning the confidence and love of the people" (*fortifié et encouragé par le seul dessin de mériter la confiance et l'amour du peuple*). Was that the manifestation of the paternal care extended by the Prince, a sort of charity that recognized the serf as a human being and was prepared to help him? Obviously, certain elements of this can be traced in Rákóczi's ideas, but perhaps we are not too far wrong in saying that there was more than that, that is getting closer to the people without whose support it was impossible to fight the war of independence. We have good reason to presume also that Rákóczi accepted the initiative of the serfs in an effort to exercise pressure on the nobility. The nobility did not want to join the independence struggle in the early stages, while the serfs wanted to struggle concurrently against the Emperor and the nobles who served him, or were only too cautious being those who exploited the serfs. Rákóczi wanted to win the nobility over considering their participation in the war of independence as necessary. He appealed to what he described as "the upper classes, the nobility and all the other arms bearing classes" to join him and defend the nobility's rights and privileges. At the same time the peasants who looted the country houses of the nobility were bid not to set fire to any property, or plunder and roam about the countryside. Serfs and their families who were ready to take up arms were promised exemption from dues of any sort. This was the *hajdú* privilege which was first granted by the princes of Transylvania to serfs serving them with arms in the early 16th century. Rákóczi's idea was to further a joining of forces thus achieving the common objective: national independence.

In spite of that, however, part of the nobility yielded to Rákóczi's appeal

only under pressure. Not only because they were afraid of their own serfs but also because they were not hopeful about the outcome of the uprising however dissatisfied they may have been with Habsburg rule. The Prince did not think very highly of the petty nobility which he felt to be closer to him in several respects than the magnates. "The nobility," he wrote in his *Memoirs*, "were ignorant of the science and art of war" (*parmi la noblesse l'ignorance des sciences et de l'art militaire*), "their inadequate education stands for the illusion of honour and virtue" (*Leur mauvaise éducation représente souvent des fantômes illusoire d'honneur et de vertu*). However, Rákóczi blamed not only the nobility for their own ignorance, drinking, and the idle and easy-going life they led but also the Austrian dynasty on whose part it was a deliberate policy to keep the Hungarian ruling class in such a state. Nevertheless it was that class that Rákóczi wanted to lean upon in the first place because he could not like Louis XIV of France who relied on the bourgeoisie for support against the nobility and above all the high aristocracy. In the absence of a bourgeoisie the army might well have played the part of an appropriate counter-balancing factor as opposed to the aristocratic anarchy he was so familiar with from his Polish experiences. And when I say army I mean what was termed as "gallant order" and was composed of the minor nobility, the soldiers who used to serve in the border castles and the liberated serfs. A force of this kind would have received massive political support from the middle nobility primarily some of the Protestants whose path to public office was blocked by the pro-Habsburg officials, they were interested in creating an independent state also because of the religious persecution they suffered.

In his efforts to bring about unity, Rákóczi attached paramount importance to the elimination of religious conflicts. They were, in most cases, linked with both social and political ones. In a letter dated June 15th, 1704 and addressed to Louis XIV, he said that he had tried to favour all the three received denominations because the House of Austria as he put it—took maximum advantage of religious denominations in all earlier rebellions. Louis, *le Roi Soleil*, who persecuted the Huguenots, approved of Rákóczi's approach as shown by the instructions he gave to his representative, to be sent to Hungary.

Rákóczi tried hard to create the economic foundations necessary for waging a war of independence and to this end he endeavoured to utilize the country's resources and the contributions made by counties without levying additional taxes. He built up an efficient system of economic institutions and made arrangements necessary for supplying the armed forces. From the very beginning his attention was focused on military

matters and he gave top priority to the establishment of a standing army.

He started the war of independence in the hope of obtaining support from abroad. For this reason all his activities connected with domestic issues were closely associated with his foreign policy.

In 1704 his principal hope was that his forces and the Bavarian and French army marching on Vienna from the West could be united. That was the motive lying behind the *kuruc* (the term covers Rákóczi's forces) advance in what is Slovakia today, and in Transdanubia. The Bavarian Elector, however, was not particularly enthusiastic in spite of the fact that Rákóczi had offered him the Hungarian throne. Meanwhile, Rákóczi tried to seek support elsewhere, since he realized that the hope of an ultimate alliance with France alone was not sufficient. He sent his envoys to Charles XII of Sweden and the Elector of Brandenburg and sought ties with the Turks but with very little success.

He did not reject negotiations with Vienna either; he was quite pleased with Dutch and English mediation in the hope of reaching an agreement backed by international guarantees.

The period of choice

On August 13th, 1704 the Bavarian and French forces suffered a decisive defeat at Höchstädt (Blenheim). Prince Maximilian-Emanuel was forced to leave his country. The victory of the allies offered Vienna the possibility of releasing substantial forces from the West and dispatching them to Hungary. On December 25th, 1704 they beat Rákóczi's *kuruc* army at Nagyszombat.*

Prince Rákóczi was not really distressed by the unfavourable turn of events but they were sufficient to convince him that the resources at his disposal were not enough to allow him to resist successfully. That is why he repeatedly urged France to give him more substantial military and diplomatic assistance.

After a prolonged journey Pierre Puchot the Marquis des Alleurs, envoy of Louis XIV arrived in the town of Eger on February 28th, 1705. The Marquis whose office was that of military adviser (*lieutenant général*, and not ambassador) put different questions to the Prince following the ceremony of the presentation of his credentials as to whether the Hungarians wanted peace or war and what means were at their disposal to carry on the war.

* See István Vas's poem on the battle of Nagyszombat on p. 58.—The Editor.

Rákóczi informed him that quite a few of the generals, aristocrats and church dignitaries proposed peace while the minor nobility and the people, especially the Protestants, were in favour of continuing the fight. Referring to the material resources at his disposal, the Prince told the French diplomat that they were inadequate, but he refrained from levying taxes, and with that measure he attempted to bring home the idea of freedom. He gave a detailed description of every military implication the French Court was interested in. The Marquis des Alleurs had a highly favourable opinion of Prince Rákóczi and he reported to his master:

Le Prince Rákóczi n'a que 32 ans, il est grand et bien fait, il a le port majestueux et la physionomie belle. La douceur et la docilité tiennent le premier rang entre les qualités de son esprit, ce qu'il accompagne de beaucoup de bonne volonté et d'une continuelle application. Je puis même dire que pour avoir été élevé dans l'obscurité, il sait beaucoup de choses et les sait bien. Il parle et écrit six langues: hongrois, latin, français, italien, allemand et polonais... C'est un Prince vertueux, laborieux, affable, généreux, bienfaisant. Il est très exact dans la pratique de la religion. On ne peut rien ajouter à sa valeur et il paraît être exempt de passions de son âge.

Louis XIV, who recognized Rákóczi as Prince of Transylvania, a rank he obtained thanks to the vote of a section of the estates, increased the amount of aid on the basis of his representative's favourable report to 50,000 livres a month. It was enough to cover the expenses of some 4,000 men. He sent a number of French officers to Hungary as well. But he rejected Rákóczi's request for more aid mainly because of France's economic difficulties. The Prince, however, wanted more than merely financial aid and some officers; he tried to secure a treaty of alliance as well which was rejected by the French with the argument that the king was not allowed to make commitments involving the subjects of another ruler. Dethronement of the Habsburgs was the only way of meeting the conditions set by the French Court. This would have automatically brought about the election of a new king. In Rákóczi's view Hungary needed a foreign ruler with outside forces at his disposal to face the Habsburgs and stand up to the Hungarian nobility. This major decision led to his convening the National Assembly in 1705, originally on the field of Rákos just outside Pest, the traditional site of earlier Hungarian Diets. Later, however, following the lost battle of Vöröskő, the meeting had to be transferred to Szécsény, some distance from Pest.

Rákóczi did not propose the dethronement at the session of the National Assembly in Szécsény for two reasons: partly because of domestic opposition and, also because Joseph I who succeeded Leopold I appeared to favour conciliation. The 1705 meeting of the feudal estates established a confederation corresponding to the Polish model according to some, while

others maintain that they followed the Dutch, and elected Rákóczi ruling Prince; however, it also endorsed the power of disruptive aristocratic generals. That was the fact though Rákóczi maintained that he had been granted unlimited powers in military, political and financial matters. The most progressive resolution adopted by the National Assembly at Szécsény was the one on religious issues in the wording and passing of which Rákóczi took part. It ruled that disputed questions among the denominations had to be settled peacefully by talks on the basis of "the exclusive freedom of conscience and the right to practise any religion".

Following the 1705 Diet Rákóczi was all out to prove that he was not opposed to agreement between the Hungarians and the Vienna Court; that is why he focused his attention primarily on peace talks.

Meanwhile, social conflicts grew sharper and subsequent tension mounted between the soldiers coming from the ranks of the serfs and their officers representing the nobility. This led to dissatisfaction on both sides. General dissatisfaction combined with the hustle and bustle of the Austrian Emperor's envoys and the English and Dutch mediators increased the desire for peace. The Prince was seriously considering the possibility of reaching agreement with Vienna but he did not believe that he would be able to force the Habsburgs to make substantial concessions especially on the issue of independence for Transylvania which ceased to be even a semi-independent principality at the end of the 17th century. In the view of his contemporaries an independent Transylvanian principality could have been the only way Hungary could oppose Habsburg absolutism. Rákóczi shared the 16th century anti-Habsburg position and refused to yield an inch even under pressure which included sending his wife to see him and then allowing his sister to visit him, manoeuvres designed to make him change his mind owing to personal favours. On the occasion of his wife's visit he met Wratislaw, the Czech Chancellor who headed the Emperor's peace mission. He rejected the Prince's demand and warned him of what was in store for him in case he refused to accept Vienna's peace conditions. Rákóczi recorded in his *Mémoires*: *Hé bien, Prince—me disait-il-vous vous fiez aux promesses de la France, qui est l'hôpital des princesqu'elle a rendu malheureux par le manquement à sa parole et à ses engagement; vous en serez du nombre et vous y mourrez. Je répartis que je n'examinais pas la conduite de la France en cela, mais mon devoir.*

After that Rákóczi made the "House of Austria's intention to prolong its rule with disdainful cruelty" responsible for breaking off negotiations.

The fact that Rákóczi was right in the question of the peace talks at Nagyszombat is proved by the letter addressed to Queen Anne of England by George Stepney, an English mediator. The letter dated July 26th 1705

was written in Vienna and enclosed was a protest by Rákóczi addressed to the Queen with the following comment:

"I hope the style is as it ought to be (for He has sent me no Copy) at least I see no fault in the Direction He has given to her Ma^{ty} and the States Gen. (which is the same *mutatis mutandis*) and I must own in Justice that what he mentions as matter of Fact is literally true. . . . The truth is, We ought not to have concern'd ourselves in this Mediation (and so I represented in my Letter to Mr. Secretary Hedges near 3 years ago when it was at first propos'd). But since Her Majesty by the advice of her Council was engaged in it and by the humble address of the Parliam^t was mov'd to urge it with more efficacy, it seems wonderful that no manner of notice has been taken in England whether we succeeded or not: whereas it was certainly for the Dignity the Mediation that some Remonstrance should have been made by her Ma^{ty} and the States Gen, when they perceiv'd this Court acted upon wrong principles; And we were never in a better Condition and Right of speaking plainly than now, when the whole burthen of the Warr against France lyes on us, and these Ministers turn all their Application to Hungary, and draw daily more Troops from the Empire."

In connection with this let me quote a sentence from Stepney's previous letter dated a few days earlier, in which he defended Rákóczi's right to Transylvania and warned that the Hungarians could not abandon their demand to this effect:

"This (that is giving up their demand) is laying an Axe to the Root of the Tree and any man who has had the happiness of living under a free Government cannot but be a little concerned to see a poor people (where of 5 parts of 6 are of the Reform'd Churches) depriv'd of their Liberties at one Blow, and given up to servitude and future persecutions notwithstanding a Powerfull Mediation, of the same Profession with themselves, has been pleased to appear in their behalf."

During his autumn campaign of 1706 Rákóczi's forces upset the Austrian forces retiring from Transylvania under the command of General Rabutin and prevented the fast advance of an Austrian army commanded by General Starhemberg on Hungary from the West. They should be regarded as successes even if the *kuruc* had made several mistakes which the Marquis des Alleurs and the French officers sent by Louis XIV did not hesitate to point out to Rákóczi and report to Versailles.

The War of Independence Takes a More Radical Course

The military successes achieved in 1706 failed to convince the peace party of the nobility that the war could, and had to be, carried on. Under such conditions Rákóczi's endeavours concentrated on getting the allied estates and Transylvania accepted as international partners at the conference table. To this end he had himself inaugurated as Prince of Transylvania and convoked a National Assembly at Ónod in May 1707 to declare the dethronement of the Habsburg dynasty. Some of the representatives of the estates were opposed to the dethronement, but they came out even more strongly against voting taxes necessary for financing the continuation of the war and the introduction in any form of the general and proportionate sharing of taxation. As early as the beginning of 1707 the leading officials of County Turóc sent a circular to other prominent county personalities calling upon them to end the burdens arising from the war and asking them to refuse obedience to Rákóczi whom they described as a bigger tyrant than the Habsburg Emperor, alleging that he was carrying on the struggle to promote his own ends. The issue of the circular was brought up during the debate at the National Assembly, and the delegates of County Turóc tried to find excuses. When the Prince rose to speak, his voice was filled with the passion of one who had suffered insults:

"Beloved nation!" he shouted, "is this what I deserved for the many services I have rendered to my country? Is this that I deserve after exile? I have dedicated my life and blood, my all, to you. I neglected my wife, my children and my own fortune. My ancestors risked everything they had and sacrificed their blood and faith for the restoration of your flourishing freedom, out of their love of this nation. And now I am believed to be piling up treasures at the expense of my country. All I can do is to hand back the office I was given at the Diet of Szécsény. I will retire to my Transylvanian principality. I am prepared to find refuge in a remote a corner of the country, after being described as tyrant instead of receiving the expected gratitude. I cannot tolerate or suffer this. I will take it into my grave. . . . Beloved nation, may you remove this shame from me!" Those words prompted aristocrats, among them Bercsényi and Károlyi, to cut down the delegates of County Turóc. Some of the nobility attacked while magnates defended Rákóczi. Later the National Assembly declared the dethronement of the Habsburg dynasty and passed certain taxes. This radical measure, however, failed to break the peace party, because power relations in Hungary had changed in favour of the Austrians and because aid from abroad appeared to be too distant a hope.

After the dethronement Rákóczi insisted that Louis XIV should conclude a proper treaty with the allied estates and himself, as Prince of Transylvania, in order to secure the support of the vacillating nobility. That was the main issue of his intensive correspondence with the Marquis des Alleurs and directly with the French Court which was reluctant to make official commitments in spite of the fact that, as early as in 1704, it had recognized Rákóczi as Prince of Transylvania and pledged that the cause of the Hungarians would be included in the general peace treaty.

Eventually Louis XIV yielded to the Prince's repeated demands and by 1708 the text of the treaties was ready but their signing had to be postponed because of the unfavourable turn in power relations in Hungary and because of the deterioration of France's international position.

Rákóczi wanted to sign the treaties as the Head of the ruling Hungarian estates and as Prince of Transylvania.

In the first Louis XIV was to have pledged to "defend the Hungarian Kingdom, placing its laws and privileges under his protection" (*protéger le Royaume de Hongrie et mettre ses lois et ses libertés sous sa protection*), restore the right to elect a king, not to interfere in the election but support the new king (who was believed to be Maximilian Emanuel, the Elector of Bavaria) not to conclude a peace treaty without securing the agreement of the Hungarians first offering assistance in regaining territories and provinces that belonged to Hungary earlier, provided he won the war.

Under the other treaty Rákóczi's rights concerning Transylvania were laid down along with a pledge on the part of the King of France to grant financial aid to the Prince in the event of both victory or defeat.

In 1707, Rákóczi put his hopes in Russia and not in France.

Following several unsuccessful attempts to establish contact with the King of Sweden who rejected any ties with the Prince despite mediation by France and other countries. The Czar desired to ask the Prince to persuade the French to mediate between him and the Swedish monarch. He also thought that Rákóczi could accept the Polish throne that had become a matter of dispute after Augustus II had been deposed by the Swedes and which Sweden's protégé Stanislaus Leszczyński claimed. The Prince was only too pleased to act as mediator but he hesitated about accepting the Polish crown being afraid to provoke the anger of the King of Sweden and opposition on the part of France. At the same time, however, he wanted to arouse the interest of Peter the Great in the affairs of Hungary and Transylvania and obtain his support for the new Hungarian ruler, wishing to secure the Transylvanian principality for himself. That is why he did not want to flatly reject the Czar's offer regarding the Polish throne.

This led to the conclusion, in 1707, of the Warsaw agreement that was signed by Count Bercsényi for Hungary, and in which Rákóczi pledged support for mediation between Sweden and Russia. He accepted the Polish royal crown under certain conditions. Peter the Great, on the other hand, promised support for the Hungarians.

Hungarian and Russian relations could not produce any major results before the battle of Poltava after which Augustus II returned, to stay king until his death. The succession to the Polish throne was thus no longer timely but the issue of mediation between Charles XII of Sweden and the Russian Czar continued to be a burning one along with the possibility of Russian aid to be granted to Rákóczi. Russia tried to mediate at the Vienna Court as early as 1708 in an effort to pave the way for a just agreement but it got nowhere. In spite of the failure repeated attempts were made again in 1710. Rákóczi, on the other hand, tried to persuade the French Court to undertake a peace mission between Peter I and Charles XII. For this purpose he sent his envoy directly to Versailles.

The Agony of the War of Independence

Meanwhile the situation of the war of independence grew from bad to worse due to internal weakness, and disruptive activities that ended by some of the nobility switching sides, not to mention the predominance of the Habsburg forces.

In that very difficult situation the French Court left Rákóczi to his own resources, following the cancellation of financial aid, as from the end of 1707, a move ascribable primarily to the report on the situation sent by the Marquis des Alleurs in which the French envoy alleged that the Prince did not make proper use of financial aid, for he had spent it partly to cover his own and his wife's costs and in part to finance diplomatic missions that were, in his view, absolutely unnecessary. In addition, he accused Rákóczi of being too lenient to his generals, not maintaining discipline in the army, and not treating the foreign officers properly. The French, however, which continued to stick to the idea of an alliance with the Swedes and Turks in a most conservative manner, were upset primarily by the negotiations with the Czar and, in particular, by the conclusion of the Warsaw treaty.

Rákóczi considered it necessary to challenge these accusations.

A letter dated January 2nd, 1708 and addressed by the Prince to father Montméjan, the head of the Lazarist Mission in Warsaw, is a particularly sincere expression of Rákóczi's feelings. He regarded the establishment of

discipline and order in the army and the rebuilding of forts, arsenals and ordnance factories neglected by Vienna, as considerable achievements. He admitted, however, that his officers' ignorance and lack of skill (*l'ignorance et la mal habilité*) deprived him of the successes he had good reason to expect. He also blamed the people of "the lower rank and without any distinction" (*des gens sans connaissance et qualité*) whose bona fide ignorance could not be punished for if he had done that he could have spoken with Ovid, "if Jove resorts to his thunderbolts whenever a man sins, he will soon find himself running short of them" (*Si quoties peccant homines, sua fulmina mittet Juppiter, exiguo tempore inermis erit*). They could not bear foreigners for whom they had a natural dislike because of differences in character (*humeurs*) and in language.

Ignorance, he remarked, intruded into all the estates: "*(ma nation quoique guerrière de son naturel, mais fort négligée par l'esclavage de la Maison d'Autriche et où l'art de la guerre avait été depuis le Roi Mathias Corvin éteint.)*" That is why he had no trained officers and was forced to be lenient with magnates although he tried to take strict measures against some of those failing to live up to their duty.

In a letter the Prince wrote to Bonnac on April 25th, 1708 he discussed the principles according to which he governed and emphasized that in a free country it was impossible to resort to the methods and means used by the Czar in Russia. In any case, in the absence of adequate power at his disposal Rákóczi endeavoured to win the different estates over to his side, so he would deserve to be called *pater patriae*.

He also explained why he maintained a large court and said that it was important not only for retaining authority but also to educate the nobility:

Les raisons qui m'engagent a des dépenses, qui paraissent à plusieurs superflues, proviennent encore de l'envie que j'ai de former la jeunesse de ce Royaume et de tâcher de l'accoutumer à des moeurs et c'est pour cela que je ne trouve pas à propos de me contenter d'un petit nombre de domestiques et que je fais voyager ceux qui ont envie de voir les pays étrangers. J'envisage par là que la nécessité de dépenser pour la guerre n'est pas moins nécessaire à la conservation de notre liberté que celle que je dois faire pour inspirer à la noblesse des sentiments dignes de son rang.

The views he expressed indicate the activities connected with cultural policy the principal objective of which was to train accomplished leaders, raising the cultural standards in general. Condemnation of Jesuit education, support for educational reform and assistance given to the arts and sciences offer indisputable proof that the *kuruc* leadership and the Prince personally introduced considerable innovations in these fields.

On August 3rd, 1708 Rákóczi was defeated by General Heister at Trencsén, an event that turned out to be fatal in the long run. After that the Prince again tried to find a solution to the internal economic and social problems. It was quite clear to him that the "soldier disbelieved the officer and vice versa"; he blamed not only the soldiers but he also had doubts as to the willingness of the nobility to help: "if we do not frighten the finicking aristocrats by the toughness of the soldiers, all cleverness will prove useless." In December 1708 he convened a session of the National Assembly at Sárospatak, where he forced the estates to financially support the war and grant irrevocable freedom to the serfs doing military service as well as to their families. The introduction of the general and proportionate sharing in taxation and the extension of the freedom of foot soldiers were too late; general disintegration was already in progress.

With the assistance of the Poles and Swedes who entered into his service Rákóczi made one more desperate attempt in early 1710 to hold up the advance of the Imperial forces commanded by General Sickingen at Romhány. It is true that the *kuruc* held their own much more impressively than in earlier battles but it was of little use. The advance of the Austrian army and the decay of the country, combined with the plague, sealed the fate of the war of independence. Agreement to be reached with Vienna was regarded as the only realistic way out by most of the *kuruc* nobles. Impelled by the increasingly pressing situation, Rákóczi was prepared to begin talks with General János Pálffy, the commander-in-chief of the Imperial forces stationed in Hungary. The conditions he proposed, however, were again rejected by the Vienna Court; all it was ready to grant was general amnesty to the rebels, and the return of their estates and property, while Rákóczi was promised personal treatment and privileges. The Prince did not find Vienna's propositions satisfactory and decided to go to Poland where he wished to meet Peter the Great in the hope of taking part in the mediatory moves between Sweden and Russia, which enjoyed French approval, and on the other hand, to appeal to the Czar for support for the Hungarians which could take the form of either diplomatic initiatives or the entry of Russian forces into Hungary.

He left one of his Generals, Sándor Károlyi, in charge of his forces. "Thus I leave my dear homeland, my greatest asset and my Munkács where there is the other treasure so dear to me in Your Grace, and bind your soul and faith believing the constancy of your resolution that you repeatedly expressed the other day in Munkács when saying that without the prosperity of your nation you would not be reconciled and we shall not leave each other." He arrived in Poland at a time when it was common

knowledge that Turkey was about to declare war on Russia, as inspired by Charles XII of Sweden, who had fled to Bender. It must be noted here that what the French offered to Peter I was mediation between Sweden and Russia and not the prevention of war with Turkey. Under such conditions it was quite evident that the Czar was unable to give assistance to the Hungarians.

While Rákóczi was negotiating with the Czar in Poland, Sándor Károlyi concluded a peace treaty with General János Pálffy without the Prince's knowledge and following assurances of special conditions for himself. Under the agreement the privileges of the Hungarian nobility were maintained, the property and offices held by the rebels were returned to them, and the rule of the Habsburg dynasty over Hungary and Transylvania was confirmed. That compromise determined the political, economic and social conditions that governed relations between the two countries up to 1848. Rákóczi protested against the agreement, being loyal to the objectives of the war of independence, because of his patriotism and on moral grounds as revealed by the letter he wrote to Károlyi: "I know that the principal argument is that I would be left on my own anyway and perhaps even the hope of external aid will also deceive me, but even if that is the case I prefer placing my hope with God alone with a clear and perfect conscience, instead of staining it with my incredulity, abandoning it all and rendering myself unworthy. This is my final resolution I will not part with as long as I live, and no misery or captivity could ever make me hesitate."

On the run

On failing to obtain support from Peter the Great even after the peace treaty he concluded with the Turks, Rákóczi moved to Danzig from the south of Poland to guide the activities of his diplomats in the royal courts of Western Europe. Guided by the hope of exercising some influence on the process of the general peace talks thanks to his presence, he moved to France, where he continued seeking support. He accommodated himself to the life in the French Court and found particular pleasure in hunting with the King and Count Toulouse. Saint-Simon and especially the Marquis Dangeau, the Prince's distant relative, gave a detailed account of the life Rákóczi led there and the respect he commanded. The eventual conclusion of a peace treaty by Louis XIV with the Habsburg Emperor in 1714 shattered all his hopes, and after the death of the French monarch he

joined the monks of the Camaldolian order in an effort to seek consolation in Jansenism but without giving up his political goals.

A new war broke out between Austria and the Turks in 1717, and Rákóczi accepted the invitation by the Sultan to go to Turkey in the hope that he would be able to pursue his plans. The opposing parties, however, made peace and the Turks yielded to the demands of Vienna: the Prince was forced to move to Rodosto, at some distance from Constantinople. Even at that stage he refused to retire from European politics and tried hard to assist French and Russian diplomacy in settling their relations with Turkey. He would have liked to move out of the isolation he was confined to in Turkey, but he wrote to successive French secretaries for foreign affairs, and to his one-time friends in vain; he was looked on as an unwanted guest in a France that had concluded an alliance with Austria.

The King of Poland Augustus II died in 1733, and King Louis XV of France wanted his father-in-law Stanislaus Leszczyński to return to Poland as successor. A new war was on the horizon in which Austria might well have turned against France. Rákóczi was ready to take advantage of the opportunity. In his last memorandum sent to the French Court he wrote: "*Il est certain que la disposition de la nation est telle aujourd'hui qu'elle avait été alors. Ses griefs étaient plâtrés d'abord, mais après la paix de Passarowicz tout a été remis sur l'ancien pied. Je ne suis pas moins zélé pour ma patrie et je suis encore engagé par des serments à soutenir la liberté et le droit de ma principauté.*"

Ferenc Rákóczi II died on April 8th 1735. Saint-Simon, a contemporary not particularly lavish with his praises, wrote about him:

... Ragotzi était d'une très haute taille, sans rien de trop, bien fourni, sans être gros, très proportionné et fort bien fait, l'air fort, robuste et très noble jusqu'à être imposant sans rien de rude; le visage assez agréable, et toute la physionomie tartare. C'était un homme sage, modeste, mesuré, de fort peu d'esprit, mais tout tourné au bon et au sensé; d'une grande politesse, mais assez distinguée, selon les personnes; d'une grande aisance avec tout le monde, et en même temps, ce qui est rare ensemble, avec beaucoup de dignité, sans nulle chose de cette manière qui sentît le glorieux. Il ne parlait pas beaucoup, fournissait pourtant à la conversation, et rendait très bien ce qu'il avait vu sans jamais parler de soi. Un fort bonnête homme, droit vrai, extrêmement brave, fort craignant Dieu, sans le montrer, sans le cacher aussi, avec beaucoup de simplicité. En secret, il donnait beaucoup aux pauvres, des temps considérables à la prière, eut bientôt une nombreuse maison qu'il tint pour les moeurs, la dépense et l'exactitude du paiement, dans la dernière règle, et tout cela avec douceur. C'était un très bon homme, et fort aimable, et commode pour le commerce; mais, après l'avoir vu de près on demeurait dans l'étonnement qu'il eût fait tant de bruit dans le monde."

Rákóczi arrested the world's attention thanks to the cause he represented, and not primarily by his person. If we look back on the war of independence in the early 18th century, it cannot be denied the merit that it offered an alternative road of development, though it failed. By maintaining the privileges of the Hungarian ruling class the Habsburgs aborted any sort of social reform. As regards national minorities, it was the Habsburgs' clear endeavour, since the beginning of the 19th century to play off nations living in the Hungary of the time against one another. In spite of a relative economic development this policy eventually led to the disintegration of the Habsburg Empire and it also produced mutual hatred amongst the small nations.

Rákóczi did not wish to produce fundamental changes in the feudal system. He placed the independence of the country in the forefront. It is true that even if Hungary's independence had been achieved, it would not have eliminated the contradictions between the ruling class of the country and the serfs who belonged to a number of nations, but it would clearly have led to an end to intervention on the part of an outside power in the national conflicts that came into the open in the closing stages of the 17th century. The war of independence waged by Rákóczi's *kuruc* was in fact the forerunner of the 1848-1849 revolution. However, it was a drama in which the conflicts between the different nations remained in the background. It is my firm conviction that the translation into practice of the early 18th century idea of independence which enjoyed the approval of different nations living together would have saved this part of Europe from numerous subsequent troubles. How then could one describe Rákóczi?

He stood for the idea of independence, and in the midst of adversity, he stuck to his goal. His moral greatness serves as an example to us as well.

ISTVÁN VAS

POEMS

Translated by William Jay Smith

NAGYSZOMBAT, 1704

On that clear, dry, cold Christmas Eve
Count Sigbert Heister's army, sent to conquer the country,
Drew toward Nagyszombat
In four columns, the fifth, the center one, being the supply column.
It was escorted on either side by two brigades led by Ebeczky
And Ocskay, who had been drinking heavily.
Bercsényi had ordered them there to harass the enemy
But they did not move to do anything. Why?
It has never been possible to decide what they did or did not do.

Still more incomprehensible were the peasants
Who had but one possession left: their souls
And with them, the masters whom they hated so much
That it seemed that they wanted only
To take revenge for their lost freedom.
This was, however, the best season for fighting
Because harvesting was over
And armed peasants like footsoldiers followed
The flags in the hope of booty.
And who were their officers?
The ringleaders of the village.

In this whole affair,
The blind were, in any case, leading the blind.
And it was from them that I expected advice,
These losers of battles.
My lord counselors! And what advice they gave me!
And how much! Saying one thing and then

The exact opposite. Their only excuse was
 Ignorance. They did not even know of the millpond
 And paid no heed to the brook, the Tírnava.
 I rode along the field but could see
 Nothing in the sudden blizzard.
 Esterházy did not follow my stratagem:
 On the left wing he placed his troops in a single line
 And most of them did not take any part in the battle.
 My right wing was led
 By Bercsényi, eloquent in counsel,
 Hesitant in action,
 And indecisive in dubious cases.
 Now he sent his messenger to me
 To say that we should allow the enemy to pull away.
 I sent back word that without a second's hesitation
 He should attack the flank of Heister's army
 Since we did not come here to crack hazelnuts.
 But since it was too late: by the time my message arrived
 My right wing had been overtaken by Heister.
 On the day after Christmas at one p.m.
 The cannon boomed and their booming thinned the clouds,
 And the enemy confronted us, already on this side of the brook.
 However, Ebeczky attacked their flank
 In the way that only Hungarians, at their best, can.
 But unfortunately they also got hold of the supply column;
 The carts attracted the soliders who began to plunder,
 And it never occurred to the non-commissioned officers to restrain them.
 Seeing this, the two German squadrons that had changed sides
 Outflanked and routed the brigade.
 I moved up, giving orders to my riflemen
 To follow me. But the noblemen, on orders from
 Ádám Vay, out of love for me,
 Seized my horse. But none of them took charge of the riflemen
 To put an end to the confusion.

Thus the greatest battle of the war came to an end,
 The first battle I had led.

Then Bercsényi and I collected the runaways.
 He knew the Hungarian genius:

It is enough to assemble them in army corps;
They take heart, as if no one
Had ever defeated them.

And I also had to continue as long as I could:
To deserve this incomprehensible trust
Once my destiny had been divinely decided.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This poem might well be called some kind of collage: except for the last three lines, not a word is by me. I took it all from Rákóczi's *Mémoires*, written in 1716 in exile in France, five years after the defeat of the struggle for independence he had led, when he was about to set out for his even more painful exile in Turkey that was to last for almost twenty years, until his death there in 1735.

The poem takes its theme from Rákóczi's own description of the first major battle of the war—lost like most fought according to the rules of conventional warfare. (Austria was able, however, to suppress armed resistance by Hungary only after another eight years.) What I did largely was to rearrange Rákóczi's words and adapt a few sentences from other parts of the *Mémoires*, mainly from a passage in which he, overcoming his own social conditioning with sovereign magnanimity, describes with sharp wit the social classes in the Hungary of his day.

The words of the poem are, however, also my own. Rákóczi did not write his *Mémoires* in Hungarian, but in French. He did so in part with a diplomatic purpose in mind: to attract the world's attention to the Hungarian cause before embarking on his Turkish enterprise. On the other hand, Habsburg power politics had separated him from his mother when he was still a small boy and sent him, born into the highest Hungarian aristocracy, to be educated in Bohemia, where he could not hear Hungarian, in order to wipe out national feeling in him. He was a grown man when Count Bercsényi taught him to speak the language, which never became a natural medium of expression for him. He wrote his autobiography, *Confessiones*, in Latin. I translated his *Mémoires* into Hungarian twenty-eight years ago. It seemed a far cry from poetry. But, then, my poetic sensibility has always been attracted by the elegance and shy poetry apparent in Rákóczi's actions, manners, way of thinking, and in his style. The Hungarian words of his *Mémoires* are therefore more or less my own.

The words of the last three lines cannot be found in *Mémoires*, or at least not in the same direct form. In them I summarized what for me constitutes his most personal message. He was a hero who had no intention whatsoever of becoming a hero. Or of becoming a leader or rebel either. At the start he did not even want to be a Hungarian. But on those rare occasions when I myself feel something like pride in being a Hungarian, Rákóczi plays an unforgettable part in this by having, despite everything, become one.

I. V.

THE ETRUSCAN SARCOPHAGUS

Which is the more elegant I do not know: the woman's narrow, long-pointed fashionable shoe, or the man's narrow, long-toed foot and vaulted sole? The narrow, well-ordered feminine braids curling from under the round, high hat, or the same kind of plaits over the man's elongated, narrow face with his pointed beard, coming down to the middle of his naked back? I do not know either what the woman's half-opened hand holds—or does she vaguely raise it, as if to bid farewell? To whom? To what? What is this long narrow hand taking leave of? What is this beautiful woman somewhat irresolutely looking toward? Nor do I know, of course, who they are.

All I know is that as the woman rests on her elbow and leans against her husband's naked chest and he embraces her, love, together with their beautiful chosen life, shines from the red stone: they lived, or would have lived, as I wished to live with you. Were they like that—as young—when they died? Or was that the moment they thought to be eternal? How should we know what these figures with their sign language mean? Or am I perhaps what I appear to be? But they wanted to be seen like that when they crumbled to dust down there under the red stone.

This is not a Christian sarcophagus, with its willed or achieved quietude, nor Latin discipline applied to Roman ashes: it is love growing more and more beautiful through all destinies and infernos. Death can be solved by propositions of many kinds, and I have tried a few formulas, but in my old age I am pleased with the present one that does not ask where we came from and whither we go: nothing is more worthy than our lives and what we can make and dare make of them; the great meaning and adventure of our existence is this and all the rest is mad or maddening humbug, for, where is that famous Etruscan ecstasy that joins in marriage with death? No, they just love each other and their beautiful lives, this married couple.

And the great Etruscan enigma so often talked about? Those famous death-copulations? Where are they? I do not see them, wherever I look among the graves, the vases, the designs, the fired clay figures, I see only life and with it also its infernal monsters, of

course, because death is great. Yet it is even greater to outwit death, and there is no neater formula for this than laughter.

So the Apollo of Veii laughs as he looks one in the eye—but at whom does he look? I did not realize that I was the one he fixed with his gaze when I looked at him. One could not see that in the reproductions, nor did any of the professors write about it—and he laughs staring fixedly into the world, and yet it is not the death call of mysteries, and yet it is not the thing emitting evil fumes concocted of rotten leftovers in my youth by the charlatans and dopes of the death myths who had, in their impotence, grown tired of unrewarding, slow work and especially of their own desiccated, tired brains; by those sick of reason, those whose activities became more and more questionable, a poor, deluded generation falling into the vapours of death. But the story that would make your flesh creep I find nowhere here: the Apollo of Veii flashes, the dark-faced light-bringer, the lifedarking, and his broken foot steps forward—laughing, he steps beyond death as he looks me in the eye.

If I look him in the eye. Yes, just to see, to see! And still to look! I am still curious to see you, old and new and newer life, the whole world! Only he who sees knows. And do not abandon me, curiosity! On and on!

Let me still look, let me still see! And trust you! And not believe any delusion but only in my eyes. I so needed this Etruscan sarcophagus and what it stands for: The hope that we still await on foot that which somewhere starts out against us and is preordained to win. And that I do not lose what I believed in. And he who laughs last laughs best. And that we preserve life as long as possible, perhaps even a bit longer. And if nothing else and nowhere else, when we do not exist any longer, somewhere down there, our desiccated skulls will laugh. And we do not give a damn, a damn, about death.

SAINT MÉDARD

On all sides a palpitating gray;
The silver slowness of the Danube

Is turned leaden by the flattening shadow of the storm.
 Nothing but birds that zigzag
 With nervous grayness. Nothing but our hearts.
 The designs of the steppes and the ocean
 Clash once again above us:
 By disturbing the depth of the continent
 And engendering showers,
 Masses of cold air from the Atlantic
 Ease our hot summer.
 Above the clouds, air masses,
 Envoys of the steppes and the ocean,
 Turn around, competing for position.
 And by the time the moon twice gets rid of the shadow of the earth
 It will have been walked upon by man.
 And what will that change? Nothing whatsoever.
 Or perhaps next year it will be easier for me to travel
 To Szentendre by suburban train.
 Or rather . . . Why should I go on? Your brains,
 Your audacity, and your technique
 Will exit from the solar system
 Sooner than your wisdom from the mousetrap
 Which it continues to circle.

On the opposite bank

The shapeless frame of the new Hilton
 Hides the cold and burned-out gaps of the city.
 And when it is erected, fresh and splendid,
 As a token of peaceful co-existence,
 Symbol of life in the vulgar and beautiful beyond,
 What will the wind bear to Buda, a waltz or
 The world-wildcat music of the electric guitar
 Amplified a year from now
 On the night of Saint Médard?
 And what kind of tawdry beautiful-beyond blend of light
 Will be projected on the dark water of the backward Danube
 And who will watch it leaning from his window toward Pest?
 I'm not even curious.

From the dusky

Excited grayness only the new bridge,
 The pale silver of our will, flashes
 Mysteriously the image of the bridge, the bridge. The wind of

Saint Médard shivers on the leaden-coloured river,
 Announcing rain, deeper grayness,
 And to some a leaden-coloured river.
 And then it passes, as usual. But if
 The private forecast comes true, for whom
 Will the sun shine in the coming months?
 I am no longer curious. I am not.

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THE EXTENDED PRESENT

The Social Sciences and the Problems of Our Times

by

SÁNDOR SZALAI

Allow me to point out, to start with, that I shall use the term "social sciences" in the narrower sense. It is undeniable that, especially in our times, economics, jurisprudence, public administration, sociology or demography, to give only a few examples, differ in concrete social practice from aesthetics, philology, linguistics, history, archaeology or the history of art. It is the relationship of social sciences in this narrower sense, closer to English usage, to concrete social practice which is my subject on this occasion.

Not that I wish to diminish the importance of philosophy and scholarship in the development of social thought and practice, or to underrate the contribution such disciplines might make to the manner in which the main questions of our times are handled. All that is involved here is an indication that the subject will be tackled from the angle of the social sciences, in the narrower sense, that is with the exclusion of, or only occasional reference to, the so-called human sciences (philosophical, philological and historical disciplines).

The reference to the present, to "our times", also requires closer definition. The delimitation of periods in history and the establishment of dividing lines between them is not a simple matter, even when endowed with the retrospective wisdom of historians. Talking of the tasks specific to our own times one should really have to know precisely when they began and when they will end, and also which of our present problems will have to be left unsolved and bequeathed to future generations.

I cannot lay claim to such anticipatory historical wisdom. What I am really discussing is the *extended present* without any clear-cut limitations. The present that we live in, plus a few past decades remembered by the majority of adults, plus another few decades when these can still be expected to be active, though in diminishing number, and increasingly giving way to those younger than themselves.

Thus we shall be concerned here only with those problems which have *arisen* in the period so defined and which we have to attempt to master *within* it. Reflections will be grouped around the following three pivotal problems:

- (1) The social management of the scientific and technological revolution in the interests of turning its achievements to the benefit of mankind.
- (2) The scientific underpinning and modernization of the methods of public administration and social organization adapting them to the requirements of the day.
- (3) The scientific re-examination of social value systems and of preferences derived from them.

This is probably the place to refer to those three major changes in our lifetime which had a far-reaching effect on *all* global problems which society has to solve in our "extended present". The first is that the Soviet Union became, in politics as well as in economics and culture, one of the great powers, with the community of socialist countries rallied around it. Secondly the vast colonial empires were liquidated, and the peoples inhabiting them, and those suffering similar oppression and backwardness, emerged as new nations, organized themselves into sovereign states and appeared on the international stage as factors of political and economic importance. Thirdly, developments in production, transport, communication, and let me add: techniques of warfare, have produced an unprecedented propinquity and interdependence among the nations of the world, thus creating possibilities for an entirely new kind of world-wide co-operation and—unfortunately—for global conflicts as well.

In other words, the concrete coexistence of comprehensive social systems ("world systems") representing different or antagonistic socio-economic formations became a global problem for the first time.

The key question is the opposition between the socialist and the capitalist systems. Problems relating to the Third World, i.e. to the so-called developing countries, are polarized to a great extent around this.

Within different socio-economic formations even identical material achievements, such as e.g. the objective results of scientific and technological progress, can be put to the service of very different social goals and interests and may thus lead to social problems of an entirely different character. Under socialism far better *possibilities* exist for the social use of science and technology than under capitalism. It depends, however, on the actual standards of development of a socialist society to what extent it can make use of such advantages. I am also convinced that in a socialist socio-economic system better chances exist for a successful control of *negative* social effects

inherent in the introduction of new scientific and technological devices and methods into social practice, and that, under such conditions, social science research may render uniquely effective help to far-sighted planning related to the side-effects of the present rapid changes in the material basis of existence.

I thought it necessary to mention this since, as the argument unfolds, I shall not be able to stress in each case the differentiating role of the socio-economic setting within which the solution of a problem must be sought. Nor will it be possible for me to consider in any detail the different approach of Marxist and non-Marxist social scientists to various issues involved. On the other hand, I shall endeavour to avoid any superficial optimism regarding the very serious global problems raised by contemporary social, scientific and technological development. Such problems cannot be eliminated by a simple reference to the superiority of the socialist socio-economic system which should sooner or later manifest itself in every respect. On the contrary, the aim is to draw attention to the true dimensions and dangers of some of the vitally important problems of our day. However, I and great many others share a "realistic optimism" which has its roots in the teachings of the founders of scientific socialism. We believe that it is the factual elucidation and the scientific analysis of social problems that provide the best chances for the further development of social practice in the right direction, and also for overcoming all dangers and difficulties which hamper human progress.

Social Problems of the Scientific and Technological Revolution

Currently popular ideas on the scientific and technological revolution are mostly based on a long series of impressive and often rather surprising accomplishments with which the natural sciences and technology presented mankind in the last thirty-five years, that is by and large since the outbreak of the Second World War. The most frequently mentioned revolutionary achievements of this kind are the release of atomic energy, the production of artificial elements and isotopes, the development of the electronic computer, the invention of radar, of the transistor and of other countless miracles of electronics, space flights and supersonic air travel, the discovery of antibiotics, the creation of heart-pumps and of artificial kidneys, and most recently the disclosure of the mechanism of heredity, the deciphering of the genetical code, as well as new agricultural technology that boosts crop yields.

Thus, it might seem that the essence, i.e. the revolutionary character of the scientific and technological revolution of our times, lies mainly in the fact that in the past three and a half decades scientific inventions and technological innovations on an unprecedented scale have been showered upon us.

However, in spite of all the wonderful and epoch-making achievements of science and technology, the listing of accomplishments, like so many world records in athletics, or the singing of their cumulative-quantitative praises, does not help us very much in a better understanding of the revolutionary character and significance of the spectacular process going on under our very eyes.

For one thing, it has to be realized that, from the point of view of the history of science, such abrupt and large-scale break-throughs of scientific and technological development are not unprecedented. Let us remind ourselves that the three and a half decades between 1865 and 1900 could boast of the electromagnetic theory of light, the theory of electrons, the theory of electrolytic dissociation, the discovery of radioactivity, radium, X-rays and radio waves, as well as the invention of the dynamo, the incandescent lamp, the electric railway, the multiphase electromotor, high-frequency power generation, the photocell, wireless telegraphy, the steam turbine, the petrol engine, the Diesel engine, the record-player, motion pictures, the motor car, the refrigerator, the typewriter and the telephone, not to mention the evolution of agrochemistry, the laying of the foundations of food chemistry and organic synthesis, the demonstration of the basic laws of the theory of evolution and heredity or the discovery of the pathogens of the most widespread infectious diseases, the introduction of anti-septic and aseptic techniques in surgery, the development of prophylactic and therapeutic serums, and so on, and so forth.

By any standards, what scientific and technological progress achieved in the last thirty-five years of the nineteenth century was as important as the results of the scientific and technological revolution of our times. One might add, with some envy, that the natural scientists and engineers of the last three and a half decades of the nineteenth century did as much with an incomparably smaller input, i.e. with much less institutional investment and expenditure of material and labour.

But let us go back even further. In the thirty-five years beginning with 1635 and ending with 1670 the world was told of Galileo's laws of motion, Newton's laws of gravitation. Pascal's hydrostatics and Descartes's analytical geometry; it was then that the differential and integral calculus were elaborated, and the foundations of combinatorics and of the theory of probability were laid; it was then that the fundamental laws of elasticity

and of the refraction of light were demonstrated; it was then that Boyle discovered the existence of chemical elements and determined the relationship between the volume and pressure of gases; it was then that the pendulum clock, the refractor telescope, the barometer, air-pumps, the adding machine and, last but not least, the pencil were invented; it was then that red blood cells were discovered by Swammerdam, unicellular ciliates by Leeuwenhoek, the cellular structure of plants by Hooke, and it was then that the first blood transfusion was carried out by Jean Denis. And all this was discovered, invented, observed, experimentally tested or researched in some way by a few hundred natural scientists, surgeons, engineers and artisans living in half a dozen countries of Europe. They did their research mostly in their hours of leisure, in addition to carrying out their duties, be they those of an officer in the army of the Prince of Nassau, court physician, a London mechanic, mayor of Magdeburg or Amsterdam lens-grinder.

Thus, the unparalleled impact of this revolution which has radically transformed within a few decades the vital conditions of mankind, cannot be explained simply by reference to the size and speed of the scientific and technological progress going on under our very eyes.

In plain English, the scientific and technological revolution does not take place autonomously in the research laboratories and workshops of science and technology, but, like any other revolution, in society itself. The revolutionary essence of the process should be looked for in the fact that a radical change has taken place in the relationship between science and technology and society.

This change is reflected in a number of events and processes some of which are often remembered but also too little studied.

It is said again and again that the annual expenditure on research and development, which prior to 1940 did not amount to a thousandth of the total national income in any country and was not even properly recorded at that time, has 2-3 per cent or even more of the national income in almost every industrially developed country. The institutional base of research and development work has been extended at the same rate, i.e. it expanded twenty or thirtyfold within a few decades.

What is more, scientific research has become a way of earning a living on its own. Research used to be a more or less voluntary or accidental by-product of other scientific or non-scientific activities performed by a variety of professional people, such as university teachers, librarians, lawyers, engineers, gardeners, stock-breeders and craftsmen. In many cases research was simply a leisure activity motivated by the personal desire to know.

Viewed from another angle, attention should be called to the fact that scientific research and development has become in our times one of the major determinants of the whole development of industrial and agricultural production. This was accompanied by an ever growing integration of scientific research and development into productive work. Thus the process which Marx predicted that science would become a *direct* productive force has become reality. Marx's acumen is all the more noteworthy since he did not live to see the emergence of the first two "scientific" industries, the synthetic chemistry and electronic engineering which were based entirely on scientific research.

There is a multitude of scientifically based industries today, such as nuclear engineering, electronics, or the production of plastics; moreover there is practically no branch of production which does not strive to solve its technical problems, to increase productivity, to develop new technologies and lines of production by boosting scientific research and development. This is at complete variance with all earlier practice. Up to the middle of the nineteenth century, science had a rather modest role in the development of production. Some of its achievements, attained by a deeper scholarly understanding and analysis of the professional skill and experience accumulated in the course of centuries, could be applied for productive purposes. It was not the steam-engine which was derived from thermodynamics, but thermodynamics was due to the steam-engine, and this in turn gave rise to a still more efficient steam-engine, the steam turbine, and so forth.

The change we experienced in our times was dramatic, indeed. Who would have thought only forty or fifty years ago that, not to mention a small country like Hungary, any of the countries of this earth would establish special research institutes for the shoe industry, for the vegetable-oil industry, for the technology of detergent production or even for beet cultivation. Nevertheless all these research institutes, along with a great number of others, have been operating for about twenty years now in Hungary. If their establishment had been the outcome of some caprice, and not been produced to meet the direct scientific requirements of industrial and agricultural production, they could not have survived and developed for such a long time.

The most outstanding feature of the scientific and technological revolution of our times, raising also the greatest number of socio-economic problems, is the almost unbelievable speed at which many—though by far not all—achievements of science and technology are becoming adapted to mass production and are made available for public use. Three years after the first workable transistor had been made by an extremely complex laboratory procedure, the industrial production of transistors started, using micro-

metallurgical techniques and such semi-conductor materials which were entirely unknown in industry up to that date. As a consequence of the spread of transistors, the production volume of radio tubes developed by immense investments during the preceding quarter of a century, dropped off rapidly. At the same time, inexpensive pocket transistor radios, mass-produced by using miniature circuits and operated with inexpensive batteries, set out conquering the world. This made it possible within no time to take broadcasting to underdeveloped regions where there was no sign of electrical power supply yet. Thus it happened that a considerable percentage of the population of Africa which is still not acquainted with either the railway or electric lights is now exposed to the electronic media.

But let me refer to another Hungarian example. The first Hungarian experimental nuclear reactor was constructed in the outskirts of Budapest, in the mid-fifties, with the help of the Soviet Union. Barely five years later, in the early sixties, radioactive isotopes produced by this reactor were used in the Csepel Iron Works as a matter of routine for testing casts, in a number of Hungarian hospitals for diagnostic and therapeutical purposes, and so forth. It should be mentioned that the construction of the first Hungarian experimental nuclear reactor, serving entirely peaceful ends, was preceded by only ten years by the secret explosion of the first atomic bomb in Alamogordo, in the deserts of New Mexico, and this, in turn, was preceded by a mere three years by the first experimental atomic pile, i.e. by Fermi's setting off the first artificial nuclear chain-reaction of critical size in 1942.

It is worth pausing here to consider the possibilities of scientific foresight under the conditions of the present scientific and technological revolution. In 1938 Lise Meitner, a victim of Nazi persecution, together with Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassmann, published in the German *Zeitschrift für Physik* a paper of fundamental importance on the nuclear fission of uranium and on the amount of energy released in the course of this fission. The conclusions drawn in this paper were validated experimentally four years later by the successful operation of Fermi's atomic pile and a further three years later by the explosion of the first atomic bomb. When publishing their paper neither Lise Meitner nor Otto Hahn or Fritz Strassmann had the faintest idea that their discovery in physics might have any direct practical implications, not to speak of any concrete military application—and within a few years at that. Otherwise they surely would not have made public their findings in 1938, especially not in the *Zeitschrift für Physik*, published in Hitler's Germany. If anyone on the Nazi-controlled journal had had the slightest inkling of the "potential energy" inherent in the manu-

script submitted by Meitner, Hahn and Strassmann, the article, naturally, would not have been published at all but would have been classified "top secret" and put on file for use in Nazi military research.

Of course, it is not chance that outstanding physicists such as Lise Meitner, Hahn and Strassmann did not, at that time, take notice of the practical possibilities inherent in their own discovery. It should be kept in mind that the immense amount of fundamental research, involving experiments as well, on the basic structure of matter and energy which has basically transformed our entire scientific world concept and which presented us with Planck's quantum theory in 1900, Einstein's special theory of relativity in 1905, Bohr's atomic model in 1913, the Schrödinger-de Broglie-Heisenberg wave and quantum mechanics in 1924-25, and later with the discovery of neutrons, positrons and artificial radioactivity, as a result of the research of Chadwick and Joliot-Curie in 1932-34, did not produce any real "dividends" in the first four decades of the century. This immense body of fundamental research did not lead at the time to any major applications either in industry or in any other aspect of social practice, military engineering included. Lise Meitner and her colleagues hit upon a truth in 1938 that changed things.

As I already pointed out, the crucial characteristic of the scientific and technological revolution of our times is not that a great number of new and fundamental insights, discoveries and inventions emerged within a relatively short time in different and often distant fields of science and technology. This has happened before, for instance, in the last third of the nineteenth century, in the middle of the seventeenth century or in the Hellenistic Age. The history of literature and of the fine arts as well records such shining ages of outstanding intellectual productivity.

What makes the scientific and technological revolution of our times so unique and contributes so much to its revolutionary impact on society is that in the period between the two world wars and even more so during the Second World War an unprecedented infrastructure for huge industrial undertakings began to take shape, a comprehensive system of modern industrial management and organization, of up-to-date product development, marketing, communication and transport. Only this made it possible for new research to become adopted and applied in the shortest term in industrial mass production and thus be made available within a few years all over the world.

One could say that the fundamental organization and the infrastructure of modern industry have just reached the "critical mass" needed for those chain-reactions which led to the present swift use in production of

new discoveries. The impact on society is often felt on a world-wide scale as is the case with modern mass communication on transport techniques.

Nowadays the whole mechanism of production participates like a huge multiplying, accelerating and amplifying apparatus in increasing the socio-economic effectiveness of research. As a result of the close feedback between research and production, this multiplying, accelerating and amplifying effect is getting stronger.

It is increasingly felt that, without inserting suitable regulators, the whole system might easily "run hot" and take an uncontrollable and even dangerous turn.

Translated into plain terms, this means:

In the past ages, as late as early this century, it generally took many years until conditions became ripe for the profitable use of new discoveries or inventions, and it took many more years for such new technologies or their products to come into general use. Stephenson constructed his first steam-engine in 1814, the first short railway between Stockton and Darlington was opened in 1825 but a further twenty-four years had to elapse before the first short Hungarian railway line was built, and yet another twenty till the first engine was under steam in Bulgaria. Such was the "unprecedentedly fast world-conquering career" of the railway. The electro-motor needed 65 years to be put to use in industry. And though X-rays were discovered as early as 1895, mankind had to wait for 18 years for the industrial production of X-ray tubes.

In the course of such extremely long "gestation periods" economic life and society as a whole naturally had ample time to adapt itself to them and to develop slowly but surely the material as well as institutional conditions of their gradual adoption, palpating their advantages and disadvantages, the risks involved in their use and the ways and means of averting these risks. A man waving a red flag ran in front of the first locomotive so that neither man nor beast should take fright; and technicians were given plenty of time to develop railway signalling devices and safety equipment. After long periods of experimentation economists were able to determine a well-balanced system of charges for passenger and freight transport; lawyers worked out regulations and the railway network adapted itself to the pattern of urban settlement and industrial location or transformed them according to its own needs. The travelling public, gradually growing in numbers, had time to get acquainted with the use of the railway, to learn how to fit railway transport into everyday life and to look out for approaching trains.

What are the chances for such a gradual adaptation to new technical conditions today?

The oscilloscope is an expensive and delicate instrument. Around 1950 there were only some hundred, perhaps one or two thousand, in Hungary. They were produced domestically, piece by piece, by small firms of instrument-makers or imported from abroad—used almost exclusively by laboratories or electrotechnical enterprises. However, in 1960 there were already 100,000, in 1974 nearly 2¹/₂ million such oscilloscopes, called “TV sets”, in the possession of the general public—new household appliances operating with 15,000–30,000 volt. Oddly enough, no one is even surprised that industry was able to switch in next to no time to the production of such a fantastic amount of oscilloscopes, and to make high-voltage apparatus of this kind safe for household use. Instead, we complain of the fact that we have not yet succeeded in producing really good programmes for “oscilloscope viewers”, that our children sit all day in front of the television screen instead of doing their homework; that a considerable part of the time available to the adult population for cultural activities is devoted to television viewing, that theatres and cinemas have lost much of their public, that families no longer talk to each other even at meal times and merely gaze at the screen, etc.

To put it briefly, with the help of the multiplying, accelerating and amplifying effects of modern industrial production, science and technology have succeeded in developing and spreading television much faster than we managed to handle it socially. True, no one had foreseen the numerous favourable and unfavourable social implications, no one predicted what day-by-day exposure to the horrors of the Vietnam war could do for the public conscience, nor that watching *Robin Hood*, a “harmless” TV serial, meant that hundreds of children in a number of countries suffered severe eye injuries or even lost an eye because their playmates wanted to test Robin Hood’s “miraculous” arrow in the garden or on the playground.

Or take DDT. This extremely powerful insecticide was discovered during the Second World War, just in time to delouse millions living in terrible circumstances owing to the war. As soon as the Hungarian chemical industry was rebuilt full-scale production of DDT was started as it seemed to have immense potentialities for use in agriculture. But as early as 1968 Hungary, like many countries, prohibited the use of DDT; it turned out that dangerous amounts accumulated in both human and animal organisms and considerable environmental damages ensued. However, no comprehensive international convention resulted on the banning of DDT since the World Health Organization and other public health authorities argued

that in developing countries many millions of deaths due to malaria were prevented yearly by the use of DDT. No similarly inexpensive, mass-produced and easily available insecticide exists therefore, a world-wide ban on DDT would have led to a renewed rise in the incidence of malaria.

Still greater socio-economic problems derive from the fact that, as a consequence of the scientific and technological revolution, various natural resources, especially sources of energy and raw materials, are exploited to an exponentially increasing degree. This may jeopardize the whole future of mankind. Without scientific and well-planned preventive measures which are unfortunately very expensive and presuppose wide-ranging international or even global co-operation, it can easily happen that, as a result, one or the other of our natural resources will be used up within our own or our children's lifetime, before its substitution or restoration could be provided for.

This does not necessarily mean support for the "back utopias" or disaster theories so fashionable in our days. I am still convinced that the progress of science and technology, going hand in hand with adequate social organization, can find the key to the fulfilment of *all* basic needs of mankind. However, no laws of nature or society guarantee that science and technology will offer a ready-made solution at the very time when, owing to negligence or lack of foresight, mankind exhausted or wrecked some vitally important natural resource. Under present conditions a delay of one or two decades in achieving some important scientific or technological "stopgap arrangement" may result in major disasters, greater than the recent drought and famine in the Sahel zone in Africa.

Let me draw attention to another aspect of the scientific and technological revolution which involves special risks. Extremely powerful new devices, chemical agents, techniques, etc. are becoming available within the shortest time for the widest public use. This is in itself a very positive and so to say democratic achievement. However, social adaptation and social control unfortunately meet with considerable difficulties in trying to keep abreast with this extremely fast "popularization" of things that are potentially highly dangerous.

Allow me to refer to a perhaps trivial example from criminology. Parts easily obtainable in practically every electrical supplies store allow one to construct a very effective portable or even pocket walkie-talkie. Many publications for radio buffs actually tell their readers how to construct such devices and provide the necessary wiring diagram. Chemicals needed to make explosives are also readily available and all sorts of explosive devices can thus be constructed with a minimum technical skill and know-how. Little is needed in the way of weapons to hijack a plane, and any

madman or criminal is thus able to put the lives of crew and passengers in jeopardy. One only has to read the papers to find out that this is not just a bad dream but something that happens all the time.

LSD, a most dangerous hallucinogenic drug which produces temporary states not unlike schizophrenia, can be made in a kitchen using readily available chemical compounds. In the United States the illegal marketing of such "kitchen-produced" LSD is a serious social problem. Cleverly planned but slight interference with complex and baffling commercial computer programmes makes it possible to carry out frauds, or obtain confidential information at great speed. The prevention of such "tricks" is one of the big headaches of computer producing and software-planning firms. The Watergate affair, it will be remembered, owes its origin to the bugging of party offices in the hotel of that name. It came to a climax when tapes on which President Nixon recorded confidential conversations with staff and visitors were replayed. The scientific and technological revolution has *such* implications as well.

The difficulties of adaptation to the extremely fast present pace of scientific and technological progress are manifest in just about every field. The speeding up of transport and communication is a major feature of our times. Today one can reach Budapest, Rome or London from India by scheduled flights in half a day or so. Such a trip used to take several days. Quarantine techniques effective when people took a slow boat were developed long ago. As the incubation period of most diseases is generally between a few days and some weeks, a lengthy sea voyage identified those infected. Under present conditions of air travel diseases can more equasily be transmitted undetected. The incubation period of a disease can be that much longer than the flight that air passengers may transfer it to distant parts of the world before the original contact falls ill. Each new variety of influenza virus spreads with the speed of jet planes, and no one knows what kind of public health measures ought to be introduced to cope.

News and useful information travels by radio waves at a tremendous speed, and so do alarming rumors, slanders and warmongering propaganda. So far social adaptation and control have been unable to keep abreast with the scientific and technological revolution in this respect as well.

All the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution are Janus-faced. They face unparalleled new vistas of human welfare and prosperity, as well as staring into the infernal abyss of human misery, suffering and devastation.

It ought to be abundantly clear that whether the positive or the negative social implications of the scientific and technological revolution are going

to gain the upper hand will not be decided by their nature but by the social factors determining the means and ways, as well as the conditions of use of these achievements.

It must be admitted that the social sciences have not contributed much to the solution of social problems arising out of the scientific and technological revolution of our times. The social sciences have, in the past thirty-odd years, produced little that might to a significant degree facilitate the social management of the scientific and technological revolution. They have given little assistance to society in the prevention or elimination of the negative, i.e. harmful or dangerous, social effects related to the use of what is new in science and technology.

I am firmly convinced that it depends to a considerable extent on the social sciences how fast, how efficiently and at the price of what sacrifices we are going to succeed in overcoming the menacing world-wide problems and dangers connected with, and partly even originating from, the present extremely rapid material progress. The social sciences hold the key to the exploitation of the scientific and technological revolution for the benefit of mankind.

"Hic Rhodus, hic salta!"—it is now that the social sciences have to prove their worth.

Public Administration and the Scientific Requirements of Social Organization

Public administration, that is policy-making and administration from the lowest local level up to the highest reaches of national political decisions, has to face entirely novel problems.

The procedural methods and routine of public administration have developed in the course of a slow evolutionary process the origins of which reach back to the beginnings of history. Progress was achieved mainly by the gradual accumulation of administrative experience. True, time and again revolutionary changes took place in the possession of governmental power; concomitant with such changes socio-economic systems and ideologies in the interests of which public administration had functioned were often radically transformed. In the course of this process some of the procedural methods and routines were eliminated and others substituted for them, and earlier conventions were re-examined and extended.

The Soviet state and, later, the socialist countries placed the exercise of political power and state administration on an entirely new ideological basis, that of scientific socialism.

Nevertheless, up to very recently the development of public administration proceeded all over the world along the same lines as the progress of crafts. It was mainly based on the gradual accumulation of experience and know-how. The scientific approach, that is scholarship and research, played a minor role. By applying its own "handicraft" approach, public administration was able to solve, in one way or another, most of its tasks.

In this respect as well the situation has changed radically. The most characteristic features of this change are:

- (a) the volume of tasks has grown by several orders of magnitude;
- (b) the span of time within which public administration has to react to various events and cope with them has become much shorter;
- (c) public administration now has to deal with more and more complex social problems of an entirely novel type; as a rule, these problems cannot be dealt with by the traditional means and methods, and the established structure of public administration is not in a position to handle them by any other means.

The increase in the order of magnitude of tasks is so obvious that no example need be given. Governments now have to deal with such problems of industry, commerce, health and welfare, population growth, environment, etc. which were completely outside the realm of governmental policy one or two generations ago. In socialist countries the government takes ultimate responsibility for practically all aspects of public life, including the management of the overwhelming part of national production.

The dimensions of public needs have become awe-inspiring. In Hungary alone, a country with only ten million inhabitants, the total sources of energy expended continuously are equivalent to the energy of a labour force of 3,000 million men. In other words, 3,000 million men, i.e. more than three-quarters of the total population of the Earth would have to revolve a huge driving mechanism during all their working-hours in order to supplant the sources of energy expended continuously to cover the present demand for energy in one small country. The 15 kilowatt supply of electrical energy needed nowadays for a small Hungarian household corresponds to 20 h.p. and this again corresponds to the performance of 400 slaves. Under such circumstances the provision of an adequate supply of energy on a national scale has understandably become a major preoccupation for governments, one without precedent.

The extension of public health services to the whole population meant a whole new branch of public administration and a huge network of institutions had to be developed for this purpose alone. The tasks of

governments in international relations have tremendously increased due to the establishment of a whole series of huge intergovernmental organizations and the recent growth of multilateral diplomacy. The business of diplomacy grew even more because, following the liquidation of colonial empires, the number of the sovereign states trebled in recent years. If a government wants to represent national interests internationally, it has to keep an eye on political, economic and cultural events even in the remotest parts of all five continents.

The time available for making and implementing governmental decision has become extremely short. Public administration is working under increasing pressure. This is due largely to the enormous acceleration of almost all social processes under the impact of the scientific and technological revolution. In view of the exponential character of growth even the smallest delay may have far-reaching consequences. The multiplying, accelerating and amplifying effect typical of contemporary industrial production manifests itself also in the far-reaching consequences of minor errors of governmental planning and administration. Thus, the relatively late lag in the development of the Hungarian telephone network, which can be explained and excused by urgent investment needs in many other fields, led to the embarrassing consequence that according to the latest estimates delays connected with local and long-distance phone calls within the domestic network amount to 2,000,000,000 minutes a year, corresponding to the working-hours of about 16,000 men and women. This is as if the whole labour force of a major Hungarian industrial plant, say the Danube Iron Works, did nothing else for a year except wait for a dialling tone, then dial, and wait again whether contact is established and somebody picks up the receiver at the other end of the line, or perhaps the line turns out to be busy and the whole procedure has to be repeated. The costs of these minutes of waiting time alone (loss in wages, extra network load, general expenses, etc.) are estimated by experts to amount to nearly 1 per cent of national income.

As regards the novel type of complex problems to be faced by public administration, which cannot be dealt with by traditional methods, and to which the established structure of public administration is not well adapted, it will suffice to mention only a few examples. Problems of this kind were formerly simply unknown or did not involve any consciously realized social obligations. Many of them were left to be dealt with by the spontaneous forces of social evolution. Today they constitute some of the most pressing tasks of governments. Take, for instance, the present problems connected with environmental protection, the control of population growth, the management of national scientific research, etc. Who had imagined only

a few decades ago that it would be the duty of the state to create and maintain adequate conditions for leisure? It passes almost unnoticed, although it reflects a new fact that even governments of capitalist countries based on a system of "free enterprise" are nowadays held responsible for the uninterrupted annual growth of national income corresponding to a pre-established "growth rate". This is an entirely new development.

All this demands more than merely an extension of the scope and the mechanism of public administration. In this case quantitative change is really about to turn into qualitative change.

Let us imagine a famous French "chef", an outstanding master of the culinary arts, who has all the tricks of his centuries-old sophisticated craft at his finger-tips. Due to his refined senses and his vast experience he knows instinctively when to add another pinch of salt to the soup, when to pull the pot from the fireplace in order to let the soup simmer for a while, when to stir it slowly, and so forth.

Now let us imagine that this very same famous "chef" is put in charge of a modern electrically heated 500-gallon kettle with an adjustable stirring mechanism, thermostatic heat-control, etc. and that he is told to cook his favourite soup in it. How can he, in this situation, make use of the old tricks of the trade, finger-tip, his experience and his tested recipes? How should he know how much a "pinch of salt" should amount to in the case of 500 gallons of soup? Should he add two pounds, five pounds or maybe ten pounds of salt? How should he set the thermostatic heat-controls and how should he regulate the motor-operated stirring mechanism, now that he is told to cook his favourite soup in this kettle. Earlier he let the soup simmer, at the border of the hearth, stirring it slowly for some minutes. What should he do now?

Much that was done as a matter of routine in the past and many highly complex tasks of an entirely new type necessitating large-scale measures of social reorganization, simply cannot be dealt with anymore by traditional means, especially not for reasons of urgency. New and scientific methods and procedures therefore have to be introduced in public administration and social organization.

The socialist socio-economic system opens up in principle a much wider scope to modern, scientifically founded techniques of management, administration and organization than capitalism is able to do. This does not only refer to the self-evident fact that, in socialism, such techniques are here to serve the interests of all the people and that their scope is therefore in itself wider. Concretely it also means that, since socialist rule has complete control over all sources of political and economic power, over the whole administrative and productive apparatus, and over every instrument and resource of social

organization, there is a much better chance to implement techniques of management, administration and organization in a systematic and effective way. This chance must be exploited.

Naturally, the development of the scientific principles, methods and procedures in question largely falls within the competence of the *social sciences*. Moreover, it is the social sciences which, carrying out continuous research, should work out a major part of those scientific fact-finding reports, diagnostic and prognostic studies, evaluations of alternative courses of action, etc. which are increasingly needed to improve the effectiveness of public administration and social organization.

True, it may not seem "realistic" for the time being to make such demands relating to the social sciences. However, this means only that thus far the social sciences have not yet adequately prepared themselves for the concrete application of their perceptions and methods to practice. In other words, they have not yet established a mediatory system of applied social science disciplines which could play a role similar to that of technology which links up basic research in the natural sciences and industrial production. Let it be said in excuse of the social sciences that so far suitable collaborators were just not there for this type of work. The governmental apparatus itself was not really interested in adopting or applying the methods and results of social science research, which therefore lacked the necessary incentives and the support to contribute effectively to public administration.

It is, however, not our task to find excuses for the weakness of the social sciences in penetrating governmental thinking and public administration. As an example, let us confess that if our government asked us social scientists to give scientifically validated reasons why it should not spend three times as much as at present on R & D, or only a third as much, we would have no scientific way of answering such a timely and practical question right now. If asked we would have to throw up our hands or we could only refer to the practice of other countries on a similar level of industrial development, which is much the same as the Hungarian one. Of course, this does not prove a thing as all other countries may be equally wrong. One would have to go on to argue that problems of organization or staffing mean that research and development cannot be increased overnight, nor can expenditure on research be reduced suddenly to any great extent. But governments surely do not have to ask social scientists in order to get this sort of vague and trivial information. The truth is that in the course of the last three and a half decades, during the scientific and technological revolution, while expenditure on research and development skyrocketed, neither economists, nor sociologists nor any other social scientist undertook to produce a coherent and practicable theory, or at least some sort of

systematic criteria, that would make possible an analysis of the relationship between the size of the national research effort and socio-economic progress. At a recent CMEA symposium Soviet scholars pointed out how far research on the legal aspects of scientific work lagged behind developments. No one has defined, for instance, what the subject of a research contract is. This is how social scientists know the basic conditions of their own professional work.

In spite of all these deficiencies one should not underrate how much useful work has been done by the social sciences paving the way for socio-economic progress during the scientific and technological revolution. It goes without saying that research done on the theory of economic growth and various models of economic processes were a major contribution on the part of economists to the scientific underpinning of planning and management on both the national and the enterprise level. Jurisprudence and legal theory have concerned themselves much more than before with legal and administrative problems arising out of technical progress. Demographic research now plays a considerable role in shaping population policy. Sociology, mainly of urban and industrial kind, has done much to elucidate concrete administrative and managerial practice. Social psychology, management science, etc. can all pride themselves on new results and methods which are put to good use by policy-makers and administrators.

Oddly enough, the recent impressive progress of political science and political sociology has not yet made comparable impact on policy-making and administration. Of all the social sciences they were perhaps the least successful in approaching their obvious practical aim, that is the scientific underpinning of political decision-making and of the practice of public administration. Those who take an active part in governmental decision-making, at the most politely listen to what political scientists and sociologists say but so far at least it would be hard to discern any sign in government decisions of such scholarly advice being taken.

Whatever one might think of the contribution of the social sciences to the solution of the problems of contemporary public administration and social organization, one thing is certain: it is a mere drop in the ocean compared with what is needed at the time of the scientific and technological revolution.

It is just the process of political decision-making, i.e. the *core* of government activity and of the management of public affairs, that social scientists were unfortunately least able to penetrate in a manner that would allow for a deeper theoretical and analytic understanding which, in time, could lead to an improvement in political practice itself. One could argue that a better and more productive understanding of "politics" ought to be a major objective of contemporary social science.

Social Value Systems and Preferences in Decisions

It would obviously be useless to expect that the social sciences should soon have a direct formative influence on high-level political decision-making. The deeper we probe into political decision-making, the greater we discover the role of philosophy, moralities and ideologies to be determining the individual and collective position of those responsible.

Political decisions always reflect social value systems and preferences derived from them. For the most part an interaction of different value systems and different preferences is present which manifests itself either in the form of conflicts or compromises.

Naturally they are certainly not always clear-cut. In general, very little is known of their true origins, nor is it easy to observe how they change in time. One can be sure though that their effects on actual decisions correspond to those objectives and interests which the decision-makers wished to enforce.

Social value systems and decision preferences derived from them (i.e. the priorities given by decision-makers to certain alternatives over others) have not been studied to any great extent. True, much progress has been made recently in the development of a theory of decisions based on mathematical, logical and also epistemological considerations. This theory is, however, little concerned with the actual content of decisions, still less with social value systems and decision preferences relevant to political decision-making, but with certain abstract determinants of the decision-making process.

There is therefore fairly little reliable and detailed knowledge about the often conflicting and compromise-seeking social value systems and decision preferences of various groups and sections of society. And yet it would be of the greatest importance to have them thoroughly explored and analysed.

It ought to be stressed, however, that such exploratory and analytical work cannot be left to the social sciences in the narrower sense alone. The whole theoretical and methodological armory of philosophy and history, of the humanities in general, must be thrown into the scales.

In what ways could political decision-making benefit from such a comprehensive interdisciplinary exploration?

First of all, one should refer to the fact that a deeper insight into our own value systems and decision preferences as well as into those opposed to them can become an extremely effective scientific weapon in the political and ideological struggle.

At the same time, it ought to be pointed out that an explicit and methodical account of social value systems and decision preferences may considerably

lighten the task and increase the effectiveness of high-level decision-making. It is just this that may make it possible to relieve top-level political decision-making bodies of a considerable part of the burden they have to bear at present and, transferring the responsibility for many decisions to lower levels of public administration which could very satisfactorily do the job if only their decisions were "programmed" by an explicit position taken at the higher level. It is well-known that top-level political decision-making bodies are right now in great need of more time for the elaboration of highly important decisions which can only be made "at the top" and which, at least now, cannot be "programmed" in advance.

Perhaps the most clinching argument in favour of the extension of social science research on social value systems and decision preferences is that, under the extremely rapidly changing social conditions of our times, we cannot feel certain whether our *existing* social value systems and decision preferences are still adequate to our needs.

With the rapid increase in the average life-span the number of the old has considerably grown. With the help of modern medicine an ever increasing number are kept alive with lessened or non-existent capacities for work, although the costs involved are high. On the other hand, the educational requirements of youth increase, and so do the demands of adult education, etc. Despite rapid economic growth, no country in the world has at the present, or will have in any foreseeable future, the resources to meet *fully* all the huge and partly brand new demands of society. Finances available are always restricted, and whatever their magnitude, not more than 100 per cent of them can be allocated for any purposes. Unfortunately, these 100 per cent are never sufficient to meet *all* demands, however justified they may be. One must economize and priorities have to be established. It is obvious that the more is allocated to certain tasks, the less can be spent on others. Is there such a thing as a methodically elaborated social value system which is explicit enough to give us some guidance in determining, for instance, what percentage ought to be spent, given present circumstances, on the care of the old? Should it be increased? Or would it be more meaningful to increase the share of the Ministry of Education in order to improve schools? Or should the public health system be developed at a more rapid rate? Or should perhaps a certain percentage of funds be withheld to meet the brand new requirements of environmental protection?

It is well-known that such budgetary decisions are made nowadays mostly on the basis of scantily co-ordinated and often contradictory personal judgements, by politicians, officials and other "experts", under the pressure

of various administrative traditions, and ministerial and group interests difficult to control. Such decisions are thus made nowadays by and large in the same way as in the past. These days, however, the huge and dramatic consequences of an erroneous or even strongly "sub-optimal" budgetary policy manifest themselves only too soon because of the often discussed multiplier effect.

In connection with long-range state investments, the rate of exploitation of natural resources, comprehensive measures for the protection of the environment, etc., the question arises time and again to what extent it is necessary and worth while for the generations living now to shoulder burdens and make sacrifice for the sake of those to come. At an international forum somebody recently made the cynical remark that we should do as much for future generations as they do for us. Not a nice thing to say even in jest. But it is not at all what standard ought to be applied to the great variety of demands for "sacrifices" and "sharing of burdens" made by many with increasing vigour. By what standards should, for instance, populations enjoying a relatively high living standard decide how much of their prosperity, or what part of the means guaranteeing the continuous growth of their prosperity, they "ought" to renounce in order to help great masses of people living in dire misery, and below the starvation level, in other parts of the world? When the sustenance of many millions in distant countries and financial funds of a proportionate order of magnitude are in question, the usual concepts of "charity", "compassion", "philanthropy" and "human solidarity" provide only very meagre advice for concrete and effective action.

Entirely novel problems of governmental decision-making in matters of public interest crop up in connection with the fact that all social value systems so far known seem to be inapplicable to certain strange social perspectives which are part of contemporary scientific and technological thought.

Thus, the latest developments in biology and biotechnics will probably make it possible in a very short time to "manipulate" genes in a purposive way, i.e. to intervene into the process of heredity, to transform inherited qualities and abilities, inducing artificial mutations even in the case of human beings. Needless to say that we do not know of any social value system which could give us guidance on the question as to who should be permitted to perform genetic manipulations on whom, when and under what conditions. No general prohibition of such activities will do. The elimination of hereditary diseases is a legitimate and even very desirable aim. But where are the limits? Should, for instance, the store of genes serving

as a genetic foundation for special talents be enriched in the population? Should parents be allowed to determine the sex of their offspring? Obviously some public institution or authority would have to take control in order to prevent risky, dangerous or even outright criminal applications of the new techniques. But what public institution or authority is in a position to take the responsibility for the future genetical evolution of man? No problem of "political decision-making" with such frightening implications has so far occurred in the history of mankind. Weighing the pros and cons of a manipulation of human genes, one calls to mind both the most terrifying events of the past and the most glorious perspectives opened up by science in our age.

It is well-known that nowadays the quickly expanding practice of the transplantation of human organs raises a number of serious legislative and other questions. Medicine is at present inclined to consider the irreversible cessation of brain activity, as the criterion of death. At the same time, however, medicine has found methods to maintain inferior vital functions of the human organism for a considerable period even after cerebral death had ensued. Thus in principle, single organs and tissues of man can be kept alive indefinitely. This is an achievement of outstanding significance, and thereon are founded many up-to-date techniques in the transplantation of organs applied with increasing frequency thereby saving the life of an ever growing number of otherwise hopelessly ill or injured people. Cornea and kidney transplants are used as a matter of routine though heart transplants still pose difficult problems.

Due to the widening scope of organ transplantation techniques and the quickly rising demand for this type of life-saving or life-prolonging surgery, it has become a major concern to establish more and more "organ-banks", very much like blood-banks. It is therefore not surprising that one should read reports of a serious discussion involving medical practitioners and public health officers on whether it would not be preferable, from an organizational and economic point of view, to replace, at least in part, the small specialized organ-banks by major diversified "organ-supply centres" where whole human organisms, considered dead following the irreversible cessation of their brain activity, could be "stored" by artificially maintaining their inferior vital functions. Thus, in case of emergencies, the required number and variety of organs and tissues could be removed from these "living cadavers" and used for life-saving transplantations. Authorities may soon have to make decisions about the approval or prohibition of this type of ghoulish "live-morgue". In view of the massive demand and need for organ transplants, the decision involved can hardly be left to medical

ethics, the surgeons concerned or to the emotionally determined judgement of relatives.

To take another example, new technologies aimed at inducing changes in the weather are applied with increasing frequency. True, they are still more or less experimental and can be applied only under special conditions. They have proved to be quite effective in realizing, under favourable circumstances, the age-old dream of rain-making. Promising tests have been made in respect to the artificial interruption of hurricanes and considerable successes have been achieved in fog dispersal. If a large-scale and low-cost application of such interventions into certain meteorological processes should become possible in the next ten to twenty years—which seems to be rather likely—then we may indeed enter an era of “governmental weather-planning”. The perspectives are nothing short of fantastic. Agriculture could be assured copious rain in May when the crops need it most, fog could be dispersed over airports, but preserved at places where moisture in the air is needed to protect plants against frost, storms could be prevented or mitigated in time, and so forth. All this sounds very alluring. However, there is another side to the coin. For instance, artificially induced precipitation in one region may deprive other regions of badly needed rainfall. How would a government react if rain were to be drawn from clouds moving towards the country where dry fields may be thirsting for it? And who has ever estimated, especially with the exactitude needed for public weather-planning, what weather conditions are advantageous or disadvantageous at any given time, for certain groups of people or for certain areas even within a single country? Where are those social value systems and preferences which the government would have to take into account when developing its “weather-making policy”? Obviously very large and complex social and economic surveys would have to be carried out before anybody could even think of introducing the new technologies of weather control into general social practice. Whatever benefits may arise, a great many people who were wont to curse God Almighty for the weather they did not like will now blame the government.

I hope that all these examples have made it clear how important the study of social value systems and preferences has become and how closely such studies are related to the all-important task of turning the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution to the benefit of mankind. The close co-operation of philosophy, history and the rest of scholarship with the social sciences is more essential in this field than anywhere else.

Marxist research in the social sciences could prove its high theoretical and practical standards under very favourable conditions by intensifying its efforts

in this domain of interdisciplinary studies. Such work might produce very effective contributions to the solution of concrete problems in the fight waged by socialism against its ideological and political opponents.

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Social sciences above all need a new type of *courage* and *initiative*.

In his preface to "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy", Karl Marx quotes Dante to point to the decisive role of scientific courage.

"At the entrance to science, as at the entrance to hell, the demand should be posted:

Qui si convien lasciare ogni sospetto;
Ogni viltà convien che qui sia morta."
(Here all mistrust must be abandoned
And here must perish every craven thought.)

Given the scientific and technological revolution, the entrance to science is obviously much nearer to the entrance of hell than ever before. The bomb dropped on Hiroshima is a powerful enough argument in support of this contention.

It will depend to a considerable extent on the courage of our work in the social sciences, which entrance we are going to pass through on our way to the future.

The basic philosophical convictions involved in our scientific ideology throw a clear light on the final objectives of our work and struggle. There can be no doubt that the "prehistory" of humanity in which we still live will finally lead out of the realm of necessity and need into that of human welfare and freedom. Ideological certainty on final objectives only increases the responsibility of scientists, more precisely that of social scientists, for the time taken, and for the price paid, to achieve these final objectives for the benefit of our own people and of the whole of humanity—while trying hard to avoid superfluous detours, errors, fights, suffering and unnecessary sacrifice.

The fulfillment of this responsibility of scientists is the greatest task of research in this age. Responsibility for the everyday course of social progress from present-day socialism to the full and world-wide realization of socialist aims and objectives, that is for the most human and satisfactory solution of concrete problems that appear in an ever new guise day after day. This is what determines ultimately our responsibility as social scientists towards the future of mankind that reaches far beyond the extended present.

Photos by Mrs János Magyar and Géza Székhelyi, MTI



GYÖRGY KONECSNI: NEVER AGAIN! (95 × 63 cm, 1945) (HUNGARY)



FILO: NO! (99,5 × 68 cm, 1957) (HUNGARY)



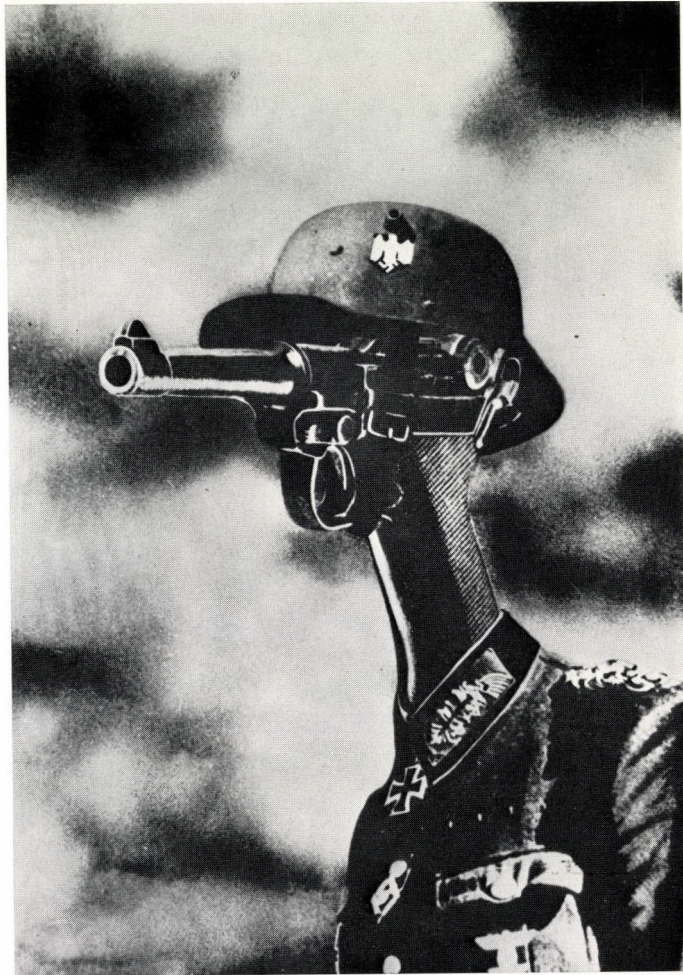
VICTORY FIRST, LESS CHATTER! (101 X 70 CM, 1937) (SPAIN)



IRAKI TOIDZE: THE COUNTRY CALLS YOU!
(104 X 71 CM, 1941) (SOVIET UNION)



BOGOMIL NIKOLOV: 1945 (100×70 cm, 1974) (BULGARIA)



UNKNOWN ARTIST: PORTRAIT (50×35 cm, 1941) (POLAND)



UNKNOWN ARTIST: WEEK OF PROTEST AGAINST FASCISM IN GREECE
(40 × 27 CM) (GREECE)



LÁSZLÓ LAKNER—GYÖRGY GADÁNYI: EUROPE.
BRUSSELS, JUNE 2-5, 1972 (118 × 84 CM) (HUNGARY)

JÓZSEF VADAS

MURALS IN THE STREET

An international exhibition of antifascist posters in the National Gallery

The poster addresses the man in the street, the political poster calls the man in the street to go out into the street, to fight, to take up arms, to protest, to unite. Iván Hevesy, a great Hungarian critic, aptly said as far back as 1919: "Posters are murals in the street."

An exhibition has now been arranged in the Hungarian National Gallery of such murals printed on paper. It is the fruit of international cooperation and makes use of material from many countries. The occasion is the thirtieth anniversary of the international victory over fascism. The International Antifascist Federation (Vienna), the Bulgarian Revolutionary Museum, the National Council of the Peace Movement (Paris), the Museum of the Resistance (Paris-Ivry), the Croat Revolutionary Museum, the Polish Revolutionary Museum: it suffices to turn the pages of the catalogue, and the names of the institutions which own the posters in themselves demonstrate that the political poster was an organic part of the fight against fascism. The works displayed have come from eighteen countries, Austria to the Soviet Union, in alphabetical order. Fifty years' history comes to life, from the time of the young Soviet state, through active resistance, up to solidarity with Vietnam.

The material is varied. Nearly all styles and trends of the past half-century are represented here. Political posters have made use of photo-montage which relies on the documentary authenticity produced by photographs (John Heartfield, Germany) and of caricature which exaggerates characteristic traits (Viktor Deni and Nikolai Dolgorukov, Soviet Union). One finds the committed expressionism of the 'twenties (Käthe Kollwitz, Germany) and the caustic classicism of the 'thirties (Parrilla, Spain), action painting which conveys the confusion of the world (Pierre Soulage, France) and pop art which directly shows objects (György Kemény, Hungary), and even conceptual art (Julian Palka, Poland).

The national collections are not of equal scope. Austria is represented by two posters, Bulgaria by more than fifty. More essential is, of course, the qualitative difference. Almost all countries have sent old, that is, prewar or wartime works, yet the picture changes all the time. The Bulgarians give a historical survey from the 'thirties up to the present; the Poles excel with their most recent—experimental—works; Hungarians stressed the post-Liberation period. Underground leaflets are not uniform either. The time differs, and the circumstances; it is logical therefore that form should differ as well. If we compare the apparently crude printing by Hungarian Communist in the 'thirties with the colour posters of French resistance fighters or the works of anonymous Greek artists, that is artists for whom it would have been dangerous to sign their works, what in the first appears to be vulgar but purposeful expressivity is in the second gracefulness not lacking in poesy and in the third murderous criticism replete with wittiness.

The German posters bear the mark of expressionism; expressionism dominated Weimar Germany, that is obvious. The techniques of political posters, concentrating on black-white-red of the 'twenties survive in Soviet work though in a modified form. Irakly Toidze's poster calling to war continues in the footsteps of Dimitry Moor; and Boris Uspensky's large-size Lenin poster, though it reminds one of Chagall, also calls to mind the time when the poster was a mural in both size and appearance.

Such national subtleties can be appreciated only by the connoisseur. More than any other art form, the political poster is bound to the present. Its message is at all times determined by political objectives. Form suffers interference by the compelling force of circumstances. The poster wants to speak loud and clear to the masses, so it cannot be particular about the tools used. That is to say, in a different sense, it is only too careful; it very consciously commits itself to the cause; it insists that its message does not get lost in the distractions of the street scene. That is also why the tools are varied, why there is a fondness for new elements. It is more closely linked to present taste than to the heritage of the past for that very reason. Bogumil Nikoloff from Bulgaria in his 1945-1975 shows the Nazi eagle coming down in flames like aircraft. This expresses an idea of universal validity in a universal idiom. Or let us take a Hungarian example: on György Gadányi and László Lakner's work the map of Europe in two open hands is a symbol equally intelligible to all. The message is the need for security in Europe as the guarantee of our future. If we look for intellectual forebears the photo-montages by John Heartfield come to mind first of all. Only in the second place, and only by the way, one remembers that György Konecsni, who is a classicist in manner, has likewise created enduring values in his posters for the Hungarian Communist Party.

So far we have talked about relationships, the interaction between posters and painting. Lately, however, there have been signs that posters born of paintings turn into paintings again. (Of course, the notion of the nature of painting is also changing.) Evidence comes not only from Hungarian painters such as Béla Uitz and Bertalan Pór in 1919 (at the time of the Hungarian Republic of Councils), Róbert Berény and Károly László Háty in the 'thirties, and Gyula Hincz and László Lakner in the recent past, all of whom designed political posters. Painters rose to battle elsewhere too. To mention only the best known contributors to the Budapest exhibition: Kokoschka, Käthe Kollwitz, Picasso. They enlisted their art in the cause of progress, and also suggested that painting, which has been ousted from public buildings and which in our age has been more or less reduced to the size of easel paintings, cannot do without its stimulating medium, the public.

A new art form was born of this realization. It is formally a poster, since it is printed, though not for the street, but for the home. Still it is not easel painting: it does not even probe into formal questions, nor does it harp upon motives of feeling or mood, but it raises burning social and political issues. One of the most interesting works of this type at the exhibition is a joint composition by eight French artists. The poster *The Vietnam Day of Intellectuals* shows, encased in a common frame and denouncing mostly the horrors of war, the reproductions of one work each by Pignon, Matta, Rebeyrolle, Manessier, Masson, Soulage, Vasarely and Picasso.

An international poster competition was arranged in Poland on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the victory over fascism. The first prize was divided between György Kemény from Hungary and Shigeo Fukuda from Japan. Kemény's work consists essentially of two photographs: the upper half of the poster is a photo of the artist at the age of nine, the lower part displays his picture of today. In between there is a longish text that is no less important than the two pictures: "My name is György Kemény. I live in Budapest,

I am a graphic designer and I work like everyone else. Thirty years ago I was a nine-year-old Jewish school boy. My parents placed me in a protected house to save my life. Once I was shot there, but the bullet missed me. Then I was taken to mass execution on the Danube embankment, but an air-raid dispersed my would-be killers. When we were liberated I weighed seventeen kilos. Even today my mother breaks into tears when recalling all this. Today I live in Budapest, I am a graphic designer and work like anyone else." This poster wants us to pause, sit down, pick it up, read it and take a thorough look at it.

The antifascist poster exhibition closes with the works which won the Polish competition. This ending is a symbolic one, for these works already forecast the future. True, Fukuda's poster differs from Kemény's. It is easy, even in the street, to take it in at one glance. VICTORY it says, in English, and beneath that is a gun barrel into which the shell falls back, closing it up. The Polish art magazine *Projekt* had the design printed as a supplement.

While the mural of the street is turning into the easel painting of the home, the political poster has grown into genuine mural dimensions. The Budapest exhibition reports also on this second change, thanks in particular to young Chileans living here. They said on television that, at the time, in revolutionary Chile, they formed brigades of painters who, touring about the country, covered houses, walls and fences with paintings expressive of political agitation. Making use of what they learnt from the mural painters of Mexico and modern art, they created a new folk art.

LO SPETTATORE INTERNAZIONALE

A quarterly review of international politics published in English by the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) of Rome. Each issue contains articles by Italian and foreign authors and a regular survey of Italy's position in international politics and commerce.

Among the articles published in the second issue of 1975 were the following:

Udo Steinbach—*The Situation in the Balkan Countries after the Cyprus Crisis*

Stefano Silvestri/Cesare Merlini—*Politico-Military Evolution in the Mediterranean Area and the Southern European Situation*

Mohamed Sid-Ahmed—*Analysis of the Politico-Military Evolution in the Mediterranean*

Hisham Sharabi—*The Middle East Conflict*

In forthcoming issues articles on European defence, price management and monetary problems, and Italy's role in international affairs will be featured.

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TO THE END OF LOGIC

Short story

by

ISTVÁN EÖRSI

In memoriam György Lukács

Between ringing the bell and the door's opening he crossed himself as he usually did. He had done so before the same door as an undergraduate: then in his freshman's excited anticipation of seeing the world-famous professor face to face, he did not know whether he'd be able to behave properly and confront an intelligent enough silence to the professor's pedagogic ardour. Now, twenty years later, the apish gesture of the right hand concealed an emotion of a different sort: anguish due to the illness, that hustling interloper, which was gradually elbowing the Old Man out of himself.

What if, he thought to himself listening for the approaching steps behind the door, what if a camera were hidden in the door, say, in the peephole, and it recorded his hurried gesture of crossing himself: how would they reconcile it with his zealous atheism, his disrespect for authority; how would they interpret it in terms of his relationship with the Old Man; what accusations, what suspicions, what funny excuses could this simple gesture lead to?

The woman with a spongy face and carrot hair, the professor's distant relative by inscrutable and complicated links, had already whispered in the visitor's ear in the entrance hall that "He is very poorly". The hoarse voice, subdued as it was, nevertheless rang triumphantly; the joy of breaking the news showed through the sadness of it, and the large white face seemed to breathe in the half-light.

The visitor started instinctively for the study as he had done so many times in the past twenty years: to enter and see the Old Man bent over his desk writing something or fingering the pages of a book, look up and ask him what news he had. "What's the news?" he would ask, and it took the visitor some five years to find out that the question was meant to be taken literally. The Old Man really wanted to hear the latest news from the

world outside his study, and it took him another five years to realize that the information was requested not as an end in itself but as a springboard from which to dive into one of his favourite themes or a burning issue of the day.

He started therefore with a reflex movement towards the "What's the news?" but the woman of the breathing pores took his arm and led him into the hall.

The hall and the dining-room constituted one space, and it had changed little. The volumes on the shelves knew their allotted place. The book-case, for example, crammed with various Goethe series, gave absolutely no sign of any change, and the Old Man's works were aligned in their accustomed order with the Hungarian texts here, the foreign editions there, completely unaffected by the condition of their author. However, close by one of the open shelves at the window—and this was something extraordinary—there stood an open chest, with manuscripts in it and lying all around it on the floor; beside it, a small table full of files and a chair with the handbag of Spongy Face. What was even more striking was that the door of the study had been left open and one could look straight on to the desk from the dining table at which the visitor was now seated. The Old Man sat behind the desk but was neither writing nor turning the pages of a book—he was staring in front of him motionless.

"He can't see", said a lean man in his sixties, the nearest relation of the Old Man. "We can talk over our tactics in peace." "What tactics?" "He not only doesn't see," said Spongy Face, "his hearing's deteriorated something terrible, and now he can't speak either." "He can't?" the visitor asked. "What do you mean he can't?" "Sclerosis, that's why!" "You needn't exaggerate", the lean man interrupted. "He still can see and hear a little." "Speak too?" the visitor echoed. The lean man shrugged. "He wants to anyway," he added after a short while. "That's why we have to discuss our tactics."

The noise of someone stirring was heard from the study. The visitor was alarmed to see that the Old Man rose clutching the edge of the desk and stood there stooped over for half a minute, a thick grey mask on his face; he then sank back into his chair and stared in front of himself again.

"Fantastic!" Spongy Face said, sitting at the small table. "Isn't it fantastic, this chest here's been found in the junk room. He didn't even know of its existence!" She lifted a stack of manuscripts and thrust it under the visitor's nose. "From 1912," she exclaimed hoarsely. "Fantastic, isn't it?"

"A psychological mystery," the lean man commented. "He kept smug-

gling this chest from one country to another, one emergency after another, for twenty-six years without apparently realizing what was in it!"

"Or perhaps he very well realized it," said the woman, "but when he repudiated his early writings he purposely forgot about them so he could salvage them."

The Old Man scrambled to his feet once more and, gripping the desk, took a few short steps toward the window, then tottered back and sat down again.

"Self-deception's been at work with him, too," the lean man stated "although he fought it all his life ideologically as well as politically."

They talk about him in the past tense already, the visitor thought to himself. Perhaps the Old Man himself would consider the past tense appropriate. But all he said aloud was, "Then let's take up the tactics!"

*

The following conversation differed from similar occasions for several reasons, one being that this time the visitor entered the study from the dining-room. At the door he instinctively stole a glance at his wrist-watch: 17 minutes past four. The Old Man raised his eyes at him from behind the desk, his face covered with armour rather than a mask. The enlarged wart on his protruding lower lip looked like a dead beetle. His mouth moved with difficulty, resulting in a faint murmur.

"Nothing special," the visitor answered. "Unless we regard yesterday's Israeli government statement as news. Reads rather a good joke if juxtaposed with the Egyptian communiqués of recent days."

The Old Man looked at the visitor with vacant, unmoving eyes.

"What would you say, Comrade Professor, to a comedy in which two sleeping nationalist leaders were exchanged? Both wake up at the enemy Headquarters on the morning of delivering their decisive speeches. They spring up and pull out the texts of their addresses. Would they have to change them very much? Would they find it hard to place themselves in each other's roles?"

The Old Man shook his head, which appeared to cause a layer of armour to fall off his face and the visitor even seemed to hear the clatter, then a faint throat clearing and a few inarticulate noises.

"No," the Old Man said, "Th...the...the thing's n...not so sim... , not so..."

"Not so simple," the visitor said. The sick man nodded. "You think the idea is ahistorical, Comrade Professor?" The Old Man shook his head. "You think, Comrade Professor, that the comedy would wipe out all con-

crete content from the speeches of the two leaders for the sake of the basic idea and thus it would put across the rather pitiful platitude that nationalist political aims are all equally worthless."

"Sen... sense..."

"Senseless," the visitor corrected himself. His interlocutor nodded approval.

Bori wheeled in a trolley with a cup of Turkish coffee for the visitor. She wouldn't have dreamed of serving him in the dining-room, she disliked *those* people in there heartily, and anyway she thought she had no duty to provide coffee for anyone but the professor's guests.

The visitor sipped the black liquid, careful not to stir up the sediment. Long a fixture in the family, for twenty years Bori had been bringing him the coffee Turkish style. When on his first visit here he'd been asked if he liked Turkish coffee he answered with a fervent nod in his confusion and ever since he had been treated to it as a courtesy.

The silence was prolonged. The visitor was alarmed to see that the Old Man, as if oblivious of him, clambered to his feet again and looked out of the window.

"I think the world thoroughly deserves schematic abstractions," the visitor began quickly. "Not so long ago the world's great personalities were able to shape their own roles, at least in part. Today ready-made roles await their performers. This is what the little comedy would be about."

The Old Man looked at him with an expressionless face.

"There're two leaders' roles. The national prejudices, the foreign political interests, and rules of the game for consolidation in a divided world merely allow some people to fill the roles already written. Consequently such people are interchangeable, in principle at any rate."

The Old Man shook his head.

"Theo... theo..."

"Theoretically," said the visitor, "but not in practice, you would say, Comrade Professor."

The Old Man nodded.

"But then a comedy can be based on theoretical possibilities, too."

Something interpretable as a smile appeared now on the sick man's face.

"Theo... theo..."

"Only in theory, you'd say, Comrade Professor."

They fell silent. Evidently they were satisfied with each other. The visitor then decided to take a daring step in order to avoid an uneasy silence.

"This method of conversation seems to be quite an effective one. Since temporarily you're deprived of speech, Comrade Professor..."

The Old Man shook his head so violently that the visitor had to interrupt his sentence.

"You can speak?" he asked stupidly. Naturally the answer was another shake of the head.

"You think, Comrade Professor, that you're deprived of speech not temporarily..."

"N...not th...th..."

"You don't think, you know?"

The sick man nodded with relief.

"Since you can't speak, Comrade Professor, but you can carry on a conversation, all you have to do is indicate your opinion and the direction in which you want the conversation to proceed. And I'll try to interpret the signals correctly."

The Old Man nodded.

"Better th... than a c..."

"Comedy?"

Energetic shake of the head. "C...c...c..." and he drew a square with his finger on the desk.

"Crossword puzzle?" exclaimed the visitor.

A nod and mutual relief. In the ensuing silence the visitor looked round helplessly to see if there was an unclaimed topic lying about somewhere. As God would have it, there was. A pile of typewritten sheets on the corner of the desk: the Old Man's last opus which he had intended to be a systematic summing-up of his philosophy—amounting to an encyclopedia of existence. He had revised the work of some two thousand pages several times because he had felt the thoughts to be original but the presentation unclear and badly proportioned. He attributed the shortcomings to "mental wear". "It would be abnormal," he would say when he could still speak fluently, "if no wear showed after eighty. All one has to determine then is what kind of work and exertion this mental wear still makes possible." As a concession to this psychic erosion he made an abridged version of his book but by the time he had finished it he was unable to decipher his own handwriting. His lingering death began with his inability to read what he had intended as his magnum opus. His pupils made a hurried effort to type it all out so he could catch up.

"Is the typescript ready?"

The replying nod lacked the joy of satisfaction.

"Have you read it?"

"I've b..."

"You've begun. And how do you like it?"

There was no answer. The visitor began to feel uncertain. Should he go on with the subject? Then he saw that his partner wanted to say something but did not get as far as forming the first sound.

"You're not satisfied with this version?"

Silence. Apparently the Old Man was preparing to say something different. This change of subject aroused vague misgivings in the visitor. He poked his finger on the manuscript again.

"Problems of structure?"

The glance that came as a reply had long been familiar. He used to look this way in his seminar classes whenever he wanted to find out if students understood their own words. For the first time he broke out of his armour sufficiently to perceive his interlocutor's awkward position. "Problems of structure?" could have meant in less polite language, "Total bankruptcy, Old Man?" or even, "Irreversible dotage?"

"When you started on this new version, Professor, you were aware of your old defects. Had you the strength to implement such an insight in practice?"

The Old Man visibly sympathized with this query. It sounded more brutal than the previous one, yet it implied more confidence. He readily admitted "wear" but made salutary distinctions between the energies needed for recognition and those for realization.

"I . . . I . . . can't," he said after a long while.

"What can't or couldn't you?"

"For . . . form . . ."

"Formulate it?"

The Old Man shook his head. "I can n . . . no longer . . ." he stopped.

"Form a judgement of it" the visitor stated rather than asked. The nod could be dispensed with. Typing the manuscript at break-neck speed had obviously been in vain. The Old Man had realized after reading a few pages that his work had slipped beyond his sphere of competence.

"It's n . . . not my . . . b . . . b . . ."

"Of course not," said the visitor. "It is what it is. Anyway the author's judgement counts for nothing. At least you can certainly avoid one source of error this way."

The Old Man's mouth began to form a word again. Plainly he wanted to finish the sentence cut short by the visitor, who was now beginning to feel that vague anxiety again.

"All's well?" asked Spongy Face standing in the door with eyes narrowed and a happy smile. The Old Man changed back into a mummy in a minute. "Like a medieval castle," the visitor thought to himself, "into which the

defenders have withdrawn from superior numbers; up goes the creaking drawbridge and all gates and doors go creaking shut."

"Don't you feel like eating?" She got no reply. She stepped closer and the head of the lean man appeared over her shoulder. "You've had a nice chat, I hear," the man said. "Fancy," the woman turned to the Old Man. "Just fancy, George"—the visitor shuddered at the intimacy of the first name—"I've found family photos in the chest in an envelope. I've just come across them. Fantastic, they're all perfectly intact, and here's a postcard from your father congratulating you on the publication of your new book. Only I can't make out the date on it: 1911 or 14?" She held out the card with the faded pencil writing to the Old Man.

"When did that book appear?" the lean man asked. "You can guess the date from that."

The Old Man staggered to his feet, the woman had to withdraw her hand which held the card.

"Come", the lean man said and took her arm, "the card can wait."

"But the photos are so fantastically good, I thought he'd be pleased."

The visitor remembered that some fifteen years before, the Old Man had not allowed a photo to be taken of himself in the company of his seven grandchildren. "It wouldn't be typical," he said, "I've never been with all seven of them at once. You can't talk to seven children at the same time."

The Old Man sank back in the chair. "Wouldn't you eat something?" the woman repeated her question. The lean man withdrew from the study. "Please leave the room now," the visitor told her. "We'll eat later." Without waiting for the woman to get to the door he turned to the Old Man again.

"It was the manuscript we were talking about," he said too loudly as if trying to wake his interlocutor up. "In particular we said it doesn't matter so much that you can't judge it."

The sick man was silent.

"What's important is that it's been completed," the visitor shouted. "You wouldn't have thought it possible."

The Old Man's head stirred again.

"You told me once, Comrade Professor, that one could only judge one's achievement according to one's possibilities. Anyone who's used up his possibilities to the last morsel has no reason to worry."

"What's wor... worry..."

"What is it then?"

The Old Man's face assumed a new pattern. He tightened his lips, the puffed up wart on the lower lip disappeared and the armour was replaced

by a transparent, grey veil. He strove to push out a word but for the moment did not succeed. He got only as far as the initial "i", which he kept repeating, then he stopped and looked at his visitor, who dared not to utter what had not been spoken.

"Impossible," he said at long last.

"The most awful . . . th . . . thing," the Old Man said, "is in . . . in . . ." and he got stuck again.

"Now you've shown you're worrying," said the visitor. "And if you're worried about anything, you can't be indifferent."

The Old Man seemed galvanized by the word breaking out from his anxious position. His eyes glistened as they had always done when he found a phenomenon that needed analysing.

"For a few days . . . indiff . . . indifference," he said, "I've never had th . . . this ex . . . exp . . ."

"A novel discovery?"

The Old Man nodded.

"Since when? Since the typescript came back?"

The Old Man shrugged his shoulders.

"You became indifferent, I think, because for the first time in your life you were unable to read something that interested you."

"You th . . . think so?" The Old Man looked lost in thought.

"But as I can see, this indifference doesn't leave *you* indifferent. You're excited by it."

The Old Man tilted his head. He made uncertain movements with his hands. He even smiled faintly; he'd always been amused by pointed sentences.

"Unfortunately indifference prevents itself from being overcome. Therefore the only way to fight it is to try to enjoy it as a new experience."

"It's un . . . unen . . . unen . . ."

"Certainly it's unenjoyable in the long run," the visitor answered. "But perhaps by enjoying it one can prevent it from becoming chronic."

The Old Man seemed to reflect. Or perhaps he was just thinking of something else. He withdrew into himself once more, not into his armour but into a shell—his transparent ears, large nose and his lower lip, which was hanging limply again, appeared to jut out from their fragile shelter. The visitor dared not disturb him. "In the shadow of his manuscripts," he thought to himself, "how small he's become in the shadow of his manuscripts." They sat like this for quite a while. In the meantime the sun had begun its usual afternoon guest performance over the Danube.

As the silence grew uncomfortable, the visitor, quite unexpectedly for

him, began to recall in a rambling, roundabout way the professor's old theory that only a private person could get into an absolutely hopeless situation. But, he wondered, could a philosopher be regarded as a private person, obliged as he is by his profession to be the mouthpiece of humanity's consciousness. The answer is obvious: the philosopher is nothing but a private person as soon as he ceases to reason like a philosopher. However, this is open to doubt since his personality represents such an immanent continuity. . . .

The Old Man was not interested in the end of the sentence. "The problem is," he said laboriously but perfectly articulately, "that I'm no longer interested in what I've been in. . . interested in all my life."

The visitor was dismayed. He could have imagined the sentence spoken by anyone else sooner than him—as if a fish had declared that it was no longer interested in water. Absurdity must have its limits.

"Impossible," he said. "You think your life was futile?"

There was no reply.

"You ought to have been devoting your energies to something else? You've wasted your talent on unimportant things?"

Silence. The Old Man closed his eyes and the visitor thought he had fallen asleep. He was on the point of getting up and slinking off when the answer came:

"N. . . no. . . ."

"You think it doesn't matter what you've done all your life?"

The Old Man shook his head.

"Ob. . . . ob. . . ."

"So objectively it *does* matter," the visitor said, "it's only subjectively immaterial."

A nod. An old sentence occurred to the visitor which he had also heard in this room: "All my talent consists in is a tolerable sense of distinguishing between objective and subjective factors." He was still exercising this ability of his, it seemed.

"Don't you think," the visitor asked, "your interest has declined because you're no longer able to influence matters in a practical way?"

The Old Man's eyes sparkled.

"That's v. . . very like. . . ."

"But if it's possible, then your present indifference is the continuation of your previous *lack* of indifference. For your interest stemmed from your desire to change the world. You've always felt contemplative speculation alien to you."

"Bore. . . bore. . . ."

"Exactly. Indifference enters into coalition with boredom. But since you have no alternative you should try to find enjoyment in contemplation too. In analysing your own apathy, for example."

"In . . . indifference," the sick man said, "in . . . indifference." He seemed to be bogged down in this one word. He was silent for a while, then added: "Hos . . . hospital. There . . ."

"The hospital is the ideal place for contemplation," the visitor suggested, wiping his perspiring face with his arm. "What else can one do in a hospital?"

An ironic glance traced the sun-tanned, round skull of the visitor. That moment the sick man was completely in control of his abilities. He wouldn't have said for all the world what else one could do in a hospital, and his interlocutor didn't want to hear it from him either.

"When are you going into hospital?"

"I'm n . . . not g . . ."

"You're not going? But I heard you were."

A denial and an affirmative movement of the head came as a reply.

"You mean you're not going but will be taken?"

"An ob . . . object . . ."

" . . . can't go. But you're not an object, Comrade Professor."

"Sub . . . sub . . ."

"Subjectively you are?" the visitor asked. "You regard yourself as an object?"

The answer came in the form of a shake of the head.

"Bio . . . biol . . ."

"You're not an object biologically? But you are socially?"

The Old Man nodded with satisfaction. His face always assumed this look when he got to the end of an involved line of reasoning. A faint smile and a slightly sarcastic look.

The clatter of plates could be heard from the dining-room. The visitor now watched without amazement as a veil, then a layer of armour was deposited on the old face although its lines were not rearranged. Bori peeped in at the door. The visitor stood up, looked at his watch: 20 past 7. "We deserve dinner," he said. The Old Man did not reply. He let his visitor help him stand up and lead him holding his elbow to the dinner table where Spongy Face and the lean man were already seated, waiting.

Translated by L. T. András

JÓZSEF TORNAI

MR. T. S. ELIOT COOKING PASTA

That crackle is well worth hearing.
He breaks in two the macaroni tubes
so as to make them fit the pot,
then casts them with both hands into the water
above the white electric range.
The water bubbles, seethes, the *pasta*
sinks to the bottom of the pot.
Mr. Eliot casts a glance
through the wide kitchen window toward the park:
it is raining there, and water
pours down the trunks of trees in substantial quantity,
tousling the lawn into a poison-green
Sargasso Sea.
Which reminds him of the pot.
Just so much contemplation has sufficed
for the rising of the *pasta*
to the water's surface.
He fishes out the bouncing ropes
with a colander, American-made,
and runs cold water on them from the tap.
"One is obliged to do so, otherwise
they will stick together." So Mr. Eliot writes
to a friend, later that evening.
"Still, the most gripping moment
comes when the macaroni
are broken in two with a dry crackle:
in that, somehow,
one recognizes oneself."

Translated by Richard Wilbur

KÁROLY KÓS,
A HUNGARIAN UOMO UNIVERSALE

by
MÁTÉ MAJOR

One of the grand old men of Hungarian culture has now reached his ninety-second year. The *Magyar Irodalmi Lexikon* (The Dictionary of Hungarian Literature) lists his occupation as "writer, poet, architect, industrial designer, painter, illustrator, ethnographer and art historian" to which can be added outstanding educator and, above all, the pioneer of the cause of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania and a fighter for the peaceful coexistence of the three cultures living side by side there, the Hungarian, Rumanian and German.

Kós gets around with some difficulty now. His eyesight is failing and the characteristic lines of his handsome face are deeply furrowed but intellectually he is fully energetic. The handwriting which he still uses in answering his correspondence preserves the special aesthetic script of his younger days almost untouched.

In the following, I have taken, directly or indirectly, the more important facts of his productive life from his short autobiography.

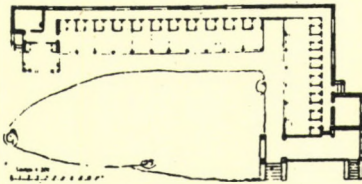
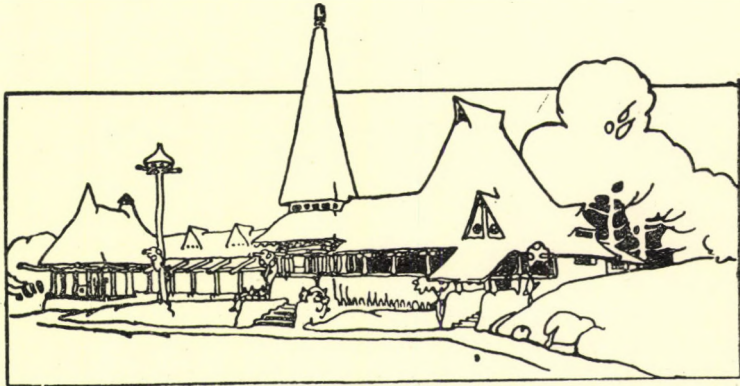
Károly Kós was born at Temesvár, which was then in Hungary, on December 16, 1883, the only boy amongst four children. His father was a postal worker who was transferred to Nagyszeben when Károly was six. There he completed the first three years of elementary school and studied German. When he was ten, his family moved to Kolozsvár where they settled and where Károly finished elementary and secondary school.

In 1902 he enrolled in the Budapest Polytechnical University and, with the aim of supporting his parents, studied engineering. However, he was not at ease in "this dry, technical subject", and, against his parents' wishes and with the loss of a year, he transferred to the Faculty of Architecture. At first, he had trouble with theoretical subjects and even with technical draughtsmanship but in his third and fourth years he won every award at academic competitions and a summer scholarship as well.



*Zebegény. Design for the Catholic Church,
1908–1909*

He received his diploma in architecture in 1907, but remained in Budapest where job opportunities were greater. After working only a year with Móric Pogány, five years his senior, and Géza Maróti-Rintelen, he received his first independent assignment in architecture. In collaboration with his classmate, Dezső Zrumezky, he designed the Calvinist manse and church of Óbuda. After that, assignment followed assignment along with the implementation of ideas and projects: in 1908–09 the Catholic church at Zebegény with Béla Jánszky; in 1909–10 the Városmajor Street school complex in Budapest with Dénes Györgyi; in

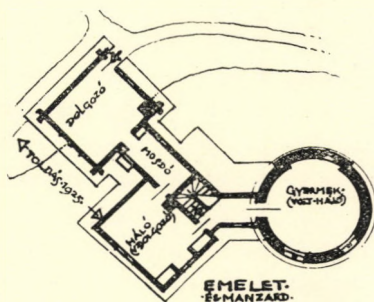
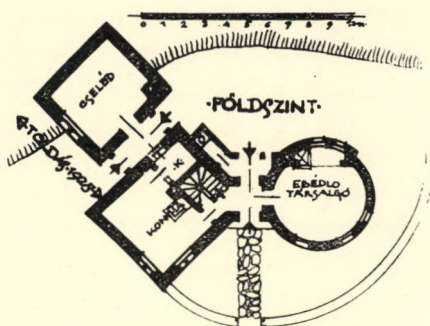


Budapest, Zoological Gardens. Design for the pheasant enclosure, 1909–1910

1911–12 the Székely National Museum at Sepsiszentgyörgy; in 1912–13 a workers' and civil servants' housing project in Budapest; in 1912–13 a Calvinist church at Kolozsvár. Together with some smaller works, these projects, all executed between 1908–14 by a twenty-five to thirty-year-old young man, are indeed an accomplishment.

*

With his earnings, he bought land in Transylvania in the Kalotaszeg region and he built a little week-end house in 1910 at Sztána which he called "Crow's Castle" (*Varjúvár*) after his first novel. He married Ida Balázs, the daughter of the Calvinist minister of the village Ture at Kalotaszeg the same year.



Sztána – Varjúvár, Károly Kós's home. Ground plan 1910.



Budapest, Zoological Gardens. Design for the Red Deer House (1909–1910)



Sztána – Varjúvár, Interior. 1910.

During these few years of peace, he published several papers on architecture and folk art including "The Popular Art of Transylvania" (*Erdély népének művészete*) (no date) and "Old Kalotaszeg" (*Régi Kalotaszeg*) (1911). His first literary attempt appeared earlier (1909). His "Song of King Attila" (*Ének Attila királról* [sic]) appeared as a supplement to "Hungarian Industrial Art" (*Magyar Iparművészet*). This is a ballad which he not only wrote but illustrated with drawings and his calligraphy. It appeared once more in 1923 with the following imprint: "The text of this small volume was printed in *corvinus antiqua* type founded by the First Hungarian Letter-Foundry Co. the illustrations were cut in linoleum; it was printed on Péterfalva paper by a hand press and bound in the workshop of Károly Kós at Sztána in 1923." Not only was he a poet and graphic artist, Kós was printer and book-binder as well. (The little book was published in 400 numbered copies, of which he sent me No. 13 when he was 84 years old. "To my great chagrin," he wrote, "it [the book] was a greater popular and critical success than my architectural creations at that time; so for ten years after that, I didn't pick up my pen.")

Needless to say, the architectural successes were no less significant. He himself asks the question: "What was the key to my unquestionable surprising success in architecture?" And his reply: "Simply, my disregard for various Central-European *art nouveau* and our own so-called tulip-design stylistic trends so much in vogue at the time; I tried instead to develop a Hungarian variant of the contemporary architectural style on the basis of Hungarian architectural traditions and in the active spirit of form-giving and building practised by the Hungarian people. But this was not my discovery; the architecture students of Ruskin and Morris in England as well as Saarinen in Finland formed new architectural styles for their nations on this basis. Bartók and Kodály also constructed the edifice of a new, contemporary Hungarian music the same way."

Kós's confession is especially applicable to the style of the buildings he designed between 1908 and 1914. It is truly not *art nouveau* architecture, but rather one which intentionally breaks with that world; thus it could be called modern in its own time. Given the transfer of the formal characteristics unique wood-constructions of blocks, towers and high roofs of Transylvanian highland architecture to the Hungarian Plain, the romantic-nationalistic character of Kós's work is undeniable. There is clearly a contradiction here, but it is relieved by the concrete and historical value of the completed works which transforms these buildings into outstanding achievements of contemporary Hungarian architecture.

Kós's extensive architectural activities came to an end in 1914. He found himself without work and moved to Sztána where he made his week-end house his home.

The following year he joined the army, but fortunately the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education released him from active duty in 1916 commissioning him along with three others to plan and implement the ceremonial decoration of the Castle in Buda for the coronation of Charles IV, the last Hungarian monarch (the Austrian Emperor Charles I).

In 1917 and 1918 he did not have to return to the army. Instead, with the help of a national grant, he studied Byzantine and Turkish architecture in Istanbul and at the end of his studies published an outstanding article on city architecture and architectural history in *Sztambul*, a publication of the Hungarian Institute in Istanbul.

When he returned to his homeland in 1918, an appointment was waiting for him at the School of Industrial Art in Budapest, as chairman of the Department of Architecture. However, it was a position he never filled. He was the father of three children living in Sztána and could not move at will. His possibilities were further restricted by the revolutions in 1918 and 1919. These continuing obstacles finally came to a head when Transylvania was annexed by Rumania.

"I had to choose," he writes, "between the secure and comfortable existence of a professor and the hope of renewed acceptance of my activities in architecture—there, in Budapest, or the total insecurity of existence, sharing with my family the unknown fate of Hungarians in Transylvania—but here, at home. The decision was difficult. Finally, I wrote the director of the School of Industrial Art that 'I believe there will be greater need for me in Transylvania than in Budapest' . . . and stayed home."

"At the same time, my decision also determined most precisely my future twofold duty in the new situation: to create my own new, and hopefully independent, living out of nothing and to work to revive the life of our Hungarian people who slipped into passivity, in order that they may demand their human and national rights."

*

The creation of a new and independent living was very difficult. Károly Kós needed all of his many-sided talents to support his family. He himself wrote: "In the first years following the change in power, since there was . . . no chance whatever . . . to work in architecture . . . I assured our daily bread with various jobs. I was an industrial designer, a graphic artist at a printer's, an illustrator, poster-designer, journalist, writer, type-setter,

printer, binder and distributor of home-made picture-book curiosities. I was also a gardener and construction labourer. Finally, I tried literature once more! I wrote my first short stories in 1921 . . . and wrote and illustrated my first short novel, *A Gálók* (The Gáls).

His activity in minority politics also began at this time with a pamphlet co-edited with two others, which "along with the recognition of the change in power, announced the demand of Hungarians annexed to Rumania for recognition and implementation of their own human and social rights".

A public meeting followed in Bánffyhungyad where the first "radical democratic" organization of Hungarians in Rumania was established, the Hungarian People's Party (*Magyar Néppárt*). At this point Károly Kós started to publish political and journalistic writings.

Károly Kós's "honest, useful and brave proletarian organizing activity, however, aroused both the Hungarian civil and clerical establishment which clung tenaciously to its own former, all-powerful leadership, and which up until that time had propagated cowardly and harmful passivity and the money- and banking-lords allied to them and their gentry and civil vassals". They founded their "conservative, nationalist party, which served their political and business interests in opposition to the democratic party of the working Hungarian people".

After four years of struggle, Károly Kós gave up the hopeless political effort. "I had to admit that the poverty-stricken party of the working Hungarian people had no chance for victory as long as it fought with honest weapons." He was not willing to adopt "the cynical, immoral methods of the opposition". Consequently, Kós withdrew from party politics and transferred all his energy into the "thus far insufficiently cared for, in fact neglected, field of action of Hungarian cultural life in Rumania".

At this time he established—in partnership, of course, but without financial backing—the Transylvanian Fine Arts Guild (*Erdélyi Szépművés Céh*) publishing house, which he headed from 1924 till 1944. By 1928, they even had a journal, the "Transylvanian Helicon" (*Erdélyi Helikon*), which Kós edited from 1931.

The same year, in collaboration with a painter friend, he brought into existence and co-directed until 1944 "the free copyright and production organ of Hungarian artists of Rumania, the Miklós Barabás Guild."

*

Two entire decades encompass the culture-creating and culture-preserving activity of Kós during which time he also wrote extensively. "The modest

results: two novels, a novella, two plays, seven or eight short stories. . . , besides these purely literary works, four rather demanding studies in architecture and cultural history and, finally, several articles on literature, art, public life and politics." The latter appeared in the Transylvanian (mostly the Kolozsvár) press. (Among his novels "Country Builder" [*Országépítő*], concerning the Hungarian king, Saint Stephen, is most notable, and of his plays, *Antal Budai*, about the man who unleashed the seventeenth-century peasants' rebellion.)

Though Károly Kós realized the most significant architectural achievements of his life before the First World War, he did not remain unfaithful to his original calling. At the very first opportunity, he once more started to design and to build. But "only for those Hungarians (and even Rumanians) from the villages and towns, who turned to me with trust as editor and brother in misfortune, average men and progressive intellectuals; for them I planned and built simple, modest shelters for men. In these, even if limited by lack of money and primitive techniques, I tried to assert the ideals of my former stylistic efforts."

In 1940, during the Second World War, the Second Vienna Decision handed back North Transylvania to Hungary. In the "war atmosphere, dreadfully, rapidly turning fascist" of these four years, Kós vehemently rejected the excellent job, and public positions offered by "very high-level, high-ranking powers" but accepted with pleasure the invitation of the Academy of Agriculture at Kolozsvár to teach agricultural architecture.

Because of this decision, he soon had another choice to make. The Academy was moved from Transylvania and was relocated in Western Hungary at Keszthely, which meant that Kós could have once more settled in Hungary. And once again, he did not do so, though the decision was more difficult this time than it had been a quarter of a century earlier. It was more difficult because the young man, who at that time was full of life and capable of action, was now sixty-one years old. If he relocated, he would have had to start over again, from scratch, an entire life's work. So he stayed. But "hooliganism" forced him to leave his home in Sztána, which was then looted. He moved to Kolozsvár.

Social change offered him new opportunities. "I knew. . . that I just had to hold on with those people who in spite of the order to move out did not flee the city but stayed here to build a new life on the ruins of the old."

And with these people he established and built up a new political mass organization of Hungarians: the Hungarian Popular Association (*Magyar Népi Szövetség*). He was chosen its representative at its 1945-46 and 1946-48 national assemblies. He participated in the rebirth of the hundred-year-old

Transylvanian Hungarian Agricultural Union (*Erdélyi Magyar Gazdasági Egyesület*). He became its president-director, and once more published the association's journal and calendar.

Right after the liberation, he became the dean of the reinstated Transylvanian School of Agriculture and then taught there from 1948 to 1953, when he retired at the age of seventy.

During the post-war period right up to the present he has not neglected his other professions. Between 1948 and 1949, he was a contributor to the Transylvanian daily, *Világosság*; his literary activities have not ceased either; he has written sketches and notes for future memoirs, and contributed to technical literature as well (he wrote on village architecture [*Falusi építészet*] for the villagers, and on agricultural architecture [*Mezőgazdasági építészet*] for the students at the academy). He also has continued drawing: posters, *ex libris* and book illustrations have come from his pen.

And once again, he designed and built. He has restored monuments, such as the birthplace of the Hungarian Renaissance King Matthias Corvinus at Kolozsvár, using the most modern methods for the protection of historic buildings. At Kolozsvár and Brassó churches designed by him were built, as well as several family homes and agricultural buildings.

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MIKLÓS VERESS

SELF-PORTRAIT AT THIRTY

In his sockets there were eyeballs full of thirst
and there were pockmarks three upon his brow
but not such leanness in the face since now
alas his empty cup had dropped and burst:

he smiled at moments hesitant and quaint
and when he had consoled some fellow-being
he stared disconsolate in the mirror seeing
poor Don Quixote on his poor old Paint

wearing what seemed a sword-inflicted gash
in the back—memento of a drawn-out clash
and private war in which his youth had died

and all sad wines been emptied to the lees
and trampled down all noble mysteries
leaving a surf of silence deep inside.

Translated by Richard Wilbur

THE DANCE

(Short story)

by

MIKLÓS VÁMOS

The guests were arriving in rapid succession. A handsome Opel had just rounded the corner. He paused for a second in front of the steps and then went up. The Doorman greeted him with a deep bow.

A bald Fiat-600 appeared under the foliage. Timidly he approached the big glass doors. The Doorman blocked his entrance.

"Sorry, but this is strictly a coat-and-tie affair."

The little Fiat was apologetic:

"I didn't have time to go home, and you see. . ."

The Doorman made a prohibitive gesture:

"Without a tie—to this dance!" He shook his head and shrugged his shoulders.

In the meantime a Mercedes had rolled up. The cloakroom attendants rushed out to receive him and help him out of his coat. They carried back the fur garment as if it were breakable.

The Mercedes stepped to the looking-glass, examined himself for a moment, smoothing back a few strands of greying hair. Then with a sigh he went into the Main Hall.

The Doorman stared after him so hard that he forgot to check whether the Wartburgs admitted in the meantime had been properly attired for the occasion.

By then the cloakroom was filled with layers upon layers of coats and wraps. Most of the guests had arrived. (The cream of society.) A few late-comers slipped in unobtrusively through the ornate side-doors to the Hall.

The dance began and the opening couple—a Skoda and an NSU—were a big hit.

Still, most of the crowd gathered around the tables loaded with delicacies in the Hunting Hall. A young Volkswagen was noisely imbibing, assisted

by a little Trabant. "Try this! You've never had anything like it, I bet! It's high-octan Super!"

"Home-grown Hungarian ÁFOR?"

"Yes, but special vintage!"

The Volkswagen went back to his slurping. At the end of the buffet table two fat Warszawas were sampling the short drinks. Some three-star Shell they found had made them so tipsy that their wheels almost rolled out from under them.

The atmosphere of the Main Hall was now super-charged.

The dancers were flushed with the heat and the air was stifling hot. The attendants opened the windows.

Suddenly a commotion was heard from among the velvetupholstered armchairs as a sleek gleaming white sports car made his way through them. The famous football hero! Several women—among them a daringly décolleté Moskwich—nearly fainted.

The dance floor was packed with couples dancing fender-to-fender. Yet, more couples kept gliding in. A Renault with something of a bay-window was escorting a soft-centred sweetie of a Steyr Puch onto the floor. He had asked her to dance a minute ago in the Green Niche.

"I haven't even introduced myself. CNY 32-38," said the Renault, bowing stiffly.

"CTY," Steyr Puch offered her hand, unceremoniously giving only her first name.

They danced. CNY 32-28 had an easy time. The softcentred sweetie almost melted in admiration when she found out that her partner was an architect, the director of the "KRAFT" Home Design Studio, with a monthly salary of over 9000 forints plus bonuses. In addition he had a beautiful villa near Lake Balaton, a week-end cottage in the Mátra Mountains, and was not even old. (He had less than 40 thousand kilometres on him.)

"And over there, who's that? A Skoda 1000 MB by the window nudged her companion's wall-flower.

"You mean that Peugeot?" the other Skoda asked.

"No, behind him!"

"Oh, that new Taunus?"

"No! The yellow Wartburg. There, the way I'm trying *not* to point."

"Oh, there, that's nobody."

"What do you mean nobody?"

"Just a nobody. A worker from the Ganz-MÁVAG."

"How did he get here?"

"He won his Wartburg in the Lottery."

Behind a big potted palm by the door the Renault with something of a bay-window was kissing the Steyr Puch. Softcentered and ready to melt as she was, CT tenaciously kept her eyes closed to avoid looking at the pot-bellied man whom she found so unattractive. She concentrated instead on the architect's week-end house and resolutely patted CNY 32-28's spare tyre.

"And what about that marvelous-looking black Ford?" one of the Skodas was asking her girl-friend.

"Oh, an ex-patriot," was the terse reply. "A '56er' visiting his younger brother."

In the meantime the orchestra took a break. The couples left the floor, carefully avoiding collisions. Here everybody knew the Highway Code.

Let's follow, for instance, that Small Car in glasses. He stops in front of the potted palm and politely gives the right-of-way to an Impala from the Ministry. Then he goes in search of his little soft-centred-sweetie-wife Steyr Puch. He catches sight of her in the shadow of the palm tree as CNY 32-28 is stroking her under-chassis. The small car quickly turns and runs from the scene in total embarrassment, almost colliding with his boss, although *he* and *not* his superior had been coming from the right. He puts on the brakes fast. How he would like to be a few cubic centimeters bigger, or at least have an extra cylinder! That would at least make him feel more at home. But he feels like a trespassing bicycle. All Small Cars are like that.

It was eleven o'clock. The orchestra took its place again on the platform and struck up a waltz. The dancing resumed.

The music carried far into the distance. In District Eight a cracked Shaving Mirror and a Washing-up Apron were watching TV. The Pop Festival was on, but it was impossible to enjoy because the far-away waltz drowned it out.

They soon turned off the TV and leaned on the open window sill nostalgically listening to the music.

*One little cigarette chick,
The best brand there is. . .*

Shaving Mirror MM nodded his head in rhythm to the far-off music. Washing-up Apron gazed at him lovingly.

Translated by Éva Rácz

INTERVIEWS

TÊTE À TÊTE WITH DEPUTY PREMIER ISTVÁN HUSZÁR

István Huszár was born in 1927 at Hernádkak, a village in Northern Hungary with a population of 860 at the time of his birth. Since he already encountered statistics in his university studies and was President of the Hungarian Central Bureau of Statistics not so long ago, it may be appropriate to list further figures relating to his native village. In the 1930's there were 390 in gainful employment of whom 360 were engaged in agriculture. Some 300 villagers owned land. In 1936, 1800 hold (1 hold approx. 1½ acres) were owned by the villagers. Small farmers (0-5 hold) owned some 1.100 hold, the 5-10 hold range accounted for 200 hold 10-20 for 230 hold and 20-100 hold for 270 hold.

Q: It was thus a village of poor peasants. What is your particular background? To what extent were you aware of the social stratification of your village in your childhood? Did you know any other village besides Hernádkak and what if anything did you know of the outside world?

A: My father was a landless peasant before the liberation of Hungary from fascist rule in 1945. He had travelled the highways of half Hungary looking for work; he had a job in a distillery, was a share-cropper, and builder's labourer. In 1945, he was given 2 hold, for the land to be distributed was scarce and the committee in charge ruled that there should be one per child. As they said in my village 2 hold were too little to fill your belly

(A somewhat longer version was published in Valóság April 1975/4.)

but too much to let you die of starvation. Am I of poor peasant or working class origin then? It is part of the truth that my grandfather, my father's father, was a 5 hold small peasant and since there were so many poor, expectations in the way of inheritance were also taken into account when the available land was distributed in 1945. There were two of them in my father's family, the argument was that my father would inherit 2½ hold which would give him a total of 4½.

In that situation I had to start working pretty early. I began in a share-cropping team, we went harvesting with two men swinging a scythe, father and grandfather. I did other jobs on the land as well, every type of work that was available.

The people of Hernádkak were not divided. There were a few well to do, the mass consisted of poor and middling peasants. I recall a very good sense of community. The village was small, everyone knew everyone else and half the people were related. When I was a child one was not isolated from one's neighbour, there were few, if any instances of the poor being looked down on nor were the well to do particularly respected for their wealth. There were peasants who hired day labourers, they were comparatively well off and could afford to buy land and have their children educated. But there was no caste-system in the village.

Q: When you started school there were two classrooms and two teachers at Hernádkak. It can

be concluded from the age bracket involved that some 60 to 70 children must have attended the lower four grades of the primary school and about the same number belonged to the age group of 10 to 14. For how long did you attend the local school and under what conditions? In 1941, 175 villagers had completed six grades of the primary school and only six of them completed eight grades. Only three had a secondary education. How was it possible for you to carry on your studies?

A: Well, the school... There were two schools; one Roman Catholic and the other Calvinist with a classroom each. All the grades were taught in one room; thus both schools accommodated all grades from one to six in one classroom. I completed the six grades and then stayed on for two additional years. I attended school to the age of 14 at home. At that time my schooling was regarded as complete from the aspect of primary education.

Carrying on was a mere accident. In 1941, some young people, the children of better off peasants began to study privately, doing the junior secondary course. Mother got the idea of bringing her son up to be a "gentleman". Following a row at home mother asked the village teacher to teach me as well. He taught four of us, we were 18, 16 and 14. We started in September and we sat for the private study exam of the first two years of Junior Secondary School in December and at the end of the same school year we passed third year at Szerencs. I attended school for the Fourth Year. One of my cousins had obtained a teaching certificate from the Nyfr-egyháza Teachers' Training College and had started teaching in Ond near Szerencs. I stayed with him and went to school at Szerencs. Then I went on to the Sárospatak Teachers' Training College.

Q: How long did you study at Sárospatak? Did you want to teach or was the teacher's training just somewhere to go because there was nothing better. What was favourable and what was unfavourable in what you experienced while attending the college at Sárospatak?

A: Four years of junior secondary were nothing. What next? As I said mother wanted to turn her son into a "gentleman"; or more exactly, she wanted to relieve me of the burden that so much weighed down her and father. But what were the prospects in a village 6 kms from the nearest railway station? The peasants saw three kinds of "gentleman": clergymen, the village notaries and teachers. One of our small group of four who had been coached together became an assistant notary. The three of us, took a more thorough look around the world. Mother did not dream of me as a village notary, and it seemed hopeless to try to be a clergyman.

The teacher who had coached me had studied at Sárospatak as well. Both of them persuaded mother and father (who happened to be the bell-ringer at that time) to send me there. Mother was only too happy to see me as organist and teacher in the village. This meant land to her. She wanted us to have land. The organist-schoolmaster, as a rule, drew not only a salary but was also given some land for his use. This promised the chance of acquiring land for the family.

That's how I got to Sárospatak. I was not sorry, things were good there. I lived in the boarding school and paid no fees. I do not remember experiencing anything particularly unpleasant. One has a bit of an inferiority complex when entering a new community. However, it was soon gone, we were a good crowd, year after year. The men who looked after us were our friends. I did pretty well at my studies although in the first year I had some poor marks in singing and music. The two accounted for four subjects: singing, church singing, music and church music. I had a difficult time because I did not have a good ear for music. As far as I know today people with no ear for music would not even be admitted to a teachers' training school.

It was traditional at the Sárospatak school to commemorate the anniversary of the birth of Lajos Kossuth by holding a meeting of the debating society that's how it happened on

March 20th, 1944. The caretaker came in and called the principal. The principal left and when he returned he walked onto the platform and said in a quiet nervous voice that we should stop because freedom had come to an end in Hungary. Antal Egey had the courage to speak like that in public. He was not a Communist, not by a long shot, but an honest man who loved and respected his country.

Q: The years spent in Sárospatak are cut in two. Although Hernádkak and Miskolc are only eleven odd kilometres apart Hernádkak was liberated a fortnight earlier on November 14th, 1944. Were you at home at the time? Where, and under what conditions, did the liberation find you?

A: I was at home in the autumn of 1944. So was father who was no longer in the army. Both father and I had to serve, but he deserted and I did not even report to the recruiting office. A friend János Sarafi, who also became an economist, found a good hiding place in his parents' wine cellar. We were naïve enough to take a rifle each, abandoned by the Germans and the necessary ammunition plus a leaflet that had been circulated by the Peace Party which said in Russian as well that who-ever reported with that to Soviet units would come to no harm.

Leaflets of this sort and other propaganda materials were regularly sent to my father by post. They agitated against compulsory deliveries known as the Jurcsek system and contained other agitprop material as well. The plain cover envelopes were mailed in Budapest. "Copy and pass it on"—they said and once or twice my friend Sarafi and I did as we were told, but not because we really knew what we were doing. It was more of a bit of a lark on our part. We had experienced what the war meant and what these envelopes contained was thus not alien to us.

We took leaflets of this kind, some of them in Russian, to our hiding place. One evening we went home with the idea of returning to the cellar the next morning.

By daybreak Hernádkak had been liberated. The "mobilization" of teenagers in our village had ended in a complete fiasco. None of the boys of my age were taken too far, they either went into hiding in the first place, or deserted and soon returned.

Q: In the spring of 1945 you went back to Sárospatak. What opportunities were open to you and what persuaded you to give away teaching and go to the university, in particular, to take up economics, something done by few at the end of the 1940's?

A: Everyone had changed somewhat by the time we got back to Sárospatak in the spring of 1945. Some of the students came from Budapest and they brought books on Marxism. A small group called on the local Communist Party head-quarters where the county secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party was occasionally present.

However strange it may sound it was a teachers' training college run by the church that turned me into an atheist. We were given the opportunity to think, and we were taught to use our brains. The teacher who taught us religion and was, at the same time in charge of the group I belonged to in the hostel, walked with me for hours on end in the park of the school, talking and arguing. This was no privilege, he did so with other students as well. "I will say a prayer for you", he used to say after hours of walking and arguments. I smiled myself and thought "All right, go ahead"... But I loved and respected him all the same.

I became a materialist at Sárospatak. After prolonged agonies. Believe me, I did want to believe in God. After a time, however, I was unable to do so. Much of my time was spent debating with teachers, fellow-students, the members of the democratic youth organization and at the Communist Party district headquarters... I was not a Party member then. I joined the Party much later. But it was that school that made me a supporter of the Communist idea. However paradoxical this may sound it is the plain truth. Only one of the teachers

was a Party member as far as I remember, and to be frank he did not have much of an influence. We who described ourselves as Marxists at that time were not really that. All we did was to read Marxist publications, we had a superficial knowledge of Marxism and we were naïve; the teacher who was the only Party member did not enjoy the students' respect because he was not a good teacher. Not one person brought us closer to Marxism but the spirit that prevailed there paved the way. We were taken seriously.

In December 1946, I replaced a parson. I was not excluded merely because I was an atheist. When we had the election, that is when the places were shared out I was given a well-to-do village that paid well. School performance was what mattered.

However, I left Sárospatak, though I liked the teachers' training college. When I went there I had no choice—yet I came to grow fond of the place. In spite of this I dropped out. In the summer of 1947 I took the *érettségi*, obtaining the secondary school leaving certificate. At that time teacher training lasted five years: three years basic plus another two. After completing the fourth year seven of us passed the *érettségi* exam and went up to Budapest to University. I did not really want to be an economist. I thought I would be admitted to the University of Technology though I had only an *érettségi* granted by a teachers training college and the passport to engineering at a *gimnázium* where Latin was taught. But I was admitted as a special student and they ruled that I had to pay the full tuition fees plus laboratory dues. I was also told that I had to take an exam in Latin. True, I had started Latin at Sárospatak and continued at home... after I had left the teachers' training school; I had decided to do so on my own.

Registering at Sárospatak was a great burden for the family. But later, even before the Liberation, staying there cost virtually nothing. I had the opportunity to earn money replacing parsons on leave, some of us helped hoe the vineyard of Dezső Kovács,

the retired principal of the teachers' training college and we helped with the vintage in the school's vineyard as well. So I was no longer a financial burden for the family. From this point of view attending the University of Technology would have been difficult. Meanwhile one of my mates had taken my *érettségi* certificate and without me knowing it he enrolled me at the Commercial Faculty of the Palatine József University. I was simply faced with a fait accompli. I became an economist by chance.

That happened in the year before the university reform. I found myself in the people's colleges movement. One has to understand that time both as regards universities and life in general. It is often called confused today. We were active in politics and we worked. We were concerned with rural sociology and sociology on the job. Not long ago I took the family for an outing to Galgamácsa along the "path of the memories". I was a member of an environmental studies team from the people's colleges with a patriotic basis in 1947 and 48, studying the degree to which the distribution of land produced changes in rural society... We also helped organise apprentices. But we didn't show up at the university much. I took the exams at the end of the first semester all the same, certain ones after the second as well but not all because we knew there would be a university reform. Dare I tell I took exams for others as well. Five Forints for Maths, but no charge for fellow collegians.

I shall never forget those years.

The first People's College I stayed at was a mixed one. It was a big advantage that arts, medicine, history, chemistry, economics, etc. students, with a great variety of interest all lived under the same roof. It made specialization difficult but it helped broaden our minds. College nights were attended not only by economists and politicians but also by writers, poets, and artists. I remember Peter Veres and Géza Képes off the cuff. Men like Imre Mező, László Rajk, János

Kádár, and László Nánási were members of the committee of patrons. We learned a lot from them.

Q: *At the university you became a demonstrator and later teaching assistant, that is a teacher. Had this anything to do with your earlier training to be a teacher? Or was there no connection?*

A: Early in third year we were told that the department of statistics needed demonstrators. Professor Ede Theisz, a mathematical economist with an international reputation, headed the department. I owe it to him that I can still read, understand and enjoy the latest literature on mathematical statistics, and the problems as well, even those I cannot solve. After a year as demonstrator I was appointed teaching assistant because of the acute staff shortage. Thus I was student and teaching assistant at the same time.

That's how I became an economist. I liked the work at the department including teaching. Let me make it clear however that I felt no calling to be a teacher. This was as true when I started at the training college as when I taught at the university. I liked to teach, though. One reason was because I got to understand many things by explaining them to my students. In the middle of explaining things it struck me that I did not have a clue. I think teaching is immensely important if you want to learn. There's no truth in the vicious saying if you can do, if you can't teach. This is the second year that I haven't been teaching. I miss it. Is this what is called an educational bent? Basically, I like to tell others of my views.

I've even taught philosophy. Out of necessity, for I was "borrowed" by the department. Even now I like to lecture at Party Open Days. That's why I argue that teacher, propagandist and agitator should be one and the same. I still read numerous books on education. And I firmly believe that those in charge should be educationists as well. They must be able to mould their staff and increase their standards of training. Personnel work is largely educational. Psychology is indispensable. There was a time when

psychology was simply eliminated from Marxist science. It was a great help to me right through that I was taught psychology and logic at the college of Sárospatak.

Q: *You have been a Party member since 1948. Did the university youth movement pave your way to the Party?*

A: One could leave out "university". The youth movement, I would say. Quite a few young people of my kind with a similar sort of background and social origin got close to the Party right after 1945. In 1948 many students in the People's Colleges were members of the Party; some joined the Peasant Party, but this did not mean an essential difference in their political convictions.

Q: *Starting in 1953 you were a member of the central Party apparatus for ten years. What was the nature of your duties? Economics primarily, or economic policy?*

A: I worked in Party H. Q. from April 1953 to December 1963. Right after going there I dealt with Statistical Bureau business, reports on the development of the national economy, that is one particular type of economic information. Later the organizational structure and my own duties changed repeatedly; at times, in 1956 and 1957, in particular, it was virtually impossible to draw sharp lines within the economic apparatus. The preparation of economic decisions, national economic planning and problems relating to the CMEA, that is questions connected basically with economics.

Q: *Let us for the moment get back to your native village. Starting with the first census in 1869 the population of Hernádkök has always been around 800. In 1949 the occupational structure was the same as in 1930. By 1960 the number of those in agriculture had gone down by one hundred, to 265, while that of those in industry had risen from 16 to 94, and almost fifty had jobs in retail trade, transport etc. The 1960 figures do not show any members of cooperatives, the 1965 ones do. What sort of contacts have you maintained with your native village in the past thirty years? Have you often been there and have*

you kept up with economic, social and political changes?

A: My parents moved away only four years ago and it is only natural that I went home fairly regularly although not often enough. Thus I was kept informed of everything going on; I even came across problems that involved not only my parents but also the life and situation of the village as a whole. Since they moved I have gone there more rarely, let's say once or twice a year. Even if the graveyard is the only link, that's still something, and I have living relatives and friends as well.

The cooperative at Hernádkak was founded later than most. Tough years had preceded it. Father always met his delivery obligations to the state, but it happened that we children had to buy the wheat and lard he had to deliver so he could meet his obligations. The beginnings of the organization of the agricultural cooperative date back to 1949 but as far as I remember only eight were prepared to join it then, including father, so the cooperative could not be established. Father and the other seven became a target for mockery. The second organization took place in 1960.

Q: Is the nearness of Miskolc and the many jobs available there perhaps responsible for the failure of the first attempt?

A: Miskolc's nearness did count. Road construction began during the Second World War and the bus service meant much to those who wanted to become part of the city's labour force. Even closer by near Onga within our village limits, an ordnance factory was built which later manufactured screws. There were jobs there, as well, pretty good ones too. There were other reasons as well. I mentioned that there were quite a few poor people who had been given a very small piece of land. The hunger for land had been enormous in that area. One and a half million Hungarians had made the trip to America, my two grandfathers amongst them. One came back, the other perished there. Those who returned brought their money and

bought land, whichever way they managed. The villagers at Hernádkak wanted to get on in the world. Those who got land thanks to the land reform also had hopes and they laboured to establish their own meagre living. There was a third reason: the Party organization was pretty weak. I remember that at the time of the 1947 elections for which I did some electoral work at home, the Hungarian Communist Party had only fourteen members in the village and only twenty-seven voted Communist.

Finally a cooperative was established in 1960. Not every cooperative was lucky from the start as regards management and control. The cooperative at Hernádkak ran at a loss for a long time. For many years as little as 14 forints were paid per work unit. There were years when my father had several hundred units to his credit and still he earned no more in a year than I did in a month. And that though anyone can tell you he was one of the hardest working men in the village and in the cooperative. When he was sixty, he had as many as 400 or more units to his credit and not just 80, 100 or 120.

Now the village is doing all right economically. It hasn't got a cooperative of its own, Gesztely, Hernádnémeti and Hernádkak have one between them, the Hernád Valley Cooperative. The headquarters is at Hernádnémeti, which used to upset the other two. It no longer bothers them, not since they have been doing better. They are already amongst the top third in Hungary. It is also true that conditions are right. The Bócs brewery started operations recently and the cooperative grows barley for it. What is even more important is that they've got a scheme to fatten cattle on some of the by-products. Three and a half tons of wheat are now grown on a hectare while in my childhood they were satisfied with three quarters of a ton.

In February 1975 a French parliamentary delegation was taken to Hernádkak to show them what was described as a not particularly outstanding cooperative yet one that one

could be proud of all the same. It had nothing to do with me, I only found out by chance. I do not mean they have no worries there. The proportion of the retired is pretty high. There are enough jobs any way, both with the cooperative, and in the area.

Q: In 1963 you were appointed Deputy President of the Central Bureau of Statistics and later President. In those ten years you spoke on timely questions on a number of occasions including ways in which the purchasing power of the forint and the rise in living standards can be observed using statistical instruments.

A: Reality is much more complex than one would think at first glance. Modern procedures are needed to allow one to give a comprehensive description following a processing of the data. Statistics is one of the instruments.

No doubt reality is always richer and more varied than we are capable of presenting it on this or that occasion. It also differs over a period of time. One always can and should have something new to say about the same thing. Norbert Wiener defined information as communication that surprises. News has information value only if those at the receiving end are taken aback. But do people like being surprised? Something new always surprises that is why it "disturbs". What it really does it to provide food for thought, livening up thinking. There are times when we find it hard to put up with this. Thus the new has to be defended mostly, for this is what contains real information in the form of statistical reports as well.

Lenin said that in case any series leads to a necessary extrapolation the danger is always present that it may turn into a defence of the status quo. Defending what is the case is therefore, in this sense, embarrassing and demeaning work. Unfortunately, statisticians often enough find themselves in this demeaning state. I could tell many a case when I argued with this person or that in my time at the Central Bureau of Statistics, and there were times when such arguments on statistical data extended over a wide range of people.

What I have in mind, in particular, are discussions concerning price and living standards indices.

It is self-evident that most people simply cannot make sense of statistical data. The majority are averages. But no one has ever bought anytimes at an average price, at an average time, and no one can compare his non-average purchases with the previous year's average. Everyone always buys at concrete prices and under concrete conditions. And this brings about impulses in people that differ from abstract and general data. For instance, the price index grew most dramatically in building costs. The construction of 80 to 85,000 homes per year, however, and within this the number of those who in whole or part pay for their building material themselves determine the incorporation of the relevant prices into the price index causing it to rise by some tenths. But those who build themselves, irrespective of whether individuals, villages or communities bear the cost are affected by changes in the price index in an altogether different way. What factors are involved and how they affect different people and sections is unfortunately not given as much attention as needed.

It is interesting that the price index is often debated yet no one asks whether it is true that the national income has increased by such and such a percentage. No one is interested in this point, though it is as much of an average as prices. What I am trying to say is that statistics does not consist of a great many independent figures, but of a system of connected data. A change in one produces changes in another. And yet abstraction must needs happen when social processes are studied. Dispersion is closely associated with abstraction. But we fail to present an adequate picture of dispersion. This is one of the major shortcomings of Hungarian economic propaganda.

Q: You were First Deputy Chairman of the Planning Office as well and you have contributed articles on questions relating to planning.

A: I was in the Planning Office for a total of four months only. But I had dealt with national planning earlier as well in Party H. Q. and in the Bureau of Statistics. I headed one of the teams appointed towards the end of the 'sixties which worked on planning living standards and the labour force. Thus I was directly concerned with planning the economy. Although I am not going to maintain that statistics and planning always adopt identical methods, the years I spent in the Bureau of Statistics were a great help when it came to planning. At present I am member of the State Planning Commission and I come up against the essential issues when it meets. The work is pretty complex. I do not mean only that we simultaneously work on annual, five year and fifteen year long term plans, since the differences in periods are merely differences of time perspectives and it is always most convenient if the plan for a shorter period is integrated into idea of economic policy referring to a longer period, if the two of them are in complete unity. It is difficult to tell how much this prevails in the national planning at the moment, for actually we do not as yet have an elaborate and long term economic policy; the most we can do is to say something about its major outlines. However, we have been engaged on the elaboration of the long term plan for over six years. I do not want to evaluate this work so I shall confine myself to saying that the fact that work began on the elaboration of a long term plan six years ago has, to a certain extent, made it possible to draft the programme of the 11th Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. This planning work attempted to display socio-economic processes as related to one another and outline their development.

What makes things extremely difficult for planners today is that while formulating a development concept that is highly stable, mature and checked from every possible aspect they have to manoeuvre appropriately in an economy that is subject to rapid

changes which do not always point in the same direction.

Q: *You took office as Deputy Premier at a time when the situation of the world economy, and changes in world market prices pose considerable problems for economists in an effort to enable the Hungarian economy that has very wide external relations to counter unfavourable influences as much as possible and make maximum use of the favourable ones.*

A: When I say manoeuvring I do not mean only the rapid changes that occur in the world economy because it is also necessary to react to the rapid changes in domestic economic reality. It is an extremely difficult job to combine mobility and stability in a reasonable manner in respect of both the planning of the national economy and economic management as such.

I mentioned the word "novelty" earlier and I think people should be more aware of what is novel. We tend to find it somewhat difficult to adjust ourselves to new situations under changing conditions and to propose solutions of disproportions, problems and hardships. The question comes up whether the intensification of operative actions in economic management is covered by the word: planning. Well, to a certain extent it is. The intensification of operative actions and the ability of economic processes to react rapidly to the changes that occur can under no condition run counter to our social objectives, for they can only be achieved if the methods adopted are adequately adjusted, and the concrete objectives as well at times. Achieving the general objectives demands rather than excludes changes and adjustment.

Q: *Which sections of the economy would you single out if you wished to give an example of rapid changes?*

A: Am I wrong if I presume that there is some measure of criticism behind your question? Do the changes in the Hungarian economy take place at as rapid a pace as in the world economy? Well, the pace is actually not as fast as required by the needs of

society. In this connection, however, let me recall that in 1962, that is not so long ago, 40 per cent of Hungary's wheat consumption was covered by imported grain. In 1975 the quantity of wheat exported is the equal of one third of domestic consumption. Fairly recently we were still unaware of large-scale production systems of industrial dimensions in agriculture, now production on an industrial scale and over huge areas of land is an imperative necessity. For this appropriately qualified staff and adequate machines are needed but it is a hard job to create the favourable conditions. Recently I had access to figures showing that fewer than half the working hours in a farmers' cooperatives are devoted to agricultural work proper, the majority being of an industrial nature. Here I do not want to cause any misunderstanding so I must make it clear that the proportion of auxiliary industrial activities is surprisingly low and the high figure is ascribable mostly to changes in the nature of agricultural work processes.

Perhaps the pace in one or another industry is still slow. But the major plans are implemented consistently and rapidly. This applies also to the overall modernization of the textile industry. All the old power looms are being replaced. The quantity of aluminium used in Hungary over the past few years has increased many times over. Today the share of prefabricated homes exceeds 50 per cent of the housing programme. This is what I consider rapid change. And this is what the whole of the nation's economy has to be adjusted to. Very often internal economic contradictions arise from the fact that the pace of industrial development in some places is slow by the standard of others.

We have been able to raise plant-growing to a level that is fairly high even by world standards. Processing, however, fails to keep abreast and Hungary, a country conventionally said to be short of raw materials, exports raw materials in the form of agricultural products. The rapid development of the aluminium industry calls for a spread of the

use of products made of aluminium at a pace that is proportionate with the production of this light metal.

The pace of change in the economy is thus fairly fast and the question should be worded like this: whether or not the changes occurring in Hungary are adjusted to those taking place in the world economy. This problem might be analysed from the angle of whether or not it is correct in itself in the pace of economic progress is determined by the central development programmes that are given priority and if the resources available are concentrated on the development of one or another industry etc. The major question in this respect is whether the others can be brought into harmony with what advances rapidly. Of course not always and there are quite a few examples to this effect as well.

The volume of consumer buying is also rising. It has been the rule for some time that, in terms of quantity but not of current prices, the turnover of retail trade increases by an annual 8 to 9 per cent. Here the point is whether or not commercial enterprises develop at a pace enabling them to live up to the demands of increased turnover, whether or not service improves proportionately and whether or not the extent of the area over which goods are sold increases to correspond to the new requirements. Meanwhile not only sales, but also their structure, undergo certain changes.

The different development areas are not always proportionate. The energy at disposal is not sufficient to provide for development on an equal footing in every field. That is why a system of priorities must often be applied. Industries with a high priority progress at a fast pace and this often brings about internal contradictions. What happens occasionally is not only the fact that we fail to be sufficiently aware of the rate of development but also that the contradiction it has induced emerges in fact or apparently to play the decisive role. Rapid progress sometimes leads to actual or merely pseudo problems. All this means that the economy must

react very quickly in order to avoid the disproportions that occur and assume the dimensions of tensions. It would be most convenient if in such a case harmony could be established without intervention from higher up.

In theory this is not ruled out if the condition is satisfied that the enterprises and economic units involved have adequate material resources and reserves at their disposal enabling them to eliminate disproportions. Unfortunately, the reserves available today are still insufficient; either there is need of intervention by higher authority or we have to resign ourselves to the fact that we are unable to turn the tide for some time to come.

Q: Owing to your office you are the chairman of more than one commission in charge of the co-ordination of cooperation between Hungary and her economic partners, seeking new possibilities as well as coordinating long term plans and performing direct duties. What are your latest experiences in connection with these activities?

A: Essentially, I can carry on from the note on which I ended before this question. We must meet the world economy's demands for highly flexible economic management and increased elasticity. This must be satisfied so that reaction to changes does not harm Hungarian social objectives. This is an extremely difficult job since the income derived through exports accounts for over 40 per cent of national income. Balanced foreign trade turnover means balanced imports. The two of them are not added but their average is established. Thus, in the final analysis, a substantial proportion of material assets is made available for use in Hungary if they are exchanged with other nations.

It is very safe to know that almost two thirds of the 40 per cent and something, more exactly 62 per cent of it, are exchanged with socialist countries, states that coordinate the long term planning of the national economy or conclude long term cooperation agreements. It is also reassuring that there

are inter-state agreements based on this and regulating the overwhelming majority of imports and exports. That is why only as little as 13 to 14 per cent of Hungary's national income is directly subject to the rapid changes on the capitalist world market. I must note that the exchange of 13 to 14 per cent of national income with the non-socialist countries extends rather than narrows resources. No doubt if there is a trade gap following a sharper increase in exports than in imports, we suffer losses. That was the case, for instance, in 1974.

I hope that what happened in that year will not recur. The rise in prices on the world market has slowed down this year; the prices of raw materials and products reveal a decreasing trend even if they are unlikely to drop to the earlier level. It is beyond doubt that today we witness the rearrangement of price ratios. This is a very serious and hard reality. Or I could put it in the following way: profits are being rearranged in the non-socialist world. I do not know where the origins of this process should be traced back to. However, it is quite certain that presently we experience the economic consequences of the disintegration of the colonial system. This must be reckoned with as a fact and during this period we must manage our economy in a manner that even if the existing situation involves temporary losses for us they should not slow down at all, or only to a very small extent, our economic growth so that in the end perhaps even more favourable conditions can be created for economic expansion than before.

Some of the nations we have been trading with have grown richer. Thus they do not need credit if we wish to trade with them, they pay cash, or part of their accumulated resources can be utilized for the benefit of the Hungarian economy in the form of joint ventures and on the basis of mutual advantage.

I am also hopeful that there is not going to be a fall-back in economic relations with

the West European countries and the exchange of goods with them will not be so unfavourable that it endangers economic objectives.

We reckon with the fact that the changes the world economy is subject to will contribute to the acceleration of the integration of the socialist community. This will not happen automatically and spontaneously. The customary discipline of trading on the world market has been shaken and countries have become more interdependent than earlier. In other words, we are only capable of averting the inconvenient consequences of the "unusual" phenomena of the world economy if we intensify trading activities. Sometimes it occurs now that Hungary pays for goods produced by another socialist country and available in one or another port in convertible currency or the other way round: we sell articles for the currency of a non-socialist country which, eventually, find their way into one of the socialist states. We must close the circuit in our trading activities, benefiting both sides.

Generally speaking, however thorough research we might conduct into changes likely to occur in the world economy we will never be able to know everything accurately in advance. Thus there is a constant need to react rapidly. This is even truer today than before. Partly because changes are of a greater dimension and partly the pace at which they take place is faster.

Q: Is there a plan, for example, for Hungary to become self-supporting again in respect of sugar, within a few years?

A: Yes. Sugar beet was grown on an area of almost 97,000 hectares last year. If my memory serves me right contracts had been concluded by February 1975 for growing sugar beet on about 128,000 hectares. In a year or two Hungary will be able to grow the sugar beet necessary to meet the domestic requirements provided the refineries can cope with the processing. Perhaps this objective could be achieved right now if the period of harvesting and processing the beet were

extended. Experts, however, argue that a hundred and ten days are already too long and, for that matter, not economic. The period must be reduced to under one hundred days. The quantity of sugar beet to be grown on an area of 300,000 acres can only be processed if all the sugar refineries operating in this country start processing on September 1st. This means that harvesting must begin in the last week of August. The problem is that in some parts of Hungary the beet is, as a rule, not ready to be harvested in late August even if varieties needing a shorter period of growth are used.

The modernization of sugar refineries is well under way and a decision has already been taken to construct a new one at Kaba, County Hajdú. It should be ready for operation in the 1978 season. On the other hand, we signed a long term contract with Cuba under which the importation of some 45,000 tons of sugar is guaranteed for every year between 1975 and 1980. I think it is therefore not necessary to increase the area for growing sugar beet by hundreds of thousands of hectares, yet it is essential to make changes in a more or less flexible manner. 20,000-30,000 hectares are not too substantial but sufficient to be used for manoeuvring. It is vital to have the necessary processing capacity at our disposal.

Plans for producing sugar from maize are also being considered. Invert sugar manufacturing technology is generally known. It can be produced in Hungary economically and the related production costs are approximately identical with those of beet sugar. The difficulty lies in the fact that a specific technology is required, an enzyme technology with which sugar refineries in Hungary cannot cope. This type of sugar would not be produced directly for consumption being liquid. It is suitable for industrial purposes, the making of soft drinks, for instance, or canning.

This is another question on which a decision has to be taken in the near future, one which is also linked to the world economy.

Q: *As much as rethinking the energy structure, isn't it?*

A: Yes. The rate at which the composition of fuels has to be changed should be reassessed. I want to underline again that the point here is not merely that considering today's and the expected prices of crude oil, coal or nuclear power will be relatively more economic. No doubt this is also part of the issue, but it is simply relative economy. The production of energy needs more facilities and, it is more costly than before. That is why it is essential in the utilization of energy to establish a structure providing for saving power. It is vital for energy transforming installations to be most up-to-date. We must go ahead with "miniaturizing", that saves not only weight, material and space but energy as well. Minimum energy demand should be the cornerstone of the strategy of economic expansion. The lowest possible fuel requirement should be the standard and the essential criterion in every field including that of machine tools, for the days of the abundance of fuel are gone and this applies to all raw materials.

I expect that in the prevailing plight of the world economy in which energy and raw materials are no longer in abundance the product structure will have to be subject to faster changes. This has long been called for by the progress of science and technology. Hungary will have to adopt stricter standards regarding economic performance and growth or the world will adopt stricter standards when judging Hungary. If this happens (and it is bound to), I am not in the least afraid of changes.

But only if this happens. This is only one condition and there are others. I cannot agree with certain formulations and approaches that one sometimes comes across. The alarm is raised needlessly. Is there a real shortage of fuel? If the rate of energy consumption corresponds to what has been outlined till 1980 under a comparatively more favourable energy situation, Hungary will have to import some 3 million tons

of crude a year from non-socialist markets. Supposing the quantity indicated will have to be imported. It is a considerable amount. Apart from some 9 to 9.5 million tons of crude imported from the Soviet Union and in addition to the domestic production of 2 million tons, 3 million tons of crude to be imported from a third source, and not from a socialist country, is a remarkable proportion. But let me make a simple comparison. There has been a large measure of regularity in recent years because three tons of crude could be obtained in exchange for one ton of grain. Hungary was able to sell one million tons of milling grain out of last year's harvest.

Thus if we speak of Hungary's raw material reserves we should not mean merely the assets available in the form of minerals and reserves lying deep in the earth but also possibilities of developing agriculture in this country. If the raw material and fuel shortage continues on the world market, I do not think that a solution can be found to the food problem. I am sure that food will be as much in demand in the years to come as it has been so far. Today not only fuel and raw materials, but food as well has to be reassessed.

Q: *Perhaps this applies to intellectual energies as well. In an emergency enormous quantities of unexploited or improperly exploited intellectual energy can be mobilized.*

A: Thank you for your interruption. And let me give an example. I have already touched on the question of food. Let me now refer to health. Hungary is a "big power" in the production of pharmaceuticals and not far behind that in respect of medical instruments either. Hungarian medical men are most welcome in every part of the world and those who want to study medicine are only too happy to come here. Linking that up and systematizing it, it looks most reasonable to develop the Hungarian health service in conjunction with the medical industry... What I mean to say is that attempts should be made to sell not only Hungarian made medical instruments and pharmaceuticals on

the world market but also this country's research in health, the hospital system and the training of medical staff. No doubt they will be very much in demand. Offering treatment should be an integral part of tourist propaganda. There are several other lines in which Hungary has a high reputation by international standards. They should be transformed into "export articles", intellectual and material goods combined to be sold beyond the Hungarian borders.

It is frequently said that this country is held in higher esteem. I have no idea how to translate this into the language of economics. But it is safe to say that the value of stability has grown in the eyes of non-socialist countries, in Britain say, or West Germany. If economic stability prevails in Hungary, respect is paid to the stable partner even by countries hard hit by economic recession. Under the present conditions of the world economy the non-socialist states seek the possibilities of expanding relations with us. This must be fully exploited. It is not necessary that the recession involving the capitalist countries should lead to economic decline here as well. There is no economic law to this effect.

Q: The latest session of the Inter-Governmental Commission for Hungarian and Soviet Economic, Technical and Scientific Cooperation has just ended. What sort of agreements were signed at the session?

A: Of the numerous factors determining the balanced development of the Hungarian economy economic relations between Hungary and the Soviet Union are outstanding. One third of the trade turnover accounting for 40 per cent of national income is with the Soviet Union. In other words, Hungary can only obtain national income and can take advantage of it in accordance with objectives if 13 to 14 per cent of it is exported to the Soviet Union and goods amounting to about the same quantity are purchased from there. Perhaps I can illustrate things more clearly by saying that almost 40 per cent of the materials purchased abroad come from the

Soviet Union, the country from which Hungary imports one third of equipment requirements. Fuel, electric power and raw materials account for almost two thirds of imports from the Soviet Union.

Relations with the Soviet Union are also guided by the endeavour to conclude long term interstate agreements determining the major areas of cooperation, for this is necessary in order to elaborate the strategy of economic growth with appropriate safety, enabling us to foresee the changes likely to take place in the economic structure and to plan the rate of economic expansion with maximum certainty. In view of the fact that Hungarian-Soviet economic ties have a decisive part to play in the country's economic activities because of their magnitude very great importance is attached to agreements on economic cooperation with the Soviet Union. And this is the point at which I come back to the question you asked. Eleven such agreements have so far been concluded. I might add, however, that the importance of a session is not measured by the number of contracts signed, for the figure quoted fails to include the protocols containing the summary of the results achieved to date in co-ordinating plans for the 1976-1980 period, or the tasks to be accomplished. Current problems of foreign trade were also discussed along with the extension of scientific and technological cooperation. Ways in which the latter can be increasingly placed in the service of growth have also been considered. I could go on enumerating. All these however, are achievements and tasks recorded in the minutes and not an agreement proper. I am of the opinion all the same that the agreements signed are of great importance. Both parties of the Inter-Governmental Commission did their home work for what was actually the fifteenth meetings of a Commission that has been operating for eleven years, so there was no need to feel ashamed after fourteen successful meetings. We wanted to be worthy of the 11th Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the

30th anniversary of the liberation of Hungary which occurred at much the same time. That is why the preparations for the meeting were particularly thorough.

Let me say a few words about the agreements. The agreement on alumina and aluminium was extended to 1985. Under it the bauxite mined in Hungary is processed into alumina from which aluminium is produced by the Soviet Union since energy is scarce in this country and the process requires enormous quantities of power. The aluminium obtained from the alumina is then taken back to Hungary where the aluminium processing plants use it to make even more valuable products. 60 per cent of the aluminium used in this country is derived from this cooperation. This is really a specific sort of commission work paid for with Hungarian goods. In 1975, Hungary is going to receive 120,000 tons of aluminium and 240,000 tons of alumina will be delivered to the Soviet Union. In 1980 and between 1981 and 1985 the quantity of alumina delivered will be raised to 330,000 tons per year while we shall be receiving 165,000 tons of aluminium during the same period. Let me repeat one essential point of this commission work: the production of such a huge quantity of aluminium needs roughly as much electric power as the total electric energy consumed by all the households of Hungary. Eight of the eleven agreements signed concern specialization in the engineering industry and mutual deliveries. The value of deliveries envisaged by both parties for a period of five years is close to the 2,400 million rouble mark (given prices effective in 1974). In other words the volume roughly corresponds to the total value of trade turnover between Hungary and the Soviet Union planned for the current year.

There are several important factors in these agreements but I want to confine myself to singling out only two of them. One is that agreement was reached not only on the mutual deliveries of finished goods, but also on production cooperation and the deliveries of parts of units and spare parts and modernization based on joint technological development. The other is that there are some large Hungarian factories in which it is questionable whether production is economical. They include—I do not as yet have the courage to use the past tense—the Hungarian Shipyards and Crane Works and Ganz-MÁVAG. Their economy indices are substantially improved by the mutual delivery agreement on shipbuilding and the specialization agreement covering Diesel and electric engines. In addition, remarkable modernization schemes involving factories are also envisaged. I could give a long list of what is included in the agreements on cooperation in the engineering industry. For example, an agreement on specialization in the machine tools industry, on manufacturing agricultural machines, on producing machines to be used in road building, and so on. All this boils down to the fact that fairly clear development prospects were provided for Hungary in a number of sections of the engineering industry.

The minutes also recorded the Commission's working plan for the current year. This reflects the conviction that neither of the parties regards the potentialities of cooperation between Hungary and the Soviet Union as fully exploited. I am confident that carrying out this working plan and at the next meeting of the Commission other agreements of major importance will be concluded, which will serve Hungarian economic progress.

ISTVÁN LÁZÁR

A. J. P. TAYLOR AT 70

A. J. P. Taylor will be seventy in March 1976. His professional interests and personal life have often brought him into contact with Hungary and Hungarians. In this interview he talks about some of these contacts and also about his books. The interview was held after a lecture which A. J. P. Taylor gave at the Institute of Historical Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest, in September 1975.—The Ed.

Q: Professor Taylor...

A: Ah, don't start like that. I am not a Professor and never have been. I am a Fellow of the British Academy. I am a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford. But Professor,—no. I do not regard the title of Professor as exactly discreditable, but I feel better without it. I am merely someone who happened to be an historian.

Q: Alan Taylor, then, you told us that during the Second World War you compiled a history and political analysis of Hungary for official use—a work by the way which was not acceptable to the Foreign Office. How did you become interested in the history of Hungary? And how did you meet such figures as Mibály Károlyi and Lajos Hatvany?

A: Just before the war a publisher asked me to write a history of the Habsburg Monarchy 1809—1918. I knew much of the Austrian side from having lived there. But I had to learn Hungarian history from the start. I did not learn enough and was dissatisfied with the book. The first edition came out in 1941. I entirely rewrote the book for the second edition which came out in 1949. I learnt more from Hungarians than from books. I learnt especially from two men: Michael Károlyi and Lajos Hatvany. Both of them were living in Oxford during the war and I saw a great deal of them.

Károlyi had long been one of my heroes. Now he talked of his life and experiences. He was by no means an intellectual. He was a frustrated man of action. He had a restless

mind, always asking questions, always wanting something to happen. His wife Catherine was more literary. Indeed she became a distinguished English writer and knew many English poets and novelists—people who were too sophisticated for a humble historian like me. You know, being a historian is a very humdrum trade. Both Michael and Catherine became close friends of me and my family. Indeed Michael was one of the three men I would recall from the dead if I could. I attended his state funeral in 1962 and was very pleased to read about the centenary meeting for him earlier this year. He was an honour to the human race.

Hatvany and his delightful wife had a flat in Oxford throughout the war. Unlike Michael he had given up political ambitions and was engaged in writing his memoirs. He had known all the great writers of the age—German, French and so on. Talking to him brought a revelation of the international literary society between the wars. He was a marvellous teller of anecdotes, always ending with a rich laugh. Loli, his wife, was as good at stories with a political twist. Now, as lively and fresh as ever, she is a piece of living history. So, having known the Károlyis and the Hatvanyes so well, I can claim to know something of Hungary.

I have passed some of my knowledge on. I have a pupil, Alan Sked, who wrote a thesis about the Austrian Army in Italy in 1848, in which he showed incidentally that the Czechs were the core of Radetzky's army. Now he is planning to publish the report of Blackwell who wanted to be British consul in Hungary in 1848.

Q: I believe you have recently written an intellectual autobiography for *The Chicago Journal of Modern History*. Can you give us some idea of what you wrote?

A: I'm afraid I was not a satisfactory writer about myself. Of course I could tell the obvious things. I have always been

a Radical and a Socialist. I have always been solitary both as a student and as a scholar. But when I come to my work as an historian I can no more analyse it than a painter can explain why he paints as he does. All my life I have learnt by doing. I taught myself history and understanding by lecturing to students. I never used notes and therefore had to think on my feet. When I write a book, I assemble the facts and quotations but have no idea at the start how they are going to work out. Often I am surprised by the results or even regret them. But they can't be helped. As an historian I have no loyalty to any country or to any political or religious doctrine. I am loyal only to the truth as I see it. I do not want to shock people but I do not mind if I do. My only concern is to explain to myself and to others how things happened. I do not think we learn anything from history except to understand the past. History is a form of detached curiosity, as useless—or as useful—to society as any other form of art.

Q: *Can you tell us something about your books and which you like best?*

A: My most scholarly solid book is a diplomatic history called *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918*, the only book of mine translated into Russian. It is, I think, very sound, very detailed and very boring. I can't think how I survived the tedium of writing it. The book I love best is *The Troublemakers*, the favourite among my brain children. It is an account of the English Radicals who opposed official British foreign policy from the time of the French revolution to the present day. As I have spent much of my life opposing official British foreign policy you can understand that these men appealed to me, though I criticized them as well.

My most controversial book is *The Origins of the Second World War*. It was not meant to be controversial at all. It was simply an attempt to write about the Second World War historically, forgetting all the political disputes, forgetting that I was engaged on

one side, and treating it as an historian would treat, say, The Thirty Years' War. Now the controversy is dead. The views in the book have become the new orthodoxy, too much so for my taste.

English History 1914-1945 is my best book in an academic sense. It is scholarly, it is entertaining, and most of the views expressed in it are, I think, right. Unfortunately so much new material has become available in the last ten years that I fear I shall have to write it all over again.

Q: *What is this new material you speak of?*

A: We used to have in Britain a fifty-year rule about government archives. So in 1964 when I finished my book all the papers on 1914 to 1945 were closed. Now it has been changed to a thirty-year rule so all the papers for my period are available. That means for instance that I can read all the cabinet minutes and papers, the proceedings of the chiefs of staff and so on. Of course there are still plenty of things kept closed: secret service intelligence reports especially about Ireland, labour discontent and Leftwing activities; war organizations such as SOE (Secret Operations Executive) and nuclear researches. You can't find out why the British Government supported Tito or conflicted with the Communists in Greece. You can't even find out why the Foreign Office refused to see Károlyi, as I know it did.

Then again my books: There is *The First World War* and *The Second World War*, both with illustrations. Both give good accounts within a short compass. In *The Second World War* I think I was the first historian to tie the two wars—European and Far Eastern—together.

I have written two biographies—*Bismarck* and *Beaverbrook*. Both were labours of love. I found Bismarck fascinating as a man as well as for his policies. As to Beaverbrook, he was the dearest friend I ever had. But I tried to treat him with historical impartiality all the same. I have also published four volumes of collected essays and edited various things, such as Lloyd George's love letters to his

mistress Frances Stevenson. I seem to have written quite a lot one way and another. As the Duke of Gloucester said to Gibbon: "Always scribble, scribble, scribble! Eh, Mr. Gibbon?"

Q: *You have written a great deal about nationalism and national problems. In your opinion is there a British nationalism nowadays and is it mirrored in historical writings?*

A: Nationalism flourishes when there is conflict—Polish against German, Rumanian against Magyar and so on. When there is no conflict nationalism is latent. The British have no national or cultural conflicts particularly as the Empire has come to an end. We have some racial conflicts caused by recent immigration of coloured British citizens. I think they will die away. If the Scotch and Welsh re-establish their political independence, as many of them are trying to do, than we shall have national conflicts. A few Scotch and Welsh historians are already writing national histories. English historians still regard these national movements as nonsense. Irish nationalism is a different matter. In Northern Ireland you have two cultures in conflict—native Catholic culture, Protestant settlers. In my opinion the conflict will find no compromise solution. One side will exterminate or expel the other.

Q: *The International Historical Conference was held recently in San Francisco. Do you like to go to international conferences?*

A: No, certainly not. It is quite pleasant to meet other historians socially, but no good has ever come from historians reading papers to each other. It is bad enough to have to read other people's books without having to listen to them reading aloud in some foreign language—especially American.

Q: *You are a distinguished historian but you are not a professor. How is that? Have you encountered political or personal hostility in your profession?*

A: I have never thought about it. I suppose I was too busy writing books to try very hard about becoming a professor. If someone had made me a professor just like that,

I might have accepted it. On the whole I am glad to have escaped the administrative duties that fall to a professor. Some of my colleagues may disapprove of my writing for popular newspapers or appearing on television so much. But I think they have got used to it. As to political views, I don't think they matter nowadays. Before the war, I was interviewed for a job I didn't get. The President of the College said sternly: "I hear you have strong political views." I said: "Oh no, President, extreme views weakly held."

Q: *You mentioned your journalistic and television activities. Why do you have them?*

A: Mainly for the satisfaction of doing them well. I am an experienced and skilful journalist who can write a powerful article on anything at a moment's notice. Usually I write on subjects where I don't care one way or the other. Occasionally I am given a subject where there is really something I want to say. Of course I should never write against my convictions and am never asked to do so. Television is different. Here I am one of the most experienced performers in Britain. I have been doing it for twenty-five years. Also I am the only man who can lecture on television without notes or maps or illustrations. I attract audiences of ordinary people, not intellectuals. When I lecture on some quite different topic such as the revolutions of 1848, I am greeted in the streets next day by taxi drivers, bus conductors and greengrocers.

Moreover, not being a professor, I have to make my living, and journalism and television are agreeable ways of doing it—both probably overpaid.

Q: *What are your interests outside your work?*

A: Not many. I like looking at buildings and have an almost professional understanding of gothic churches, though now I like Anglo-Saxon churches best. I am always ready to jump out of my car and look at a church or abbey or castle. I like music, particularly chamber music, though here I have no professional knowledge and cannot

even read a score. I go rarely to the theatre and am usually bored when I do. I have heard Toscanini conduct *Falstaff* and Flagstad sing *Isolde*. This has almost spoilt me for anything else but I go on trying.

What I enjoy most is walking in the country—up to twenty miles a day. I go to the Lake District most summers and go up the mountains but not by rock climbing. I have walked the Pennine Way which goes up the backbone of England from Derbyshire to the Roman Wall. I have also walked Offa's Dike which was created in the eighth century to keep the Welsh from stealing Anglo-Saxon cattle. It is still there, often ten foot deep and about a hundred and fifty miles long.

If anything went wrong to stop me writing—if the arthritis in my fingers stopped me typing or if my sight began to fail—I should walk twenty miles every day as Wordsworth used to do.

Q: *What advice would you give to young historians who are starting their careers?*

A: Find a subject and get working on it. Never mind whether it is important. You can always throw it away later. Get on to original documents as soon as possible. Copy accurately down to the commas. Be sure to take down the reference numbers of the documents you copy. Do not believe something merely because you find it in some document. The higher and more important a man is—a prime minister, a general, a king—the less likely he is to be telling the truth. Remember that most hereditary rulers are likely to be half-witted. Remember too that all the people you are dealing with were once alive and are entitled to their point

of view. Do not try to show you are cleverer than people in the past. You aren't.

Q: *What are your future plans?*

A: At the age of seventy I am perhaps entitled to answer with Dubedat in Shaw's *Doctor's Dilemma*: "My plans are very simple. I am going to die." I should like to be on the move fairly soon. In the coming economic catastrophe there will be no consideration for pensioners, and quite right too. They are unnecessary luxury for a bankrupt civilization. Meanwhile I hope to rewrite *English History 1914-1945*. What will actually happen is that some publisher will come up with a fresh idea and that I shall be again writing a book I never thought of.

Q: *This interview appears in The New Hungarian Quarterly. What do you think the magazine could do to reach more readers?*

A: I read NHQ with interest and admiration every quarter, and particularly admire the balance it maintains between political and literary articles. I incline to suggest that articles by official persons are not impressive for the English readers who distrust all articles by officials and ministers. We could do with more about the practical problems of Hungarian life—anything from the routine of housekeeping to family relations. Do Hungarian men help with the washing-up? Who decides where to go on holiday and where in fact do you go? The literary and artistic articles are the ones that set their mark on NHQ, they are the most welcome. I have no advice, except this, on how to broaden NHQ's appeal.

Q: *Do you think life was fair to you?*

A: No, but then I have not been fair to it.

ÉVA H. HARASZTI

REVIEW OF PERIODICALS

CONTRADICTIONS IN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

HUNGARIAN ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

The Society for the Dissemination of Knowledge has now functioned for over a hundred years. At present it acts as both a major adult education organization and as a society of scholars which potentially includes all intellectuals in Hungary. The Ethnographic Committee of the Society looked into ethnographic research concerning Hungarians in neighbouring countries from the aspect of material accessible to a wider public. The evidence before the Committee was published in No. 6, 1975 of *Valóság*, the Society's periodical devoted to the social sciences.

Hungarian ethnography is reputed to be of a high standard largely because it seldom acted as an abstract discipline, more as a way of looking into social issues, sounding them out, however inadequate it may have proved for the purpose. Romantic national myths, common in East Europe, came to be superimposed on ethnography, an additional reason why it could not become a dry-as-dust science. It turned into a ring in which opposed nationalisms tried their strength, and though the fighting was not done by scholars this did not lessen the burdens that ethnography had to carry.

The above perhaps explains why Iván Balassa, one of the most respected ethnographers in Hungary, started his remarks:

"Concerning the ethnography of Hungarians living beyond the country's borders, a certain hesitation of a political nature has continued to the present, though it is becoming smaller. That is why I wish to make it quite clear right at the start that Hungarian ethnographers most firmly dissociate themselves from irredentism and the imperialist nationalism of the between-the-wars period. It is precisely on the basis of Lenin's national minorities policy and of internationalism that they consider a detailed discussion of the problem to be necessary, additional to the need to include the ethnography of Hungarians living outside Hungary in the material which is made accessible to a wider public."

The ethnography of those Hungarians who found themselves beyond the borders of the country drawn up at Trianon in 1920, Iván Balassa puts their numbers between 3 and 4 million. They are integral to any proper study of the subject, and yet research becomes an extremely delicate question because of the suspicions associated with it. Iván Balassa writes: "The older generation who experienced the nationalist agitation practised by both sides but which never had its origin amongst the people is reluctant to consider the question. Younger people take a keen interest in the ethnographic research concerned with Hungarians living in other countries, but just because they could not be familiar with the atmosphere of the times they often fail to find the right key."

Thirty years have passed and things appear to have matured to the extent that ethnography is now getting its turn following a start on cultural co-operation, that is linking up the intellectual life of Hungarians in neighbouring countries with the Hungarian mainstream, and the initiative taken by students of literature who give some of their attention to works of Hungarian writers who live outside Hungary. Reciprocity must be stressed. One of the articles quotes György Aczél, member of the Political Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and a Deputy Prime Minister: "We consider it natural that the national minorities in Hungary nurse relations with their brothers in Czechoslovakia, Rumania and elsewhere not only as a matter of principle in the widest sense of the term but also on the basis of the linguistic community to which they belong. In the same way we also endeavour to nurse relations with Hungarians living in the neighbouring socialist countries... This specific cultural mission relies on... the fact that the culture of the Hungarian minority communities is part not only of the spiritual life of the country in which they live but also of universal Hungarian culture." (György Aczél: *Eszménk erejével* [By the Force of our Ideas]. 1971.)

Perhaps the very long delay is responsible for the fact that the Committee was concerned not so much with spreading ethnographic knowledge to the Hungarian public but rather with taking into account Hungarian ethnographic research in the neighbouring countries and with the part played by an awareness of, and interest in, the folk-art there produced which is the socially most important aspect of the problem.

"The influence of ethnography on moulding the mind is, in general, stronger in national minority communities than amongst the majority," László Kósa writes. "That is why customs and traditions, and folklore and the ornamental arts in the first place, have a specifically important place in the cultures of national minorities. This goes

back some time, stemming as it does from the same root as the awakening self-awareness of the nations of East Europe. The ethnographic interest shown by national minorities and their jealous guarding of customs and traditions also bear witness to a defensive attitude intent on preserving identity. What they are looking for is their own otherness, their national character, which they want to keep alive."

Endeavours are made to satisfy the widespread interest in ethnography, present everywhere, though in varying intensity, or else to co-ordinate and direct it, as far as possible. This could well be described as the driving force of research into the ethnography of the Hungarian minorities, feeding as it does not only folklore-mindedness but in a number of places, research proper. Those interested are of two kinds: the passive who acquire and read as many works on ethnography as possible, who attend folklore performances and use folk-art objects to decorate their own homes; and the active who collect at the source as well, and publish what they collect. The very best of the latter are recruited among those who, though not working in museums or research institutes, have brought their own knowledge to such a pitch that their work, both in the field and the way in which they publish it, equals or even surpasses that of men or women employed as ethnographers. Most of them are teachers or students, but there are also workers, peasants and members of professions other than teaching among them. They do a tremendous amount of work saving what is about to be lost, fired by enthusiasm only, and devotion to the cause, work which is really part of the duties of museums and research institutes where such exist. More has been done in Czechoslovakia than anywhere else to co-ordinate such activities. According to 1968 figures 406,116 citizens of Czechoslovakia declare Hungarian to be their native language. 1969 saw the foundation of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society in Czechoslovakia.

Regional houses and traditional peasant rooms are amongst the results its efforts have produced. László Kósa reports that the preservation of private and school collections occurred mostly in Czechoslovakia. They contain highly valuable ethnographic material, but their fate, as a rule, is still closely linked with that of their founder. Similar work is done by the Institute of Hungarian Studies established in Yugoslavia 1969, a country with a Hungarian minority of 520,938. In Rumania, with 1,711,938 Hungarians among the country's inhabitants, an institute to co-ordinate work has not yet been established. Nevertheless this is where most of the work is done over the largest range and where the trained ethnographers are most numerous in spite of the fact that no one specializing in the ethnography of national minorities has been trained for some time, not even with Rumanian as the language of instruction. Only ten odd of them work in official research establishments including museums and universities. László Kósa writes that Hungarian ethnography in Transylvania (Rumania), which can look back on a century's work, even shows evidence of independent schools of thought. More ethnographic works are published in Rumania; and books published there can count on certain success in Hungary, because of the sound way in which they combine scholarly work and public appeal. Interest in ethnography has increased in Rumania to such an extent that not only periodicals, but dailies and weeklies as well carry articles on the subject and publish material collected in the field. Ágnes Kovács writes that the amateur movement is organized largely by the press in Rumania through various competitions arranged for young and old alike.

As the *Valóság* articles show, cares and problems are much the same everywhere. One of them is the shortage of trained staff, the other is the need to provide training for amateur field-workers. In Rumania, for instance, this is done through private correspondence; in Czechoslovakia, seminars are

held to this end. In the Soviet Union, the Hungarian Studies Department at the University in Ungvár (Soviet Carpathian Ukraine, where, according to 1967 figures, 169,960 live) established only a few years ago, is now training the first generation of students. Outlets for publication are a problem everywhere, as is the absence of specialized periodicals and that, other than in the Soviet Union, there is little if any access to the literature of the subject published in Hungary; nor is there direct access to information on what is done in the field in other countries. Yet it is a particular joy that so much is done spontaneously, almost as another folk art, as it were, but the shortage of trained staff is bound to act to the detriment of sound scholarship. The Committee, made up of highly trained men and women, felt the absence of comparative ethnographic studies to be the cardinal shortcoming and drew attention to the fact that multinational Transylvania, in particular the areas inhabited by a mixed population, offers an excellent opportunity for cross-national surveys. However, only the Yugoslav Institute of Hungarian Studies in Újvidék has so far examined contacts between national groups. The increasing number of journeys by ethnographers from Hungary to the neighbouring countries fill part of the gap. The possibilities for this kind of work vary from country to country. László Kósa writes that relations with Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia have proved to be sound throughout in this respect over the past ten years. Contacts between museums close to either side of the border have also been progressing favourably. The fact that Hungarian ethnographers could once again visit the Carpathian Ukraine after a long gap is due to the favourable way in which contacts between ethnographers in Budapest and Moscow have developed.

There was little hope only a few years ago that ethnography, freed of the burden of nationalism, would be able to play such an important role in education and culture. In

the context of this the anxiety expressed by those in the profession as to the value to scholarship of ethnographic competitions, school collections, folklore festivals and duplicated rather primitive local publications does not appear to be all that important. As shown by the articles in *Valóság* this double aspect of Hungarian ethnography in neighbouring countries is its strength. Ethnographers who are members of national minorities have to carry a comparatively heavier burden in education and culture than such as are members of majority nations. A further reason why they cannot do their work while neglecting increasing public interest in ethnography lies in the fact that under the specific conditions they operate in, scholarship and public culture are very close to one another, not to mention that the work they do is vitally important for their immediate environment. László Kósa quotes József Faragó, a respected Hungarian ethnographer in Rumania, who had this to write in the 1973 *Korunk* (a Transylvanian Hungarian periodical) yearbook: "... Hungarian folklore in Rumania is a characteristic and important part of the culture of the Hungarian minority. It is indicative of its paramount importance that at the present stage of development the Hungarian national minority would be inconceivable without folklore; as regards the future, our folklore is one of the means that help us stay what we are... Folklore is a form of expression of our existence and nature. It follows that Hungarian folklore in Rumania, along with professional work in the field, is of immense cultural and political importance. Failure to appropriately display and make maximum use of our folklore lessens our particular culture and renders the culture of the country as a whole poorer. Systematic folklore research, however, enriches our knowledge of ourselves. It must be borne in mind that without realistic knowledge of ourselves it is impossible to transmit this to others. That is why the future of Hungarian folklore in Rumania

is the common concern of Hungarians in the country, and as such the concern of the country as a whole."

THE CONTRADICTIONARY SITUATION OF ENTERPRISES

The general rules governing the finances of enterprises, introduced in 1968 and only slightly modified since, are based on ideas formulated in the course of the preparation of the 1968 economic reform. Increased independence granted to the enterprises, it was argued, does not suffice to intensify economic efficiency, nor does it suffice to make them interested in accomplishing the objectives of the central plan. What were needed were "socialist enterprises". This notion of "socialist enterprise" which was not closely defined, and which is socialist to the extent to which it serves the purposes of the central plan targets, is activated by the fact that the companies have become interested in production at a profit, and that the personal income of staff also became partly dependent on the profit achieved. This measure has cut off the line that ensured the dependence of the financial interest of enterprises on the annual plan indices that used to be determined on a national level and broken down to the level of individual firms by a central agency. The new system of financial regulations made the enterprises interested in the profit they can make. The profit made by a company corresponds to the difference between costs and income. In an article "The Contradictory Situation of the Enterprises in Hungary's System of Economic Management" in No. 6, 1975 of *Közgazdasági Szemle*, a specialist journal of economics, Tamás Bauer concludes that central planning focused on the enforcement of the major objectives of economic policy is necessary for the operation of a system of particular interests of the above nature. The author then goes on to analyse the conditions required for the ap-

propriate operation of such a system and says that what is essential in the first place is that the prices must express the real social valuation of products and services; the second, that the performance of executives and staff should in fact exercise an influence on the profits made; thirdly, that enterprises must be given a free hand in elaborating their production and sales policies on their own, with the relationships between supply, demand and prices appropriately taken into consideration.

In short, the fact that enterprises are made interested in the profit they make and the income they achieve, which is one of the cardinal elements of the new system of economic management, not only makes it possible for them to act independently and bear full responsibility in taking economic decisions but it also necessitates this. The contradiction in the title of the article is concealed in the above correlation, for the independence of and responsibility borne by the enterprises make up only one side of Hungary's economy while the other, which is composed of the system of economic institutions, that is the actual mechanism of decision-taking, the hierarchical situation as a whole, often fails to be in harmony with the theoretical and practical conditions of the appropriate operation of the system of interests outlined above.

Basically, the strictly specified specialized and regional division of economic units, a system that was established in the period when economic management was based on plan instructions, has survived. The internal division of the state organization of economic management has also been preserved, for the ministries specialized according to the industries and lines of production have been retained; moreover, the internal division of such institutions as the National Planning Office, the Finance Ministry and the National Bank has also been adjusted to cor-

respond to the system of specializations. In essence, the earlier organizational structure of the planned economy has remained unchanged, Tamás Bauer says, and adds that this state of affairs continues to make it possible for sectional and enterprise interests to come to the fore within central decisions, and vice versa: that the method of directing the economic activities of the enterprises centrally was retained and strengthened. Thus the enterprises now find themselves in a contradictory situation, for their present position is characterized, on the one hand, by the end of the system of breaking down the plans to the enterprise level and the introduction of uniform economic regulation; but, on the other hand, it seems to have remained directly dependent on the central state machinery.

This dual character has brought about troubles in the operation of the system and certain "ways of operation" have taken shape such as financial preferences, different kinds of central price subsidies, export subsidies, permission to raise wages above the established level, tax concessions and special credits and investment funds. The methods allowed for the effects of a system based on interest in profits to be softened, leaving out of account the financial effects of the decisions taken; though as a result mushrooming preferences of various sorts rendered value relations impossible to survey and made the calculation of what is economic even more difficult. Besides, the situation of the enterprises continues to be contradictory and the financial differentiations made are not sufficient to remove the contradictions. Pressure by the political and social organizations and the voice of the press are needed to ensure that enterprises bear the public interest in mind even at the expense of profitability or their own economic benefits in those cases where enterprise and social interests clash.

ISTVÁN BART

NOTES FROM EUROPE

Cahiers Européens—Europäische Hefte

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, for a Hungarian reviewer to be completely impartial about a magazine whose subtitle implies that it aims to be a mirror of European culture. He inevitably takes in hand the first two year' numbers with the question: what concept of Europe is going to be espoused by a magazine published jointly by two West European foundations (the F.V.S. of Hamburg and the Johann-Wolfgang-von-Goethe-Stiftung of Basle)—the one which draws a line along the Elbe and the Leitha, or the other, the only one acceptable to a Hungarian, which replaces political restrictions with—we may already say—"the spirit of Helsinki", endeavouring to promote the greater Europe which has always nurtured our ideals and strivings, even when brutal facts made them seem practically hopeless.

The most encouraging comment and strongest praise a Hungarian reviewer can give *Notes from Europe* as edited by Pierre Mortgat, is that it obviously started out reflecting the views of the Europe "of the Nine" but more and more perceptibly, almost from number to number, strives to endorse the wider view as set forth by René Maheu, former Director General of UNESCO, in his essay "For an open Europe" (No. 1/1974): "The maintenance of the spiritual values of Europe... but of what Europe, the politically minded may ask. For Europe is, in fact, profoundly divided, politically, ideologically, economically, and militarily. Hence the temptation to restrict European spiritual values to the particular camp to which we ourselves belong, and to deny the other side any right to claim either to be European or to defend values worthy of the name. I believe it to be supremely important to resist this temptation, which we know in advance can lead only to discord, suspicion and consequently insecurity... I consider that there is a Europe

taking in the whole geographical unit that goes by that name, and that this is the Europe of culture or, in fact, of spiritual values."

The magazine quotes these thoughts of Maheu in its very first number in January 1974. At the time the controversy was still in full swing between those, on the one hand, working hard in the spirit later to be elaborated in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and on the other, those intent on thwarting a new chapter of active peaceful coexistence. *Notes from Europe* was obviously and unambiguously in the camp promoting a Europe of concerted spiritual values. These numbers of the magazine testify to an abundance of good intentions, supported by a more recent innovation: originally every article was published in German, English and French. In the second year the editors started alternating a fourth language, as can be read on the title page of the magazine: "*eine andere romanische Sprache*". It was a commendable first step. But, without wishing to be spoilsports, we nevertheless wonder whether the members of other language families in Europe may also be admitted to this beautiful linguistic polyphony...

Notes from Europe, as intended by its founders, limits its purview to "nature conservancy, the care and protection of the countryside, local amenities and historic monuments, town building and architecture, the fine arts, science and literature, agriculture and forestry, and aid for youth and aged people." In reality such limits comprehend a great deal, from a short story by Siegfried Lenz (in No. 2/1975) to Jiří Kolar's "urban folklore" (No. 2/1975). Stanislaw Lorentz, director of the Polish National Museum and professor of art history at the University of Warsaw, writes about the rebuilding of his native city, after being completely destroyed in the Second World War.

He not only relates in a professional and objective manner how, using salvaged prints and Canaletto's paintings, they recreated the old city of Warsaw, but he also conveys the human dimensions of their work. He is fully aware of the traditions of national culture, the responsibility they had in renewing and preserving it, and the strength they derived from the enormous community power inherent in a socialist society. The Nazis blew up the royal palace to symbolize the "definitive annihilation" of Polish statehood: its rebuilding symbolizes much more—a mass movement marshalling the necessary material resources by collective social action.

Or let us take another noteworthy article, by Heinz Spielmann, an art historian in Hamburg, who discusses Oskar Kokoschka's European "City Portraits". It is a dissertation in the sociology of the arts, analysing the encounter between city and artist... but while describing the "portraits", in which Kokoschka's brush brings life to the Dresden of 1922, the Prague of 1934, then on to Venice, Florence and postwar Berlin, Hamburg, Lübeck, Bremen and London, Spielmann actually recalls the process of alienation which began in the inter-war period, gathered speed since the war, and Kokoschka has opposed after his own fashion. After the war the artist visited nearly all the big cities that had been destroyed. But, notes the article, quoting Kokoschka, "I have never painted ruins, because for me, destruction is a confusion of the mind. However, the destruction brought by technical civilization, which completely destroys the organic growth of a city, interests me even more. That is why I painted the series of urban paintings—to save what appears to be the human creation in a city, that is to say, the community of individuals."

Unity and difference

Still the basic subject of the *Notes from Europe* is, with good reason, the way past and

present cultural activity links together the peoples of Europe. Marion Gräfin Dönhoff finds an excellent and worthy example of this in her commemoration of Edgar Salin, a modern *uomo universale*, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for pioneering research in economics, but also translated four volumes of Plato and wrote a book on Stefan George which is still considered a standard work. Henry Rollet writes about another aspect of Salin in his "European Commitment" (both articles appeared in No. 1/1975), and the disappointment it engendered which dominated the end of his life. "In his last years Edgar Salin often despaired of the future of Europe, which he had envisaged with such confidence in 1958," Rollet writes. "Deeply convinced that a cultural unity did in fact exist in Europe, he suffered when he saw its realisation held back by political opportunism... I did not share his pessimism then and I do not now." Salin, though he might have had some reservations, would certainly have endorsed the spirit of Helsinki with at least a sigh to relieve his pessimism. And we look forward with frank expectation to a change of heart by Raymond Aron on a subject he describes in his customary crystal-clear way in the essay "Europe, future of a myth" (No. 3/1975): "The myth of the united Europe has been submerged in the prosaic routine of daily life in the Europe of the industrialists and prosperity. Today it no longer arouses the enthusiasm of the post-war generation who are living in a Europe that is partially integrated and who no longer dream of a United States of Europe. Whether or not they are in revolt against the established regime, they are more often prepared to devote their energies to such issues as the conservation of nature, environmental protection and traffic congestion than to the political unification of Western Europe." It would not be fair to single out one sentence to take issue with Raymond Aron, but we may perhaps ask incidentally whether his question does not imply its own answer.

Have today's youth not abandoned the idea of a united Europe, which they themselves had longed for, precisely because they are disillusioned with the tight confinement, the Procrustean bed, of Western Europe? Don't they turn towards the conservation of nature, environmental protection and other problems of general interest because the solutions to these problems point beyond such limitations? This is not the place to continue this train of thought, which anyway has already been settled in Helsinki, as clearly documented in *Notes from Europe*, the magazine that assembles the best minds of our continent in the very spirit of Helsinki.

Hungary and Europe

In a publication about Europe the reader looks for items about his own country with understandable curiosity—especially when he is a citizen of a country which has always felt it so important to be a part of Europe and European culture. In this respect *Notes from Europe* does not disappoint the reader. An essay by Iván Boldizsár, editor of NHQ (No. 3/1974), deals with Budapest but, under the pretext of a "city portrait", analyses the European character of Hungarian culture and the Hungarian spirit. "... Budapest belongs to Europe, to Europe as a whole," the author writes. "When walking over the old Lánchíd, the chain bridge, our Pont Neuf, built by the Scots Adam Clark, or when crossing over the Margaret Bridge, the work of the engineer Gouin, a member of Eiffel's staff, or when stopping on the Elizabeth Bridge, destroyed during the war and rebuilt even more elegantly than before by a socialist country, I can in a single glance survey both Europe's past and its present. On the hills of Buda the old royal castle has arisen from its ruins, restored in all its medieval and baroque splendour, and now, like the Louvre, houses a number of museums. In the spring of this year, Professor László Zolnay dug up a 'sculpture cemetery',

which dates from the Anjou dynasty of the 14th century, and has found there 50 magnificent gothic statues in stone, almost intact, which could rival the statuary of Chartres. In a circular panorama, integrated with these old symbols and values of Western culture, are the Csepel factory buildings and the new housing estates... which express in a different but harmonious manner the humanist and socialist ideals of our heir tage..."

In the same number in which we read Iván Boldizsár's essay on Budapest, a Hungarian musicologist, László Vikár, writes an interesting treatise on Zoltán Kodály's method of teaching music, as now employed the world over. While noting that the Kodály method has been introduced in the U.S.A., Canada, Japan, Australia, and Kodály institutes founded in Tokyo and Wellesley, Mass., U.S.A., he wonders how the Hungarian composer's method could be applied on an even wider scale, in still more countries. An interesting article on the restoration of the frescoes in the Black Church in Brassó (today Brasov, in Rumania) also pertains to Hungary: one fresco represents the great Renaissance Hungarian Monarch, King Matthias Corvinus (1458-1490).

Let us conclude our gleanings from *Notes from Europe* with a small contribution to the article "Photography as a European Achievement" (No. 3/1974). We should like to add to the data in this excellent and interesting essay, the name of the engineer and mathematician József Petzval (1807-1891), professor at the University of Budapest and later of Vienna, a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His calculations led to the first photographic lens suitable for photographing a person's face. It reduced to a mere fraction of a second the time needed to taking a photograph, and the "Petzval lens" is still used today in film cameras. So a Hungarian has made his contributions to the invention and improvement of photography, as others had among many other "European achievements."

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SURVEYS

MIKLÓS SZÁNTÓ

LEVELLING AND INEQUALITIES IN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

An imaginary map of culture would show peaks, plateaus and deep valleys. An indispensable aid in orientation, perhaps, but such a map would present, of course, a static picture, while culture is a process. The majority of those who write on mass culture today, going back to Ortega, picture this as a levelling process which takes place as a result of the wide dissemination of mass-culture media. They claim that, with the disappearance of the peaks, culture has become the province of mediocrity, a view which has adherents in Hungary, too. Erroneous judgements have occasionally gained ground in the working-class movement as well, mostly in the form of utopian illusions based on a sort of "obligatory optimism". The process of culture has been viewed as a single phenomenal, straight-lined rise, problem-free, where plains and valleys disappear, where all differences are levelled out and a vast "plateau" spreads out at the level of the peaks. In reality, however, the situation is different. Some of the old inequalities have disappeared while others persist but have taken on new forms. In the course of cultural development new inequalities spring up, new contradictions arise and are resolved.

Certain levelling trends are noticeable in developed capitalist countries as well. But equalization caused by technological development takes a different direction. There are some who would equate the two kinds

of equalization on the ground that the levelling process is a world phenomenon; what they forget is that equalization in Hungary is taking place in socialist soil, within a national framework and with a changed content. What is the same is also different, and every general phenomenon occurs in the specific, particular context of "here and now".

In referring to levelling and inequality, the terms themselves imply a comparison of certain reference points; differences or similarities of the chosen points of elevation, a decrease or increase of differences, the convergence or divergence of values are all determined within a given system of measurement. Thirty years after the liberation of Hungary we are attempting to survey as Marxists the way we have come and the historical antecedents of the present situation, and in so doing to clear up the real factors and contradictions of the concrete situation. For this reason the special features of the present cultural conditions in Hungary, the relations of the different classes and strata of Hungarian society to one another and the observable trends of levelling and inequality need to be examined.

Every cultural historian is confronted with the very complicated question of the standards by which to measure social progress. The classics of Marxism have illustrated the development of successive social structures by the developmental levels of

forces and relations of production. The evolutionary curve from the stone-axe to the laser beam is evident and tremendous, but technological progress in itself cannot be the sole index of the genuine affluence of a society. In their investigation of the main trends of social evolution Marx and Engels came to the conclusion that the epochal stages of the continuous process of equalization must be sought in an analysis of the basic forms of the division of labour. On this basis it can be said that socialist society is characterized by the obliteration of sharp social differences between classes, and that, by relying on social ownership of the means of production, the thousand years old differences between town and village and between manual and mental work will gradually disappear.

Characteristic of our time is the production and large-scale dissemination of ideas to broad masses on the part of a large number of specialists. The efficiency of dissemination has increased enormously and knowledge is spread with fantastic speed. "Consumers of ideas" have multiplied along with a host of highly trained skilled workers, technicians, university graduates and, in another dimension, politicians. Mass information requires a lot of material, a need which is also expressed by the fast-growing demands of the consumer "market".

We live in an atmosphere of competition between the socialist and the capitalist systems, of international exchanges and discussion. Publicity throws light on vast areas, extending the frontiers of public opinion. We live in a time when ideas and knowledge rapidly become obsolete, and life calls for new ideas daily.

Research, however, indicates that "cultural demands" have not grown uniformly in all the different strata of consumers. It is very difficult to transmit new knowledge to the older generation of workers and peasants who did not go beyond the sixth grade of elementary school. It is only with great difficulty that they are able to accept works

of art differing from their accustomed taste, which is based upon traditional ways of narrating stories, the traditional gamut of melodies and colours, and works with plenty of action.

Mobility therefore is of two kinds. In relation to the starting-point of 1945 marking the liberation of the country, the whole of Hungarian society has moved forward and upward. This process is sometimes faster, sometimes slower in rhythm, but it is steady. At the same time the cultural development of certain sections of society progresses unevenly and relative shortcomings do exist. The total structure has changed vertically, but horizontally there are differing levels and rhythms. While society as a whole is in continuous motion forward and upward, there is a vertical levelling of large social groups within which there exists a horizontal inequality of strata.

In Hungary the juridico-social foundations of "vertical" equality are built upon the working class having achieved political power and having passed social ownership into law. "Horizontal" inequalities, however, could not be eliminated, for the inequality of income distribution and the inequality of culture and life-style between different classes and strata of society have remained. Life-style differences are due not only to a difference of available supplies but also to a difference of demands. We carry many things with ourselves: a peasant turned worker, for example, who brings an established system of customs and a given body of knowledge from the village, is able to absorb the new for a certain period of time, but there is a limit to his flexibility beyond which he is unable to adjust. It is a process of assimilation which does not take place uniformly, for example, in respect to the satisfaction of so-called "civilized demands" or artistic tastes. For the most part it takes place much sooner in spheres closest to innovation in technology, ranging from the operation of the washing machine to the mechanical techniques of factory work, be-

cause daily practice aids the development of new reflexes. It is accomplished with most difficulty in conceptual and symbolic systems of knowledge which are less frequently used and which frequently lack a basis on which one can build.

The Democratization of Culture

How did we get where we are today? What characterized the cultural conditions of the country in the decades before 1945? What was the significance of the cultural monopoly of the old ruling classes?

1 Inequality was institutionally secured. The exploiting classes restricted admission to secondary and higher education. For all practical purposes, education was not available to children of working-class and poor-peasant origin because of the system of tuition fees, the hardships of subsistence during study years, the scarcity of job opportunities afforded by college and secondary schools, the threat of future unemployment, etc. All these factors perpetuated and deepened the cultural gap between manual and mental work on the one hand and between town and village on the other.

2 The body of cultural knowledge, works of art, the instruments of civilized recreation were monopolized in such a way that, on the one hand, the working class was largely deprived of the culture afforded by schools and thus had no incentives and, on the other, poor people could not—even if they wanted to—buy goods such as radios, books, theatre tickets and musical instruments.

3 The culture of the ruling classes was dominant, and in its role as defender of capitalist society it paralysed the thinking of people by espousing religiousness, sentimentalism, shoddiness and by preaching submissiveness.

4 Intellectuals—who are of decisive importance as steadfast innovators, developers, guardians and transmitters of culture—were

made to serve the purposes of the ruling class which was also the exclusive provider of its reserve forces. The little industry there was did not require a great number of technicians. Vacancies requiring secondary or higher education—mainly legal posts—could easily be filled by members of the ruling classes, which also controlled distribution. The way of life of intellectuals was shaped by forces which were under the influence of the ruling classes.

Therefore interpreting the democratization of culture which has followed in the wake of the liberation as a countercurrent to the cultural monopoly, one must say in the first place that the educational standards of large social groups are becoming equalized. The meaning of equalization can be summed up as follows:

1 Control of the institutions of secondary and higher education with equal opportunities for working-class and peasant youth.

2 Legally equal conditions which tend to become equal in practice; utilization of extra-curricular forms of cultural development; acquisition of cultural tools with a view to shaping cultural discrimination.

3 Conscious propagation of a dominant Marxist culture with the help of institutions which pursue a socialist cultural policy and which consider it their main duty to draw into cultural life the heretofore culturally isolated masses.

4 Increasing the proportions in accordance with the tasks of the building of socialism, creating a new generation of professional people from the ranks of the working classes; winning over the old professions and enlisting the active participation of all in the realization of the aims of socialism; structuring the professionals in conformity with the requirements of a developed industry and large-scale farming; considerably increasing the number of those with technical qualifications.

The new structure can come about only if the various large social groups are able to make use of the available means. Improved

conditions guarantee that anyone can obtain the qualifications which best suit their abilities, and that on the basis of an appropriate work assignment, and its accompanying income, they can fashion their own demanding or unambitious way of life. The position occupied in the division of labour, income, educational levels and life-styles underlie the shaping of the cultural structure of a society building socialism.

The Indices of Development

Today's situation is the result, the summation as it were, of thirty years' changes. If we fail to take this into account it is impossible to measure either the distance from the starting point to the present position or to determine diverging velocities or setbacks of partial processes in some areas and the cultural trends of different social groups. Nor would it be possible to evaluate the significance of phenomena and map out a course of action to be taken. However, it is not easy to find the "milestone"; in historically different circumstances it is difficult to use identical categories to measure progress. The varying standards used by researchers and the absence of a clear periodization of post-liberation cultural history are a source of many errors. There are no indices of different periods which would make comparison possible at specific points and this causes further difficulties. In this necessarily brief survey such an attempt appears to be one of the possible, and hopefully controversial, solutions which will stimulate further effort.

The present system of cultural institutions came into being step by step; scientific and technological achievements, literary and artistic works characteristic of given stages emerged at every point and the masses "consumed" the different cultural productions, re-creating them in their own image in accordance with their specific capacity.

A network of schools, scientific institutes,

theatres, cinemas, the press, radio and television, publishing houses, libraries and other institutions not specified here have been established. Mass media came into being which are capable of satisfying the needs of millions of people, transmitting indispensable knowledge, information and cultural products to Hungarian homes day after day. There are a large number of talented specialists in this field and the indices of the supply of cultural facilities testify to considerable development. The question is whether the growth rate is fast enough and whether development complies with both needs and what can be done. According to the cultural policy resolution of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party there are alarming signs of serious shortcomings which make it imperative to examine thoroughly the present situation.

Some discussions of the present situation are far too "aesthetic"; they fail to make allowances for the conditions which determine choices of action, their hierarchy of values and hence the place and role of culture in their lives. Cultural contradictions cannot be understood, nor can they be resolved, within the limits of cultural conditions; they can only be inferred from the whole of social practice, keeping in mind, of course, the relatively autonomous development of a particular field.

In accordance with the basic Marxian position, let us begin with differences in production and the social division of labour and its cultural consequences. Within the total number of wage and salary earners in agriculture, industry and the service sector alike, manual and intellectual workers are differentiated according to training, the degree of responsibility in concrete productive labour and the amount of physical effort required by the work.

There are further subdivisions, the stratum of manual workers itself its heterogeneous and is subdivided according to qualifications into skilled workers, semi-

skilled workers and unskilled workers. There are also degrees of inequality in distribution, for example in wages. (Another basis for classification is the aggregate income, on which calculations of per capita income are based.) The income level determines the scope and composition of the family "assets", and also influences the pattern of household expenses.

One of the most profound cultural contradictions of our time, at a period of transition to intensive production, is found in production.

Production and Culture

People live and work in conditions that are getting better but the improvement is not in a straight line. Productive labour is the basis of existence and, as a result, contradictions and tensions in this sphere are carried over into private lives, influencing the way we feel in particular about culture. A substantial part of tasks stems from the fact that the level of training and education of the labour force is not in keeping with the technological level of production. While industries complain of a labour shortage, in some areas overqualification is a problem. Modernization of production is a way out, but the mechanization of hard manual work is made difficult by the prohibitive cost of machines. What is more, a considerable number of skilled workers do jobs that could be performed by the semi-skilled and—as we read in one study—"they rightly ask themselves if it was worth their while to undergo special training. For, while there is a growing number of skilled workers with a secondary education, there will be an ever increasing need for mechanics or semi-skilled workers as automation advances."¹ Today

¹ György Pogány: "Társadalmi-gazdasági követelmények a fizikai dolgozók képzési-oktatási struktúrájával szemben" (Socio-economic Requirements in the Training and Education Structure of Manual Workers). *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 1974/12, p. 1342.

the general education of manual workers is lower and their average qualification is somewhat higher than socially needed. Not much has been done to stimulate interest in the enterprise, so the workers' personal interest abates; thus it is only natural that the prestige of culture does not rise. The demand for extension training does not express a need within the enterprise, but arises as a result of outside prompting on the part of the state, and this encouragement occasionally even conflicts with the every-day interests of enterprises.

What can thus be expected? Qualification levels will generally continue to rise, while technical work will, for some time, require the monotonous semi-skilled tasks of assembly-line production or, at best, work with semi-automated machines. How much monotony can be tolerated depends largely on a person's educational and training level. "The more abilities and skills you feel to be unused in any given job, the more you suffer from the monotony," a prominent Hungarian economist writes in this connection. She also formulates the consequences as follows: "Parallel with the ever more widespread satisfaction of material needs, the kind of work done, together with related cultural differences, is fast becoming the most important kind of social difference."²

Many professional people are "semi-skilled" intellectual workers who do not perform work of a creative nature. The end-result is unpleasant feelings they try to escape from, and culture becomes a kind of "protective device" instead of a source of human wealth.

Let's make no mistake, however; this process is not a mysterious stroke of fate: technology is not an enemy to culture. First, advanced technology is a welcome development which brings with it qualitative changes in production, a widening choice of products, improved supplies and a higher standard of

² Katalin Falus-Szikra: "Képzettség és munkaszervezés" (Qualifications and Work Organization). *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 1974/12, p. 1424.

living. Furthermore, the working conditions of an up-to-date, modern factory, skill in a new trade, productive collective activities, the wholesome, democratic atmosphere of factories in, and even in spite of, mass production can, and necessarily will, prove to be constant stimuli for the cultural improvement of youth, those of rural origin, and women. We also hope to be able to discover modern forms of work organization which will provide a remedy against monotony, render work more varied and eventful and increase labour productivity at the same time.

In speaking of the dialectics of work and leisure and the different aspects of contradictory relations, what Marx said of the true significance of leisure activities should be kept in mind.

"The saving of labour time (is) equal to an increase of free time, i.e. time for the full development of the individual, which in turn reacts back upon the productive power of labour as itself the greatest productive power. From the standpoint of the direct production process it can be regarded as the production of *fixed capital*, this fixed capital being man himself."

"Free time—which is both idle time and time for higher activity—has naturally transformed its possessor into a different subject, and he then enters into the direct production process as this different subject."³

Hungarian society cannot afford to let this fixed capital of the human force of production, knowledge and experience remain unutilized by wasting creative energies. The question is frequently asked why people cultivate gardens, investing their ideas and energy in them to such an extent that they withdraw from community life. In my opinion, the most instrumental factor is that the choice of profession is often accidental; positions often turn out to be unobtainable to the real or imagined abilities of

people; but the negative atmosphere of a factory or the weakness of a collective can also contribute to a lack of involvement in public life. Often work does not grow into a vocation and a good many people do not feel the joy of accomplishment in their productive activities. All these factors are also related to the weaknesses of unsatisfactory workshop-democracy. The garden, the week-end cottage or the car as a goal or as an occupation may offer only a "mini-perspective" but one which is at least tangible. And so many withdraw into their private worlds.

Of course, this is but one aspect. To the city-dweller the garden means recreation, a closeness to nature, fresh air, healthy surroundings, relaxations, frequently a change of company, meeting with people of similar interests, exchanges of opinion, companionship, "supplementary sports", and sometimes, encounters with new fields of knowledge.

The car is a vehicle which helps one to see and know hitherto unknown cities and people, countries and cultures; its operation sets in motion skills and abilities which might rarely be used, thus giving rest and pleasure. The above "values" do provide pleasant experiences if they serve as tools in personality development. The trouble begins when the garden, car or cottage becomes an end in itself and turns into a mere status symbol; when it serves as a refuge for the owner to hide in; when it is a cave of withdrawal from society and community life; when it is not a source of new strength for man to live more affectively in the community but dwindles into a fenced-in "property", raising an insurmountable wall between society and the proprietor.

The basic requirement of advanced socialist societies of equalization between manual and mental work is not only a matter of raising the levels of education and training. Productive culture is also a unity of knowledge and behaviour, which is manifest in man's morality as a whole, in his willing-

³ Karl Marx: "Grundrisse". *Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* (Rough Draft). Translated by Martin Nicolaus. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1973. p. 711 and 712.

ness to make sacrifices. As György Aczél said: "By culture we do not only mean the level of technical knowledge (although this, too) but primarily the so-called 'inner culture', the culture of thought, of feeling, of the total human attitude. It refers to the individual's capacity for comprehending the entire working process, the social interconnections and significance of labour, and recognizing and sizing up the role it plays in society, in man, in the world."⁴

The leading class of a society building socialism is the working class, and the unity and progress of that society depends on their enthusiasm for productive labour and political consciousness. This is why we consider important the socialist brigade movement whose motto and practice so accurately express the requirements of socialist humanity: to live, work and learn in a socialist way. We are working to make the socialist brigades genuine communities and workshops of culture.

Much has been said about the scientific and technological revolution having renewed and restructured the cultural ideal; the rapid obsolescence of knowledge necessitates continuous training, even after formal education is over. It has been noted less frequently, however, that it takes great perseverance, diligence, self-abnegation and sacrifice over many years for a working person to make up gaps in formal education. The chances for success are greatly influenced by the participant's age. After 40 the success of school-type learning seems quite hopeless. In addition to age, family status and sex are decisive. A single woman is more likely to study, but the situation of a housewife with two children is difficult and she has less opportunity to do so.

Figures on the educational level of the gainfully employed indicate that nearly half

⁴ György Aczél: "Szocializmus, életforma" (Socialism, Life-style). Based on short-hand notes taken at the meeting of the Central Council of Trade Unions on June 29, 1973. *Látóhatár*, No. 1973/9., p. 179.

the population of Hungary has not completed eight years elementary education. If we examine the figures by ten-year periods, it appears that in the 20 to 30-year age-group there is a high ratio of secondary-school graduates, while among working people over 50 the number of those who have completed only six or seven years of elementary school is astonishingly high. In the coming decade there will still be hundreds of thousands in production who have a low level of education and general culture and who have very little chance of finishing their elementary-school studies. At the same time the rate of technological progress is extremely fast and enterprises introduce more and more new machines which people must learn to handle. The lower the level of general education and professional training, the more difficult the switch-over. Older workers naturally cling to what they have become accustomed to; their self-esteem is based on the routine of decades. The younger, more highly educated workers are also better qualified professionally and adapt themselves more quickly to new conditions, finding it easier to switch over to the new. Such situations imply contradictions and create tensions between different strata of workers.

The prestige of culture varies from stratum to stratum; its standing is not only a cultural but a social question. Béla Köpeczi writes: "Until general culture, professional training and income come into a closer and more reasonable relation with one another, the social prestige of culture cannot grow."⁵

Urbanization

During the past few decades vigorous urbanization in Hungary has considerably raised the cultural level of the labouring masses. New, incomparably broader pos-

⁵ Béla Köpeczi: "A kultúra társadalmi rangja" (The Social Status of Culture). Extract from a debate. *Látóhatár*, 1973/3., p. 168.

sibilities were provided than had been available in the traditional village. Urban life requires the acquisition of new knowledge necessary for a new way of life and the adoption of relevant norms and customs. Concurrent with rapid and extensive urbanization has been the diminution of differences between the capital city and the countryside, on the one hand, and between the towns and the villages, on the other.

Industrial plants were established in traditional towns, engendering new cities, but the development of the infrastructure did not keep abreast of this rapid industrialization. Hundreds of thousands of new industrial wage-earners solved this problem by retaining their rural residences and commuting between home and work. Characteristic of the position of commuters is that they spend too much time commuting. The fatigue of the daily rides resulted in a cultural disadvantage which was further aggravated by their working as auxiliary labourers in co-operatives, on state farms or on their own household farms, especially at the peak of the agricultural season. Thus they were left out of general cultural development.

City-dwellers acclimatize to urban life through an uncomfortable "crash course". In cities technological development is higher and the interrelation between the spread of electricity and the rise of the cultural level, for example, is self-evident. The appearance on a mass scale of audio-visual instruments has transformed life-styles. Some household appliances have an indirect cultural effect. The city, with its abundance of cultural facilities and regular schedules, provides cultural stimulants around the clock.

But there are also drawbacks. Every sociological or socio-psychological study on city living points out that amid urban conditions there are more impersonal relationships than elsewhere, that opportunities for new acquaintances are fewer and the circle of acquaintances smaller. There are indications also in this country that families become introverted, a trend which is promoted

by better housing conditions and increased television viewing. There are many lonely people. It is paradoxical in a society building socialism that the cohesive force of the community does not grow as it should.

The continuous one-way influx of people from village to town has slowed down; the resources of agricultural labour are dwindling. The village itself is no longer an entirely agricultural settlement. In most villages located in the vicinity of some city, the majority of the population are gainfully employed in industry, commerce, the service sector or in public administration. In many places villages grow into suburbs and are being supplied with public utilities in widening concentric circles. The car enables villagers to go to the theatre and concerts in the city and the radio offers the same culture to them as to city-dwellers. Collective work and uniform interests bring people together, and this factor, in addition to and in place of family relationships, is the basis of the re-organization of social life.

A reverse movement which could be seen a decade ago in developed industrial countries is now beginning here: families are swarming to settlements outside the city. The increasing use of cars, the development of mass transportation and more highways have made it possible for the strata with surplus income and higher living standards to have family homes built in villages which are growing into suburban zones around larger cities. At the same time the strata with more modest incomes take advantage of relatively less expensive plots of land in districts farther out and build their own family homes with gardens. This ties up all their money and energy over a period of several years; in the actual construction, especially on week-ends, they enlist the help of the whole family, relatives and friends, and colleagues; then after moving into the new home they repay in kind, working Sundays on the plot of another relation or colleague.

Nor is this process free of contradictions.

On the one hand, a relatively large number of villages, following the pattern of the unification of co-operatives, become so-called primary villages and develop more rapidly as emerging industrial centres; on the other hand, some communities remain backward and face the possibility of depopulation. The system of detached farmsteads, which came into being in some parts of the Great Hungarian Plain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and whose scattered houses are still inhabited by a million people, demonstrates certain features which in some places are still viable under the new conditions. In other places, under different conditions, they survive for a time, only to become obsolete as their occupants lag hopelessly behind rising national living standards. In this respect there are great differences between more and less industrialized areas; communities linked to the transportation network develop more rapidly, while others are virtually abandoned. The total abandonment of villages such as Gyúrűfű and rapid urbanization occur simultaneously, are interpenetrating phenomena. All strata, of course, cannot equally utilize the possibilities of the changing situation. It depends first of all on income, education and age as to whether families benefit from the new conditions, or whether it all only adds up to inequality between those moving forward and those remaining behind.

*Contradictions of Cultural
Consumption*

All researchers of cultural conditions are in agreement that there has been considerable improvement in the living standard of Hungarian families; their cultural "reserves" have been enriched, and within a few years' time it has become a matter of course to have a radio and a television set. Household culture has changed; electrical appliances help in housework and the demands for services have grown too. The pro-

cess of equalization in respect to per capita family income has progressed.

At the same time there is a relatively broad stratum which still lives under bad conditions and must struggle with housing difficulties; there are retired people who receive low pensions and families with too many dependents for the family income. The past four to five years of accelerated improvement has not equally covered all strata of the population. Per capita income depends to a large extent on the number of children, and the ratio of earners to dependents is one of the determinants of discretionary income which, over and above the satisfaction of basic necessities (food, dwelling, clothing), makes such things as cultural demands impossible to satisfy.

Culture costs money. Therefore it is essential to know what use people make of available material resources and whether the ratio of cultural allocations is growing, absolutely and relatively, within family budgets. And here we encounter a serious contradiction, for the ratio of the sums expended on culture within the pattern of household expenses is stationary.

The prices of cultural facilities in Hungary are comparatively low. Considerable state subsidies make books and theatre tickets accessible to any person of modest means who wants cultural entertainment. But even inexpensive cultural products are only within the reach of one who has a developed taste for them and a "free" income. The moment you have to stop to consider how to spend your money and, we may add, your time and energy, the value factor intervenes. In the whole system of decision-making the position culture holds in the scale of values, the prestige of culture, the social esteem given the cultured man and the real or fictitious values which underlie social prestige all play a role. (In capitalist societies, social status is determined by success, money and career.) The question arises whether ability, culture, social usefulness and participation in decision-making con-

stitute the value standards of socialist society. One of the causes of the harmful manifestations of petty-bourgeois mentality is that in our transitional society certain types of personal property lend "private proprietary features" to their owners, and an attitude of "consumption for consumption's sake" can also be observed.

Culture is a particular commodity the nature of which is restricted by the Hungarian state's policy of subsidization. But let us entertain no illusions in this respect either: the national income devoted to this purpose is produced by the entire people. The buyer has a definite need which presents itself as a buyer's demand. If we examine, for example, the social stratification of theatre-goers, we find that the number from each stratum grows according to the degree of education. The people who enjoy the subsidies granted to theatres come primarily from the higher income groups with secondary and higher education. This does not mean that state subsidies to theatres ought to be stopped, but it does give cause for greater sacrifices in order to create such demands and to seek means by which disadvantaged people can be effectively helped. It must be recognized that equal chances often augment inequality. Therefore efforts must be redoubled in order to achieve the cultural advancement of those living in difficult circumstances.

At this point, however, it should once again be noted that the "consumption" of culture does not automatically go hand in hand with the socialist way of life. Socialist life-style also demands a communal attitude and active participation in public life.

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Many questions have to be answered, constructive debates have been going on for years; the recent Party resolution on cultural policy has complemented an entire series of

previous resolutions. Socialist culture as a whole has been brought into the limelight. Interesting discussions have been held on the role of intellectuals, the structure of institutions and the prestige of culture. For example, in a meeting of the Cultural Research Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the theoretical and practical problems of socialist culture were discussed by leading specialists.

These useful and interesting debates have been marred by an overemphasis on aesthetics while work and its culture have been pushed into the background; not enough stress has been placed on the fact that socialist culture encourages not only study and a search for artistic experience, but also a communal attitude that manifests itself in productive work, in public consciousness, in behaviour and in knowledge alike. In my opinion the solution should be approached from the side of the socialist way of life, taking into account conditions of personal circumstances. In production we have in part already discovered ways of switching over to the intensive stage, but in culture many vestiges of the extensive period still survive: the qualitative approach is strong, the worker is often regarded merely as manpower, not infrequently planning is one-sidedly investment-oriented and we have not yet found sensitive, accurate indices for a system of effective incentives to create interest in culture; long-range thinking which takes into account the chain-reaction effects of all our economic and social arrangements is sometimes lacking and these effects can promote or hinder cultural processes, too.

Most contradictions go hand in hand with progress. Marxism-Leninism is a good compass and on the basis of the Marxian scale of values we can work out necessary tasks, fight against unfavourable tendencies and strengthen everything that points to the future.

PÉTER SÁRKÖZY

VALUE ANALYSIS IN AGRICULTURE

About thirty years ago an American engineer, Lawrence D. Miles, proposed a new-type of production index. His method, value analysis, has since been used in industry in a number of countries, but less so in agriculture. Methods of this kind are not really suitable for small holdings. The situation differs where farming is on a large scale, particularly where primary production and processing are integrated. There are a growing number of farms of that sort in Hungary. It was therefore decided to include value analysis in the postgraduate studies of agricultural scientists in Budapest.

The Basic Principle

Value analysis establishes the ratio between the function of a given product and costs in terms of the principle of "more, better, and more cheaply". The *use-value* (function) of an article is thoroughly examined. Not only the real usefulness but other attributes called *effective qualities* are usually considered before purchasing something.

If we wish to buy apples, for example, we first look at the assortment displayed in the window or on the shelves of the shop. Consciously, deliberately, we wish to buy apples for their useful qualities (vitamins, fructose, acids, aromatic substances, etc.). Evidently (and often not even entirely consciously) we are influenced in our decision by other effective qualities: colour, shine, shape, soundness, packaging and general attractiveness and desirability, though such qualities have nothing to do with the nutritive value of the fruit and its role in the diet.

Accordingly this function is integrated in the would-be buyer in a twofold sense, and this surely must be taken into consideration by the primary producer and the trader alike.

But the function is only the numerator of the fraction expressing the ratio, where the cost is always taken as the denominator.

$$\text{I.e.: value} = \frac{\text{function}}{\text{cost}} .$$

It is very probable that, given apples with essentially similar external and internal qualities, we will ultimately choose the cheapest. Thus he who produces roughly the same quality at smaller cost can in all probability do better.

The interests of buyers and sellers thus coincide in the interpretation of value analysis, and this is also to the credit of the method.

The Ratio of Qualities

Before making good the above interrelationships, it is absolutely necessary to clarify with regard to any given product (a) its function, (b) its price and (c) with what and for how much it could be replaced in full or in part.

Thus, e.g., a copper screw on the outside of a radio could obviously be replaced by a cheaper steel screw, if one paid attention only to useful qualities. But if the screw has also a decorative function (effective quality), the matter should be judged from a different angle.

The ratio between useful and effective qualities is widely different in the case of investment goods, or consumer goods, or special objects for personal use.

In the case of investment goods the main emphasis is on useful qualities, while effective qualities (e.g. the design and finish of a tractor) are of only secondary importance.

When it comes to the motor-car, which is much closer to a person, the ratios differ: they approximate those concerning consumer goods, where the buyer expects a certain

attractive, pleasing appearance. As regards food, it is not irrelevant in what state of preparation and in what form the deep-frozen article, reaches the shop. The buyer judges it by these qualities irrespective of nutritive value.

And lastly, the special objects, luxury articles and decorative ones are saleable primarily or almost exclusively for their effective qualities (possibly their artistic value, fashionable shape, etc.).

The useful qualities are naturally not negligible either. We expect a shapely porcelain vase to hold flowers and not to leak. The reason why it is bought, on the other hand, is its ideal value. Similarly, the worth of a pet animal—dog, cat, bird—is hardly determined by its “accomplishments” but by personal attachment (called *pretium affectionis*). In a certain sense this holds true also of indoor plants. (It is no exaggeration to say that personal qualities can often be inferred from favourite flowers.)

A large number of agricultural products are consumer goods the demand for which is determined by an almost even accord of their external and internal qualities. The fact that effective qualities grow in importance with the rise in the standard of living is not to be neglected either. That the packaging and publicity bear a different weight at a time of abundance and a time of scarcity does not require proof. This applies to prime necessities as well as to luxury items. The colour of wine, its taste, body and bouquet, its alcohol, sugar and acid content (i.e. all its useful qualities) are more or less equally important.

But the shape, corking and label of the bottle can be just as important.

The analysis of the efficiency of production inevitably raises the question whether all of the listed and other qualities are necessary, and if so, to what extent they are necessary from the point of view of the consumer and of the producer.

Let us revert to the above example. Some people prefer dry, not too heavy wines.

Elsewhere mass taste still prefers sweetish stuff. It is likewise worth considering in what circumstances special-quality bottles having a specific shape (fancy and even luxurious wrapping in general) can be effective.

In a very exclusive New York restaurant where I dined a few years ago, it was argued—with mild exaggeration—that a Hungarian wine, called *Egri Bikavér** (Bull's Blood of Eger), has a meaningless label. My host, the restaurant manager, a Hungarian by birth, told me that if the label caught the eye, if it gave, say, a brief description of the good fight of the defenders of Eger Castle against the Turks and narrated in a few words the popular legend about *Bikavér*, the wine's value in the eyes of consumers would go up no end.

In other restaurants abroad, however, where red bottled wines are mostly served decanted, such costly “dressing” simply makes no sense.

The Application of the Method

The application of value analysis is subject to certain conditions. One of them is called creative doubt.

It is a pertinent old saying that attachment to the customary is the moment of inertia of human thinking. Today this moment is a far stronger brake on progress than it was in the past. Simply because the brake has—however contradictory it may seem—a relatively tighter grip at higher velocities.

Keeping this in view, we have to be aware that new requirements and new solutions arise all the time.

* In the sixteenth century the Turks seized the larger part of the territory of Hungary and kept it occupied for over 150 years. They captured Eger Castle in the famous wine-growing region, although resistance against superior numbers had been long. The Muslim invaders were not allowed by their faith to drink wine, so they called it “bull's blood” and drank it all the same. They also maintained that *Bikavér* bolstered the fighting spirit and virility.

It is therefore worth reviewing the always pursued and sometimes fossilized methods of production, comparing them with others, weighing their rentability, their productivity and other characteristic indices. Such principles essentially served as the soil for the production systems used in Hungary which introduced and applied a complex of most up-to-date methods. . . *

A Few Examples

The growing demand for proteins causes headaches the world over and in Hungary as well. In this sense the point at issue is not merely to meet directly the population's demand, but something more. Although per capita daily protein consumption in Hungary is about 100 grams on a national average, which is quite a lot, nevertheless one cannot be satisfied. This level should be raised, possibly at the expense of other items making up the somewhat excessive daily consumption of over 3,000 calories.

To this end, however, the feeding of cattle, pigs, sheep, poultry, etc. should be adjusted to produce lean meat and other products (milk, eggs, etc.) and not fat. In state and co-operative farms the necessary conditions are given, industrial technology, fodder mixed in the right proportion, and so forth.

The big question is, what can most profitably provide the protein content of fodders. As far as vegetable protein sources are concerned, soya beans are grown in Hungary in limited quantity, they can therefore be reckoned with only to a small degree. There are no surpluses of sunflower and other oil-seed cakes either. On the other hand, there are abundant crops of lucerne which is rich in protein if properly prepared and preserved. Again value analysis is of help in determining the optimum ratio.

One has to choose among the different

ways of preparing and preserving lucerne, every time with a view to enhancing its value. It is with this in mind that one has to scrutinize the qualities of ordinary hay, silage, meal, juice essence, concentrates, etc. It must be stated of each separately what it gives and for how much. If we summarize the afore-mentioned possibilities, value analysis will go through the following stages: 1. Establishing the facts; 2. shaping planning; 3. weighing various solutions; 4. comparing variants; 5. working out the optimum variant; 6. decision-making.

The analyses made so far indicate that lucerne meal, which is most widely used on world markets, has strong rivals. (A contributing factor is, of course, the considerable rise in the price of fuel, especially gas-oil used for drying.) Particular attention has also been aroused abroad by a novel preparation, a concentrate pressed and thickened under the patented Hungarian *VEPEX* system. It has the advantage of being suitable for processing not only lucerne but the green parts of other, less demanding plants. And, what is equally essential, the product so made can be used for human consumption.

Other methods come to the fore precisely because of their energy-saving nature. Thus, e.g., at the Szabadság Co-operative Farm of Kétpó an ingenious piece of equipment was recently constructed which produces dry fodder with more valuable contents than lucerne while consuming far less energy.

These are a few examples to illustrate that analytical methods which occasionally appear highly theoretical can be of direct practical use in production.

Economic Approach

The discussion of lucerne shows that value analysis can render good service in the production of food.

We often read exaggerating predictions that the earth will sooner or later be unable

* See also NHQ, No. 58.

to sustain its fast-growing population. I am convinced that no such danger exists, particularly if the importance of the economic approach is not lost sight of in production, processing and consumption. If we succeed in creating the necessary accord be-

tween the external and the internal values of each important product, and in thereby reducing relative costs, we shall already be closer to our goal. Value analysis is no negligible aid in the favourable shaping of ratios.

MÁTÉ KOVÁCS

HUNGARY IN UNESCO

As is generally known Unesco is the largest cultural organization in the world, but cultural activities in the strictest sense of the word occupy a relatively minor place among the Organization's overall activities.

The Hungarian National Commission for Unesco has long felt that the social sciences and culture deserve more encouragement and greater financial support without necessarily supplanting the Organization's generally accepted priorities of education and the natural sciences.

A number of member states and the Director-General agree with Hungary. Analysing the Organization's goals, they concluded that, properly speaking, the social sciences and culture should be coordinated with socio-economic developments in the world and thus become, in the long run, the centre of the whole Unesco programme.

For the time being, however, considering the burning needs of the developing countries, social science and culture will have to remain the least supported Unesco programme, getting less than half the amount allocated to education alone.

During the history of Unesco the cultural section has undergone numerous changes and tissions, in spite of favourable developments in

the past few years, it has not yet really found a role or independent programme of its own.

For a very long time it was a tangle of uncoordinated programmes in which, to be sure, there were valuable initiatives, but a number of less worthy activities as well. The sundry programmes ultimately went under three headings: development of culture; the study and propagation of cultural values; and the preservation of cultural relics.

Cultural policy

The Hungarian delegation to the General Conference was particularly active in formulating the policy on cultural development which was considered to be of decisive importance for the cultural programme as a whole.

Unesco's previous programme reflected the bourgeois policy of *laissez-faire* culture, but by the middle of the sixties the results of socialist cultural activities and the pressing problems of developing countries had raised more insistently the need to implement newer and more democratic policies. It was proved that a policy of "free competition" would prevent the developing countries from increasing their cultural life or even creat

ing, against their colonial backgrounds, an independent cultural life built upon their own authentic traditions.

The first important step in the right direction was the 1966 General Conference of Unesco which adopted a declaration on the principles of international cultural relations.

After elaborating these principles in 1967, Unesco undertook a detailed examination of national cultural policies.

Among other things it studied the possibility of establishing cultural centres and held a conference of specialists in Budapest in 1968. Then in Venice in 1970, these studies were scrutinized at a world conference of cultural ministers.

Here, in contrast to previously-held principles, cultural policy was taken to be an indispensable instrument for the practical assertion of a right to culture through the wide dissemination of cultural values and democratization of cultural life. That is why every government is bound to frame a cultural policy which, taking into consideration its own needs and possibilities, guarantees cultural participation to the widest number possible.

The socialist countries, Hungary among them, made concrete proposals which went beyond questions of principle to the practical side of cultural policy and administration. A Hungarian proposal was accepted which condemned the use of artistic expression and the media of mass communication for war-mongering, racial discrimination, violence or propaganda against mankind.

After the Venice conference, Unesco resolved to convene regional meetings of cultural ministers. The first was the European regional meeting held in Helsinki in 1972, then an Asian one in Djakarta; there still remains another Asian and a Latin American regional meeting in 1975 and 1977 respectively. Finally, to evaluate the regional conclusions there will be a second world conference of cultural ministers. At the Helsinki meeting one of the sub-committees elected a Hungarian chairman, and the

Hungarian delegation sponsored or co-sponsored fifteen draft resolutions.

Based on the results of the Helsinki conference, the Venice meeting went further toward realizing the hopes of socialist countries on, first of all, the development of cultural cooperation in Europe. Several important new resolutions stressed the need to use the instruments of culture to safeguard and strengthen peace and security in Europe.

As an international agency Unesco of course cannot interfere in the policies of member states but it can provide valuable information: this it does by organising an extensive exchange of experiences and publishing documents on particular national activities and their results. The Organization has published a series of some thirty monographs in English and French on cultural policies, or institutions and methods of developing cultural life in the member states. A summary of Hungarian cultural policy, compiled by the Ministry of Culture on the basis of an agreement with Unesco, was published in English and French in 1974.

Unesco has asked for several contributions from Hungarian institutions and specialists in the field of cultural development. A Unesco volume of essays, *New Trends in Artistic and Literary Expression*, had a Hungarian editor; the Budapest Institute of Popular Culture prepared essays on the importance of folklore festivals and the cultural behaviour of youth, and a Hungarian director was commissioned to make a 20-minute film on the possibilities of using cinema and television for the artistic education of the public.

International cultural relations

In the field of cultural values, Unesco begins with the assumption, as noted in its Charter, that a major psychological motive of war is the lack of mutual understanding and trust between peoples. This is the result of peoples' ignorance of one another's his-

ories, traditions and cultural values and the consequent ignorance of each other's thinking and view of life.

At the General Conference held in New Delhi in 1956, the member states accepted a ten-year major project on the mutual dissemination of Eastern and Western cultural values. This comprehensive programme started with the treasures of Asian and Arab cultures, but with new African states appearing in the following years, the project was extended to cover African cultures and the ancient civilizations of Latin America.

Under the chairmanship of Hungarian Academician Lajos Ligeti, the Hungarian National Commission for Unesco set up an independent East-West sub-committee, which translated Oriental and African works into Hungarian and published independent essays and other volumes. Over a ten-year period it published 148 books of Hungarian translations of Arabic, Burmese, Hebrew, Persian, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Mesopotamian (Akkadian, Sumerian, Assyrian), Mongolian, Old Egyptian, Old Persian, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Turkish and Vietnamese. In addition Hungarian authors wrote more than 100 works about the peoples and countries of Asia and Africa. It was with the assistance of Unesco that there appeared in Hungarian the first collection of Japanese folk tales, the *Ramayana*, and finally a bilingual, Hungarian-and-English bibliography entitled, *Hungarian Authors on Asia and Africa, 1950-1962*.

Under the same programme, a number of valuable scholarships were awarded to Hungarian orientalists for the study of Arabic, Iranian, Japanese and Turkish philology and Indian folk music. Hungarian specialists assisted, for example, in research into Mongolian folklore.

The successful completion of the East-West project has been followed by numerous individual cultural studies, with Hungarian specialists playing an important role in the Southeast European, Central Asian and Slavic studies, including being host to the

international symposium and exhibition on the Eastern Celts held in Székesfehérvár.

Many Hungarian specialists take part in Unesco's musical programme. With the Organizations's support the Hungarian Record Company produced albums of Mongolian and Hungarian folk music. Musical compositions by Sándor Balassa, Attila Bozay, Zsolt Durkó, András Mihály and András Szöllösy won first prizes or were highly placed at the international platform of composers, Unesco's annual competition to popularize new music.

Unesco gives moral and material support for the annual international Kodály seminar in Kecskemét and played an important part in commemorating Béla Bartók on the thirtieth anniversary of his death.

Unesco has also promoted the popularization of Hungarian literary treasures abroad. In the Unesco series of literary works in English and French, the nine volumes that have appeared so far include poems by Janus Pannonius, Sándor Petőfi, Endre Ady, Attila József, novels by Frigyes Karinthy, József Lengyel, Kálmán Mikszáth, Zsigmond Móricz, Józsi Jenő Tersánszky, and a *Bibliotheca Corviniana*. Unesco also assisted in the translations into Arabic of Imre Madách's dramatic poem *The Tragedy of Man* and an anthology of Hungarian poetry.

The cultural heritage

According to established Unesco practice, safeguarding cultural values and protecting over cultural heritage is confined to architectural and other material relics, that is, saving monuments and designing museum programmes. We are of the opinion that here and in the study and propagation of artistic values more effort must be devoted to the preservation of oral traditions, folk music and traditional dance.

The three main elements in Unesco's programme to safeguard cultural values are:

1) drafting international instruments, conventions and proposals for the protection of the world's cultural heritage; 2) collecting information from interested institutions and specialists on the up-to-date and effective methods to preserve and restore monuments and museum objects; 3) assisting member states in making the best use of their cultural monuments, with special regard to the possibilities of developing cultural tourism. This very subject was discussed at the Unesco Executive Board meeting in Budapest held at the invitation of the Hungarian government in May 1966. The participants visited restored monuments to see Hungary's attainments in the protection of monuments and the promotion of cultural tourism. As a result of the meeting, Dezső Dercsényi's *Ancient Monuments in Hungary* was published by Corvina in English and French with the aid of Unesco.

In its scientific and methodological work on the protection of our cultural heritage, Unesco often draws upon the experiences of Hungarian specialists and institutions. Hungarian scholars twice took part in organising a refresher course in Baghdad for specialists in saving monuments in Arab countries. On two other occasions a Hungarian expert was commissioned to restore the frescoes on rock temples in Ethiopia. At the same time a great number of Hungarian museum experts held Unesco scholarships abroad not only in Europe but also as far away as Japan and Indonesia.

The international campaign to save monuments, undoubtedly the best known and most spectacular of Unesco's activities,

is in fact not officially part of the Organization's programme or budget.

Unesco mobilizes public opinion, collects voluntary contributions from governments, institutions and private persons, and coordinates the financial and scientific effort necessary to save such internationally important monuments as the temples in Nubia, the Philae temple, the Borobudur shrine in Indonesia, the historic areas of Venice and Florence, the ancient monuments of Mohenjo-daro in Pakistan, and those of Carthage.

Egypt's government was the first to apply to Unesco for such aid. Hungarian archeologists participated in the Nubian excavations and rescue operations, and as a result Egyptian authorities permitted some of the rich finds to go to the Egyptian Collection of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts.

We think that the proper development of this manifold and fruitful activity will depend first of all on whether Unesco is able to replace its diverse programmes with efforts concentrated on solving the most important questions on cultural life.

Another essential requirement—one that Hungary has often emphasized—is that a closer link be established between the programmes in culture, education and information. It is impossible to achieve the modern cultural idea—a system of permanent education—without the close cooperation of the educational system and cultural and information media, but mass communication may become not just useless but even harmful without adequate cultural content propagating humanistic ideas. The Unesco programme must better promote this interdependence.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

NEW VOLUMES OF POETRY

ISTVÁN VAS: *Önarckép a hetvenes évekből* (Self-Portrait from the Seventies). Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1974. 96 pp. — ISTVÁN KORMOS: *N. N. bolyongásai* (The Wanderings of N. N.) Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1975. 66 pp.

Some poets demand that their visions be understood—and others their personal experience. These latter are the poets who write in order to understand what has happened to them during their lives; who would like to understand the naked facts and the interrelations among the facts—which occasionally take decades to discover—wishing to record and transmit to others the biological, psychological and historical potentiality of a personality. In one of the poems of *Self-Portrait from the Seventies* István Vas* begins by mentioning the New York stock exchange crash of 1929; then hurriedly, in keeping with the conciseness of verse, he evokes a historical process, the SA on the march, the war, the defeat of German arms, at a time when the exiles and victims of deportation were soaked in the German myth as well. One's mind wanders for a moment and one realizes that at the time when existentialism was fashionable in France, already after 1945, the French sometimes

* Poems by István Vas are on pp. 58–64 of this issue and also appeared in Nos. 29, 38, 46, 50 and 56, in translations by Donald Davie, Edwin Morgan and William Jay Smith.—Ed.

complained that although Hitler was defeated, German philosophy still conquered France.

Then one realizes that Vas's first poems appeared in 1929 at the time of the New York crash and that, in the autobiography he started in the early 'sixties (*A Difficult Love*), Vas told that he had taken no notice then of what was going on in New York. At the time, his first poems and first, shattering love-affair were more important to him. Since then, he has caught up with events, and has a reference to the oil crisis in the present volume.

Despite the discrepancies in what Vas considers worth recording, he has consistently documented his life and attempted to understand and learn from it. After a number of years, he even saw the importance of the 1929 crash in its consequences, in his life and eventually incorporated it into this, his personal history. All awareness comes in retrospect, writes Vas in *A Difficult Love*, a monumental work in progress on the history of cognition, of the possibilities of life and life in poetry.

In general an autobiography, and this includes *A Difficult Love*, always portrays the course of events, even if the chronology sometimes mixes past and present. The very act of writing is itself subject to time, to its own experiences. Vas began writing his autobiography almost fifteen years ago; by now the first two volumes have appeared in

two editions. On the other hand, short lyrical poetry, even if it is autobiographical, subsumes chronology in art and may slight a life's most important patterns and regularities. The verse of *Self-Portrait from the Seventies* echoes the quest of *A Difficult Love* to relate the poet to his earlier poems. The composition of the volume indicates this relationship; Vas even borrows a few pieces from a selected collection of poems which appeared in 1972 under the title *The Unutterable*.

Vas composed the poems of *Self-Portrait from the Seventies* between the ages of 60 and 65. The dominant motif of earlier collections was a "streak of curiosity", and now one of the opening poems of the new volume reads: "I am no longer curious". This volume is a drama between worn-out inquisitiveness and an unrelenting desire to know; at the same time wit is considered a drama of wonder which is both weary and unrelenting. Beginning at least one and a half decades ago, in the late 'fifties and early 'sixties, one of the most important themes of Vas's poetry was "the way of all flesh": sickness, old age, death. But now, in the *Self-Portrait*, his curiosity has also become problematic, and as such his whole life's work takes on a new dimension. Vas, as a poet who is forever re-learning courage, is also courageous in questioning his most individual qualities. Not because he wishes to reject them, but because he would like to renew them. How characteristic of Vas in the same poem, "Saint Médard", to discover "On all sides a palpitating gray" and announce at the same time that "I am no longer curious". Once in 1947, in a poem on Cusanus, Vas characterized himself as standing at the cross-road of contradiction. The contradictions have increased as curiosity and worn-out curiosity vie with one another in the *Self-Portrait*. Vas, who never flinched from the so-called forbidden truths, modestly and ironically speculates on suicide, only to reject this possibility precisely in the name of curiosity, knowledge and tenacity. For

him sickness and physical pain are not philosophical cerebrations, nor are they merely the subject-matter of poetry. They are experiences, one aspect of human life. Although never explicitly, every poem suggests that "I too am" sickness and diseased organs. And he untiringly studies his life. In one of his most shocking poems he tells of an old man suddenly trapped in a coffee-house mob with a feeling of anguish; only with great difficulty is he able to convince himself that he needn't be afraid of being carried off or having clandestine information reported against him. In a sonnet the poet grumbles about what seem to be petty affairs: tram traffic has been stopped on one of the bridges; he must learn to go by bus; the escalator of the underground in Budapest is faster and steeper than the one in Paris, London or Moscow. The closing tercet expresses the fear of being in a traffic accident. The reader knows that the poet was hit by a car and that he did not abandon poetry in the hospital bed; the sonnet, however, is not interesting for this reason, but because it is one of those rare occasions when creation, insignificant in itself, grows within the context of the total volume and comments on the rest. The poems on the crash of the New York stock exchange recognize the imminence of the Second World War and emphasize the sudden panic which must be conquered: nothing should be given up: in principle, everything must be taken into account and even anger belongs to human dignity.

But there is happiness as well. The very appearance of a beautiful woman brings forth a hymn which dispels provocative irony. Women are the symbols of home, the bearers of memories, the sources of greatest pleasures. He writes about women with gratitude and optimistic objectivity; feigned youthfulness and old gentlemanly coquetry are both lacking.

Self-Portrait from the Seventies is a strictly constructed volume. The poet has perhaps never been so concerned with the editing

of a volume as he is with this one, and the title justifies this concern. The personality, the rights of "one man", are always emphasized. It is no accident that his collected poems of 1970 were entitled "What Does This One Person Want?" But he was never more personal than now and has never suggested to such an extent that his knowledge of the world belongs to the "portrait" of a man. The volume begins with a two-line epigram untranslatable because of its play on words, which cleverly notes that the approach of the lunar module to the moon in no way diminishes the majesty and splendour of the May moon.

The volume closes with the description of a trip to Greece in a brief cycle called "Four Hellenic Pieces". In the first the poet meditating on the Acropolis asks whether Keats would have written "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles" if Lord Elgin had not stolen the friezes from the Parthenon. He then questions himself in the characteristic Vas fashion as to whether he who is thinking this thought on the Acropolis is a poet or not. In the second part, in Delos, he postulates that the statue depicts a man who stayed outside the Delosian "confederation of business". I would remark here that a few years earlier in Ravenna the poet dissociated himself equally from the Arians as from their triumphant enemies. The scene of the third part is the Museum where the visitor contemplates the callipygian statues of naked males and chiton-covered females. The fourth part is the "Smile" from the smile of Naxos marble which inspires the poet with the realization of having arrived. The poem, the last of the volume, closes with the strongly stressed words "I was here". But at the same time the poem has the line "I am starting out".

Vas's life's work is gigantic in dimension. Several hundred poems, several dozen essays, an autobiography in progress, many volumes of translations (poems, dramas, novels). Still it is too early to think of an end or completion. Significant surprises are still in store

for the reader and critic, new witnesses to relentless examination and reexamination.

*

In the beginning was the melody...—in this Valéry and Mayakovski are in agreement. A melody, a certain rhythm, a few measures at first, from which the poem is born through conscious effort. If this is true and actually valid for every poet, we can then follow the poetry-creating process through to the end until we are able to grasp each one of István Kormos's poems* in its total complexity and depth.

On first reading, words, pictures and stories disappear. There is only an alluring music so often lacking in modern poetry and a rhythm and harmony reminiscent of folk-songs. Virtuoso alliteration enhances the musicality and upon second reading it turns out that the rhythms of the verse line and verse paragraph are in opposition so that unexpected enjambments appear. At this point the reader becomes suspicious and is on the alert for a surprise. As it turns out, within each verse line words can be linked together in various ways. Picturesque descriptions, hidden by the musicality, are now observed and unusually poetic words and expressions amaze the reader. Still later it suddenly occurs to the reader that the sources for this poetry are the Bible (primarily the New Testament), certain poets who have created mythologies of their own, painting (mainly Brueghel and the Hungarian Csontváry) as well as Nature. And what is more surprising is that in the New Testament, poetic, artistic and natural element are actually organically interrelated to one another and almost imperceptibly fade into one another within one poem, verse line or even one syntagm. To separate them is exhausting analytical work but it is nearly always worth the trouble.

István Kormos's poetry is a kind of pre-

* See poems by István Kormos in Nos. 25 and 44, translated by Edwin Morgan.

sent time, a present of memories and a present of visions. It speaks of childhood, youth, birth and death, hopes and loneliness. Everything is sacred and profane at the same time. Every individual experience aspires to general validity, and every general experience to individuality. In "The Manger", Erzsi Zöld, the milkmaid, gives birth to a child and Kormos relates the event with biblical overtones. The poet does not even know the name of his father: it was his grandmother who raised him and the titles of poems in *The Wanderings of N. N.* reflect his religious village upbringing: "Sacrifice", "Prophecy" (a present-day version of the three kings), "Saint George", "Engraving: After a Cloudburst", "Grandmother's House", "Rivers" (a child of eight thinks rivers have "sex and age"), "Legend" and "Cranberry".

Kormos was born in 1923. His first attempt at poetry was in 1943 but his first really significant volume only appeared in 1971 under the title *Poor Yorick*. Kormos wrote the greater part of the volume between 1943 and 1948; from 1949 to 1956 he wrote only a few poems and afterwards, until 1962, stopped completely. During this time he translated Russian folk-poetry and also parts of the *Canterbury Tales*.

Not lacking in grotesque elements, "Poor Yorick", a poem of 50 lines which synthesizes both vision and memories, communicates with lexical conciseness and clarity the major circumstances of the poet's life as well as a few more important themes of his poetry. The poem is a Hamlet-like monologue to a skull. Kormos mentions his grandmother—as he does elsewhere—for family memories play an important role in his old and new volume alike. He also tells of how

he reached the Atlantic shores "on foot", and memories of Normandy and Brittany recur in both volumes. "Poor Yorick" also recalls the poet as a child struggling to decipher the Old and New Testaments. In the closing strophe of the poem the poet lists the names by which he was called in a way that is also biblical. His last name was "Poor Yorick".

The new volume, *The Wanderings of N. N.*, also describes the milkmaid Erzsi Zöld giving birth, and Kormos again borrows the title for the new volume from the title of one of his poems. The new title expresses a new identification. In the final analysis it is also an autobiographical creation with a dominant motif of unconquerable solitude. Nor is self-irony lacking, though with Kormos's lyricism self-irony fits in very well with loftiness. But the autobiographical allusions of *The Wanderings of N. N.*, in comparison to *Poor Yorick*, are much more indirect. While the former is more a registration of concrete facts and events, the latter is a perpetuation of dreams and desires. The chronicler of the poem, N. N., sails over never-existing waters in an imaginary Viking boat, done in the first person singular. He speaks of unquenchable thirst, loneliness, and instead of the hoped-for wedding music, he meets only with a priestless funeral and the burial of his grandmother. Nor is the biblical element missing from this poem: the squeaking of the joints in the Viking boat is the "cry of a babe in the wilderness". Kormos's N. N. is a nameless and unknown person who could not realize his dreams. He is an everyman of our time and, in addition, a very important and very individualistic patch of colour in present-day Hungarian lyric poetry.

LÁSZLÓ FERENCZI

FOUR ENGLISH NOVELS

The four novels I am going to discuss here come together by chance: by chance they were brought out by English publishers in the same year, 1974, and also by chance I got hold of them without much delay. It could have been another four, I could have been somebody else, and any change would obviously and basically have changed the whole article. Consequently, I cannot claim that the selection is necessarily "representative", but I do feel that it is significant.

IN THEIR WISDOM by C. P. Snow

Of the four authors more than one is an old acquaintance: perhaps C.P. Snow is the oldest, as a writer. Literary magazines have already made efforts to familiarize and popularize Snow's works in Hungary; yet, neither the novel discussed here, nor the only one translated into Hungarian (*Time of Hope*) managed to make him really popular in Hungary.

Hungarians pass up Snow's literary qualities for an understandable, though not particularly laudable reason: his realism arrived in our country at a time when we had only the shadowy epigones of realism and were fed up with it; we never grasped what was significant in his art, only the echoes of what we wanted to get rid of. He was and is a "classic" realist, the upholder and moderniser of English and Russian realist traditions. The flow of his narrative is quiet and expansive; he is psychologically sensitive but does not indulge in extreme cases. Rather he shows that in the average there are extremes hidden in the deep layers of motivation. His psychological sensitivity is coupled with, or rather outweighed by, his interest in society as represented by people's attitudes, reactions, sympathies and antipathies. He mea-

sures the slightest change in their interplay; his novels are apparently eventless because at the end of a series of actions almost nothing has changed—nothing "but" the relationship of the characters to each other and to the society as a whole: the lot of some has got on the track, others' derailed.

It is to Snow's credit that he refrains from using profuse imagery and coarse language, or presenting what seem to be deep psychological riddles. And yet in his quiet, puritanical literary way, devoid of complacency and deception, he took upon himself the task of becoming the conscious and consistent chronicler of his age. The succession of his books presents an interesting and authentic picture of England and the changes it has undergone from the turn of the century.

Perhaps for this reason or because of some peculiar mixture of vices and virtues of his own, Snow seems to belong to that group of writers who do not invite immediate enthusiasm but work slowly on increasing numbers of readers and in the end make that much greater an impact. As far as I am concerned, Snow's novels have always been interesting though never to the point of excitement—and yet, after ten or twenty years, his characters, situations, and moral lessons are more alive to me than those I have found in recent books of greater immediate success.

His latest novel, *In Their Wisdom*, offers yet another convincing and authentic picture of England in the seventies, as seen from a unique vantage point through the actions of a very special group.

An old man in his will disinherits his daughter and makes his custodian's idle son his principal heir. The daughter—JennieRastall—encouraged and financed by a millionaire businessman—contests the will. However, this is only the frame, if you like the pretext, by which the writer introduces us

into the lives of a set of persons and families, involving, in particular three elderly lords, Hillmorton, the conservative aristocrat; Ryle the Labour historian; and Sedwick, the "almost-Nobel-prize-winning" scientist. Their friendship and destiny are the real concern of the novel and the preoccupation of the author. The fate of these three eminent men, fighting old age and illness illuminates the fate of their country, which historically speaking is also nearing its end and is right now regressing into what it had been before modern times: a second-rate island off the coast of Europe. Ryle gives voice to this thought somewhere in the novel; and the same idea is expressed by Snow with greater relevance and suggestiveness through the nostalgic, autumn-like mood sustained throughout the novel in the fate of the three characters. We witness Hillmorton's agony; Ryle's frustrated, perhaps last love, which binds him to Hillmorton's daughter and through her lover, to the inheritance proceedings; and Sedwick's operation for Parkinson's disease in one of the best chapters of the book. The operation succeeds but does not remove the shadow of illness from him, the most attractive character in the novel.

It is a narrow-cross section; nonetheless the picture it gives is complete in intensity, warmth, and profound, penetrating sadness. Snow has again proved to be a master in tracking the fluctuations and the waverings of human feelings and relationships: all his characters and their changing personal relations are authentically motivated. The book is full of disappointment and bitterness; still, it is pervaded by a deep current of serenity, perhaps the serenity of understanding or survival: the world is carrying on, and not unpleasantly. We just happen to know that the clockwork is about to run down. . . This is approximately the emotional sum of the novel.

I do not know whether the above conveys just how English the novel is in every particle and juncture. This very Englishness can be seen on the surface in the details of the legal proceedings (which are almost complete-

ly alien to the experience and knowledge of continental readers (who are in this respect the descendants of the Napoleonic Code). Then there are the habits and manners of the House of Lords. And deeper: the way father and daughter conceal their feelings from one another in a peculiar elliptical language all their own (here I think of Lord Hillmorton and his daughter, whose conversation about the inheritance she can expect is a classic in the genre of social comedy spilling into psychological tragedy). It is perhaps this almost exotic Englishness that undermines Snow's success on the Continent, while it provides the great intrinsic interest, which, I am convinced, will help his work survive the vicissitudes of immediate popularity.

HERS by A. Alvarez

If Snow is the most insular of Englishmen, Alvarez is perhaps the most continental. This comes of his wide-ranging interests: well-versed in the literature of several countries, he had new and interesting things to say even of ours in his preface to a volume of selected Hungarian short stories. So Alvarez the critic is an old acquaintance—and even older than his contribution to that volume would suggest. I personally learnt to respect his erudition, wit, and craftsmanship in the heyday of the *New Statesman*, when for years he was a regular critic. Now a new Alvarez, the belletrist, makes his appearance, and I cannot decide whether I have lost or gained by the new acquaintance. Goethe's witty saying lends self-confidence to writers and fills critics with remorse: sooner or later they are bound to try to make, rather than just criticize, literature. And this is why there is no end of critics from Sainte-Beuve to Alvarez who, sooner or later in their lives, go over temporarily or permanently from one domain of literature to the other—not always for the good of their reputation, but at least for their own inner satisfaction.

This seems equally true of Alvarez. His

first novel, *Hers*, is as meaningful and meaningless as its title, the female personal pronoun. For a first novel it is a great achievement—almost too great an achievement. The reader puts down the book a bit disheartened by the dark and insensitive spot in the leading female character, and in the heart of the novel written about her. The insensitivity prevents the girl from establishing relations based on genuine human feelings, and the novel from fulfilling the author's ambition.

While keeping one foot on the Continent, Alvarez is at least an Englishman in his choice of subject. His tone of voice, however, is definitely continental, reminiscent of the classic French novel, in particular *Adolphe* by Benjamin Constant. They have the same secluded world with few characters, the same deep, kind, but uncompromising and searching gaze which pries into the most hidden secrets of the soul. The only difference is that Constant's novel is a masterpiece while Alvarez's is the interesting, but not first-rate work of an educated person. Why?

Presumably not because of the story. Charles Stone, a prominent professor of literature, is in his fifties; he has been married some ten years and had two children by Julie, his junior by some twenty years, whom he met as a visiting professor in Germany. More important, however, is that Charles, despite his age, is passionately in love with his wife, whose very existence keeps him in permanent sexual excitement. More out of curiosity than love, Julie starts an affair at a summer course with Sam Green, a gifted arts student of Jewish descent, who gives up his reading for Julie and "starts a new life". Julie falls ill and seeks a cure in Germany, where a fascist youth makes her discover her own real spiritual make-up, the "black spot" in her soul. It enables her to break with Sam, who has followed her, and return to her husband to resume her old life as the young-wife-of-the-old-professor.

Neither is the psychology at fault. On

the contrary, it is perhaps the best part of the book. Charles's character hits the bull's eye—authentic on the inside, pathetic and comic on the outside. The professor who thinks only in quotations is all of a sudden overcome by devastating jealousy; the elderly man who becomes the accidental target of young hooligans' practical joke, feels he is fighting "the struggle of generations" against his wife and a student; the son of working-class parents who worked his way up into the upper middle-class, is now out of touch with both. Equally well-executed is the figure of Sam, the ambitious young man, for whom the "conquest" of Julie is the test of adulthood—Oh, Madame Renal! Tentatively and unconsciously following the right path in his love affair and career, he finds suffering in some degree pleasurable and makes of faithful attachment a kind of faithlessness because of his desire to break away.

Nor are the author's intellectual powers inadequate. Alvarez hits his stride in intellectual, analytical writing. The first and only dinner among the triangle—where they discuss English anti-Semitism—and Sam's conversation with Kurt about fascism—taking in crime and innocence, and punishment and atonement—are masterly: "born" anthology-pieces.

The real source of weakness is Julie who, in spite of the author's instincts and knowledge of psychology and psychoanalysis, never comes to life—and everything in the novel depends on her. Her whole life, her emotional and sexual career, are not life "intercepted" but textbook-delineated, forced into being but never really alive: everybody has more life than she, around whom they revolve. Her emotional and sexual past expands the "black spot" which she discovers through her affair with Kurt, the perfect cynic and nihilist. For the novel, however, *her* figure is the "black spot" which prevents the book from becoming anything more than pleasant reading. And this again reminds us of the basic difference between art and science: a great achievement in the latter—the chemi-

cally-pure substance—causes the greatest weaknesses in the former.

Despite their differences, works by Snow and Alvarez somehow and somewhere harmonize: they speak of the same England, of the same age and society, even if their points of view differ. Compared to them the third novelist I read works in another age and another language.

MONSIEUR OR THE PRINCE
OF DARKNESS by Lawrence Durrell

He is Lawrence Durrell, and his new novel is titled: *Monsieur or the Prince of Darkness*. Self-criticism is not a favourite pastime of critics. I too am embarrassed about it, but in Durrell's case I feel obliged to. Once having read two volumes of *The Alexandria Quartet*, I greeted it with delight; when I read the whole, my enthusiasm abated. The following two-part novel with its strange titles, *Tunc* and *Nunquam* was a further disappointment. It seemed to be the aberration of a novelist with great gifts and valid message who got mixed up with his own theories and therefore achieved less than he could have. His recent novel, *Monsieur...*, however, makes one question all previous expectations of him. With the same devices, using the same "input", he comes up with a fantastically bad novel. I think it was István Vas, a prominent poet and sensitive man of letters, who said Durrell was warmed-up Huxley. At the time I thought it was unfair to Durrell, now I think it is unfair to Huxley. Nevertheless the parallel holds insofar as both of them seem to follow the same course, from the criticism of social conditions to mysticism. As if the English publisher admitted that the present Durrell is different from the "intellectual" novelist who deserved sober letter-designed covers, the present book has a slightly surrealistic cover of *Sleeping Beauty* posed against a romantic fairy landscape in ink and water-colour—obviously and con-

spicuously meant to attract an entirely different audience.

The story itself is very simple, and gets complicated only through tricks of narration. Bruce, an English physician, Piers and Sylvie de Nogaret, French aristocratic brother and sister, form a close-knit trio of friendship and love. To secure the relationship, Bruce marries Sylvie, and the three of them are not separated till she breaks down under the emotional strain, goes mad, and is taken to a mental asylum. Until then they are always together because Bruce works at embassies, Piers (ordinary Pierre is not enough) is a diplomat, and they manage to be sent to the same places. Prague, Delhi, or anywhere else are all the same as far as the characters and story go; Alexandria alone has any significance (and not Cairo!) because there they make the acquaintance of Akkad, a gnostic Coptic banker, who initiates them into gnosticism at a ritual celebrated in Macabru, the mystic mosque in a desert city. Even more significant is Verfeuille, the ancient castle of the Nogarets above Avignon, where they spend their holidays in a perfect idyll of rustic, aristocratic seclusion, surrounded unto death and after by faithful servants and friends. Of them two are significant: Toby, the slightly amusing English don who searches the secret of the Knights Templar in the Verfeuille archives, and Sutcliffe, the novelist who writes their history. At the beginning of the novel Piers and Bruce are about to retire when Bruce is summoned by cable to Avignon: Piers is dead. Did he commit suicide? Was he murdered? It is not determined, and for simplicity's sake the police opt for suicide.

Starting from this final event, reading the thoughts of Bruce, the letters of others, the novel and notebooks of Sutcliffe, shifting in time and order of logic, the story gradually unfolds. We learn that Piers was murdered (probably by Sybille, the daughter of Banquo, the banker) by his own consent as a member of the gnostic Assassin sect in which the

willing victims are selected by their secret body of leaders; later the heads of the better ones are collected. Needless to say Piers's body (in the course of a winter funeral scene which would do credit even to Scott) lands headless in the family crypt.

Though not an essential part of the story, mention is frequently made of Pia, Bruce's sister and Sutcliffe's wife, as well as Blanford, the author of bestsellers, whom Sutcliffe hates. In the last chapter we learn that he is actually Blanford, the lame but successful writer who came to Venice to finish the novel we have just finished.

Again, Durrell's armoury is in full array: Alexandria, the desert, the sea, mysticism, the Coptic banker, sexual aberration (not only the Piers-Sybille-Bruce triangle; Pia deserts Sutcliffe to live with Trash, a Negro lesbian, Sybille travels throughout Europe in Gypsy caravans and visits her home only to cure the various venereal diseases she contracted—and I must have forgotten a few other things). It is just a re-hash of *The Alexandria Quartet*, while the secret centre deciding upon matters of life and death is the core of *Tunc Nunquam*, and Durrell takes the liberty to link the present novel with the former ones: Sutcliffe "quotes" Purswarden, the Sutcliffe of the *Quartet*—and there are surely other, indirect allusions which escaped me.

Because I did not pay enough attention. For all the beautiful descriptions (Durrell is still a master stylist), all the marvellous tricks, impressive images, excellent beginnings, and befuddling final pirouette—the whole work is second-rate. Perhaps because Durrell takes WRITING and everything he says in such deadly earnest. It is a pity, for despite all, one feels he is a gifted writer. Now the reverse side of his talent is more obvious—the plethora of erudite words and expressions; the selfconscious image- and scene-building, the nostalgia for both aristocratic and primitive sides of life. They completely overshadow the bright side of his art: his beautiful descriptions and poetry which at their best take off into vision.

THE CONSERVATIONIST

by Nadine Gordimer

The reader will feel just how exotic Durrell's novel is in the pejorative sense of the word, after experiencing the truly exotic milieu in a novel like Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist*. Though it is the author's sixth novel, we have so far had only a taste of her work in short stories published in literary magazines and we know of her brave fight for the rights of South African Blacks, which forced her into exile.

The Conservationist is the story of Mehring, a Johannesburg industrialist, told mostly in the stream of consciousness technique. Mehring is rich by our standards and well-to-do by South Africa's. Not yet fifty, he lives by himself, with a divorced wife in America and an adolescent son comfortably far away. He devotes himself to his work, women and his recently-bought, 400-acre estate. He is at home in the world into which he was born and became a success. Never having questioned his own values he watches complacently as his mistress promotes her leftist ideals and is forced to emigrate while his hippie son too thinks, lives, and acts, in accordance with values that are alien to him.

The writer means to portray Mehring's life, mentality, and thought processes from the inside but this is exactly what is least appealing in the novel: Mehring's figure and way of thinking are irrelevant to the world which we see through him and find most revelant.

South Africa is more remote to us today than the moon. Happily, Gordimer does not concentrate on the capitalists in Johannesburg but, through Mehring's farming hobby, portrays people on the farm and its vicinity: the Hindu grocer, the Boer planter, their families, and large numbers of segregated Negro settlers. Their world is indeed unknown and exciting; it is the more exciting for the Hungarian reader because every now and then, against the

exotic fauna, flora and even more exotic habits, the world is suddenly familiar. Present-day South Africa is strangely akin to Hungary from the eighteen eighties to the nineteen thirties, with its social stratification, social relations and characteristic behaviour. And this assonance between two worlds so far apart convinces the reader that Gordimer's picture is authentic and intimate—and also fascinating.

Unfortunately the novel fails to give any idea of its main character's main activity. The author presents Mehring in his leisure only; but is it possible to conceive of a tycoon relaxing without devoting a single thought to his money-making? Hardly. The writer's particular abilities are partly at fault. Not that Gordimer cannot tell her story well or organize a plot; she can, but she is more at home as a story teller than a novelist: the self-contained episodes and their characters are much more alive than the plot or main character. But because she meant to portray the real lives of real people and their relationships in an exotic world (not exoti-

cism itself), this superficially un-exciting novel is filled with excitement and tension, all along riveting the reader's attention because he learns something novel about this world, his own age, and an unknown society—and in a way characteristic way of literature, he learns through them something about himself. What he learns about himself is practically undefinable because any novel's "novelty" varies with the individual, the age, the cultural sphere—yet, it is this very accomplishment that marks good literature and raises Gordimer's novel to the rank of memorable literary works.

Four novels thrown together by chance, but together unambiguously demonstrate that good literature does not come of overrating beauty of expression and form, but having something important, indeed, imperative, to say about society, the human soul, or the interplay of the two. This is why Snow's and Gordimer's novels stand out and Durrell's sinks into oblivion.

PÉTER NAGY

THE ARTIST AS 20TH-CENTURY CLOWN

MIKLÓS SZABOLCSI: *A clown, mint a művész önarcképe* (The Clown as a Self-Portrait of the Artist.) Corvina, Budapest, 1974. 168 pp. (With 16 colour plates and 50 black-and-white illustrations. In Hungarian.)

Since the middle of the last century, European culture has witnessed the peculiar phenomenon of artists' trying to establish an identity for themselves. The dilemma of the artist's identity, which appeared in various forms and with growing intensity in

the various artistic fields and philosophy, is evidence of fact that artists themselves sensed their position, existence and function to be precarious—socially, psychologically and metaphysically. The unpredictable arbitrariness of market production, coupled with the isolating mechanism of the social environment, undermined the artist's security in the relatively stable hierarchy of previous centuries. The artist has become either life's king or beggar, an idol or outcast: sometimes a seer, popular leader, prophet; sometimes a strange, unappreciated, mysterious loner.

And in this multi-coloured kaleidoscope of shifting effects and acceptance he fits the natural embodiment of contradiction and uncertainties—the clown.

Perhaps no other symbol over the past 150 years has featured more regularly and colourfully in artistic confessions and representations than the clown and his ilk in the milieu of the circus. And this is almost to be expected, for the clown as a self-portrait and confession symbolizes the outcast, alienated, defenceless, unappreciated, mocked, naive, childishly pure and truthful figure of the artist. If we also include, as Miklós Szabolcsi does, the related figures of acrobats, fiddlers, Gypsies and jugglers, then we follow his pioneering work, *The Clown*, into the expanded realm of emotions and behaviour that draws the whole world of the circus into the analysis. They round off the typology of self-consciousness with the various manifestations of artistic self-torment and rebellion.

All this shows that Szabolcsi grasped one of the central problems of modern society when he decided to trace the various appearances of the clown through European cultures. He pays special attention to the last two centuries when this symbol suddenly became typical and diffused throughout the arts, in literature, later in film, and indeed, to a certain extent even in music. It is a pioneering study from various points of view. There are, first of all, few monographs in cultural history which outline the evolution of a symbol (I would rather call it, with a more conservative terminology, a "motif" as Szabolcsi does at times, too); and there are even fewer complex examinations of one idea in several media, although in modern cultural history this method is becoming increasingly necessary. Szabolcsi here opens a line of inter-disciplinary aesthetic analysis which has long been overdue (at least in Hungarian theoretical literature), and which, even if not completely unprecedented is still virtually virgin soil. (Szabolcsi himself already moved in this direction with his

study comparing Attila József the poet, Bartók the composer, and Derkovits the painter.) What informs this inter-disciplinary summation beyond Szabolcsi's commanding proficiency in literature, painting, film and music alike is his high standard of semiotic analysis: the comprehensive examination of the symbol and its connotations aims at comprehensiveness while including a subtle perception of variants, reciprocities and modified accents that emerge in the wandering motif. Szabolcsi does not examine how and when the circus or the theatre features in art. He is concerned with the acrobat or clown as the self-portrait of the artist, what the artist considers to be identical in their situation, to enable him to conceive of the clown as the symbol of himself.

With the exception of the work of Professor Jean Starobinski of Geneva University, *Portrait de l'artiste en saltimbanque*, which was written almost at the same time as Szabolcsi's monograph, there is, to my knowledge, no other book on the subject. The identical theme of the two books inevitably leads to a certain amount of congruence and overlapping. Szabolcsi deliberately builds upon and argues with Starobinski's results without going into polemics. Yet, the essence of his work—in its subject-matter and analysis alike—goes beyond the Swiss scholar in periods of literature and fields of the arts covered. While Starobinski concentrates on French literature and painting between 1830 and 1860—that is, the rise and acceptance of symbolism—Szabolcsi presents a truly comprehensive monograph on the history of the motif and its modifications, including the period in which the socialist arts were developed, and how that too changed the character and use of this system of symbols. Thus he discusses antecedents reaching back to the *commedia dell'arte* and Shakespeare (although I feel this line of antecedents could have gone back to antiquity); artistic intersections which brought with them new interpretations, such as Watteau, Baudelaire,

Verlaine, Laforgue, Cézanne, Verdi, Picasso, Ensor, Rouault, Chagall, Apollinaire, Kafka, Thomas Mann, Klee, Chaplin, Fellini, *et al*; Nezval's acrobat of a "folk character", illustrative of the transition from the past to the future; Alberti's clown-poet, transmitting "true emotions and true sentiments"; the chain-breaking proletarian acrobat in the painting of the Hungarian Derkovits; Leger's plebeian circus motifs, and the contemporary Hungarian poet Gábor Garai's trapeze-artist metaphor for human solidarity and interdependence (of special value for us is the treatment of the Hungarian material).

Szabolcsi's subtle, exact and witty characterization is richly elaborated in categories and embraces a huge body of material so far unexplored and unsystematized. It immediately commands our respect for its philological erudition. The changes in the clown motif reflect the whole history of the role and vitality of art, and in thus pointing to its most significant and most typical manifestations, Szabolcsi provides an outline of artistic consciousness. In its specific cultural and ideological terms, the book describes how the motif assumes its role, with an inside view of the most intimate spheres and hidden recesses of modern art. The book becomes at the same time a source-book and a good read—an adventure story in cultural history.

While stressing the book's pioneering merits (aside from a few factual shortcomings which inevitably appear in an all-embracing undertaking of this kind, such as the unfortunate omission of G. B. Shaw and Lorca's Gypsies), I am afraid that its historical exactness and authenticity are not, or not always, coupled with equally subtle analyses and conclusions. The semiotic starting point overshadows the social and critical analysis. The primacy of semiotics causes two separate problems. On the one hand it is not always proved, especially in the case of the painters, that the work is necessarily a portrait, let alone a self-portrait as well.

Neither in every case does the artist look for express correspondences to Fellini's statement, "The clown is the ambassador of my calling", or Joyce's "I am only an Irish clown, a great joker at the universe". Although in a general sense, in the sense of "*Madame Bovary, c'est moi*", every artistic expression is at the same time also a self-portrait, it would still be exaggerated to discover in Degas's or Toulouse-Lautrec's dancers the artist's self-portrait. The possibility of a more indirect, less modified personal symbolism cannot be excluded in clown portrayals either. The purest examples of what Szabolcsi wants to show are in lyrical poetry, and self-confessional, lyrical prose. In the realm of painting there are more hypotheses and reservations than he is willing to admit.

Szabolcsi undoubtedly has an eye for the classics, taking account of the most lasting formulations of the clown and circus. I think, however, that this does not exempt him from explaining what *makes* these confessions classics and how they are linked with the intellectual currents and artistic philosophies in the soil in which they grew. Because of the scantiness of the philosophical-social background, as well as the cautious implied expression of his aesthetic views and his lack of polemic fervour, the author, in spite of his obvious intentions, sometimes lapses into a merely listing of facts. Brilliant characterizations and penetrating descriptions are not always followed by profound analysis and evaluation, either ideologically or artistically, in the strict sense of the term. This limitation might be explained by the fact that Szabolcsi has embarked on an untrodden path, where there are as yet no established guidelines for examining motifs, and not even any attempts to work out a typology for this method. It is thus understandable that the author was content to sketch the background and leave references unspecified while concentrating his effort on the basic research, the disclosure of the material. Since he considered the intellectual

genesis of the period to be familiar, he refrained from repeating known facts. Nevertheless, this restraint deprives the work of a dimension that could have raised it from a reliable reference and enjoyable monograph to a cultural and philosophical standard

work. Still, it is an excellent source-book, a reliable and pioneering monograph, a valuable achievement in extensive and profound scholarly research reflecting a versatile knowledge which opens the way for further evaluative exploration.

ERVIN GYERTYÁN

DISCOVERING SMALL FINNO-UGRIAN PEOPLES' LITERATURE

MEDVEÉNEK (Bear Song). A compendium of the literature of the eastern Finno-Ugrian peoples. Selected and edited by Péter Domokos. Európa Kiadó, Budapest, 1975, 196 pp.

From their very beginnings in the Enlightenment, Hungarian national feelings were inextricably bound up with an awareness of being unique, "a brotherless branch of their race". Therefore they set out in search of kin. The compiler of the first Tibetan dictionary, the Hungarian Sándor Kőrösi Csoma, was not the only one to undertake the search; nor was he the first to think of the possibility of kindred peoples still living somewhere in the "ancestral land". Mention of those "who came out from Hunnia" had been made centuries before. But those obsessed with the idea made it basic to the national existence of Hungarians, since it was supposed to authenticate the nation's ancestry and strengthen its thousand-year-old historical identity. This is the reason why the romanticism of the early nineteenth century, particularly among smaller peoples struggling for liberation or unity, turned with such great interest to the remnants of ancient national poetry. If it found none, it invented it; if it found some, it embellished and rewrote it. One of the boldest undertakings of

Hungarian romanticism was to create, in the absence of a genuine one, a heroic poetry of the Hungarian Conquest period. Research into medieval Hungarian chronicles led to the invention of two great legend cycles as part of an equally hypothetical ancient Hungarian heroic poem. One was the Hunno-Hungarian cycle; the other covered the period of the Conquest and the Árpád dynasty.

All of this contributed to the struggle for an independent national-state: it provided emotion-charged artistic and historic arguments for the politicians who insisted on the antiquity and organic evolution of the Hungarian people. It enhanced "ancestral glory" by providing images that could inspire and restore the once-corrupted, now reawakening national conscience. Being most powerful and most remote, Attila was considered the best ancestor. As Virgil led the way back to Troy, so the tragically disappointed master of the invented Hungarian "folk epic", János Arany, traced the origins of Hungarians back to Attila's Hunnic empire.

It is thus understandable that the Hungarian public in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was disappointed with János Sajnovics's discovery that the Hungarians' relations, at least linguistically, were to be found in Lapland among as they

said "kinfolk smelling of fish oil". At about the same time Antal Reguly found other obscure peoples even more closely related than the Laplanders, including the Voguls (Mansis) and Ostyaks (Khantis). Unfortunately bad health prevented his propagation of the attractive side of these people—their genuine and rich folklore, which he had succeeded in noting down under extremely difficult conditions.

For a whole century, his notes, like those of his successors, were regarded as research materials of interest only in the Finno-Ugric comparative linguistics. In Hungary the poetry of related peoples was represented only by the *Kalevala*. The first, amateurish translation of this epic was known to Arany, but he scarcely used it except, perhaps, to show a precedent for his virtuoso taste and talent in "ancient Hungarian octosyllabic" verse. The Finnish national epic, in a somewhat gilded translation by Béla Vikár, later influenced the modern Hungarian poets who imitated its peculiar but graceful cadence and primitive mythical subject-matter.

Nowadays the texts noted down from the speech of non-Finnish kindred peoples are of interest not only to philologists but also to the Hungarian reading public, which was recently introduced to it by the poet and prominent philologist, Géza Képes. With ardent persistence he rehabilitated Reguly and brought to light the original folk poetry which Reguly valued so highly and had deciphered with great difficulty. Képes's volume entitled *Éjféli nap* (Midday and Midnight, see the NHQ, No. 53) was a revelation even to those who knew a little bit about the subject from news items (mainly from Aladár Bán's early enterprises), a few preliminary translations and experiments of younger poets. In his book Géza Képes gave a rich taste of the folk poetry of all the Finno-Ugric peoples, having already introduced their more accessible contemporary poetry in an anthology, published in several parts.

Still, Péter Domokos's anthology, *Medve-*

ének (Bear Song) is a successful trail-blazer for a number of reasons. His thorough linguistic and folkloristic knowledge allows him to circumscribe the field sensibly and help the reader find his way in it. He is able to select the pieces characteristic of the peoples' poetry. He classifies his material with a convincing sense of proportion, hinting also at the gaps which are unavoidable for the time being. He uses numerous and highly competent translators. He confines himself to a far narrower field than Képes did—to the poetry and literature of the eastern Finno-Ugric peoples, those whose territory is mostly in the Soviet Union today. It can now be said of them what, in 1911, Aladár Bán could say only of the Hungarians, the Finns and the Estonians of the Finno-Ugric family—"they have a literature in the strictest sense of the word".

Even at the beginning of this century the peoples mentioned in the book hardly had a literature of their own and their folk poetry was barely known beyond the limits of their own settlements. The situation is well summarized in the introduction to the volume: "As nationalities of Tsarist Russia the majority of those peoples lived in utter oppression and backwardness. . . Their societies were hardly noticed. . . A few intellectuals began to emerge from their masses only in the middle of the eighteenth century. . . The year 1917 is not at all arbitrary. The despised "other races" were transformed by the revolution into peoples having linguistic and cultural autonomy. . . In the Hungary of the interwar years it was barely possible to study, let alone write about, the recent culture of these peoples who had come into the Soviet Union, and even after 1945 such investigations were for long in disfavour for scientific and political reasons. In the Soviet Union itself, literary scholarship took a serious interest in the literature of small nationalities only after the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union."

This compendium of eastern Finno-Ugric literature—a work born in the spirit

of felicitous co-operation among philologists, folklorists and poets—was “compiled in token repayment of a great debt”. Side by side there are pieces of folk poetry from the remotest past and “literary” works of greater pretensions produced in these very young literatures (none of them more than a hundred years old). With such a short literary history and the writers’ insularity, their work is very closely related to ancient, naive, natural realism. These people are also very few in number (the smallest group numbers seven thousand, the largest just a million and a half). Large-scale industrialization absorbs as many as there are remaining to preserve

their independent cultures. (Fortunately, there are special institutions which help shape and consolidate their autonomy.) Still, it is a wonder that so small a foundation could produce a generation of poets of the stature of Yuvan Shestalov, whose work has an artistic value in no way confined to the narrow bounds of the Vogul territory.

These works may not be accessible to a public brought up on the great literatures of the world, but it would also be unfair to recommend them only for their exotic value. The editor adroitly leads the reader beyond provincial limitations to the universal, human and true poetic value of this poetry.

DEZSŐ KERESZTURY

AMERICAN “FREQUENCIES”

MIKLÓS ALMÁSI: *Regésszámok* (Frequencies). Talks on Today's America. Magvető, Budapest, 1974. 340 pp.

In recent years, Hungary has produced its own spate of Columbuses, who cross the ocean in search of the “different world” which is supposed to be America. But this new world is not so easy to discover, for the United States keeps changing and is always in need of revised, updated and fresh accounts from recent visitors. Every Hungarian sees the United States, first of all, as the embodiment of technological progress. If Hungary is moving towards the same future, he wants to know what should be avoided and what retained. The lessons that the United States can teach go hand in hand with the discovery of what there is typical and what unique.

To avoid relying merely on incidental experiences in his voyage of discovery to America, Miklós Almási sought out the profes-

sionals who study America—the people who claim to be keeping track of the country's heart-beat. He read widely among American writers, including Emerson, Veblen, Galbraith—from the fathers of American sociology to the latest authors. Whenever possible he called on leading American sociologists and so managed to interview Richard Sennet, Margaret Mead, Charles A. Reich and Herbert Marcuse.*

As a result, Almási's study of Americans, *Frequencies*, has an unusual perspective, combining essay, interview and travelogue. Herein lies both the value and limitation of the work. The author speaks about the cardinal social problems of America with pretensions to objectivity. He sees the United States through the eyes of her own sociologists, unfortunately inadequately known in Hungary, but at the same time provides his own analysis and criticism. Thus, besides a portrait

* See NHQ, No. 55.

of America, the book is also a useful introduction to contemporary American sociology.

Not a chapter but a whole volume could have been devoted to each social problem considered in *Frequencies*; as it is the book can go little beyond concise summary.

The major point in *Frequencies* is that the American consumer society, with all its technological achievements, is a dead-end. The American dream of unlimited opportunity remains a dream, for the United States has not succeeded in establishing the living conditions under which the individual can—to use the terminology of Lukács—overcome the barriers of his particularity and become, in a true human community, capable of living on the due level of his race.

It is common knowledge that objectivity is in fact subjectivity raised to the level of objectivity. The subjective angle through which Almási viewed America is derived from the spirit of Lukács's teachings. The author is also of the generation that suffered the tortures of fascism at an early age but, having been born in 1930, also a fairly mature state of mind. The end of the war and the establishment of a socialist order offered him too the promise of a fuller and freer life. In the early 1950s, when enthusiasm was expressed by flying red banners, Almási went to university, where he was accepted as an undergraduate student of Lukács's. At that time Lukács himself was not sufficiently Marxist by Zhdanov's standards, a measure that had come to be applied in Hungary as well. So Lukács and the students who stuck with him, were gradually forced into opposition. In his spiritual development Almási followed Lukács throughout to his ultimate major work, *Ontology*, in which Lukács, drawing his lessons from the Stalinist period, called for a society humanized in every respect, where individuals no longer experience alienation.

For several years Almási studied the theory of drama and wrote *A modern dráma útjai* (The Paths of Modern Drama, 1961) and *A drámafajlódás útjai* (The Paths of the

Development of Drama, 1969). His book *A látszat valósága* (The Reality of Illusion, 1971) deals with philosophy. He is now on the staff of the Hungarian Theatre Institute (a chapter of the International Theatre Institute) where he is engaged in studies of the influences of the theatre on individuals.

Lukács was not given to the public expression of emotion, nor are his students. The book has only a single sentence referring to the close, almost filial, ties between Almási and his master: on hearing of Lukács's illness Almási cut short his stay in America. Yet, the author's background and ties with Lukács explain his attraction to the New Left in America. His own criticisms of America are based on their writings and conclusions. At the same time, he can utilize his experiences and ideological development to criticize the New Left in two important respects—the inconsistency of their Marxism and their neophyte, leftist, dogmatic exaggerations.

In 1970–71, Almási spent almost a year doing research in the United States, first at Brandeis University and then at the University of California Campus where Herbert Marcuse was lecturing. Although the subtitle of the book is "Talks on Today's America", its reports on the decline of the New Left, while current in 1971, had become history by the time the book came out in 1974. When the United States invaded Cambodia and Laos, a final wave of protest swept across American campuses but was suppressed for good by the volley fired at Kent State University. It was the period when Angela Davis was arrested, but all the protest movement had left were leaflets, passionate slogans and a few sparsely-attended protest meetings.

Almási could not avoid analysing the failure of the New Left. He makes clear that the New Left's principal demand, overcoming alienation, attracted mostly young intellectuals. As such—and despite continuous efforts—it never appealed to the American working class or the Blacks and

other minorities involved in the various civil rights movements. The hippy utopias of the New Left repudiated the technological, consumer society with their version of voluntary poverty, and so managed to infuriate the workers who, quite understandably, refused to relinquish the benefits they had won only by dint of sheer effort. The more the New Left associated itself with the impoverished peoples of the United States and the Third World, the more it came up against the American working class and middle classes defending their privileges. The mass communication media found no special difficulty in turning the overwhelming majority of the American citizens against the New Left. The increasing repressiveness of the police finally sealed the fate of an isolated movement that had already been weakened by its own internal struggles.

During the final gasps of the New Left in the early 'seventies, it was quite reasonable to blame the defeat of the movement on merciless repression, while treating the tactical and strategic mistakes of the New Left itself in a tone reserved for sick and helpless patients.

Like the ideologists of the New Left, Almási judged American liberalism too harshly and ignored its importance in American life. He is quite justified in criticizing those American progressives who think they can have their reforms while remaining within the bounds of the existing social order. At the same time, he identifies a strain of liberalism that is more enlightened and modern in its thinking and does offer alternatives that are practicable under prevailing conditions.

Even the ideas of the New Left gained ground and brought lasting changes in areas where they got the backing of liberals, including, in the widest context, the retreat of narrow-minded puritanism. The contact between the sexes has become much freer and more relaxed, premarital relationship appears to be natural even among the middle class, and homosexual relations no longer

arouse shocked indignation. Four-letter words have come into the literary, as well as social, vocabulary.

Almási pays special attention to those who reject social competition, adopting instead a conscious anti-careerism which he found in abundance, though confined to intellectual circles and university campuses. At a certain level of prosperity it is actually possible to withdraw from the competition that destroys men's health and spoils the pleasures of life. Yet American society is still generally motivated by the spirit of competition, measured directly by money and individual success, as also revealed in Almási's book.

The author attributes the bankruptcy of the American way of life above all to the fact that the individual, whether he participates in or refrains from competition and a career, always remains a solitary warrior. To make matters worse, the mythology of the American pioneers and the Protestant ethic inherited from their great-grandparents' generation still survive and contribute to the alienation and loneliness of the search for individual glory. Even the revolution in lifestyles failed to release Americans from the prison of loneliness; all it achieved was new variations on an old theme. In analysing the ideology of the hippies Almási makes clear that the principle of *keeping cool* leaves the apostles of community and fraternity virtually locked in the same loneliness as their Protestant ancestors.

Young people want and need to break out of suburbia, the physical domain of full stomachs and the spiritual domain of isolation and loneliness. But they cannot. In summarizing the research conducted by Riesman, Slater, Sennet and other American sociologists Almási arrives at the conclusion that suburbia is in fact the American citizen's hopeless attempt to maintain the old ideal of the small town, the result of romanticizing a past and seeing in it the true human community, where everyone knows everyone else and people love and help one another.

er. Almási found suburbia to be little more than bedroom communities, organized as upper-middle-class ghettos with no more than makeshift and temporary foundations lacking any true human values. Its symbol is the social party governed by small-town protocol and confined to platitudes known to everyone where it is considered almost indecent to deviate from empty phrases and conventions.

In the course of analysing the historical process and special characteristics of American development, the closing chapter of *Frequencies* argues that the bankruptcy of American life is the inevitable consequence of a profit-oriented society which the scientific and technological revolution has only aggravated. The only possible solution would be the kind of revolution in the social and economic order which would allow the individual to find content in his life by participating in a fulfilling community.

In spite of this pessimistic outlook, the

book ends with a quotation from John Kenneth Galbraith confirming Almási's contention that capitalist Europe has little alternative to following the American way. Almási does not discuss the future of the non-capitalist European countries; he limits himself to the remark in the introduction that he intended the book, among other things, to be a warning not to follow America into the scientific and technological future.

It is questionable whether one could get to know Hungary from a book written, for instance, by an American. It is even less likely that a complete picture of a vast country like the United States would emerge from a single book. *Frequencies* gives the maximum that can be expected from a book on America today. It discusses essential issues, supplies substantial and relevant information and is highly sensitive to the existing problems, encouraging the reader toward further reading and thought.

GÁBOR MIHÁLYI

TAYLOR ON THE SECOND WORLD WAR

A. J. P. TAYLOR: *The Second World War*. Hamish Hamilton Ltd, London, 1975. 234 pp.

"Despite all the killing and destruction that accompanied it the Second World War was a good war," A. J. P. Taylor concludes in his 234-page popularized account of the Second World War. It was a good war or, in other words, a just war, a war in which—and this is not frequent in the history of wars—moral and military superiority came to be on the same side. This is perhaps the reason why the author seems to have a special liking for his subject.

This work shows off the best of Taylor's virtues as a historian—an excellent style and narrative talent, profound intuition and analysis, a grasp of events and fluent prose with an admirable elaboration of minor episodes. Although he uses no fresh material or hitherto unknown details, the book still differs from other compilations and synopses. Taylor has the capacity to describe well-known facts in a new way, formulate independent judgements and reject commonplace theses about the war. His narration is fascinating even for those who know practically all the facts and figures in the book.

Among the new thoughts there are, of course, the old ones which aroused controversy when first presented in *The Origins of the Second World War*. The antecedents of the war he now states briefly, though masterfully. He summarizes on a few pages the most important contradictions of the inter-war period and compares the major political, military and social differences between the First and the Second World Wars. His old thesis—that Hitler did not want a world war because Germany was not prepared for it—is brought up here and later on again when he discusses in detail the first phase of the war. In my opinion this is an erroneous conclusion which reflects upon later events in forcing the author to defend the proposition that the British provoked war by standing by their guarantee to Poland in the spring of 1939.

This is, of course, not what Taylor wants to say. The book underlines the faults and contradictions of the British policy of appeasement, pointing well to the three antitheses—victors v. vanquished, fascism v. democracy, capitalism v. socialism—which dominated world politics and prevented conservative British politicians from finding an unequivocal foreign policy. In the same way Taylor analyses the position of the Soviet Union in 1939, taking into consideration not only Munich but also the Japanese threat.

Hitler built up his Reich in Europe faster than Napoleon did. Having said that, Taylor masterfully analyses the contradictions of conquest and points out a few angles which historiography has not so far emphasized. (Thus, according to Taylor, the neutrality of Switzerland and Sweden was a boon to the German war economy.) To the old dispute over whether the Anglo-American bombings of Germany were efficient and necessary, Taylor adds his own view. He stresses that not only were they unfit to break German "fighting morale" or reduce German war production (though here he gives a somewhat one-sided description)

but they were also expensive in material and personnel when those resources could have been put to better use. In Taylor's view the German general staff propagated the myth that they had to postpone the war against the Soviet Union because of the Balkan war and it was these delays that were beyond their control that proved fatal. He convincingly argues that only 10 per cent of the German divisions had to be kept temporarily at the Balkans, while preparations for the Soviet invasion had not actually been completed by May 15.

Scarcely can one accept, however, his opinion of the Atlantic Charter as "a string of pious generalities that inspired nobody and were hardly mentioned again". For these liberal "generalities" were surely of importance in the struggle against fascist ideology and ruthless power politics.

Taylor disagrees with the importance generally accorded the battle of Stalingrad because he considers Kursk to have been the turning-point of the war. Though his arguments are far from convincing, the underestimation of Stalingrad does not spring from anti-Soviet bias, just the impulse to have his own opinion on every question. Most writers on the Second World War consider it a serious military mistake not to extend the North Africa landings in November 1942 as far as Tunisia, since it left an opening for German and Italian troops. In Taylor's opinion it was a "blessing in disguise", for 250,000 German-Italian troops were thus taken prisoner by the Allies. Of course this is true, but the fighting lasted until May 1943, and Taylor agrees that it postponed the landings in Europe an extra year. There are historians who criticize the Allies' demand for unconditional surrender, but I agree with Taylor when he insists that this was the only feasible policy against the fascist powers. No less well-founded is the book's sharp criticism of the Anglo-American supreme command in its Italian campaign.

There is no space here for me to argue

with Taylor's opinion that in term of strategy and politics "the Balkans were almost valueless". His statement is at variance with those Western historians who accuse Churchill and Roosevelt of undue submissiveness towards the Soviet Union, but this can hardly be an excuse for the superficiality of his view. By the way, I feel that South-east Europe is in general a feeble part of the book. There are also errors in the text about Hungary. Other states besides Hungary cleared their accounts with Germany (p. 65), and Hungary did not hand over all foreign Jews to Germany in 1942 (p. 142).

"The fighting strength of the German Army was and always remained on the Eastern Front," Taylor states of the year

1944, which he regards as decisive for the final outcome of the war. Here he becomes engrossed in the post-war spurt of German technology, and in speaking of the technical superiority of the Allies manages to say a few words about Beaverbrook, the British minister for aircraft production. Incidentally, Taylor is a master of concise characterizations. His words of appreciation or sarcastic remarks are most pertinent: Viscount Montgomery, for example, is perceptibly not one of his favourites.

The text of Taylor's book is well complemented with a high-standard and varied selection of illustration. Despite all his controversial views and thoughts, Taylor's work is not just a good book but an excellent one.

GYÖRGY RÁNKI

EXPLAINING HUNGARIAN IN ENGLISH

LORÁND BENKŐ and SAMU IMRE (ed.): *The Hungarian Language*. Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1972. 379 pp. + 16 facsimiles; in English. (Also published by Mouton Publishers, Paris and The Hague)

A reliable, concise survey on the Hungarian language is at long last available to the English reader. At the same time it is unfortunate that the book has not been published in Hungarian.

As no similar work was previously available in English (which I learned to my regret when I taught an introduction to Hungarian studies at Columbia University in New York), the book is of profound significance for the dissemination of information about Hungarian, especially since English is the principal language of international publishing. Hungarian is not even an Indo-European language and so receives no atten-

tion as one of the European languages while the major literature on Hungarian remains in Hungarian. In addition, until quite recently, works on general linguistics emanating from Hungary were just a trickle in the international flood; so there was little to be garnered from this source either.

Edited and written by the middle generation of the "Budapest School", *The Hungarian Language* synthesizes the work of this generation which is in the forefront of linguistics in Hungary (both Hungarian and non-Hungarian) today—all the more reason it is a shame the work was not published in Hungarian. It has nine studies by seven authors, with the two editors contributing two chapters each. Though a choice of contributors is an editor's prerogative, no editor could have chosen better for such a difficult undertaking.

"The purpose of this volume is to offer

the reader a general survey of the history and the present state of the Hungarian language." The intention is fully carried out in the book, up to and including the final chapter on linguistic history. It is a practical approach, giving, first of all, information on the Hungarian language and the way it has been developed by Hungarian linguists.

The fact that more is demanded, especially in English-language countries, is another matter. These demands are aimed precisely at methods of work and the closely related theories which serve as their basis. It is no secret that Hungarian linguistics is directed more toward data than theory, as the study on linguistic history indicates (though this does not mean that the latter hasn't been developing at an accelerating rate over the past decade). The same is, of course, true of linguistics in, say, Poland and Italy, and I mention this not to criticize, but to emphasize that a second volume in English, specifically about linguistics as such in Hungary (in particular with respect to Hungarian) is not only not superfluous but expressly necessary.

While the structure of the volume reflects the concepts of the middle generation of the Budapest linguists, there are also technical and organizational reasons for the chapter breakdown, which is as follows: Péter Hajdu, "The Origins of Hungarian"; Béla Kálmán, "Hungarian Historical Phonology"; Sándor Károly, "The Grammatical System of Hungarian"; Loránd Benkő, "The Lexical Stock of Hungarian"; Loránd Benkő, "Hungarian Proper Names"; László Deme, "Standard Hungarian"; Samu Imre, "Hungarian Dialects"; Samu Imre, "Early Hungarian Texts"; István Szathmári, "An Outline of the History of Hungarian Linguistics". (In addition, page 379 contains "The most important bibliographical items of Hungarian and Finno-Ugric linguistics published in Hungary.")

The nine studies give a rather comprehensive picture of Hungarian and Finno-Ugric linguistics in Hungary while covering a

number of other subjects that arise from the individuals' own starting-points.

Because the subjects are treated more or less independently some gaps do arise, notably in supersegmental phonetics, linguistic research into the Hungarian poetic language and numerous subjects in applied and normative linguistics. These themes are mentioned here and there, but without any systematic analysis. The lack of a separate chapter on semantics and no discussion of linguistic phraseology or syntax arise from the more integral reason that these subjects have been skimpily researched in Hungary.

To native English readers, the chapters on onomatology and standard Hungarian may come as a surprise and for that reason alone are valuable, almost newsworthy. Certain British, and even more American, linguists might consider the chapter on the heritage of the written language to be philology rather than linguistics but those who have struggled abroad to disseminate scholarly knowledge on the Hungarian language will appreciate the inclusion of such a chapter. The same is true for the final chapter. But I find it incomprehensible, as might the native English reader, that economy was applied precisely here, where an outline replaces even a brief history of linguistics in Hungary, and no more than a glimpse is given of foreign research in the Hungarian and Finno-Ugric languages.

The different studies more than merit examination, but I shall save detailed criticism for such time as the book appears in Hungarian. However, it may be useful to discuss the different studies as part of a unified whole.

Péter Hajdu's economic Uralic (not Finno-Ugric) background to the later chapters on the Hungarian language is comprehensive in structure and modern in concept.

Béla Kálmán's work, "Hungarian Historical Phonology", is Hungarian historical phonology in the strict sense of the term. It is a subject that might have been treated

as Hungarian phonological history, or even as the phonological part of Hungarian historical grammar. These shades of difference in interpretation indicate the possible differences in scientific orientation. After reading the study it turns out that the author stands closer to Prague phonology than most of our sources. As a result of the ambiguous presentation of the chapter (and the related part in the table of contents) it is impossible to know whether or not the sub-chapter on the contemporary Hungarian phonological system is part of the main text or only an inside appendix. The chapter is a rather conservative summary of historical and descriptive phonology with the descriptive part lacking a number of aspects which were excluded from the specific examinations in the historical part (e.g. the characterization of supersegmentals).

Sándor Károly's paper, "The Grammatical System of Hungarian", is the largest one in the volume. It is itself book-length, with a clear synchronical and systemological point of departure. While the historical nature of the subject is not ignored, it has only a supplementary or introductory function while there is some overlapping in the chapter's parts: sentence formation, word formation and morphology. Károly attempts the synthesis of various post-classical schools including certain tendencies of formal linguistics and the second, Chomsky-dominated era of generative linguistics combined with his own original solution. The approach and the outlook might have been augmented by a few American descriptive works published since the 1940s, like those of R. A. Hall, T. A. Seboek and principally John Lotz, at least for orienting the English-speaking reader.

In his first study, Loránd Benkő, connects the etymological summary customarily discussed under the title "The Lexical Stock of Hungarian" with the history and characterization of vocabulary. Outstanding in this first part is his discussion of the "internal formation" of words. In the second

part the author makes broad-scale use of the results of machine-aided statistical research. However, descriptive lexicology is a scientific discipline which, up to now, has received little attention from theoretical linguistics, in fact the nature of its relationship to grammar is still unclear. At any rate this is the most informative summary of this subject to date.

Loránd Benkő's onomatological study is a reliable summary of Hungarian personal and geographic names, presented historically. Somewhere between the chapters on vocabulary and onomatology should come phraseology, along with the names of institutions, brands, animals and a whole sphere of problems which form a separate subject in Hungarian vocabulary and onomatology. It would have been interesting for the English reader to gain some insight into these factors in addition to the two classic chapters on onomatology.

The title of László Deme's paper, "Standard Hungarian", covers a number of related subjects of which the author deals at length with theory and terminology in his introduction. Standard Hungarian has been thoroughly studied in terms of history and linguistic geography but social and stylistic aspects of the language were never analysed to the same degree, although in dealing with the present the author examines this subject in depth as well. To a certain extent, the historical part of Deme's paper synthesizes the various chapters that cover the history of language, but no single study does the same for contemporary Hungarian.

Samu Imre at least describes in essence the contemporary Hungarian dialect system, following a brief historical introduction. His phonological description is not in complete harmony with that of Béla Kálmán. Using a complex method he himself formulated (phonological, phonetic = sub-phonologic, statistic, systematological) he first of all shows the "sound" system of dialect notation but discusses less the other parts of dialect description in Hungarian dialectology.

Finally, the reader is given a brief classification of Hungarian dialects (unfortunately, without geographical reference). Illustration of a few dialects through texts would have been a good idea for this chapter, along with their transcriptions in common usage, but unfortunately, there is no English translation of the analysis and the text.

Samu Imre's second paper, "Early Hungarian Texts", covers old Hungarian texts, that is, only a part of the written language of the time. In later eras, with the advent of printing, the amount of Hungarian written material increased (and, of course, dictionaries and glossaries are not to be overlooked). And the continuation of the theme can be found in the chapters on the Hungarian literary language (i.e. standard language) and the history of linguistics. This concise, informative chapter is illustrated in the appendix with well-chosen facsimiles.

István Szathmári's final chapter on the history of linguistics does not really belong in a volume introducing the Hungarian language, but it does provide a framework for evaluating the achievements of research. In discussing the history of research, the history of the concepts of linguistics can be described, of course, only superficially, but in any case, the author puts greater emphasis on linguistics as part of the history of Hungarian culture. With such a multitude of important data, the chapter would appear concise at twice the length.

Aspects of the author's concept of the history of linguistics are readily available to readers, making this brief glimpse something of a short synopsis, which could serve to introduce a systematic history of Hungarian linguistics. Addressing a foreign audience makes for certain limitations, for it is obvious that a summary intended for domestic consumption would have detailed the conflicts in the history of linguistics in Hungary and its relation to other academic spheres. For some reason the translator uses the term *modern* to cover the whole period

going back to the 1870s. It might have been appropriate for a book written before the Second World War, but today hardly anyone would think of the period up to and including 1925 as modern—certainly not in linguistics.

The brief bibliographies following each chapter differ from author to author, at least in part because of the nature of the different subjects. But it is difficult to approve of authors' listing only book titles, which are a matter of binding and size, not merit.

Indices of names and subjects must definitely be included in a second printing.

Although published in Hungary, the book must conform to the standards of British and American publishing as well. On the whole, the English translation is of a high standard. (I do not want to draw distinctions among translators.) While the original Hungarian text is not available, it is easy to see the text has a readable British style. It is also possible to compare the original Hungarian titles with their translations and, in one or two cases, compare translations of terminology. In part, I would have adhered more closely to the Hungarian (instead of using British equivalents) and in part I would have conformed to present Anglo-American usage. The volume was read by a linguist, Robert Austerlitz, whose working language is English, but he did not give Hungarian its due, and concentrated only on the English, as far as I could tell.

In the bibliographies certain Hungarian works could have been listed in their English translation, for example works by Miklós Zsirai and György Lakó.

In the final analysis, the transcription and interpretation of the Hungarian material were done in a carefully considered way, a tribute to the combined effort of the editors, authors and their American advisers.

However, the typography and technical editing of the work from a linguistic point of view reflects Hungarian practice of the

early 1960s, with little English usage. The result is less successful than an English, and, even more, an American linguistic book would have been.

In fact, the book should have had a native English linguistics editor, for while the Hungarian linguistics is up to the standards of the best Hungarian publications and the same could be said for purely English references, we more or less miss the work of transcribing or, if you prefer, recoding the Hungarian linguistics for an English reader. In one or two chapters, I think the authors' intentions to save space allowed them to leave out explanatory texts which would have thrown light on the background and significance of the given data. Most likely, the book was not really read from the point of view of the reader from abroad.

The publication of this Hungarian book in English is not the appropriate occasion for analysing linguistics in Budapest, its concept of scientific theory, or historical

outlook. All those who are not close-knit members of the Budapest School or are not linked to the middle generation, would have, of course, written differently on many points and about different subjects, as is evident even in the heterogeneous styles of the authors themselves. After all, it would be difficult to demand identical intentions from even these seven authors.

However, when it is a question of a representative undertaking of this nature, it is possible to ignore differences in outlook. The book fulfils the task it undertakes. The team of authors—and it would be difficult to imagine a much better one—provide one good solution from among numerous possibilities. For a long time to come this volume will make an outstanding contribution to the spread of Hungarian linguistics abroad, among both linguists and interested laymen, including readers of Hungarian descent who are no longer able to read Hungarian.

GYÖRGY SZÉPE

GÁBOR GARAI

IN HUNGARIAN

What a language to speak!—

Incomprehensible to outsiders.

Those who speak like this

are outsiders everywhere.

Orphan, heavenly nest in a vortex of floods,
turtle-dove's leaf-braided shelter,

what power had you
to survive the madness of vultures

in brotherless loneliness?

Who brings you an olive-branch day after day?

Who entices you ashore with

'you'll make it dryshod'?

For you always touched land among blood-creamy rocks,
and craziness goes swirling endlessly about you
as space spins round a point

in the sealed circle. . .

Sun. Sky. Fish. Stone. Wind. Water. . .

You love me?

I love you!

I take you with me like home-baked bread,

I drench you in foreign seas

and lift you clean above the wave-torn seaweed.

A miracle made flesh—my life is your medal:

your people, suppressed a hundred times—

who knows how?—

survived!

Look at the happier nations gawping at you—

they can't make out one word of the rigmarole.

To me, however, you are living water on the tongue:

you are my religion, and if need be, my mask,

my aerial roots,

my guard in far-off lands,

my homeward-pointing shepherd-star.

Translated by Edwin Morgan

ARTS

OBITUARY FOR THREE SCULPTORS

Jenő Kerényi, Zsigmond Kisfaludi Strobl and Erzsébet Schaár, three major Hungarian sculptors of the older generation died during the summer of 1975.

JENŐ KERÉNYI

Jenő Kerényi started his career in the latter part of the 'thirties, and soon had a distinguished reputation among fellow-artists.

Guided by personal preferences, he was also influenced by certain fashions of the time. In retrospect, early influences appear to include the forbear of modern sculpture, Rodin, then Bourdelle, Maillol, and in common with Ervin Ybl and Máriusz Rabinovszky, the primordial and archaic work of Etruscan sculpture. All along he sought the dynamic, passionate and sensual example of primeval myths. At the same time, he noticeably and consistently disregarded the most influential trends of the epoch, Cubism and Constructivism, which at least affected, if not conquered, the other prominent sculptors of his generation.

His early works, especially the small sculptures done between 1946 and 1948, consisted mainly of female nudes like the standing figure of the *Sunbather* (1946), its sitting version (around 1946), the *Statue Model*, the *Recumbent Nude* and the *Stretching Figure* (all 1948). They are dynamic, turbulent, restless creations. "Panther-like ex-

citement", the apposite phrase of Máriusz Rabinovszky, expressed the unquiet gestures and rhythmically undulating contours of the work, which remind one of the violent forces of nature. Rabinovszky was the sculptor's most incisive critic, analysing his works of the period in a brief study of intuitive and exacting brilliance. "We have few artists so sincerely original", he wrote of Kerényi in 1948. "This individuality is not cultivated. It is rather the result of a concentrated, emotional temperament, exercised with spontaneous and unrestrained enthusiasm."

He designed his first monumental and entirely mature statue, *The Partisan Memorial*, two years after the liberation of the country in 1945. This statue, erected in Sátoraljaújhely in 1948, is the first complete realization of the vigorous movement which is so characteristic of Kerényi's work.

The finest pieces are to be found in the rich output of the 'sixties: that period saw the creation of such works as the *Legend* (Tihany, 1963); the *Flute-Player* (Margaret Island, Budapest, 1965); *Sepulchre Monument for Csontváry* (Kerepesi Cemetery, 1967); *Genius*, a monument of the working-class movement (Miskolc, 1969); the four-figured *Fountain* (Dimitrov Park, Győr; given to its present site in 1970); moreover, a whole range of expressive statuettes, like *Dózsa* (1966), *Mother and Child* (1968) and *Peace, at Last* (1971).

The excellent small sculpture of the past

few years shows the closest unity of movement and tension. This recent synthesis has engendered such works as the *Antique Legend* (1972); *Golgotha*; *Moses*; *Copernicus* (all 1973); his most trenchant and mature work up to that time. In 1973 he finished the monumental work, *Hands*, now at the Heavy Industries Polytechnic University of Miskolc; it may generate a new, more intricately structured development but is far from being at variance with dynamism; and at the time of writing, a large-scale version of the *Antique Legend* was shedding its plaster shell in the artist's atelier.

*

The *Partisan Memorial* embodies dynamic movement, as mentioned above, but there is a lot more to it than that. The statue marks the consummation of a period, for the dynamic movement in Kerényi's art here reaches its climax. We could scarcely find a more appropriate formulation than Rabinovszky's: "The idea is manifest through every detail of the work. The weight of the body, divided between the two straddled legs, is shifting onto the right leg. The somewhat diagonal swing of the right leg is immediately carried upward in the defensive gesture of the left arm. The sprawled animal held aloft by this arm has its own pillar-like verticality. At the same time, the right arm moves backward in a free and unsteady gesture. The elongated face and the Promethean neck evoke the profile of some magic steed, which, together with the left arm and full torso, comprise a single unit. At the hip the trunk diverges slightly from a full-frontal position to accommodate the shifting balance of the legs. The animal held aloft becomes part of the structure of the statue through the same dynamism. . ."

The statue of the partisan is persuasive—completely persuasive—because its rhythmical, complex movement and its recoiling and resurging dynamics are unique: they do not appear in any other work of art *in exactly the*

same way, yet they seem familiar. They arouse a vague intuitive sense of a familiar movement and rhythm, and finally we realize that it embodies exactly the way we perceive the dynamics of nature. It is in the undulation of all animate and inanimate things—the air, water, plants and our very emotions. We are convinced and shaken by the movement for it is not the imitation of anything particular but the expression of elementary forces: it is tense like a string; beaming like some source of light. It fills space, stretching its arms out into the world; yet it is a tangible, artistically fashioned entity. It is persuasive because it is not static but an amalgam of antitheses—instinct and reason, matter and spirit, fear and resolution. It is universal and local, ancient and new.

These rhythmical dynamics, starting on the inside and emanating outward, can be traced in later works as well. Indeed, in some statues it is even more intense with increasingly fervent gestures, as in the large-scale *Ballerina* (1958) made for the Brussels World Exposition. This style is especially appropriate to the heroes uplifting their arms in the flush of victory, as the standing figure of the *Fighter* with its shield upraised (around 1960) and its equestrian version, *Little Rider*. Victory is evident in the memorial to the heroes of the Hungarian working-class movement in *Genius*; yet the massive proportions and regular forms of this strongly-built figure strike the rare note in Kerényi's art of organization and harmony.

The intricate, yet clear-cut, movement which characterizes the partisan memorial in Sátoraljaújhely never recurs in such a concentrated, obvious and dominant way. The dynamic motive power bursts from deeper wellsprings and changes the whole structure of the statue.

Let us choose an example from the 'sixties, and try to see what constitutes the dynamic tension of the sculpture. Though we emphasize the separation of movement and tension, it is only an analytical tool, for



JENŐ KERÉNYI: MYTH, 1963

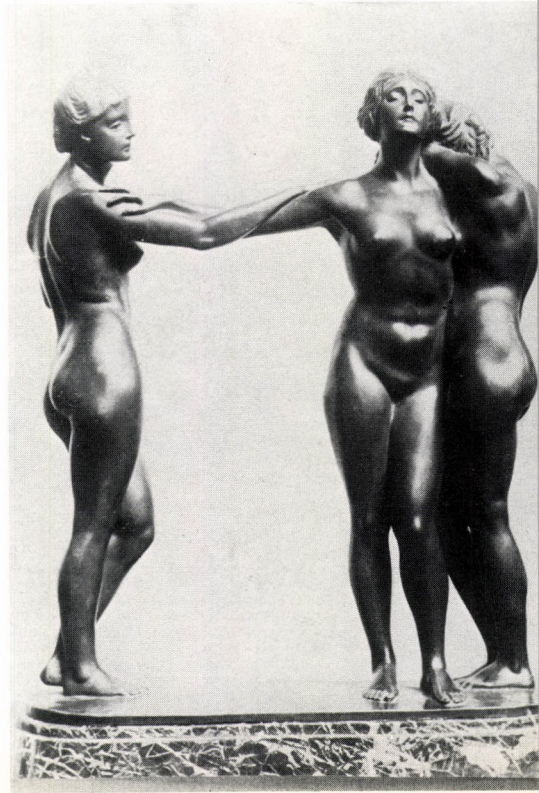
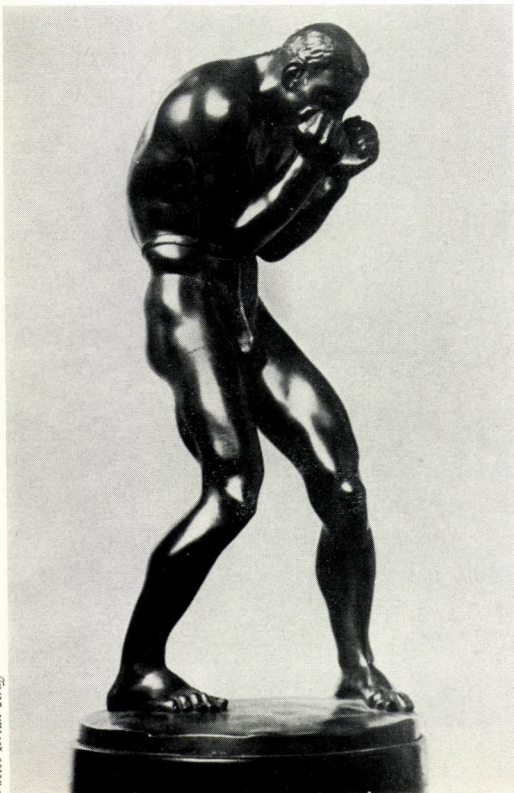
Photo Ferenc Kovács

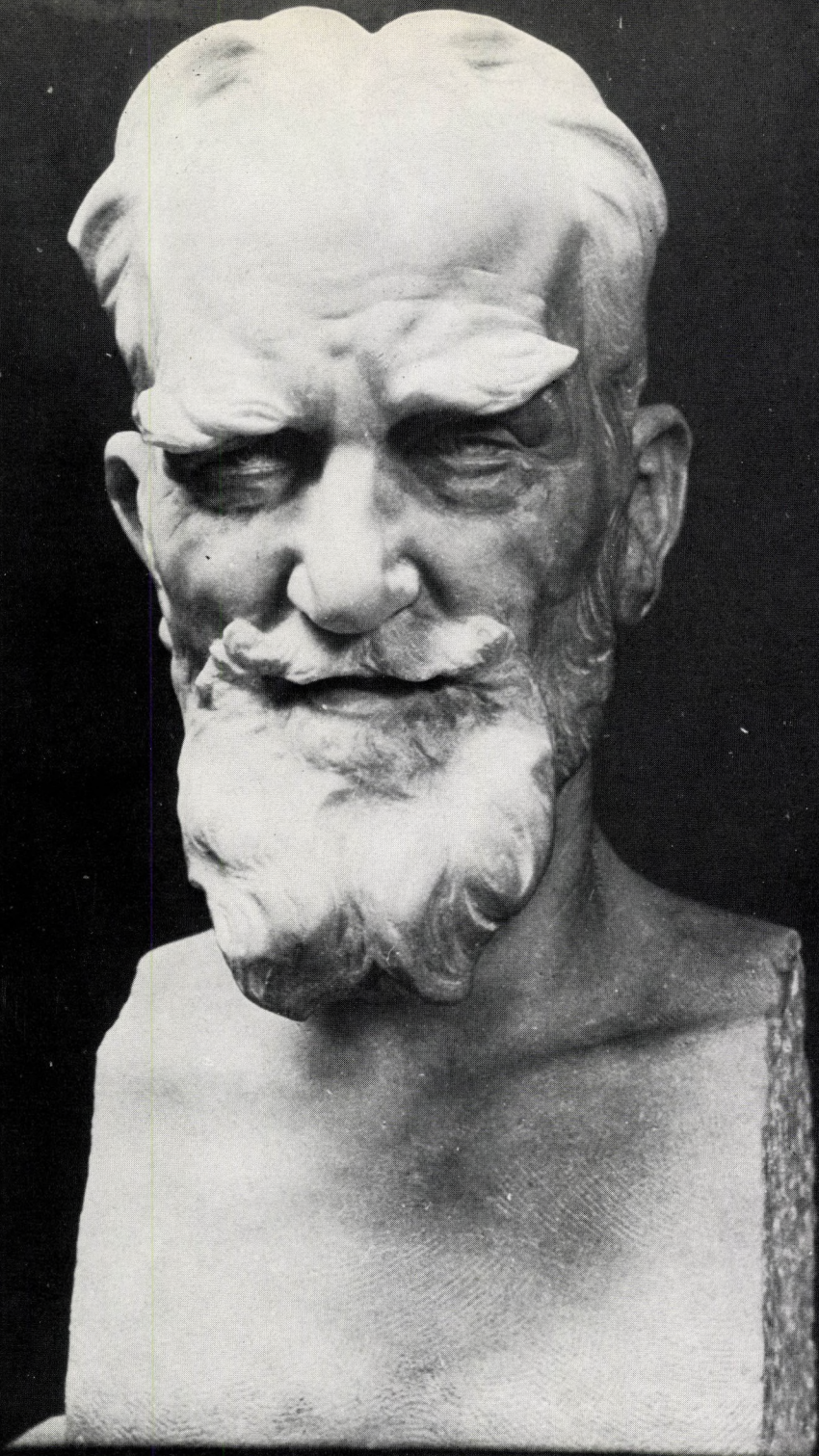


ZSIGMOND KISFALUDI STROBL: PRINCESS ELIZABETH, 1934

THE PUGILIST 1914, LONDON—NEW YORK

FINALE, 1911 BUDAPEST





ZSIGMOND KISFALUDI STROBL: GEORGE BERNARD SHAW, 1938 LONDON



ERZSÉBET SCHAÁR
(FROM THE ARTIST'S LAST WORK)



Photo Ferenc Kovács

THE STREET
(EXHIBITION IN SZÉKESFEHÉRVÁR, 1974)



ERZSÉBET SCHÁR: THE POET LŐRINC SZABÓ

Photo Ferenc Kovács

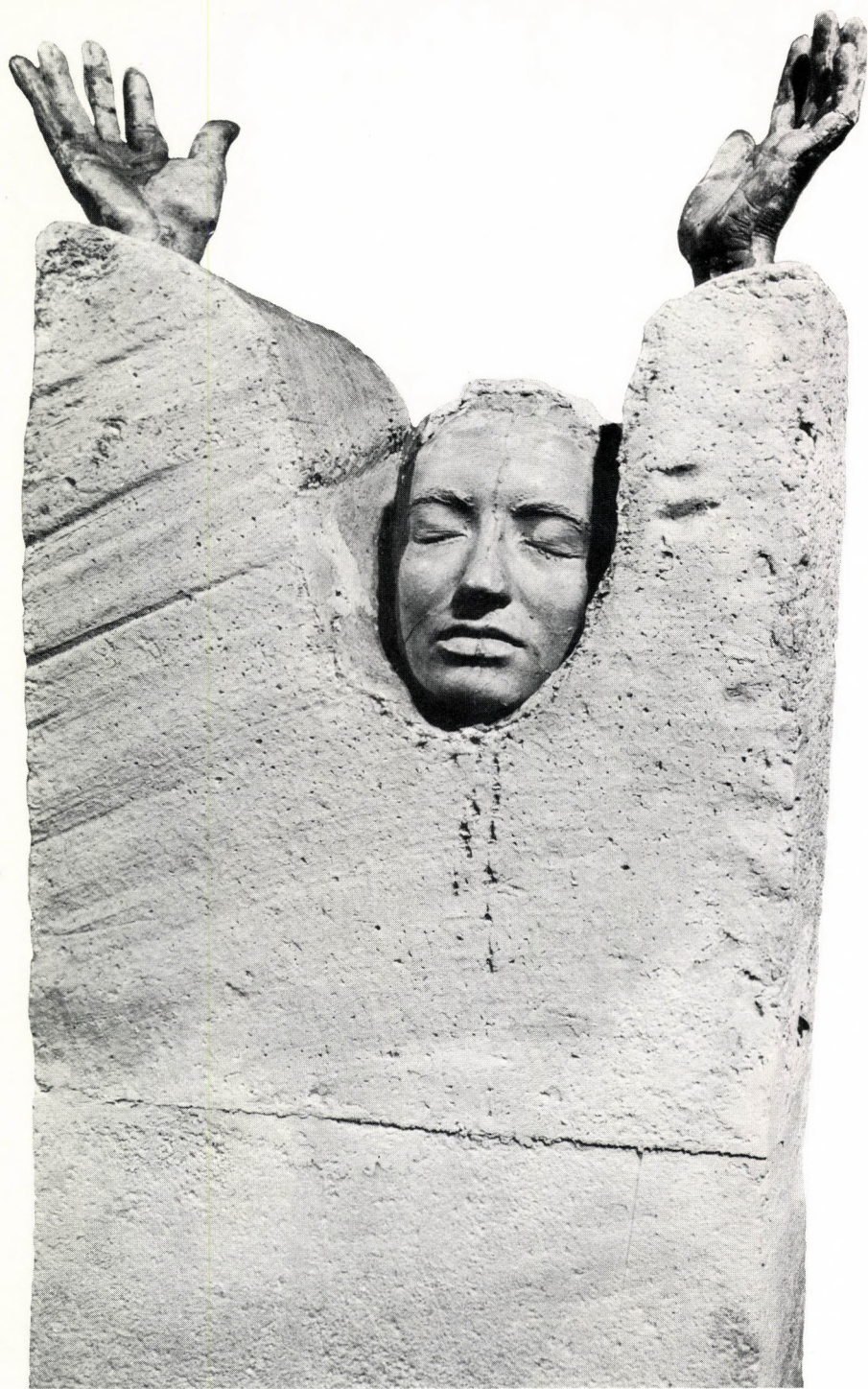


Photo Ferenc Kovács

ERZSÉBET SCHAÁR: IMPRISONED IN STONE



JENŐ KERÉNYI: COPERNICUS, 1973

Photo Ferenc Kovács

even his most dynamic statues are far from lacking the synthesis of empathy and communication.

To talk about synthesis is perhaps out of place, for though the two primary concepts are not in contradiction, and indeed actually prefigure one another, "synthesis" might give the false impression of rest and balance, which is far from the dynamic world of Kerényi's plastic art.

Nevertheless, the bronze figure, *Legend*, done in 1962 (and erected on the Tihany peninsula in 1963), gives the impression of being one of the more restful creations of the artist. It is the faun of ancient legends, the goat-legged and horned demigod. It sits on a lofty pedestal on the shore of Lake Balaton, near a wide sweep of water where its restless contour draws a clear-cut line against the wide sky in the background.

Its setting is excellent. A rustically hewn, vertical pair of stone pedestals conjure an ancient form; its gnarled facing is in keeping with the shape of the figure without overshadowing it. There are few statues so organically fitted to the setting and history and legends associated with landscape.

In profile its form is an inverted triangle. Its mass appears arched, hollowed out and channelled by some internal erosion. The rugged contours penetrate to the interior of the work, with vibrant zigzags forming the body of the statue.

The sitting version of the mother and child and especially the figures in the ornamental fountain of Győr are closely related to the *Legend*. In *Dózsa* and a recent statue, the *Oilfielder*, the tension is more direct, indeed, more real, while in *Csontváry* it is more abstract and spiritual, the product of cerebral mood.

Surveying the freakish tendencies in art, Milán Füst draws a distinction between "real freaks and tendentious distortions of that which is normal, in response to some psychic urge... Certain trends in contemporary sculpture strive through distortion to reveal more poignantly and dramatically a

creative frame of mind in a plastic form. . . . Since that which we call normal evidently represents a kind of balance, it is a static phenomenon. Conversely, the less normal is more dynamic. . . ."

This is exactly what I wish to point out in Kerényi's sculpture where distortion becomes a device or, rather, many devices for dynamic expression. It embraces the proportions, the forms and gestures as well as the torn and restless superficies of the statues.

The figure of *Dózsa* is a complex of large and coarse blocks. Its chest is two massive pillars, supporting a horizontal block for the enormous shoulders. Towering above is a worn yet defiant head. The arms are hewn out of gnarled tree-trunks. The legs are splayed pillars. The whole composition is reminiscent of an ancient and primitive building, but the hefty figure of this peasant leader makes an allegory which the language of sculpture brings home to everyone.

These vigorous devices of expression are especially characteristic of Kerényi's recent works, and they seem to culminate in *Golgotha* (1972). This too is a symbol, and a timely one. Who could fail to see in the cavalcade of tormented, torn and writhing bodies, living and twisting crosses, the multitudinous outrages and atrocities of our time; the horror of war, the threatening shadow of atomic devastation, the Saturnalia of violence; the victims of Vietnam and Chile?

Kerényi's sculpture is, in fact, movement itself, the changing rhythm and shapes of natural forces.

GÉZA CSORBA

ZSIGMOND KISFALUDI STROBL

If every inhabitant of Hungary were asked to name a Hungarian sculptor, the majority would say Zsigmond Kisfaludi Strobl. For he was not merely a sculptor, a Hungarian sculptor—he embodied all these as a living symbol.

He was born in 1884. His father was a school-master; a sensitive, learned and democratic man, and, not coincidentally, a lover of nature. He doubtless had an influence on the art of his son, for practically the whole of Kisfaludi Strobl's work was conceived with a fascination for the visible world. It was during an excursion at the age of twelve that he discovered clay, and, according to the evidence of his autobiography, that first fortuitous, rapt clay-modelling decided his future.

The spontaneous decision was followed by deliberate steps. First he became a student of the Applied Arts School in Budapest, and then studied in Vienna. On his return from the Academy there he attended the Hungarian School of Decorative Arts under the guidance of Béla Radványi and Bertalan Székely. He stood pre-eminent among his colleagues, and was soon noted for his brilliant craftsmanship. The several portraits and statues he did then were already marked by a consummate mastery of his trade.

His statue *Finale* won the Rudics prize in 1912; it secured a permanent place for Kisfaludi Strobl, whose career was already well-established at the time of his first exhibition in the Artists' House in 1909. He used the prize to study in Western Europe; in the meantime he participated in the Biennale of Venice.

Stylistically, his art is related to the classicism of the turn of the century; his intellectual guide was Adolf Hildebrand. Strobl's work is always removed from naturalism, yet never removed from nature; it is characterized by sublimity and accuracy, and shows the sculptor to be a man upholding the values of the past. He was convinced that the artists destined to be remembered would be the ones to preserve the dignity of art against every kind of derision, distortion or paraphrase, irrespective of the taste of the age. This "traditionalism" may account for the fact that the fundamentals his style of did not change throughout his career: long he worked with the self-same elegance

before the war when giving shape to antique ideals; during the Revolution of 1918 when raising a monument to the memory of the soldiers of the Revolution; between the two world wars in a series of war memorials; and after the Second World War when he gave the final shape to the memorial on Gellért Hill in Budapest. Aside from official appreciation and decorations, he enjoyed the friendship of great men: he represented in sculpture the whole English dynasty in the 'thirties; Bernard Shaw was among his subjects; after the war, he made a statue of Marshal Voroshilov; and what is most important for a sculptor: he was prolific throughout his life. There are fifty statues by him standing in public squares in the country. As his name, so his oeuvre has become familiar.

JÓZSEF VADAS

ERZSÉBET SCHAÁR

Death has added nothing to the legends about Erzsébet Schaár; it has merely deprived her of the chance to defend herself against them. They derive from the contrasting multilayered meaning of her intricate configurations and the intimate, domestic quality of her inspiration. After her exhibition in Vienna in 1968, she discussed the connection between the formal genesis of her statues and the scenes of her life: "Having arrived home, I started the day by cleaning the apartment. I flung open the windows and doors. They were fixed in space as though the air had been a solid mass. I gazed upon the doors leading to the three adjacent rooms. All three were fixed in different directions; and I was between them like a speck, with three different forms standing in three different directions from me."

The personal motives of art remain for the most part obscure. A work of art may speak in the language of silence about insignificant things, which have no im-

portance outside the sphere of personal existence: memories, objects converted into symbols by the passing of time, scenes of half-forgotten events. There are two photographs in the catalogue of the exhibition in Budapest (subsequent to the one in Vienna) referring to the persuasives: the one shows the wide open doors to adjoining empty rooms; the other, a flight of stairs looking up from the ground-floor (from her family home, which was later pulled down). When I first visited the house, there was a statue at the head of the stairs; its body was plastic cream, with a plaster face and plaster hands.

The stairs are the play of space with itself, given direction and purpose by the human figure at the intersection of up and down. The figure is fixed on the stairs, fossilized into motionless time; it immortalizes an insignificant event: someone waiting for something or someone, perhaps only for the bell to ring. Erzsébet Schaár's statues are plastic memories; her sculpture is the art of remembrance—the familiarity of the past in the present. The memories are personal, but familiar from all human histories. The recurrent motif of her configurations, the doors and windows, are the symbols of loneliness and release from loneliness; their magic is redolent of renaissance paintings, from the closed space of which—surrounded by walls and pillars—the open window commands the view of a far-reaching paysage.

The family home is probably her most important subject (though not experience), and not just because of the decades she spent there. Her sculpture expresses different states of mind visualizing twentieth-century human aspirations, states of existence and relations. Her statues are no less expressive in the absence of the human figure; her spatial relations are capable of evoking the most important and dramatic episodes in the history of one man or all human history. Her unfolding and enclosed spaces compel the spectator to search behind the plastic problem in the intersecting circles of meaning. He must find the human and historical

dimensions from his own experience and observations. Her "Egyptian" statues, cast in patinated bronze, are narrow corridors divided into mysterious "colonnades"; her "Greek" spaces in bottle-green glass are informed by clear proportions. There are works which remind one of graceful Gothic naves illuminated by stained glass windows, and some which conjure up air-raid shelters and basements under bombed-out rubble.

What she learned from the history of art was assimilated to personal experience; her works involuntarily incorporate old structures, not because of their form but because of their meaning. Her life was an artistic development independent of personal existence; her art is equally an individual at the mercy of historical destiny and chance. In spite of a similarity in material, forms, methods and meanings, she divided her statues into two types: the bronzes and glasses were conceived with a fascination for timelessness, whereas the building component formations and figures reflect the immediacy of a moment's inspiration. The statues made of crumbling, disintegrating plastic are the result of sudden realizations and rapid work unmindful of detail. They are sketchy but definitive and cast into bronze or glass they become impersonal. In them time lives its own life as in buildings abandoned by their inhabitants, around which even the landscapes change. These works do not fit the atmosphere of showrooms and museums but nature, where their life—as that of ruins—slowly merges with the life of plants.

"This art is indefatigable in giving information about a history which is much too universal for the artist to have experienced herself. It communicates the constantly haunting, incommunicable feeling of the dreary world. It translates the mercilessness of destiny into the language of modern consciousness, and teaches with its very motionlessness the remedy against the severity of destiny"—wrote Pierre Emmanuel about Erzsébet Schaár. In the teeth of contempo-

rary reality, the universal shame of war and concentration camps, its validity is cosmic and embraces the whole of human history. Erzsébet Schaár lived for years in its power, without being able to express it, without knowing it was precisely what she had to address herself to. First she was searching for and photographing its impressions in the depths of her soul; it was not facts but the origins that concerned her. That her figures had endured human tragedy and so vanquished it was evident only in their muteness, the eager attention with which they listened to the silence. Someone clenching barbed wire knows no past and future, only the moment devoid of beginning or end—this is not the exclusive experience, but the sole explanation, of her art. Tragedy has become forever the home of her figures; their personal lives capture the reality beyond personal life. Her every statue is a simple affirmative sentence; the judgement needs no comment.

In the space divided by windows and doors she found the way to express the plastic thought that brought her finally to call herself a sculptor. Though she already had a distinguished past, including a number of successes and false starts, she sloughed them off, much to her own surprise as indifferently as Don Juan did his lovers. She had a good academic education which brought out her precocious talent as a portrait sculptor. "I saw three bronze-heads in the French collection of the Modern Museum of Prague: Rodin's broken-nosed man and two female portraits by Despiau..."—wrote Béni Ferenczy. "I walked for a long time from one statue to another, wondering whether we Hungarians could boast of a sculptural portrait to rank beside these three French masterpieces. My thoughts ranged over a number of portraits from the Hungarian collection of the Museum of Fine Arts. I finally reached the conclusion that the worthiest candidate for the honour was Erzsébet Schaár's *Male Head* of 1944... With her every form is in its proper place, exactly

where it should be, not a thought too near or too far. It is not anatomy but conceptual, philosophical exactitude and order."

The portraitist is anxious to record the individual character of the face, the single combination and proportion of the eye-sockets, nose, mouth, chin, the bulges and dimples that make visible the closed and peculiar inner core of the personality. It is not the same as translating modern plastic thinking into sculpture. Putting figures with particular gestures in her spatial structures would seem an easy task for Erzsébet Schaár, one is apt to think, but in fact she has to unlearn her exceptional abilities in portraiture. States of existence and emotion produce motionless faces; expectation, remembrance and horror obliterate individual traits. Therefore she joins a plaster likeness to an oblong figure made of hungarocell, a plastic foam; it is a paradox, but even the truest mask conveys less the personal than the universal. Space gives a figure life, character, and meaning, just as the window circumscribing space and piercing its surface itself takes on a role and significance from a face looking out.

Her nude figures, from the same period as the portraits, those lanky young girls so reminiscent of Lehmbrock, generalize a particular psychological state, and yet are no more than tradition in thought and shape. In the forties and the fifties she merely executed commissions for portraits or minor figures, which in no way betrayed the climactic development she must have been going through. "I am more and more possessed by the feeling"—she said in 1956—"that it is only nature that I can reach out for and cling to; yet it can be a source of faith only if I enlarge my conception of it and disregard the limitations accepted in the plastic arts. The whole trans-human world, which falls outside the traditional range of the plastic arts, was regarded as anti-plastic. And it was exactly through anti-plastic motifs, taken in this sense, that I wanted to find new paths. For instance, even in a flower I was attracted by the part that appeared until then the most

unfit for sculptural elaboration." Her work in haut-relief in the early sixties has the quality of Japanese engravings; the soft contours of flowers, leaves and dragonflies scarcely stand out from a background which, through delicate handling, retains its meaning and prominence. She then made small group-compositions of standing, sitting and recumbent figures whose recurring gestures and postures link up with each other more emphatically than with a single plane. The small reliefs (hardly 10-15 cm.) are reminiscent of film pictures or theatrical scenes, and represent notions which the symbolist poets tend to write in capital letters: love, death, old age and grief; yet solemnity and the romantic urge toward intensification are extraneous to the plastic art of Erzsébet Schaár. Her work is beautiful and artistic, but its significance lies less in itself than in the potentiality it offers. These silhouette-like figures are impersonal, acquiring their character by gesture and situation; once placed in a non-horizontal position the same transformation occurred as in Kandinsky's upside-down suspended aquarelle: they were something different from what they were meant to be. They got displaced from the plane of the relief, and penetrated into space and the artist did not shrink from the possibilities offered by chance.

In the Window is the first in her series of spatial sculptures. It consists of two parallel planes; the anterior surface is broken by a small window with the outline of a woman's head between its bars. As if form and figure had exchanged places, the human figure merely establishes a plastic connection between the two planes, without having a greater role than the planes themselves. The spectator confronts a complex spatial relationship: as seen from the front, there is the woman's face, eyes closed as a symbol of loneliness and destitution; sideways presents a narrow passage bordered by two walls, made awesome by the figure's stiffly hanging arms; from behind there is an unrelieved surface, a hopeless prison wall, with as much plastic

meaning as is inherent in the material itself. In sum, it is an architectural work, which has to be walked round—a problem not of volume but of space, and yet not only a problem of plasticity.

The figure between the two planes seems asleep. Its lines acquire a mask-like stiffness because the walls convey a primordial and elementary sense of danger. In the next statue, the open-eyed woman leans against the wall, having tumbled out of the dream and discerned a real wall. Awakened to reality, she has escaped the incorporeal anguish of the dream only to discover the inevitable dependence of her ego on this frightening environment: the relation of a prisoner and his cell. The figures authentically represent situations and human attitudes, using an exact sculptural solution of formal elements and spatial positions. The conception demands the elaboration of only some detail, face and hands, perhaps the legs, and repeating on a small scale the spatial problem expressed by the whole work. Both the body and the shadow of the body are essential to the statue; the prisoner is framed in the world by reality and the unacceptable absurdity of reality. The walls enclose the figure in darkness—not the darkness of the night of the mystics, the blackness encompassing the man flung into existence, but the shadow cast by indestructible memory. Their bearing is always the same: standing on the ground, stiff as a post which can never change its place.

In earlier work she also portrayed men with objects, but then the objects were secondary, a kind of cue for an actor who falters in his monologue. They gave the spectacle conventional visual components with interchangeable parts. Such interchangeability is evident in her series, *Chairs*, the story of two old chairs cast in bronze and seen from the first touch of death to utter destruction. It makes no difference whether the story is acted out by chairs, houses, towns or men—the tragedy needs no additional spatial or temporal specifica-

tion. One kind of imprisonment may be characterized by another kind of imprisonment—as Camus quotes from Defoe in the epigraph to *La Peste*. The objects of Erzsébet Schaár undergo the same invisible metamorphosis as the tin spoon in the museum of Auschwitz: tools in the service of a certain function and monuments themselves.

At her last exhibitions, in Székesfehérvár and Lucerne, she built a street with houses, gates, windows and shopwindows, a complex of several rooms, which was none the less a statue. It may be considered a work of pop art, an “environment” or even a traditional sculpture; yet it was something different from, and more than, the sum of these. White coldness brooded on the town of

hungarocell; those loitering in the street and the gateways or gazing out from the windows were just as much as the houses the creatures of imagination at work. The plastic idea is easy—perhaps even too easy—to translate into the language of history. And the analogy with history is supported by the fact that the portraits were recognizable historical personages including writers and artists. Yet the simplicity of the parallel is misleading, for the confession is about memories, which like the walls and the figures are mere components of a work and easy to formulate. Not so the idea behind it.

The work was not only a confession but also a message. The last and final one, one of the most important enunciations in Hungarian art in our century.

CSABA SÍK

SMALL SCULPTURE PARADE IN BUDAPEST

I am not one to revere authority but I was still impressed when I first saw Claes Oldenburg's series at the Budapest Biennale at the *Műcsarnok*. Even if his textile dilapidated pop-group drums, his pairs of plastic knees and Calder-inspired iron mobile are not major Oldenburg—they could not be because of the Biennale's limitation on the size of works exhibited—they were still much more than a mere introduction. Also representing the United States at the exhibition were Dimitri Hadzi with a silver statuette and Sylvia Stone with horizontal majestic glass statues in transparent shades of smoky gray, green and yellow.

Having singled out one important contribution, I will cover the rest of the exhibition in (Hungarian) alphabetical order by country. Australia's varied, vigorous works show the maturity of a young country be-

traying no sense of inferiority. Though different in subject-matter and expression, Austrian sculptors share Hungarians' professional refinement. The craftsmanship, however, is accompanied by unattractive affectation and preciousness.

The Belgians were represented by a series of yellow-polished bronze figures by Eric Cardon; these monsters seem to be twentieth-century versions of Goya. Brazil was distinguished by the variety and richness of the materials sculpted. The rather orthodox cubist style of the Bulgarian, Kroum Vashev, is very good, even if inspired by Ossip Zadkine's work at the end of the 1910s—at least a worthy inspiration. Matti Kosselka of Finland exhibited his horizontal geometric statues moulded from blue-and-black plastic and aluminium; its lyrical quality is not concealed by its tranquillity. The language

of the Finnish Juha Ojansivu is a heap of leaden sacks, but he can make them convey everything. Denmark confronted me with the large pebbles of Ole Find, reminding me of neolithic relics. Beyond the door I saw the bright, blue and wine-red forms, reminiscent of livers and spleens, by Jean Filhos (France), and his compatriot Francesco di Teana's white-metal stable pendulum, a constructivist symbol.

The Greek Nicolaos Dogoulis makes attractive, didactic and logical experiments, juxtaposing angular horses and ones shaped with Maillol-like reality, both in bronze. Attractive pseudo-hinges of Rob Elderenbos stand next to the rusty iron-constructions of his fellow Dutchman Theo Niermeyer, who fashioned a quasi-geometrical structure of hefty, thick plates balanced against a fragile coil spring.

The Japanese were distinguished by a classical refinement using rare, indeed, the most valuable of materials though I felt everything to be now very European. Shiro Hayami's two Labrador-marble pieces consisted of the positive male symbol and Bokos, the female, which is degraded to its simplest form.

One can see that the Yugoslavs really prepared for the biennale. The electrically rotating mobile by Alexandar Srncic shines with the brightness of some surgical instrument, though somewhat softened by a few unobtrusive coloured streaks. It is a significant series, although perhaps a bit too tasteful. Painted wooden pseudo-mobiles (they are actually immobile) by Miroslav Šutej, in spite of their immaculate finish, retain their strong features. The luminous mobiles of Koloman Novak follow the example of Schöffler; they are flawless and softer than their model. The Pietà of Bronislaw Chromy (Poland), taking the form of an oval, is a most successful alloy of realism and surrealism. Adam Myjak transposes the work of the British painter Francis Bacon into sculpture with evident success.

In the area allotted to Great Britain the unfigurative plastic constructions of Patrick Joseph O'Keefe and Donald Locke managed to convey a certain logical order. Michael Bibbi's plastic torsos are simplified two-dimensional reliefs of the human urogenital tract; they are also characterized by discipline and symmetry. The urbane realism of the Norwegians is not weighty enough. The sculptors of the German Democratic Republic did not have far to go to find the expressionist traditions on which they drew. Gottfried Gruner's aquamobiles in the West German room are attractive plexiglass water-mills which perform to a choreography worked out by the sculptor. While I am very much for playfulness, the playfulness of these mobiles left something to the desired. Another German, Erich Hauser, superimposed sheets on blocks of metal fit closely together like compressed iron at a debris-site. They have a cold, classic composure, sometimes static, sometimes showing a certain amount of movement. Spain: José Mario Subirachs sets forth his sexual subject, a cross-section of the nude figures of man and woman, in the idiom of the printed circuit. His chef-d'œuvre, however, is "Symmetries": the shining gold brass sphere set in a stained wooden frame resembles the handle of a rubber stamp with the same form etched in the wood like a negative contrast. "The Woman in Labour" by Julio L. Hernandez is a traditional bronze statuette, yet at the same time a hyperrealistic work. His "One of the Family", is a half-figure female portrait consisting of face, arms, garment and apron sculpted with sensitive naturalism. The skull and eye-sockets remain empty, left to the imagination of the spectator.

The tin soldier-like figures of the Swiss Schang Hutter are characterized by a dense, vertical rhythm; they are like the parallel threads of a wire brush, magnified—from an artist who expresses the same thing in several ways. The best sculptor of the whole exhibition is Bengt Ander from Sweden.

Like his woodcarvings, his sculptures gracefully go beyond neoprimitivism and Pop Art. One is both inspired and depressed by his devastating criticism, as evident in the gigantic wooden Alarm Clock, the Tabernaculum, or the wooden-relief daubed in tasteless colours, called "Auction of the Peasants". Similar to Ander is Alexandr Belashov of the Soviet Union. His colourful, gilded, glazed composition "Reindeer Breeding Family", was conceived in the spirit of the applied arts and with some courage is here entered in an art exhibition.

This year's new Hungarian work (all from artists invited to participate), albeit abundant in ideas and flawless in execution, is, on the whole, rather mediocre. It is especially disappointing when we bear in mind that previous Biennales in Budapest exhibited the likes of Miklós Borsos, Imre Varga, Tamás Vigh, Tibor Vilt and two artists who died in 1975, Jenő Kerényi and Erzsébet Schaár.

Only a few individual Hungarian pieces were significant. Tamás Asszonyi and Róbert Csikszentmihályi displayed a high standard in Hungarian medal-making; their cerebral medals cast from carved patterns approach the limits of high relief.

A man of the older generation, Iván Szabó, puts all the experience and knowledge derived from his teaching career at the Academy into his tiny and intimate statuettes. The sad resignation, combined with a craftsman's skill in modelling and patina-glazing, as evident in the mounted figures of man and woman entitled "Mongolian Love", are noteworthy. However, I agree with the critic of a Budapest weekly who wrote that his figures were "glitteringly dry". Károly Vasas creates a quasi-modern Baroque style with cubistic planes. It is not hard to detect here the influence of Marino Marini. At a deeper level Vasas's work is about movement. "The Siege of the Winter Palace" balances the dynamics of a rushing crowd with the static architecture of the gate—an exactly articulated and executed work of art. Gyula Kiss Kovács

resorts to a Pop Artish and all but rococo form of expression. He is not above ample use of *objets trouvés*, as on the marble bust of Emperor Francis Joseph I or the series of First World War decorations. His work, and—as we will see—the moulding of Mihály Mészáros reflect the influence of last year's Manzù exhibition in Budapest. Mészáros's work has a dynamic surface liveliness and no little amount of humour. The only reason why his workshop table with a sculptor's tools on it is not Pop Art is its bronze casting and the artist's own impressionistic style. It was left to Pál Kő to put a real table in the exhibition. His "My Mother's Books" is a table with a carved-wood book on it and the stump of a real pencil on a string stuck in it.

However, the sculptor's message and novel expressions were not adequately represented at the Biennale.

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For the sensation of the autumn season was Pál Kő's exhibition at the Helikon Gallery unaccountably made to coincide with the Biennale.

Folk xylography and perhaps the art of Marisol (Escobar) influenced Pál Kő's recent statues, all of which, though not too intricate, are fraught with philosophical musings. Their vital elements are trenchant yet not wildly ironic, always playful. His statues are mostly carved wood, usually painted—indeed, frequently attired in little suits and adorned with real objects. Pop objectivity and verisimilitude are combined with the unskillfulness of naive art. This is, of course, an affectation, for his brilliant mastery of chiselling is betrayed in "Delila", a wood nude figure with real hair cut from the braids of his wife. "The Wing-Maker" shows a hydrocephalic, feeble-minded old man fittingly seated in a store-bought bird-cage. An excellent piece is "Kossuth", the wood-carving of a dwarfish, stumpy figure in the finery of a magenta silk smock,

a tasselled neckerchief and a broad-brimmed Kossuth hat. There is a certain amount of boldness in debunking the leader of the 1848–1849 War of Independence but at the same time it captures some of the devotion that Kossuth still inspires in Hungary.

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A tradition of the Biennale is to have a retrospective exhibition of a one-time modern, now classic, Hungarian sculptor. This year was Dezső Bokros Birman's (1889–1965) turn. I knew him well and I dare say the ceremony making him a posthumous academician was as unsuitable to his memory as the sleek exhibition was to his sculpture. He was always out of cash, always sarcastic, with a self-directed irascibility that was misunderstood. Yet he was esteemed by younger artists—always by the young—as well as by critics and writers. Bokros Birman made nothing but masterpieces. The Biennale makes a classic out of this iconoclast *par excellence*. He was primarily an expressionist, though he is now considered a surrealist, which, of course is also true, as is everything said about him.

His oeuvre is perhaps symbolized by the "Hatted Self-Portrait" (1927), a finely chiselled bronze in a cubist style reminiscent of Egyptian sculpture; his terra cotta portrait of one of the greatest futurists of Europe, Hugo Schreiber (1933), is also an *ars poetica*, indeed, a confession. This plump male head is a comical caricature, which still commands respect. The double nude figure "Mother and Daughter" (1922) is more biblical or even Lesbian than naturalistic; the perky, very vertical male nude figure, "Don Quijote" (1929), is a hatted statue (as was the self-portrait). "Ulysses" (1949)

is actually an illustration; the top-hatted man thrusts his hand through the legs of an antique nude female torso. The whole concept of "statue within a statue" deserves a separate study, but few think of it or even remember this statuette, monumental as it is.

The best characterization—maybe, explanation—so far of the art of Dezső Bokros Birman was given by Frigyes Karinthy. Though, to the best of my knowledge, Karinthy was not in the habit of writing about the visual arts, he wrote this in 1928: "... I couldn't stop thinking about those original, staggering and enthralling figures which I saw in your studio a little while ago. My face was nervous and restless, my eyes blinking and twitching; I walked round them and faced them again, while they, with their stone eyes, were looking through me, motionless in a mysterious silence somewhere far in the infinite. Do your statues look into the distance of space or time? I do not know, probably you do not know either. The statues are strange creatures, especially those which you have sculptured from your visions."

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The Third International Exhibition of Small Sculpture was mounted by the Art Gallery of Budapest in the autumn of 1975. Its ten rooms held 515 objects from twenty-five countries: the United States, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, the German Democratic Republic, the German Federal Republic, Holland, Hungary, Japan, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, the Soviet Union, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia. It was a bit much for me, but I seem to be alone in my opinion.

JÁNOS FRANK

WESTERN EUROPEAN PAINTING AND CONTEMPORARY HUNGARIAN ART

In a history going back only a century and a half, the fine arts in Hungary have had to contend with the opposite problems of creating their own tradition while catching up with the rest of Europe's. The two were usually considered to be incompatible: at times national character was stressed to the detriment of modernity; at other times Hungarian artists, driven by a fear of provincialism, succumbed to some foreign style even at the price of renouncing their own individuality.

Both extremes proved to be misguided, for an enduring tradition in Hungarian art was not established until national self-expression was combined with a respect for universal values. The group of painters who marked the birth of modern Hungarian art, the so-called Nagybánya School, came into being in 1896, as a result of the realization that "Hungarian art can grow strong and great, become truly Hungarian, only in the Hungarian soil, under the Hungarian sky, in renewed contact with the Hungarian people...", as the founder of the School, Simon Hollósy, put it patriotically towards the end of the last century. Inspired by this conviction, a few masters who had studied in Munich settled in Nagybánya, famous for its picturesque surroundings, and started to paint both popular genre-pieces in a Naturalist style and intimate landscapes in the recent Impressionist style.

Compared to European painting at the turn of the century, the plein-air painting of the Nagybánya School was a late-comer. This is a fact, not a value judgement, and only indicates where modern Hungarian painting started the pictorial and stylistic outlook on which the painting of the next decades were to be built. For Nagybánya established not only a beginning but also a firm tradition in the history of Hungarian fine arts, or rather became one of the tradi-

tions which are still influential today. Nagybánya art initiated the perception which was later considered so characteristic of Hungarian painting: that kind of spontaneity and sensualism which was far removed from the constraints of conceptual and theoretical nature.

The first conflict of Hungarian representational art came in reaction to the Nagybánya School: Hungarian artists who had been to Paris—Béla Czóbel, Károly Kernstok, Lajos Tihanyi, among them—did proclaim and enforce the priority of reason but also created pictures of solid composition, luminous colour and dynamic character. In 1909 they and several fellow artists formed the "Eight", the Hungarian equivalent to the *École de Paris*: their art was characterized by elements of Cubism, Futurism and Expressionism. Thus the activity of the Eight—even if primary form-creating was out of the question—brought Hungarian painting in step with international developments.

Still, it was not the Eight but the activists who brought Hungarian and European art into parallel and intertwining contact. The activists were no longer trying to catch up but to live contemporaneously. Just as their periodicals, the *Tett* (Action, 1915-16) edited by Lajos Kassák, and later *Ma* (Today, 1917-25), had precedents abroad in the German reviews *Sturm* and *Aktion*, so their programme, their ideals and style were inseparable from German Expressionism. In the beginning Expressionism and Constructivism were amalgamated in their art. However, Hungarian activists, practically without exception, were original and independent creative talents, who proclaimed a definite political and artistic programme and fought their way through all the technical and spiritual stumbling-blocks of experimentation and form-creating. This uncompromising struggle gave rise to the

dramatic Expressionism of József Nemes Lampérth and Béla Uitz (who was later to work for several decades in the Soviet Union), the plane Constructivism of Lajos Kassák and Sándor Bortnyik (which they later called "the art of pictorial architecture") and the internationally-recognized copious activities of László Moholy Nagy.

The European School

The European School that began in 1946 played a significant role in the Hungarian art world after the Second World War. Its adherents demanded an artistic renaissance divorced from the now-traditional painting of the Nagybánya period. Their work was to be meditative in character and hardly responsive to social and artistic problems. Their programme combined up-to-date art of European standards with the "discovery" and continuation of progressive Hungarian traditions. Thus they too saw the need to reconcile national and universal, Hungarian and modern art. Their programme enabled the European School to encompass numerous trends in Hungarian art, including the Hungarian branch of the École de Paris, the Constructivist and Surrealist wing of the Szentendre School, Hungarian Expressionism and the beginnings of the new, non-figurative art.

It is worth noting that these highlights in the Hungarian search for its own artistic tradition, instruments and style corresponded to similar activities in Western Europe. In light of this background, contemporary Hungarian fine arts present a complicated and contradictory picture. In earlier decades the fusion of Hungarian and universal art, no matter how intermittent and sporadic, was spontaneous and natural, while after the Second World War it became institutionalized in attitude and programme. The representatives of the European School consciously guarded Hungarian art against provincial isolation and wanted to enforce the

marriage of Hungarian and Western European art, although the majority knew little more than what they borrowed from Braque, Chagall and Klee. They did not have enough time to assimilate the foreign "isms" and use them to create their own individuality. In 1948 the European School ceased to exist, and so over the next ten years ended the tenuous links which still connected Hungarian art with Western Europe.

As a result of the enforced isolation, the young generation of artists, by now grown up in the late 'fifties and early 'sixties, saw as a fresh experience artistic trends which for the most part had already "expired"—e.g. action painting—as well as those which were just unfolding and already flourishing. The sudden release of pent-up spiritual energies was accompanied by the fear, sometimes verging on panic, of the intellectual currents from which they had been excluded. The liberated artistic personality took refuge in joining "fashionable" trends, though as a result it was precisely that individuality which remained inhibited, we might as well say, straight-jacketed. By the early 'sixties, a thrilling artistic situation had taken shape: at the price of some internal injury and temporary deformation to be sure, there emerged a young generation of artists which had at last the questions raised in Western European art resonating with their own artistic and human search.

The neo-constructivists

Consistent with the Hungarian tradition, the different schools did not all act the same way. But not accidentally, neo-constructivism had the most homogeneous effect, for Hungarian painting had its own Constructivist tradition. Puritan Bauhaus art, which re-discovered and made a standard of adaptation to the practicalities of life, was all the more acceptable in Hungary because more than one Hungarian artist from the *Ma* circle became active in the Bauhaus School.

The standing of Hungarian Constructivism was further enhanced by the fact that the father of op art, Vasarely, had been a pupil of the activist Sándor Bortnyik. Lajos Kassák who, as already mentioned, created in the 'twenties a particular genre in what was called pictorial architecture, was also held in particular esteem. His geometrical forms, arrayed in extremely categorical order, were followed in the 'fifties and 'sixties by rather lyrical plane-constructivist paintings. These became a living force in contemporary Hungarian art, and his one-man show in 1967 had a stirring effect among young artists. Less influential were his concrete pictorial forms, for his pupils responded most to the recent work in which the stiffness of geometrical forms was abruptly relaxed by the pulsating vibrations of emotions. After the spiritual and picturesque tangle of anecdotal and pathetic art of the preceding decade, the new generation was particularly attracted to the impersonality of exactness, objectivity and mathematical norms. The Western neo-constructivist panel paintings, carried out with mechanical precision, appeared in their eyes to be the embodiment of pure plastic speech and pictorial intellectualism.

Kassák's intellectual approach and examples of foreign work together shaped the art of the Hungarian neo-constructivists, among them *János Fajó* (b. 1937), whose painting is based on the frequent repetition of motifs and complicated constructions. His spirals, twisted strings, annulated shafts of delicate formation are arranged in overlapping layers, putting his work nearer to Vasarely's decorative paintings than to Kassák's conception of clarifying geometrical relationships. Fajó is fond of the harsh colour effects of yellow-blue-green, yet this colour scheme does not dominate his painting, for he also uses the warm harmonic tones of red-yellow and blue-red. *Imre Bak* (b. 1939) has a more rational approach than Fajó; his career is marked by emotionless severity, speculative thinking and a German

sort of precision. In his canvases vast patches of homogeneous colour and unpainted spots are marked off by the multiple contours of a geometric form. The contours are in fact coloured stripes of identical breadth composed of the daring and bright colours of advertising lights. The shape of the canvas itself follows the contours of the geometric form. The simplified form, the intensive patches of colour and the monumental dimensions of his work are akin to so-called minimal art. The practical outlet of his work lies in aesthetic industrial design. Lately, however, he has tried to imbue his pictures with different meaning and significance. They are smaller in size with a quiet ascetic rhythm that maintains its variations in a monotone repetition, expressing plain natural history interconnections and the demand to be taken as conceptual. Such is, for example, his tetrptych-like "sky-field" composed of grey-green colour patches. It seems, though, that Imre Bak's tangentiality to conceptual art threatened precisely the sweeping gestures of his work: the conceptual aggressiveness reduces the monumental gracefulness to mere artiness.

István Nádler (b. 1938) is striving for a richer visual effect than Imre Bak. The geometrical regularity of triangles, squares and diagonals is disturbed by overlapping wavy-edged discs whose segments shrink or flatten over a large surface to the illusion of space. His coloured pipes, diagonals and squares are placed side by side in such rhythmic procession that they suggest growth while at the same time creating an optical illusion on the canvas.

The art of *Tamás Hencze* (b. 1938) is an unusual amalgam of Constructivism and illusionistic representation. He is preoccupied with the geometric division of the canvas surface, he sometimes divides the flat plane with horizontal or vertical lines, or sometimes even with multiple oval shapes, and then brings out these divisions with different shades of the same basic colour. These shades of a single colour, usually grey

(less frequently red), move from light to dark and cold to warm with a pulsating energy of varying intensity. His pictures are painted with such impersonal precision that they seem to be almost mechanical. Yet their effect is not impersonal: the vibrating pulse of the multiple "colour hazes" intensify or fade like shadows to remind us of the lively rhythm of nature.

The potentialities of plane-constructivism point beyond the genre of panel painting. This possibility was grasped by members of the group known as the Pécs Studio (Ferenc Ficzek, Károly Halász, Károly Kismányoki, Kálmán Szijártó, Sándor Pinczehelyi) who design their large-size enamel paintings as monumental decorative complements to modern architecture. The group's leader, *Ferenc Lantos* (b. 1929), with the technical help of the Bonyhád Enamel Factory, has developed a mural enamel art in which the combination of geometrical elements and folk art ornamentation create a playful, decorative general effect. The activity of *István Gellér*, although he is not a member of the group, is related to the art of the Pécs Studio. His "loose" Constructivism is an attractive diversion from the extreme rigours of others' didactic and linear work: the organic connections and pictorial vigour of his motifs create a tension of mutually accentuated motions going in and through each other to create a dynamic visual effect.

With works of a uniform standard the neo-constructivists create a continuously reliable but hardly better than mediocre aesthetic in Hungarian art. In breaking through ingrained conventions strongly rooted in visual effects, their art, which aspires to delicate aesthetic equilibria, is sometimes so decorative that it fails to make a creative stand in the vital problems of contemporary art.

Abstract expressionists

While plane-constructivism had Hungarian and Western European forbears to

comfort its adherents with continual justification and reinforcement, the founders of Hungarian action painting or abstract expressionism were left much more to their own devices. To establish informal painting in Hungary more than ten years after the birth of American action painting might seem to be an absurd venture. The fact that it was not can be ascribed to two artistic personalities from whom action painting was not—either as a behavioural or an artistic expression—derived second-hand. From their exalted, instructive and intense personalities as well as their freedom from any academic conventions, they developed their intuitive methods from their start as artists in the mid-sixties. Of the two Hungarian action painters *Endre Tót* (b. 1937) is the more impressionable personality. But his artistic non-perseverance evident in his frequent changes of style, do not discredit his first period as a painter: his teen-age fervour and cantankerousness, his equally romantic and cynical individuality (always mixed up in sentimental adventures) are evident in the paintings done on canvas and paper as confessions of an "angry young man". Sentimentality and cheerlessness, aggressiveness and wavering self-confidence come out in these sensitive, elegant, almost "arty" works in which the painter manifests himself in delicate-fragile calligraphies and in excited "formless" lines and coloured patches far removed from any geometric form.

Ilona Keserű (b. 1933) paints huge canvases with organic forms of burning colours, whose open and closed, amassing and decomposing, small and large, graphic and painted variants suggest the experience of inception, change and motion. The abstract whirling forms of her canvases express the ecstasy of action painting. Even as spheres or discs, they are not modelled on geometric structures but on natural origin: the thick daub of paint acts as a living substance in Keserű's pictures: it seethes, spreads and glitters even as it clots into a spinning ball or a mass reminiscent of the figure eight.

Similar to her idiosyncratic forms, her colours also adjust themselves to the laws of her shaping, changing and fermenting world. The colours have dimensions of depth, perspective, plasticity; they do not cover but give shape, they are not planes but masses. Endre Tót's calligraphies are intimate diary notes compared to Keserű's monumental paintings of explosive tension.

Pop art has had no social foundation without the consumer society's abundance of goods, the accompanying satiation and suffocation from over-achievement and civilization's ills, such as commodity fetishism, the over-mechanization, and a maze of advertisements overwhelming all fields of life. As all these are unknown in Hungary one cannot even talk about Hungarian pop art. At most there is some taste-shaping, the absorption of some features and, more precisely, the expansion of the instruments of art. When, for instance, in the latter half of the 'sixties, *László Lakner* (b. 1936) built real, plastic objects into his paintings, he applied the shock methods of American pop art. Ilona Keserű's art points beyond action painting to "pop" ideas alloyed with popular folk art: she builds into her paintings objects from Hungarian folklore like the gingerbread heart; what is in itself vulgar and popular becomes the stuff of her serene, candid art. One of the constant motifs of her pictures—a wavy-edged, flattened oval shape reminiscent of a heart—was discovered among folk-art relics, as a simple rustic tombstone in a village cemetery. Her colours—violet, pink, orange—suggest the market wares of Hungarian village folk, although they also fit the eye-catching, shining aggressiveness of the advertising world. Ilona Keserű frequently adorns her paintings with coloured beads or shapes them out of creased burlap. Her technical skill, "feel" for materials and decorative sense of colour are profitably applied to her stage designs, which in recent years have often been seen in Budapest theatres.

Conceptual art

In the early 'seventies, conceptual art stirred and fascinated the whole Hungarian avant-garde. It signified a liberation from technical limitations and difficulties. It broke the fetters of lengthy execution and opened the possibility of fast communication with the promise of a quick *entrée* into international artistic life. At the same time it was an escape from the real problems of creation and a concession to fashion, not to mention the danger of art becoming meaningless and "easy". It was for this very reason that conceptual art in Hungary managed to become at the same time both a vigorous intellectual exercise and a sterile, futile action divorced from Hungarian social history and reality. Incidentally, *László Lakner's* strongly intellectual art had conceptual art already built into it, though it was never his exclusive style. His postcards give voice to the nostalgia felt for the peace before the First World War, for feelings of protected family life, sweet excitement of childhood adventures and the banality of sentimental love. His concept work combines documentary element—calligraphy, the machine-printed letters of a telegram, postmarks—with some very concrete and prosaic "representation", such as a passport photograph, a kissing couple, a landscape detail.

The concept work of *János Major* (b. 1934), a highly-trained, showy, occasionally even morbid and strongly ironic graphic artist, is just as authentic as his drawings. With a killing irony that retains its artistic merit, one of his works lists everything that was *not* invented in Hungary. Both *Miklós Erdély*, a former organizer of happenings who had no end of sparkling ideas, and *Tamás Szentjóni*, who displays an impatient, aggressive personality, found conceptual art the most appropriate form of expression. A typical Central European artisan of kinetic art, the sculptor *István Haraszty* makes mobiles and contraptions which can communicate actual truths

with an accurate conception behind them. Endre Tót, the most fanatic and representative practitioner of conceptual art, unfortunately makes a permanent mistake in repudiating the born painter and impulsive being in him, and instead forces himself to conform to rigid intellectual perceptions and representations of the world. His so-called "mail art" is pompous, desolate, impersonal, and becomes ineffectual precisely when he expects it to make its striking impact. He wanted to break away from the human and artistic community which sometimes seems to be small-minded and petty-bourgeois, but he inseparably belongs to it.

The hyperrealists

Of greater substance than conceptual art is the school which can be termed hyperrealism or radical realism. Like geometrical abstraction, it originated in Hungary. It has no deep roots and a short history, going back to Aurél Bernáth's pupils who graduated from the Art School in the late 'fifties and early 'sixties and devoted themselves to what they called "magic naturalism". Their intentions were, of course, far from the hyperrealists', but their manner of painting was capable of exact representation, at least in detail and may have been the antecedent of a school that had grown strong by the early 'seventies. The young László Méhes and László Lakner are accomplished practitioners of the art. *László Méhes* concentrates, even in his concepts, on the accurate observation of any phenomenon or process. Through photography he could capture the phases of a minute happening, like the drift of an object in the water. Since 1972 his pictures have achieved naturalistic fidelity by combining photographic exactness with the demands and personal touches of craftsmanship. He puts on canvas banal scenes of life—a railway compartment with a married couple absorbed in their magazines or obese bathers in a public bath—thus confronting the

spectator with the characteristic remnants of petty-bourgeois life. The already mentioned László Lakner, who started with the magic naturalists and was also taught by Aurél Bernáth, paints the most prosaic objects of reality with almost palpable sensuousness and accuracy. At the start of his career in 1963-64, this was evident in a number of still-lives depicting various metallic objects and machines in dispassionate, intellectual representations. Late in the 'sixties he shaped his mature style with a series of roses, bones and mouths, painting unrealistic enlargements of a single common motif. These make for a shocking naturalism just because of the tremendous dimensions, which in turn become fantastic and put the conventional, trivial objects in a new light. This outlook brought Lakner to hyperrealism; his huge canvases are apparently nothing more than the presentation of some object: a syrupy picture postcard from the last century, a bag of gravel, the title-page of an old newspaper or a peasant bonnet. Nothing artistic disturbs the objectivity with which he depicts, for example, the bonnet of rustic beauty, but there is also the noble simplicity that one finds in museum catalogues full of inventory numbers and photographs in black and white. But the selection and separation of the objects imply also a stand, for Lakner, as a moralizing politician, has always been inclined to take a stand, to protest, to agitate. With subtle irony his latest pictures take aim at trash and sentimentality, and in the case of the bonnet he shows, practically as the opposite of petit-bourgeois taste, the genuine aesthetic that manifests itself in peasant art.

*

The examination of today's Hungarian art in the context of Western "isms" is always fraught with the danger of ambiguity. A survey like this can uncover only one segment of Hungarian art, excluding phenomena which may well have a more de-

cisive influence on the general picture. And, of course, in reality there are no schools, only an artist's life-work which such a survey describes in fragments, statically and in chronological disorder. In the beginning of her career, for example, Ilona Keserű totally identified herself with action painting, but today she is one of the most noticed Hungarian artists precisely because her painting resembles only itself. And László Lakner, in spite of the fact that he has had difficulties in overcoming the attraction of American art, especially Rauschenberg and Rivers, has substantially remained true to himself: his early, severely objective still-lives already had the seeds of the great hyperrealist artist he has become in the 'seventies.

The situation is complicated by the fact that the neo-avant-garde schools, except perhaps neo-constructivism, never appeared in pure form in Hungary. The various currents arrived only as heterogeneous phenomena, burdened with the ballast of domestic traditions or conventions, or "disturbed" by specifically Hungarian elements. No new

endeavours encapsulating the intellectual movement of the whole world have sprouted here as "original" inventions, and even the catching-up has sometimes been slow.

Perhaps these few data indicate the wide variety of nuances in historic, social, human and artistic motivations which make the present-day connection between Hungarian and Western European art both colourful and elusive.

In this context it is of secondary importance to show what incontestable results the Hungarian neo-avant-garde has contributed to the creation of a new international visual art. More essential than part-contribution is the process of re-forming and revolutionizing the whole outlook, a process of moving out of the conventions and isolation that perpetuate indifference and immobility. The art of the 'fifties, bogged down in its own intensity, was saved by a new intellectual openness towards the world. Fresh impulses have again encouraged Hungarian artists to undertake the torments necessary for genuine art: doubt and risk.

JUDIT SZABADI

FORMS FOR HONEY-CAKES

The honey-cakes, so popular at one time and available in many shapes, are just one step from oblivion. Few in Hungary make them now.

Honey-cakes are made of flour, honey and syrup. The dough is then shaped into figures of various kinds. They are coloured after baking.

Beginning with the 16th-17th centuries the making and selling of honey-cakes was a special trade organised in a guild.

The different honey-cake figures were sold at fairs, patronal festivals or before

churches and were given to children or girls who placed them in conspicuous places in their homes, on chests of drawers or window-sills,

Honey-cakes crumble and cannot therefore be kept for any length of time.

There is, however no reason to fear that they will disappear without trace. Printed descriptions exist and the forms used to make the figures have survived.

The hard wood forms are a couple of inches thick and different figures are carved as mirror images.



Photo Ferenc Kovács

DEZSŐ BOKROS BIRMAN: ULYSSES (BRONZE. 20 CM, 1949)



IVÁN SZABÓ:
FREEDOM (BRONZE)
54×12×6 CM, 1970



IVÁN SZABÓ:
LOVERS FROM MONGOLIA
(BRONZE,
25×20×10 CM, 1975)

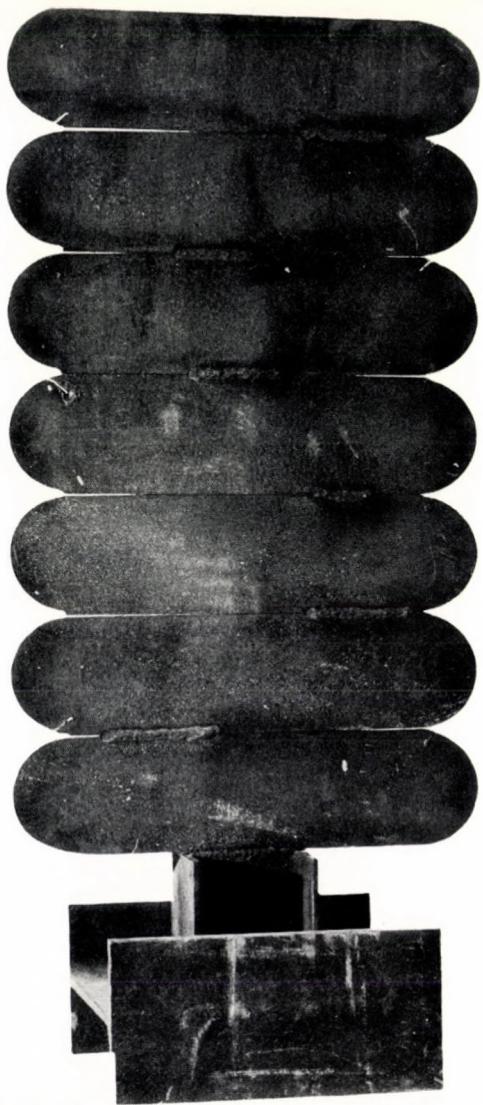
PÁL KŐ:
DELILAH (WOOD, 1975), 90 CM



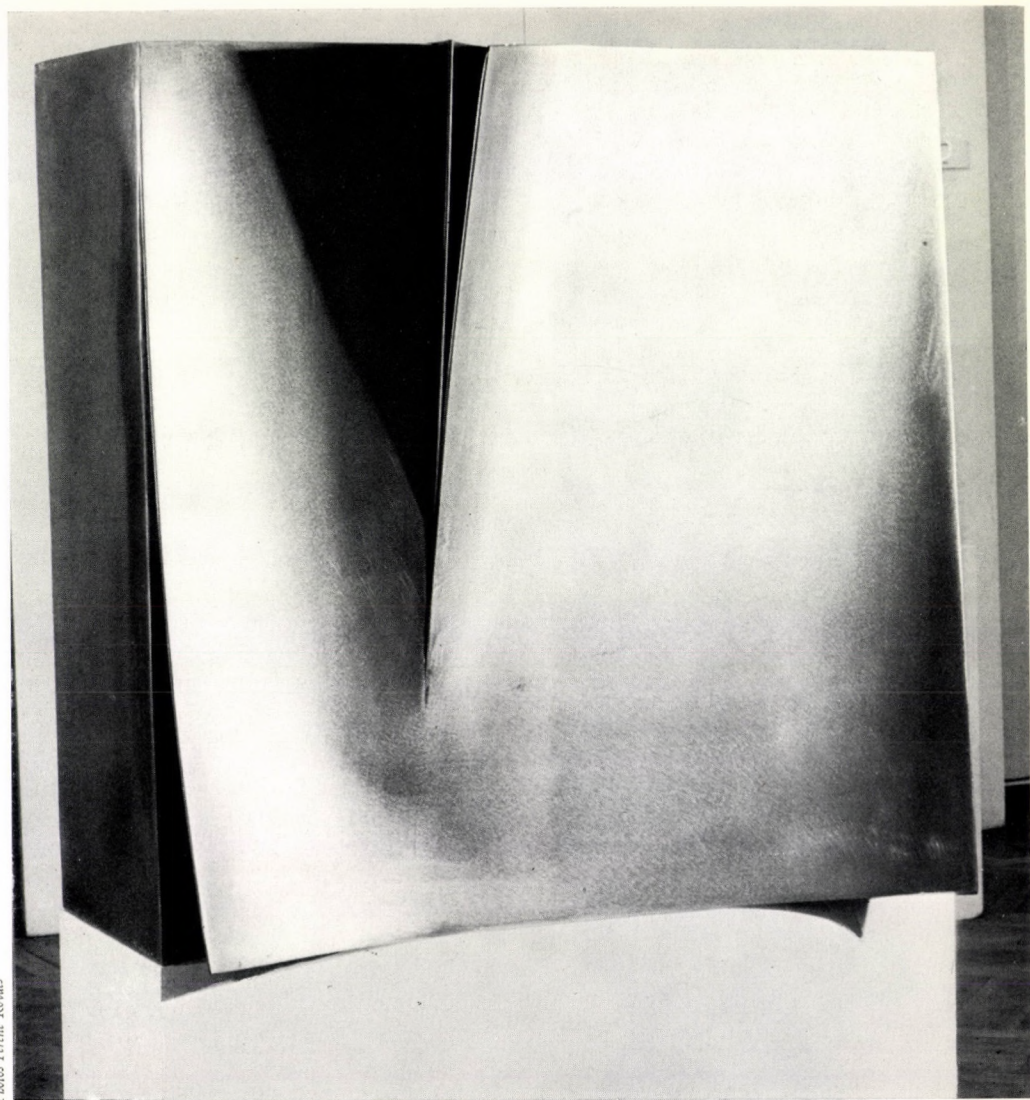
Photos Ferruc Kovács

PÁL KŐ: KOSSUTH
(PAINTED WOOD, 1974), 70 CM



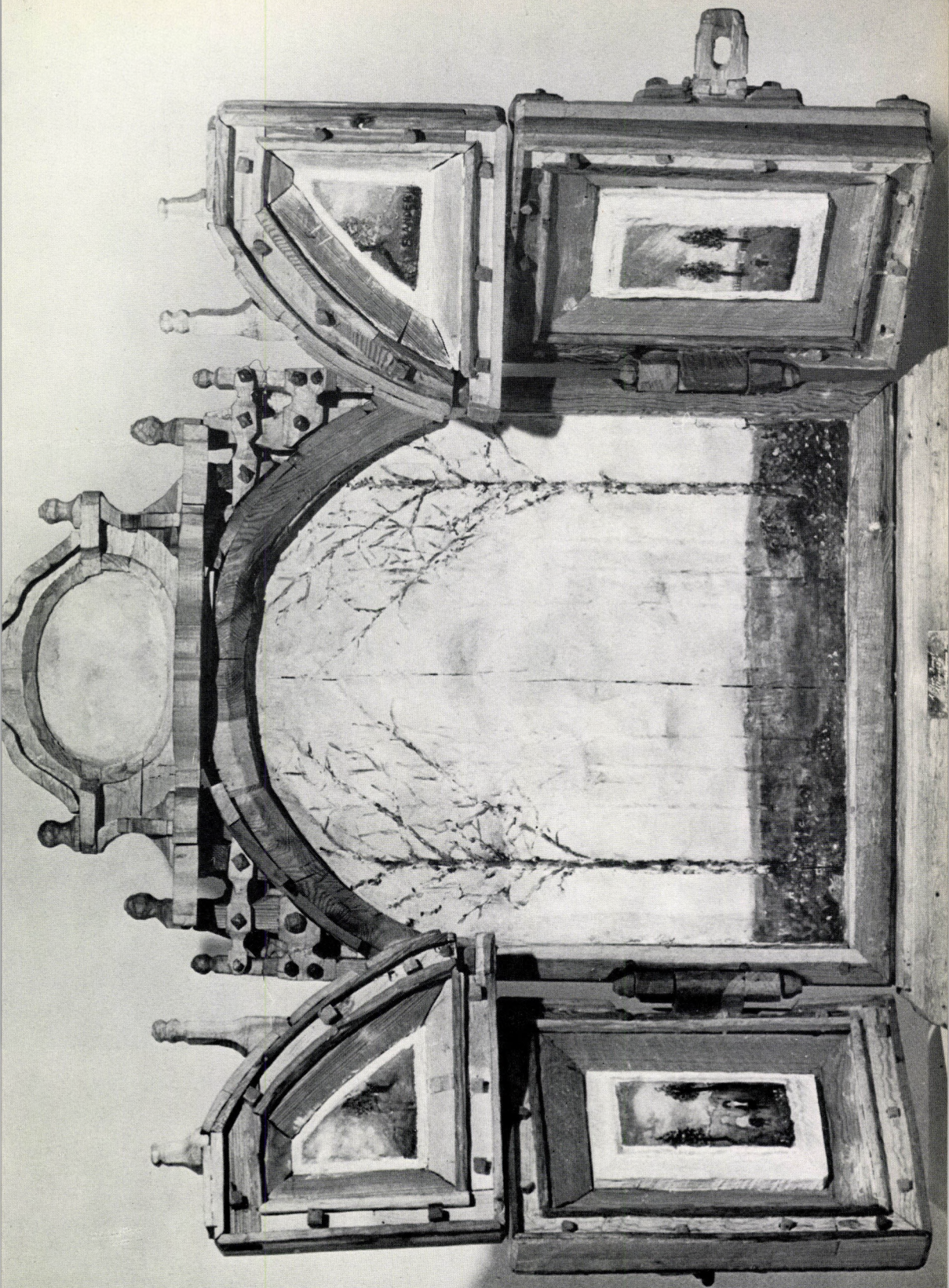


THEO NIERMEYER (NETHERLANDS):



Photos Ferenc Kovács

ERICH HAUSER (FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY):



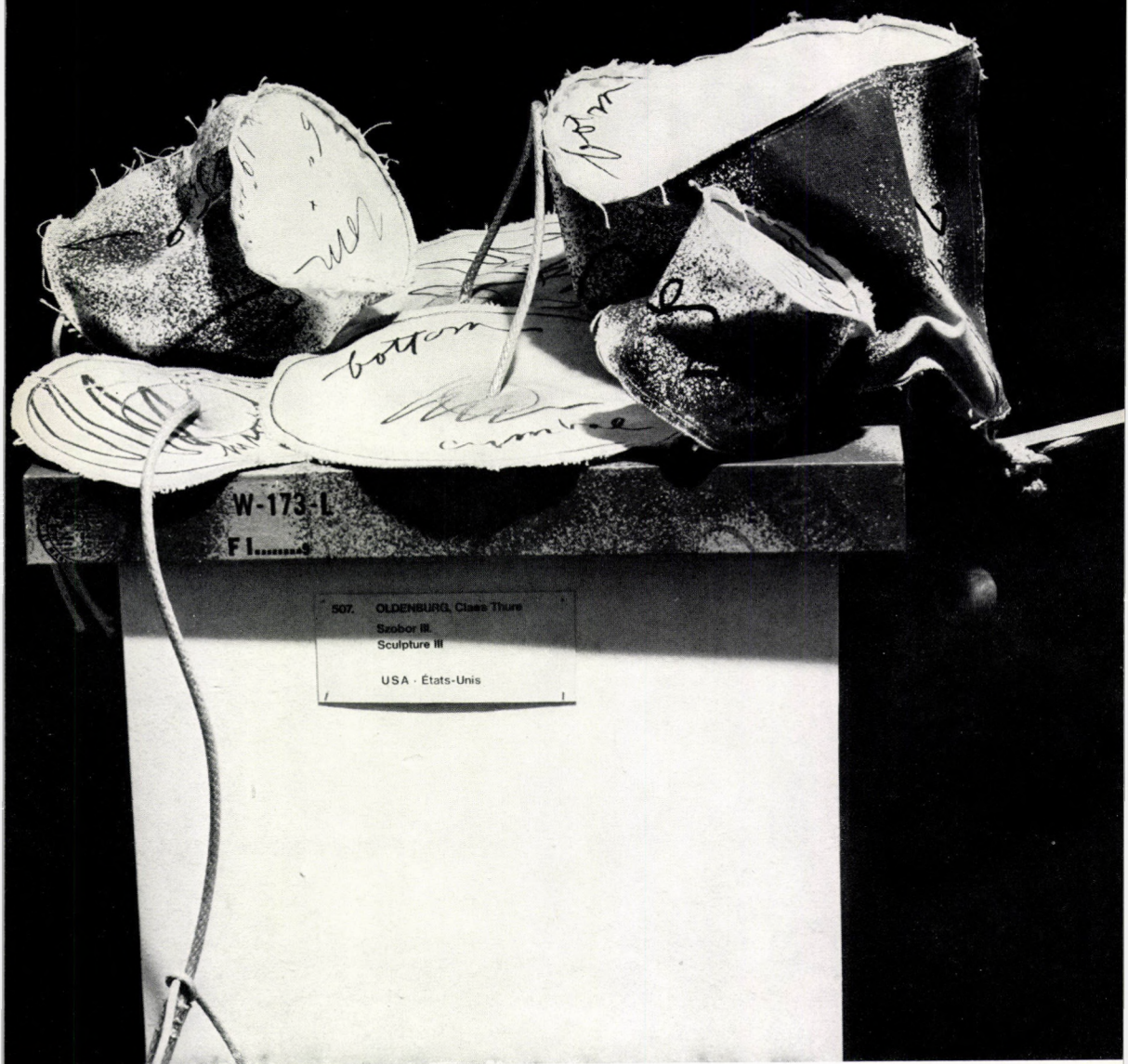


Photo Ferenc Kovács

CLAES THUR OLDENBURG (USA): STATUE III (TEXTILE, 40 CM, 1975)

◀ ANDER BENGT (SWEDEN): TABERNACLE (WOOD, 80×55×20 CM, 1971-72)

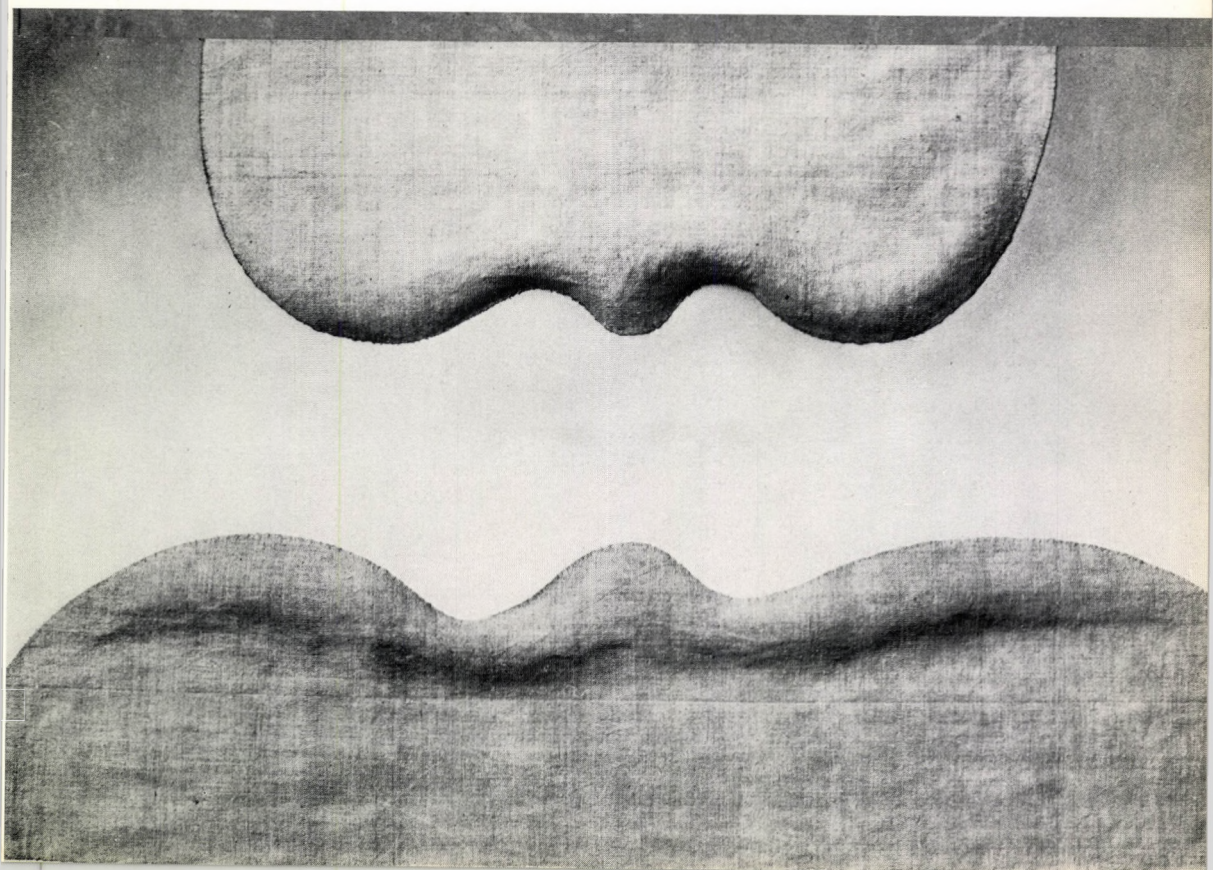
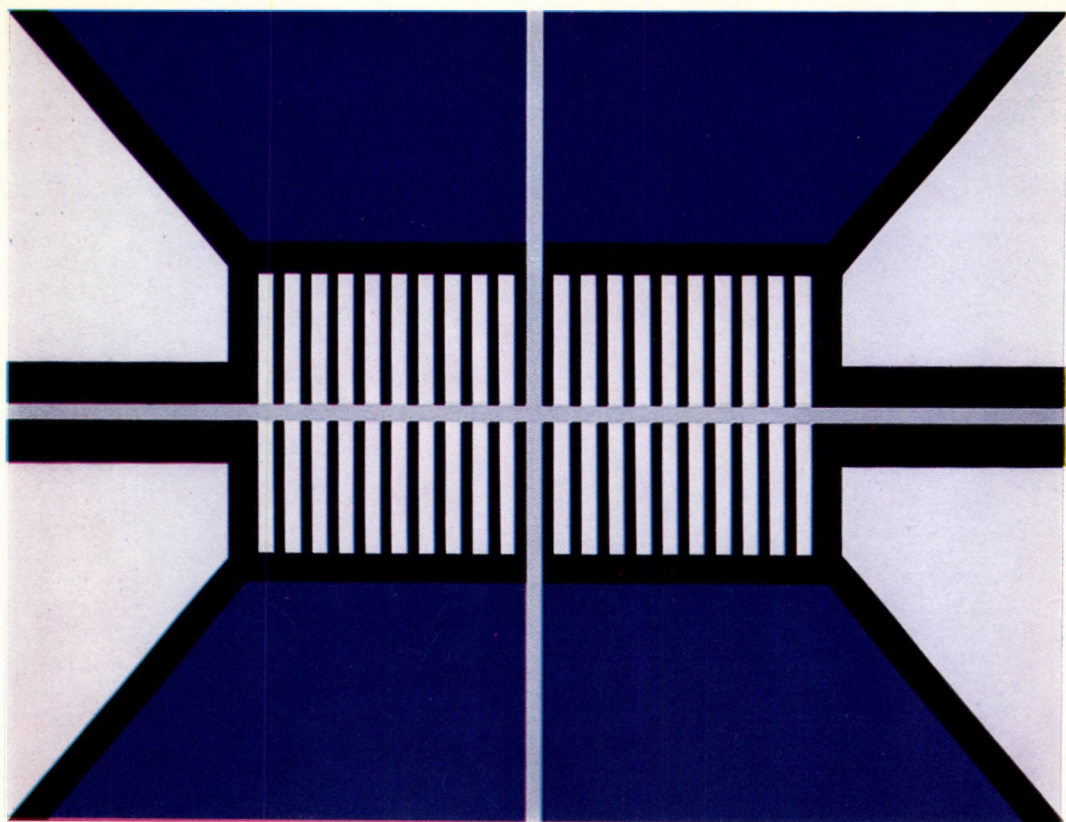
Photo Ferenc Kovács

IMRE BAK: HOUSES IN FOUR-FOLD REFLECTION (50×60 CM, 1974) ▶

Photo János Gulyás

ILONA KESERŰ: APPROACH 2 (SACKING RELIEF, 1972) ▶

Photo Zsolt Szabóky



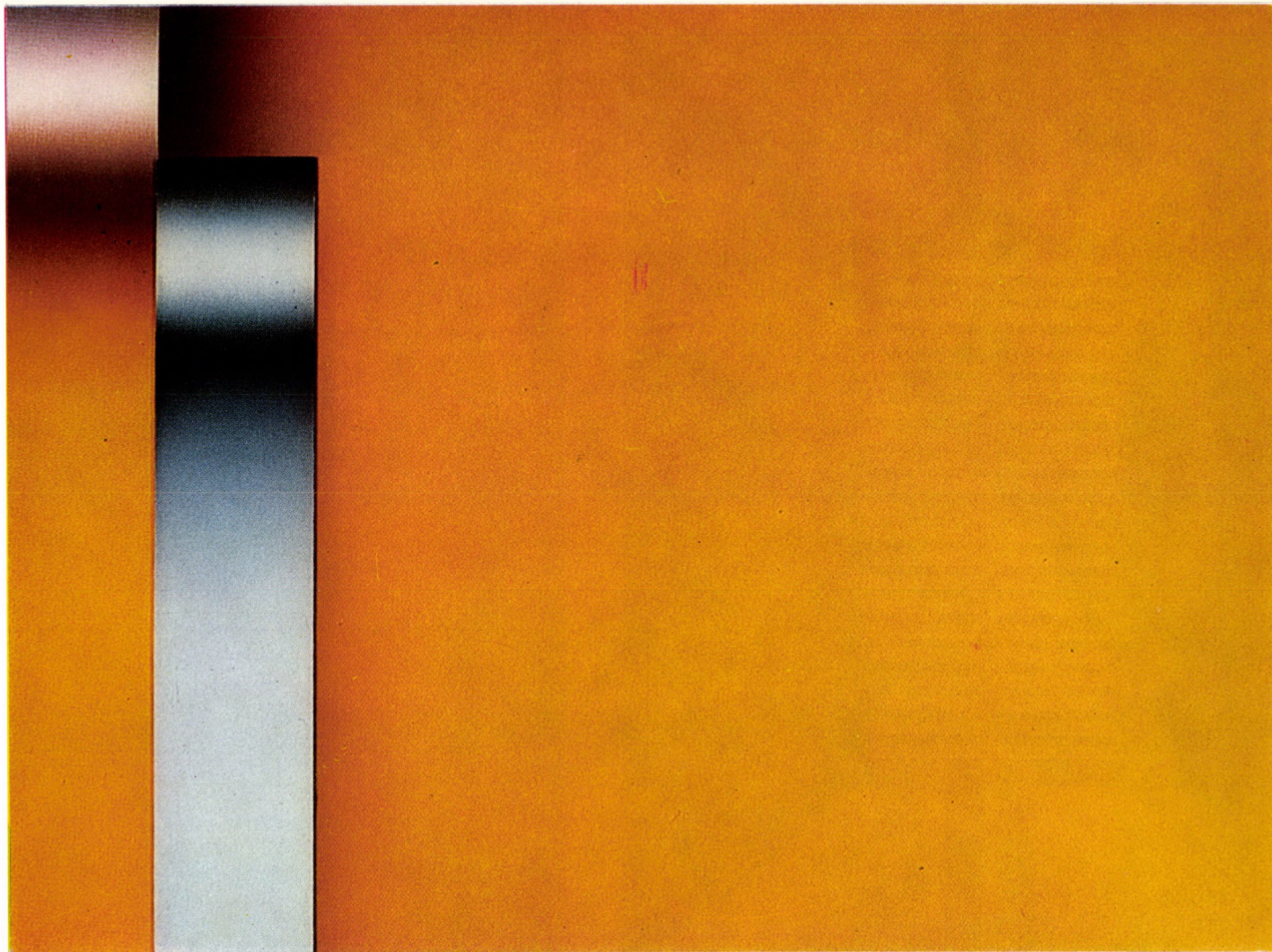


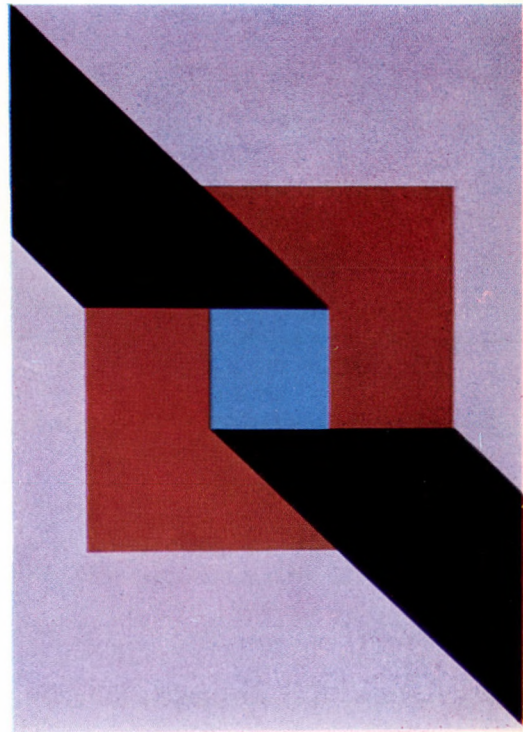
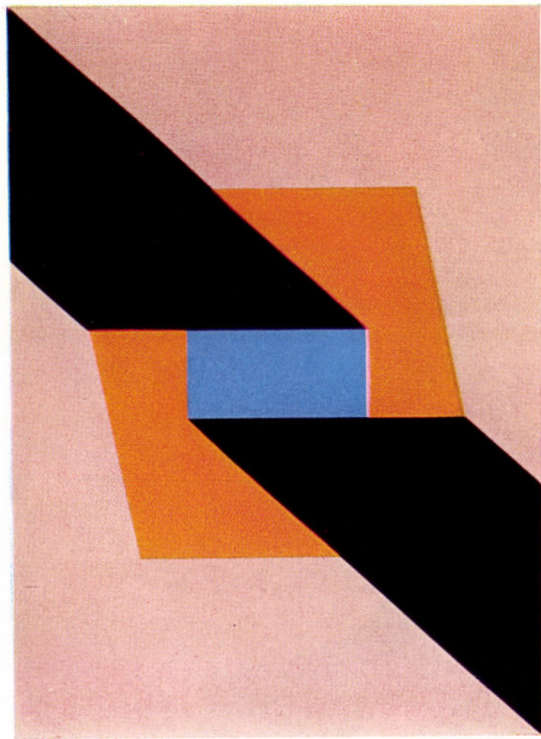
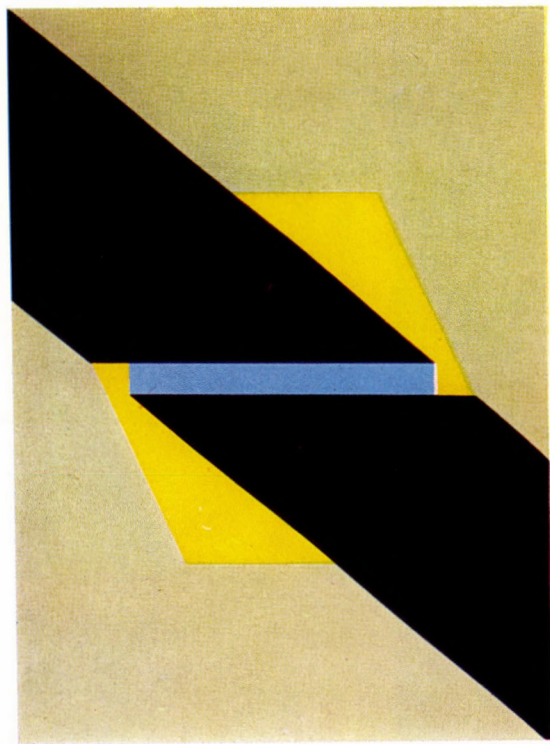
Photo János Szerencsés

TAMÁS HENCZE: HISTORY IN YELLOW (PAINTED COLLAGE, 30×40 CM, 1975)



JÁNOS FAJÓ: A CELEBRATION OF FORMS IV
(OIL ON CANVAS, 180×180 CM, 1975)

Photo Ferenc Kovács



ISTVÁN NADLER: TOWARD THE SQUARE (TEMPERA, 62X42 CM, 1974)

Photo János Szerencsés



*Mounted Hussar, signed "W",
19th century (Beliczay estate)*



*Baby—by Altmann,
cca 1810*

Photos Ágnes Bakos and Melitta Bach



Figure—19th century



*Hussar—by Imre Beliczay,
middle of the 19th century*

Courtesy of Budapest Historical Museum



◀ Chimney sweep—19th century



Crucifixion—19th century ▶

Bunny—by Béla Beliczay, second half of the 19th century



The usual figures are crucifixes, hussars, horses, swords, cradles, and babes in swaddling clothes.

Some forms break up these figures, and three-dimensional objects are produced by folding or putting them together.

The workmanship was of uneven quality. Some pieces show fine craftsmanship but others are rough or superficially executed.

Some show a style of sorts giving evidence of training. The current research attributes it to West European influence. Human figures, animals, objects etc., are shown frontally and brought down to a plane or else they are in profile.

Imre Beliczay who made honey-cakes in the middle of the 19th century was a guild-master who had started work as a carver of forms. He experimented with three-dimensional representation as well.

Forms for honey-cakes were not in great demand even when honey-cakes were most popular. Carving them never turned into an independent trade, being done by the honey-cake masters themselves or by one of their journeymen.

Although some of these masters of journeymen placed their initials on the figures made by them, they cannot be identified.

MIKLÓS LÉTAY

MUSICAL LIFE

BARTÓK IN OBERLIN

The name Oberlin sounds familiar to Hungarians: Oszkár Jászi, an outstanding Hungarian politician and sociologist of the early years of this century, lived and taught there during his long exile. It is much less widely known, however, that in the first months of his voluntary exile, Bartók gave a concert there.*

Originally he had been invited to play his 2nd piano concerto with the Cleveland Orchestra. The Oberlin Conservatory probably heard about it and so invited Bartók to give two concerts there; or, perhaps, Andrew Schulhof, Bartók's impresario of Hungarian origin, picked it because of its proximity to Cleveland and its associations with Hungary. In a letter to Mrs. Jászi in November 1940, Schulhof seems to confirm the latter theory, in writing that Bartók would be in Oberlin on December 2 and 3 and would be glad to meet the Jászis. Schulhof probably knew Jászi's second wife from the old days in Viennese art circles, when she had been friendly with Kokoschka, Stefan Zweig and Karl Kraus, among others. Jászi noted on the back of Schulhof's letter: "December 8: I pointed out the *Time* article to Bartók."

The article, in the issue of November 11, was an unfriendly critique of Bartók's first concert in New York.

The reviewer criticized the performance

* I would like to thank Professor G. A. Lányi of Oberlin College for his valuable help in clearing up many details of Bartók's stay in Oberlin.

of the Sonata for two Pianos and Percussion in a flippant tone, and concluded with some superficial remarks about the composer: "One of the few *Kulturbolschewik* composers still living in southeastern Europe, Béla Bartók, up to now, has shuttled unperturbed across the Atlantic. A Nazi-hater who refuses to speak German any more because 'to me it is a dead language', he got out of Europe last month with hardly a change of underwear. While he and Mme Bartók raced in a bus from Geneva to Lisbon, their baggage got sidetracked and missed the boat. In the music roll under Béla Bartók's arm was the manuscript of his Kitchen Sonata."

Bartók travelled to Cleveland on December 1. Winter is generally hard there, where the icy breath of the Canadian lakes reaches the Ohio plains unimpeded. Bartók had behind him his arduous journey or rather "flight", and a worried month in New York, looking for a flat while facing financial uncertainty. All these were aggravated by the disagreeable experience of a not too successful first concert. So the eight days' concert tour required a superhuman effort from a man now nearing 60 and already bearing the germ of his mortal illness.

At Oberlin he gave two concerts on the same day: at 10 a.m., a solo concert and lecture where he performed only his own work, and at 8 p.m. another solo concert where he also played two compositions by Kodály and Mozart's Concerto in D minor.

OBERLIN' CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

Piano Recital

by

BÉLA BARTÓK

assisted by

The Conservatory Orchestra

WARNER CONCERT HALL

Tuesday, December 3, 1940
at 8:00 p. m.

Program

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---|---------------|
| I. Mikrokosmos | | | |
| Chords together and opposed | (122) | } | <i>Bartók</i> |
| Peasant Dance | (123) | | |
| Change of Time | (124) | | |
| Harmonies | (102) | | |
| Six Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm | (148-153) | | |
| The Night's Music | | | |
| Suite, Op. 14 | | | |
| Allegretto | | | |
| Scherzo | | | |
| Allegro molto | | | |
| Sestante | | | |
| Allegro barbare | | | |
| II. Transylvanian Folk Song | } Op. 11 | } | <i>Kodály</i> |
| Epitaph | | | |
| Mikrokosmos | | | <i>Bartók</i> |
| Free Variations | (140) | | |
| From the Diary of a Fly | (142) | | |
| Minor Seconds, Major Sevenths | (144) | | |
| Unison | (137) | | |
| Ostinato | (146) | | |
| III. Concerto in D minor | | | <i>Mozart</i> |
| Allegro | | | |
| Romance | | | |
| Rondo | | | |

Steinway piano used

A poster advertising Bartók's Oberlin recital,
1940

John Frazer, a former teacher at the Oberlin Conservatory, remembers Bartók's concert in Oberlin very well. In his opinion the concert was not a success. To his knowledge Bartók had almost no time or strength to rehearse: he gave the impression of a tired

and sick man. After the concert Frank Shaw, the director of the Conservatory, gave a party in Bartók's honour, to which he had invited the Conservatory's teachers and their wives. Bartók sat in a big armchair and barely said a word.

The allegation that Bartók was unknown in America at the time is untrue. According to John Frazer, music-lovers in New York had known him as far back as the 'twenties. They expected a great deal from his performance. Herbert Elwell, musical critic of the most important Cleveland daily, introduced him to the audience with understanding and reverence. He then reviewed the concert of December 3 in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. After the expert analysis of Bartók's performance he wrote of his music that it "partakes of the bitter protestations engendered by the moral climate of the last world war. It is nothing if not the work of an independent thinker, a sincere thinker, who realizes his intentions with ascetic severity, by rejection of everything pretty or plastic in the way of melody and, not infrequently, by extraordinary intuitive discoveries in novel sonority and purely dynamic effect. It has a certain kind of fortitude and integrity in its scorn for the refinements of tradition."

Bartók arrived in Oberlin on December 2. He had one day to rehearse with the orchestra; on the same day the Jászis invited him to lunch. According to Mrs. Jászi and others who heard her recollections, Bartók and Jászi remained very reserved the whole time. They did not warm to each other at all. This can be explained by Bartók's understandable fatigue and his language difficulties (Mrs. Jászi did not speak Hungarian), and even more by the seemingly hopeless situation of the political left: by the end of 1940 the anti-fascist front was about to collapse in Europe. What words of encouragement could they have had for each other? Although Jászi was not a connoisseur of music, the notes in his diary after the concert show his warm appreciation of Bartók: "I was deeply

impressed and from his composition I felt Danubian and Transylvanian air and color." Jászi was born in Nagykároly, Transylvania; maybe it was as a gesture to him that Bartók played Transylvanian melodies in both Oberlin programmes.

*

These two men had certainly much in common. Both were strict moralists; both believed in the need for friendship among the peoples of the Danube region and yet, they did not develop a deeper, lasting relationship. There were several reasons for this: one was surely Bartók's illness; another, and one that should by now be spoken about straightforwardly since documents substantiate it, concerns Viktor Bátor. He was a confidant of Tibor Eckhardt, and made approaches to Bartók in many ways. The composer was indebted to Bátor for numerous favours, among them having helped Bartók's son Péter leave Hungary and join his father in America. This, of course, was a matter of grave importance to the mortally ill artist.

Bátor could never persuade Bartók actively to join any political group but once or twice Bartók did put his signature on ill-advised correspondence. The political activity of the exiles was a jungle in which even the most experienced politicians lost their way, including people like Ruzstem Vámbéry who, in a moment of weakness, was willing to support a common front with Eckhardt.

Political activity and especially political machinations behind the scenes had always been far removed from Bartók's sphere of knowledge and he had no way of knowing that a group which called itself "For Independent Hungary" and propagated attractive anti-fascist slogans, was in reality an anti-progressive venture under Eckhardt's influence.

So he signed letters in the spring of 1942 as the chairman of the organization's "scientific and artistic committee", to solicit for members. The committee never did materialize, but Jászi and his friends were offended at Bartók's participation in the whole affair. In the correspondence between Jászi Károlyi and Vámbéry they referred to the matter several times but continued to mention Bartók with the greatest respect. They were sincerely grieved and shocked at his worsening state of health. However, it is also true that the left-wing among Hungarian political émigrés took offence. Because of that, in addition to the composer's grave illness, they did not approach him and so too easily forfeited the invaluable moral support which his name could have given them. It must be added that after Bartók's death Viktor Bátor proved to be an excellent businessman in handling the debates and lawsuits resulting from the estate and copyrights.

It is always important to confront myth with fact and especially with Bartók, whose memory certainly needs no embellishment with myths.

ERZSÉBET VEZÉR

TWO BOOKS ON MUSIC

ANDRÁS PERNYE: *Hét tanulmány a zenéről* (Seven Essays on Music.) Magvető Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1973, 417 pp. (in Hungarian). *Előadóművészet és zenei köznyelv* (Performing Art And the Musical Vernacular.) Editio Musica, Budapest, 1974, 486 pp (in Hungarian).

When, some fifteen years ago, I asked music critic András Pernye to write an article for the scholarly review *Magyar Zene* evaluating the performances at the Budapest Musical Competitions, I had no idea it would set in motion a train of thought that would arrive at two monumental scholarly works. Their titles do not do justice to the scope, or even to the coherence, of the two works. *Seven Essays on Music* is actually a logically compiled history of music; *Performing Art and the Musical Vernacular* captures the veritable life of music from its origins to the present day and treats the subject with immense erudition and scientific evidence. Though the author calls the latter volume an "essay", it too is a history of music.

András Pernye combines originality with the best traditions of Hungarian writing on musical history and aesthetics. He treats music not as notes put down on paper but rather as the artistic product of people, be they individuals, a whole social class or even an entire society. He thus follows the Hungarian musicological school founded by Bartók and Kodály, and made famous by the musicologist Bence Szabolcsi and the music critic Aladár Tóth. In aesthetics, he builds his thought upon György Lukács's work: and Lukács—who did not live to see the publication of these volumes but was familiar with András Pernye's essays—pointed out on several occasions, verbally and in writing, how greatly he valued them.

Open-minded readers, among whom I presume to count myself, are not bound by the opinion of great thinkers, even of un-

disputed authority; indeed, their opinions tend to arouse opposition from independent-minded people. A careful perusal of the two volumes, however, has made clear to me why György Lukács regarded András Pernye's writings as so important to the whole development of Hungarian musicology.

The train of thought running through the 900 pages of the two volumes is set in motion by a single, concrete idea, which is mentioned in the first of the *Seven Essays*—on the theory of musical repeats. "The only shaping principle of music is the repeat," says András Pernye before he goes on to prove his thesis historically and aesthetically, setting forth psychological and social arguments in terms of the individual and community. He considers the repeat, quite specifically, as the way that certain types of music come into the vernacular. After stating this as a guideline of his essays, he cites two examples—the fate that befell J. S. Bach and the *bel canto* opera—to show the significance of the musical vernacular in particular periods. While here he delves into the past, the second half of the book turns to the music of our time, which draws on folk-music and uses the repeat as a form-building principle, but finds itself in decay ("Alban Berg and the Numbers", "Warsaw Autumn in 1964", "A Hungarian Film on Pop Music"). The essay on pop music very effectively demonstrates that members of the younger generation are longing for some kind of musical vernacular; when they no longer find the genuine, community-based vernacular, they impose it on genres like pop music.

An apparent departure from the theme of the book is the essay entitled "Drama Time", in which Pernye examines the relationship between real time and time in drama and musical drama. But the real subject is operatic composition, and Pernye compares the musical theatre as the medium

of condensing real time with opera as the means of providing a specific kind of musical vernacular to as large an audience as possible. So, in fact, the essay is of a piece with the entire collection.

*

Performing Art and the Musical Vernacular is a work related to the *Seven Essays*, yet it is of a different nature. Here Pernye raises questions and answers them. His most important questions are: Why were certain types of music born in this or that period? How and why did a style or a group of works become popular? What elements of the vernacular of music were contained in the most popular compositions? How did one or another school make a musical vernacular?

As he draws nearer to the present, Pernye notes that music comes increasingly into disarray. In the beginning, at the level of musical folklore, the composer, performer and recipient were naturally the same. The community understood precisely what it was told by the music it had made: it was a form created from repeats by various means. In the last stage of development in our time, the division of labour entirely destroys the uniformity of composition and performance: these two extremes embrace approximately two millennia in the history of European music.

The author's questions and answers draw essentially from three sources. First, he looks for evidence in the music—the creative works themselves. Second, he draws on an immense literature about the musical life of different periods (the bibliography lists nearly 200 publications, most of which are original documents from before the nineteenth century). Finally, as he comes nearer to our day, he discusses the considerable personal experience of the author, a critic who has written thousands of pieces about concerts and music.

The train of thought has three decisive turning-points. The first is the birth of

instrumental music in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The precondition of performing art comes into existence when vocal pieces, bound by thousands of ties to popular music (i.e. the vernacular), are arranged for instruments. This early instrumental music retains and is inspired by a variety of techniques but it also becomes increasingly independent and opens up boundless new avenues of development. Perhaps Pernye's most important observation is that polyphonic vocal music, even written by a single person, was still sung by a community of people, while early instrumental music was performed on the lute or keyboard instrument by a single person. And herein lies the germ of what was to appear, about two centuries later, as the instrumental virtuoso, whose performance was more important than the work performed.

The author rightly associates the rise of musical performance as an art with a certain decline in the composition of music. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, England was the native country of modern concert music and music-making for the paying public, but her own musical production gave precious little to the world. In Germany, though, no such performing practice had yet evolved, while contemporary music of outstanding artistic importance was being written from the roots of popular Protestant church music. In examining the concert life of England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Pernye follows the method which Marx used in his study of the phenomenon of primitive accumulation in *Capital*.

It is a clever and convincing argument which deduces from effective demand the necessary appearance, in the nineteenth century, of the virtuoso who is ever more independent of any composition. Pernye notes that the literature of music pedagogy begins only in the nineteenth century to discuss methods of playing an instrument independent of musical communication. Thus, we witness the mushrooming popu-

larity of tutors who cram pupils with scales, scale passages and other virtuoso elements in an entirely abstract pursuit, devoid of any musical message or intelligible musical meaning. All this is, of course, related to the romantic "ego" cult, since every artist prepares for a production which nobody else in the world is capable of, while the public equally expects nothing less than unique performances.

While there develops this phenomenon of virtuoso performance (which is of course quite different from the essence of Bach's or Mozart's instrumental virtuosity), so, in the thirties of the nineteenth century, as if in self-defence, the history of music discovers the forgotten music of the past. Earlier, every composition had a short life both in space and time; now, the resuscitation of the musical past brought incalculable consequences for the future of musical practice, performing art and contemporary composing alike. If in our days the public listening to music (and what I have in mind here is not the special and exclusive audience of modern music festivals but the mass of regular concert-goers) feels attracted to the music of the past, it is due—symbolically of course—to the influence of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, directed by Mendelssohn. Or, more precisely, the revival of the *St. Matthew Passion* is merely an example, but also in fact a reminder of the time when the music of the past aroused the interest of an audience for the first time.

Besides instrumental performing art, the author also pays particular attention to the activities of orchestras and conductors. He discusses the work of orchestras and conductors in their historical context; that is, he surveys the subject from its origins to the present day. His observations are supported

partly by a large body of specialized literature and partly by experience. This dual but interrelated treatment of the subject constitutes a highly successful and rather lengthy chapter of the book. Although I well understand the reason for it, I still feel a slight disquiet at the paucity of material on operatic performing art; in general, the book gives brief attention to this very captivating and popular musical genre. This is certainly due merely to the fact that András Pernye, as music critic, has primarily accumulated his experience in concert halls, not in the Opera House.

To conclude the book, the author states: "The presence of the musical past on the concert platform and its continuing spread will eventually eliminate the radically romantic quality of concerts, and refashion the whole of concert life. In this way, in the more distant future, we can hope to reach what can be called modern performing art." Pernye believes in this, and the present writer shares his view that the sensational productions of international star performers will sooner or later be supplanted by the kind of performing art whose only purpose is the humble communication of compositions. I now quote the last sentence of the volume: "The future task of performing art is to develop the ever growing camp of music-lovers, i.e. the public, into a sensitive audience having a modern spirit and an all-round culture. In other words—to restore the original functions of the musical vernacular and to recreate the communal content of the art of music." It is more than mere belief or vain hope, since lots of promising signs of this original yet newly rediscovered link between music and audience can already be observed in contemporary musical life in Hungary.

JÁNOS BREUER

THEATRE AND FILM

MORE TO PRAISE THAN TO LAMENT

ISTVÁN NEMESKÜRTY: *Word and Image: History of the Hungarian Cinema* 2nd, enlarged edition. Corvina Press, Budapest, 1974. 294 pp. In English.

When István Nemeskürty's *Word and Image* first appeared in 1965, it was rightly acclaimed as the definitive work on the Hungarian cinema up to that period. With scrupulous care, Nemeskürty described and provided a critical comment on every extant Hungarian film of any artistic or social value, as well as relating each work to the complex political background which produced it. Although this exhaustive method does not allow space for the author to comment at any great length (or for more than a couple of pages) on any particular film, the book succeeds remarkably well in becoming more than a monotonous or confusing parade of titles, and—for a foreigner at least—it provides a consistently fascinating series of revelations.

The work has now been reissued, in a slightly different typographical format, and with an expanded, and in some cases different selection of photographs. In addition the final chapter, originally called "The 'Sixties", now becomes "The 'Sixties and the 'Seventies".

Ironically perhaps, the original edition of *Word and Image* stopped just at the point when Hungarian films had begun to attract

world-wide attention and directors like Jancsó, Gaál and Szabó had started to carry off major prizes at international film festivals. *The Round-Up* (Jancsó), *Current* (Gaál), *The Age of Daydreaming* (Szabó) and *Cold Days* (Kovács) are among the films mentioned in the closing pages of the 1965 edition, and, from today's perspective, these now appear the appetizers to the magnificent feast spread before us by Hungarian film-makers in the past decade. Indeed, it would not be too much to claim that, in terms of sheer quality, the ten years from 1964-1974 are by far the most fruitful in Hungarian film history and perhaps even counterbalance in this respect the whole sixty years preceding them.

It is sad to have to report, then, that Nemeskürty's handling of the contemporary film scene must come as a distinct disappointment to anyone eager to obtain a new perspective on the work of these now-established directors and their younger successors. Of the thirty pages in this chapter, some fifteen are simply reprinted *verbatim* from the final chapter of the earlier edition, thus leaving a mere fifteen pages for a topic that deserves (and in France and elsewhere has obtained) a whole book to itself! To put the matter in this way is not mere quibbling, for the compression of these vital ten years into such a small space inevitably distorts the whole balance of the book (which was perfect in its original form) and risks leaving the un-

informed reader with the impression that the recent period is of little more significance than, for example, the 1930-38 section, which retains its original forty pages.

There are signs, however, that Nemeskürty's enthusiasm for recent developments is somewhat muted and he goes so far as to comment in his final pages that: "it may be stated that in Hungary in the 'sixties there were more good films than good directors." The most obvious sign of this disillusionment is in his treatment of the director most universally recognized as a major contemporary film-maker, Miklós Jancsó.

Nemeskürty writes at some length, and with great appreciation, of Jancsó's work up to and including *The Red and the White* (1967). The remainder of this director's career to date, which involved by 1974 four films shot in Hungary and three made abroad, is huddled over in less than a page and dismissed as tainted with "mannerism" and "obscurity". Now this is a defensible position and one that might well be worth arguing at some length, if only to counteract the somewhat uncritical adulation Jancsó's work has been receiving recently outside Hungary; but, given the director's critical and artistic stature, it needs to be argued and not simply asserted. For someone like myself, for whom *Red Psalm* is a masterpiece and *Confrontation* and *Agnus Dei*, though flawed, are provocative and rewarding works, such perfunctory treatment can be described, at best, as unsatisfactory.

István Gaál and István Szabó come off rather better than Jancsó in Nemeskürty's revised estimation, but here too the treatment is so scanty as to be ultimately frustrating. Gaál's *Baptism*, a subtle and intelligent film that has never yet received the thoughtful analysis that it deserves, is dismissed in one, purely descriptive, sentence. *The Falcons* receives fuller and more sympathetic treatment, but *Dead Landscape*, another underrated and visually very powerful film, again is passed over in a few words. However, Nemeskürty seems to have retained his

faith in this fine director's talent, and there is nothing here of the disenchantment which pervades his comments on Jancsó.

With Szabó the story is much the same: a fairly lengthy comment on one film (in this case *Father*), while films of at least equal interest (*Love Film*, *25 Firemen's Street*) are dealt with in a much more cursory manner. This is followed by a few notes on the recent work of some of the older generation of directors (Makk, Fábri, Révész and Kovács) and then a paragraph on the sociologically interesting work of Bacsó. The last two pages of the book then become a breathless gallop over the achievements of the latest film-making generation, a jumble of names and titles that makes no attempt to distinguish between the very different visual styles or thematic materials of artists as different as Kósa and Mészáros, Sára and Gábor. Surprisingly, one of the finest of the newer directors, Imre Gyöngyössi, is not even mentioned. Indeed, more space is spent in this concluding section lamenting the supposed defects of the contemporary Hungarian cinema than in trying to give the reader a sense of its nature and achievements.

Nemeskürty's forebodings appear to be quite widely shared within Hungary and it is not uncommon to encounter at the moment the gloomy refrain that "the great days of the Hungarian cinema are over". Certainly no Hungarian film has quite matched the international impact of Jancsó's *The Round-Up* in 1965-66, but, in the rest of Europe at least, the Hungarian cinema continues to enjoy a position of unique respect and the films of Jancsó, Gaál, Szabó, Kósa, Kovács, Gyöngyössi, Makk and Sára are eagerly awaited, viewed and discussed. It would be tedious to enumerate all the worthwhile individual films produced even in the last five years, ranging in style from the abstraction of Jancsó's *Electra* to the naturalness of István Dárday's *Holiday in Britain*, but the above list of names should be enough to challenge Nemeskürty's con-

tion that the contemporary Hungarian cinema is lacking in outstanding directors. It is certainly far too early to write the requiem for the Hungarian film and, sadly, Nemeskürty has probably done his country's cinema a disservice in updating his book in this cursory and half-hearted manner. It might have been better to allow his earlier,

classic book to stand on its own and to attempt to investigate in a separate volume his misgivings about the current scene. And, while treating the subject in the depth that it both deserves and demands, he might have come to the conclusion that, even today, there is much more to praise than to lament.

GRAHAM PETRIE

JANCSÓ'S WORLD

ANDRÁS SZEKFŰ: *Fényes szelek, fújjatok! Jancsó Miklós filmjeiről* (Blow, shining winds! About Miklós Jancsó's films). Budapest, Magvető Könyvkiadó, 1974. 378 pp.

Out of a host of first-rate Hungarian film directors, Miklós Jancsó was the first to achieve world fame. His success and importance must be seen in the context of the development of cinema as an art form, as distinct from the product manufactured by the entertainment industry. There is no dividing line between the two, for occasionally the latter can produce a brilliant film, and a creatively conceived film can sometimes achieve popular success in spite of its artistic qualities. But the audience which responds to Jancsó's films the world over is an audience shared by Bergman, Wajda, Satyajit Ray, Glauber Rocha—thirty or forty directors at most. For this public, the release of a new Jancsó film is a cultural event: critics race to see it first and festivalgoers crowd into the earliest possible screenings.

In view of such fame and indisputable quality, Jancsó's work has been remarkably free of analytical literature. This may be due to the difficulties of seeing the films. The early ones are hardly ever shown, and

his most significant short feature, "The Presence", made after "My Way Home" and before "The Roundup", has never been released. Then, Jancsó's admirers are unfortunate in the distributors who hold his Italian-produced films. Even the efforts of the prestigious National Film Theatre in London failed to obtain them for the Jancsó Retrospective Season in 1974, though "Rome Wants another Caesar" was made available later for the London Film Festival.

Against this background, András Szekfű's undertaking is of the widest possible interest, and it is to be hoped that this book will also be translated and published abroad. First of all, it is a rich source of fact. After a brief biographical introduction, the first chapter gives the detailed history of Jancsó's early years in film-making: his newsreel studio output, his documentaries and thirty-two short feature films. As no one has assembled this material before, it is impossible to check it for omissions, but from the tone and presentation of the entire book, accuracy can for once be taken on trust, and the information is particularly useful for an understanding of both the scale and the exact nature of Jancsó's achievement after 1966.

The author accepts Jancsó's own asser-

tion, as indeed one must, that his career as author-director began with "Cantata" (*Oldás és kötés*). Szekfű emphasizes the influence of Antonioni, particularly of *La Notte*, on Jancsó; in the chapters on "Cantata" and "My Way Home" (*Így jöttem*) he analyses the technique of the long take, how it developed into Jancsó's characteristic choreographic style and how this style is integral to Jancsó's approach to the theme of each film. Indeed, the style became the process of defining the theme, defining the actions of the protagonists and isolating them from the other main component of each scene, the landscape.

As the book proceeds, with separate chapters devoted to each film, the author concentrates on the theme increasingly in terms of the action. In fact he describes the action moment by moment, stressing the emotional effects created by every image and assessing its importance in the political or historical 'message' of the film. By this painstakingly accurate descriptive method, the philosophic and emotional content of each film is clarified and the charges of obscurity or difficulty sometimes levelled against Jancsó are seen, quite properly, as the faults of imperfect attention on the part of the viewer. This scene-by-scene description is highly effective in reviving responses to films seen long ago, in activating the film-department of the reader's *musée imaginaire*, but it is difficult to assess the reactions of someone who has not seen the films, for the book is neither an introduction nor an appetizer to Jancsó's work.

In addition to an analysis of each film and of Jancsó's stage production of *Fényes szelek* (which means 'Shining winds'; the film of the same title is known as "Confrontation"), Szekfű includes a liberal amount of contemporaneous or subsequent critical reaction to Jancsó's films. This is more relevant than quoting from controversial reviews in Britain or the US, as there can be no doubt that the 'intellectual climate' affects filmmakers more directly in a socialist country

than in the West, where box-office takings tend to outweigh other factors in evaluating the success of a film or the viability of a director.

Of all Jancsó's films, the greatest storm of controversy inside Hungary was roused by "Confrontation" and it was not mere chance that Szekfű also used the title for his book. The winds are the bright shining winds of revolution: the revolutionary ideal, and its trans-substantiation into a historic process of some sort is a recurring subject of Jancsó's films, and this aspect is perhaps Szekfű's chief preoccupation. In the chapter on "Confrontation", he examines the moment-by-moment development of the action and points out the audio-visual ambiguities, and by this process Szekfű penetrates to the crux of the controversy. A special reason for the vivacity of this chapter may be that the author joined the filming as a production assistant.

In the later chapters, particularly on "Winter Sirocco" and "Agnus Dei", the thematic, philosophical-political preoccupations help to by-pass the question whether these films are artistically successful, or even why this doubt arises so often in connection with these two films. Szekfű is on safer ground with "Red Psalm" (*Még kér a nép*) which is arguably his best chapter and also Jancsó's finest film to date, because the theme is most perfectly integrated with the style. It is probably the apotheosis of Jancsó's 'middle period', the period of stylization which opened with the shattering masterpiece, "The Roundup" (*Szegénylegények*) in 1965.

Throughout the book, the author contrives to efface himself, his own reactions and tastes. He does not attempt an evaluation of Jancsó's films, nor any aesthetic, as opposed to thematic analysis. Nor does he attempt to evaluate Jancsó's critics, though he tends to use their quotations to cap or contradict one another. It is a sense of strong political conviction (tempered by high standards of scholarship and the desire

for aesthetic objectivity), which saves András Szekffü's writing from appearing colourless. What is lacking, however, is an impression of Miklós Jancsó either as a man or as an artist. Without expecting a pen-portrait, even less a psychiatric casebook, there is a legitimate curiosity in every film-goer about the creative process which results in such individual, and sometimes idiosyncratic, works of art.

It would be illuminating to know more about the genesis of Jancsó's ideas, the development of an idea into a script, and the method of collaboration between Jancsó and his script-writer Gyula Hernádi.* It

* A short story by Gyula Hernádi appeared in No. 60.

would also be interesting to know more of the role of the *dramaturg*, especially since this is an office unknown in most countries. Then, how much of a Jancsó film is improvised? How much is added or changed at the stage of fitting the soundtrack to the picture? How much does Jancsó leave to his cameraman? What are the actors' reactions to Jancsó's working methods? There is a need for several more books about Miklós Jancsó. András Szekffü's study displays a historian's capacity for distinguishing fact, opinion and hypothesis and shows that he is highly equipped to write another, perhaps even one for the general reader.

MARI KUTTNA

A SEASON OF CLOSE-UPS

Márta Mészáros: *Adoption*, Imre Gyöngyössi: *Expectations*,
Ferenc Grunwalsky: *Red Requiem*

To say that Hungarian films this autumn are starring the human face is not just facetiousness. It is all part of the Hungarian directors' attraction to Ingmar Bergman, whose *Cries and Whispers* was recently shown here. I may be mistaken, but having read that Bergman said his big dream was to make a film in which the human face would express everything I thought that *Cries and Whispers* went a long way toward the dream, and similarly the human face seems already to have caught on in recent Hungarian films.

The new film of Márta Mészáros, director of *The Girl* (1964), *Binding Sentiments* (1968), and *Don't Cry Pretty Girls* (1973) awakened my suspicions of "Bergmanization". *Adoption* seemed an obvious choice for the Grand Prix at the West Berlin Festival for its Bergman-like rhythm in the sequences, the

long close-ups of faces and the beautiful and reassuring happy ending of the story, which was jointly written by Gyula Hernádi, script-writer for Mészáros's husband, Miklós Jancsó.

The heroine is a 43-year-old widow living in a village where she works in a furniture factory. Her lover, a married man with two children, will not have a child by her, though she is anxious to have one. Her friendship with an 18-year-old girl living in the near by approved school makes her want to adopt the girl, who in turn wants to marry her boyfriend, a "nice" skilled worker. The older woman persuades the girl's parents to agree to the daughter's marriage. The wedding takes place. The heroine comes to terms with her lover, continuing their sexual relationship, and adopt-

ing a baby to satisfy her craving for a child.

All the issues are laudably topical: anybody could put him- or herself in the place of the young girl, the woman "buried" in the village, or the husband tied to his family while in love with another woman. In Bergman's hands, the story would have delved deeply into the situation and surfaced with those basic human attitudes and absurdities which he alone knows how to explore. He would have filled the film with insoluble conflicts and almost unbearable suffering. Márta Mészáros takes over Bergman's method of portraying faces, the protracted shots of motionless expressions. The story proceeds at an even and steady rhythm but these formal virtues are left as ends in themselves, never developed for the sake of emotional or philosophical issues or even to enrich the heroes' psyches. In addition—and this is what I missed most—the situation lacks any real conflict. The characters may be serious but their difficulties are not so hard to solve. Take one example: the man introduces his mistress to his family in the hope of ending the seemingly hopeless triangle. The wife and visitor drink a ritual coffee, exchange a few words about their respective jobs and the mistress bids her hostess farewell, still in possession of her man. Later the husband shows the torment of his choice, sitting in pyjamas on the stairs, suddenly going to the refrigerator, grabbing the bottle of spirits, filling his glass again and again as he goes back to his place on the stairs. His face, of course, remains deadly serious throughout. Here, however, the Bergmanesque technique does not work because this face is unable to express the absurdity of its owner's inner state. The emphasis on drinking is not persuasive, and is made even worse by the next scenes where everything goes smoothly. He gets dressed, goes to his mistress's house, knocks at her window and she happily takes him into her bed. This may be a valid sequence of events but not a representation of conflict.

There are other more serious inconsis-

tencies in the film. We learn that the girl in state care led a depraved life in the past: she knocked about in the country, took up with older men and has been in practically all reformatories in the country. What happened to her, I asked myself, because when we meet her in the film she is a woman of character, a sensible and responsible person, who sticks by her one lover and is a good friend of the heroine. The reasons for this amazing change remain the director's secret as do a number of similar inconsistencies, gestures and shots which suggest numerous possible meanings and are left undeveloped. The relationship of the two women—another Bergmanesque feature—has strong lesbian overtones: after the younger one has been with her lover the older one slaps her face and when the two have dinner together they extensively kiss and caress each other's face and hair. What is it supposed to mean—that two lonely creatures found each other, broke with customs and loved each other or that the director wanted to imitate Bergman?

Despite its beautiful and its well-balanced sequences, it is not a film I would recommend. It shows considerable development from Mészáros's earlier works but changing styles is not enough—an artist must also convey a message behind the faces.

Imre Gyöngyössi's *Expectations* emphasizes the slow-moving faces of two women. The director belongs more or less to the Hungarian "nouvelle vague". Born in 1930, his previous films were *Legend about the Death and the Resurrection of Two Young Men* (1972) and *Sons of Fire* (1974). This time he wants to raise a monument to the memory of those mothers "whose sons died in the Second World War for Hungary's liberation". I don't like war memorials and homages, so that inscription filled me with foreboding; the film itself dumbfounded me. The scene is a large mansion in a park somewhere in Hungary. The inhabitants are a genteel Hungarian woman and her maid,

formerly the nurse of her children. The world around them is war approaching its end. The faces in the mansion show pain: both women suffer, the lady of the house in boredom, the maid in toil. They await the return of the lady's three sons though official confirmation of their deaths arrived long ago. Whom then do these two long-suffering women await in their Bergman-like posturing? The maid's face clearly shows the unwillingness with which she plays her role and submits to the wishes of her mistress. So the opposition is presented between the maniacal mother and the reasonable but oppressed maid, whom affection and deference keep tied to her mistress.

Bombs hit the mansion, furniture, books, newspapers and curtain burn while the building shakes and the lady of the house struggles alone to put out the flames—until she faints. The maid appears, easily puts out the fire and starts to nurse her mistress. The bombing is an important detail because it is the only thing that happens to the house while war rages around it uninterrupted throughout the film: battles are fought, crowds of refugees stream past the wrought-iron gate. All of this belongs to the outside world. The house escapes the laws of death, cold, filth, hunger and terror and indulges in passions and manias instead. The lady has her plans and dreams for the three sons who will certainly return tomorrow morning, always tomorrow morning. When a doctor tells the lady her sons must have died long ago, the answer is, of course, a slap on the face. This slap is the director's symbol: great passions must not be challenged. One day a high-ranking officer, an old friend of the family, comes to encourage the widow to flee to the West. Soldiers start to put her furniture on lorries but the two women don't want to go. They remain and the house and its furnishings return in fact to their original state.

When the maid carries the first wounded soldier into the house I knew at once he was to be one of the "homecoming" sons. Sure

enough, the lady of the house joyfully recognizes him as her Stephen. The poor stranger has no way out: if return for shelter and nursing he plays his part while his "brothers," two resistance fighters, arrive. One soon rebels: he tells the woman the "big secret" that they are not her sons. He then grabs a toy sail-boat and runs out to the woods where a bullet hits him and he dies with the toy in his hand. The women follow the scene from the window. The other two "brothers" also say their farewells and decide to go back to the front. In the last sequence, as Soviet soldiers fight the Germans, the maid walks around the battlefield carrying jugs of water. She is not afraid of bullets, she is invulnerable. A poor Tatar soldier, however, is not bullet-proof and collapses at her feet. Trying to carry him into the house, the spell is broken and a bullet hits her too. She still does not let her mistress help. She drags the soldier into the kitchen, wanting to wash his wounds, but he is already dead. The maid too now dies in protracted agony. The lady of the house steps into the kitchen as if waiting for the double death behind the door: she stands between the two dead bodies. End of film.

The torments of the spectator, however, do not end so abruptly. He wants to know what the point of it all was. The fascination of a mother's madness? Or is there some great moral lesson or drama behind the mania?

Unfortunately, no drama is possible when only sickness is represented. And then, how do I know that the "three sons" really died for liberation? The film is full of pseudo-mysteries, symbols and poetic intentions which have no connection with anything. Once a beautiful white horse appears in the park. I was waiting for it because nowadays no self-respecting Hungarian film goes without at least one horse. The two women keep looking at the horse. Ah, I said to myself, they will take it into the house and keep it there until the boys arrive. But even

that is too much of an idea: a man in shirt-sleeves sneaks from behind the trees, embraces and kisses the horse, takes a revolver from his pocket, lovingly shoots it, then disappears behind the trees. Well, such is war; everybody goes mad.

My sarcasm is an instinctive reaction to the film's mannerism, details, "profundities" and the global pretensions of author and director. I protest at the waste of Mari Töröcsik, one of Hungary's best actresses, who starred in Makk's *Love*, and here is left to brood with a sad face. It is quite true that a loving mother cannot resign herself to the death of her sons, and some mothers may go psychotic but this is a medical and not an artistic matter. The mad woman is uninteresting as a patient. Adopting wounded and fleeing soldiers in exchange of her sons is much too banal and meaningless an idea. And is it possible to regard the exaggerated attachment and remorseful love of the two women as some Hungarian novelty after Bergman? It is too much even for Mari Töröcsik to carry off and the close-ups of her face fail to compensate for the rest of the film.

I liked Grunwalsky's *Red Requiem* much better. It is a young directors's first feature, based on a novel by Gyula Hernádi who also wrote the script.

It is not easy to enter the world of Hungary at the time when the film takes place. It is specifically about Imre Sallai, a leading Communist in the Hungarian Republic of Councils in 1919, who was executed in 1932.

First we must recall the historical situation: Károlyi's democratic government took over after the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy at the end of the First World War. It was followed by a peaceful revolution and the Hungarian Republic of Councils, established by the Hungarian Communist Party and Social Democrats in 1919. They introduced major reforms in what was a semi-feudal, backward country; the history of Hungary would certainly have been different

had they not made fundamental mistakes (e.g., they did not distribute the land among the peasants), and had the *entente* not interfered. The Hungarian Red Army was defeated the occupied country was surrendered to Horthy's White Terrorists. The leaders of the revolution, including Imre Sallai, took refuge abroad but returned to Hungary in the 'twenties to direct the work of the illegal Communist Party. In 1932 some of them were arrested, sentenced to death and, despite international protests, executed.

The film—and Hernádi's novel—tell the story of Sallai's last ten minutes. Now revered as a Communist martyr, in the film he tries to calculate, using a visitor's watch, whether in the very short time between his sentence's being read out and carried out he can repeat the most important slogans about the present situation. In reality it is identical to the theme of Hernádi and Jancsó's films: the behaviour of a man in the clutches of an oppressive ever-tightening machine.

Red Requiem starts with the familiar scene and sounds of a courtroom. Elemér Ragályi's camera stops on and comes back to the tense, hard and nervous features of Imre Sallai and Sándor Fürst, the two defendants, then passes to the indifferent faces of the guards. The movement of the camera immediately establishes the tension without which artistic creation is impossible. The faces are studied in almost musical rhythm. With increasing excitement, the verdict is proclaimed. The prisoners' eyes, whose jumping pupils have made me paralysed with fear, now seem much calmer as they start toward their cells. At this moment the camera focuses on the faces of two apparently attentive and emotionless wavy-haired young officers. Their intelligent and agreeable appearance does not betray what they want, even after they walk into Sallai's cell, to ask him—with a slight air of ironic superiority—whether he has any last wishes.

The officers are courteous and reserved, more curious and attentive than malicious.

Sallai wants nothing. They ask him what he thinks of his situation. Sallai replies that when he had the chance, he should have executed the two officers. "It's a pity that we let you go," he says without animosity. The meaning of the scene becomes clear in flashback: Sallai is commander of a prison where these two and twenty or thirty Hungarian officers who had led a mutiny, were held.

I think it is the best part of the film, the prisoners standing at the bottom of an empty cistern surrounded by a Red Army guard which includes Sallai. A bearded politician tells the prisoners they have been sentenced to death but they still await a government decision on whether to carry out; pardon is still possible.

These scenes effectively copy Bergman's technique of making faces emerge and disappear. We come to see Sallai's character and behaviour. The same sequence includes the well-delineated figure of a very nervous third officer. He narrates the story of his life, career and original ambition to be a doctor. Though he has already been searched for weapons and poison he manages to commit suicide.

The time machine goes further back to Sallai as a twelve-year-old, fairhaired, oval-faced precocious little boy with the cold eyes of a scientist. The scene is in the country. The boy is prowling around an old sheepfold where the "godly", a religious sect, are hiding an army deserter. The Austro-Hungarian army holds manoeuvres in the area and the arriving cavalry represent the same instrument of power, tension and anguish as in Jancsó's films. From time to time two or three horsemen armed to the teeth gallop up to the stable. An officer interrogates the Sallai boy while soldiers grab the wildly protesting deserter and drag him off to be shot. Within the stable is an obsessed creature whose sex remains unknown until,

drenched in a heavy down-pour, the shape of her nipples beneath a wet shirt show her to be a woman.

Then we see another trial, this one not quite a repeat of the first because this is a summary proceeding. An execution is ordered. The director cannot help using the now-discoloured photos of the era, in this case of the revolutionary days in 1919. It is not a new idea, and the photos themselves show too many happy faces of children, workers, soldiers and women enjoying the celebrations, parades and freedom.

Next is the scene in the condemned-man's cell where Sallai says a final farewell to his sister-in-law. Here we learn from a passing comment that he had a wife, Margaret, to whom he sent word that "he loved her as only a man condemned to death can love".

The climax of the film is a very objectively presented, documentary-like execution scene with protracted close-ups of faces. Sallai has no time to shout all his slogans. Sándor Fürst who follows him on the gallows has to complete the message. The closing scene is just the wall of the prison yard, ending the film like a curtain. Nothing need be added: death is the most powerful argument in any human debate.

The director, however, changed his mind and brings the twelve-year-old Sallai back to deliver in severe and abstract terms the catechism of the mature and wise revolutionary. This is unnecessary and a mistake: a boy of twelve cannot know and certainly cannot say anything about these experiences. It becomes another Hungarian film which continued after it should have ended.

Despite these mistakes Grunwalsky has a convincing concept. He has yet to shed his dependence on his great model, Jancsó, but some of his sequences, especially the rhythmic analyses of faces, already show elements of an emerging personal style.

JÓZSEF TORNAI

SOME LEFTOVERS AND A REMARKABLE NEW PLAY

István Kocsis: Orphan Kata Bethlen

The Budapest autumn theatre season got off to a slow start—slow, careful and comfortable, as though the lights were turned down a bit. The plays don't cast much of a shadow but they still go on evening after complacent evening. Repertory pieces left over from last season no doubt include genuine successes but most are carried by their own inertia (or more correctly: repertory mechanism), as there is no internal justification of their continued existence.

The Vígszínház, the most versatile company in Budapest, for example, could go on for years earning a comfortable living with its two successful musicals, *Imaginary Report on an American Pop Festival*, reviewed in No. 51, and *I am 30*, reviewed in No. 60. The two productions combine the youthful openness of the amateur avantgarde theatre with a calm professionalism that manipulates effects and politics to make superficiality seem deep. In accordance with the trend that is equally fashionable in the West, the plays include the fresh and forceful poetry of good rock music and are altogether greater successes than the Shakespeare and Goldoni works appearing on the same stage. *Anthony and Cleopatra's* star-studded cast makes for a historical variety show, or rather, opera striving so much for monumentality that the music is destroyed. What Strehler succeeded in doing several years ago, here fails in the hands of a Hungarian director. Condensed into one evening, Goldoni's trilogy, *Summer Holiday*, becomes a horrible buffoonery, a series of awkward improvisations that lasts for two and a half hours. On the other hand, Gorki's *Barbarians* is excellently staged with energetic direction. A small Russian town in the early years of the twentieth century delves into the cares of today with strict, hard lines and a

contemporary relevance that was lacking in the original, which is far from being the best of a writer who is presently enjoying a revival in Hungary.

István Örkény's *Catsplay* and the *Diary of a Madman* carry on almost as convertible currency. Iván Darvas continues in the role of the minor Tsarist clerk who lives through the birth of the paranoia of today's organisation-man. The plays of Aldo Nicolai and Natalia Ginzburg are retained only for their memorable acting; it is otherwise regrettable that David Rabe's *Sticks and Bones* is the only other Western drama in Budapest besides the revival of Romain Rolland's dusty *Game of Love and Death* on which the good performances and direction are wasted.

* * *

So far I have been considering the offerings at the most popular, best-directed and most entertaining theatres in Budapest.

An intense but solitary light emanates from the cellars of the Royal Castle of Buda, where the chamber theatre of the National Theatre performed during the summer months.

For an hour and a half an 18th century Transylvanian Hungarian woman alternately speaks and chants, quarrels and utters curses all alone among the walls and columns of the ancient monument. No one replies as her self-torment releases a beam of merciless light through the distance of history.

Written by István Kocsis a young Hungarian dramatist, from Transylvania, the play is entitled *Orphan Kata Bethlen* and reflects an interest, going back some eight or

* See the entire play in NHQ, No. 44.

ten years, in the spiritual and moral state of Hungarian minorities living in neighbouring countries. As a result of this interest, Hungary has begun to integrate into its own intellectual life the work of the Hungarians in Rumania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. It is a programme full of problems, inherent reservations and suspicions, yet both sides have benefited from it—including the Hungarian theatre, from which I want to mention here three dramatists: Géza Páskándi, who now lives in Budapest, András Sütő and István Kocsis.

The new Transylvanian Hungarian drama is prompted by its own historical and present situation to raise questions of significance for the whole of Europe. Among the numerous subjects, two examples are (1) the possibilities open to a man encircled by power, and (2) the confrontation of consistent but crazy principles with rational compromise, which ends in tragedy. They point to two of the outstanding dramas: Géza Páskándi's *Feast* which is about the psychological complexities of retaining or abandoning one's faith, and András Sütő's *A Horse-dealer's Palm Sunday*, based on Heinrich von Kleist's *Michael Kohlhaas*, which uses an eventful situation for an up-to-date exploration of the justification of revolt, especially on grotesquely narrow grounds.

The third dramatist is 35-year-old István Kocsis from Kolozsvár. Although he first made a name as a short story writer, today he writes for the theatre. He is one of the strangest and most original contemporary Hungarian dramatists. He almost always writes a monodrama—even if his plays have more than one character.

Kata Bethlen (1700-1759) put the word "Orphan" before her name to describe her own condition. Her autobiography and correspondence constitute an inheritance of lasting beauty, revealing an exceptionally unlucky fate, which she accepted with the greatest dignity. A fanatical Protestant, she was forced to marry a Catholic at the age of 12. When her husband died, she was de-

prived of her children to prevent her from bringing them up as Calvinists. She married again; it was a good marriage, but her husband and all her children died before her. She waged a continuous battle against relatives and Jesuits (who had been sent by the Catholic Habsburgs), attempting to convert her. She was uncompromising in her beliefs, convictions and freedom. And this fanatical woman, this Countess who might seem blinded by religion, was also a patron of modern science and firm supporter of the downtrodden while enduring her own succession of personal tragedies. She created her own self: the orphan, a figure equally representative of Hungarian Transylvania, which Kata Bethlen accepted but also strove to overcome.

Kocsis's plays always have only one hero, a real hero—a great, outstanding personality whose exceptional virtues are verified by history and cultural and moral values. She is put in a situation where she must choose and out of the tragic hopelessness of the choice, she creates her own mythological personality. She reflects every sort of pain and problem of our own century, when man's sufferings bring him to a higher level. Coupled with the tragedy is catharsis, where the fall or transfiguration of the free personality is realized in madness or death, as the world forces out some kind of compromise or option.

Or both. For rigid and supercilious distance and the irony of sober consideration lie farther from Kocsis than anything else. He identifies with his heroes — posing, answering and constantly disputing ultimate questions — in the same way that Schiller identified with the Marquis Posa. Kocsis is irremediably romantic in his cult of the individual. He is also irremediably current, for nothing is unambiguous to him or his heroes. He mythifies individual responsibility, the responsibility to create one's own transcendent existence, significance and role in the noblest senses of the term. He gives the individual the right to and responsibility for decision-making while knowing only too well that decisions and choices are part of a

constant and eternal dialectic which does not get to the real meaning of things.

Kocsis makes the hero's mind act as the testing ground for decisions and choices. Thoughts go on to fight the battle of arguments and counter-arguments, thesis and antithesis, romance and rationality. On the stage the action is determined not by the formal logic of dramaturgy, but by the whims and monomaniacal confrontation of associations raised by the fundamental question. In Kocsis's plays the much-divided personality is engaged in an astonishing struggle to achieve a new unity and homogeneity with itself.

The unity, however, never comes. For it cannot be established, a recognition that turns the 19th century romantic in Kocsis into a modern dramatist. His heroes cry out for transcendental certainty but remain tragic prisoners of the world's dialectics.

It follows quite naturally that Kocsis's main dramatic tool is language. Fortunately, he has the specific Transylvanian talent for expressing everything with richness and plasticity. There is hardly any action: the characters do nothing but think and express their thoughts. Everything in a Kocsis play depends on the actor's psychological and intellectual load-bearing capacity, that is, on the weight of his "spiritual nakedness".

This peculiar treatment involves quite a few dangers, like the monotony of constant intellectual tension. And this does occur in Kocsis's plays.

Luckily, there is hardly any of it in *Orphan Kata Bethlen*. The one-and-a-half hour monologue was greeted by perplexed silence followed by unprecedented applause arising out of the experience of purification.

With uncompromising fidelity to Kata Bethlen's autobiography and letters, Kocsis insisted even on retaining the curses of a soul tortured by the constant blows of an invisible and speechless God. Cunningly and splendidly, we watch the growth of a worm that can be trampled underfoot and humiliated before a God who never utters a word, while

the fallible greatness of humanity reaches the level of community from the selfishness of faith: the birth of a modern woman's soul.

The monodrama, covering a life over almost four decades, is an astounding piece. The National Theatre deserves credit for giving Kocsis the scope to achieve his real mission and then stage the play in a good performance. I feel it compulsory to note the name of the actress in the role of Kata Bethlen even if I know I write for foreign readers. She is Mária Ronyecz, a young actress, excellent in a tragic part. She matches the exceptionally difficult text with both reason and passion. Her success is the triumph of a committed and serious artist.

*

Glittering and gleaming decor and costumes, fantastic splendour and dazzling art—this is what characterizes the first performance staged at the Madách theatre this season; only the play was short of glitter. Sándor Bródy, the outstanding naturalist novelist and playwright of the turn of the century wrote three anecdotes for the stage in 1902 about the love affairs of three great Hungarian kings. Perhaps the stories themselves are no more than anecdotes but concealed behind the neoromantic glaze lies true masculine lyricism. It is real masculine sorrow, not necessarily of kings, but of the man who always lets real love go by. And the sorrow cuts deep, even though it carries with it the complacency of the dandies of the early years of this century.

The heart of the three short plays should have been sought in the eternal ambivalence of love and marriage. Instead, the Madách production thought it adequate to display the surfaces of neo-romanticism and art nouveau but this is impossible to accept today without irony. If they had managed to make it campier, a serious dramatist like Bródy would have escaped the humiliation of being made to look like a writer of operettas.

The lesson to be drawn is that it is inadvisable to revive dramatic traditions without modern sensitivity and a contemporary approach.

*

Even a play thought to be out-of-date can be revived by a director sensitive to its deeper aspects. This occurred at the theatre of Veszprém where the social drama, *Matiasz panzió*, written by László Németh between 1941 and 1945 was revived by István Horvai, director of the Vígszínház in Budapest. The play provided me with fresh evidence of Németh's unique talent. Very current in its time, the play is too closely bound to the time of its writing so that seen today, it seems loaded with irrelevant information. Still Horvai unearthes a tragic structure which assumes an astounding strength on stage, the strength of a Greek tragedy.

*

The Attila József theatre operates in one of the industrial districts of Budapest, doing

rubish boulevard comedies along with Shakespeare and O'Neill but unable to attract much attention from the critics. At the beginning of the new season, it presented Alan Ayckbourn's *Absurd Person Singular*.

Ayckbourn is a good craftsman, but no more than that. The audiences at the Attila József were grateful for the excellent comic situation and for what came very close to cheap humour. They felt completely at ease in the three English homes on successive Christmas Eves.

*

A final note on the indestructible George Bernard Shaw who experiences no revival in revivals in Hungary, for he is always *in floribus* here.

The National Theatre appended the *Black Lady of the Sonnets* to Kocsis's drama as a sort of *non sequitur*. Rehearsals of *Saint Joan* are now in progress in the Vígszínház. The Veszprém theatre will be staging *The Philanderer* this year, the first performance of the play in Hungary. *Pygmalion* is also expected to be revived soon.

LEVENTE OSZTOVICS

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EÖRSI, István (b. 1931). Poet, playwright, critic and translator, a disciple of György Lukács, who translated some of Lukács's late works from German into Hungarian. See his poems in Nos. 36, 47, as well as "György Lukács, Fanatic of Reality," in No. 44; "The Hostage", a short story in No. 46; and "The Story of a Posthumous Work (Lukács's Ontology)" in No. 58.

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KERESZTÚRY, Dezső (b. 1904). Poet, literary historian, essayist, member of the Editorial Board of this review, a former Minister of Culture. See "Ignotus" in No. 38; "The Balatonfűred Heart Hospital" in No. 39; "A Tool for the Scholar" in No. 40; and his review on Finno-Ugric Folk Poetry, "A Gift and a Challenge", in No. 53.

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problems of peaceful coexistence"), 1967; *Szocialista külpolitika* ("Socialist foreign policies"), 1973. See reviews of his books in Nos. 31 and 56, as well as his "The Political Situation in Europe Today" in No. 42, "One Year of Hungarian Foreign Policy" in No. 54; "Foreign Policy and International Détente" in No. 55; "European Security in the World Today", and "Thirty Years of Hungarian Foreign Policy" in No. 59.

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SÁRKÖZY, Péter (b. 1919). Agricultural engineer, Professor at the Institute for Advanced Management Studies in Agricultural Engineering. Published numerous volumes and textbooks on agriculture, lectured at Humboldt University in Berlin in 1972, and at the Vienna Hochschule für Bodenkultur in 1973. See "Production Systems in Agriculture" in No. 58.

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VÁMOS, Miklós (b. 1950.) Writer. Studied law in Budapest and after acquiring his doctorate, went to work as script editor in a film studio. Began publishing

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