NHQ

The New Hungarian Quarterly

Extending Détente — *Frigyes Puja*

The Comprehensive Programme of C.M.E.A. — *Gyula Szekér*

The Helsinki Final Act and International Law — *Péter Kulcsár*

The Truth of Imagination — *István Vas*

The 1526 Mohács Disaster — *Ferenc Szakály*

The Young Lukács's Aesthetics — *Miklós Almási*

Short Story, Poems — *Erzsébet Galgóczi, Lajos Kassák, András Mezei*

65

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The New Hungarian Quarterly

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This issue went to press on November 24, 1976

HUNGARIAN REALITIES—PAST AND PRESENT

As this paper goes to press we find ourselves midway between the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, and the Summer 1977 Belgrade meeting where problems connected with European security and cooperation are due to be reviewed. This is a time for the drawing up of balance sheets, and not only in Europe, a survey of results, of what has been achieved and what remains to be done. What steps, one wonders, ought to be taken to extend détente and to reinforce the foundations of coexistence. Pride of place is therefore given in this issue to a number of writings which reflect Hungarian policy, and it also includes a number of articles and book reviews which express what Hungarian legal, economic, and cultural opinion feels about various aspects of the subject. The Foreign Minister Frigyes Puja's situation report discusses in detail what efforts the socialist camp is making, and Hungary as well as part of it, to ensure that the process of détente becomes irreversible. We should like to draw particular attention to what this article, which is based on an address given to the General Assembly of the UN and extended by several passages on recent developments has to say about the exchange of cultural values, and the growth of human contacts. He quotes facts to show how much Hungary has already done in the interests of East-West cultural contacts and the exchange of information, pointing out that there was every intention to continue thus in the future. Gyula Szekér, who is a Deputy Prime-Minister, looks at the integrational processes taking place within C.M.E.A. He stresses the growing attractiveness and increasing international weight of the economic integration of the socialist countries everyone of whose activities is based on equal rights of all the participating countries, be they large or small, and on mutual aid. This is where Gyula Szekér's and Frigyes Puja's arguments meet. It is obvious that C.M.E.A. efforts to place economic cooperation between member states of C.M.E.A. and of the European Community on a sounder basis,

putting an end to every form of discrimination and man-made obstacle in the way of an extension of rational East-West economic contacts based on mutual interest, essentially extend and firm the economic basis of coexistence.

János Szita's book on European economic cooperation, reviewed by Eta Hardi, deals with the problems raised by Gyula Szekér, though from another angle. Péter Kulcsár's "The Helsinki Final Act and International Law" exemplifies a legal approach, a first step, one hopes, towards an overdue thorough study by international lawyers of Helsinki and its consequences. The list of articles contributing to basic international questions is concluded by the story of a proposal submitted to Unesco, and recently accepted, as written up by József Kovalcsik, one of the participants. The proposal was drafted by a committee whose members included writers, journalists and teachers, with the aim of helping countries to formulate a cultural policy which will turn culture into something truly democratic, by making it accessible to all, everywhere.

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As always we once again decided to publish background material that would throw some light on one or another aspect of Hungarian reality. Ferenc Donáth's special subject is socialist agriculture. He is not merely a recognised authority—in his time when, with the end of the Second World War, a start was made on liquidating the system of large estates, and the age-old dream of the Hungarian peasantry was about to come true, Donáth as State Secretary for Agriculture, helped carry out the land reform. He was later imprisoned, but his passionate interest in Hungarian agriculture continued after his rehabilitation. A comprehensive survey of thirty years of socialist developments in agriculture which is about to appear is the fruit of many years' devoted labour. Ferenc Donáth, at the request of this paper, re-wrote two chapters to make them suitable for periodical publication. This number includes the first which is specially concerned with the effect of socialist agriculture on economic growth. Professor Tibor Huszár's "Culture, Community and Society" on the other hand is concluded in this issue. It discusses whether, and to what extent, the socialist brigade, this new type of small community within socialist society, is proving a sound vehicle for access to culture.

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For Hungarians the 1526 Battle of Mohács was not just one of many lost ones, it was a tragic turn of events signalling the end of the political integrity and independence of medieval Hungary. 1976, the 450th anni-

versary, was an opportunity for remembrance. Much has been written recently on the battle, on the events leading up to it, and the consequences, some of it highly controversial, and of interest to the general public. Some of the mass graves have recently been excavated. Ferenc Szakály, a historian, has thoroughly gone into the subject, and Zoltán Nagy, the art critic, discusses the memorial which now graces the battlefield and burial ground.

Béla Köpeczi discusses *A historical and geographical account of the ancient Kingdom of Hungary and the provinces adjoining*, published in England early in the 18th century, almost contemporaneously with the events of the Rákóczi wars which it describes. Köpeczi establishes that the work, published anonymously, was really an adaptation of a French work on Rákóczi by Eustache Le Noble. What makes the article particularly interesting is the light it sheds on Western European attitudes towards Hungary in its fight against the Habsburgs, prefiguring in many ways the readily granted sympathy without effective help of later centuries.

Erzsébet Galgóczi makes a double appearance in this issue. Fiction by her, dealing with social problems, has repeatedly been published in the pages of the NHQ. This time Erzsébet Galgóczi first appears in a new role, as the subject of an interview, conducted by a fellow-writer, Ferenc Karinthy. She tells of her roots in peasant soil with bitter-sweet wit and unfailing self-revealing honesty. "The Celtic Queen", the Galgóczi story published in this issue, is set in October 1956.

István Vas's "The Truth of Imagination" which shows that Keats and Petőfi were linked by a number of intellectual currents, is the text of a paper given at a conference held in London. The poems by Lajos Kassák are taken from a volume of verse by Kassák and Attila József which Edwin Morgan is preparing for Penguin Books.

Csaba Ilkei tells the story of a Hungarian doctor's heroism during the war. He was awarded a document, signed by President Eisenhower, here reproduced, in recognition for the help he gave American air-force personnel who had bailed out over Hungary in 1944.

István Bart has been reviewing Hungarian periodicals for NHQ for some time. He writes here on the position of Hungarian Jews while discussing an article which György Száraz published in *Valóság*. Száraz, a young playwright speaking straight from the shoulder, tells of a number of problems in the relation of Jews and gentiles, the history of antisemitism, and its after-life. The article aroused considerable interest on publication, and Bart discusses the way it was received as well which, incidentally, throws further light on the question discussed.

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László Varga this time writes on three different types of books that have much in common nevertheless. Ágnes Gergely, István Eörsi and Péter Dobai have written a novel, a volume constructed of prose and verse, and short stories respectively but all are concerned with defining the relationship between man and his role, and with problems of identity. The gigantic œuvre which György Lukács created in the course of eight decades looms in the background of Miklós Almási's book-review. Almási writes on two early Lukács works, the *Philosophie der Kunst* and the Heidelberg Aesthetics which both originate in the thinker's pre-Marxist period. Both works created considerable stir since, though people had some idea of their existence, the manuscripts themselves, until recently, lay low in a bank safe in Germany, from whence they surfaced thanks to the diligence of a bank clerk and a fair dose of good luck. Almási argues that both are important in their own right, their value being further enhanced by certain ideas being already present which Lukács later fully expounded in his major works.

Gondolat of Budapest publish a series on foreign countries and continents. The volume on Australia is by Kázmér Nagy, who left Hungary soon after the war, lived in Australia for some years, and is now a resident of London. The book is reviewed by Rudolf Fischer, one of NHQs language editors, who lived in Australia long enough to put down some roots there.

In this issue archeology really comes into its own. On the occasion of the *Limes* Congress which took place at Székesfehérvár, the local museum, as is customary on such occasions, arranged for an exhibition which included much of the best material in the way of Roman statuary that the country's museums could provide. László Castiglione eschewed the currently fashionable archeological or historical approach, looking at the exhibition as an art historian. The question he examined was whether, and if so to what degree, local stylistic trends were in evidence in Pannonia, in addition to the central main line of Roman art. What Castiglione argues is most suggestive. Discovering the features of a Pannonian or, in a wider sense, Danube Valley art, at the back of the official art of the Roman empire, may offer new perspectives towards a more thorough understanding of the Roman period in the history of the region.

THE EDITORS

EXTENDING DÉTENTE

by

FRIGYES PUJA

Today it is clearly realized by all that the practical implementation of the principle of peaceful coexistence and the extension of détente create favourable conditions for social progress and peaceful construction, while increasing confidence among the nations. That is why the foreign policy initiatives of the socialist community are directed towards extending the process of détente, making it irreversible. The proposals of the socialist countries, particularly of the Soviet Union, continue to give an impetus to the struggle for peace, security and fruitful international cooperation.

The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic, like those of the other countries of the socialist community, actively contributes its share towards strengthening peace and security and developing cooperation among peoples and nations, as well as in the common efforts to deepen détente. Lasting peace and stable security are the central concern of Hungary's foreign policy. We are convinced that this course is, at the same time, fully in keeping with the vital interests of the Hungarian people.

The development of bilateral relations between socialist and capitalist countries is of paramount importance to the strengthening of peace and security. The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic has already done a great deal in this domain. We have wide-ranging political, economic and cultural relations with these countries. Exchanges of visits by public figures are frequent. The exchange of goods and economic cooperation in industry are widening in scope. We have accomplished a great deal in helping Hungarians to get acquainted with the genuine cultural values of the countries of Western Europe and North America. The development

Based on an address delivered by Frigyes Puja, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, at the 31st session of the United Nations General Assembly, October 14, 1976 with additions written by the author in the light of subsequent events.

of human contacts is considerably facilitated by a flexible practice in the granting of visas. In 1975, Hungary with a ten million population, was visited by more than nine million citizens of other countries. In the spirit of the ten principles endorsed at Helsinki we stand ready to develop inter-state relations, broadening the scope of political, economic and cultural cooperation, improving the exchange of information and widening human contacts.

When one speaks of advances made in the cause of peace and security one must not overlook the fact that the adversaries of détente in certain Western countries have recently intensified their efforts, absurdly accusing the socialist countries, blaming détente for specific political and economic problems of their own, coming forward with trumped-up "problems" and making renewed attempts to interfere with the internal affairs of socialist countries. In a word, by using political means combined with propaganda campaigns, they are seeking to disturb the peaceful cooperation of countries with different social systems. There is mounting evidence that what extremist circles are seeking is to destroy not only the results of Helsinki but détente in general.

Here, on this platform of the United Nations, allow me to express my conviction that the adherents of peace and international cooperation will be able to thwart the attacks on peaceful coexistence, upholding the achievements of détente and creating the conditions for further progress.

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Détente has emerged from the joint efforts of countries with different social systems. We are all aware of the outstanding importance of the common efforts of the Governments of the Soviet Union and the United States of America in bringing this about. We on our part are hopeful that this constructive cooperation will continue to prevail and will make it possible to achieve still greater results.

The Hungarian Government believes that in the period ahead we shall be faced with major tasks which, if accomplished in the international sphere, are likely to give a new impulse to the process of détente. These include giving full effect to the provisions of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, achieving fresh results in tackling the problem of disarmament and liquidating the still existing hotbeds of crisis.

The year following the Helsinki Conference bears witness to the viability of the recommendations contained in the Final Act. That document reflects realities in Europe and corresponds to the interests of the nations which

dwell on that continent. The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic attaches great importance to the implementation of the Final Act. We are of the opinion that the provisions of the Helsinki document should be carried out in full, bearing in mind, of course, that the Final Act offers a long-term programme. We look on the Final Act as an organic whole and we are not prepared to accept a selective approach, highlighting certain sections. It is essential that reciprocity prevail in the implementation of the provisions of that document.

The provisions of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference can be implemented most effectively as part of bilateral relations between participating countries. In recent months, imbued with this spirit, we presented concrete proposals to the governments of several countries of Western Europe.

Multilateral cooperation could be an important vehicle for the realization of the Final Act as well. My Government supports the holding of congresses to discuss questions relating to environmental protection, transport and energy. Realization of this Soviet proposal would considerably enhance the cause of all-European cooperation. Similarly, we actively support efforts to establish an institutional framework for relations between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Economic Community.

We consider that the consultative meeting to be held in Belgrade in 1977 will be an important landmark in the promotion of peaceful cooperation in Europe. That meeting should, in our view, be prepared in such a way as to allow it to do constructive work, strengthening mutual understanding and good relations among participating states, thus serving progress in the implementation of the Final Act and the expansion of cooperation among the countries of Europe. The Hungarian Government wishes to work in this spirit.

International peace and security make the extension of political détente to the military field a matter of increasing urgency. Certain steps have already been taken in this direction, the time has come, however, for a still greater advance.

The curbing of the arms race is a central issue of current international affairs. Military and industrial circles in some countries are exerting growing pressure on their governments to increase expenditure on arms. Such efforts are backed by using surviving tropes of cold war rhetoric. We believe the United Nations cannot remain inactive in the face of such developments.

I wish to put it on record that the Hungarian Government fully shares the view expressed by the Government of the Soviet Union in its Memorandum presented to the General Assembly on the stopping of the arms

race and on disarmament. We think that realization of the ideas contained in the Memorandum of September 28 would contribute largely to the solution of this important set of problems.

The Soviet–American Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) are accorded continuous close attention on the part of the Hungarian Government. We hope that conditions will soon emerge for concluding the SALT II Agreement, which would exert an exceedingly positive influence both on the relations *inter se* of the two great powers and on the international situation as such.

In the context of disarmament, force reductions in Central Europe are a question of the greatest timeliness. The proposals of the Warsaw Treaty countries seek to ensure that none of the countries concerned shall see its security prejudiced by a reduction of armed forces and armaments and to preclude the possibility for either side to obtain unilateral military advantages. We hope that, instead of trying to gain unilateral advantages, the NATO countries will in future seek a mutually acceptable arrangement by acting in a manner similar to the socialist countries.

My Government warmly welcomed the Treaty on Underground Nuclear Tests for Peaceful Purposes signed between the Soviet Union and the United States of America last May. That is another step towards nuclear disarmament. The Soviet-French Agreement on the Prevention of Accidental or Unauthorized Use of Nuclear Weapons is an added contribution to the reduction of international tension. May I express my hope that similar agreements will be reached between all nuclear states.

The initiatives for the general and complete prohibition of nuclear weapon tests equally enjoy the support of the Hungarian Government. Such proposals, and their implementation, serve to reduce the danger of a nuclear war.

We welcome the fact that the Geneva Committee on Disarmament has drawn up a draft treaty on the prohibition of environmental warfare and are hopeful that it will be given final shape and approval by the General Assembly at its present session.

As far back as the 21st session of the General Assembly in 1966, Hungary initiated action to ban chemical weapons. Today, after ten more years have passed, we believe that the time has come to take concrete steps towards the conclusion of a treaty banning chemical weapons.

The Hungarian Government places great emphasis on the adoption of the Soviet draft treaty on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new weapons systems of that kind. We are satisfied to see a growing number of countries showing interest in this problem.

The Hungarian People's Republic is invariably in favour of an early convening of a World Disarmament Conference, but it has no objection to seeking other platforms, such as a special session of the General Assembly, for discussing the problems of disarmament.

Real headway in implementing the Final Act of the Conference on Security in Europe, solving certain problems of disarmament and achieving still closer cooperation among the nations cannot be made unless the requirements of peaceful coexistence between countries with different social systems are met to the fullest in international relations. The Hungarian Government therefore regards the non-use of force in international relations as being of outstanding importance. We are convinced that adoption and practical application of the draft treaty submitted by the Soviet Union on September 28 would greatly increase confidence among the peoples.

From the point of view of the furtherance of détente and the strengthening of peace and security, we attach much importance to the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee meeting held in Bucharest on 25 and 26 November 1976. At this meeting the leaders of the member states of the Warsaw Treaty exchanged views on some problems of Europe and the world, and decided on measures to be taken concerning a few important questions.

The Political Consultative Committee has expressed views of particularly great importance on the strengthening of peace and security in Europe. Let me draw attention to a few only:

The November meeting of the Warsaw Treaty has underlined that without progress in respect of disarmament, primarily nuclear disarmament, there is danger of the favourable trend of détente being stopped or even reversed.

To promote nuclear disarmament, the Warsaw Treaty member states have formulated a new proposal. They have appealed to all signatory states to the Helsinki Final Act to undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against one another. The government of the Soviet Union has forwarded the appeal and a concordant draft treaty to all the governments concerned. It is only natural that the member states of the Warsaw Treaty as well as the peoples of all Europe should expect a constructive answer from the governments of capitalist Europe.

But the Western reception of the highly important proposal is rather heterogeneous: some qualify it as a "propaganda trick", others rehash the old demand for on-the-spot inspection. The indications are that the governments of the NATO countries try to take every opportunity to avoid accepting any reasonable proposal of the Warsaw Treaty states. Thereby,

however, they may prevent a very effective step furthering the cause of peace and security.

As regards the reduction of conventional armaments, the Political Consultative Committee meeting has emphasized: the states of the Warsaw Treaty are ready to negotiate for the limitation of conventional armaments also beyond the Vienna talks on reduction of armed forces and armaments.

The meeting of the Political Consultative Committee has reaffirmed that the Warsaw Treaty states are willing to liquidate their organization if the North Atlantic alliance is simultaneously disbanded. If this is not yet acceptable to the NATO countries, the two military-political blocs should simultaneously wind up their military organizations. Aware of the opposition of NATO countries, the Warsaw Treaty states would be content with less than that, that is with the two organizations barring the admission of new members. This also would be a contribution to the cause of peace, since it would become impossible to enlarge the military-political blocs.

As can be seen, the Bucharest meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty has launched a whole series of initiatives with a view to disarmament. Now it is up to the NATO countries to respond positively to these proposals.

The declaration of the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee underlines the importance of international economic cooperation for the sake of peace and security. The member states point out that certain capitalist countries use economic relations as a means of exerting political pressure on other states. In spite of the fact that in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe all signatory states have recognized the beneficial effects which could result for the development of trade from the general application of the most-favoured-nation treatment, certain states still insist on the application of discriminatory measures against socialist countries.

A recent event in the talks between the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Economic Community has been the reply of the Common Market to the CMEA proposal made in February 1976. The Common Market has given no substantive answer to the proposal of CMEA, or rather it has proposed agreement on some issues but has evaded taking a stand with regard to essential problems of commercial policy. The meaning and aim of this manœuvring are well known: this is an attempt, concealed behind naive "arguments", to play off the socialist countries against one another. The Warsaw Treaty states expect a more serious approach from the Common Market countries.

In the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act the members of the Warsaw

Treaty are ready to foster cooperation concerning energy resources, environmental protection and transport technology. The Soviet Union has undertaken to convene in Moscow an intergovernmental conference to discuss the energy problems. This sound initiative is expected to bear fruit.

The declaration of the Warsaw Treaty states stresses that the development of scientific and educational relations, cooperation in the field of information, the expansion of human contacts should bring about improvement, not deterioration, in the European atmosphere, in the relations among European countries. It is not by accident that the member states emphasize this in the declaration. Certain forces, in opposition to friendship and mutual understanding among peoples, try to use the development of these relations for interfering in the domestic affairs of other states.

The Warsaw Treaty member states agree with the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act concerning the development of human contacts, and a humanitarian handling of personal problems. They endeavour to adjust their practice to this spirit. It cannot, however, be left unnoticed that while some Western politicians speak pathetically about humanism when the socialist countries are in question, they immediately forget about it when dealing with the practices of their own country. The Warsaw Treaty states suggest with reason that, in the name of humanism, just conditions of labour and life be guaranteed to the people also in all capitalist countries, unemployment be ended, and the achievements of science, technology and culture be made accessible to all.

The Political Consultative Committee has paid great attention also to the factors hindering the strengthening of peace and security. Nor have the member states overlooked the schemings of West German reactionary circles regarding the tense situation that has developed in that part of Europe. The member states are convinced that normal relationships between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany are of profound importance for all Europe. They are convinced that the violation of the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin signed on 3 September 1971 plays into the hands of the enemies of peace. It is imperative to repel the efforts to undermine the special status of the city and to use the problem of West Berlin for the purposes of smear campaigns against the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic and other socialist countries. West Berlin can become a constructive factor of cooperation in Europe only if the attempts at the actual incorporation of the city into the Federal Republic of Germany are thwarted. Energetically repudiating the actions of extremist West German circles, the Political Consultative Committee

has declared at the same time that the member states of the Warsaw Treaty are ready to maintain and develop manysided relations with West Berlin. As is evident the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee meeting has tackled really important issues of international cooperation, and its proposals have undoubtedly aided the fight for the strengthening of peace and security.

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Acute hotbeds of tension not far from Europe are a source of particular concern for the Hungarian people engaged in peaceful work. The Middle East crisis, the tragic events in the Lebanon and the delay in finding a solution to the Cyprus problem are all fraught with great dangers.

Putting an end to the Middle East crisis is a primary objective in the strengthening of international peace and security. The Hungarian Government deplores the increasing complexity of the situation.

It is now evident that secret talks, separate agreements and a loosening of ties between the socialist community and the Arab states fail to promote a durable peace in the Middle East. Such unilateral attempts have not achieved their publicly stated purpose of stabilizing the situation in the region. They have only resulted in the perpetuation of the Israeli occupation of Arab territories, the division of the Arab forces seeking a just settlement, the strengthening of the positions of Israel and its supporters, and the postponement of a solution of the crisis.

The Hungarian Government maintains that a comprehensive settlement is possible only if Israeli forces are withdrawn from all Arab territories occupied by aggression in 1967, if the rights of the Palestinian Arab people, including the right to establish a state of its own, are enforced and, finally, if the security of all states in the Middle East, and the inviolability of their frontiers, are guaranteed by international safeguards.

The Government of the People's Republic of Hungary is deeply concerned over developments in the Lebanese crisis. The huge losses in human lives and property resulting from armed clashes only play into the hands of the enemies of the Arab countries and of the Palestinian Arab people. Further delay in settling the situation is likely to conjure up the danger of escalating conflict. We continue to hold that he Lebanese crisis can only be solved by the Lebanese themselves, and that foreign intervention of any kind can only aggravate the situation. My Government stands for preserving the territorial integrity of the Lebanon.

The Hungarian Government is invariably in support of guaranteeing the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus, and of

eliminating every kind of foreign intervention. We maintain that the internal problems of the island country are for the Cypriots alone to solve, taking account of the interests of the Greek and Turkish communities.

Turning to Asia, the Hungarian delegation is pleased to note that the conditions for a lasting relaxation of tension in that part of the world are gradually emerging. This process is largely enhanced by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam which, established in July last, is a stable factor of peace and security in South-East Asia. Unfortunately, the admission of this country to the United Nations has been blocked so far. The interests of international peace clearly demand that the Socialist Republic of Vietnam should, at this very session, occupy its rightful place among the Member States of this organization.

The Hungarian Government welcomes the active participation of the Democratic People's Republic of Laos and of Democratic Cambodia in international political life.

The Hungarian delegation feels that the United Nations and the specialized international organizations should take their proper part in the reconstruction of Indo-China. The states bearing primary responsibility for the suffering borne by the peoples of Indo-China should carry out their obligations undertaken in international agreements and should provide assistance in healing the wounds of war.

The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic continues to support all efforts by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reduce tension on the Korean peninsula, consolidating the peace of the region and attaining the peaceful reunification of the country. We deem it necessary that the relevant resolution adopted by the United Nations last year should be carried out.

Changes of importance have taken place in Africa since last year's session of the General Assembly. The proclamation of the People's Republic of Angola, the victory of the Angolan people over foreign intervention and reaction at home, has been an event of historic significance in the disintegration of the colonial system. The Hungarian nation is in sympathy with, and gives support to, the Angolan nation in its efforts to rebuild the country, reviving the national economy and establishing a progressive society. In common with the overwhelming majority of Member States, we stand for the admission of the People's Republic of Angola to the United Nations.

African patriots can count on the solidarity and support of the Hungarian people in their just struggle against illegitimate minority governments and the policy of apartheid. We are convinced that those infatuated with the ideology of racial superiority will not be able to stop the people of Zimbabwe

exercising their full rights for much longer. We are confident, too, that the people of Namibia, a country now occupied by the South African racists, will accede to real independence in the near future.

Actions encouraged by foreign interests to turn back the clock in Latin America call on vigilance on the part of world public opinion. There is ample evidence to show that the rightist, fascist governments, placed in power by conspiracies, are not advocates of détente but, on the contrary, work against peaceful coexistence and cooperation among the nations.

Hungarian public opinion keeps a close eye on the terror by the fascist junta in Chile, firmly condemning it. The Hungarian people, in unison with other progressive forces, demands the release of Luis Corvalán and of all the imprisoned Chilean patriots.

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Good relations between the socialist and the developing countries are an important factor in the world situation today. The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic therefore strives to give substance to its relations with the developing countries.

Hungary attaches great importance to the international activity of the non-aligned countries. We warmly welcome the positive results of the Colombo Summit Conference and are convinced that the implementation of the Colombo resolutions will result in stronger cooperation between the socialist and the non-aligned countries.

We understand and support the endeavours of developing countries to bring about mutually advantageous international economic relations free from discrimination and based of equality. The position of Hungary on the establishment of a new international economic order has been extensively explained by the Hungarian delegations to the 6th and 7th Special Sessions and the 29th Regular Session of the General Assembly. We consider it necessary that the principles laid down in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States should be implemented as soon as possible.

It is our conviction that notable progress in the economic prosperity of the developing countries can only be made in a favourable international climate. That the resolutions adopted at the Colombo Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries also reflect a growing awareness of the interrelationships existing between détente, disarmament and the economic advancement of individual a countries is a matter of great satisfaction.

We attach great importance to the provision of international aid to the developing countries. We ourselves are trying to contribute our share,

commensurate with our means and possibilities, to the development programmes of these countries.

Nevertheless, we also maintain that the fundamental guarantee for the economic growth of the developing countries must be sought in progressive socio-economic measures at home. The soundness of this approach is vividly shown by the accomplishments of socialist Hungary in the increase of industrial and agricultural production, the flowering of cultural life and the marked improvement of living standards.

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An important basic condition for increasing the effectiveness of the activity of the United Nations lies in a more consistent practical application of the spirit and letter of the Charter. During the past thirty years the Charter has withstood the test of time and its application has contributed to the maintenance of peace and security, to the development of relations among nations, to the solution of economic, social, cultural and humanitarian tasks, and to the expansion of international cooperation. Hence there is no need for any amendment to the Charter of the United Nations.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME OF C.M.E.A. 1971–1975

by

GYULA SZEKÉR

The 30th session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (C.M.E.A), which met in the summer of 1976, showed an identity of views of the fraternal socialist member countries. The work of the session expressed the creative spirit of internationalism. Such an atmosphere created most favourable conditions for the definition of current and future objectives.

C.M.E.A. met at a time when the 1971–1975 plan period had been completed and the implementation of the new five-year plans of the member states was already under way. The communist and workers' parties of all the member countries had held their congresses at which the direction of future social economic progress was defined along with the tasks ahead and their relation to the activities of the other fraternal socialist countries. Each gave top priority to the improvement of economic cooperation and the development of socialist economic integration.

The first five-year phase of the Comprehensive Programme designed to serve cooperation also came to a close.* All this was an excellent opportunity for the Council of Delegates, the supreme organ of international economic cooperation of the socialist community, to summarize the results of co-operation over a longer period and determine on this basis the measures ncecessary for the promotion of socialist economic integration.

Achievements of the Socialist Economic Integration

Recent changes in the world economy and in the international situation as well as the socio-economic development of member states of the socialist

* The decision to work out a Comprehensive Programme was taken by the leaders of the Communist and Workers' parties of the C.M.E.A. member states at the 23rd (special) session of the C.M.E.A. in 1969. The draft programme was adopted by the 25th session in 1971.

economic community have completely verified the efforts designed to expand cooperation among the nations affiliated to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and to establish a socialist economic integration. By the end of 1975 all the member countries completed a successful five-year plan period in the building of socialism and communism; the forces of production had shown a considerable progress and material and cultural standards had increased substantially.

In achieving these results, the national efforts made by the individual countries are inseparable from the material and intellectual potential generated by their cooperation. That is why the results of the integration process are, as a rule, reflected in the general economic progress made by the community of the C.M.E.A. countries.

According to preliminary figures the total national income of the C.M.E.A. countries increased by 36 per cent during the five years of the plan. The annual rate of growth in national income of the member states considerably exceeded that of the highly industrialized capitalist countries, for the national income of these states rose by 14 per cent in that period, that of Common Market members by only 12 per cent.

Between 1971 and 1975 the industrial output of the C.M.E.A. countries rose by 45 per cent, a rate four times higher than that of the highly developed capitalist states. Again, the members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance are well ahead of the Common Market countries in respect of the total volume of industrial and agricultural production and with regard to several other important indices of economic growth. For example, the total electric energy produced by the C.M.E.A. countries in 1975 amounted to 1,386 thousand million kW hours as against 1,010 thousand million kW hours of electric energy produced by the Common Market countries; the 1975 steel production of the C.M.E.A. countries amounted to 193 million tons as against 126 million tons of the Common Market countries.

The material and technological basis of agricultural production also increased substantially. As a result, the volume of production rose by 14 per cent in agriculture between 1971 and 1975 as compared to the average output per annum in the period from 1966 to 1970, in spite of the fact that weather conditions were unfavourable. Agricultural production grew by some 10 per cent in the highly industrialized capitalist countries during the same period.

The total volume of investments of the C.M.E.A. countries in 1975 exceeded that of 1970 by 46 per cent. A number of major plants with the up-to-date equipment were put into operation.

The successful carrying out of economic development plans created a broader basis for further improving living standards. Between 1971 and 1975 per capita real wages grew by 29 per cent. Turnover in the retail trade also rose considerably as compared to 1970. Fifteen million homes were built in five years, providing modern housing for 60 million people, that is one-sixth of the total population of the C.M.E.A. countries.

The remarkable social and economic progress of the member states of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance produced not only major quantitative but also qualitative changes. Industrial production was modernized, a process that coincided with a change in structure. An increasing proportion of the ever growing production stemmed from industries at a higher stage of processing and turning out more valuable and more modern products, such as the engineering industry, the computer technology and the chemical industry. The member states of the Council for Economic Assistance used the resources at their disposal, including manpower, raw materials and energy, to manufacture increasingly valuable products. A higher proportion of agricultural goods was produced by new and modern production units of an industrial character. Though this process has been present over a number of years, now the congresses of the fraternal parties insisted that progress can and should be accelerated in this field.

The productivity of industrial labour increased by 33 per cent between 1971 and 1975, that is an indication of the magnitude of qualitative changes. The share of the members from this massive growth in five years is as follows: 47 per cent in Poland, 41 per cent in Bulgaria, 37 per cent in Rumania and Mongolia, 36 per cent in Hungary, 34 per cent in Czechoslovakia, 33 per cent in the Soviet Union and 30 per cent in the German Democratic Republic. It is interesting to note that the rise in the productivity of labour accounted for some 80 per cent of the total industrial output in the whole of the C.M.E.A. countries between 1971 and 1975.

The increase in the economic potential of the member states of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance shows that the share of the members in the production of electric energy and the most important raw materials continued to rise in these five years. In 1974, for instance, the socialist integration produced 21 per cent of the total electric energy of the world, 24 per cent of the world's output of sulphur, 33 per cent of chemical fertilizers, 25 per cent of cement, 22 per cent of natural gas, 26 per cent of iron ore and steel, 30 per cent of coal.

It is a proof of the rapidly increasing weight and readiness to cooperate of the C.M.E.A. countries that, in 1975, the value of trade turnover conducted with countries not affiliated to the Council for Mutual Economic

Assistance was over twice as much as that of 1970. The share of trade turnover with countries outside the C.M.E.A. increased from 20 to 30 per cent of the total foreign trade turnover over the past ten years. In addition, the division of labour among members is of decisive importance in the external economic relations of the socialist economic integration. One of the proofs of this is that in 1975 the share of the turnover among C.M.E.A. countries amounted to 62 per cent in imports of machines and equipment, 65 per cent in imports of consumer goods and to as high as 66 to 99 per cent in imports of iron and non-ferrous metals, fuels and sawn timber.

The implementation of the measures envisaged for the period between 1971 and 1975 in the Comprehensive Programme also had a remarkable role in these achievements. Member countries carried out measures elaborated jointly for the production of material goods, above all to ensure the fundamental raw materials and fuels in the long run; specialization and cooperation expanded in the processing industry, progress was made in sectors of vital importance in agriculture and transport as well as in scientific and technological cooperation, and more emphasis was given to the joint organization of research essential for economic cooperation.

The specialization of products and cooperation in production accelerated between 1971 and 1975. During that period the member states concluded as many as 50 multilateral agreements on specialization and cooperation in different aspects of the engineering industry. The agreements cover the production of over six thousand articles of the machine industry. The progress of specialization and cooperation in the manufacturing of parts and units of the machine industry, however, failed to meet requirements. Major improvements in this field are due in the current five-year-plan period. In addition to increasing production, the mutual deliveries of specialized engineering products will rise from 22 to 28 per cent.

As a result of the Comprehensive Programme for the period of 1971 to 1975 relations among the economies of the member countries expanded and broadened in every field; this process went hand in hand with an improvement in the exploitation of resources and an intensification of the concentration of their utilization. All this contributed to the acceleration of economic growth.

Here are some examples to illustrate the large scale of cooperation. The biggest calcinated soda plant in Europe (1.2 million tons per year) was built in Bulgaria with the cooperation of Hungary and the Soviet Union. The years under review saw a rapid development in the C.M.E.A. states of petro-chemistry. Cooperation in petro-chemistry similar to bilateral col-

laboration in this field between Hungary and the Soviet Union began or made progress in several member countries concurrently with optimum production capacities and cooperation among the manufacturing plants. An example is cooperation in petro-chemistry between Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic and between Yugoslavia and Rumania.

Inter-government agreements were also signed by C.M.E.A. members on the development of plant protection chemicals. Under these agreements member countries will build 50 new large-capacity chemical plants and enlarge another 24 in the 1976 to 1980 plan period. When signing the relevant agreements the contracting nations also agreed on product specialization.

Over 100 technical and technological proposals were elaborated as part of cooperation in the light industry. They are suitable to bring about a 2 or 2.5 fold increase in productivity following the modernization of the leather, shoe, furniture, textile and printing industries.

The member states of C.M.E.A. developed cooperation over the past five years in the planning of the technological facilities in the food processing industry and in the establishment of a uniform technological documentation centre for this industry. The member states cooperate in the development of an international chain of refrigeration.

In agriculture, a number of cooperation measures have been coordinated and implemented. The international agricultural equipment system has been further developed promoting the expansion of product specialization. Joint measures have been taken in order to develop the production of chemical fertilizers and plant protection chemicals that are vitally important for agriculture. Cooperation in the breeding of new sorts with a higher crop yield was also successful. Some progress has also been made in up-to-date large-scale livestock breeding and collaboration in the areas of plant protection and animal health has proved to be useful.

In transport and communication the role of Joint Rolling Stock (OPW) continued to grow. The number of rolling stock came fairly close to 135,000 by the end of the plan period (1975). Today transport by OPW rolling stock accounts for 60 per cent of the total rail transport in C.M.E.A. countries. During the plan period, between 1971 and 1975, they signed agreements on the establishment and development of a uniform container transportation system. It will exert a favourable influence on transport capacities in the forthcoming years.

A long-term comprehensive cooperation programme on housing has also been drawn up by member states in keeping with the Comprehensive Programme. Within its frame the joint development tasks of the pro-

duction and technological basis of building, with large panel prefab elements for example, were also set.

Scientific and technological cooperation between 1971 and 1975 was focused primarily on a solution to the 18 major spheres envisaged by the Comprehensive Programme. To promote the activity 48 coordination centres, 4 international institutions, 3 international centres engaged in the scientific further training of specialists and 2 international teams of scientists were set up and 2 international research laboratories were established by member countries. During these five years research institutes of member states accomplished over 5,000 jobs set jointly within the framework of cooperation. They included, for instance, the construction of over 150 new machines, machine systems and instruments. Over 200 technological processes were developed.

The organization of cooperation within C.M.E.A. also showed major progress between 1971 and 1975 keeping up with increased requirements. Extended cooperation necessitated the setting up of some new C.M.E.A. bodies; in addition, member states interested established a number of new international economic ones. They are now active in the international organization or coordination of production.

I want to emphasize that this list is not a classification according to importance; it is simply designed to show the diversity and varied ways of cooperation within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance that developed by the mid-1970s concurrently with the advancement of the socialist economic integration and to illustrate the considerable degree to which joint activities and the system of bi- and multilateral agreements are incorporated today in the economies of the member states. Cooperation among C.M.E.A. member countries has by now become a fundamental condition for economic growth.

International Impact

A major achievement is that C.M.E.A. economic growth has been steady and unbroken. In the first half of the 1970s it continued to be dynamic, at a time when in the capitalist countries stagnation or recession prevailed and their international trade declined. Inflation and unemployment threaten the job security of millions.

By way of contrast the socialist countries did not have to face the repercussions of the crisis that shook the economies of the capitalist countries. Thanks to the systematic and far-seeing cooperation of the community of nations which forms the C.M.E.A., the bulk of fuel and raw material

needs was satisfied from own resources as against those of the countries of the European Common Market which have to import large quantities of carbo-hydrogens and raw materials from third countries. As a result of close cooperation established with one another as well but with the Soviet Union in the first place, member countries managed to solve most of their problems concerning of the supply of sources of energy and raw materials. Between 1971 and 1976, for example, the Soviet Union supplied almost twice as much crude oil to the other C.M.E.A. countries than it had done in the preceding five-year period. From 1976 to 1980 the Soviet Union will deliver 400 million tons of crude oil and oil products plus 90,000 million cubic metres of natural gas to the fraternal socialist countries. During the five years ending in 1975 the mutual deliveries of electric energy within the united electric energy system of the C.M.E.A. countries exceeded 80,000 million kW hours. This is almost four times as much as their present domestic production of electric energy. An outstanding co-operation task is to ensure the increasing deliveries of fuel and electric power, for the economies of C.M.E.A. member states. The Friendship Oil Pipeline has been operating since 1962; following the construction of the inter-system high-voltage long-distance power line over the past 10 to 15 years cooperation among the united electric power systems was established and developed successfully. All this largely contributed to the systematic economic growth in C.M.E.A. member states.

By relying on the strength of the community, the smaller and larger countries, the well and the less developed ones, are equally capable of safeguarding their peoples and their national economies from major shocks through socialist international economic cooperation. They can do so, above all, because competition and subsequent conflict as well as the colonialist and neocolonialist methods of dominating other peoples, robbing the smaller and weaker nations of their resources, and imperialist ideas of developing certain countries at the expense of others, are remote from the international economic ties among fraternal socialist countries and their objectives. Relations among the socialist countries and connections outside C.M.E.A. are based on free choice of participation, sovereignty and mutual advantages. Within the frame of the general development of the economic community the gradual levelling up of standards of growth of member countries is a major goal. This is, at the same time, clear-cut evidence of complete equality within the limits of the community.

Promotion of the process of levelling up is a constant duty that has to be carried out in every field. In line with this a number of measures have been taken to speed up growth in Mongolia and, more recently, in Cuba.

The fact that apart from the implementation of these principles and in addition to mutual economic advantages, the omnipresence of a well-tested faith in offering comradely assistance considerably increases the efficiency of the socialist international economic integration.

The social and economic development of Hungary over the past thirty years serves as a good example illustrating the results achieved on the basis of ideas of internationalism. Cooperation that was established with members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance played an inestimable part in the growth of modern Hungarian industry and agriculture. Today, when the modernisation of the product structure of Hungary's industry and agriculture is one of the major tasks ahead, a guaranteed international background is given by coordinated programmes, in part jointly elaborated with the other socialist countries. This cooperation makes it possible for the most advanced technologies to be introduced into the Hungarian engineering industry, including work of vital importance such as vehicle construction and the computer and telecommunication industries, by relying on large series to be established in production. The most essential items of the deliveries envisaged by the long-term trade agreements, and on the basis of specialized contracts, are those on which the modernization of the economic structure rests. Since they are up-to-date, they are most suitable for non-socialist markets as well.

All that has been considered so far acts as an extremely important condition from the point of view of the continued unbroken progress of the Hungarian economy, a factor whose significance is self-evident. Huge dimensions of production and large series of products turned out in major modern industries (as well as major and safe markets established for a long time to come and constituting a prerequisite of large series) are the indispensable conditions of economic production and development. The success of cooperation with the fraternal socialist countries can be illustrated by the structure the Hungarian of chemical industry that is being constantly modernized, the building up of the petrol-chemical industry and the development of the pharmaceutical industry as well as of the production of plant protection materials.

The agreements signed by Hungary and the Soviet Union and Hungary and Poland on alumina and aluminium created a safe basis for the efficient exploitation of Hungary's bauxite reserves. At the same time this cooperation enabled this country to counterbalance a relative shortage of electric energy in an industry that needs extremely large quantities of electricity.

A number of recent agreements with the Soviet Union and the German

Democratic Republic offer scope to Hungarian agriculture to engage on a comprehensive and intensive development programme.

Current Tasks and Objectives

It is in the national interest of the C.M.E.A. member states to strengthen and develop socialist economic integration. The international division of labour and the opportunities made available by international cooperation for the development of the national resources on the basis of mutual advantages are indispensable today for a more effective operation and dynamic development of modern economies of substantial capacity.

The economies of the C.M.E.A. member countries stand for a huge capacity even by world standards, and advanced forces of production make international cooperation necessary. Through it the burdens of development can be shared, a steady supply of the necessary fuels and raw materials can be ensured and, at the same time, it acts as a major market of course within the frame of appropriate agreements, offering a broad range of goods to both the producers and consumers. Today the 370 million community of the C.M.E.A. nations offers such advantages to each of its members. The national interests of each country of the socialist economic integration are compatible with those of all the other member states. This, in turn, brings about in the long run the identity of their interests in the development of cooperation and in the establishment of economic integration.

This identity of interests was proved this time again by the resolutions adopted unanimously by the 30th session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. They concern the duties that have become particularly timely out of those included in the Comprehensive Programme, as a result of recent progress, as well as the accomplishment of tasks that emerged partly as brand new ones.

Each period produces its own most essential and pressing tasks. The standards reached by the C.M.E.A. countries, the requirements to be satisfied by national planning and the tasks arising from the development of the system of economic cooperation make it imperative for them to embark shoulder to shoulder on the preparation of the cooperation tasks to be accomplished after 1980. While continuing to implement the objectives set by the Comprehensive Programme with unchanged energy the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance must give top priority to the systematic and collective carrying out of the long-term tasks of production of vital importance in the period to follow. This duty was summarized

in the resolution passed by the 30th session of C.M.E.A. on the elaboration and execution of long-term target programmes for cooperation. The resolution provides for the drawing up of five target programmes for the solution to the most essential cooperation tasks of C.M.E.A. member states in the field of production.

A target programme is elaborated, above all, for satisfying the long-term energy and raw material demands of member countries. In connection with this the resolution states that solving the problem of the supply of energy and raw materials has become a matter of international concern. These issues can only be settled effectively and satisfactorily through joint efforts by all the C.M.E.A. countries. The fact that the member countries possess huge resources of fuels and raw materials makes it possible to meet increasing demands, provided the forces necessary for the production are concentrated. The overwhelming majority of newly discovered deposits lie on the territory of the Soviet Union, in particular in areas beyond the Urals. That is why exploitation necessitates increased material resources because not only the distance separating the new mines and the users has become much greater but the climatic and ground conditions are also much more difficult and the inadequate development of the infrastructure must be taken into consideration as well.

In spite of the fact that the countries affiliated to the C.M.E.A. are capable of producing the overwhelming majority of their energy and raw material requirements from their own resources, they reaffirmed the importance of rational energy and material management, of research focused on raw materials and production, and the efforts made by the individual nations.

Economy is indicated, among other things, by the increasing costs of exploitation and transport. Special attention must be paid to the fact that both crude oil and natural gas are much more valuable as technological raw materials than as fuel. For this reason the member countries of C.M.E.A. must do everything in their power to make fuller use of existing solid fuels (like coal, lignite and shale) and of hydroenergy.

Plans are now being drawn up to satisfy electric energy requirements. They include the establishment of a high-performance continental grid. With the construction of a 750 kV long-distance power line to be completed by the early 1980s the united high-performance electric energy systems of the countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance will be further broadened. Work on the first long-distance power line between the Ukrainian town of Vinnitsa and the Hungarian village of Albertirsa is already under way. One of the most promising methods, in the long run,

for dealing with energy problems is nuclear energy. This is a field of special significance in the cooperation spectrum of C.M.E.A. members.

The target programmes serving as a groundwork for the supply of the C.M.E.A. member countries with raw materials, fuel and electric energy have the objective of ensuring the most economical location of energy and material demanding plants, reducing requirements and making the common search for new reserves more extensive, constructing more modern furnace installations and establishing mining technologies of high capacity.

A target programme has also been drafted for the long-term development of the engineering industry of the C.M.E.A. member states and for the expansion of the specialization of production and cooperation. The production and scientific potential of member countries makes specialization and cooperation over a much wider sphere possible. This opportunity must be taken maximum advantage of, using the target programme. To this end the elaboration and extension of C.M.E.A. standards must also be accelerated. Other questions of importance include economic incentives for specialization and cooperation and the coordination of the interests of exporters and importers.

The development of the engineering industry on which technological progress as a whole rests is absolutely essential. This industry has the job of producing all the equipment and vehicles necessary for carrying out all the other target programmes. The success of every target programme envisaged is dependent to a considerable extent on the technological standards and efficiency of the equipment to be used.

The agriculture and food target programme prescribes that each of the countries affiliated to the socialist economic integration coordinate the development of the agriculture, and cooperation in the establishment of the necessary industrial and scientific background, exploiting as fully as possible the natural and climatic conditions of all the nations in the community. All this serves the aim of making it possible for the members of the socialist economic grouping to satisfy their demands for basic agricultural products.

The development of agricultural production and that of the food processing industry goes hand in hand with major investments and a substantial increase in the number of specialists. That is why the resolution on working out the relevant target programme emphasizes that, for creating the necessary conditions, it is expedient to integrate the material, scientific and financial resources of the member countries on the basis of mutual advantage. The resolution states that apart from joint efforts it is also essential for individual member countries to make maximum efforts on their own to exploit their natural and climatic conditions and to satisfy demand for

products of the agricultural and food processing industry from their own resources.

A target programme is also being drawn up for the expansion of the supply of industrial consumer goods. In this respect the principal objective is a better supply of the needs of the population ensuring the quality and choice of goods available on the members' domestic markets on a high level.

Finally, there is also a target programme on the drawing board for the substantial development of the transport and communication potential. Joint efforts and coordinated measures will ensure in the first place that the potential of the international transport of goods should grow faster than production so that transport requirements relating to the intensification of the division of labour can be fulfilled. This is the idea lying behind measures designed to ensure growth in the capacities of main lines and border stations, the merchant marine and container transport. Special attention is also paid to the further development of motorways and communication by air.

Between 1976 and 1980 trade turnover among the countries affiliated to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is planned to increase (on the basis of the coordination of plans) by 70 per cent as compared to the corresponding figures of the plan period ending in 1975. Railways will account for over 50 per cent of total transport, a quarter will be effected by pipes, while the share of water transport will be 17 per cent. Apart from inter-member-country transport, the need for domestic transport will also rise considerably, including transit transport, especially in the case of Hungary. In the period to come it will be most expedient to coordinate the establishment of transport capacities necessary for carrying out tasks that continue to grow dynamically. In this manner the dissipation of resources can be avoided.

The target programmes contain a wide range of measures designed to serve a gradual levelling up and eventual elimination of differences in standards of economic development concurrently with the general increase in the economic level of the countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

The long-term target programmes are thus designed to ensure optimum conditions in the major lines of production for a concentrated exploitation of the opportunities included in the Comprehensive Programme. A successful carrying out of the tasks referred to will serve the implementation of the fundamental political goal of the fraternal parties, that is the raising of the material and cultural standards of the nations rallied by C.M.E.A.

Determination and the subsequent carrying out of the coordinated tasks of the target programmes which are in keeping with the interests of all the member countries, will mobilize the internal forces of each state and promote a more effective and concentrated exploration and exploitation of natural, material and manpower resources.

The concentrated effect of the target programmes follows, among other things, from their comprehensive nature, for they coordinate the development of individual areas on an international scale, beginning with research. The comprehensive character is enhanced by the fact that they are being drawn up in close coordination.

Elaboration of the target programmes offers additional remarkable advantages to the C.M.E.A. countries. Since these programmes are drawn up collectively the work of elaboration provides sound planning experience particularly regarding coordination in both the long and the short run.

The 30th session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance underlined that several essential cooperation tasks are so urgent that their carrying out can suffer no delay. For example, it must be taken into consideration that the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Programme to date has created a new situation and improving conditions for cooperation in a number of fields. In the current five-year plan the socialist countries embarked on a joint venture covering ten major investment programmes to the tune of almost 10,000 million roubles. They are designed to improve the supply of C.M.E.A. member countries with fuel, raw materials and processed goods (natural gas, steel, ferro-alloys, cellulose, nickel, and so on). This joint activity is summarized by the 1976–1980 coordinated plan of many-sided integrational measures adopted by the 29th session. The successful elaboration and execution of the long-term target programmes are also expected to result in major undertakings. All this calls for the constant "maintenance" of the economic, legal and financial system, its adjustment to the new requirements as well as the development of the working methods.

The session specifically underlined the importance of the further development of cooperation in planning. The elements and mechanism of effective cooperation in planning assumed their final form in the practice of recent years. At the present stage the task is to work on their general and continued improvement, progressing towards the gradual building up of the system of cooperation in planning making sure that they serve the tasks ahead both of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance as a whole, and each individual member state.

The 30th session established that to this end an increased role must be

given to consultations on economic policies on different levels; the coordination of plans should be more extensive and a matter of operational practice, and the elaboration of the coordinated five-year plans of the diverse integrational measures should be improved. The practice of collective planning by a number of industries for the making of certain products should be widened. The tasks listed above were created by development and their accomplishment is one of the preconditions of further progress.

A growing attraction

It has already been pointed out that the unbroken and steady development made by the C.M.E.A. countries has an inherent power of attraction for the whole world, commanding substantial international respect for the economic community of the socialist countries.

The economic successes achieved by the C.M.E.A. member states are combined with remarkable political achievements as well. The most important is progress of the process of international détente and the Helsinki Conference, in particular the Final Act on European Security and Cooperation,

Recent international political events provide favourable opportunities for the expansion of economic relations between the members of the socialist economic integration and states not affiliated to C.M.E.A.

Finland, Mexico and Iraq have concluded cooperation agreements with the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, and this points to a considerable increase in the international respect that C.M.E.A. commands. Besides, increasing attention is paid by different international organizations to the countries belonging to the socialist economic community. C.M.E.A. has been given observer's status by the United Nations and several other international organizations, and it has consultative rights in the European Economic Community. The increased respect the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance commands today makes it obligatory for the socialist economic grouping to take a position on and give voice to its opinion on major world economic questions. Talks were initiated by C.M.E.A. with the European Economic Community in the above spirit. The objective of the move is to clarify the possibilities of relations between the two economic integrations and the countries affiliated to them, and to establish favourable conditions for cooperation. C.M.E.A. is guided by the endeavour to eliminate every sort of discrimination and remove all the artificial obstacles to the expansion of economic relations based on reasonable and mutual interests.

This attitude follows from the Charter of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance which states that the member states constantly endeavour to maintain good and mutually fruitful relations with all countries on the basis of equality and free choice. C.M.E.A. always prepared to establish and expand economic relations with the developing countries offering aid based on the above principle.

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The 30th session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance performed successful work: it reviewed and evaluated the work done in carrying out the Comprehensive Programme over the past five years, and set the major tasks ahead.

Hungary has taken an active part in the work carried on by the socialist economic community of nations over the past five years. Hungarians as well have been amongst the engineers of the achievements, and the beneficiaries of successes, in proportion to work done.

The first five years of the execution of the Comprehensive Programme show also in the light of Hungarian results that the political and economic interests of the Hungarian people are completely identical with the interests of the socialist economic integration as a whole.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SOCIALIST AGRICULTURE

by

FERENC DONÁTH

Part I

How does growth take place in collectivized agriculture, and how does it correlate with the realization of the ideas of socialism? What has practice verified of the theoretical assumption that the socialization of the basic means of production, on the one hand, accelerates economic growth and, on the other, creates the foundations on which socialist relations of production take shape and strengthen?

Following the reform of economic management (1968) the rate of growth of Hungarian agriculture gathered speed. In the years of collectivization (1961–63) rates of growth lagged behind the expansion of agricultural production in the developed European capitalist countries, but by the early seventies it was already far ahead of it. Basic to the acceleration of growth was the change in property relations and work organization, but this was in itself insufficient. Considerable material and intellectual resources had to be concentrated in the cooperatives to accelerate growth.

Differentiation of production and income

What is now of special interest, however, is not the rate but the differentiated process of growth. The connection between the two is close. The main objective in Hungary also is to accelerate the growth rate. But the method of growth has to be examined separately since this calls for a system of distribution which influences the enforcement of the socialist principle of distribution according to work.

The ways and means of accomplishing growth are in fact objectively delimited by the general circumstances of production. In collectivized agriculture also commodity production takes place in a large number of separate

A section from *Reform és forradalom* (Reform and Revolution), a forthcoming book by the author.

enterprises with differing economic and natural potentialities. The main stimulus of production is increase in enterprise earnings and in what is closely related to it in producers' cooperatives—personal income.

Consequently socialist agriculture shows differences from farm to farm, depending on size, in the levels of production and earnings.

The natural potentialities of farms (conditions of soil, terrain, precipitation, etc.) are unchangeable or only hard to change factors of production; a notable decrease in the differences between them, at present, requires investments out of proportion to the anticipated increase in production. The economic potentialities of farms (market relations, transport facilities) also can be changed only with difficulty and slowly. These circumstances in themselves gave an impetus to early differentiation. When large-scale farming was introduced several factors were already acting in this direction. Among them the differences between the relative size, composition and skill and industry of the labour force and the efficiency of management—not to mention differences in the supply of fixed and circulating assets—have become serious sources of the differentiation of cooperatives. And not only producers' cooperatives but also state farms have become differentiated. This is also an indication that the differentiation of farms is not a consequence of property relations, but can be attributed first of all to the factors of growth being present to a differing degree and in different proportions.

Cooperative profits are reinvested enlarging production. Initial differences will therefore automatically grow and even snowball. This results in differences in personal income derived from equal work, at least in cooperatives where the income of the farm and the earnings of the worker are closely interrelated. This process may develop spontaneously, the differentiation of farm incomes leads to an increasing differentiation in the earning and personal conditions of workers and creates social tension.

The crux of the matter is therefore whether it is possible, and in what manner, to stop the development of social inequality in collectivized agriculture, and this so as not to hinder but to promote economic growth.

It is interesting that after the completion of collectivization a central decision was taken to further the development of production in producers' cooperatives operating under unfavourable conditions. The purpose was to diminish, through increased state support, the differentiation of cooperatives in the field of production. Those in charge soon realized that this was not an economical way of utilizing already meagre resources. It has been proved—and this of course holds true not only of Hungary—that identical expenditure is liable to result in greater output in farms of a higher standard. This has been shown by calculations made in all producers'

cooperatives and not only *ad hoc*. According to the Central Statistical Office of Hungary, for example, in 1972 the most efficient 312 producers' co-operatives realized unit output at 19 per cent less production cost than did the weakest 214 producers' cooperatives. The effectiveness of ex-penditure improves commensurate with the higher standard of farming (and not with the expansion of farming areas).

It was necessary, therefore, not to continue with the idea of expanding state subsidies for the development of production in low-level farms in the interest of reducing the differences. An economic policy aimed at le-velling off the productive funds would inevitably have slowed down or hindered economic growth.

Another alternative was, in the interests of accelerating economic growth, to insist on the most effective utilization possible of state funds in re-distributing material resources among the producers' cooperatives, but at the same time to prevent the resulting greater differentiation of output and gross returns of cooperatives from extending to personal incomes. Con-sequently, the state should fight the increase of inequality not with regard to the development of production and cooperative earnings, but along the line of personal incomes.

Owing to the structure of producers' cooperatives and their interests system this task is by no means easy and is not without contradictions.

The personal income of the employees of state farms is hardly influenced by the fact that differences between the output and the earnings of such farms are great, greater than in producers' cooperatives. In 1972, as in other years, the economic performance of state farms influenced payment to workers to the tune of 5 per cent, those to executives up to 10 to 15 per cent. The differences in earnings of these farms thus cause no social problem, since they are reflected in the incomes of workers to a minimum extent.

Producers' cooperatives show the essential feature of being unaffected by wage regulations binding on state enterprise. The wage level is de-termined, within certain limits, by the producers' cooperatives themselves, in part with regard to the importance and difficulty of the job and perfor-mance, in part in relation to the total result. It is therefore their essential feature that the result directly and considerably influences the personal income of members. This close interdependence has been eased somewhat by the introduction of pre-fixed and guaranteed wages, replacing a system in which members carried full risks, and income was distributed only after the balance sheet was drawn up. This did not, however, alter the basic fact that the wage level of all cooperatives is a function of their levels of

output and earnings. This is probably the principal reason why the fixed assets and material import are in general more effective in producers' cooperatives than in state farms, and that economic growth since the reform has been fastest in the cooperatives.

This idea, however, contains the internal contradiction that differences between personal incomes cannot be done away with without eliminating the financial incentives, which are still the main impelling force of economic growth. Under conditions of commodity production this contradiction cannot be eliminated. Until society surpasses the level at which man's material needs provide the dominant stimulus of production, this contradiction cannot be resolved, it can only be kept within limits. Under these conditions the task of economic policy consists precisely of finding that way of expanding the economy and that extent of the differentiation of personal

THE DIFFERENTIATION OF PRODUCERS'

Unaccumulated production value of basic agricultural

	Less than 4,000	From 4,001 to 6,000	From 6,001 to 8,000	From 8,001 to 10,000
Number of farmers' agricultural cooperatives, 1973	62	145	288	389
			Value per one	
Value of fixed assets				
1968–1972	100.0	148.1	180.9	196.2
1973	100.0	155.1	187.4	211.4
1968–1972 = 100	132.0	138.0	136.0	142.0
Accumulated production value				
1968–1972	100.0	140.8	182.9	220.0
1973	100.0	148.1	200.0	253.0
1968–1972 = 100	124.0	130.0	135.0	143.0
Cooperative gross returns				
1968–1972	100.0	133.9	158.4	190.1
1973	100.0	132.5	167.8	203.2
1968–1972 = 100	106.0	105.0	112.0	113.0
Development funds				
1968–1972	100.0	148.9	174.3	217.5
1973	100.0	162.3	261.6	331.8
1968–1972 = 100	76.0	83.0	115.0	117.0

incomes, which secure a fast rate of economic growth without causing tension and thus becoming a source of lasting social differences. The history of the countries building socialism demonstrates how difficult it is to implement such an economic policy. This difficulty finds expression in the problems familiar in the history of Communist parties, in the struggle against leftist and rightist deviations, a struggle one of whose important themes is the contradiction which exists between economic growth and socialist principles.

But let us see in what manner and how effectively it was possible in Hungarian agriculture to reduce this contradiction in the building of socialism by introducing the reform of economic management during the latter half of the sixties.

The extremely slow rate of growth (1.2 per cent a year) that prevailed

COOPERATIVES ACCORDING TO PRODUCTION LEVEL

activity per one hectare of cropland in forints

From 10,001 to 12,500	From 12,501 to 15,000	From 15,001 to 20,000	From 20,001 to 30,000	Over 30,000	Total
462	351	347	125	30	2,199
hectare of cropland					
226.5	251.4	284.5	373.8	774.2	
247.5	287.1	339.8	463.5	1,056.4	
144.0	150.0	157.0	163.0	179.0	
255.3	300.0	369.0	479.5	1,103.3	
303.1	356.2	446.2	613.1	1,619.7	
147.0	147.0	150.0	158.0	173.0	
221.3	259.4	323.2	404.6	1,143.7	
244.7	288.7	356.7	489.8	1,482.3	
117.0	118.0	117.0	138.0	138.0	
260.6	325.4	425.7	570.9	1,741.8	
419.0	509.7	659.5	984.1	2,986.5	
123.0	120.0	118.0	132.0	131.0	

THE DIFFERENTIATION OF THE EARNINGS OF MEMBERS

Unaccumulated production value of basic agricultural

	Less than 4,000	From 4,001 to 6,000	From 6,001 to 8,000	From 8,001 to 10,000
Number of farmers' agricultural cooperatives, 1973	68	145	288	389
			Per capita earnings of active cooperative	
Daily wages				
1968–1972	100 (74 Ft)	102.7	108.1	114.9
1973	100 (90 Ft)	102.2	106.7	112.2
1968–1972=100	122	121	120	119
Yearly earnings				
1968–1972	100 (12,426 Ft)	115.6	126.7	141.7
1973	100 (17,878 Ft)	115.2	123.5	133.8
1968–1972=100	156	153	153	148

in the first half of the sixties had to be speeded up. This part of the task was successfully carried out by the reform; the yearly rate of growth rose to 2.8 per cent in the second half of the sixties and to 5.5 per cent between 1971 and 1974. Allow me to single out only those of the complex measures mentioned earlier which accelerated this growth so as to increase at the same time the differentiation of production level and enterprise earnings.

Of course, the autonomy (a combined result of several measures) of producers' cooperatives in itself promoted their differentiation. Having given free scope to skill, enterprise, initiative and talent for management and organization the increased autonomy of producers' cooperatives released forces which they possessed to very different degrees. Under the system of excessively centralized management these were blocked and thus had less effect also upon differentiation.

The considerable rise in agricultural prices, although favourable to all cooperatives, inevitably accelerated differentiation. The price increase best suited those with higher production standards turning out greater quantities

OF PRODUCERS' COOPERATIVES ACCORDING TO PRODUCTION LEVEL
activity per one hectare of cropland in forints

From 10,001 to 12,500	From 12,501 to 15,000	From 15,001 to 20,000	From 20,001 to 30,000	Over 30,000
462	351	347	125	30
members from the collective farm				
121.6	128.4	139.2	145.9	177.0 (131 Ft)
118.9	123.3	132.2	135.6	163.3 (147 Ft)
119	117	116	113	112
154.4	167.0	188.7	202.6	230.3 (26,341 Ft)
145.2	151.5	162.3	173.2	195.5 (35,020 Ft)
147	142	135	134	133

of commodities; for this very reason the farms showed faster rates of growth.

The credit policy deliberately and consistently served the idea that in the distribution of financial resources preference should be given to farms which are able to make relatively better use of such funds. This is why creditworthiness came to the fore and new forms of support to producers' cooperatives on a low level (which farmed mostly under unfavourable conditions) were developed. Credit accomodation and the size of credit were determined by the amount which the cooperatives were able to contribute to the investment out of their own capital. As a consequence, state credits for the enlargement of production are granted first of all to cooperatives well supplied with capital.

Since cooperatives receive a substantial part (43 per cent in 1972) of state support for the purpose of investment, state support also enables those that have ample own funds to develop at a faster rate.

Mainly as a result of such circumstances the strong differentiation of

producers' cooperatives continued to intensify after 1968. There was a faster rate of growth in farms well provided with capital and high productive standards. The averages of the first five years following the reform (1968–1972) also show this wide range of differentiation. A comparison of the five-year averages with the corresponding figures for 1973 shows at once that economic growth continues but so does the differentiation of factors and rates of growth.

The great and increasing differentiation of development funds which serve to enlarge production is of particular importance. The rate of differentiation is fastest in this respect. As a consequence the amount of new investment per unit area, for example in 1972, was more than five times greater in the producers' cooperatives with a high production level than in the producers' cooperatives with a low production level.[1] The presence of different degrees of the factors of growth thus leads to very different rates of growth. In the period between 1967 and 1972 the yearly rate of growth was 0.6 per cent in the 214 cooperatives with a low production level (3,000 to 6,000 Ft/ha); it was 3.3 per cent in 1,138 middling cooperatives (6,000 to 13,000 Ft/ha) and 8.5 per cent in the 962 better than average cooperatives. Included in the last group are the 312 cooperatives with the highest production level (20,000 Ft/ha) and a yearly growth rate of 17 per cent.[2]

Under the present circumstances economic growth is inseparable from differentiation. Today's differentiation of cooperative production and cooperative income brings with it tomorrow's differentiation in the growth of cooperatives.

The acceleration of economic growth has doubtless proved the economic justification of the policy which has no longer sought to level off or reduce differences between the factors of production in farms, but has promoted the flow of resources to where they are most profitably used.

Identical expenditure yielded substantially higher results in the high standard farms.[3] Efforts at increased effectiveness accelerate not only economic growth but also the differentiation of farms.

Is it possible in cooperative farms to solve the contradiction between rational and profitable economic activity and the socialist principle of distribution according to work? Is it conceivable for the considerable differences in the earnings of farms not to appear in the personal incomes of the workers in violation of socialist principles of distribution?

1 *Agricultural Statistical Pocket Book,* 1974, p. 256. (In Hungarian)

2 See Dr. József Takács: "The Large Agricultural Concerns..." in: *Hungarian Statistical Review,* 11–12, 1974. (In Hungarian)

3 *Agricultural Statistical Pocket Book,* 1974, p. 246.

This contradiction could be completely solved only by abolishing cooperative property and by putting an end to the workers' direct interest in the income of the farm. But the experience of the collectivized agricultures of Eastern Europe shows that the most important stimulus of rational and profitable cooperative activity is precisely the direct material interest of the workers.

When the state intervenes, however, it is able to reduce this contradiction and keep within socially acceptable limits the differences in personal incomes of the workers of particular cooperative farms, by withholding cooperative incomes to varying degrees and channeling part of them back during the redistribution of national income.

This problem has been partially solved. Following the reform, economic growth gathered speed, and earnings from collective farming also rose, but in such a way that the differentiation of earnings did not increase but rather diminished in spite of the growing differentiation of cooperative production and income.

In respect of either daily or yearly earnings, the average wages paid increase with the rise in the level of production. Yearly earnings according to the cooperatives' production level are more differentiated than daily wages because the amount of yearly earnings are determined by the extent of employment as well. Therefore, the wages paid for unit labour (for a ten-hour workday) and the extent of the cooperative member's employment together determine yearly earnings. And it is a fact that in farms with a higher production standard (with better management) more use is made of the labour of cooperative members.

But what we are interested in first of all is the trend of daily wages. This is what shows most clearly—provided that in the groups including a great number of cooperatives with similar production patterns the composition of labour (according to complexity, intensity, etc.) is not markedly different—that the members of producers' cooperatives receive wages differing in amount for equal work according to the production standards of their respective farms.

On a five-year average the differences between daily wages are considerable: wages are 40 to 70 per cent higher in one quarter of the cooperatives with an above-average production level than in another quarter of the cooperatives where the level of production is below average.

In the six years following the introduction of the reform the differences did not increase but decreased, though only to a limited degree. The rise in wages was faster in the weak producers' cooperatives than in the well functioning ones. This was due to the fact that the personal incomes of

the members of cooperatives of a lower than average level were supplemented by the state in part out of the incomes withheld, to a far greater measure than before, from cooperatives on a higher level.

But the state, if it wishes to promote growth, has to regulate personal financial interest in such a way that better or worse management of the cooperatives is automatically reflected in the wages. Yet, to find this measure and to apply it steadily is difficult indeed, as the economic history of the socialist countries demonstrates. This is why it is practically inevitable that certain cyclic phenomena should appear in economic policy. This is particularly visible in agricultural policy in such a way that what comes to the fore is now the producers' financial interest, now principles denouncing profiteering and a programme of distribution according to work. This in part constitutes the background of the recurring debates and contentions which appear as trends also in the Communist parties.

(To be continued)

THE 1526 MOHÁCS DISASTER

by

FERENC SZAKÁLY

For a hundred and fifty years in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the middle part of Hungary, the Great Plain and parts of Transdanubia were subjected to a brutal Turkish economic, political and military régime. When the Turks were expelled towards the end of the seventeenth century, most of the once populous and thriving Hungarian countryside had turned into waste and marshland. One-tenth at most of the medieval towns and villages survived until liberation. The areas of the Hungarian Kingdom ruled by the House of Habsburg (unoccupied Western and Northern Hungary) and the Principality of Transylvania dependent upon, but not occupied by, the Turks were also hard hit by the Turkish presence. Wars, particularly the fifteen-year war between the Habsburgs and the Turks (1593–1606), caused tremendous damage there. Even in times of peace the population had much to suffer from the marauding Turks looting and burning, blackmailing burghers and peasants into paying tribute. Under Turkish domination and in its wake Hungary not only lost the possible natural population increase but the population also dropped in absolute figures way below the four million mark of the late Middle Ages, although great numbers of Serbs moved from the Balkans into the occupied territories. Hungarians by race were subjected to the worst blood-letting, since it was they who lived in the most seriously afflicted territories, also providing the bulk of the fighting men. I could continue endlessly listing the serious consequences of Turkish domination, but I do not wish to give rise to the impression that Turkish rule alone has to be blamed for Hungary's economic and social underdevelopment of the East-Central European type in comparison to development in countries of Western Europe.

The roots of events go back in some form to the Mohács disaster on August 29, 1526, and to its consequences in weeks and months that followed.

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The young Sultan Suleiman I started on the 1,000-kilometre-long road from Constantinople to Hungary on April 23, 1526. His army, not counting a multitude of camp-followers, numbered 60,000 to 70,000 disciplined soldiers accustomed to hardships and victory. This was the army that in 1514 had brought to heel Persia, and had subjugated Syria and Egypt between 1515 and 1517. In 1522 it had taken Rhodes, the fortress of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John that many thought impregnable. The Osmanli host included artillery the fire-power of which had decided more than one battle, as well as the Janissaries, those Christian boys whom subject races had been forced to supply, and who had been brought up tough, fanatic Muslims and soldiers of the Sultan.

This formidable host wound its way through Balkan passes for two months and a half until it reached the River Száva, the southern boundary of the Kingdom of Hungary. But the minds of Hungarian leaders and the nobility were at the time occupied not by rumours of foreign wars, but by the controversies preliminary to the Diet scheduled for April 24. The national assembly foundered in the mud of personal invective and party quarrels, and the issue of national defence was not even brought up until the last day. Then on May 9 the Estates nevertheless hurried through a series of defence measures: as the papal nuncio, Antonio Burgio, pertinently remarked in his report to the Holy See, "they built a host of castles in the air [...], one or another of which would need a whole Diet to be completed".

On June 30 foraging and reconnoitring Turks reached the Száva, and there was no Hungarian army to meet them. Archbishop Pál Tomori of Kalocsa, Captain-General of Lower Hungary, had urged in vain that all strategic points along the Száva be somehow fortified, which would help delay the Turks. The Hungarian armies were supposed to assemble at the market town of Tolna on the Danube by July 2. The appointed date was long gone when the camp was still wholly empty. King Louis II (1516–1526) set a bad example by temporizing. He said he was unable to go to war lacking the money to recruit household troops, whereupon members of the Royal Council and foreign envoys decided to raise the necessary sum, and the Pope allowed the churches to turn silver and gold plate to coin. The nobility, as usual, waited for the king to join the campaign in the middle

Suleiman II. Part of an engraving by Peter Koeck van Aelst, showing the Sultan's entourage. (16th century)

of July, they were not willing to defend the Száva line under the command of the palatine.

Since the king and the magnates, in Archbishop Tomori's words, "had not even their horses shoed", in June and in the first half of July the southern marches were guarded only by his handful of battle-scarred veterans, about 2,000 of them, and Bali Bey of Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade) could throw a bridge across the Száva without let or hindrance. When, between July 2 and 4, the Rumelian army led by the Grand Vizier Ibrahim crossed the Száva, the superior numbers forced even Tomori to retreat to the left bank of the Danube behind Pétervárad.

Thus the Sultan's host moving northwards along the Danube could go about besieging the boundary fortresses in its way without having to face the coming of relief troops. Still the ill-equipped and meagre garrisons of Pétervárad and Újlak, resisting for 17 and 8 days respectively, considerably slowed down the Turkish advance. Left to their own devices, however, they could not hold out long enough to allow the total military force of the country to assemble and be joined by the slowly arriving foreign reinforcements. It was even more out of the question that skirmishing in the southern marches could have delayed the Turks till October 26 when they customarily retired to winter quarters. Between August 15 and 19 the Turks threw a pontoon-bridge across the Dráva which was also left undefended by the Hungarians. A spy then, the Sultan's diary reports, brought news that "as soon as you will have crossed the Dráva, you will meet the wicked king at the fifth station".

The "wicked king", Louis II, left Buda with his small force on July 20. He moved forward at a painfully slow speed, waiting for the mounted troops of the lords temporal and spiritual and the levy of the nobility to join him. He encamped at Tolna on August 6. Since, however, it appeared that the country was not right for mounted knights in armour, he proceeded southwards on the 14th in the direction of Mohács. In the meantime he had ordered the Palatine István Báthori to take his men to the Dráva, trying to stop the Turks crossing the river. But those assembled at Mohács insisted that they would only follow the king.

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Up to July 16 Archbishop Tomori supported the defenders of Pétervárad with gun-fire from the opposite bank. He soon came to realize, however, that he could not relieve the fortress by himself, so he crossed the Danube. However, he did not lead his troops to the Mohács camp but, together with Péter Perényi, Lord Lieutenant of Temes, hurried to the defence of

the Dráva line. When it appeared that the Turks already had a bridgehead on the left bank, Archbishop Tomori and his 6,000 men, settled in a waggon camp in the marshes of the Krassó river. Between August 20 and 26 he kept disturbing the foragers swarming ahead of the main body of the Osmanli army. His troops were determined to defend the last natural barrier, even at the cost of their lives, but the council of war decided that both Tomori and Perényi should join the Mohács camp.

On August 27 the Sultan, still unhindered though not without difficulty, reached the left bank of the Krassó, and from August 26 his raiders constantly swarmed around the Mohács camp. On the 28th it was proclaimed in the Turkish camp: "Rest day today, fighting tomorrow! On your guard! Be prepared! Early in the morning, when the trumpet calls be all fully armed!" (The Sultan's diary.) Next morning, at about five o'clock, "the entire victorious army, mounting their horses, got under way, and at a slow pace, now stopping now moving, arrived at Mohács, before the camp of the good-for-nothing infidels, at about two o'clock in the afternoon. The Grand Vizier with the Rumelian army took up a position in front, and the Sultan behind them with the Anatolian troops, the mercenaries of the Porte and the Janissaries. The [...] infidels fired a few cannon-balls, one of which dropped on the right flank; and they stood, arranged in several fighting lines, before their camp. On our side there was quiet. The time had not yet come, and man and beast were tired. When it was decided that the fighting should start the next morning: at the time of the afternoon prayer [at about four o'clock], the [...] infidels suddenly started to move in our direction."

When the Turkish army reached the edge of the terrace closing off the Mohács field from the south, the Hungarian army had already for about nine to ten hours been waiting in battle array. The Hungarian host of altogether 26,000 men was divided into two battle formations. Most of the knights in armour that were meant to be decisive and the bulk of the nearly 15,000 foreign mercenary foot soldiers were arranged in the first battle formation. Archbishop Tomori extended the line as far as he could since he was afraid that the Turks, superior in numbers, would outflank his forces. The right flank was under the command of Ferenc Batthyány, the Banus of Croatia, the left flank was commanded by the Lord Lieutenant of Temes, Péter Perényi. The foot soldiers held the centre. The king took his place in the second battle formation surrounded by high state and church dignitaries with their household troops. A division of 1,000 cuirassiers took a stand behind the king with some light horse and foot soldiers on both sides.

When the Rumelian army descended the terrace and was about to

encamp, Tomori ordered the right flank to attack. Batthyány's men, according to Suleiman's diary, "covered with iron from top to toe, iron pikes in hand, heedless of the hammering bullets and cannon-balls, galloped without showing the least signs of fear towards Ibrahim Pasha, the Beglerbey of Rumelia. Since they had not formed battle lines yet, the Rumelian army was unable to resist, and some of them ran towards the ruler. The other troop attacked the son of Yahya Pasha and the Bey of Bosnia and broke their battle formation."

However, Batthyány's horse and the foot soldiers following soon found themselves faced by the Turkish ordnance and the Janissaries behind it. The cannons fired over their heads, but the Janissary volleys did all the more damage to the crosswise moving horse and the foot soldiers attacking over a broad front. "The Janissary division charged three or four times, firing their musquets, and tried to drive back the [...] infidels", is noted in the Sultan's diary.

The assault on the right flank having died down meant that the battle was decided. Péter Perényi, in command of the left flank, found himself confronted with the Anatolian horse, which had appeared in the rear of the Rumelians and then swept to the right. He was only able to break up the front lines. The Asian horsemen soon pushed back Perényi's troops, whereupon Tomori sent part of the second battle formation also in support of the left flank. ("And the wicked king, with the rest of his wretched soldiery, rushed at the august ruler and the Anatolian army," the Sultan's diary notes.) Practically nothing is known about the details of the attack by the second battle formation. It is certain, however, that in a short time this force must have suffered complete defeat, hardly any of the high dignitaries managing to escape. The struggle lasted longest in front of the ordnance. There the foot soldiers left to themselves fought for their lives until they were almost completely destroyed in the uneven struggle.

The battle of Mohács lasted altogether one hour and a half to two hours.

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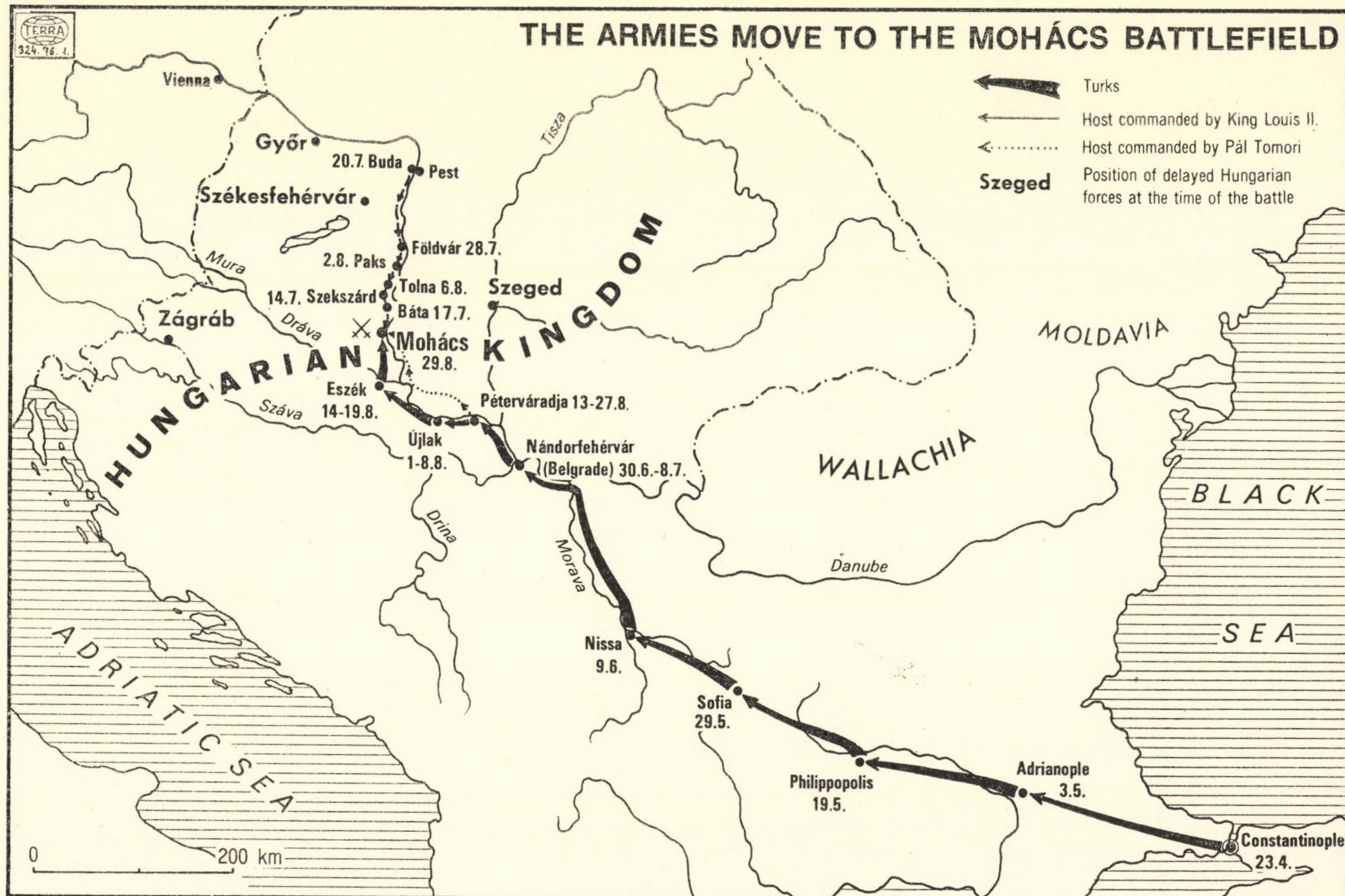
After a few days' rest the Sultan, with his armies, headed north, and on September 11 he arrived in Buda, the defenceless capital of the Hungarian kings, without meeting with any resistance. After a stay of two weeks in Buda, on September 25, Suleiman started for home following a route between the rivers Danube and Tisza. Meanwhile his foragers had burnt and looted the greater part of Transdanubia and then the territory east of Pest, up to Eger. Only a few walled cities and fortresses heroically defended by those who took refuge there could avoid total destruction.



TERRA 324.76.1.

After the battle of Mohács two Hungarian armies, ready for battle, were left. They had both made for the royal camp at Mohács, but neither got there on time. As late as September 1 Kristóf Frangepán still waited in Zágráb for the Croats to assemble there, and the nearly 15,000-strong army of János Szapolyai, *vajda** of Transylvania, was stationed in the Szeged area. Hearing the news of the defeat at Mohács the two captains reacted quite differently. Frangepán, with his five hundred horsemen, immediately headed for Transdanubia, to save what he could. He arrived late, but his appearance created a scare in the Turkish camp of Buda. Szapolyai's raiders also chipped bits here and there from the troops of Grand Vizier Ibrahim which had parted from the main body of the Sultan's army and were marching south in the direction of Szeged. The main body of Szapolyai's army, however, looked on idly, from across the river, how the Turks pillaged the area between the Danube and the Tisza.

The Turks in Buda then returning southwards suffered their heaviest losses not at the hands of those whose task and duty it would have been to fight them, but from fleeing peasants who had rallied here and there. The king had ordered in vain, from March onward, the mobilization of one-fifth, one half and then the whole of the peasantry, the peasants came to the camps in small numbers. But when they assembled spontaneously, chased by the Sultan's army, they sold their lives all the more dearly. A fleeing host of about 20,000 men which had retired to a waggon camp at Pilismarót, NW of Buda, twice repulsed Turkish attacks on September 13 and 14, and the Sultan, on September 15, ordered 6,000 Janissaries and 10,000 horse against them and had their encampment destroyed by artillery fire. The Turks put to flight strong peasant forces also in the Mátra Mountains (September 28) and at Bács (September 30). The strongest of all was the entrenched camp of peasants which the Sultan's army chanced upon in the marshland between Bács and Pétervárad on October 2. This can be inferred from the fact that a large number of Turkish commanders were killed in a pitched battle fought against peasants. There are indications that the number of those killed in mopping up such camps of fugitives far surpassed, on both sides, the losses in life suffered in the battle of Mohács itself.

Hungary paid a tremendous price for the defeat at Mohács. Louis II, King of Hungary and Bohemia, barely twenty years old, fleeing for his life, fell off his horse in a marshy brook and was drowned. Also killed in action were seven church dignitaries—including Captain-General Archbishop

* *vajda*, administrative and military head of the province of Transylvania.

Pál Tomori of Kalocsa and Archbishop László Szalkai of Esztergom, the Chancellor of the realm—and a number of magnates. Wherever the Turks moved before or after the battle, their road was lined with hundreds of burnt-out villages and thousands of dead left unburied. The retreating Turks drove with them tens of thousands prisoners to the slave markets of the empire. The envoy of Venice reported to the Signoria as late as 1528 that in Sarajevo one could buy any number of Hungarian slaves and any amount of silverware and other treasures looted in Hungary. A cautious estimate makes us suppose that in 1526 the country lost all in all nearly 200,000 of its inhabitants. More than during all the Turkish wars taken together. But the disaster that befell Hungary was far too serious to be expressed in figures. In 1526, the independent and sovereign Hungarian state was overcome and fell to pieces.

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The royal Hungarian army had been defeated by Turks before 1526. This had happened whenever Hungarians joined battle with the Sultan's army in level country. The Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg, King of Hungary, at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396, and the Regent János Hunyadi at the battles of Várna in 1444 and the Kosovo Polje in 1448 were put to flight. A king of Hungary had been killed in battle (Wladislaw I Jagiello at Várna in 1444). All these battles however, some comparable to the disaster of Mohács in human losses, had happened far from Hungary, in the Balkan Peninsula. It was clear that the Hungarians were unable to contain the Turkish advance through the Balkans. These defeats only indirectly affected life at home, and so it was easier to avert the consequences. They were defeats suffered by the army, not by the country. 1526 was the first time that the Sultan himself entered the territory of Hungary, defeated the royal forces there, freely ravaged and pillaged for weeks right in the centre of the country, and—last but not least—was given the possibility of remaining master of its greater part, including the royal residence, Buda.

The Sultan did make use of the chances offered by the changed situation. True, he had retired from the greater part of the areas which his armies had reached and which hardly anybody could, at the time, have prevented him from holding. But he left garrisons posted in all fortresses of Southern Hungary (Pétervárad, Titel, Újlak, etc.) which his forces had taken before the battle of Mohács. The territory the Turks occupied in 1526 was only a small percentage of the entire area of medieval Hungary. Yet, just this small area was the key to the defence against the Turks and at the same time to the military situation in Hungary. By seizing it the Turks expelled

Hungarian defence forces from all those natural strategic lines (the Danube, the Száva and the Dráva) along which new border fortresses could have been erected to replace those lost to the Turk. Without such a line of defence, the Osmanli forces were able in a few days to move forward unimpeded to Buda, the heart of the country.

They could do so all the more easily since the remainder of the country was split into two halves which fought each other for fifteen years. On November 5, 1526, the greater part of the Hungarian nobility elected János Szapolyai, vajda of Transylvania, to be king and on December 16 a smaller group elected the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand of Habsburg, the later Holy Roman Emperor, who by then had already succeeded Louis II as king of Bohemia, to be king of Hungary. This latter election was a merely formal act. In virtue of the treaties of 1505 and 1515 between the Houses of Habsburg and Jagiello, the Habsburgs regarded themselves as the legitimate successors to the Hungarian throne, even if not a single Hungarian magnate had given the business constitutional sanction. Since the Turks had occupied further positions in the territory of Hungary and thus made it clear that they left the vanquished country to itself only for a time, the defence of their hereditary territories did not allow the House of Habsburg to give up certain Hungarian territories, or the Hungarian throne as the only way to legitimize such possession.

Both before and after 1526 the eastern policies of the Habsburgs were determined by the safety of the Austrian hereditary provinces. Before 1526 the Hungarian state which, since the death of King Matthias Corvinus, though independent, was in many respects under Habsburg influence, fulfilled this task automatically, for the most part at its own expense. When the defeat at Mohács, however, made it obvious that Hungary could no longer defend itself, the Habsburgs could not tolerate any other ruler on the Hungarian throne, whatever the guarantees he might have offered. They could easily tell that such a ruler would be unable to hold up a new Turkish attack and would soon become the puppet of the Porte. And that is just what happened to the government and the "country" of King János Szapolyai after 1527 onward.

All this had as a consequence that already in the year of the Mohács disaster Hungary fell *de facto* and *de jure* into three pieces; what was to change in the coming years and decades was not the 1526 arrangement but the relative proportions of the three parts. The Turks gradually occupied the middle third of Hungary (Buda fell in 1541), the House of Habsburg acquired the northern and western parts of the country and King János's state, dependent on the Turks, was succeeded by the Principality of

An armed Hungarian crossbowman. From a coat of arms granted by King Matthias Corvinus to the sons of Jakab Bothfalvi Both in 1460.

Transylvania which was autonomous but, though unoccupied, more or less dependent on the Turks.

With the fall of the Hungarian state the walls came down which separated the two greatest military powers of the region, the Habsburgs and the Ottoman empire, and which had so far prevented a direct conflict between them. The struggle between Habsburg and the Turk went on in a singular manner from 1526 to 1541. The Sultan's army made several attempts to take Vienna (1529, 1532). The Habsburg armies launched no offensive operations against the Turks (except the Slavonian campaign in 1537) but endeavoured to force King János, who enjoyed Turkish aid, to retreat to an ever smaller territory. All this, however, did not in the least alter the fact that Hungary, a belligerent party, became a theatre of war—and was to remain so for a hundred and fifty years. The Hungarian armed forces which had survived the defeat at Mohács acted all the time as auxiliary troops in the direct clashes that took place between the two great powers after 1541. Having been one of the greatest and strongest political and military factors in Central and Eastern Europe, Hungary came to be "an area of fortified marches" between the two world powers, a realm of destruction. And this process dated back directly to the 1526 campaign.

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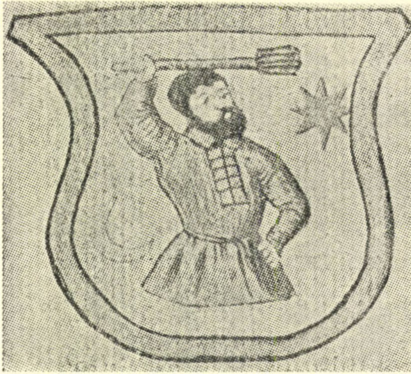
The defeat in the battle of Mohács was, and is still today, perhaps more vividly than any other event of the Middle Ages or the Turkish period, kept alive in the collective memory of Hungarians. Though it cannot be said that the decisive import of that event was immediately recognized by contemporaries, as reflected in memoirs, historical documents and scholarly works on history which appeared one after another in the sixteenth century. (True, in general they contain few value judgements.) On the contrary: the ensuing frequent ordeals—Suleiman I's recurrent campaigns in Hungary (1529, 1532, 1541, 1543, 1566), the fall of Buda and the surrender of a whole series of Hungar-



A Hungarian nobleman with a mace. From a coat of arms granted by Louis II to Ferenc Krasznai Pándi in 1526

ian fortresses (from 1541 onward)—seemed to efface a little the great significance of the Mohács disaster.

What apparently most touched contemporaries, and the following generations, was the fate of the king in the battle of Mohács. The only Hungarian eye-witness report on the battle, *De conflictu Hungarorum cum Turcis ad Mohatz verissima descriptio* (Cracow, 1527), by Chancellor István Brodarics, Bishop of Syrmium (1470–1539), was meant as a reply to the charges advanced by an Austrian humanist, Johannes Cuspinianus, who had averred that the king's tragic death had been caused by the carelessness of the Hungarians. It is also characteristic that court chaplain György Szerémi (b. about 1490, d. after 1548), who had a penchant for contemporary gossip, added to his "Letter on the destruction of Hungary" (*Epistola de perditione regni Hungarorum*, about 1545) a special appendix to relate the—by the way unfounded—rumours spread about the king's assassination.

But the death of the king made the Mohács battlefield interesting to those foreign travellers who found their way into this part of the occupied country and visited the battlefield. Stephan Gerlach, a German parson, travelled down the Danube in the company of David Ungnad, an imperial envoy. On June 26, 1573, Gerlach noted in his diary: "Before long we came to the country town of Mohács; since we had some spare time, His Excellency and I went by coach to the place a good half mile away, where the last king who had resided in Hungary [the Habsburg rulers have their residence in Vienna], Louis, and his thirty-five thousand men had joined battle with three hundred thousand Turks, were defeated and perished. This field is now partly wasteland, partly ploughland. When we were there we saw ears of corn. One can still see the gun emplacements, where the dead were buried. [. . .] Then we looked at the place where King Louis, fleeing after the battle, rode across the swamp and died in the water, or rather was drowned. He was already past the swamp, but his horse fell, and so he died. This was shown to us by an old Hungarian who came with us and who had also been there at the time of the battle." The memory of King Louis prompted also an English surgeon, Edward Brown, to visit the field of

Mohács in 1669. "... then to Mohacz," he wrote. "Before we came to this place, we passed by a small Bridge over the Brook Curasse; which, upon great raines, over-floweth the Neighbour parts; near which Ludovicus the unfortunate King of Hungary perished, being stifled in a muddy place, where his Horse plunged, after the Battel fought with the forces of Solyman, on the other side of the Town."

The defeat at Mohács was rarely mentioned, even parabolically, in the historico-religious philosophical writings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Hungarian writers of the Reformation period, who saw, and made people see, in the Turkish occupation and devastation a visitation of God for the sins of the country, found sufficient examples to prove their point in contemporary events without going back to events long past. The lessons inherent in the defeat were first evoked by the poet and warrior Miklós Zrínyi* (1620–1664) who fought the Turks, in order to use them, like other historic parables, as edifying cautionary tales of the Turk-afflicted Hungarians of his own time.

To the Hungarians, who day after day had to suffer from the Turkish presence in Hungary, the battle of Mohács could only serve as a counter-paradigm. Not because of the fact of defeat, for Zrínyi, in his most impressive epic, *A szigeti veszedelem* (The Disaster at Sziget), evoked as an inspiring example a defeat—the resistance and glorious death of his great-grandfather at Szigetvár (1566), but because Mohács proved an inglorious defeat. The interpretation of the battle of Mohács could undergo radical change only at a time when not only the battle as such but the whole Turkish era, were things long past.

The Mohács image was given a new interpretation by the Reform Period of the early nineteenth century, when the best writers and statesmen together joined in an endeavour to get the country, living under Habsburg rule and burdened with obsolete feudal survivals, to awake to a national consciousness and to embark on the path of bourgeois progress. They drew encouragement from the fact that even after the tragedy and catastrophe of Mohács the Hungarian nation could rise to its feet again. To increase contrast effect they conjured up, with the image of "the graveyard of our national existence" and "the burial ground running red with the blood of heroes".

This mournful, romantic and in many respects anachronistic Mohács image owed much to the elegy "Mohács" by Károly Kisfaludy (1788–1830), who had initiated and defined the re-interpretation. It left an almost indelible mark on the way Hungarians learnt to see their past. This view

* On Zrínyi see also the notice of the performance of Dezső Keresztury's play on p. 192.

was fought to no great effect by the greatest Hungarian poet of the *fin de siècle*, Endre Ady (1877–1919), who argued that the country complacently asleep in the mire of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy needed another Mohács.* Historical scholarship as well has since raised its not so penetrating voice in vain against the one-sidednesses of the conventional Mohács image.

Not that historians did much to overcome the one-sided and anachronistic emotional effect. Hungarian historiography long ago turned the Mohács defeat into a landmark, largely because it saw in the House of Habsburg's rise to power the beginning of decisive changes, without, however, devoting particular attention to analysing the event and its circumstances. Even later it confined itself to seeking the cause of the fall of the Hungarian state in the mistakes and sins of the men of the period. This narrow approach was placed in the proper international context only in the work of the ablest historians.

It is conspicuous how little the Hungarian historians have had to say about the battle itself, its preliminaries and consequences. It is typical that the last piece of research on the subject working from the sources appeared fifty years ago, on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the Mohács disaster (*Mohács Emlékkönyv* [Mohács Memorial Volume], Budapest, 1926). These weak spots came up more emphatically about ten years ago in the clash of arguments that followed the publication of István Nemeskürty's essay *Ez történt Mohács után* (This is what Happened after Mohács)** (1966, and reprinted twice within ten years).

Nemeskürty's passionate plea looks into the options left after Mohács was lost. He cannot convince, me at least, that the alternatives he presents were those with which the men who lived and acted at the time, and had to make the decisions, were faced, but he did arrest the attention of the general public, and forced historians to reconsider all the open questions, doing additional research where necessary. The storm raised by Nemeskürty has not died down in ten years. The debate soon spilled over to cover most of the essential questions of the medieval Hungarian state, what Hungary could and did do in the Turkish period, and of the relationship between the public and historiography as well.

*

What historians today are, of course, interested in in the first place are the causes of defeat and of the sudden decline of the Hungarian state.

* The following issues (No. 66 and 67) will include poems by and articles on Ady.

** See Neville C. Masterman's article in No. 36

The all but complete consensus of Hungarian historians in the past blamed the incompetence and weakness of the Royal Court and its advisers, the irresponsibility and quarrelsomeness of the lords temporal and spiritual, and the political immaturity of the lesser nobility. Hungarian politics of the pre-Mohács years and decades present a depressingly gloomy picture, especially compared with the times of the highly competent Renaissance king, Matthias Corvinus (1458–1490), whose realm at certain periods included not only Hungary, but also Silesia and Moravia as well as parts of Lower Austria and Styria. The politicking society of the reign of the Jagiello dynasty in Hungary (1490–1526) only squandered and dissipated the legacy of the great king: the centralized state apparatus, organized system of taxation (which in good years had produced a revenue of as many as a million florins) and the standing army of foreign mercenaries. It cannot be disputed that the uncertain, haphazard and divided management of affairs lost many a position that could still have been saved.

It is sufficient to refer to the immediate antecedents of the campaign of 1526, the diplomatic blunder of 1520. A state of peace had prevailed for many years between Hungary and the Ottoman empire which did not stop local skirmishes or Turkish raids in Southern Hungary, but which at least kept the Sultan's army off the European theatre of war. After ascending the throne in 1520, Sultan Soliman I hurriedly sent his emissaries to the Hungarian court to renew the peace as was usual when there was a new head of state. The Hungarian court, however, misled by the Pope's plan to start a new crusade, took the Turkish envoy prisoner and rejected the peace offer. It did this without being in any way prepared for the war it thus provoked. As a consequence, the Turkish armies in 1521 took the fortresses of Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade) and Szabács, thus destroying the centre of the line of fortresses along the Hungarian border. In the following years the Hungarian government tried in vain to renew negotiations: Soliman had discovered the weakness of Hungary and resolved to force the issue.

Direct Turkish–Hungarian clashes began, after sporadic skirmishes, in the early 1390s, after the armies of Serbia and her allies had been defeated at Kosovo Polje on St. Vitus Day, 1389, and the Turk had extended his influence over most of the central Balkans. From that time onwards, apart from a brief period between 1402 and 1415, the Turks were the major threat to the Kingdom of Hungary, determining the country's foreign and domestic policies, and influencing social and economic development as such.

At the start of the struggle, the Kingdom of Hungary including Croatia covered an area (*c.* 300,000 sq.km.) barely smaller than that of the Ottoman

The Castle of Klis (Clissa), at the southern end of the Hungarian line of fortifications. Copper engraving by Dominicus Custos, end of 16th century.

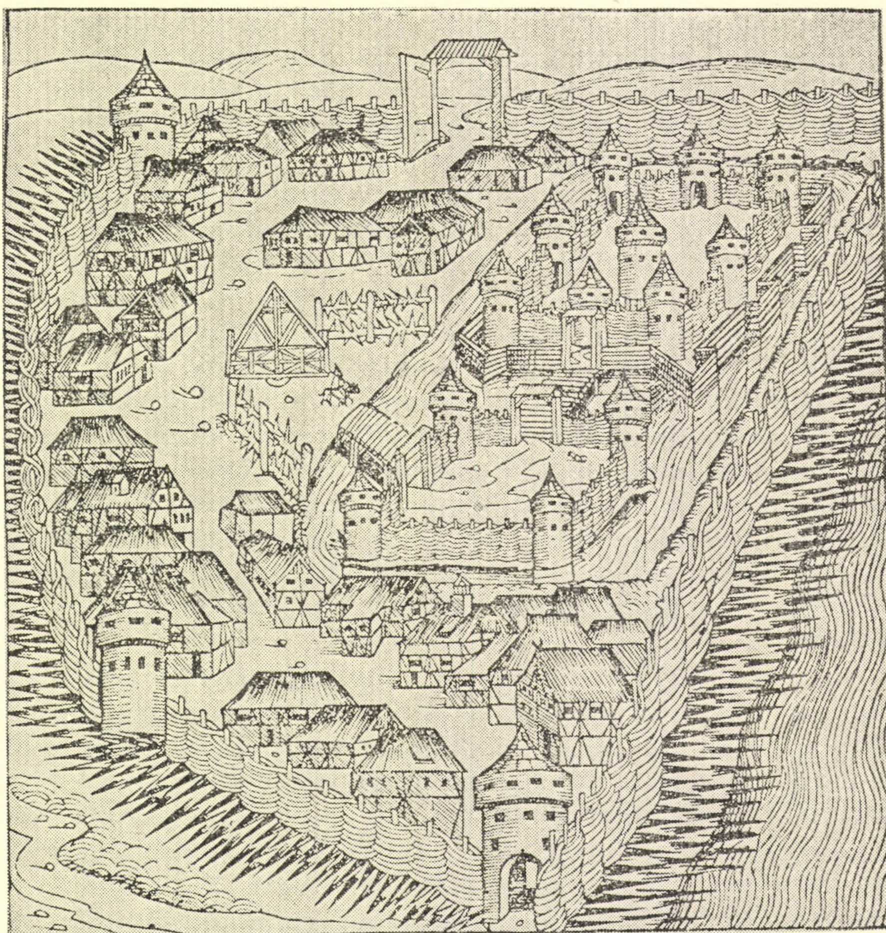
empire, far surpassing the latter in economic and social development. Yet at the very beginning the Hungarian army was at a disadvantage. This was clearly manifested in the successive Turkish inroads made on Southern Hungary after 1389. And also by the fact that already at the very first major collision, in the battle of Nicopolis in 1396, Sultan Bayazet I could decisively defeat Sigismund of Luxemburg's powerful army of crusaders, although his own men had just returned hurriedly from the Asian theatre of war.

Turkish military successes were, paradoxically, due to the relative social and economic backwardness of the country. In contrast to the European states which were disunited and without a powerful striking force just in consequence of their development, in the Ottoman empire all power and landed property was concentrated in the hands of despotic sultans who could thus easily subordinate the interests of the whole of society to the interests of an army practically identical with the state. Consequently they

possessed a force that had greater strength, was more homogeneous and more quickly mobilizable than the armies they were confronted with in Europe. Their advance was greatly facilitated also by the fact that the states on the Balkans, representing the most backward variety of European feudalism, put up very feeble armed resistance.

Hungary, which represented a sort of respectable mediocrity within the totality of European feudalism, already offered substantially fiercer resistance. The Hungarian government realized in good time that it could best serve the defence of its country be trying to contain the Turkish advance already on the Balkans. Eventually it failed in this endeavour. The Balkan countries came successively, and for the most part entirely, under Turkish rule. It already counted as a big success that King Matthias Corvinus, in 1463, could compel Sultan Mohammed II to share with him the possession of Bosnia. In addition to the resistance of the Balkan countries and to the internal problems of the Ottoman empire, it is maybe decisively due to this Hungarian effort at self-defence that it did after all take the Turks a hundred and ten years to annex the Balkan area. (The Turks obtained their first base in Europe, Gallipoli, in 1353 and occupied the last major Balkan state, Bosnia, in 1463.)

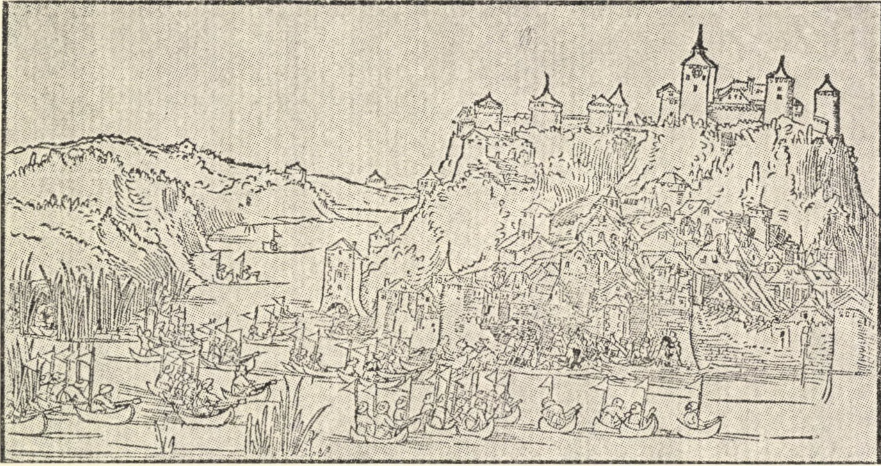
The Hungarian defensive forces were gradually pushed back to the southern frontiers of the country. Here stood the organized frontier defences which could preserve the territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Hungary for another fifty years following the Turkish annexation of the Balkans. The building of the frontier defences had been started by King Sigismund who, by a treaty in 1427, obtained for Hungary the key to the defence of the Central Danube plain, the fortress of Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade) and a series of other fortifications. The work of organization was completed by King Matthias. Under his reign the Hungarian–Croatian border fortress system consisted of two lines. The first started from the Walachian frontier (Severin) and ran through Belgrade, Szabács (Šabac) and Jajca to Clissa on the Adriatic coast. The second line running parallel extended from Temesvár through Pétervárad and Bihač to Senj also on the seacoast. In the intermediate part between the two fortress lines the kings of Hungary settled a large number of Serbian refugees, who did frontier-guard duty in return for land grants and tax exemptions. These frontier defences were intended to stop the inroads of Turkish raiders, and the Hungarian armies set out from there to devastate the occupied territories. The greatest military successes of Hungary in the struggle against the Turk are connected with the defence of this system of boundary fortresses. The Sultan himself twice had to withdraw empty-handed from under the



The fortress of Szabács (Šabac). A woodcut from Schedel's Weltchronik, *1493*

walls of Belgrade, and several sieges were repelled also by the Hungarian boundary fortress of Jajce, the one-time royal residence of Bosnia.

At the same time, however, the maintenance of the system of boundary fortresses, the payment of their garrisons of about 10,000 men, consumed even in years of peace two-thirds to three-quarters of the revenues of the Hungarian Treasury. These were steadily diminishing just in consequence of the Turkish ravages, and that though the walls of the fortresses were seldom repaired, their equipment was barely improved, and the garrisons were irregularly paid. The country had inevitably to break under the burden it bore beyond its means. Particularly characteristic of Hungarian

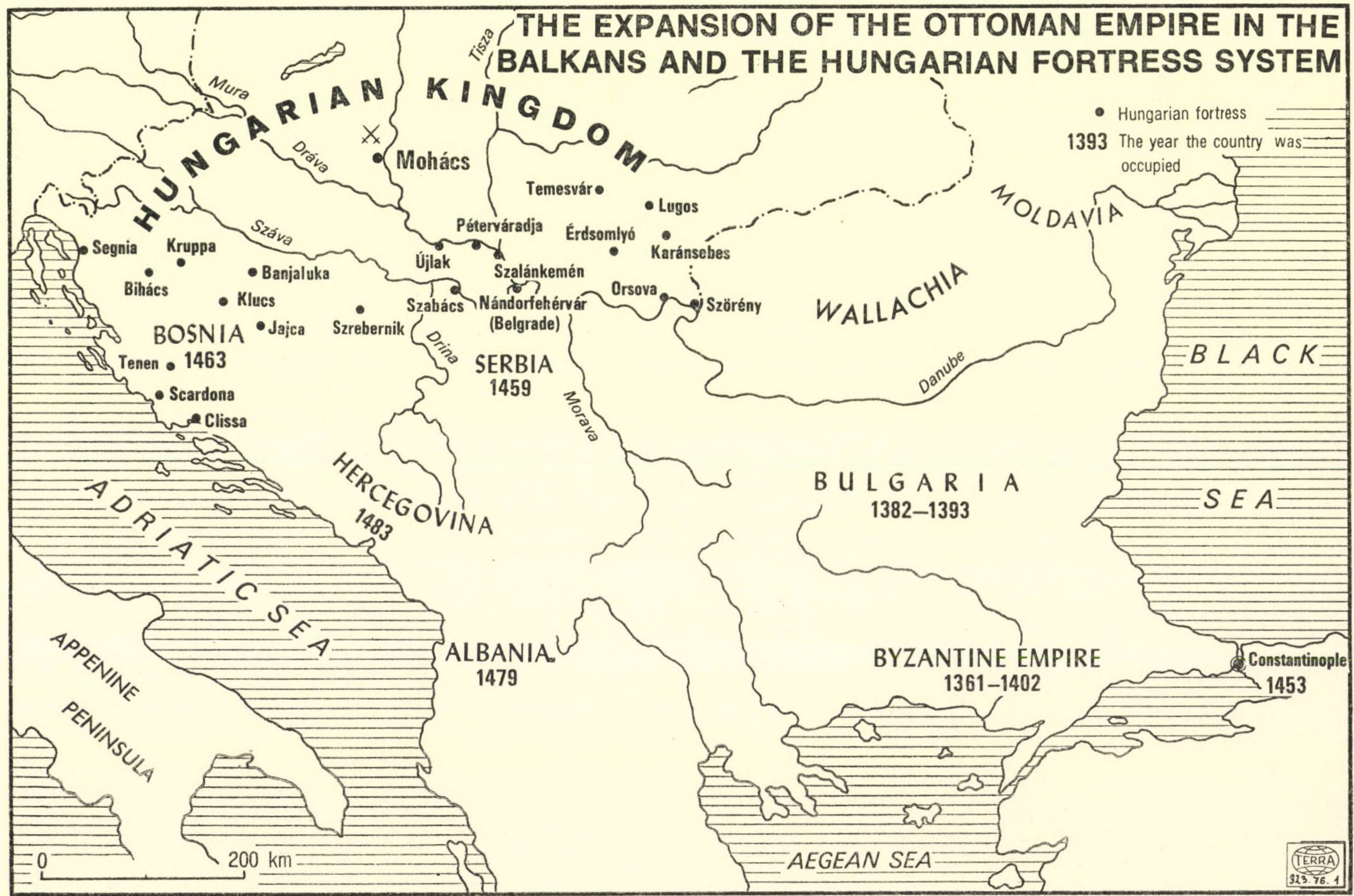


The siege of Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade) in 1521. Woodcut by an unknown master.

economic life was the lack of floating capital most badly needed for the maintenance of the defences. Under such circumstances it was out of the question for the Hungarian court to keep a numerous mobile standing army of mercenaries under arms. Yet, failing this, the boundary fortress system itself could not function effectively, for the besieged fortresses without the aid of relief troops could hold out only for a short time. The great innovator, King Matthias, had organized a formidable mobile army of mercenaries, but just in the interest of its maintenance, his entire foreign policy was entangled in a vicious circle. Since the country could not by itself maintain this mobile army, it had to venture on conquests in the West, but these drew its army away from the southern area of war.

Turkish pressure increased generation after generation. At the time Mohammed II died (1481) the territory of the empire covered 870,111 sq.kms. and during the reign of his grandson, Selim I (1512–1520), it grew to one and a half million square kilometres with a population of over twelve million. The revenue of the Sultan's treasury in 1525 amounted to four million gold florins, twenty times the revenue of the Hungarian treasury at the time. No one could therefore doubt that the pressure of this mammoth empire would sooner or later break the resistance of Hungary and, should it come to open conflict, the Turks would easily come out on top.

This was so particularly since changes, shifts unfavourable to Hungary, occurred also in international affairs. At the start of the Turkish–Hungarian struggle all Europe was in a way concerned about the new conqueror who had appeared in its south-eastern regions, and seriously contemplated the


THE EXPANSION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN THE BALKANS AND THE HUNGARIAN FORTRESS SYSTEM
Hungarian fortress
1393 The year the country was occupied
HUNGARIAN KINGDOM
Mura
Dráva
Száva
Tisza
Mohács
Temesvár
Lugos
Péterváradja
Érdsomlyó
Karánsebes
Segnia
Kruppa
Bihács
Banjaluka
Klucs
Újlak
Szalánkemén
Szabács
Nándorfehérvár
(Belgrade)
Orsova
Szörény
Jajca
Szrebernik
BOSNIA
1463
Tenen
Scardona
Clissa
Drina
SERBIA
1459
Morava
MOLDAVIA
WALLACHIA
Danube
BLACK SEA
HERCEGOVINA
1483
BULGARIA
1382–1393
ADRIATIC SEA
ALBANIA
1479
BYZANTINE EMPIRE
1361–1402
Constantinople
1453
APPENINE PENINSULA
AEGEAN SEA
0
200 km
TERRA

launching of a crusade. But the Ottoman empire, a former public enemy, gradually and simultaneously with its advance, became a participant, a partner, a factor in the political skirmishes in Europe—first as a potential and then as an effective ally of certain countries. The political physiognomy of the Europe of the early sixteenth century was determined by the armed rivalry between France and the still Spain-centred Habsburg empire. Involved in this struggle, Europe was already less and less concerned with what happened on the secondary theatre of war in Central Europe, with what fate awaited a Hungary already broken by the fighting.

So the papal nuncio, Antonio Burgio, could then, already before the start of the Turkish attack, easily predict the fate of Hungary. "Your Holiness should be prepared," he reported to the Holy See on January 18, 1526, "that this country will be unable to defend itself and will come out of the war as the enemy will please [...] The most they may do is join battle once, but they will be defeated all the same; for they have not a single fortified position where to lay their heads, to regain their breath and wait for the aid of other Christian princes. But even if they did have such a fortress, where could they expect relief to come from?"

The defeat at Mohács was the decisive point at the end of a Turkish-Hungarian struggle that has lasted without interruption for a hundred years. That it happened then and there as it did was, of course, the working of chance. Chance, however, was determined by what was necessary and inevitable.

MEMORIAL ON THE MOHÁCS BATTLEFIELD

The idea of a memorial at Mohács, on the field where the Turks routed the Hungarians in 1526, in a battle that lived on in the consciousness of the nation as the cause and symbol of much that was hardest to bear in the centuries that followed was first mooted in the autumn of 1959 by László Papp, an archeologist, who started excavations at the site of battle, in the fields of the village of Nagynyárád. Within a year his work led to the discovery of the until then unknown mass graves of Mohács. The discovery created a stir, attracting large crowds that made excavation difficult. It was only natural that the fallen should be commemorated.

An article published at the time tells that "The Council of Mohács planned to erect a monument in the town to serve as an ossuary. The people, however, asked that the dead be left in peace. Let them stay in the battle-field. They proposed instead that a memorial made of glass should be erected over the common graves, so that passers-by should see them in the very place where they sacrificed their lives for this land."

In the meantime László Papp continued his lonely search for the exact location of the battle. In the absence of an up-to-date archaeological apparatus, however the search yielded less and less as is evidenced by the fragmentary finds as well. When Papp died work itself was suspended, and continuation had to await the 450th anniversary of the battle when the movement of earth on the site of a projected memorial brought to the surface—in addition to the two already known common graves—three additional ones. The result: five mass graves and a historical memorial with 20,000 Hungarian dead.

The memorial surrounds the re-buried graves. György Vadász the architect means it to stay what it is—a burial ground. It is, however, not easy to determine what such an artificially created graveyard should be like. At all events, the designer acted with common sense. He envisaged the place on the analogy of beautiful cemeteries, equipping it with all the required accessories. Thus the ensemble is not lacking a finely wrought gate of monumental proportions, the work of the smith József Pölöskei. There is a memorial pavilion, a fountain, and a stone rose by the sculptor Gyula Illés, evoking Hungary torn into three parts after the defeat of Mohács. The traditional ornaments of a cemetery are there, trees and flowers are present; in short, green vegetation, which is waiting for the most part as newly planted seedlings to grow to full proportions. And the whole conception is crowned by a forest of spear-like grave-posts, like those of old Hungarian Calvinist churchyards. They are the work of Pál Kő, József Király, Sándor Kiss and István Szabó Jr.

*

King Louis II of Hungary and Bohemia
(By an unknown master; Brussels, Musée des Beaux-Arts)

János Szapolyai, King of Hungary. Gold forint, 1540

Courtesy National Museum and Széchényi Library

Ferdinand I King of Hungary and Bohemia, Holy Roman Emperor
(Copper engraving by Barthel Beheim, 1531)

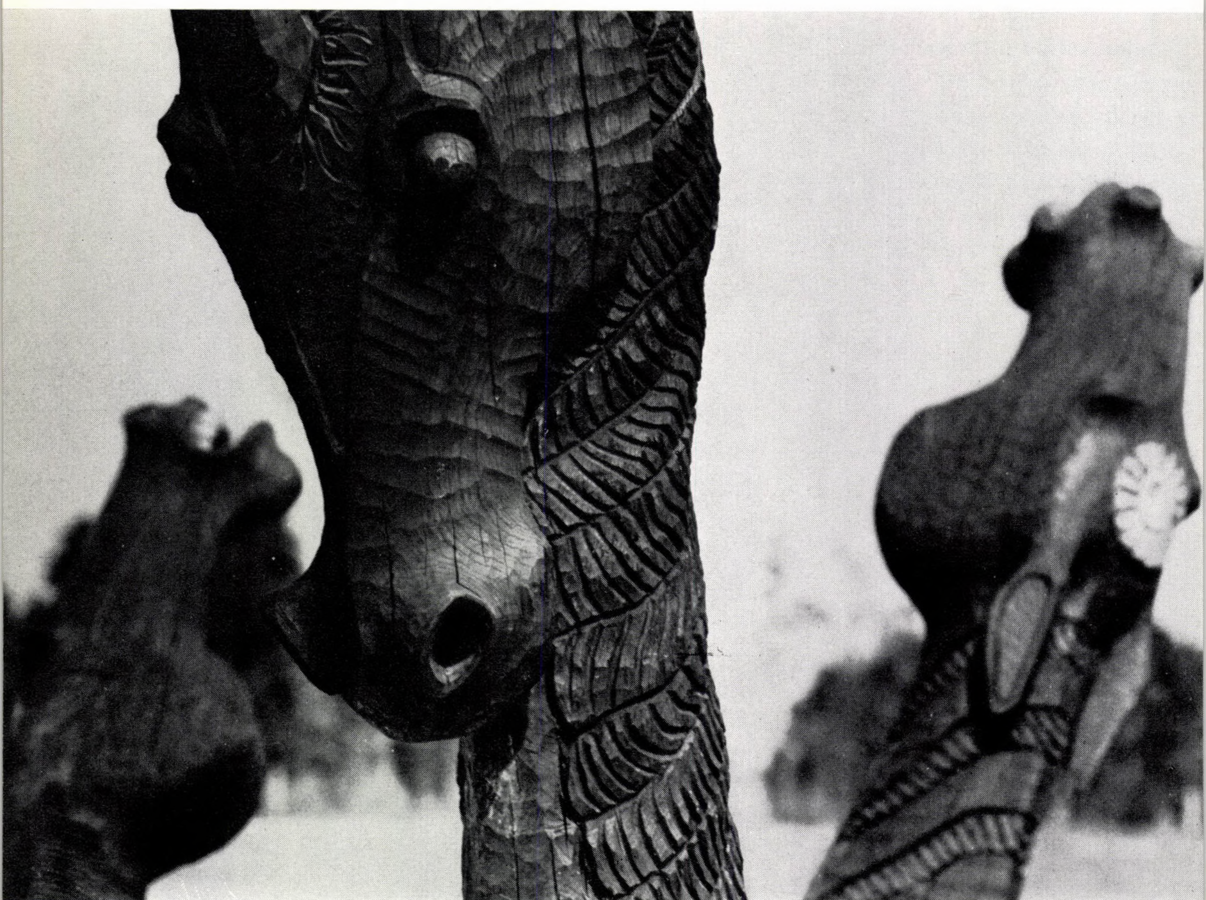
PROXIMVS·A·SVMMO·FERDNANDVS·CAESARE·CARLO
REX·ROMANORVM·SIC·TVLIT·ORA·GENAS
AET · SVAE · XXIX
ANN · M · D · XXXI

A 1506 coat of arms granted by Wladislaw II to János Dombay and László Palásthy, showing a Turk and a Hungarian in close combat

A 1448 coat of arms granted to Péter Berekszói by János Hunyadi, the Regent, showing an armoured soldier with a double-edged broadsword

◀ *Part of the memorial field: Wooden statues: Crossbow by Pál Kő (4.50 m) Louis II by Pál Kő (height 1.20 m and base 3.30 m) in the background Dorottya Kanizsai arranging for the burial of the dead, by Géza Samu (6 m)*

Pál Kő: Soliman II (detail; coloured wood. The figure is 8 m high, the head 1.80 m)

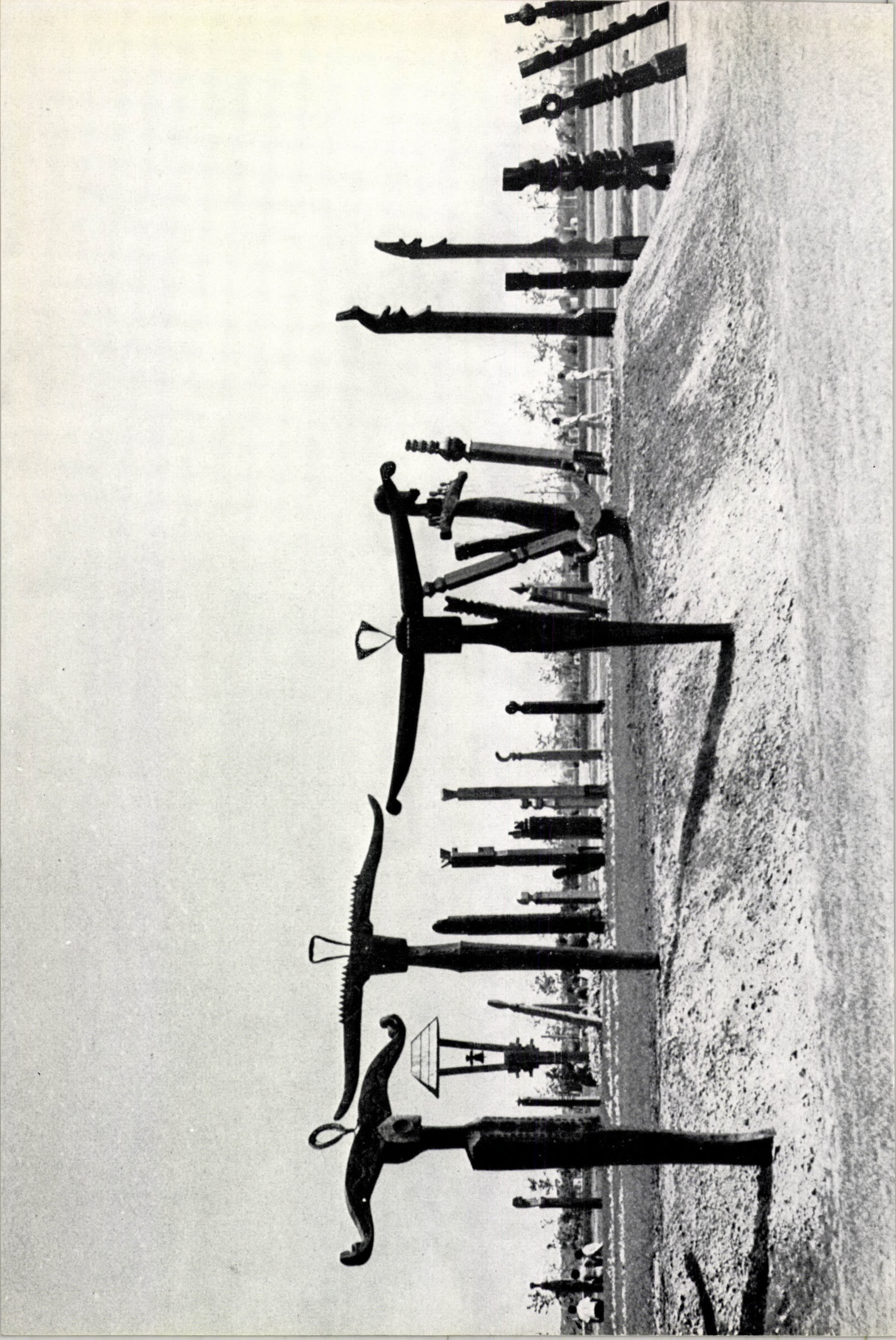


Pál Kő: Gravemarks of battle steeds (coloured wood, 3 m)

Pál Kő: Archbishop Pál Tomori (coloured wood, 1.20 m plus 3.30 base) ▶

Part of the memorial: In the forderground Crossbow Passion (painted wood and metal) by Pál Kő, in the background a campanile and headposts by Sándor Kiss, at the right headposts by József Király ▶▶

Photos Tamás B. Farkas



The first impression of the visitor to the graveyard is not the best. We step off the chestnut-lined road and find ourselves face to face with the enormous portal, which strangely floats in space, almost without a function, and, like the head of an infant, it is disproportionate in relation to the modest body. All the more so, because for the time being it finds no sufficient counterweight either in the saplings or the memorial pavilion, and even less so in the inner area, forming a terraced hollow towards the middle. The gate itself is an interestingly designed and finely executed piece along with its stone-frame and trellis-work, soldered out of thousands of metallic rodlets. Its style is in keeping with that of the memorial pavilion; the same, somewhat austere, idea is expressed. Yet, we are looking in vain for the same harmony if we compare the introductory part, carrying so much architectural emphasis, with the forest of grave-posts, which constitutes the core of the memorial. It is difficult to detect any relationship between the sepulchral signs, heterogeneous even in themselves, and the architectural framework.

The presence of the wooden grave-posts and the wood-carvings patterned after them raises other problems as well. First of all a doubt as to chronology. What right have they here, being centuries younger than the event memorialized and centuries older than the age that raises the memorial. And what, one might ask, is their function and composition? What is the function of scores of sepulchral signs, arranged—it seems—without any apparent idea, when the memorial, in fact, settles around five clearly circumscribed common graves.

Add that the works of four sculptors, selected pretty much at random, quarrel with each other. They are different in quality, in conception and carving technique.

The most important work of the four is by Pál Kő. It is certainly worth a visit. He entered into the spirit of the centuries-old events. Nothing is easier than that, for everyone has access to the documents, to the work of historians, to their recent agitated controversies as to the classics of Hungarian literature that made those events their theme or subject. What should an artist do then but leap from this diving-board and quote some of the most memorable lines written by great poets.

*

All this, however, is just a beginning, as the figures of King Louis II and Archbishop Tomori, in their placing, are a prologue. A figural-realistic, easy warm-up for a start towards deeper planes, where motifs that can still be captured in their objective concreteness, the old weapons, harness-straps, shields and musical instrument-shapes sweep in an interesting way beyond themselves, filling up with sensations and images—so hard to mould into words—of a bygone world whose memory they symbolize.

That this transcending sweep, this transformation of meaning, can take place at all is the result not of the objective material of motifs but the artistic "transcription", the artistic "reorchestration". In some places it facilitates—or necessitates—minor, in others, major re-shaping. In the case of the cross-bows, for example, little is needed; the outstretched arms of the folk-art decorated, cross-evoking form are highly effective in themselves as are the maces driven in the ground. The same, however, could not be said of the figures carrying round shields, where it is the extraordinary superimposition of the human figure and the instrument-like form that prepares for the most poetic formulation of this type, the minstrel-figure christened wind-harp.

The mythical, surrealistic transformation of the elements of reality finds its artistic buttress in the juicy details of the carving, the vivid figuration of the execution, in the tender calligraphy of the manes of the horses, the ornamental and figural inlays, which enrich the representation on the basis of the principle of the "image within the image".

The forcefulness and "reticence" of these details, the spicy folk-like quality of their shaping, stand out in an instructive manner against the more strident and more extrinsic tone of the stylization of the other sculptors.

When all is said and done, Pál Kő's work is devoid of any kind of unpleasant didacticism, and of all abstract allegory. The horse-heads reaching out obliquely from the ground, neighing skywards more unequivocally represent the Passion of Mohács than any *recherché* visual sign leading along the road flanked by them and through the cross-bow-Golgotha to the grisly head of the idol-tree named Suleiman. Suspended on the belt of the turbaned tyrant are triumphal trophies, cut-off Hungarian heads. The grisly, sanguinary rite, held in celebration of victory, is evoked, whose details are described by contemporary Turkish sources. The head, skewered on a spear, of Archbishop Pál Tomori was in front of the Sultan's tent. Two thousand Hungarian prisoners in fetters were led to the place of execution "to make them the preys of glittering swords and sparkling poniards". In the meantime the triumphant drums rolled, and at the order of the Sultan "three great cupolas were piled" using the cut-off heads of the executed Hungarians.

Zoltán Nagy

LAJOS KASSÁK

POEMS

Translated by Edwin Morgan

IN THE SCALES

Béla Bartók

Let us say something of the composer too.
See him on the platform in his evening-dress
and in the street with his hat off
as he strolls in the early sunshine.

Thin as a fishbone
white as a lily
but seated at the piano he becomes a Dragon
he jangles, cries, and sometimes barks
till the sky darkens and house-walls collapse.

By no means that real-life figure
who could stand in front of children to teach them
their manners and their duties to mother and father.
Only in his dreams is his face turned towards us
only a music-maker never asking us
if we were there at the Elevation of the Host.

Every day he crosses the borders of good and evil
sometimes bringing a bouquet in his hand
from the place where fire is embers and
virgins vanish and soldiers die.
No one would credit he is that singular man
the angel's fiery sword hunted from Paradise.

Yet there's no doubt, he must be that Satan who
strolls with his hat off, or seated at the piano
jangles, cries, and sometimes barks so fearfully
that the sky darkens and house-walls collapse.

BRITTEN'S SYMPHONY

How godless this music is and how prodigious.
A seated group yonder are hunting sharks bats a screeching crone a freak
a camel-child an occasional angel a lost ichthyosaur a dragon's fang a rhinoceros
across the scorched meadow under a sky's rain of atomic ash.
Some score-transcriber got your heart in his hands tinkers with your nerves.
Not for you recollections of your rosy childhood sweet fruits soft
breeze fishes frisking up from the river the moon on the top of the tower
that kept watch for you.
Are you the one who foresuffers for us all weeps blood in terror not
pity's tears in silver.
You a huge strength crushed in vain by millstones are standing here again
ready for the road but you didn't know
which way leads East and which way West.
Music you compose under nocturnal broodings wings
and oh how godless this music is and how it speaks of disasters.

THE FACTORY

Mammoth expanse
engineering combine hot and cold insatiable growling with terrible
sounds like an
elephant-herd.
My ex-stamping-ground
is today a stream of the past fouled by soot and oil.
All praise to your tireless folk
deep in materials and tools
who are given to rebelling
for the sake of bread
snatched from the iron
from pitiless machines
from the cash-drawer.

Generations of curses
have blackened its gates and walls.
Its gargantuan chimneys feed
smoke to passing clouds.

In that place
no flower
no bird.
It's a landscape
only men can bear.

My ex-stamping-ground
wellhead of my feelings my protests
I never left you entirely behind.
I have still no gold-rimmed glasses
no white collar no black bow tie
I still don't gawp at shop-fronts
vibrating with lace panties and blood-red nail-varnishes.
My glance
keeps your unmistakable laws.

You still live in my
shaky lung my
ten fingers the curve
of my bent back
and my 1500 poems
born in my heart
flowering red-and-black.

Often I turn as I go
and see
with opened eyes with serener eyes
I see
you are no longer
stone and iron monster.
You wash yourself in waves of light
and dry yourself with cloths of smiling.
You vomit your dirt out
like a sated dirt-eater
and you switch on the lamps
and you make beds for those that need them.

You are not now
quite so pitiless
not now so damned.
When workers enter you

they are not braced for torments
nor are those who leave you ready to run from the world.

My shoulder on a pillar I watch
the streets lie down in front of them
the houses give them shelter.

TERRIBLE BEAUTY

Was a man
and they stretched him on a cross.

Everyone found something else to look at
but each daybreak
on his dead right arm
a golden oriole
whistled to itself
heard far off.

THE ABERFAN TRAGEDY

Mrs England
true miner's wife
went to the main office
handed in the report with 1500 signatures
petition to protect them
against the mountains of slag
looming over schools
and miners' houses
2,000,000 black
crumbling tons.

Mr Jackson director
knowing how the shares false tax-returns
lie sleeping celestial dreams
in their sealed iron safe
made comforting noises
and Mrs England
went back under the shadow of the slag-mountain.

Fine autumn days followed.

Then one morning just when the teachers
were up on the platform calling the register
the black slag-mountain shuddered
groaned
howled
like ruthless last-day trumpets
like gunshot aimed at the heart of the earth.

The mountain disrupted
black tatters and slurry
slithered down
into the valley
onto schools
thick with children
onto houses
of cards
collapsed in the mud.

The sky was overcast,
the air poisonous with sulphur.

Neighbourhood rescue groups came
soldiers firemen army doctors
and miners
fathers mothers
shrieking for their children
who vanished in that hell
250 gone.

Mr Morris was there too
pensioner of a few days
100 percent silicosis
in his 70th year.

Propped on his stick
he stood without speaking
without moving
and as he went away
his thought was
he too had better
get on with dying.

CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY

by

TIBOR HUSZÁR

Part II

5

The question arises: what are the characteristic criteria of socialist communities at the present stage of social development? What communities function in Hungary today or what are the organizations that contain the possibility of becoming socialist communities? What is the basis (production organization, settlement, political organization, educational institution, house of culture) from which new and lasting socialist communities can be developed, communities that strengthen the socialist character of Hungarian society once they are integrated into a system?

Following Makarenko contemporary sociological and educational literature emphasizes the following characteristic of a socialist community:

a. The community is a group with its members keeping in touch with one another within a system of constant and personal relations;

b. the community recognizes the sovereignty of the community as a whole as against individual members; the socialist community is built on the principle of giving priority to community interests;

c. the socialist community is not one created by Nature, it cannot be based on enforced union; it recognizes the individual's right to become a member of the community as he wishes, but as long as he is a member, he must subordinate himself to the sovereignty of the community;

d. the socialist community unites members in the pursuit of socialist objectives and activities beneficial for society as a whole.

The formation and consolidation of socialist communities take a long time. Preconditions are that leaders should rely on the initiative of the working people and reckon with the identity and divergence of their interests; leadership should implement the decisions of national bodies and the interests of society as a whole, with the participation of the masses and their organizations; the law should provide for autonomous action.

In the course of history socialist societies have had to take a roundabout route on a number of occasions. What happened in 1917 was the product of a broad stream of revolutionary democratism: the Soviets consisted of worker, peasant and soldier delegates, the newly established soviets and the party and Komsomol organizations were not only the institutions of the new power but they were also communities developing at a dynamic rate. According to Makarenko the practice of these revolutionary communities was formulated into a principle, an inspiration for educational practice.

The Russian socialist revolution regarded itself as the opening stage of a world revolution. The working-class movements in the West, however, showed themselves im-

potent at the decisive moment. Thus the Russian revolution was left alone for decades. During that period the dictatorial elements of the dictatorship of the proletariat were unavoidably stressed, the leadership concentrated attention above all on production. The strengthening of centralism ensued from the strategic turn of events. No doubt intensive centralization did not favour the kind of development of socialist communities which is based on initiative.

The victory of the Soviet Union in the Second World War justified this policy. It is also quite evident today that without a country possessing the industry and substantial military potential of the Soviet Union, neither the socialist countries nor the newly independent states established in the wake of the colonial system, would have been able to consolidate their positions. All this does not alter the fact that for decades Soviet society lived in the shadow of the stepped-up tempo it had set itself in an effort to accomplish its targets central decisions were supreme. These features also determined cultural and propaganda activities.

Developments in Hungary in the years following 1948, the "year of the major turn", show a number of similarities.

Decisions made centrally gave birth to new movements, the leaders were appointed by higher authorities; they were, as a rule, "guest executives". The question is whether what was inevitable in the Soviet Union, a country in a state of siege and isolation, was necessary in the people's democracies of Eastern Europe, in which industrialization was carried out under much more favourable conditions. In any case facts remain facts: initiative could be activated again only in the last ten years and the building of socialist communities once again emerged as a burning issue only recently.

It is impossible to plan new communal institutions in an arbitrary fashion. Provided conditions are favourable they grow out of existing organizational forms; they are modified and produce new forms by themselves only gradually.

This is what Péter Veres the writer had to say a few years ago: "One or more million people in a city are not a community, nor can groups of four or five playing cards, or drinking together be regarded as one. In our society engaged in socialist construction basic communities meeting the requirements of collectivism have not as yet been established in adequate numbers.

"What can serve as such a basic community? A village as a production community, a plant or workshop as a production community, a profession as a professional community, the staff and students of a school as a teaching and student community, and so on. I have said in many of my writings that real communities cannot be created in the absence of functional inner democracy. If a host of people work together, it does not necessarily mean they are a community. Their spirit, soul, thinking or taste can turn them into that, to put it briefly, moral cohesion. Some of the socialist brigades and farmers' cooperatives already serve as good examples."

What Péter Veres there says is to the point. There are almost one and a half million members of socialist brigades in Hungary today. It is the production organization however that offers the most comprehensive possibility for building a community. According to June 1970 figures, the farmers' cooperatives had over 1,038,000, the consumers' cooperatives 186,000 and the industrial cooperatives 233,000 members. Place in social production and the identity of living condition and interests pave the way for brigades in the plants and cooperatives to become socialist communities. At the same time these brigades may well become important vehicles of culture and education.

The classes and study groups at schools and in the higher educational institutions also rally hundreds of thousands. Potentially, every class at a primary or secondary school or a study group at a university or college is

a community, and if they fail to become one this will make things difficult for building communities in other areas of life as well. If a feeling of responsibility for the community and habits of communal action fail to be established in one's youth, the communal form of existence will hardly, if at all, become an inherent necessity later on.

A total of 9,102 amateur dramatic and art groups are active in different houses of culture run by the local councils, trade unions and the armed forces. They rally approximately 180,000 young people. There are over 6,000 clubs for the dissemination of scientific knowledge and their membership exceeds the 160,000 mark. In addition, there are vast numbers of people attending numerous clubs and societies catering to hobbies and pastimes run by 169 cultural centres and 812 houses of a culture. 4,381 organizations and clubs deal with sports. No doubt all these cultural organizations and sporting clubs can serve as a basis for a wide variety of communities.

Apart from the great many associations, societies, institutions, clubs and brigades listed above which rally large numbers, there are several other potential communities. It is sufficient to mention in this connection professional clubs operating under the auspices of the Association of Learned Societies, the Patriotic People's Front and the Association for the Dissemination of Knowledge. Besides organizations that have their own statutes there are quite a few informal communities as well such as closely-knit groups of friends, not to mention groups of young people looking for a place to meet, some of which sometimes go astray in the absence of elevated objectives.

One might well ask: if statistically such a wide variety of institutionalized and informal communities, or at least organizations that may potentially become communities, are detectable, why do we speak of the building of socialist communities as a task that has to be tackled, and why are so many people convinced that in recent years, the number of existing communities has declined in our society and that community spirit has grown weaker.

The decrease in the number of amateur groups in themselves is no explanation for these views becoming so widespread. The point is that the need for quality is being stressed. The reform of the system of economic management rendered not only relations of interests more sensible, but has also shown up pseudo-solutions. There is no doubt, however, that at the same time certain symptoms of a withdrawal into the private sphere have also grown stronger in the contradictory form discussed in the introductory part of this paper. Yet the demand for a more meaningful life is the most important element. Considerable sections of our society have now reached the stage of realizing that material goods alone do not produce happiness. The desire for a more meaningful life placed the meaning of socialist values and objectives in the renewal of the way of life into the focus of attention in a novel manner. That is why a large section of society is dissatisfied with the present community forms.

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Some hold that the need for community life depends on age, that it is inherent only in young people. Young adults with a family of their own relax within the bosom of their family, getting away from the troubles of their workaday existence. The old on the other hand prefer to spend their time in the clubs and in common rooms of the houses of culture. These *ad hoc* loose groups cannot be termed communities because of the lack of a common objective and collective activities; their get-togethers are confined, as a rule, to conversation.

According to this supposition the need for community in characteristic of a specific age-group. This is impossible to deny, especially if community is identified with

a definite type of community: I mean the group of young people that plan collectively virtually every moment of their leisure, and very close community ties that sometimes substitute for a home. The suspension of existential worries and oblivious drifting are characteristic features of such groups. This state, which in most cases is financed by parents, is typical of young people in the first place. It is a form of existence, however, which is only one possible variation of community ties. The socialist community covers areas of action and human relations connected with the essence of social relations of the socialist society, and as such its range and validity cannot be reduced to one or another age-group, to common amusement, or to collective recreation.

The community is not identical with a small group. Not only because not every small group is a community but also because community is used to denote forms of more universal social intercourse as well. The picture of the community outlined above identifies community essentially with communities such as boy scouts, or youth clubs, whose objects are different but in respect of their group structure there are similarities. Historically speaking, the lasting formations of the community that actually determined the way of life of tens or hundreds of thousands of people served as a framework for production organization as against communities devoted to leisure. The historical "exception" is the bourgeois society that came to be atomized for reasons of capitalist production leading to the disintegration of production communities.

At the present stage of development it must be made absolutely clear that lasting and organic communities capable of acting simultaneously as the framework for performing collective labour, acquiring culture or spending time off usefully can only be developed from production organizations. It will naturally be beneficial for socialist thinking of an ever increasing number of political organizations or self-governing bodies such as the local village council or institutions of public culture, like youth clubs or amateur drama societies, develop the community spirit and responsibility for one another in their members. Only the communities of industrial plants and the farmers' cooperatives, or in a broader sense, those of the institutions and production organizations serving the purpose of social reproduction, are capable of realizing the social character of ownership in our day-to-day activities, making it possible for producers to dominate their own social conditions in their own limited sphere as a first step, then bringing them under their own control.

It is one of the fundamental goals of the socialist policy of access to culture to assist working people in the development and possession of their own production potential. The term: production potential is used in the widest possible sense including the social relations under which production, or in a broader sense, the reproduction of society takes place.

In this connection the possibilities open to the socialist brigades and cooperatives should be discussed in detail.

Over one and a half million people today are members of socialist brigades. This is the very form offering favourable conditions for the coming into being of the communities. The declared objective of the socialist brigade movement is to work, live and learn in a socialist manner, a programme that is all inclusive and comprehensive. Examinations carried out by the Research Institute of the Trade Unions and other institutions bear evidence to the effect that this policy is implemented in a one-sided manner and that the socialist brigade serves, for the moment, as a framework for the organization of socialist emulation rather than as a community renewing the way and form of life and re-structuring the people's objectives and scale of values.

By historical standards the socialist brigade movement is of fairly recent origin.

The first socialist brigades were established in 1959 and the overwhelming majority look back to only a few years. It is therefore quite understandable that the movement is still trying to find its identity. What gives rise to uneasy feelings is that certain enterprise managers and bodies concerned with management are satisfied with the present form of the movement. They fail to analyse the causes lying behind the existing formalism, and do not assess the diversity and magnitude of the coordination of the efforts necessary for carrying out the designed objectives.

By what standards then is the work of the socialist brigades evaluated?

The fulfilment of the plans and the coordination of the objectives of the brigade movement are some of the conditions necessary for turning the brigades into communities of people acting for common goals and enabling the socialist production organization to become the framework of this community. One-sided concentration merely on production, ignoring the other objectives of the brigade or handling them in an indifferent manner, can lead the movement into a dead-end. The labour performance can be measured and remunerated, while the activities or work of another nature are often difficult to survey and measure. The measurability of production targets makes everyone, including management and brigade members, inclined to focus attention on production. The objective that the members of the socialist brigades wish to work in a socialist manner is considered to be achieved provided plans are fulfilled and the brigades participate in socialist emulation. It follows from the concentration on production that the brigades are only too often reorganized in the interest of instrumental objectives relating to production. In the course of the reshuffle only demands raised by the different technologies are taken into consideration. The fact that overtime done under the label of voluntary work accounts for too high a figure as compared to all the other activities undertaken is an additional indication of this one-sided emphasis.

The objective of "working in a socialist manner", however, cannot be reduced to the accomplishment of programmes contained in enterprise decisions. The socialist element is ensured by the worker's attitude of being the master. It is his institutionally guaranteed possibility and right to be informed about the matters of his own enterprise and to have a say in decisions that are connected with working conditions. The rapidly changing technical parameters, the enormous amount of information necessary for successful market research and a host of other technological and economic conditions make it impossible to include all those employed by an enterprise in the determination of the profile of production, the selection of the types of goods to be manufactured, and so on. However, a plant is not only a production unit but it is also a social organization, in other words, the organizational framework of specific human relations and social contacts.

Every worker who is familiar with the work has his own opinion on the character of human relations. In a number of plants, however, these opinions are not voiced no platform being provided for the purpose. In principle, what are termed production meetings are designed to serve this end. However workers unaccustomed to speaking in public are reluctant to stand up in front of large gatherings, sometimes of many hundreds of people. Meetings held by the socialist brigades would, therefore, be a more adequate place for a free exchange of views. Sociological research has shown that despite the government and party resolutions to this effect certain enterprise managers do not attach importance to this function of socialist brigades. If the opinion of the brigade as a community and the worker as its member is not asked for, and neither the brigade nor its members are informed about the preparation of enterprise decisions

on social policy, or if their opinion is ignored when it comes to allocating the cultural funds, or distributing the homes built by the enterprise, and in the course of the elaboration of decisions on matters of labour safety and social policy, how can they see themselves as masters and how can they identify themselves with the objectives set by the enterprise? To have a say on social policy, however, is only the minimum goal. Quite a few socialist brigades, especially those in which members have been working alongside one another for a longer period, that is those recruited from the cadre of old hands of the enterprise, are qualified to make known their mature views, voicing their opinions on certain essential questions such as the allocation of work, its rhythm and pace, the wages scale and the selection of foremen and shop stewards, jobs that require no specific professional knowledge. Another area in which socialist brigades can play an important role is that of the drawing up of collective agreements and their control from time to time.

It goes without saying that they must be adequately informed in order to express a responsible position on the questions outlined above. Sociologists of the Research Institute of the Trade Unions carried out a survey of the workers' "information level" in the foundry of the Danube Metal Works. It is not representative of all the workers of the plant, but the answer supplied by 637 people serve as a highly instructive point of orientation.

The replies to the question whether or not the opinion of the members of the socialist brigades is taken into account directly or indirectly when decisions are taken on matters of social policy show the following pattern.

If the survey is anything to go by it is not the workers' demand for information that is negligible. Quite the contrary: there is high tension between the workers' demand for information and the extent to which they are actually kept informed.

*Participation of socialist brigade members in decision making**

In making these decisions members of the socialist brigade	as a percentage of those interviewed
do not take part	32.0
take part through the brigade leader	32.8
take part through the trade union meeting	36.4
The management listens to and is familiar with the views of socialist brigade members but decides alone	23.3
The workers and the enterprise management take joint decisions	6.7

* *Those interviewed could pick two alternatives*

So far as the collective agreements concluded by the management and workers are concerned, only 20.7 per cent of those interviewed hold that the views of the socialist brigade members were taken into account in the course of the elaboration; 53.7 per cent maintain that these opinions were taken into consideration only partly, while 23.4 per cent say that no heed whatsoever was paid to the proposals put forward by the members of the socialist brigades. Consequently, the socialist brigades draw the tacit conclusion that in contrast to the intentions of the government and the higher party bodies, the managers need only the work they perform but they do not wish to include them in the management of the company, or they only pay lip service to this principle.

The fact alone that the management is "production orientated" and as such they look on the worker primarily as part of the labour force does not accord with the ideal

picture of a socialist manager. Today, however, attitudes are determined by interest relations (at least this applies in practice) stimulating managers to consider short-term prospects, reckoning with their direct interests only to judge each institution and action from the aspect of plan fulfilment. This leads to the formation of a vicious circle in which workers display a passive attitude because the managers are indifferent to their views; the managers, on the other hand, attach only formal importance to keeping workers informed arguing that the workers' attitude is a passive one.

The hands of managers are bound by the interests of their particular industry, deadlines and opportunities limited by regulations governing wages and finances. The party organization is a political organization. This is manifested, first and foremost, in the representation of the interests of society as a whole, but its functions are not confined to this only. It is imperative to directly ensure that power relations prevail in every plant, factory and workshop, the inclusion of the working people in the management of the enterprise and plant must be promoted over the widest possible range. In the web of interests that run counter to one another this objective can only be accomplished through a persistent and patient struggle waged.

Anyone wanting to act as the spokesman of the socialist brigade must be a man of strong character and true to his principles. That is why neither personalities nor ways in which those heading the brigades are chosen are a matter of indifference. According to the charter of the socialist brigades their leaders are elected by members. This is an essential condition for a democratic atmosphere and the moulding of the community. The surveys disclosed, however, that this principle is not adhered to everywhere, since at places the leader of the brigade is simply appointed, or the election is turned into a mere formality the membership finding itself faced by a *fait accompli*. The surveys offer evidence that a "loyal" person ready to compromise is often preferred, a man who is easy to convince about the importance of overtime and the usefulness for the whole of the population of voluntary work. Whether the leader is appointed or elected in harmony with the workers' sense of justice is not indifferent either from the aspect of the atmosphere of the brigade or from the angle of the shaping of the community.

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It seems on the surface that I have deviated from the subject of this paper, that is the part played by communities in access to culture. This is not so. If the socialist brigade, which is taken as a model on which the part played by the socialist community emerging from the production organization is intended to be demonstrated, acts primarily as a factor in organizing emulation and if the demand to work in a socialist manner is confined to the achievement of the plan targets, the other objectives of the brigade—social and cultural—will become merely formal. Provided the socialist brigades are reckoned with as potential communities in the social organization of labour, and importance is also attached to this factor when describing them, and if greater collective control by the factory workers, above all, by the brigade members over their own working conditions is considered to be the brigade's cardinal objective, the other aims of the brigade will assume a much deeper meaning as well. The slogan of working in a socialist manner must mean that workers have something to do with the life and production in the workshop, in the factory as such. Naturally, the roles played by the manager, engineer, foreman and worker are different. The technological division of labour determines them. However, the social division of labour cannot be reduced to the technological division of labour.

A plant is a social organism as well, a system of social relations. The regulation of these relations has a number of non-technological and non-commercial implications and the socialist brigades and their representatives must be reckoned with as a political factor in the operation of the regulators. Only under such conditions can the awareness of responsibility for the whole of socialist society be established and consolidated, with the whole system of intermediaries put into operation.

A similar conclusion must be arrived at if the activities of the socialist brigades are to be interpreted from the angle of access to culture. This calls for thinking and active people and is related to social life as a whole and is one of the principal means of the development of human universality. According to our concepts a cultured man can be defined as one taking a constant and renewed interest in culture and knowledge, a person capable of using the knowledge he or she has acquired in his everyday activities, with fellow men, friends and colleagues.

The socialist brigades can only become the vehicles of access to culture if their activities are carried on in the service of the development of human universality, promoting the presence and absorption of the values of socialist culture in day-to-day activities. In this sense the different elements of the slogan of working, living and learning in a socialist fashion are complementary. If, however, the demand relating to labour is narrowed down to correspond to the logic of technocracy, and the worker is reckoned with merely as part of the labour force, learning and culture will be reduced to the status of incidental elements and universality will become an empty slogan.

The empirical surveys carried out with socialist brigades are most instructive from this angle as well. In the Danube Metal Works a reply was sought to the question of the sort of structure that the collective activities performed by the brigades had assumed beyond the collective accomplishment of the tasks of a production character which are, in essence, confined to activities relating to the fulfilment of plans.

The social work for which the highest number of points are awarded is, as a rule, a specific production project. Participation in political programmes usually means taking part in meetings. Exchange of political views with the managers of the plant and a discussion of problems or doubts, suggestions made in a comradely atmosphere are much less frequent. "Accomplishment" of a cultural character is of a completely subsidiary nature.

Structure of the collective activities by socialist brigade members

Participation in programmes with brigade members over the past three months	zero participation	once	more than once
	(in percentages)		
Number of people interviewed: 637			
excursions	75.7	14.8	9.5
theatrical performances	72.5	19.9	7.6
cinematic performances	62.5	18.6	18.9
lectures disseminating knowledge	56.0	21.4	22.6
visits to members' homes	60.9	18.9	20.2
going to cafeterias, restaurants or having a drink somewhere	38.7	28.7	32.6
voluntary work	8.9	21.5	69.6
political meetings	29.9	27.5	42.6
work done to help others	47.6	23.1	29.3

In the given context particular importance is attached to the position of and part played by the attendance of political pro-

grammes in the collective activities of the brigades and in the aspirations of their members. A survey by the Research Institute of the Trade Unions covering the socialist brigades operating in the Danubia and Telephone Factory collected the following replies to the question of what should be done, in their view, regarding learning and culture:

What should be done in the brigade's view regarding learning and culture?

Number of people interviewed: 360	%
intensification of on the job training	56.0
formal schooling	12.8
increase in the reading of fiction	8.5
urging the reading of dailies	2.5
urging theatre and cinema attendance	6.0
developing the demand for music	0.8
increasing the number of excursions	6.8
no answer	5.3

The recognition of the importance of on the job training is a positive factor in itself. This recognition, however, is not reflected in the number of people applying for extension training, and it is a disquieting phenomenon that training in skills is stressed largely at the expense of interest in public affairs and politics.

The term political knowledge covers not simply the material needed to pass an exam at the end of courses in ideology. Political knowledge is a system of political information, skills and attitudes with the assistance of which experiences gained in everyday life can be interpreted, contradictions are exposed and the right ways of overcoming these contradictions and of social activity are bound. Communities are not born without objectives. This applies even more so to the socialist communities that cannot be established and consolidated if there is no link between the socialist future and day-to-day activities. In the sense political knowledge is sterile if it is divorced from day-to-day activity in the plant and the conscious efforts made by the socialist brigades to play the part of a responsible social factor in the life of the plant. And *vice versa*, this activity cannot be purposeful, dedicated or true to guiding principles if the value of the assets, plan indexes and bonus systems constitute the point of reference.

Continued political and professional training is inseparable from the long-term objectives of communities and individuals. If there is underemployment inside the factory gate of specialists with high and medium qualifications, a phenomenon occurring on a nationwide scale because changes in the centrally planned structure of professions are not adequately coordinated with modifications in the structure of workshops, professional extension training may lead to a rise in the number of disappointed people instead of multiplying the mobile intellectual capital. Or if the workers experience that those making up the power core of the plant are not qualified politically and culturally, the prestige of political courses will inevitably suffer and, as a result, it will be less likely that studying be directly linked with the social processes and with practical needs that determine the day-to-day life of the plant concerned.

The cultural commitments undertaken by socialist brigades envisage collective visits to the theatre and cinema, the circus and concerts. These may also be instrumental in arousing interest in culture or paving the way for the establishment of a diversity of relations including family and friendship ties among the brigade members. In their present form, however, these commitments cannot or can only partly live up to expectations.

Among the host of reasons exercising an influence on the efficiency of cultural commitments formalism and the absence of independent activity should be singled out. The underlying cause of formalism is the separation of the objective of living and amusing oneself in a socialist manner from work and study. In general, the dividing line between working hours and leisure, public life and private life, is too sharp. The quantitative approach that causes considerable damage in this respect as well contributes to the strengthening formalism. The activities of the socialist brigades are evaluated. It is a condition for receiving bonuses that a specific number of points must be scored by every brigade. Points are awarded for the number of trade union members in the brigade, the punctual payment of membership dues, visits to the theatre, cinema, circus shows, museums and exhibitions.

A conversation between members of the Institute of Popular Culture and the leader of a youth club sponsored by the trade unions in the town of Pécs, held in February 1973, is an example of the problematic nature of cultural commitments.

"What happens is that when the commitments are undertaken at the beginning of the year everyone promises to do this and that. Then for months nothing happens; at the end of the year when the time comes to count the points there is a last minute rush, they dash to as many places as possible to get the necessary papers; everyone is ready to sign the documents for them, and when the evalution takes place the conclusion is that the cultural commitments have been lived up to."

"For there's money at stake, after all!"

"Well, that's how it is. They devote a week to dashing to different places. They get cinema and theatre tickets, get the... how do you call it... club register signed by the representative of the Association for the Dissemination of Knowledge. That's what they do, but there is no work behind the documents."

"A sad state of affairs."

"But that's how it goes. As a matter of fact even the management of the plant does not really care. They don't care, because output is all that's important to them."

At the same time the quantitative approach is completely indifferent to the type of performance the workers go to see, or the kind of book they borrow from the library and whether or not they actually read it. It is also worth considering that even at places where programmes are drawn up with greater care (there are such examples as well) very little attention is paid to the demands and their transformation and gearing are hardly ever attempted. Although "cultural activities" carried on in the plants can only become real access to culture if the members of the brigades and in general the broad masses of workers are transformed from the passive consumers of culture into active cultivators, people actively acquiring it. In several plants, however, their activity is not extended even to deciding themselves on the play they wish to see. The so-called cultural officers consider it absolutely natural to make a decision without and instead of workers.

At this point we find ourselves faced with the question of what would happen if, as a result of an unexpected change in approach, the members of the socialist brigades would demand club activities and direct exchanges of views with writers and artists. In the case of major plants the occurrence of such a demand would presumably lead to insurmountable difficulties. It would be proved that inside the plant there are few rooms suitable for informal and comfortable gatherings after working hours. In the houses of culture all the available space is occupied by existing societies and amateur art groups. There are no comprehensive data available on the proportions of socialist brigade members attending programmes provided by the houses of culture or on their participation in the activities of artistic groups, but it can be concluded from available figures that the

ratio of the workers' participation is comparatively low.

A report based on the examinations carried out by the Institute of Popular Culture in Baranya and Fejér counties, draws the following conclusion concerning relations between amateur artistic groups and the plant serving as a basis and workers' participation: "for reasons of professional prestige the leaders of the orchestras and choirs are all out to satisfy the demands of different festivals and qualification contests. This produced the paradoxical situation that while the majority of the groups are ensembles of a high reputation and standard, the ratio of workers participating in them decreased; this applies to groups long associated with workers as well. Even new recruits come from the ranks of artistically qualified people. This led to the workers losing interest and dropping out." This situation and approach strengthen not only "shamateurism", but in practice it also results in the ensembles maintained for reasons of prestige using funds allocated for the cultural pursuits of the plant's workers.

Athletic pursuits also constitute an integral part of man's many-sided development. The state and the trade unions spend large sums on the development of sports, on the maintenance of grounds and the purchase of equipment. However, available data show that the facilities provided and maintained by the plants are not used primarily to meet the requirements of the workers even if they have teams competing in the sports concerned. The stadium is a shrine reserved for the highly privileged registered players and athletes.

This is not the place to discuss those plants where the sportsmen do not even work, while the workers do not take part in sports although the moral implications of this problem are considerable and have an unfavourable influence in practice on the attitudes and values of young people. It is also not possible to consider the extent to which an approach focused on performance promotes or hampers the bringing up of many-sided people with a healthy body although on the basis of the limited information available it seems likely that the majority of sports clubs do not regard the cultural education of their members as part and parcel of their duties. The fact to be stressed is that sporting activities in the plants today do not serve primarily the active recreation of the people employed. Amounts that often run into millions of forints are designed to provide the basis, above all, for highly qualified sportsmen to train under favourable conditions. In 1972, Videoton electronic works spent as little as 160,000 forints on promoting mass sport activities out of a total of 2,600,000 forints allocated to cultural and sporting purposes.

If we want the socialist brigades to become the transmission belts of the socialist way of life, the means to be used and the conditions necessary for community life must be created. When I say conditions I mean not only the social and political ones but also actual facilities such as rooms which are inviting and establishments in which they can find recreation and can spend pleasant hours of their free time together.

If the cultural and sport programme of the plant were drawn up with the participation of the leaders of the socialist brigades, it would facilitate the shaping of the community; simultaneously it would also enhance their prestige. Naturally the character of these programmes varies from plant to plant. The situation is obviously much simpler if the majority of the workers live near plants than where workers have to commute.

Another factor influencing the compilation of the programme is the stratification of the people working in the plant, in other words the proportion of unskilled, semiskilled and skilled workers, and clerical staff, the age composition, the number of women, and so on. Undoubtedly, it needs more than ten years to create conditions that come close to the optimum and to

maintain them on an appropriate level. Efforts of this kind, however, can only be successful if the plant and the local councils whose authority covers the areas in which the workers live coordinate their long-term programmes and provide for workers' participation. In the long run, perhaps even plans involving social policy such as housing, the expansion of the nurseries and kindergarten network could be properly coordinated with endeavours concerned with community-building.

When thinking of communities that spring up from the production organization attention was concentrated primarily on the socialist brigades active in industrial plants. It must be noted, however, that the brigades operating in farmers' cooperatives are no less suited as a framework for production communities. An analysis of the similarities and differences, however, goes well beyond the scope of this paper. Let me say though that it is well worth and necessary to consider ways in which it is possible to create the organizational and working framework of collective thinking and collective culture on the basis of collective ownership interest, and by reckoning with farming on the private plot and a host of other factors influencing the way of life of the peasantry in major agricultural plants employing hundreds of people and possessing a considerable arsenal of machines. Presumably the ways in which a major modern agricultural plant becomes a primary community are different from those of the farmers' cooperatives of the 1950s. The farmers' cooperative can be moulded into a community only as a system of the minor communities working shoulder to shoulder in the spirit of common objectives, but it is essential to take into consideration the fundamental conditions of the organization of labour necessary for a modern socialist large-scale plant. If the farmers' cooperatives are not only treated as production organizations but also as a social formation, in other words, seriously reckoned with as new types of social relations and ties coming into being in the cooperatives.

Given the members' standards of schooling and cultural facilities the institutional organization of access to culture in the farmers' cooperatives is perhaps an even more organic condition for community building than in the industrial plants. And yet, the access to culture is less favourable in these cooperatives. A major turn of the trend can only be expected if the party organs, the local councils and the agricultural professions come to recognize the part culture can play in the political and social activities of the villages and assume the initiative to this end.

Obviously, communities can be formed not only in production organizations. It is true that during the process of urbanization the residential communities taken in a classic sense disintegrated, yet the houses of culture run by the villages, small towns and urban districts continue to provide even today the venue for a number of different communities. Analysis of this question, however, goes well beyond the scope of this study.

(Concluded)

ANDRÁS MEZEI

POEMS

Translated by Herbert Kuhner

WHAT THERE IS TO SAY

Words twist
bones of sound crack
splinters wound your mouth
that's how you expose your bleeding throat to the skies
where the butterfly moulders
on poisoned strips of brain
and aluminium wings of angels
plunge aflame into the sterile lunacy of the mind
where in the disgrace of a continent
nothing but the bowel's phosphorous wick gives off light

Witness
touch your lips
which speak of love by way of your fingers
and say lucky is my mouth
from nipples to kisses
from mother's milk to sweet saliva
provided with food and blessed with love
if your lips are uninjured
and not besmeared with blood
words come from them
as easily as seeds falling into furrows
drink with enjoyment when the rim of your glass
sparkles at you

but even when kissing
don't close your eyes to the truth
Then wipe taste away
and tear yourself from the indifference of lust
and turn towards your brother
whose lips
are an open wound from ear to ear
a vent in ear and sky
a target for rockets
a bone dry mask
covered with the blood of defoliated jungles
that was about to say

What there is to say—

SLOGANS

Is there cynicism in things, Lord?
But things exist through us.
I refuse to be your salesman, Lord
. . . . or happy.

Buy now!
Rockets at cut-rate prices
for underdeveloped countries:
SPRING SALE!

*

Don't give up
your faith in the future!
It's not worthless,
just a bit anachronistic.
KONSUMTOURIST
will buy them all,
even the broken ones,
FOR A GOOD PRICE,
shine them up
and recharge them.

*

I.G. Farben
GET RID OF
your parasitical illusions.
On the spot,
no questions asked,
satisfaction guaranteed
or your money back
FIRST-RATE MERCHANDISE!

*

The best mouth disinfectant
is somebody else's mouth!
We have one for you!
Gargle in
the manager's waiting room!

*

Now you can inhale without anxiety!
The PILOT'S SMILE
is world renowned.
Filter-tipped NAPALM cigarettes
are good for you.

MY HESITANT MOTHER

My hesitant mother walking down the street
is unaware of this poem
and of being followed by these lines:
Her shopping bag weighs her down, weighs her down...
The price of eggs has gone up, and
winter's on the way, winter and snow,
trains clatter by, and
the price of potatoes...

My hesitant mother walks down the street,
weighed down by her shopping bag, by the beets,
by the other vegetables, and the head of a chicken
dangling with its throat cut
like the head of time

swings like a pendulum
in the square in front of the market hall
where the see-saw swings and the blind beggar taps-taps
with a rocking gait, his face turned up to the sky,
and there's the cock-a-doodle-doo of tightly-bound cocks
and the rustling of the chicken with its throat cut,
you can almost hear the knife leaving the wound,
and the blade flashes
and all this occurs on the way from the kitchen to the market,
and that's the route my mother takes
early in the morning and after work...
She wears a kerchief, brown coat and has this hesitation,
and in her hand there's a shopping bag, shopping bag, shopping bag!
But by the time the meal's ready, her modern age son
will have gulped his lunch down at a stand in the street.

SOLITUDE

Her body under the sun
shimmering and supine
a single rose with no one
to admire and hold it

tarnished-mirror desert
of sand and quartz
breast like radio towers
quivering in the heat.

HIDDEN STATUE

I can't know or see the beauty
of your interior landscapes
composed of frame and organs
and your splendid nervous system,

the bulging, trumpeted cell-walls
that are alerted to sound and light
when they are stirred
by agitated administration:

veins, bloodvessels, arteries.
But this unforgettable activity
can only be seen
in your eyes and your face.

Hidden statue, I'm not blinded
by the muscles in your loins,
the elastic fibres of sinews
or your blessed hip-bones.

Tissues forming a living entity,
mother-of-pearl vertebrae;
I praise your slender spine
and finely-wrought skull:

In silvery membrane hemispheres,
rocking on waters of bone-cavity,
on their mesh the swirl of
diamond currents, spheres and music,

contained by your forehead,
a cathedral of reason.
This unquenchable candle-light
flickers doubly in your eyes.

THE TRUTH OF IMAGINATION

by

ISTVÁN VAS

If we were to try and answer the absurd question: Who is tho greatest Hungarian poet, those of my countrymen present, and I think, all Hungarians at home, would soon agree on Sándor Petőfi.

I apologize for starting with the name of a Hungarian poet, the most political in a country where poets in general are much more politically committed than in the West, when we are gathered here in the name of John Keats, said to be the world's most unpolitical poet. The two of them are linked by a circumstance that might at first appear extraneous. Both died at the same age, twenty-six, one in the Spanish Place in Rome, the other on a battlefield in Transylvania, where the armies of Czar Nicholas I of Russia crushed the Hungarian revolution and fight for independence of 1848/49. It could well be that they are related in some other, though hidden, way as well.

In one of his last poems Petőfi, already in the revolutionary army, wrote about the Emperor Francis Joseph, one of the chief butchers of the Hungarian nation—I naturally quote him in the roughest of prose versions since what I wish to bring out here is not the full magic of his poetry but only the power of his imagination: "Send to us, you crowned brigand, / legion upon legion of your henchmen /, so we can build a bridge from their bodies / for you from here to Hell."

Gyula Illyés, the most eminent Hungarian poet alive, whose book on Petőfi, written some forty years ago, is still the best, once pointed out the affinity between this image of Petőfi's and Lautréamont's imagination.

Talk delivered at the International P.E.N. Literary Session in London on August 24, 1976. The discussion was based on a quotation taken from a letter by John Keats: "I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the Heart's affections and the truth of Imagination..." (Letter to Benjamin Baily, November 22, 1817.)

What I am reminded of however is a few sentences I jotted down from Keats's *Notes on Milton*. Apropos of a line in *Paradise Lost* Keats says: "How noble and collected an indignation against kings... His very wishing should have had power to pluck that feeble animal Charles from his bloody throne. The evil days had come to him; he hit the new system of things a mighty mental blow; the exertion must have had, or is yet to have, some sequences."

Is not the wish that lies at the bottom of Keats's notes the same as the one that erupted, thirty years later, in a curse and resolute prophecy in Petőfi's stanza? Did that tremendous curse and prophecy come true? It did not. Unfortunately it was the "crowned brigand" who, even if only with the assistance of the Czar, succeeded in the almost literal sense of the world in placing his throne on a mound of bodies. Just as Milton's wish had no "sequence," not as much as to help topple that "feeble animal Charles" from his bloody throne; after all Charles II died in bed as a monarch. But the revolution which toppled Francis Joseph's successor, our "feeble animal Charles" from the Hungarian throne was still fired by Petőfi's imagination and prophecy. In a similar way the anger that swept Charles II's brother, James II out of England reverberated with Milton's rage.

Of course Milton and Keats could not speak as openly in the age of the Restoration and at the height of the power of the Holy Alliance as Petőfi could during the revolution. But the power of their imagination is shown by the fact that however hidden their message may have been it was certainly clear. And if I were asked who expressed the necessity of overthrowing the powers that be in the simplest, noblest, and most universal words I should answer: Keats in *Hyperion*. Translating it into Hungarian was among the happiest experiences of my entire poetic career. The passage I have in mind is when Oceanus tells Saturn in the gathering of the old gods: "We fall of course of Nature's law, / not force of thunder or of Jove" and adds:

And first, as thou wast not the first of powers,
So art thou not the last; it cannot be:
Thou art not the beginning nor the end.

What is this? Truth or imagination? It seems as if Keats answers the question in Oceanus's words:

Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain;
O folly! for to bear all naked truths,
And to envisage circumstance, all calm,
That is the top of sovereignty. Mark well!

Does truth then, one might wonder, gain the upper hand of imagination? But this "naked truth" is preceded and followed in the poem by Keats's exuberant imagery. Let us not try and decide—let us rather thank the organizers of this Congress for the connective *and* they put between the two main subjects, truth and imagination. This *and* suggests that we are really dealing with one subject, for truth is not worth much without imagination nor imagination without truth.

This applies not only to poetry. For even if we are not prepared to follow Keats to the extreme view he expressed in one of his letters arguing that the poet "is certainly the most unpoetical of all God's creatures," we must not suppose for a moment that poetry is something more poetical than existence. In proof of this I might refer to a phrase in *What is to be done?* by the youthful Lenin: "We should dream!" to which one should add that he made an attempt to link up dreaming and political science.

I should rather refer here to us Hungarians who have often been described mockingly by others, as well as by ourselves, as being a people given to illusions and "mirages". A typical 19th century novel in verse bears the title, *The Hero of the Mirages*. It is also true that we give our present existence in Europe in no small measure to our imagination. When Hungary hardly existed on the map half of her territory being part of the Habsburg possessions, and half of the Ottoman Empire, we imagined an intact and independent Hungary. When other nations buried us, we imagined that we were alive and in the end we were and do live. But then it is equally true that we had to pay a heavy price whenever—and I am afraid this happened frequently—our imagination was divorced from the truth.

But all this is contained in the simplest and most perfect aesthetics the world has produced, that summed up in Keats's dictum: "Beauty is truth, truth beauty."

FERENC KARINTHY

TALKING TO ERZSÉBET GALGÓCZI

This conversation between the two writers was broadcast by Hungarian Radio in its "My Study" series. The text was printed in the June 1976 issue of the monthly Kortárs. *We publish an abbreviated version. A story by Erzsébet Galgóczi appears on p. 101 of this issue.*

Q.: I remember it was at Visegrád that we first met more than twenty years ago. You made a real impression on me and I can now frankly tell you it was not only because of what I had read of you but for an altogether different reason. We went down to the Danube and threw pebbles. I liked to think of myself as a fit man, good at games, I played first division water polo at the time. And there you picked up a nicely rounded pebble and threw it very far—much farther than I did.

A.: You are exaggerating.

Q.: You're very strong, aren't you?

A.: I used to be, not now. We played games at the Drama Academy and our coach tried to talk me into taking up competitive athletics, throwing the javelin.

Q.: Because you've got such strong arms and hands.

A.: Well, I asked the coach what it would mean if I did. He listed the things I must and must not do: I must give up smoking, I must go to bed early and get up early, train for several hours a day, in short, live a sober life. I thought it over and told myself that two things couldn't be done at the same time and I was dead set on becoming a writer. And that was it as far as I was concerned.

Q.: That's more than twenty years ago. You attended a 'dramaturgy' course, didn't you?

A.: Yes. I had gone to the Academy of Theatre and Cinematography from a provincial secondary school where foreign literature was not part of the curriculum at all. The only names I knew were Dante and Goethe. At the Academy we started in the first year with the Greeks and went on studying world literature, history of the drama, Hungarian literature, and modern literature, sixteen hours a week, for four years. I had schoolmates who had entered the Academy having read practically all the required books of the four-year course; they took it easy and by the last year I had caught up with them.

Q.: You now live in Budapest, in an outer area, in a new housing estate. You have a comfortable flat full of books. How do you spend your days, what's your daily routine?

A.: It varies. I have two different periods. One is when I actually get down to writing, the other when I go about my business or live my family and social life.

Q.: At home, in your village, Ménfőcsanak.

A.: At home and abroad and in the country. I like those spells best when the

outside world encroaches least on my quiet existence and when I don't have to get up from my desk for weeks on end.

Q.: Please tell me about a day like that, like today, for instance. When do you usually get up?

A.: Sevenish.

Q.: Do you live alone?

A.: Let's put it like this: I live in the flat alone. I can't work if there's anybody else in the flat. My mother used to come up from the country and stay with me for a week or two in the winter when she could be spared on the farm. At times like that I don't get a single line down.

Q.: So you get up at seven and I bet you make a strong cup of coffee first thing?

A.: The very first. Then I potter about till ten. I like taking my time getting ready, taking a bath, breakfasting, putting the room in order, reading *Népszabadság* right through, not missing a thing. Mondays never start so well, I miss the paper. At ten I sit down at this desk and work till twelve. At noon I go down to have lunch in one of the restaurants in the neighbourhood and do the shopping for supper and breakfast.

Q.: Is that your only daily outing, having lunch and doing the shopping?

A.: Yes. Restaurant, supermarket, newstand, and the bookshop. They are all on the housing estate.

Q.: Don't you go in to town, don't you ever get farther than the City Park?

A.: Not when I'm writing. If I get onto a bus or tram or the underground I'm away from home for two or three hours or longer and by the time I come back my head is filled with rubbish like a sewer. On such occasions I first have to get the impressions I received in town out of my head before I can concentrate on my work again. I rarely succeed that day though. Now if I take a stroll in the neighbourhood only, it doesn't throw me out of my routine.

Q.: Now of course whatever drops into the sewer might become material one day to be written up.

A.: Not necessarily. If I have an unpleasant experience in the underground or on the bus, why should it ever be...

Q.: Excuse me, Erzsi, but your entire activity as a writer is about having unpleasant experiences, greater or smaller ones.

A.: In the last ten or fifteen years I've been much more interested in other people's lives than my own. But I've never written about trifles like unpleasantness at the cleaner's or on a bus. No doubt things of this sort do make life more unpleasant but they don't matter in the long run. I for one can't concentrate on my work unless I try to keep away from town. For me town begins on the other side of the railway tracks, over the flyover.

Q.: You have an afternoon nap, I suppose?

A.: Yes, I doze off for an hour, an hour and a half perhaps.

Q.: You use a typewriter? Invariably?

A.: Yes.

Q.: Straight into the typewriter?

A.: Yes but later I correct by hand and retype. I can't use hand to write, after a page and a half my wrist gets tired.

Q.: What are you working on now?

A.: On several things at once. Nearly always I'm working on more than one piece.

Q.: Can you work on several things at the same time?

A.: Only because these pieces are in different stages of evolution. When I get down to writing one of them I don't touch the others before I finish the one in hand. Prose requires a lot of material and a lot of work. By a lot of material I mean that I carve out a chunk of the tangled jungle that is called life or pull out a thread and trace it to the end, construct the characters in my mind, search for the motives, design the structure—well this sort of work takes me longer than the actual writing. True, it doesn't require the same intensity. Recently I finished a novel for which I had been collecting material for fifteen years and plucking up courage before I had sat down to write it.

I think my best piece so far is the one I am working on right now; I began last year. I want to tell the story of my native village, Ménfőcsanak, from the abolition of serfdom down to our days. I've been collecting documents in various archives, the papers of town councils and vicarages, and I spoke to a lot of people, among them the former squire who now lives in Vienna.

Q.: Who was the squire?

A.: One of the Bezerédj's.

Q.: So you looked him up in Vienna?

A.: Yes. I went to Vienna for this purpose after writing them a letter telling them I was working on this subject.

Q.: Did they know who you were?

A.: I don't know. In any case I sent them a book of mine with the letter so they knew if they cared to look into it that I didn't just come down in the last shower.

Q.: Is that *the* Bezerédj family?

A.: Only a branch. They're a big family who were raised to the nobility some eight hundred years ago. They got possession of the Ménfő estate of some 1,500 acres in 1805. The last of the Bezerédj's, who was a real old-type landlord, died in 1920; the family I went to call on in Vienna were his successors or more precisely his descendants... I've been dealing with this subject for about a year and am still collecting material. The more I know the more evident it becomes how much I don't know; each little bit of information whets my appetite for further and further details. Last autumn when I seemed to have exhausted the relevant material in the National Archives I had hoped to start writing this January. Well, it's January now and the stuff is full of holes. Now I'm thinking that perhaps I need another three months research and then... and then another three or more months? And if I'm able to stop these gaps, shall I know everything then? Then there're the long deliberations with myself: what form to choose? I think the novel form alone is suitable because it can accomodate the sociological material as well, while this doesn't hold the other way about. I use every bit of reliable evidence.

Q.: How long is the book going to be?

A.: Five to six hundred pages.

Q.: This then is one. You mentioned you were working on several things.

A.: Yes. In recent years I've been working for the films, television and radio. I like to work for them because their audiences are much wider than those of the written word. I get on well with some of the directors, I think, because I'm well trained in dramaturgy and so I need little dramaturgical assistance.

Q.: You have a piece called *Cogito* I'm very fond of. When did you write that?

A.: In 1957. At the age of twenty-seven.

Q.: It's not yet about your becoming a writer but about why you didn't want to stay on the farm. But when did you finally decide to become a writer? As you mentioned earlier you first opted for dramaturgy.

A.: At the age of nine I began to write poems and when I was fifteen—that coincided with the liberation of Hungary—I gave up writing poetry because I realized then that I had stories to tell and I couldn't tell them in verse. But even at the age of twelve I had already written a—what do you call it?—little story, and since there was no paper at home just then I scribbled it on the last three empty pages of a book.

Q.: That was your first short story. What came next?

A.: In '45 I enrolled in the State Teachers Training College in Győr. And though I never forgot that I wanted to become a prose writer I didn't write anything till 19 apart from school compositions. If my memory is not at fault there were eight or ten secondary schools in Győr at the time and these schools held essay competitions every year. Every class sent one student to these competitions and a jury decided at the end who wrote the best piece. When I went to the training college I was always picked to represent my class. When I won for the

third year running they stipulated in the fourth year that Galgóczi should not represent the college because the others had no chance against her. So in the last year I didn't take part but the training college took first prize... Two years later, in 1950, I was awarded first prize for a short story at the talent-scouting competition organized by the Youth Federation.

Q.: Your short stories reveal a world which I was not or only very slightly acquainted with as a boy, and you show it so authentically and vividly that I always read them with true interest. In actual fact all your writings are about the impossibility of staying a peasant. You said just now that your mother was the last peasant woman. In one of your stories you tell of a twelve-year-old weak little girl who is sent out to hoe and you say that die she could but not fall behind or stop—am I quoting correctly? And yet all your life is about not being able to wrench yourself away from that way of life. I know—you have repeatedly said so—that you keep going home. I looked for you in Budapest and couldn't find you because you had gone back visiting again. What you have left behind in way of life, becoming as you have a noted writer living in the capital, is recurrently shown in your works, you keep returning to it. I find this very, very appealing and I think here we already come very close to great literature. Desperate passions, and that we can't detach ourselves no matter how much we want to...

A.: I couldn't detach myself though I can tell you I tried every time I felt it a drag or a burden; in the last ten years I haven't wanted to cut my roots and this decision has been more and more conscious with me. I'd lived in the country till I was twenty and although I went to a secondary school, that only meant three or four months in the winter because in the autumn, as long as the work continued in the fields, and as soon as it started again in the spring, I took the train home and went to work in the fields just as my brothers and sisters did. In the first twenty years of one's life all sorts of things happen to one, you know.

Q.: They say everything happens till then.

A.: No. I had a lot of things to find out and experience after twenty. It's a fact that the village has pervaded my whole self so deeply that most of my dreams are still set in my family, in my childhood, during the war. I was nine when the war broke out and fifteen when it ended. I don't think there's a more impressionable age in a girl's life. It's only natural I can't get away from it. But, I repeat, my not wanting to get away from it is a deliberate decision for after all it's the world I know most intimately, and as far as I can see in literature, past and present, we haven't said everything about this world. To be not all that serious: I've become a writer because I didn't find the Ménfőcsanak peasants in the books. In other words, I don't think I'm worrying a theme that's been completely exhausted. It's not a picked bone.

Q.: Erzsi, I'm older, I read you and you know how much I like your stuff. Let me say something critical at this point. As exciting as your peasant characters and the first generation intellectuals with a peasant background are, I think they are your principal subjects, I find your middle-class characters somewhat alien and quite bluntly, much more empty. Take that beautiful story *Harder than Rock* and one of the teachers in it, Kisvölcsey. Or in the *Loser* that middle-class woman and the sex-starved females. I don't feel these figures to be all that authentic, Erzsi. Anna Karenina was a countess but she had a fairly complicated soul.

A.: Yes but Tolstoy who wrote her up was a count.

Q.: Yes but Tolstoy described his peasants very well too.

A.: Yes but it's a lot easier to get to know people from above than from below. Tolstoy could enter any of his serfs' houses whenever he wanted but a serf could only enter Tolstoy's mansion if he was summoned.

Look, I've been living here in Budapest the life of the intellectuals for twenty-five years, ninety per cent of my friends are intellectuals irrespective of whether their fathers or grandfathers were peasants or workers, petty bourgeois or upper middle-class or gentry. I've become a peasant writer out of necessity because I had no other experience. Now I have. Now I'm at home in Budapest just as much as in the country and I know the life of the people here from the inside. I could have portrayed that party executive's wife and that college teacher you referred to with just as much realistic detail as my peasant figures if I were to have written that story from their point of view, only they didn't happen to be the most important to me then. In those two pieces the two intellectuals of peasant origin were the ones that mattered to me and they were who I identified with.

Q.: How are your writings received in your village? I think all your writings have their models, one or several. When you come face to face with these models, and that must happen quite frequently I suppose, what do they think in the village?

A.: I can't say for sure. They relate to me in several different ways. They come to me with all sorts of troubles and cares, looking me up in Budapest, if they get wind that I'm home they seek me out there, with the most fantastic problems. I don't know if they really think I can help or they just enjoy unburdening their souls. The petrol embezzler with one foot in gaol but still out on bail asks me to get him out of the fix. The parents whose child was shot in the head by his pal and has been crippled ask me to do something that the boy might regain his health. I never promise anything but listen to them and sooner or later write their stories up. Those who recognize themselves are either proud or mortally offended. But their huff soon subsides.

Q.: Are those proud about whom you write nice things and are those offended about whom you say bad things? I think it's not as simple as that.

A.: A good deal more complicated. The year before last a seventy-year-old farmer in our street hanged himself. I hadn't known the old man, they had moved there after I had come to live in Budapest, I was only told the story. I came home and wrote it up. It has since appeared under the title *Farewell to the Dead.* Copies of the paper were passed around in the village and next time I went back one half of the village was resentful because they didn't figure in the short story, the other half because they did.

Q.: You've had worse cases than that, as far as I know you were sued for libel after one of your non-fiction pieces.

A.: Non-fiction is a different story. You have to be faithful to the facts, down to the names . . . !

Q.: And that involves making special inquiries, I know that from experience, precision in the smallest details, otherwise you're caught out and they've got you.

A.: No one can put one over me in the country. I'm not an agronomist nor an economist but I've picked up as much as I needed for my pieces dealing with the peasant question from my reading. And I take care to check and double check all the facts I'm told. Whenever I fail to get to the bottom of anything I rather leave it out altogether. For twenty years I wrote two reports a month and it's never happened that anyone caught me lying in the smallest detail. I've been attacked and sued several times for libel but every time I was proved right.

Q.: So you've never lost a case?

A.: No.

Q.: But you've never sued anyone, have you?

A.: Never. I had a case when I criticized a co-op chairman in my village after he had held office for one and a half years.

Q.: It was in one of your books.

A.: Yes. He'd been chairman for a year and a half when I wrote about him that he mismanaged the co-op, and that he was up to tricks and was running into the red, looking for short-term successes, that he was a

demagogue, and so on and so forth. The chairman took legal action against me, and all his superiors, including the county, and even higher up, everybody were against me and accused me of prejudice and malice and I only got off the charge of being superficial into the bargain because all the facts I used I got from him. But, they argued, I'd come to the wrong conclusions. Well, scarcely a year had passed when this chairman was put behind bars with all his cronies. When the experts all fell for his so-called successes I sort of intuitively sensed the truth behind appearances.

Q.: Your very strong allegiance to truth, in small ways as well as big, can be observed in the fact that a theme, a character, an event often crops up first in a report and then later, in a different key, in your stories. A scholar could show this. In fact, some of your themes recur, first in a report, then in a story, then in a novel or a play. This shows the way leading from experience to the work.

A.: After the liberation I received the strongest impetus from populist writers like Ferenc Erdei, József Darvas, László Németh, Péter Veres, Gyula Illyés... In those days most of the populist writers engaged in politics and I too had such ambitions. At five, not yet of school age, I wanted to become a teacher, at nine a poet, and at fifteen a member of Parliament, and finally...

Q.: For what party, did you give that a thought?

A.: I was a Communist.

Q.: Were you ever a member of parliament?

A.: No, never.

Q.: Not even a council member?

A.: No, not that either... Finally at twenty I found the career—and the art form as well—to give expression to and gratify all these various propensities of mine. I practised writing reports not merely as a way of earning money—though there were years when it was my chief support—but out of passion. It's a commonplace that far-reaching changes took place in this country since '45 but those most exposed to these have been the peasants. In captions: land reform, compulsory delivery, kulak lists, enforced organization of co-operatives, repeated dissolution of producers' co-ops, ending of compulsory deliveries, the definitive organization of producers' co-operatives and their consolidation. In the meantime more than a million people have migrated from the countryside to become workers, clerks, professional people. Mechanization and modernization penetrate agriculture, village communities. These are really historic changes. And I did like being present at the events, where the action was, getting my information straight from reality, not second hand. Now that I'm also dealing with the history of the peasantry in the last century I'm for ever regretting that the liberation of the serfs, for example, was not covered by a reporter on the spot. Being a reporter between 1950 and 1970 was a great school for me; when I felt that I'd outgrown it I gave it up.

Q.: As far as I can see, besides this mass breakthrough, or rather in the midst of this shake-up, the personal lives sometimes took a tragic turn, not a few of my young friends ended their lives in tragedy, suicides and breakdowns. Intellectually this generation, your generation, kept pace with those who came before you, as you said you only knew Goethe and Dante but then studied and read everything, I can see the books all around here on the shelves. With head and brain you stood the pace but I think you had to pay for this with your nerves, and I often see this in your characters, those first-generation characters whose lives had gone awry...

A.: We had a classmate at the Academy, a village girl who had had only completed six classes of primary school. At the time some of my short stories had already been published, still when I read the essay she had written for the admissions exam I was stung by envy. A few years later she got into bad ways, physically as well as mentally, so she had to be expelled. Today she leads

a humdrum life, she's married with a child, has some clerical job or other. She doesn't read, watches television but doesn't like it, she's fed up with her life and family. In the meantime we had been receiving the most alarming news about her for years. Once I ran into her in the street. She looked like someone who made a living out of being picked up occasionally, threadbare overcoat, down-at-heel shoes, matted hair, subtenancy in a basement, the rest of it. I took her into a café and tried to put some heart into her: she who started out as such a brilliant talent, why didn't she write, write up her experiences, she could ease the agony that way and also her poverty in time, etc. She listened apathetically and then suddenly asked: 'Tell me, did you eat meat as a child?' 'I did.' 'And milk?' 'I did.' 'And sugar?' 'I did because we grew sugar-beet.' 'I didn't have milk or meat as a child you see and brain cells are only nourished by protein. My power and energy lasted as long as I fought my way into the Academy and there it went phut. I'd used up all my reserves, and I couldn't stand the pace.'

Q.: But you went further and had your fill not only of meat and bread but also of literature, languages, arts, politics.

A.: At the Academy of Theatre and Cinematography the competition was stronger than, say, at the arts faculty because you could flop not just in the exams but anyone who didn't come up to mark was quickly eased out. Our class was thirty strong when we started and five years later only seven of us got their diplomas. The proportion wasn't much better in the other classes. The opportunities weren't even by a long sight, those from the country were at a tremendous disadvantage, one nearly impossible to make up for. Not only because we had to compete with those who had even their nurseries filled with books—but being mostly middle-class kids—it's interesting I can't recall any of them from the capital being from working-class homes—they had no problems of where to live or what to eat for supper and where to get the money for incidentals. You know, anyone who lives in a three- or five-room flat in Szent István Park is given a very different start than someone like me who lived in furnished rooms in Budapest for fifteen years. Is it any wonder that so many of them couldn't cope? Though the real competition only started after we received our diplomas, on entering life. For five years I'd been together with two hundred odd would-be artists, actors and actresses, theatre and cinema directors, directors of photography, dramaturgists. Twenty years have passed since. Anyone who has failed to make a name for herself or himself isn't likely to do so now. If I were shown that list of names now I don't know how many of them I could still recognize. What's happened to the rest?... Luckily I had a rather strong sense of responsibility for the peasantry: I felt I mustn't let down this most backward part of the population, giving up the struggle I'd have given them up. On the other hand I've inherited my mother's stubborn nature and have rarely been touched by real despair; I was telling myself: this is what you have now, it's up to you to change the situation.

Q.: You've written a good many plays for television, still I believe that your strongest point is prose, the short and the long story. Incidentally it's not a very popular form today, unfortunately, though if the short story output of Hungarian letters were to be compared with that of other, perhaps greater, nations, I think we'd have nothing to be ashamed of. You're carrying on this noble tradition of the Hungarian short story... With us the portrayal of the peasantry has, in the last half a century, been committed to a certain kind of naturalism. With you however there isn't the slightest trace of that muck-raking naturalism. Yet the farmer's life is full of the greatest hardships, miseries, disgusting things, as indeed all life is, but peasant life, being closer to nature, seems to be more so. Still you never stray into these details in bad taste. Is that

a conscious creed or the survival of childhood modesty?

A.: Modesty in the first place. In my time, in my family and in the village, people didn't use bad language. (Today, I'm sorry to say, they do.) If in a fit of anger a "damn it" slipped out a retaliatory box on the ear followed. Between the two wars we had such a parish priest that the farmers recited the Angelus not only at table but also hearing the sound of the bell out in the fields. In the second place, I despise naturalism and grubbing in irrelevant details. I look at the man in the peasant, equal to me in mind, character, passions, destiny. Looked at from this angle it's really irrelevant when he last had a bath.

Q.: You're not out for oddities.

A.: I'm not interested in them. What I'm interested in are the laws that govern man and society.

Q.: Some American farms which I have seen—do not at all remind one of a Hungarian farm or that which we call "a household plot". It resembles a factory, you can see machinery, workshops, huge pipes, gigantic glittering silos. The farmer ranges over his farm in an aeroplane or controls it sitting in a computer centre. Everything is done by machines and the owner looks like a research scientist in his white overalls. Is it going to be the same here too by the time farmer's production is turned into such a super-industry?

A.: It's certainly not going to be an agrobusiness as it is in the United States because the land area is smaller and the population density greater. The distance between two villages will remain 8–9 kilometres, not as it is in the United States. I've not been there but have read a good deal about it, about the surplus produce too; for example, two engineers have worked out a method of building houses of wheat. So that in case of a natural disaster the house can be taken apart and eaten. Like in a fairy tale, isn't it? The cottage made of honey-cake, the fence of sausages... However regrettable it is that certain things are bound to change with the peasantry's economic habits, it must be recognized that this is the necessary road that agriculture must take.

Q.: Even if people will no longer sing in the spinning shed?

A.: My mother's eighty but she only heard from her mother that there had been a spinning shed somewhere where people used to sing... The road for agriculture is large-scale production and mechanization. Ménfőcsanak has a population of five thousand of which the co-op members number five hundred. Of the five hundred about eighty are active, the others are old-age pensioners or dependants, or receive some kind of annuity. Of the eighty workers perhaps only twenty or thirty do the kind of job that farmers usually do. The rest are tractor drivers, lorry drivers, driver's mates, industrial workers.

Q.: And those twenty-thirty people who are traditional farmers, what sort of work are they doing?

A.: Last year there still was share-hoeing: the maize was hoed by the farmer and his wife for a quarter of the crop. This year they are already weeding with chemicals, while sowing and reaping are done by machines. Traditional farmer's work is only done in household plots and gardens now. Or if it still exists in some co-ops it's artificially maintained for social reasons.

Q.: Don't you think that mankind's going to miss it?

A.: A friend of mine once hit the nail on the head when he told me: "you've become a writer because you hated hoeing." I really didn't like hoeing and I've never met anyone who did. I'm hoping that our agriculture will overtake that of the most advanced nations but that the general picture of the village and the villagers' way of life will not change altogether. If the villages are to stay so are the household plots and gardens and orchards too where you can indulge your yearning for the soil without having to break your back.

Q.: But by then I suppose it'll be the activity rather than its result that will be important.

A.: Just an example of that. Those girls I used to go to school with who are peasant women look ten years older than I do. That's what farmer's work does. The village was relieved, people straightened up as if several bagloads had been lifted off the shoulders of every one of them, when in 1959 the co-operative was formed.

Q.: What you've just been talking about, well, it will inevitably bring with it the decay, for example, of everything that we call folk art, literature, poetry, music, which are integral parts of Hungarian culture. It was literally at the last moment that Bartók and Kodály captured Hungarian folk music, another generation and it might have got lost irrecoverably. When I came in here I saw a spigot, a colender and a mall. I know that nobody uses these sort of things any more but they are very attractive objects and obviously you hung them on your wall because you found them handsome and original. So then all these things are to go, irrevocably?

A.: All that was of real value has long been assimilated in the general culture of the nation. As to these farmer's implements which are so much in vogue today? Thirty-nine trades have died out or are pursued today on an industrial scale. Now the farmer's trade is awaiting the same fate. And so are peasant ways and peasant arts too. But the process didn't begin recently, it began about a hundred years ago. The village had ceased to be creative of arts when I was a child, the folk-songs we sang we picked up in the "Kalász" Girls' Club or from the music teacher at school. Of the two hundred songs that were and are sung at weddings half only are folk-songs, half popular songs composed by known men. And the folk-songs weren't of the most ancient stock either... Peasant culture is the product of a community, closed and immobile for centuries, and as soon as these conditions were disrupted the community's culture needs be also disintegrated. Let's be frank about it: peasant culture is much too constricted to offer an answer to all the infinite variety of human conditions. If they are to get Bach and Beethoven in exchange for folk-songs, literary classics for tales and parables, science for superstitions and faith, I'm inclined to say they are doing all right. Of course, it's a matter of time. For the time being the village receives the radio and television and the odd fashionable books. It's up to cultural policy, and us artists and the intellectuals in general, that the classic values should reach them sooner and more completely.

THE CELTIC QUEEN

by

ERZSÉBET GALGÓCZI

A fenced round farmstead, a tile-roofed house, farm buildings in good repair, a sweep-well with its pole beckoning from afar, a clump of sumach trees. In the far end of the yard a haystack, heaps of stalk, clamps. The wind rushing down from the Alps spread broken straw around the yard. End of October; dusk. Imre, aged eighteen, stands atop a horse-cart loading beet into one of the clamps.

A black car as big as a barge comes waddling in from the endless emptiness. It comes to a halt in front of the porch. A middle-aged man with a tie round his neck gets out putting his feet right into the mud. He looks round and helps his wife out from the back seat. Imre was ready to jump from the heap of beet-root, willing to help, but before he could do so he sees his mother appear in the door: a meek, round-faced, sturdily built peasant woman in her forties. She watches the newcomers with surprise but without alarm; then as she recognizes the immovable face hidden under the hat, she sends the lady a faint smile.

The man proffers his hand with exaggerated heartiness.

"Good evening," says Antal Wegmann.

"Good evening, Borika," says the woman dressed in black from top to toe, reaching out a hand.

"Good evening." (She addresses her as "ma'am" in the market.)

"Come on in." Borika leads the way. A corner bench, an oversized walnut table and a whitewashed fireplace—the steam of boiling potatoes—a collapsible camp-bed, shelves, a bench for the pail and two chairs at the wall fill the spacious kitchen. Borika pulls down the kerosene lamp from the ceiling, lights it, eases it up. She puts the two chairs in the middle and offers the visitors seats. She remains standing.

Confused, Wegmann wanted to signal to his wife but she fixes a stare on the floor, unapproachable.

"Mrs. Sokorai," the man begins diffidently, "it might well surprise you to hear it... we've got into a little trouble... we'd like to hide out here for a couple of days... provided you've got room... if you're sure it's no inconvenience..."

The request is as unusual as it is incomprehensible. Borika is at a loss though her face is calm. "My husband is ill... just a second..." and she goes out.

In one of the rooms her husband lies asleep. He is ill or drunk. Probably both. She wakes him up tenderly, tells him about the visitors, adding: "They are the ones who bought all our bacon in fifty-two when it was illegal to sell pork and fat. I took it to the gate of their house, the woman came out with the cook, and paid handsomely. It was her husband who called up the police sergeant the year before last when they wanted to intern you for black-market slaughter. He's some big party shot, you know. They came in a car as big as this room..."

Imre is busy unloading the beet with the fork. Weeks, months, years pass without anybody coming to this farm (at most the frontier guards drop in for a glass of water) and here is that black vision which he has to fight back a desire to go to, but the beet does not get any less, delaying the moment of close inspection, of physical contact. Craning his beck he stops in his tracks: a young woman or girl? detaches herself from the vision. She has a lot of black hair and long things. She stretches in an unself-conscious way and carries herself lazily towards the lighted door. From the doorstep she sends a long look at the staring boy on the top of the cart.

Imre lets himself drop from the cart, washes the dirt off his hands in the fire emergency concrete water tank, and shakes them dry. The round water surface serves him for a looking-glass too. By God, how he hates him that looks back! Uncombable head of hair, screwed up eyes, down just showing around childishly soft, swollen lips. He stops and starts before plucking up enough courage and he impulsively makes for the kitchen.

His father, dressed, sullen, sits at the table, propping himself up on his elbows. Receiving strangers an inconvenience at any time. A stranger peers into your soup, sniffs the smell of your bootrags, watches you closely how you strain the milk. You can't speak or listen to your heart's content. Mrs. Sokorai has not sat down yet, she still stands leaning her back to the fireplace.

"He's my son, Imre."

Imre nods awkwardly, he wants to scurry to the corner bench but Wegmann rises, reaches out a hand, and says his name. It is an ordeal before

he gets to the two women. The girl holds his hand, looking straight into his eyes, and utters her name syllabically.

"Andrea." She smiles.

Imre keeps staring from the corner, letting his gaze roam about the handsome young lady's hair, face, smart dress and nimble fingers playing with a cigarette.

Sokorai asks mistrustfully: "You sure didn't do anything wrong, sir? 'Cause if you're trying to get past the law, I'm sorry there's nothing doing."

Wegmann smiles wryly.

"I would hide from the arm of the law on my own and not take my wife and daughter with me. I'm hiding from lawlessness... It might happen that the law blunders and innocent people are made to suffer but lawlessness has no limits." His breath nearly gives out. "It's not myself I'm worrying about. It's my family."

Sokorai does not catch on: "Lawlessness...?"

Wegmann pretends to be confidential. "The mob set fire to our house as mentioned... Maybe they hate me, perhaps they have their reasons, but my wife and only child too could have found their death in the blaze. And they're innocent. All their guilt is that they belong to a Communist..."

Imre, amazed, can't help breaking in (though his father does not like him to have a voice in the affairs of the grown-ups nor in the jobs he has to do, and that went for all kinds of jobs, because he did the working and his father the bossing: ordering, forbidding, hurrying and calling him God's worst lazybones).

"You're a Communist...? And they set your house on fire...?"

Wegmann, unbelieving; "You don't listen to the radio?"

"We have no electricity," Imre explains.

Wegmann sighs sympathetically. "Oh, of course, of course... There have been disturbances in Budapest. The Communists are persecuted. There was a procession, a demonstration, the smashing of statues, shots and the rest of it in our town too yesterday. That's why I'm here now."

Imre gazes stupefied at the two ladies.

"Yesterday these two frontier guards came up to me in the fields and tore these stars from their caps: they had enough, they're going home. That's all I've heard," says Sokorai. "A farmer like me has to do his job in all regimes 'cause people want to eat in any regime."

Nobody speaks. Wegmann is fidgeting uneasily. A moonless dark night outside.

"Can we stay?" Wegmann is in a hurry. "Naturally, I don't expect it for free."

Sokorai raises his arms, palms turned out, in an arrogant forestalling gesture.

"I didn't reckon it free either." He jabs a finger at his wife. "Show them the first room."

Impenetrable darkness in the yard, so thick you can lean on to it. The chauffeur yanks out a cabin trunk, carries it on his shoulder to Wegmann, waiting in the porch, before he makes another round.

"Don't go back, but take the car to your people at Remetepuszta and wait. I'll send you word."

In the hardly ever used room there are two beds, chockfull with eiderdowns and pillows, and a sofa. Borika puts the kerosene lamp down and waves her hand.

"The bedclothes are clean, make yourselves at home."

Wegmann's wife places her hat on the small table with a lace cover and pinching the bedspread between finger and thumb turns it back to examine the bedclothes. She is satisfied.

Before doing anything else Wegmann fishes out a transistor from the well-crammed trunk. He plays with the knobs.

"Borika is a decent woman but her husband is a regular boor."

Andrea hurls herself on the sofa and asks, yawning:

"How long are we going to stay here, daddy?"

"Who knows?"

The girl looks at her wrist-watch: half past seven. And mud outside and beyond the farm the bleak endless puszta without a soul on it; here inside the bleary light cast by the kerosene lamp.

"Goodness, what ever are we going to do here?"

"We've brought along your school books," her mother reminds her and puts the warm nightgowns and fluffy dressing gowns in a neat pile on the table.

The portable radio is humming: Vince Pahocsa sends word to his family and fiancée in Lőce that he has made it to the free world. Whoever picks the message up please pass it on. Ilona Kundelein sends word to Ipar Street... Tihamér Macsotai sends word... freedom...

"Free world!" Wegmann uttered the phrase or thought he did before he realized it.

Imre is poring over a book in the kitchen—*The Secret Treasures of the Royal Grave*—but the letters run together into a blur. (If rain prevents him from working he walks to the village to his former schoolmistress and returns with half a bag of of assorted books.) A slight noise from the door: Wegmann in pyjamas edges in with his Japanese portable.

"I never go to bed this early." He blinks and sits by the table when offered a seat by Imre. He fiddles with the tuning knob of the red box. Imre wanted to clutch with shy jubilation at the shreds of music as they faded in and out. Wegmann settles for some humming tune.

"How far is Czechoslovakia from here?"

Imre wrenches himself from the little wonder-box and gazes at Wegmann coldly.

"The Danube's the border."

"And how far's the river?"

"Three kilometres."

"Have you been to Czechoslovakia?"

"No, why should I have been?"

"And if you wanted to go over?"

"What for?"

Wegmann is worrying another station for music.

"How did you come to live here?"

"We've always lived here."

"Are there any other farms hereabouts?"

"There were."

"Were the inhabitants resettled?"

"Either that or they moved in to live in the village."

"And what about you?"

"We stayed."

"You like it here, I mean, living here?"

"Would you like to, sir?"

"What did you want to become?"

Imre grows pale. Wegmann clicks open a wonderfully engraved silver cigarette case; he slides a row of shiny tipped cigarettes before the boy. Imre does not see it. Wegmann lights up.

"In fifty-two we could have moved to the village, too. The co-op had chosen our farm for a site to build their stables. Here in the flats the grass is plenty rich enough so they wouldn't have had to cart the hay from nine kilometres away. They offered us a house in the village. But my father flatly said no. He said he wouldn't settle in anyone's property, not even if the person had been a member of the Volksbund... My mother and I were making plans for me to go a technical school..."

"I see," says Wegmann drawling. He is waiting.

"...after I'm called up I'll never come back. Not here. I'll take mom with me and if my father wants to stay and rot here, let him..."

Wegmann touches the boy's hand confidentially.

"Imre, you will have guessed this much that I held a high position. That's why they were after my life. I feel safe with you here but I'm out of touch with developments. I'm not informed about the general situation, I don't know what to make of the situation, how the land lies. For if the regime is overthrown as it was in 1919 then I have to emigrate to the Soviet Union or go underground. Czechoslovakia is a friendly country and it's near too and I can quickly come back any time I'm needed again... Could you take me over the border into Czechoslovakia?"

Imre, alarmed: "To the Czechs?"

"Have you a boat?"

"Yes."

"Can you row?"

"I grew up on the river."

"You smuggle, don't you?"

"I used to as a child. Not now."

"Why not?" Wegmann inquires.

"The frontier guards shot Fatty Aunt Brigitta, after which everybody gave up smuggling."

Wegmann's grows warmer.

"If the situation gets back to normal, I'll take you under my wings. I'll speak to the best teachers and you can matriculate within a year. We'll send you to the university. What would you like to be?"

"An archaeologist. Three years ago a bearded man was looking for day-labourers. Mom let me go too. We dug a zigzag communication trench in the Zsomberek parish fields and we found a Celtic queen... I mean, her skeleton. Around her neck there were three chains with nine gold coins as big as 2 forint pieces and thirteen as big as camomiles. Mr. Kuncz explained it all..."

"We'll send you to a university, and in five years' time you'll be an archaeologist... There are many Celtic graves in Hungary, enough and to spare for you to discover."

Imre wavers.

"And the farm? The land? My father does nothing at all and I can't leave mom alone, she couldn't cope with my work."

"You sell the farm. You get a three-room flat in town and you can nicely furnish it from the sum you get for the land. Your father gets a porter's job somewhere and Borika is such a superb cook that she can become chef in a factory canteen."

"The boat can't take four."

"I'm going alone." Wegmann pulls out a wad of purplish one hundred

forint notes. "Tell your parents I was suddenly called back, and this is for the hospitality for the present. I leave my family in your charge, Imre. My wife will be no trouble but take good care of Andrea. I'll tell her to do as you tell her. Don't let her go into the village. Don't let her write letters. If any stranger calls don't let her leave the house."

"We can leave tomorrow, Mr. Wegmann. I'll get the boat ready."

Imre is of medium height and well-built; his waist, shoulders, limbs—all well-proportioned and graceful. His looks suggest beauty and fragility rather than strength.

His mother is helping to put a sack of potatoes on his shoulders and the boy carries it lightly to the clamp without bending under the burden.

Andrea is scribbling something on a piece of paper in the sun on the porch, but what she is really occupied with is watching Imre's movements. She is amazed at the contradiction: the boy is smaller than the sack. On the way back Imre eyes her; he cannot forego the half-breaking smile of the other face.

Andrea is addressing some envelope, hides it in her coat pocket and walks in easy, leisurely strides to the cart.

"Can I go for a short walk just outside the farm?" The girl is both coquettish and mocking, her irresistibility is calculated, after all she is speaking to her jailer.

"Just a second..." Imre runs and stands outside the farm. There is nobody in sight all the way down the dirt road lost in the plain. He pears towards the Danube, not a soul to be seen. He runs back. His face is almost stern as he grants permission.

"But be sure you don't wander too far!"

Andrea strolls out taking her time. As soon as she is out of the boy's field of vision she breaks into a trot. She is the only moving creature for miles around in the desolate fields.

Missing of the girl drives Imre out of the farmyard. "Andrea! Andrea!" The figure hurrying out of sight does not turn. He runs after her. The pounding of feet makes her look back and he starts fleeing from her jailer. Her legs being longer the boy has a hard time catching up. He grabs her by the shoulders and tries to get at the edge of the envelope peeping from her pocket. Andrea fends him off, grapples with him, only trying to safeguard the letter from him. The struggle is bitter and they are at it with all they are worth. The girl trips up on the clods and pulls the boy down with her. The tussle lasts for another minute. They become aware of each other's bodies and are shocked into immobility. The boy's forehead is

a span away from the girl's white face and half-parted lips; she has not seen yet Imre's ecstatic gaze giving him completely away. Their lips are about to touch when Imre springs to his feet and helps her up too.

Agitated, eyes to the ground, they walk back. She raises her eyelashes and with the same half-breaking smile takes the boy in from the tip of his boots up to his shaggy hair. Her taking the measure of him is carried out with meticulous care and mounting delight.

Well scrubbed and in polished boots and wearing a clean shirt, Imre sits at the table propping his head on his elbows over *The Secret Treasures of the Royal Grave.* The letters merge into a blur before his eyes. At last he hears the long awaited but hardly hoped-for sound of the girl's approach. She is wearing a dressing-gown and no shoes. Her face is like a bed of carnations. She approaches the motionless boy on tiptoe, throws both her arms around him as she pulls him up to her breasts. Lights of joy flicker in Imre's eyes. Unaware of moving he embraces her kissing her and carries her to his made bed. He is about to blow out the lamp but the girl keeps him back. She starts slowly to unbutton his shirt searching for places to touch his chest with her lips, exploring it and roaming about his hard shoulders, his movingly slender, stringy neck. "You little boy... it's not he that carries the sack, it's the sack that carries him... teeny-weeny baby-boy... teddy-bear..." Ecstasy and stabbing vigilance contend with each other in the boy; he must not tolerate being played with fast and loose just as if he were a ball of thread. But Andrea goes calmly to the door and bolts it, then she looks into the pantry. "Hide me here if anybody should come." She turns the wick low and blows out the lamp.

ANDREA! Andrea and the city. Andrea and the university. Andrea and the Celtic queen. He would steal a gold coin from the first queen he digs up. Andrea will wear it on a headband on her forehead. Just like the queen consort of the Zsomberek trench. 'Not reigning queen but the king's wife,' he hears Mr. Kuncz's voice.

In those few days he did not carry the sacks, the sacks carried him; it wasn't he who hoed out the golden yellow beet but the beet tumbled into the wicker-basket of their own will. What was so excruciatingly hard to bear was that each day was so desperately short and the nights like so many lightning flashes.

The concrete water tank showed a likeable Imre, a handsome, bright and bold boy who, one day, would dig up Attila's sword from the bottom of the Tisza.

Dusk was descending when the barge-sized car came waddling into the yard. Wegmann got briskly out, confident and seeming a bit impatient.

Without looking round he hurried into the house with his chauffeur close behind him.

Imre is covering up a potato clamp: a thrust with the spade and a spadeful of earth over the potatoes covered by a layer of straw. The work is slow and uninterrupted. If rain gets the potatoes at night they would rot—and with them a year's work would go to waste.

The chauffeur trudges across the yard with a cabin trunk on his shoulders. The barge swallows up Andrea's flower-patterned dressing-gown (if you're good I'll pick some of the flowers off it and give you a bunch), her greengage-coloured pullover (I dreamt I'd lost my breath for it was wrapped up in cotton-wool and you peeled it off my breasts), her skirt fluttering about her thighs (and why is it that all this is merely an addition to what he feels ?).

Hard work drenches the body and it drenches the shirt—even the eye-sockets. Andrea is running to him keeping on looking back towards the house. Her face wears the sorrowful expression of farewell—or is it just the fear of being discovered ? She huddles up to the boy's drenched chest, his face smelling of sweat... "Teeny-weeny..."— tiny kisses wander up and down Imre's skin. Andrea is still here but her thoughts go back to somewhere in her old life which is awaiting her again.

"I'll write you my address."

By the time the grateful and generous Wegmann leaves the house that had given him shelter for a week, followed by the idol-faced lady and the half-drunk and satisfied Sokorai (who was only sorry they didn't drink a toast) and the good-natured Borika, relieved by the well-ended bargain—Andrea is already wiping the boy off her lips with a lipstick, using the rear-view mirror.

Translated by László T. András

SURVEYS

PÉTER KULCSÁR

THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

The Final Act of the Helsinki Conference was not intended to be a convention under international law, and yet more than a mere declaration. Consensus, solemn commitment, moral and political obligation—these were the terms used by the politicians who addressed the Conference. The provisions of the document have often been referred to as recommendations. All this is important since there is some uncertainty about interpretation and terminology. In interpreting an international agreement one has to take into account its precise text, but also the intentions of the signatory States at the time of signing. This applies to any contract. The interpretation of contractual arrangements have been worked out by international lawyers to apply to international treaties. Even though the Helsinki Final Act is not considered a legally binding convention this bulky document is interpreted in accordance with the legal principles with methods established in legal practice. This is just one, but a very important one, of the connections between the Final Act and international law.

If we wish to define the position of the document accurately we have to place it, on the one hand, in the context of the process of collective security efforts and, on the other in that of the interrelations between the political, moral and legal norms of international life. For even if an instrument is not a treaty, it may still be of legal import. An instrument of primarily political and moral nature may also have a legal character. In international life major government declarations, especially bilateral and multilateral agreements, usually have a certain legal impact.[1] One reason has been mentioned above: the law gives form to such agreements, supplying a method for their interpretation, and for the settlement of controversial issues. Another reason is that the legal effect can manifest itself not only directly in the binding force. An agreement or declaration may also provide legal grounds for further steps, for the conclusion of a treaty, for the establishment of further practice establishing binding precedents. Thirdly, an important international agreement like the Helsinki Final Act is connected in many respects with earlier international legal acts and treaties. It interprets, applies or complements them, including e.g. the Charter of the United Nations. The Helsinki Final Act, owing to the principles it contains, has become especially closely connected with international law: its principles are themselves part of international law.

The policy of collective security

The desire to guarantee European security by an international legal instrument, or rather to create a system of collective security, was expressed already in the mid-

[1] See, e.g. Max Sørensen: *Manual of Public International Law.* London, 1968, p. 122.

thirties by the Soviet Union, and occasionally by certain capitalist governments as well. One element of this security system would have been a convention for the definition and prohibition of aggression as proposed by Commissar for Foreign Affairs Maxim Litvinov in 1933. In 1934 Barthou, the French Foreign Minister and the Soviet government collaborated on an "Eastern Pact" which would have been another essential element of the security system.[2] Attempts were already made after the first World War to put into practice the idea of a collective security system regulated by treaties. An example was the League of Nations itself which functioned in Geneva for twenty years, in spite of a number of inborn defects, amidst fundamental conditions still unfavourable to collective security. Since 1945 the United Nations has acted as an international organization for collective security that tries to avoid the mistakes of the League of Nations, but because of its large membership, it has to spread its attention all over the world.[3]

After the end of the Second World War, still in the Cold War years, the Soviet government proposed a system of collective security in Europe. At the Berlin Conference of Foreign Ministers in 1954 it suggested that the European states should conclude a treaty for fifty years, under whose terms the signatories would regard an attack on any one as being an attack on all, undertaking to render assistance in individual or collective self-defence. At the same time they would repudiate any closed grouping inconsistent with the object of collective security.

The Soviet Union and seven people's democracies, at a conference held in Moscow in December 1954, issued a declaration in support of a collective security agreement. They declared their willingness to consider any other suggestion with a view to drawing up a draft convention. Western diplomats, with John Foster Dulles as their spokesmen rejected one initiative after another. But the Soviet Union and the people's democracies continued to argue for a collective security agreement even after they had set up their own defence organization. Article 11 of the Warsaw Treaty signed in May 1955 states that, should a system of collective security in Europe be established and a general European collective security system agreed upon for this purpose—an aim which the Contracting Parties would continuously strive for—the Warsaw Treaty would become void upon the entry into force of the general European agreement.

The proposals made in 1966 at the Bucharest meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty upheld the notion of a contractual security system and, in view of Western reluctance, suggested process by grades. The Bucharest meeting proposed the convening of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe which would not lead immediately to the creation of a collective security system. The proposal reaffirmed that the member states of the Warsaw Treaty were willing to wind up their defensive alliance simultaneously with NATO; until the NATO countries expressed their consent the Warsaw Treaty states proposed arrangements for the liquidation of the military organizations of the two alliances. The Budapest Appeal of 1969 concentrated attention explicitly on convening a European conference.

The socialist countries, as appears from a series of documents, including their Prague Declaration of 1972, urged measures of international legal validity, declaration of the principles of peace and security in Europe, and the establishment of a standing body of the participating states. This body, like any other international organization, could not be established except by an agreement

[2] P. Potemkin: The History of Diplomacy (in Russian, Moscow, 1945)

[3] On the League of Nations and the UN Security Council, cf. Árpád Prandler: *Az ENSZ Biztonsági Tanácsa* (The UN Security Council). Budapest, 1974.

that was part of international law. But political leading quarters in the West; since the middle of the 1940's were averse to institutionalizing security and to assuming treaty obligations for this purpose. Even though in the past there were people such as Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, or Aristide Briand and Louis Barthou in France, who supported international agreements and organizations, in the Cold War period starting with Churchill and Truman—the conservative approach again became predominant. Those who support this approach insist on separate agreements fearing comprehensive ones. The last major commitment on the part of the West to collective international legal guarantees was participation in the United Nations Conference on International Organization which ended with the signing of the Charter of the United Nations on June 24, 1945. Afterwards the tone of Western diplomacy was set by those who denounced both Wilson and Roosevelt for their readiness to accept universal and public arrangements. Castlereagh's and Churchill's methods were recommended instead. Hans J. Morgenthau the theorist of the "power realism" school called President Wilson an "idealist" for having argued in his time that the United States "will join no combination of power which is not the combination of all". He criticized President Roosevelt and his Secretary of State, Cordell Hull even more strongly. Roosevelt actually said in his March 1st 1945 Message to Congress after the Yalta Conference, that the Crimean Conference marked the end of unilateral steps and of the system of closed alliances, spheres of influences, balance of power and another conventional foreign policy concepts, stating that the Allies wished to replace all that by a universal organization. Secretary of State Hull added: "I am not a believer in the idea of balance of power or spheres of influence as a means of keeping the peace." Philip Noel-Baker Minister of State in the Foreign Office was attacked by Morgenthau as well.[4] Western ideas which set no great value on the survival of elements of the wartime antifascist coalition, and which always thought more highly of an exclusive or secret treaty than a universal agreement, have not come to an end. Helsinki is therefore of historic significance also because it resulted in an agreement arrived at on the broadest possible basis and so-to-speak with the searchlights of publicity trained on it.

The Western press and influential quarters in the West, however, persist in their decades-old scepticism towards international law, in a sort of allembracing aversion to treaty-making. After Helsinki they oppose the conclusion of treaties for the implementation of the Final Act and the further deepening of cooperation, declaring such instruments to be both useless and dangerous. This is not free of irony since international lawyers have always been proud that their discipline originated in Western Europe. Conservative jurists wrote even after the Second World War that new states, including the socialist countries, were "newcomers" to international law, and now it is they (the Western jurists) who show no adequate interest in, and no respect for, this uniform system by undermining it.[5]

Beside the reluctance of the NATO countries other circumstances also made it impossible for European states to give their comprehensive agreements the form of a convention with full legal force. The Final Act is a highly complex and heterogeneous document. Its provisions constitute an integral whole and should be uniformly observed. But these provisions show differing degrees of concreteness and generality, they define purposes that can already be realized today and others that have to be realized

4 Hans J. Morgenthau Jr.: *The Mainsprings of American Foreign Policy. The American Political Science Review*, Dec. 1950.—*Politics among Nations*, New York, 1948.

5 Cf. G. I. Tunkin: Questions of the Theory of International Law. Russian, Moscow, 1970.

gradually. Some of the countries concerned have shown a readiness to conclude legally binding treaties on some of the aims but this readiness did not seem to extend to all states or all purposes.

The document explicitly facilitates the creation, at a later date, of a convention with full international legal powers on questions of security and cooperation in Europe. In certain matters of detail the document openly encourages the participants to conclude bilateral and multilateral treaties, but security measures of major importance have not been left out of account either. The chapter "Follow-up to the Conference" provides for the participating states to organize further meetings among their representatives proceeding to an exchange of views on the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act and of the tasks defined by the Conference, as well as on the improvement of security and the development of cooperation.

A preparatory meeting will be held at Belgrade on 15 June 1977, to be followed by a meeting of representatives appointed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Thereafter experts from the thirty-five states will meet in Switzerland to explore a new method for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Their work will be based on another Swiss proposal submitted in Geneva for a "Draft Convention on a European System for the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes". The Swiss moves—especially those regarding the establishment of an arbitration court and a sort of mediation agency—suggest no easy tasks since practically no favourable experience has yet been made with the working of such bodies in international relations between states belonging to opposite systems. But states have to give serious consideration to the possible establishment of such organs, as they are also encouraged to do by one of the principles laid down in the Final Act, the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes. This principle recommends the states to use "negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement or other peaceful means of their own choice".

The creation of a collective security system for the gradual and simultaneous replacement of the two military blocs had long been a proposal which was consistently entertained only by the socialist countries. However, in the time that has passed since Helsinki it has been apparent that this idea is gaining ground, being supported not only be neutral countries like Finland or Switzerland but, also by Portugal and both the Communist and the non-communist left in France.

Features of a Convention

Certain features of the Final Act are reminiscent, in form and content, of genuine conventions. For example, the provisions which envisage certain concrete measures are hardly distinguishable from similar ones of international conventions or other legal instruments. Such are, for example, the aforementioned arrangements for the holding of further meetings, or the arrangement, that the text of the Final Act should be made public by all participating states, which should disseminate it and make it widely known. The implementation of these arrangements calls for no new legal agreements.

That the document signed in Helsinki is not a convention does not find expression either in the title or necessarily in its text. The precise terminology, the lengthy multilateral consultations preceding the signing, as well as the structure of the document (preamble, operative provisions and final clauses) are all much as is customary in the case of conventions. At the signing a reservation was also expressed in the manner usual in the case of treaty obligations (Turkish reservations regarding Cyprus).

Orientation is made difficult by the absence of a rule of international law on the description or classification of resolutions adopted at international conferences. Jurists

therefore seek analogies, comparing instruments for example, to documents and resolutions of similar international conferences. Michel Virally, a French student of international law, writes in respect of such analogies: "The evolution of customary rules for international conferences is also relevant here... thus rules arise in practice governing the competence of conferences to determine their own procedure, to address recommendations to states, and so on."[6]

An international treaty is not only an instrument explicitly so named, agreements of the most diverse designations even declarations and charters, if they have such an effect can be described as such. The closing declarations of many multilateral conferences are agreements under international law as pointed out by Manfred Lachs the Polish international lawyer in a work published in 1958. He includes in this category also the closing act of the 1815 Congress of Vienna, although it was a mixture of many heterogeneous documents. Professor Lachs mentions among the instruments of international legal effect the documents of the conferences held during the Second World War, thus the Moscow Declaration of 1943 and the Yalta resolutions of 1945.[7]

Obviously the Helsinki document's similarity to conventions was the reason for the limitation of its effect on a number of points. It is laid down in one paragraph, for instance that the Declaration does not affect the existing rights and obligations of signatories, "nor their corresponding treaties and other agreements". And in the concluding part of the Final Act the government of Finland is requested to transmit the text of the Final Act to the UN Secretary-General with a view to its circulation to members of the Organization as an official document of the United Nations. It is added, however, that the document shall not be registered with the UN Secretariat as international treaties usually are. These stipulations are attributed to an intention of the signatory states not to conclude a convention with the effect of law although this is not clearly stated in the document. The omission of registration by the UN Secretariat, for example, does not preclude an arrangement from becoming a treaty but prevents its being referred to on UN platforms as a treaty. Reference in the United Nations to the document itself is not precluded by the signatories but is encouraged by its circulation as an official document. What then is decisive from the point of view of the creation of a treaty under international law?

International lawyers are unanimous in arguing that the creation of a treaty under international law is subject to two fundamental conditions. One is a voluntary agreement of will between states with regard to the substance of the arrangement, the other is the intention of states to establish a legal norm, or a legal obligation.[8] The Vienna Convention of 1969 on the law of treaties expounds this in detail: the contracting states have to express, either in the treaty or apart from it, that they undertake a legal obligation. If therefore there is no such provision there can be no question of a treaty obligation in the legal sense.

The norms of international life, however, are not in the least stationary. They expand and change in the course of time. The norms of international law comprise not only treaties. Moreover, international law is not even the only rule of conduct governing relations among states. Of course, many still regard the legal agreements as the strongest, the most authoritative rules of international life: these agreements have a specific set of rules and sanctions established over past centuries and, what is not negligible either, a science of their own dealing with such rules. Other basic sources of international law, in addition to treaties, are the world of

6 Michel Virally: *The Sources of International Law*. In: Sørensen, op. cit., p. 158.

7 Manfred Lachs: Multilateral International Treaties (in Polish, Warsaw, 1958).

8 Haraszti–Herczegh–Nagy: *Nemzetközi jog* (International Law). Budapest, 1972.

customary behaviour governed by precedent, as well as certain recognised principles.

Legal and moral norms

The generally held view that the Helsinki document is in the first place a political and moral norm, a political and moral commitment, directs attention to such norms of international life, to their relationship to one another and to legal norms. Today it is not clear to all yet that, in international affairs, there are not only legal but also moral and political norms.

The systems of national law and those of international law, according to the view prevailing today in socialist jurisprudence, are in interaction with each other and are of equal standing.[9] Neither enjoys preference. International law is theoretically part of the system of international norms in which political, moral and other norms are valid. These often overlap they may even be partly or entirely identical. International law is not as highly developed yet as national legal systems, and it undergoes continuous change; its precepts become clarified and extended.[10] The notion of international morality is generally used additionaly. Things stand similarly also as regards the concept of international public opinion.

The connection between moral and legal norms is particularly close in international affairs. The boundary between a moral and a legal rule is not always clear, many legal rules are at the same time moral rules, too. Hersch Lauterpacht writes, for example: "...there are a number of factors which bring to mind the close connection between law and morals in the sphere of international law".[11]

The relation between moral and legal norms is important also from the point of view of sanctions and guarantees. Legal and moral norms here are different, but this difference with respect to international norms is not as great as in the case of domestic, national norms.

The spread of international morality is connected with the fact that states are bound to assign ever greater significance to the reactions of public opinion and those of other states. They have to take into consideration both probable and actual reactions.[12] Moral pressure, "moral coercion" or sanctions—these are today concomitants of both legal and non-legal commitments.

Reciprocity is one of the most important guarantees in principle, known to politicians and in international morality. The principle of reciprocity means that "states behave towards another state in such a manner as they expect it to behave towards them".[13]

A specific guarantee of the Helsinki document is also the above-mentioned meeting to be held in 1977—where the implementation of its provisions will be discussed—as well as possibly the further meetings.

Thus the Helsinki document, even though its observance is not guaranteed by the usual legal sanctions, still provides important safeguards which are both new and fit to be subjected to legal scrutiny.

Recommendations, customary law

In the analysis of the relationship between law and moral and political obligations, an instructive comparison is offered by the recommendations of international organizations or various international conferences, especially the resolutions of the UN General Assembly. Jurists are of course agreed that

9 Mihály Samu: *A nemzetközi jog fogalma és tagozódása* (The Notion and Structure of International Law). *Jogtudományi Közlöny*, Budapest, Oct., 1966.

10 See, e.g. Kaplan and Katzenbach: *The Political Foundations of International Law*. New York, 1961.

11 Hersch Lauterpacht: *International Law*. Cambridge, 1970. Vol. I, p. 46.

12 Cf. Harold Nicolson: *Diplomacy*. London, 1950.—G. A. Arbatov: *Ideological Struggle and Current International Relations*. Moscow, 1970 (in Russian).

13 Búza–Hajdú: *Nemzetközi jog* (International Law). Budapest, 1961.

a recommendation does not imply any legal obligation. Many of them, however, find fault with the UN Charter and other sources of law, because these fail to give a legal definition of the notion of recommendation. According to M. Virally the negative definition that a recommendation has no binding force is insufficient because this is not indicative of the force or legal effect it may still have.[14] Other scholars argue that UN General Assembly resolutions of a recommendatory character carry considerable political and moral weight once they have been adopted by the overwhelming majority of member states. Some think that such resolutions, without being a direct source of international law, can play an important part in the process of the further development of rules of law.[15]

At variance with Michel Virally, Hersch Lauterpacht attributes to General Assembly resolutions no greater effect than that of recommendations, but he adds that they still imply legal grounds for states which by themselves, or in conjunction with others, wish to act in accordance with these recommendations.[16]

Another perhaps even more important, analogy with the recommendatory character of the Helsinki provisions is that international conferences often result in important non-conventional declarations. As far as high-level, multilateral political meetings are concerned such a detailed and complex document as the Helsinki Final Act rarely have a mere recommendatory character. Take the Bandung Conference of African and Asian countries in 1955. It issued a document that was fairly exhaustive but shorter than the Helsinki Final Act. It contained what is known as the Bandung Declaration of the leaders of twenty-nine states on the "ten principles" which later came to exert a great influence on the practice of international politics and on the development of international law, its principles and customs.

The resolutions adopted by the United Nations, or the declarations issued at the end of summit meetings, may become starting-points for nascent customary rules. Customary law evolves as particular uniform practice in the course of which states recognize, or at least become aware, that they take part in law-making. A precedent established in this way has to be observed as law.[17]

All this provides interesting lessons as to how new rules of international law may be established in the form of customary law also on the basis of the Helsinki recommendations. Experts agree that in our days the formation of common law has accelerated, a customary rule can be established by a small number of cases. This is not necessarily prevented either by the intervening cessation of the practice or by occasional inconsistent actions. Such occurrences can of course slow down the establishment of new customary rules. It is not mere chance that in the period following the signing of the Final Act the international press devoted considerable attention to the practices that might evolve with regard to the various subjects discussed in the document.

The ten principles

The international legal principles figuring in the Final Act mean the most direct connection between the document and international law. The ten principles of European relations as well as several others mentioned can be found in international law, they are mostly identical with the principles of international law. The principles of interna-

[14] Sørensen, op. cit., p. 158.

[15] Falk and Black: *The Future of the International Legal Order*, Vol. I. New Jersey, 1969.—Tunkin, op. cit.

[16] Tunkin, op. cit. p. 129.

[17] Hanna Bokor–Szegő: *A szokásjog szerepe a mai nemzetközi jogban* (The Role of Common Law in Today's International Law). *Állam és Jogtudomány*, Budapest 4/1971.—Falk and Black, op. cit. p. 56.

tional law are specific, general rules but not "generalities". On the one hand, they express the basic features of the legal system, and create an internal logic, and connection between the various rules. On the other hand, their application is obligatory in the interpretation of rules of law. Where there is no detailed regulation, they are directly applicable, they fill a gap, they must be taken into account in the creation of new rules and treaties.[18]

The principles of international affairs, such as the requirement of peaceful coexistence, non-aggression, or disarmament, usually become part of the principles of international law through the negotiation of customary behaviour. The legal principles laid down in bilateral treaties become general principles of international law with the help of more comprehensive instruments—after the Second World War mainly through the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter, which is a convention itself, provides in Article 103 than in the event of a conflict between the obligations of member states under the Charter, and their obligations under any other international agreement, their obligations under the UN Charter shall prevail. The most important principles are contained in Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter, but—and this was a deficiency for some time—only very briefly and without detailed explanation. After the work of codification that lasted more than six years, seven principles were included in a General Assembly resolution adopted in October 1970, the Declaration of the principles of friendly relations and cooperation among states. But all this did not in the least mean the exhaustive and definitive explanation of the principles of the Charter, and still less that of all general principles of international law.

A section of outstanding importance in the Helsinki Final Act is the Declaration on the ten principles guiding relations between European states. This assertion does not contradict the interpretation of the document as an integral whole, and the necessity of respect for the other provisions of the document. The significance of the ten principles is enhanced by their inclusion, separately and in the form of a declaration, in Chapter 1 of the Final Act. Their significance is also shown by the emphasis on their general European application. In the preamble the participating states "declare their determination to respect and put into practice, each of them in its relations with all other participating States, irrespective of their political, economic or social systems as well as of their size, geographical location or level of economic development the following principles which are all of primary significance".

It was not superfluous for the ten principles to practically reiterate the principles of Articles 1 and 2 of the UN Charter and those of the afore-mentioned General Assembly resolution of 1970. As I have indicated neither of the two documents is comprehensive. The 1970 Declaration of the United Nations, for example, allows to a great extent for the legal demands of the developing countries and former colonial territories, for the legal aspects of the liquidation of colonialism and the armed struggle for liberation. The ten principles of the Helsinki document, in turn, were formulated especially in the light of the European situation, including disputed frontiers. The binding rules of the UN Charter are such principles as sovereign equality of states, renouncing the use of force, peaceful settlement of disputes. The Final Act repeats these by simultaneously interpreting them and concretely applying them to Europe; thus promoting the enforcement of these legal norms in the European context. And let us add: also their popularization, since for some time now international principles have hardly ever been given such publicity in Europe.

[18] Lauterpacht, op. cit., p. 88.—Géza Herczegh: *General Principles of International Legal Order*. Budapest, 1969.

An addition to the general principles of international law is the third principle of the Helsinki document, the inviolability of frontiers. This is not contained in the UN Charter, nor among the general rules of international law. It was formulated as a bilateral rule of law by the 1970 agreement between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany. The principle of the inviolability of frontiers has now emerged with added stress, in the form of a recommendation as part of the Final Act. The way is open just as for other provisions of the Final Act for this principle also to become in time, a general convention.

Several of the ten principles explain in more detail and interpret more extensively than does the text of the UN Charter which is considered as an original source of law. More extensive interpretations are given of the principles of non-intervention in internal affairs, territorial integrity of states, and fulfilment in good faith of obligations under international law.

With the formulation of the principle of human rights and fundamental freedoms the European states have taken an important step towards a uniform interpretation of these rights regardless of ideological differences. They reaffirm their adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948, but they invoke also the two International Covenants of 1966. The latter instruments are in fact not only UN recommendations but treaties binding upon the states that are parties to them. The two Covenants had not yet come into force by 1975 because their entry into force was subject to 35 ratifications from all over the world. But this requirement was fulfilled as a result of the accession of a number of European states, by March 1976. It is no exaggeration to say that this is one of the results of Helsinki. It is to be noted that Hungary and several other socialist countries took the lead in the ratification of the two Covenants on human rights (Hungary presented its instruments of ratification already in January 1974), while some Western countries were rather passive regarding this important new form of international cooperation with respect to human rights.

The tenth principle, that of fulfilment in good faith of obligations under international law, decidedly reflects the inclusion of the document in the unified body of international law. It lays down that states will pay due regard to, and implement, the provisions of the Final Act. The Helsinki Declaration does not affect the enforcement of pre-existing international treaties. The participants confirm at the same time that, in the event of a conflict between their international obligations under any treaty, their obligations under the UN Charter will prevail, i.e. they confirm the implications of Article 103 of the Charter.

Principles of international affairs and of international law are to be found not only in the Declaration of the ten principles, but also in the other chapters on various forms of cooperation (e.g. application of the most-favoured-nation clause, humanitarian principles, etc.). These chapters are characterized by most diverse concrete recommendations. At the same time the political principles contained in them, such as the promotion of mutual confidence and mutual knowledge, invite further scientific investigation. It also goes for these points that the Helsinki document increases their weight and elevates their importance among the international norms prevailing in Europe.

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With the above comments I did not wish to prejudice a thorough scholarly study of the Helsinki Final Act, I only meant to air a numbers of aspects. On the basis of the foregoing, however, I am of the opinion that the document, even though it is no treaty, has international legal significance and a legal character. Its contents are determined first of all by its political character, and it

is not surprising that in places it gives free play to a certain flexibility and variety of interpretation. This is not exceptional in respect of international treaties. States would be unable to sign joint instruments if the question of interpretation were regarded as closed in advance. Beside its political and moral substance, however, it is the exploration of its legal character and effect that makes clear the force of the Final Act. Not only its political substance but also its impact and effect will be felt for a long time.

ACCESS TO CULTURE FOR ALL

Utopia or Compromise?

In April 1976, at Unesco headquarters in Paris, a conference of experts discussed for two weeks, in meetings going far into the night, the document referred to above* without reaching complete agreement. The draft recommendation was prepared for consideration at the next Unesco Conference, with a view to assisting member states in defining their cultural politics. I represented the Hungarian Unesco Commission at the conference. Looking at the conference papers it occurred to me and, as it turned out in the course of conversation to others as well, to question that uniform principles of cultural policy can be formulated for countries on different levels of economic, political and cultural development. What sort of theoreticians try here, on the basis of what sort of abstract utopianism, to bridge the ideological front-lines which cut the world? Or is it simply a manœuvring ground of foreign policy? These reservations cannot be brushed aside since the regulation of the principles of cultural activity on the international plane seems to be utopian mental gymnastics in a world where not even the most elementary living conditions are assured to many millions, and where human rights are trampled on in many countries.

All this is true, but the Unesco document starts from the far from utopian assumption that cultural progress cannot be regarded merely as a complement to, and a qualitative regulator of, general development, since it is an instrument of development itself. It is not hopeless to make this understood internationally, since peaceful coexistence—which does not rule out the conflict of ideologies—makes possible the functioning of certain institutions which, on the international plane, may become the ground of negotiated settlements. In this context not even foreign policy "manœuvres" and sensible compromises can be dismissed with a bitter or impatient gesture.

This is how things stand with a document in question, which was discussed by a hundred and eight experts of fifty-nine states, among them forty with observer status representing ten Unesco member states and various organizations, including two liberation movements (Palestine and Namibia), four intergovernmental agencies and twelve non-governmental bodies.

The nature of the document

Unesco has been endeavouring for more than ten years to work out an international code for the subject. The intergovernmental conferences on cultural policies (Venice, 1970; Helsinki, 1972; Jogjakarta, 1973; Accra, 1975) adopted a number of declara-

* Draft recommendation on action to ensure that the people at large have free democratic access to culture and participate actively in the cultural life of society.

tions and recommendations reflecting considerable development in respect of access to culture. The results of this continuous work are referred to also in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed at Helsinki on August 1, 1975. This expert conference had to overcome great difficulties, since recognition of cultural rights as part of human rights imposes on governments the obligation to create the conditions necessary for the exercise of those rights. Governments therefore have to co-ordinate their cultural policies with their social policies. Difficulties deriving from the notion of "élite culture" also had to be overcome.

The document is a recommendation; it forces no kind of cultural policy model on member states but is intended to assist individual countries in formulating their own cultural policies. Of course it is difficult to speak of access and participation without defining that to which access should be given. Deputy Director-General Jacques Havet and Pouchpa Dass, head of the department of cultural development, argued that a number of attempts having been made it would not be advisable to reopen that debate. Therefore, when preparing the preliminary draft, the Secretariat endeavoured to interpret the concept of culture in the broadest possible sense, that is, as a source of knowledge, a manner of living, as well as the power to communicate, and did not narrow it down to the luxury activities of an élite.*

According to the draft recommendation, cultural activity often concerns only a minority, and the existing bodies and the resources employed do not in the least always correspond to actual requirements. Cultural benefits can therefore be made accessible to the broad masses only if the socio-economic conditions make it possible for those concerned not only to delight in them but also to take an active part in all manifestations of the cultural life of society and in the entire process of cultural progress.

The document regards access to culture and participation in cultural life as two complementary aspects of the same reality. Access can promote participation, and participation broadens access, giving culture its real meaning. This is at the same time an essential element of the general social policies concerning the working masses, the work process, leisure, family life, education and training, urbanization and environmental protection.

Teaching in school, education in culture and art, the use of working hours and leisure, the mass media, cultural and various amateur activities may receive a new impulse in the perspective of permanent education. Therefore an educational policy having this in mind must be elaborated which adjusts itself to needs and aspirations, brings to light the intellectual abilities of people, and enchances their appreciation, ensuring their education in culture and art, potentiating their articulateness and stimulating their creativity, thus enabling them to exercise better control over social changes, and to take a more active part in the collective life of society.

The objective is to raise the intellectual and cultural standards of society on the basis of humanist values, and at the same time to strengthen the humanist and democratic content of culture. All this presupposes, however, that measures are taken against the pernicious influence of the "mass commercial culture" which jeopardizes national cultures and the cultural progress of all

* The draft recommendation prepared by the Secretariat was based on a preliminary study prepared by André Holleaux, French Cultural Councillor of State; Iván Boldizsár, Hungarian writer; Augustin Girard, Head of the Research and Study Centre of the Office of the French Under-secretary for Cultural Affairs; V. S. Kruzhkov, Director of the Moscow Institute of Art History; R. Thapar, the Indian journalist. Raymond Williams, Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge; K. Zygulski, Director of the Warsaw University Institute of Philosophy and Sociology. Cf. *Action visant à assurer le libre accès démocratique des masses populaires...* Paris, Unesco, 1975 (SHC_MD 28).

mankind, degrading the human personality, being particularly harmful to young people.

Such a cultural policy requires a communication policy the aim of which is the intensification of the exchange of information, ideas and knowledge in the interest of facilitating mutual understanding, which, with a view to cultural objectives, stimulates the use of modern and conventional information media.

The documents suggests that, in case of necessity, member states should, in conformity with their constitutional processes, modify prevailing practice and guarantee the right of democratic access to culture and of participation in cultural life as a human right.

The right to differ

Discussion at the round-table conference was heated. The title of the recommendation already occasioned controversy. Most of the proposed amendments moved by a few—mainly Western European—countries were aimed at deleting certain passages, other suggestions proposed, in the title of the draft and recurringly in different sections, the term "free participation" instead of "active participation", the terms "everybody", "the personality", "the individual", "men", "anybody", "the population", "all members of society" instead of "the popular masses", etc. Quite a few said that this concept was an abstraction "inconsistent with the realities of their country".

Had the draft recommendation not laid down carefully its notions regarding the most extensive possible circle of social groups and cultural institutions and activities, there might have been misgivings about the abstraction of the concept of popular masses. But the document defined in several places the cultural rights of the individual, of the various groups, of ethnic, etc. minorities, therefore one is bound to argue that this dispute about concepts was directed against the spirit of the draft recommendation. This is deplorable since it stimulates the formulation of a really democratic cultural policy, as suggested even by its title.

There were those who argued that the concept "popular masses" was contradictory, though there were certain realistic aspects in its use since in many countries there are still underprivileged groups and social strata and there are "citizens more equal than others".

This discussion revealed the differences in ideology, motives and positions of the delegates of countries with differing social, political and historical backgrounds. The delegates of socialist countries emphasized that the development of the individual was progressing together with the development of the whole of society, therefore they insisted on retaining the term "popular masses". No agreement being reached, the proposals to be submitted to the next General Conference will contain alternatives for the title of the document, and alternate terms when needed.

Many suggested that, although the preceding Conference had subscribed to the necessity of preparing such a document "in the present state of thought", it would still seem premature to prepare and adopt this sort of international regulation, since the very concept of cultural policy was of so recent origin that it could not yet be the object of international norms. Such an argument not only does not take cognizance of the results of the cultural policies of the socialist countries but can be considered a clear retrograde step from even the ideas accepted within the framework of Unesco.

These—mostly Western European—delegates argued at the same time that the draft, which designates a decisive role to governments, questioned the freedom of individuals to participate, or not to participate, in cultural life. This is a strange sort of objection against a position demanding democratic access to culture.

In other respects they recognized the importance of the principles of humanism,

peaceful coexistence and sovereignty, or rather the inadmissibility of any form of fascism and racial discrimination, but in a given context (especially in respect of freedom of artistic expression, the mass media, the international exchange of cultural values and ideas) they held the view that the socialist proposals for the enforcement of such principles were restrictive in character. They explained, for example, that the constitutions of their countries forbade all forms of censorship, or that governments had no right to interfere in the free activities of individuals, groups and institutions.

In this connection the socialist countries argued that the generally accepted norms laid down in a number of international instruments must be enforced also by legal means. On behalf of the developing countries a number of delegates considered it important to condemn racism and all attempts at cultural domination, and called attention to the fact that there was not only administrative censorship, which might serve also good purposes, but there was also censorship imposed by economic means which, by influencing the cultural market and in other ways, caused more serious damage.

This is worth while meditating upon. It is generally accepted in principle that the culture of small nations can be of value not only in itself, but to enrich the universality of human culture, yet when it comes to practical questions, to translation, book publishing, the sale of artistic productions and films, then things become more difficult. To put it crudely, the culture of small peoples is not "good business" in the industrially developed Western countries. It finds no buyer, no promoter, no market there. Indeed, the cultural appreciation not only of man but also of a country can be limited. It is obviously absurd to reproduce the cultural products of the whole world on the cultural market of a single country, but this is beside the point; the question is about making national cultural markets more open to outside cultural values. But is the cultural market really glutted? According to the book-keeping of institutions and enterprises it really is, while according to the statistical surveys of cultural sociologists concerning the consumption of cultural values it is not, especially not in the qualitative sense. The selective mechanisms functioning in the consumption of cultural values are "stratum-specific" also because the institutional systems influencing cultural requirements are built on the established "taste hierarchy", for business reasons, but not only for business reasons, instead of trying to change it. Consequently in the "liberal cultural market" the multicolour image of the world is lost in uniform monotony; both the television and book markets are dominated by already profitable stereotypes, and not by the reality of the variegated world of one's own people, of developing countries, of small nations, groups and individuals, serving thereby also the preservation of historically outworn "knowledge" and "behaviour patterns", restricting even the possibilities of international cultural exchange to the detriment of all. This kind of interrelation may exist between cultural policy, or its absence, and cultural exchange promoting international understanding.

In the debates over the draft recommendation, which contains many progressive features in respect of the notion of culture as covering ways of living, the stimulation of activity and creativity, the idea of permanent education, emphasis was thus placed on political considerations. During the consultations preceding the Helsinki Conference and in the course of the concurrent propaganda campaign, the most spectacular disputes arose over the subjects of the third agenda item ("third basket" in journalese), i.e. over the role played in the process of international detente by culture, education, information and humanitarian issues. Since the signing of the Final Act we can also witness efforts being made to reopen this dispute time and again and to take these questions out of the scope of agreements on

the promotion of détente between countries with differing social systems.

It is understandable that this dispute flared up again in talks at Unesco headquarters as well, but in the midst of different conditions. Not only the countries of the European area were here represented but also African, Asian and South American states. The majority of the delegates of these interpreted the liberal-bourgeois scale of values and political conceptions as overt or disguised manifestations of the ex-colonialist or neo-colonialist ideology, and therefore they were particularly sensitive to any argument which, with reference to the quality of the way of life and to the difference in the scales of values, expressed doubt about the equivalence of cultures. These countries felt also that the reference made to the limited authority of governments not only evaded the demand for planned development but, alluding to the freedom of the cultural market, even refused to offer appropriate international guarantees.

During the debates the conference room often became the venue of a sort of test of political strength. This caused the delegates increasing uneasiness, since after a while discontent was formulated by both sides: "let us not become a voting machine", said one of the speakers, "but let us not become a disputing machine either", came the reply. The common platform of the two opposite views was the refusal "to become a machine". Indeed, and this was felt by all, the cause was too important to allow the conference to go up in the smoke of endless verbal duelling or to rigidify into a regular taking of a vote.

Ultimately the majority of the participants stressed the significance of the recommendation and its earliest possible adoption. Such action on the part of Unesco might help member states which have not yet ensured conditions for independent cultural policy making. Delegates of the developing countries argued that the draft, designed to make man the moulder of his own future, well expressed the fundamental aspirations of peoples subjected to foreign occupation or cultural domination. A common demand of these is the strengthening of their own cultural image, since this is an integral part of liberation and national unity.

The primary approach of the fundamental principles of the draft coincides with the tasks set by the Hungarian educational policy, so the Hungarian position supported the document—in the preparation of which Hungarians also had taken part—since it displays identities with Hungarian national and international cultural aspirations. This view proved to be identical with the opinion of the delegations of socialist countries who attended the Paris conference.

The amendments proposed by the socialist countries were not intended to shorten the text submitted by the Secretariat, and did not suggest the deletion of any passage. In most cases they recommended complementary phrasings. At several points, referring to the content of culture, they proposed the stressing of humanist and peaceful aims, the categorical rejection of incitement to hatred among the nations, and the demand that the draft should reflect the principles adopted at Helsinki. Other socialist proposals aimed at putting a more marked emphasis on the importance of creating the necessary socio-economic conditions.

The draft recommendation, which in many respects contains the amendments moved by the socialist countries, was adopted by the majority of the participants. Twelve countries chose abstention rather than a vote against the draft because "the document had some merits". It can only be hoped that these merits will become more and more generally evident.

József Kovalcsik

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AND HISTORY

The Budapest Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association

The International Comparative Literature Association held its 7th Congress in Budapest in the August of 1976. Hungarian scholars felt confident of success, knowing that Budapest was a truly suitable place for this one-week meeting of close to five hundred participants from fifty countries. There is something about the *genius loci* even when it comes to scientific conferences, and what I have in mind there is less the panoramic features of the city, or the splendour of the early nineteenth century neo-Renaissance building of the Academy, but more essential spiritual traditions. True enough, I've heard it said that some of the most useful exchanges of scientific views have taken place at airports, a friend mentioned Frankfort recently, participants not even taking the trouble to bus into town, but as regards literature atmosphere cannot be dispensed with as easily. Some of these aesthetes with well-developed sensibilities no doubt occasionally, looking out at the Danube, meditated that not so long ago György Lukács himself, taking a breather, had looked out at the same mighty river, only a mile or less downstream, through the window of his study.

Professor György Mihály Vajda, the General Organizer of the Congress, had pointed out with justified pride in his "The history of comparative literary research in Hungary" that the first journal devoted to comparative literary studies was published in Hungary, at Kolozsvár, between 1877 and 1888, by Samuel Brassai and Hugo Meltzl. Its Hungarian title, *Összehasonlító Irodalomtörténeti Lapok* was given in a Latin version, *Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum*, beginning with the third year of publication. Let me go on with the story by quoting the introductory words of Béla Köpeczi, Deputy Secretary General of the Academy, Vice-President of ICLA and President of the Committee of the Congress, who pointed out that in Budapest, in 1931 "the first Congress of literary history was held in which scholars with the standing of a Benedetto Croce, Friedrich Baldensperger, Otto Walzel, or Paul van Thiegen took part." Nor should one neglect the 1962 Budapest international conference of comparative literary history, whose close to fifty participants from countries other than Hungary included names like W.A.P. Smit from Utrecht, Roland Mortier from Brussels, Jean Rousset from Geneva, Julius Dolansky from Prague, Kazimir Wyka from Warsaw, or René Etiemble from the Sorbonne. One of the ICLA journals, *Neohelikon*, the *Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum* of our own day, is published from Budapest. The Institute of Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences is in charge of the *Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages* in many volumes, perhaps the bulkiest publication on the subject. *Acta Litteraria* published by Budapest University has also achieved a certain international reputation. The World Literature department of the university, which used to have a general nature, concentrating on "great books" was restructured as an Institute of Comparative and General Literature under the guidance of Professor Péter Nagy.

Zsigmond Pál Pach, Professor of History, and Vice-President of the Academy, argued in his words of welcome that comparative studies were lately accorded a respected place in intellectual studies in Hungary. "Comparison of Hungarian developments with progress in East and West, that is the use of the comparative historical method, is what is needed to raise the human and social sciences to a world standard; this is the principal instrument of the historical backing of the internationalist approach,

and at the same time the measure of our national characteristics and progressive national traditions.

Comparative studies with a new stress on historicity, that is how I would describe the major idea and meaning of the Budapest congress. Major papers by the Hungarian participants represented this idea, e.g., Professor István Sőtér's "The Application of the Comparative Method in the History of a National Literature"; Professor Miklós Szabolcsi's "The Renewal of the Historical Methods and Comparative Literature", and Professor Péter Nagy's "The Hungarian Literary Revolution of the Beginning of the Century in the European Context."

This trend evident in the Hungarian contributions is no doubt connected with a major enterprise on which Hungarian scholars are engaged: the production of a seven-volume Marxist history of world literature in Hungarian. Perhaps the increased emphasis on the place of Hungarian literature in the concert of other literatures is also connected with this. These days thanks to a growing number of translations of Hungarian works into Russian, German, French and English, the much lamented isolation on Hungarian literature is beginning to be less severe, and literary historians as well are therefore beginning to consider it their business to establish its proper and justified place.

I should not like to create the impression that such a link-up between comparative studies and historicity was exclusively, or even principally, the business of Hungarian participants. To quote Academician Aleksander Flaker from Zagreb, who led the discussion of the Comparative Literature and Literary History workshop: "If the comparative study of literature has developed (earlier) as the study of 'influences' of certain writers on others or of one national literature on another... then (later) literary comparison has been replaced more and more by a comparison of the causal-historical conditions in which writers worked or even by literary phenomena interpreted as reflections of a certain social-historical situation or as ideological answers to it."

There is something special about comparative studies. It is as if they wished to justify their right to exist again and again, not only to the world but to themselves as well. One can't help feeling that more energy is devoted to outlining the scope and essence of the discipline than to concrete literary facts. The most powerful impression was made by someone long known in Budapest, Professor H. H. Remak from the University of Indiana. His paper was originally written as "Controversy and Concord in Comparative Literature" and then reformulated as "The Future of Comparative Literature". It does for the present what René Wellek's "The Crisis of Comparative Literature" that had formulated doubts rather than a firm faith in the future, had done at the 2nd Congress in 1958.

Remak's was the voice of his own conscience and that of his discipline. He mentioned Marxism, structuralism, and *Rezeptionsästhetik*, as three trends whose influence is growing in current comparativist studies. In his analysis the three were given almost equal weight. Remak does not profess to be a Marxist in some sort of exclusive sense of the term. Looking at his own development and the processes taking place over the past five or ten years amongst western intellectuals, chiefly those in academic employment, he wished to demonstrate the growing presence and influence of Marxism in non-Marxist thinking. He stressed that the effect of "the most interesting and productive of... ideological stimuli" was powerfully potentiated "on the receiving end" by the reaction of western intellectuals to political events, while "on the emitting end" a "more open, more flexible, more pluralistic, more aesthetically conscious" Marxist thinking in both socialist and non-socialist countries proved to be of great help.

Looking at this applied Marxism evident in a whole series of other papers and

concrete analyses, and also at the increasing knowledge of structuralism shown by participants from socialist countries or Western Marxists, (the first-class use made of structuralism by Soviet scholars is a telling example) one can perhaps discern Central Europe, and Budapest within it, as the point of intersection.

It is planned to hold the next congress in Africa, the point of intersection of other important lines of development, something that is made logical by endeavours to draw the Third World into the ambit of comparative studies, not only as a passive subject, but as active participants.

JÁNOS ELBERT

A SIMPLE STORY

I asked my doctor, István Várkonyi many times during the past years to tell me *the* story, his story I had vaguely heard about here and there but could not get really the gist of.

He had never been willing to talk, until unexpectedly, he said one day:

"Now you can ask. I retired yesterday. I am sixty-eight. I can't gain any distinctions any more, jealousy can't overtake me."

*

"Thank you, doctor."

"Under the condition that you won't make a hero of me. You won't embroider anything and won't use a single superfluous adjective."

"Well, but why have you kept silent, for thirty-one years about something you are now willing to talk about?"

"I wanted to live by my work and not on my supposed distinctions. What I did was my duty as a man, no more."

"Were you afraid of something?"

"Never of anything. Although, on a single occasion, in the early fifties, I put some of my documents together and took them down to the country, to one of my friends, a parson. He wrapped them into cellophane, tied the parcel up with a piece of string and buried it in his cellar. To tell the truth, no one touched me."

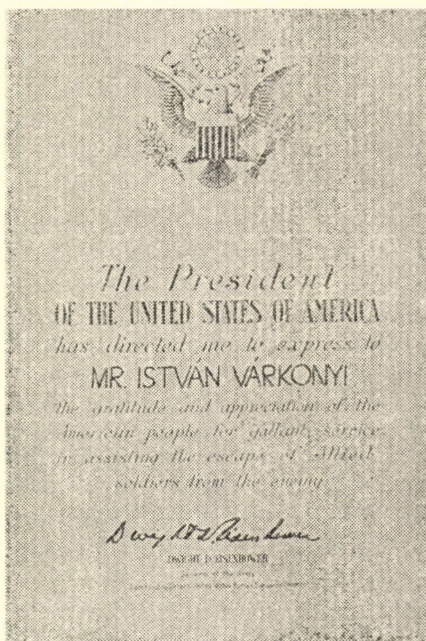
"And what happened to the documents?"

"I have them here ready for you. You may find them here in this envelope."

Photographs folded up into four, slips of paper, with the yellow impression of the string.

He showed me the document here illustrated.

"There is no date, doctor..."



The President
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
has directed me to express to
MR. ISTVÁN VÁRKONYI
the gratitude and appreciation of the American people for gallant service in assisting the escape of Allied soldiers from the enemy

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

"It reached me on January 24, 1947."

"If I'm not mistaken, Truman was the President of the United States at that time."

"You are right."

"Then let's have the story."

*

"In the middle of November 1944 I received call-up papers ordering me to report to the Kámon barracks near Szombathely, to the Signals Regiment No. 101/1. At that time I was an ensign of the reserve. I reported to the commander, Lieutenant-Colonel vitéz* Béla Répási. He was an old and tired, ailing man, recalled. He complained bitterly in my presence about the chaotic conditions. The barracks were a transit camp for Signals units moved to Austria by the Germans. Répási considered the whole thing sheer madness, but he could not do anything about it. His adjutant was discharged because of illness early in December, and I was appointed in his place. I did not feel enthusiastic. It was my duty to keep a record of the constantly changing numbers on the roll, and to supervise outlying radio transmitters. Companies came, and moved off towards Austria. They were urged on by their commanders, and we had to provide shelter and victualling."

"I felt distressed by helplessness, by the fact that I was unable to help those moving on, all hopes lost, leaving behind their families."

"Were you completely powerless?"

"Almost. Only once did I succed in doing something. A lieutenant of the reserve was on the verge of suicide. He felt unable to leave his family which lived in Budapest. It was next to impossible to escape, the Germans were at our heels. I asked a pilot ensign friend of mine, who served at the Szombathely airport and flew in milk every day to the children of Budapest, to take the lieutenant. He was risking his life, but he flew off with him. And he returned without him. His name was János Molnár. Later, when he was sent to take arms and ammunition to the Germans at Pápa airport, he landed at Szolnok instead which was in Russian hands. He lives in Budapest, and enjoys the best of health."

*

"On Christmas Eve 1944, Répási was supposed to say the usual few words, under the regiment's Christmas-tree, but he didn't have the strength to do so. I had to come forward, in front of the soldiers, and I said the saddest words of my life. From the radio I knew exactly what had happened right then to the head of the Hungarian Resistance, Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky: he was executed at Sopronkőhida. It was with that knowledge that I left to see the crews of our radio stations. I was alone, driving my car. I called at every unit and shook hands with every soldier. I will never forget all those hopeless, accusing glances."

"I was already on my way back. There was a bright moonlight when, around midnight, not long before Kámon, I noticed some movement to the right of the road, around the haystacks and ricks of straw. I stopped the car, removed the safety catch of my revolver and started out through the fields towards the stacks. Some eight to ten people crouched there. I counted them later, there were eleven of them. I addressed them in Hungarian but received no answer. I asked them in German, and then one of them replied in a broken German: We are Americans. They gathered round me, but not with any intention of attacking. They all were exhausted, half frozen, hungry men. Bomber pilots who had been shot down somewhere above Sopron. They had bailed out, buried their parachutes, and spent the days in ricks, and ventured out at night.

"I don't know any more what my first feeling was, but I did see that these men were no fighting enemies but unarmed prisoners. They begged me not to turn them over to the Germans. I am no pro-Nazi,

* A title awarded by the Horthy régime.

I assured them, and promised to come back and fetch them in an hour and a half. Should I not do so, they were to clear out urgently."

"I drove to the barracks. I got hold of Hungarian soldier's uniforms and boots unnoticed, and started back with a small truck. I found them at the same place, only by now they had taken out their weapons which had been hidded in the ricks. I asked them to throw them away, change their clothes and to fold up their overalls, bringing them along. They got into the truck, and we set out for Vaszar, with the wine cellar of a parson I knew as our destination."

"Let's stop here for a minute. Were you not afraid? After all, you could have been stopped by the first German patrol..."

"...and they'd have massacred us on the spot, wouldn't they? That's so. Fortunately, I didn't think of it then. There was no trace of fear in me. I only felt a determination that I must help. I am a human being, and I had enough of the senseless slaughter, of that wretched war. Eleven people want to live, and it is my duty to save them."

*

"The reason I took them to the vicinity of Vaszar was that I thought the Russians would advance towards Szombathely in the direction of Pápa and Celldömölk, and in that region I would be able to hand them over sooner to their allies. However, my ideas were thwarted by the German counter-offensive, and the tank battle of Székesfehérvár, as a consequence of which the frontline came to a halt well under Pápa, and the attack towards Western Transdanubia started only on March 22, after Székesfehérvár had been liberated by the 4th Guards Army. The 9th Guards Army took Pápa on March 25, but I had taken the Americans to Úriújfalu already in the middle of February, and from there in the middle of March, to the neighbourhood of Vép, Nára and Bárdos. A few days before March 29, the liberation of Szombathely, we succeeded in getting into the town's underground shelters, called Owl Castle, and here they spent the last few days. It was there that they were joined by those two Soviet tankers with whom they were shut up together for at least four days and nights. If you now ask how it actually happened, I can only say, God only knows. One morning when I took some bread and bacon to the underground hide-out, there they were crouching in the darkness, among the Americans. Fate so ordained it that they needed no dictionary to understand their interdependence, and they shared their really scanty rations with the solidarity of those who want to survive."

"It seems as if you intentionally avoided exciting details, doctor, those little episodes which make the story psychologically interesting as well."

"All my life it has been the whole that interested me, and not irrelevant details. In my youth I was a long distance runner, and I never looked up before the finish."

"On April 3, 1945 I was summoned by the Soviet commander to the county hall. He thanked me on behalf of the allies for what I had done. The five American pilots and the two Soviet soldiers were also present."

"What about the other six Americans?"

"They escaped from the vicinity of Bárdos to Burgenland still in March, and from there they got on to Italy, and there they reached their own lot."

"What happened to you after that?"

"The Soviet commander asked me whether I had any wish. I asked for permission to return to Budapest together with my family as soon as possible. Within two days we were at home. We were taken by a Soviet truck. They saw to it that we should get back our flat. And here we have lived ever since."

"Until January 20, 1947 nothing noteworthy happened to me. That day, the adjutant of General Weems, the head of the American mission in Budapest, rang at our flat late at night and brought an invitation to the Park Club for twelve o'clock on Friday, January 24. There, at the ceremony combined

with a banquet, I was presented the certificate of merit of the United States, signed by General Eisenhower. I was not the only one invited, altogether fourteen of us were given awards. Unfortunately I do not remember their names, but you may find them in the papers of the day. The Hungarian government was represented by the Minister of Defence, who promoted me to captain of the reserve then and there."

*

"I cannot tell you anything sensational about the twenty-nine years which have passed since then. I saw patients in my district, I helped people as much as I could. I have met neither the American pilots nor the Soviet soldiers since. Their memory links within me the divided world of today which can be saved only by man's solidarity with man. All I learnt was perhaps that if one has to act, words cannot replace action. My story is as simple as that."

CSABA ILKEI

MODERN HUNGARIAN POETRY

MIKLÓS VAJDA, EDITOR
WITH A FOREWORD BY WILLIAM JAY SMITH
320 pp. 41 PHOTOGRAPHS

This unique anthology consists of poems by forty-one contemporary Hungarian poets living and writing in the postwar years. It is to date the single most comprehensive collection of modern Hungarian poetry available in English. Following rough translations from the Hungarian, the poems have been put into final poetic form by major American, British, and Canadian poets, among them Donald Davie, Robert Graves, Ted Hughes, Edwin Morgan, Charles Tomlinson, Kenneth McRobbie, Daniel Hoffman, Barbara Howes, Richard Wilbur, and William Jay Smith. Culled largely from the pages of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, the poems represent the work of Hungary's most important modern poets, including Gyula Illyés, István Vas, Sándor Weöres, Anna Hajnal, János Pilinszky, Ágnes Nemes Nagy, László Nagy, and Ferenc Juhász. *Modern Hungarian Poetry* contains an introduction by Miklós Vajda, a foreword by William Jay Smith of Columbia University, and a biographical note along with a photograph of each poet.

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REVIEW OF PERIODICALS

ON THE TRACKS OF A PREJUDICE

Most of my press reviews start with "special interest has been aroused"—by one or the other article; this, of course, is quite natural: otherwise why write about it? What I am writing about now really raised the dust, and the October 1975 issue of *Valóság* in which it appeared has been treasured by all who possess a copy. Needless to say, interest was predictable, and more than the usual number were printed of that issue.

And yet what György Száraz the playwright had written was no more than a critical notice of *Hajtűkanyar* (Hairpin Bend), a novel by Mária Ember. Earlier reviews had been good, without being over-enthusiastic, nor did what Száraz had to say stir up feelings of a literary sort.

Száraz put a quotation from the novel at the head of his article. "The subject of this book is not THE Jewish fate. The story is about Hungarian history"—and then cut right into the tangle of bias, prejudice, sensibilities, grievances and suspicions. Jewish Hungarians, Hungarian Jews, "being Hungarian", "being Jewish", Jewish fate, Hungarian fate—it is such notions that Száraz proposed to examine. He wanted to see clearly and speak frankly of things about which nothing has appeared in the Hungarian press for the past thirty-odd years. His most frequently used term, "duality", in the essay can be easily misunderstood taken out of context; and many objected to its anti-semitism or philo-semitism, each according to his own prejudices. To get things into better perspective a few words about Száraz himself are not amiss.

He is a Hungarian from the Up-country, that is Slovakia. There are no Jews in his family. He introduced himself in the illustrated weekly *Tükör* of March 2, 1976, and what he had to say about his spiritual and intellectual homeland carries more weight than a potted biography. "Our ancestors struggle within us: peasants tied to the soil and nomad shepherds, settled burghers and journeymen on the road. Just as the duality of preservation and disengagement pervades the whole essence of man, the underground, twisting roots of every family cover all that small and yet spacious world called East Central Europe in the language of regional geography. If we tried to follow tracks of any family living in this region, and follow all their roots, we would see that we all filled this land. A search for the memory of our ancestors meanders through new and new landscapes, twist on slopes and hills among the boundary stones of changing of life and changing native idioms.

"I would like to travel this road once, and seek my ancestors: Hungarians, Cumans, Polovtsians, Székelys, Germans and Slavs; serfs, artisans, free peasants of the Transylvanian County Csík, petty nobles of the Great Plain, miners of the Ore Mountains and burghers from the Tatra valleys.

Those who no longer have a face, history or memory. Those who are lost forever, whose bodies moulder in graves throughout the Danube basin under Calvinist headboards, Catholic crosses, carved and painted Slav grave-posts in sunken medieval cemeteries and mass graves of cholera victims in Cumania, among the hills of Zala, under the snow-capped mountains of Csík, in the towns of the Tatra, on the slopes of the Lower Carpathians..."

How should one write about the year 1944? That is Mária Ember's subject, the year of the deportation of Hungarian Jews. György Száraz tackles the same subject: "With passion reopening old sores or with cautious tact? With literary pathos or in objective, dry sentences? With the horror of the contemporary, the humility of the survivor, with the sense of guilt of the involuntary accomplice or with the cool calm of those who were not guilty? But all of us had something to do with it... because everything that happened then has become Hungarian history by now."

How could it happen, who were the anti-Semites in Hungary?—asks György Száraz. He remembers his childhood. "Not far from our house in the 'holes', as they called the cluster of houses divided by lanes in the centre of the village, the synagogue was also there, there lived an old peddler, a nineteenth-century survival; he had a whistle and carried a sack on his back. We, children, followed him in a group if we caught a glimpse of him: 'Catch us if you can, Old Jew!' If he turned we fled screaming. We were not really afraid of him, this was just a game, no more. However, probably, the memory of medieval ritual murder accusations and of the fairly recent Tiszaeszlár ritual murder trial (1883)* was at the back of our minds. Probably this was also behind the way my grandmother admonished us: 'Just wait till the skin-peddler Jew gets you!'

"So the stumpy little cobbler, who taught me to sing Erger-Berger, an anti-Jewish song, was an anti-Semite? I knew him till his death, he was not a member of the Arrow-Cross Hungarian fascist party, and didn't meddle in politics. Or my grandmother who, at seventy, her aching feet clad in unwieldy felt slippers, pushed the creaking cart everyday to the fields, was she an anti-Semite? I don't think so. I can't believe it."

Somebody says in Mária Ember's story:

"We always kept to ourselves. Our synagogues are not open day and night like the Catholic churches. We married each other. The yammering if the child didn't choose another Jew. The parents rent their garments as in mourning. And then we wonder that we stayed strangers..."

György Száraz comments: "Yes, the Jewish synagogues and the inner life of Jewish families were always surrounded by some mystery. The closed gates, the high fences suggested secrets. The clothes, language and religious customs of these newcomers were the signs of a strange and distant world, more distant than the world of the Suabians in Harta or the Catholics at Apostag."

A little history is here called for. The history of the Jews in Hungary was much like that in the rest of Europe. The unifying spirit of the Christian Middle Ages had a strong impact on both. As long as the Hungarians were pagans they did not mind much that the Jews had crucified Christ but "with the spreading of the new religion among the masses, with the approach of Hungary to the West both in economic and political relations and ways of life the Jews grew more and more alien".

Let us skip the medieval centuries; from the viewpoint of the Jews they were more or less like everywhere in Europe although Western-type pogroms started relatively late in Hungary.

Since the end of the eighteenth century the number of Jews in Hungary substantially increased. Queen Maria Theresa annexed

* See Péter Hanák's "Acquittal—but no Happy Ending" in NHQ No. 36.

Galicia and the majority of the Jews came to Hungary from this Polish province although the proportion of Sephardi Jews was not insignificant either. There were 75,000 in 1785 and 240,000 by 1840. The problem had to be solved. The first legislation providing rights for the Jews was prepared in 1839 when the Jews living in Western European countries were already well advanced on the road to emancipation. How did Hungarian Jews live? They dealt in hides and wool, and formed the right to distil and sell spirits, and to sell meat. The feudal lords liked them since "Jews live almost on onions alone and are more industrious: they trade, buy, sell, if they have a horse they are ready to take on freight at acceptable rates, i.e. they content themselves with small benefits"—wrote a politician in the early nineteenth century. In the primitive conditions of Hungary at the time the village Jews were the only middlemen between the owner of the estate and the outer world.

"That Hungarian peasants speak of 'going to the Jew's' to buy kerosene and blue-stone does not indicate anti-Semitism, it is rather a job classification, a synonym of the tradesman..." one of Mária Ember's characters observes but Száraz comments: "This is not quite so. The peasant—a producer and consumer—always suspected the trader, the middleman, the businessman wherever he came from. A buyer or seller whose profession is not buying and selling always feels a little cheated. And this primitive suspicion was doubled by religious prejudice. The growing number of accusations at the end of the eighteenth century indicate the increase in village anti-Semitism.

The first step towards emancipation had been that Joseph II (1780–90) permitted the Jews to practice a trade and settle in the royal free boroughs. At the same time he tried to put them in the service of his Germanizing ambitions: he compelled them to take on German family names and do military service, he erected schools for them to replace their "bad *Judendeutsch*" by standard German. Despite all this they did not become the instruments of Germanization since they made their living chiefly among the Hungarians. The process of assimilation became a process of Magyarization.

How far did it go? A snapshot from revolutionary Hungary in 1848 is the answer: the Jewish religious community in Arad issued a proclamation according to which" in order to eliminate the not unfounded accusation that the Jews... stubbornly segregated themselves from the other denominations", they proposed to shift the Sabbath to Sunday, and abrogate compulsory circumcision and the obligation to hold divine service in an unintelligible language, with outward paraphernalia and hatted.

In 1849 the National Assembly proclaimed their emancipation.

The Hungarian Jews had to realize that their conditions and very existence depended on the success or failure of the revolution. In refutation of anti-Semitic arguments many of them turned Christian and Magyarized their names. A certain Kunewalder, the chief of the Jewish religious community of Pest, converted to Catholicism. The event created considerable stir. A little later the papers announced the conversion of a respected businessman of Pest, Lajos Flesch, and his 14-member family. The *Pesti Divatlap* announced in April that Hermann Roth, a future priest, prepared to edit a Hungarian paper for the Jews with the "main aim of reconciling the clashing interests of Jews and Gentiles."

The defeat of the 1848 Revolution was followed essentially by the modernization and capitalist reorganization of the Habsburg Empire and within it of Hungary. "Apart from the Germans living in Hungary the Jews were the only section of society who were free of feudal bondage, and skilled in business and financial matters. They were fit to take upon themselves the burdens of developing capitalism and—understandably—they became its almost only masters and

beneficiaries... It was quite natural that the take-over of the leading economic posts by a relatively small group of people up to now pushed into the background irritated others." Add that at about that time Polish and Russian Jews fleeing from poverty and racial persecution started to migrate towards the West. In Hungary they enjoyed full citizen's rights; since 1867 immigration had not been restricted. In 1871 there were 541,000 thousand Jews in Hungary, in 1900 already 851,000 and by 1914 more than one million.

These were the two facts on which contemporary and later anti-Semitism based their charges: the monopolistic situation of the Jews in the world of capital, and their dynamic, large-scale immigration. But the Jews were not to blame in either case.

"The anti-Semitic rage of the seventies and eighties soon died down. The best people, regardless of party affiation, protested against the most odious and revolting events—such as the ritual murder charge at Tiszaeszlár in 1883. The trial itself rather extinguished than kindled the fire. We were ashamed of ourselves perhaps more than the French after the Dreyfus affair. At the elections in 1884 the Anti-Semitic Party still secured 17 seats, in 1887 only 7. Győző Istóczy, the "father of Hungarian anti-Semitism", was considered the clown of the Parliament, his contributions were accompanied with roaring laughter from all sides, his party soon disintegrated... So racial prejudices had ceased to exist? Not quite. But by the end of the century, although saying this may sound frivolous, a faint taste of joviality was added to anti-Semitism... It would be difficult to discover murderous passions even in the political anti-Semitism of the period; at most they demanded the tightening of immigration laws but never a restriction of the rights of Jews already living in Hungary... This was the golden age of Jewish anecdotes and the best jokes and comic paper characters were invented by the Jews themselves. In fact—to make the idyll complete—there were always one or two Jewish journalists on the staff of anti-Semitic papers.

But how could it happen? How did this jovial anti-Semitism turn into the "murderous flame which devoured five hundred thousand Hungarian Jews?" Indeed, the years after the turn of the century constituted perhaps the best period of Hungarian Jewry. One could easily imagine there was no Jewish question in Hungary, that Hungarian liberalism had solved this too—until it turned out that it had not solved this either.

At the turn of the century the walls of the intellectual ghetto crumbled as well. Young Jews broke them down, and scandalized the guardians of these walls on both sides. Some of these rebels were satisfied with the opportunities offered by emancipation, and utilized them to the maximum. This group acceded to leading positions, and aroused the antipathy of the aristocrats and the landed gentry who feared for their power and the antipathy of the masses, and, with this, laid the bases for a different kind of anti-Semitism—of a social instead of a religious type. Earlier "Jew" had been a synonym of village trader, later of banker, and capitalist.

There was also another group who did not want to become members of the Establishment. "The inner democracy of Jewish communities, the memory of ancient and recent grievances in the fedual environment, the faster and more accurate understanding of the logic of capitalism and naturally of Marxism, its critic, made the poorer Jews and the Jewish intellectuals relatively more receptive to the ideas of the age than backward non-Jews were."

Breaking out from the ghetto they found themselves facing other walls built of backwardness and hatred around the classes and national minorities. They continued to struggle and became the main army and leaders of Hungarian progressivism. "That they could not know well enough the people

for whom they fought, that they were not always tactful, that they exaggerated sometimes and threw genuine national-popular grievances, ambitions and fears into the same pot with chauvinistic resentment and illusions of "Great Hungary" and the 1000-year-old state was a mistake but it was in the nature of things. On the whole they became the ferments of the age and the good allies of all genuine talents."

Both capitalists and progressives constituted only a minority of Hungarian Jewry. The majority meanwhile successively integrated in the country's life, adjusting to the environment in every respect, giving up their isolation.

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Száraz received many letters after the appearance of his essay; he quoted one of them in an interview given to András Mezei in the October 11, 1975 issue of the weekly *Élet és Irodalom.* The heading "Why Not Let Sleeping Dogs Lie?" bore an ironic reference to Száraz's essay. Here it is: "...my family has been living in Hungary for five generations... Our native language, education, emotional and intellectual ties have made us Hungarians, our Jewishness was a religion which few abandoned. What do I want to prove? Frankly speaking, nothing. There is nothing to prove. I am a Hungarian, and an atheist. And yet, I am thought a Jew. What I consider myself to be? As long as I cannot define the concept of Jewry beyond religion and race, I am unable to give an answer. It is a different matter that many thousand graves constitute a strong bond with a community even if it has been forsaken many times." Száraz, in his answer, gave a striking formulation of the question Jewish Hungarians—Hungarian Jews, as it appears now: "why couldn't you safeguard and regard as yours all treasures of a many-thousand-year-old culture while your native language, education, emotional and intellectual ties made you a Hungarian? Or, to put it differently, a person feeling and realizing consciously the responsibility of his identity with mankind, a person receptive to universal human culture and aware of the great harmony arising from differences between nations should have no such trouble. Why should such a person live in the state of schizophrenia or mutilate himself?... What stupid rascal would exclude Miklós Radnóti, Károly Pap, Milán Füst—and many others—from Hungarian literature? But who could deny that Pap's and Gelléri's writings expressed also their Jewishness, that their personality as artists was a unique alloy of two cultures? What fool would dare weigh on precision scales the Jewish origin, German philosophic schooling, Marxist internationalism and Hungarian commitment of György Lukács?"

And yet, this is exactly what happened. After 1919 the Counter-Revolution, declining to recognize the responsibility of the historical ruling classes for the sorry state of the country and at the same time nourishing the illusion of "national pride", thus finding an outlet for the social discontent of the masses, spread the myth of the "nation-destroying Jewish conspiracy". Defeat in war and the disintegration of what was called historical Hungary was thus put forward as the result of the machinations of Jewish war-profiteers and defeatist agitators. Every progressive idea turned into "Jewish-bolshevik-plutocratic poison alien to the soul of the Hungarian nation". For the first time an accusing finger was pointed at *all* Hungarian Jews. This led up directly to 1944. "Yes, thus the jovial anti-Semitism of the turn of the century became deadly serious just when the irritating immigration from the East had come to an end and the Jewish middle class had more or less integrated. Thus the poverty of rural and urban masses, the insecurity of the existence of the petty bourgeoisie and the middle classes, the situation of jobless university graduates became the hotbed of a new anti-Semitism, and then, following the brown example, the breeding ground of Arrow-Cross nazism."

The relationship of Jews and non-Jews was henceforth determined by suspicion. "Here is the vicious circle: prejudices had an impact on personal antipathies, and they, in turn, strenghtened the prejudices. In these conditions it happened that both Hungarian Jews hurt in their dignity and fearing the worst, and progressive Hungarians became the victims of mutual suspicions."

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How could 1944 happen? Száraz arrived finally at the guilt of hostile propaganda. "Yes, they gradually habituated them to it (that is the Jews to tolerate humiliations). And they habituated us too; through films, the press, anti-Jewish laws, the first, the second, the umpteenth... In school, in the para-military youth organization, in boy-scout patrol-meetings. We were taught that Jewish commissars were driving the Bolshevik herds attacking on the Eastern front, and that the American planes dropping high explosives were manned by Jewish pilots... "We have heard in Munkács that since the Jews had been shut into the ghetto there is more food. Are the Jews of Rozsnyó also in a ghetto? And can you get everything?"—wrote my father in May 1944, from the military hospital in Munkács. Yes, the Jews of Rozsnyó were also in a ghetto. Food you couldn't get but Jewish shops, apartments and Jewish property were on public sale. They wanted us to want it too. They made a whole nation accessory to the fact." Let us delve further into the author's childhood memories.

"...I saw the auction of 'Jewish belongings', clothes, furniture, household utensils, in the yard of the evacuated ghetto... And in the thronging crowd there were the women who, in May, had wept over the people marching into the ghetto... In the summer of 1945 we lived in Budapest, in a proletarian house teeming with bedbugs, our kitchen-door facing the corridor with the shared lavatory at its end. In August after the liberation the police came into the house: the janitor shouted that those who had in their posession goods from Jewish shops must carry them down to the court; in one hour there would be a search and if they find anything... I watched the procession from the corridor, the children carried linen deck-chairs, zinc buckets, wash-bowls, tennis rackets, skis..."

How much did we absorb of the poison? —asked György Száraz. Who did it? "We didn't do it. We didn't want it. The fascists did it. The Arrow-Cross lot. The Germans. The gendarmes. We only put up with it. We only looked on. We only took the zinc bucket, the wash-bowl... Others took them too, why should we have left them there? We didn't know what lay in store for them. We didn't know the crowded railway trucks, the concentration camps, the gas. Nobody told us. And if we had known? Had we still looked on? Had we not done something against it? There is no answer, there can be no answer, to that question. They made us accessories to the fact insidiously, we failed to pass the test but we did not know what test we had to pass."

"I heard the expression 'a fascist people' for the first time in June 1945, in an open cattle-truck, amongst a dense crowd of black-marketeers and market women. I stood squeezed near three men. I understood from what they said that they were on their way home from forced labour service. They surely had accounts to settle but I disliked these three homecomers intensely for what they have said.

"A fascist people"—who were they?

Anti-Semitism existed also in other parts of Europe: Száraz lists the Slovak, Croat, Rumanian and of course German and Austrian crimes. They "solved" the Jewish question everywhere. A fascist people? What was the difference between them and the Hungarians?

Why had we no uprising, no guerilla war in our country? Because of our disadvantageous terrain? Because of unsuitable circumstances? Because the Revolution of 1919

had been followed by a Counter-Revolution in 1920? Because people's souls were crippled by hostile propaganda and incitement, by irredentist sorrow, by fascist social demagogy, because the country was bled white and countless Hungarians who had fled from the successor states lived in railway trucks, and because there had been Vienna Awards, the "enlargement of the country"?

"How did we try to overcome all this after the war? With tact. Instead of Jews we said 'persecuted people' and said it delicately, gently or with natural simplicity. And they did not protest; they accepted, even required and demanded it as if they had accepted for eternity the absurdity forced on them in 1944: that it was shameful to be a Jew.

We were not only tactful, but also hypocritical. As we did not and could not accept responsibility for the gas chambers, we did not accept anything. We didn't do it. The fascist did it. The Germans. The Arrow-Cross lot. We suffered. We also have our dead. Consequently: we are not guilty. They—and how could it have been different at the time—wanted and demanded that we accept responsibility for everything. For the gas chambers, for the extermination camps... Then we both spoiled something. They accused us louder and louder and we kept stubbornly silent. And finally silence on both sides... Was there any anti-Jewish irritation in the years after 1945? It is difficult to say it out loud but we have to admit that there was. I don't mean the old story, or the murderers but the irritation which stemmed from unsolvable contradictions, misunderstandings, narrow-mindedness, lack of sincerity.

The Jews were living in a state of schizophrenia. "Can this soil become a homeland for them at any time? Should they discard their Jewishness for wich they had almost been murdered? Should they be Hungarians and live in the midst of a people from which they had been expelled?" As the necessary historical process, the assimilation of Hungarian Jews was completed, it was replaced by the "double bond", a much-treated theme in the plays of György Száraz. How does he interpret it? As he said in the interview: "Why is this wrong? Is it a crime if somebody feels that Isaak Babel's and Sholem Alechem's writings are closer to him than those of Maupassant or D. H. Lawrence? If this is a crime, then I am also guilty because emotionally, although not aesthetically, the Vogul bear-songs and Csokonai's poems are more important to me than the *Iliad* or Goethe. And why should you [Mezei, the interviewer] turn away from the graves of your ancestors driven through Europe? Why should you forget the memory of those murdered in 1944? In the name of a misconceived patriotism or in that of a misconstructed internationalism?"

Why couldn't a Jew be Hungarian?—asks György Száraz because he knows that putting the question like this will create the least resistance from both sides. If there is still anti-Semitism in Hungary it does not revolve around this more or less rational question any more. Let me quote the original article again:

"We have got over it. We solved it. Did we? Yes, with legislation. But we know that legislation and paragraphs are not everything. Time solved it or will solve it? Yes, but I am afraid that many things can still hide in the shadow of still-existing Jewish sensitivity and non-Jewish tact. Everybody with Jewish friends can see for himself how easy it is to become embarrassed. Once I used the term Jew in the presence of a very close acquaintance. He looked at me sadly: 'you at least should not use abusive language...' "

György Száraz is not a philosopher, he does not develop all the historical and philosophical aspects of the problem: he is a dramatist, and his article is in fact the analysis of a historical drama; he looks for moral lessons in the situations. He looks reality in the face, and examines his conscience—and his article has been a meaning-

ful and (alas) courageous action because he expressed something that was obvious to all honest people—only we have never spoken of it so far.

Once more I quote from the interview: "In that article—and also now—it was difficult for me to say 'we and they', 'here and there'. But this had to be if I wanted to make myself understood. I used this loathsome juxtaposition only to annihilate it by expressing it. I believe that most people feel in a similar way 'here and there' but... cannot say so because perhaps 'there' they feel in a different way. And as they cannot say so they become irritated and suspicious and irritated people are easily hurt and they hurt others easily. The words 'here and there' should mean something else since a long time, and in reality they do mean something else. The real borderline runs between commitment and unprincipledness, moral loyalty and irresponsibility, talent and aggressive ineptitude. We can, will and should argue with each other, but let us not doubt each other's good intentions any more, and let us not use cover-names, concepts which have lost their real meaning long ago, and now only serve as camouflage, and let us not believe of outstretched hands 'here' and 'there' that they want to strike blows under any circumstances."

István Bart

DÉTENTE AND THE WORLD ECONOMY

The 1976/2 issue of *Külpolitika*, a quarterly published by the Hungarian Institute of Foreign Affairs, leads with a survey of the international situation given by the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union by Gábor Karczag. Stress is laid on the importance which the Congress gave to relations between and among the socialist countries. It was put on record by the Congress that the process which brings socialist countries closer to each other manifests itself these days clearly and with the force of a historical law. "Observations made by and at the Congress and current international events prove" the article adds, "that a relaxation of international tension is the dominant trend within the world situation, but there are other opposed trends as well in all fields of social activity, and there is a struggle between them." An article by Miklós Horváth "Certain Aspects of International Détente" takes a closer look at some of these trends, and argues that peaceful coexistence between states of opposed social systems is increasingly asserting itself as the basic principle governing their relations. The key differs, yet it is an organic part of the basic political ideas that govern the socialist as well as the capitalist system. "Détente", Horváth argues, "is a stage in the struggle to give full validity to peaceful coexistence. Within this process the interests of countries belonging to the two systems must be readjusted to each other again and again, that is conditions must be created where this can be done. Tension, that is the clash of interests, and relaxation of tension, that is a clarification of common interests and the making of compromises, are thus simultaneously present." The various areas where interests do or might clash, and where com-

promises could be reached, are then discussed in turn, including politics, economics and the protection of the environment, stressing that, following Helsinki, the role of cultural and scientific contacts, the exchange of information and holiday travel is increasing. Horváth discusses also the prospects of military détente in detail, emphasizing that the socialist camp is not relaxing its efforts towards convening a world disarmament conference. "The class interests of the international working class and of the forces of socialism and universal human interests meet and are in harmony in anti-war efforts." Horváth concludes that the socialist system has played a decisive role in the relaxation of international tension, and the growth in the strength of socialism makes the deepening of the process of détente likely, as well as the further assertion and extension of the policy of peaceful coexistence.

Other articles deal with recent Egyptian foreign policy (István Káldor), efforts towards economic integration in West Africa (Ferenc Somogyi). Csaba Sz. Kiss writes on the transformation in the structure of international economic relations, and on efforts towards and discussions concerning a new world economic system. His starting-point is the resolution moved by the developing countries and passed by the 6th Special Session of the UN General Assembly in 1974, which included a programme of action designed to produce a juster division of labour in world economic relations. Kiss goes on to the Charter approved by the 29th General Assembly based on an idea by President Echeverria of Mexico and he discusses the tactics employed by the developed capitalist countries. He points out that they liked to use the term "consensus" as well as that of a "new international order", in essence however they rejected the connected ideas of the developing countries. Kiss shows how they were forced to modify their tactics, and he concludes with an account of the most recent steps taken by the developing countries, which, in his view, strengthened their negotiating position.

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The 1976/3 issue of the paper opens with a piece on the non-aligned countries by István Kende. It covers the history of the concept from its first post-war formulation, paying close attention to the changes it underwent under the impact of forces effective in international affairs. The major stages of development are dealt with in detail: that for which the Bandung Conference proved eponymous, which saw a sharp turn against Cold War policies of confrontation, and a search for peaceful coexistence; the 1961 Belgrade Conference where, after the Bay of Pigs adventure, non-alignment came into its own as the common policy of a number of countries, followed by a number of summit and foreign ministers' meetings, right up to the 1975 Lima Conference. Kende quotes interesting figures showing how the number of non-aligned countries rose in a quarter of a century. Twenty-five countries were represented at Belgrade in 1961, by 1972 fifty-nine foreign ministers met at Georgetown and, two years later, at Lima, the representatives of seventy-nine countries took part in the deliberations. The growth in numbers is not really a true measure of the progress made, Kende states, since that was largely a function of the liberation of what had been colonies, but in the firmer stand taken, and in their anti-imperialist policy becoming more active though far from free of contradictions.

"Non-alignment," Kende writes, "should not be interpreted as the absence of commitment to an ideology or social system. Non-alignment means not being committed to one side or another in the struggle between the socialist and the capitalist countries, which in practice means keeping out of military alliances in the first place... Since the non-aligned cannot be neutral on basic issues, such as the interpretation of peaceful coexistence, the condemnation of imperial-

ism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racial discrimination, support for the principle of non-intervention, etc., they necessarily take up an anti-imperialist position. Their foreign policy is not opposed to the anti-imperialist principles of socialist foreign policy, even if some of them preach anti-communism. Therefore their position objectively favours the socialist forces in the international class struggle."

Béla Kádár, a Senior Fellow of the World Economy Research Institute, of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences deals with the changing international position of Southern Europe, probing deep into the intricacies of his subject. After outlining the political developments of the past quarter of a century, he discusses foreign trade relations, devoting particular attention to economic cooperation with the socialist countries which has really got off the ground once certain political obstacles that stood in the way of the progress of economic relations were removed. Interest in economic cooperation with the socialist countries increased, Kádár writes, thanks to speeded up economic growth in the region, fast expanding import demands and investment needs, as well as a search for markets by new industries and efforts to reduce dependence on the major powers. Trade between Hungary and Italy has been well established for a long time and, accordingly, Italy is even now Hungary's most important trading partner amongst the countries of Southern Europe, being responsible for roughly four-fifths of Hungary's trade with that region, or 4 per cent of Hungary's total foreign trade. Trade with other Southern European countries has fast developed in recent years though it must be said that the potentialities of commodity exchange with them are a long way from being fully exploited. Proximity, the dynamism of the economies and particularly of the foreign trade sector, and the broad spectrum of common economic interests suggest far more extensive cooperation, Kádár states, going on to argue that the present structure of the trade in commodities acts as a limiting factor, since it does not reflect the essence of economic development which—though the socio-political context differed—had taken place in Hungary as well as in the countries of Southern Europe. Raw materials and semi-finished goods still dominate trade, and there is not enough cooperation between industrial enterprises that creates wider and more lasting contacts. Kádár finally points out that a shortage of information, discernible elsewhere as well, delays development, drawing attention to what an exploitation of potentialities could produce in the way of speeding up developments.

László J. Kiss writes on Hungarian–West German relations between 1963 and 1973, giving a detailed account of the agreements reached. József Balázs, discusses ideological questions connected with international détente as part of the post-Helsinki situation: "Détente has acquired a number of meanings in recent years. Looked at from the functional angle, being used to denote the period which replaced the Cold War, most people take it to be the relaxation of tension, and there is some truth in that. In the view of the socialist countries, however, détente is much more than that, or at least, it should become much more. Détente is a new international relationship which grew as the principle of peaceful coexistence was implemented in practice, in which states cope with the necessarily arising conflicts of interest not by using the "conventional means", that is force or the threat of force, but by elaborating new norms of conduct. It follows that the inner, substantial, definition of détente is based on the basic contradictions of the age and cannot be separated from it. The transition from capitalism to socialism is a historical process, and the struggle between the forces of war and peace is a process as well. It follows therefore that détente, which is one of the forms in which the processes of the age manifest themselves, can only be realized through

struggle. What the struggle for détente also means is that unequal and unidentical interests are linked with the realization of this process, and that even the recognition of the mutual interests is temporaly differentiated."

The author continues to describe connected Western attitudes in turn and lays it down that post-Helsinki developments did not, and could not, justify either Dr. Kissinger's or Willy Brandt's interpretation concerning a surveyed track on to which revolutions and the demand for social progress can be urged to deviate. Certain Western political scientists, he goes on, "have invented some sort of socialist convergency 'theory, turned inside out, according to which the socialist countries, making use of détente, wish to adjust Western societies to the socialist model. This is an absurdity. The charge of export of revolution never had a real basis, and the new variant of the old charge adjusted to détente lacks it even more so." The author lays considerable stress, in conclusion, on détente being nothing like the giving up of the ideological struggle, on the contrary, it signifies the systematic continuation of that struggle under the conditions of peaceful coexistence. He quotes János Kádár's address to the Helsinki Conference. "The Hungarian government is convinced that peaceful coexistence and the rapprochement and friendship of the nations presupposes, and also makes possible, the fruitful cooperation of states in science, education, culture and information... Ideological differences become particularly evident in the course of cultural co-operation and the exchange of information. Those of us who have here met together in deliberation represent parties with differing ideologies, and countries with differing political systems. It is clear however that we have not met in order to acquire each other's ideologies or political systems." As Kádár's observation indicated, in Helsinki, and after it, numerous ideological questions were raised, and will be raised in the future, in the relationship of the two systems, which are well described by détente and the dialectics of cooperation and the struggle. "This is something objective, and it reflects the contradictions of the age," József Balázs concludes.

Z. H.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

XÁNTUS REVISITED

Letters from North America by John Xántus. Translated and edited by Theodore and Helen Benedek Schoenman. Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1975. 198 pp., 14 illustrations.

In the wake of the collapse of the 1848–49 Revolution in Hungary thousands of those who took part were forced to escape the reprisals of the reactionary Austrian régime. The exiles scattered all over Western Europe, a small number of them even managed to get as far as the United States, the great catchment basin of the outcasts of Europe. Here the usual fate of the penniless immigrants awaited them. The greater part somehow survived the inevitable hardships of assimilation and vanished in the melting-pot—excepting the few who returned home after amnesty, nearly twenty years later. Life in America, full of ups and downs (mostly downs) of only a tiny fraction of these refugees of either type has been documented in letters, diaries, recollections, and similar writings from the pens of the persons concerned—but whatever has come down to us in written or printed form is of historical value to both Americans and Hungarians.

Such a document, rich in revealing detail, is *Letters from North America,* written by János Xántus between 1852 and 1857, and now published for the first time in an English translation. Xántus had been trained in Hungary for the profession of law and was 24 years old at the end of the war. It took him two years to reach the United States where he spent thirteen years and became the most picturesque Hungarian exile there as regards variety of occupations and achievements. He is still remembered and respected in Hungary (to which he returned in 1864) as the organizer of the Budapest Zoo and in a narrower circle as the author of two excellent books on America.

Like other newly arrived refugees Xántus was forced to keep body and soul together in various ill-paid and menial occupations before finding jobs more congenial to him. It was a great day in his life when at long last he was employed as a topographer, engaged in the geodetic survey of the United States, on the western frontier, and also as a naturalist. In this latter capacity, and later as the consul of the USA in Mexico, he added considerably to the zoological and general knowledge of a region that until then had been *terra incognita.* The records of the Smithsonian testify that Xántus was a sound and many-sided explorer who contributed extensive zoological and botanical collections to that famous institution. The archives there still hold volumes of his copious research reports, correspondence with his superiors, drawings of specimens, and similar material of scientific interest.

All that time, up till 1857, Xántus kept writing monthly, often weekly, tender letters to his mother in Hungary about his experiences in America, in cities, on the frontiers, and in the wilderness, his ceaseless travels, adventures among the Indians, about American flora and fauna, describing

amusing and terrifying incidents and characters and relating stories of big and small game hunts. These letters, and the few excerpts from his travel diaries sent home, though highly informative, are not the kind of organized and continuous record that is submitted to a scientific body. They are rather glimpses of the life of an explorer. Xántus wrote on his mother's level, avoiding technicalities, with plenty of picturesque detail. When on occasion he ran out of interesting material he unselfconsciously helped himself to passages from the books of fellow-explorers, forgetting to mention his sources. Being a man of no mean literary skill these disconnected writings shape into a highly readable travelogue that was something of a success in Hungary when, in 1858, they were published in book form, with illustrations by the author, under the title *Xántus János levelei Éjszak-amerikából* (közli Prépost István) ("Letters of János Xántus from Northern America," edited by István Prépost).

In far-away Santa Barbara, California, Theodore Schoenman, himself once a refugee from Hungary, studying the early history of his state, happened to come upon this volume, practically unknown in the US and, like the Prince in the tale of the Sleeping Beauty, he gave it a new lease of life, in English, after more than a century of slumber. The translation, done with infinite care by Mr. and Mrs. Schoenman, is a brave and honourable undertaking that makes an interesting piece of mid-nineteenth-century Americana available to the readers of the country which is the subject of the story. Their translation reads well, indeed in some places better than the original Hungarian where one has constantly to make allowances—something few readers are prepared to do—for the far from negligible changes a rapidly developing vocabulary has undergone in the last century and half. Even H. M. Madden, another and not quite unbiased critic of Xántus, who years ago, I think mistakenly, treated the 1858 bunch of private letters making up this volume as a scientific treatise, admitted that Xántus was a good journalist, a man capable of giving colour to his narrative. In the Schoenmans' translation Xántus's vivid style and the zest of his narrative are rendered adequately and even his gleam of gentle humour comes through fairly well. The translators can be congratulated on the successful completion of their task.

What is of no less importance, the Schoenmans have prefaced their translation with sixteen pages of very useful introductory matter, sketching in the historical background, making available, on the basis of their own research, information concerning Xántus's activities in the US that was hitherto little known to the general public. The translated text is garnished with footnotes correcting place-names wrongly given by Xántus, inaccuracies or exaggerated assertions, calling attention to such of Xántus's statements about his achievements that were sheer fabrications to impress family and friends back home in Hungary. They also print passages that seem to be taken over from the narratives of other American travellers, and add explanatory lines clearing up confusing descriptions. More than once important passages are added from Xántus's manuscript correspondence with his superiors stored in the Smithsonian Institution.

Xántus, after whom more than a dozen plants and animals, first discovered and described by him, were named by later naturalists, was himself in the habit, like other explorers at all ages, to bestow names on brooks, hills and other geographical features that he was the first to identify. (One hill he named after his idol, the poet Vörösmarty, a name not likely to stick in America.) One wonders how many (if any) of these geographical names became current and are still living, or were at least registered on contemporary maps of Central and Western America. Unfortunately the translators omitted doing what would, no doubt, have been very specialized additional research.

Pages 138 to 141 contain what Xántus termed a glossary of Wichita and Comanche words with their English equivalents. This is scarcely more than a curiosity and of limited usefulness. The translators forgot to mention that Xántus "transcribed" the Indian words using mid-nineteenth-century Hungarian spelling. No American linguist unaware of this fact will make much of *aszukocse*, *czeos* or *vajepicsi*.

It is gratifying to find that the number of mistranslations in negligible, no mean achievement in view of the regrettable fact that the new two-volume Hungarian–English dictionary of 1963 was not available to the translators. Still, one or two have to be pointed out. On p. 113 we find an italicized Hungarian word *eczetta*. This was left untranslated here, perhaps because of an error of the copyist who misread *eczetfa*, a variety of sumach, probably identical with *Rhus glabra*. (Elsewhere the word is translated correctly.) In the footnote to p. 191 Ágoston Haraszthy is wrongly described as a Count, a title he did not hold. In the passage to which the footnote refers the "Hungarian magnate" is Count Sámuel Wass (his name is incorrectly given by Xántus), talking ironically of himself. On p. 187, line 22, instead of Counts Vas one should read Count Wass, in the singular. The number of misprints is relatively high in this volume, especially in the Hungarian names, whereas the German, French, Spanish names are better served, at least when it comes to putting the correct accent-marks on them. What will make every Hungarian-born reader wince painfully is to see, more than once, the name Petöfy.

These are, however, minor blemishes. The volume is an impressive piece of bookmaking. With its good quality paper, clear print, pleasing layout, well-reproduced mid-nineteenth-century lithographs, a useful sketch-map, a short bibliography, and an extensive index of names it could have been a fine feather in the cap of both the translators and of Wayne State University Press. Unfortunately it is marred by what could be called (to use a very polite term) the editor's effort "to blow off the dust" that has settled on the book in the last 120 years. In less measured terms—and after a paragraph by paragraph comparison of the American version with the Hungarian original—I am inclined to speak of a ruthless wielding of the editor's blue-pencil. Pages and pages of Xántus's text were omitted, excised or mutilated, especially in the second half of the book, probably in order to squeeze the text into the Procrustean bed (and with the Procrustean technique) of a strictly limited number of pages, as ordained by the publisher. (The axe was applied mostly to those passages in which the narrative was deemed insufficiently anecdotal.) This sort of editing-out is normal publishing procedure the world over with an *original* work. But in the case of a translation it is a more than questionable procedure, all the more so as not a single word is breathed about this in the book, apart from the tame hint in the translators' Prefatory Note thanking the editor for her efforts "to whip the manuscript into shape." We are compelled to mention this unannounced way of abridging a work since the blurb states that the same translators and publisher are about to bring out the English version of another book by Xántus and joyful expectations are thus clouded with apprehension.

LÁSZLÓ ORSZÁGH

"ACTIONS OF THE FAMOUS PRINCE RAGOTZI"

A Contemporary biography in English of Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II

A Historical and Geographical Account of the Ancient Kingdom of Hungary and Provinces Adjoining was commissioned by four booksellers and published in London in 1717. If one merely looks at the title one imagines it to be designed to meet the interest taken by public opinion in England as a result of the new war that broke out between Austria and Turkey. A closer look will show, however, that it is a biography of Ferenc Rákóczi II., the leader of the great war of independence fought in the early years of the 18th century; nevertheless it also contains general historical and geographical information on Hungary. The book goes beyond the telling of the historical tale and tries to describe the Prince's personality and activities using the methods of prose fiction as well.

Let us look at the picture of prince Rákóczi presented and the way in which it comments on his policy. The preface calls Hungary "one of the noblest Monarchies of Europe", bastion of Christianity, but first it fell prey to the Turks and than it became the servant of the Germans. The Prince described as the "famous Ragotzi" who was deserted by his followers took up arms against servility.

> "P. Ragotzi made glorius Efforts to assert his own Right, and deliver Hungary from Thraldom, and would in all Probability have succeeded, had not too many of the Natives oppos'd their own Happiness all the Time, and at last Count Caroli and others basely betray'd him, the Hungarians having lost their ancient Intrepidity and Zeal for their Liberty. But we will not reproach them, since other Nations have as much degenerated from what they were, and now reciprocally revile one another."

The book describes the Prince as follows:

"The Prince we shall hereafter speak of, and who was lately Head of the Malecontents, is son to that Countess of Serini* and Prince Frederick Ragotzi.** His name is Francis Prince Ragotzi: As to his Person, he is extraordinary well shap'd tall, and comely, his Face round and full, his Hair black, and wears his Beard after the Turkish Fashion. He has Abundance of Wit, is discreet, generous, and courtous, skilful in Martial Affairs, and much more in Politicks; he observes an inviolable Faith both towards his Friends and Enemies, who all extol his Goodness, and the Sincerity of his Word".

After describing how the Emperor Leopold I deprived the Hungarians of their fundamental laws, the freedom to elect their own king and the freedom to resist authority included in King Andrew II's Golden Bull in 1222 and unlawfully grabbed the principality of Transylvania, it lists the causes that turned Prince Rákóczi against the Court in Vienna:

> "Prince Francis Ragotzi had then, as he still has, a considerable Interest in Transilvania. His Father and Grandfather had sate on the Throne very long, paying Tribute to the Porte, and govern'd with singular Moderation and Justice...
>
> Francis reckon's he had a lawful Pretention to that Dominion, and believ'd that the Emperor Leopold had no better Title to it, than his Artificies, and pos-

* Ilona Zrínyi (1643–1703). In 1667 she married Ferenc Rákóczi I and Ferenc Rákóczi II was their son. After the death of her first husband, Ilona Zrínyi married Imre Thököly, the leader of the first war of independence waged by Hungarians against the Habsburgs.

** Ferenc Rákóczi I (1645–1676) who was elected Prince of Transylvania in 1652.

sess'd it by Violence and Usurpation; and that the Emperor Joseph had no other Claim, but being the Son of him that had made himself Master of it. These Considerations mov'd him at Times to let slip some hard Words, not only in Relation to the Right he had to Transilvania, which he hop'd might supported by an Election, but on Account of the vast Estate the Council at Vienna had made forfeited, as belonging to Teleki, Godfather to his younger Son."

The motive of the Vienna Court for turning the Austrian Emperor against the young Hungarian Prince was, above all their desire to acquire the estates and properties of the Rákóczi and Thököly families.

"He allow'd his Enemies to accuse him of holding private Intelligence, both in Hungary with the Malecontents, who assembled themselves, and began to raise their Heads powerfully; and in Transilvania, to cause himself to be chosen Vaivod, Duke, or Sovereign Prince. On this false or specious Impeachment, the Emperor issu'd his Orders, and Ragotzi was apprehended at Nieustadt* in April 1701, and imprison'd in that same City where Count Serini** had lost his Head.

This was not the only Outrage offer'd to the Blood of the unfortunate Count Serini, who had been beheaded for the Council at Vienna, to avoid restoring the Estate to his Son according to the Laws of Hungary, and to make their own Advantage of the Confiscations, had before caus'd that young Count Serini to be arrested in the same City of Nieustat, where he continu'd a Prisoner'till his Death."

The Prince's escape is described in detail:

"Prince Ragotzi was more fortunate, or more ingenious than his Uncle; he neither lost Courage, nor wanted Prudence under this Calamity. No sooner was he secur'd, than he had laid the Design of making his Escape, if any possible Opportunity offered. To this Purpose, he pretended he did not question but his Imprisonment would be for Life, as his Uncle's had been; and that if so, he had no Need of his Plate or Furniture. Accordingly he sold all, but it was to raise Money. Then he corrupted a Captain of Dragoons, whose Name was Le Heman,* whom he entrusted with his Secret, and engag'd to be assisting, towards the carrying on of his Design, and provide him with a Sute of Cloaths of one of his Dragoons, to disguise him. Having dispos'd all Things for the Execution of his Project, on the Day he pretended to have receiv'd a considerable Sum of Money, giving out he was much comforted in his Troubles, he gave a noble Entertainment to his Guards and their Officers, making them all drunk; then disguising himself in the Dragoon's Habit he had procur'd, as was said before, he made his Escape on the 17th of September of the same Year, at two of the Clock in the Afternoon, whereof no Notice was taken 'till two Hours after. Thus he got off, without meeting any Obstacle to his Design. He immediately got into the Suburbs, where his Friends had three Horses ready for him. He immediately took the Road to Raab** or Javarin, which is on the Danube. He passed that River, and his Horses being tir'd, took Post-Horses there, which were furnish'd him, he not being known. Thence, thro' the Upper Hungary, he got into Poland; and from the Country, with the same Celerity and Indefatigableness, return'd into Hungary to join Count Berezeni***, who had put himself at the Head of the Malcontents, and was their Commander in Chief. There he was receiv'd with all possible Demonstrations of Respect and Submission."

* i.e. Wiener Neustadt

** Péter Zrínyi (1621–1671), father of Ilona Zrínyi

* Gottfried Lehman

** Győr

*** Miklós Bercsényi (1665–1725) Rákóczi's commanding general appointed his deputy in 1707.

There are inaccuracies in the description of the Prince's escape but the biggest error is connected with the start of the uprising. It was not initiated by aristocrats but by peasants. Bercsényi was not in Hungary at the time returning with some hundreds of mercenaries recruited using the finances supplied by the French, when the uprising was under way. In the passages that follow, however, the reasons prompting the Hungarians to transfer their allegiance to Rákóczi, rejecting Habsburg attempts to negotiate, are described correctly:

"Prince Ragotzi resenting the unworthy Usage he had met with Vienna, instead of listening to the Overtures made to him, gave the greater Loose to his Passion and Indignation, and returning out of Poland into Hungary, found such a favourable Reception, that by the universal Consent of all Men, he was acknowledg'd Head of all the Malecontents, and Chief of the Hungarian Counts, who had taken Arms for the Liberty and Privileges of his Country. From that Time he manag'd a War which prov'd a great Thorn in the Emperor's Side.

The Court did not seriously want to come to an agreement because, as the author of the book put it, the Habsburgs had learnt nothing from history:

"Into this Trouble was the Emperor brought by the rigid Proceedings of his Council against Prince Ragotzi; whereas, instead of condemning him to lose his Head for ingeniously making his Escape out of the Prison at Nieustadt, they ought rather have made use of Mildness and Clemency, have recall'd that Prince, and not have drove him to Despair, and be fore'd afterwards to caress him as they did, when Things were drove to that Extremity, as to be almost past redressing. On the contrary, those Politicians thought of nothing but carrying on Things to the utmost, and pressing on to Extremities, without considering the Consequences, of reflecting that there was sufficient Cause to dread the Resentment of a Great Prince, who had receiv'd the greatest Provocations. Accordingly, the only immediate Care was how to satisfy the Revenge of the House of Austria. This Persecution of Prince Ragotzi, in the Height of a War, which was maintain'd with much Difficulty against the Malcontents, heighten'd the Rage of the Ministers and Favourites, who could entertain no Thoughts of restoring the forfeited Estates, which made the prime and best Part of their Wealth and Possessions. But pursuant to what Juvenal says, *Populus sequitur Fortunam ut semper et odit Damnatos*".

The author pays tribute to the Prince's ability to organize the armed forces and speaks highly of the successes achieved by the Hungarians early in the war; at the same time, however, the Emperor's victories are termed unimportant.

"The Prince was not all satify'd with that Sort of Militia which came in voluntary to serve him, but subject to no Order or Discipline. He gather'd under his Banners above an hundred thousand Men, but all of them raw, and as yet undisciplin'd; he made Choice of, and call'd out of other Countries as many Officers as by Degress brought them into some Form of Government, and divided them into four Bodies, which he soon after made up fix. The two chiefest of them he put under the Command of the Counts Berzeni and Caroli,* to posses themselves (as they soon did) of the Island of Schut,** which is the most commodious of all the Passes on the Danube, and the easiest to cross over from the Upper Hungary to the Lower, and back again from the Lower into the Upper; as also the properest to incommode Vienna. He directed them to ravage all with Fire and Sword, to the very Gates of that Capital City, and to those of Buda and Pest, which are below

* Sándor Károlyi (1668–1743), a landowner who became a general in Rákóczi's army.

** Csallóköz.

that Island. Prince Eugene being then at Presburg, where he in vain us'd his utmost Endeavours to gather such an Army as might bring all the People of Hungary to Submission; Prince Ragotzi sent a third army thither, under the Command of Count Otskai,* and other Persons he could confide in, reserving to himself the strongest Army about the Teisse** and Transilvania, to be ready to break in there when he should think fit, and secure all the Places and Passes in the Neighbourhood. He has, at the End of the Year 1703, possess'd himself of an important Pass on the Danube, near Gran, or Strigonium*** a Place very considerable for its Wealth, Situation, and Archiepiscopal See, and that Pass making him Master of both Sides of the River, he erected his Magazine thereabouts. Whilst the other Hungarian Armies acted in Pursuance to his Orders, and struck a Terror and general Consternation into the Inhabitants of Vienna, Pest, and Buda, by their surprizing Excursions to the very Gates of those Cities, he block'd up three others about the River Teisse; these were Tokay, which soon surrender'd to his victorious Arms, Zatmar,**** and Caschaw,***** the later of which was also, e'er long, starv'd out.

In the mean while his other Armies pass'd over the Rivers Morava and Leitha, on the Ice, making mighty Inroads into Austria, Moravia, and Silesia; which struck such a Terror into Vienna, that it was resolv'd to throw up an Intrenchment round the Suburbs, and to employ thirty thousand Pioneers on that Work Day and Night without Intermission, not excepting Holy-Days, or even Sundays.

In this Posture were the Emperor's Affairs, when Prince Ragotzi took from him the Fortress of Agria,* which had cost the Turks such Toils to take, and so much Care to maintain it. He also made himself Master of the famous Castle of Mongatz,** in which his Mother, Wife to Count Teleki, had formely defended herself for three Years, Nature and Art having combin'd to make it almost impregnable."

* László Ocskay (1680?–1710). Rákóczi's brigadier but not a count.

** River Tisza.

*** Esztergom (taken by Rákóczi in 1705)

**** Szatmár

***** Kassa

That was the situation in which England and the States General offered to mediate between the Emperor and the Hungarians who had risen against him.

"These Successes mov'd the English and Dutch, who had enter'd into an Alliance with the Emperor, to support him in the War he had undertaken against France, on Account of the Succession of Spain, to interest themselves in this Affair, and not suffer the Emperor to be entangled in the Allies' War against the Hungarians, who were like to give him a considerable Diversion. They represented to the Emperor, that this War with the Malcontents would in Appearance break the Measures they had taken, and draw away so many of his Forces, that he would be in no Condition to afford the Duke of Savoy those Supplies he had promis'd him; or Prince Lewis of Baden a sufficient Force to carry on the War upon the Upper Rhine, if he was oblig'd to keep a great Army in Hungary. They laid before him, that not only the Charge of the whole War in Flandres lay upon them; but that they had also engag'd, together with the Portuguese, to support the Interest of the Arch-duke Charles, in Spain, which put them upon prodigious Expences. That besides all this, the Emperor was still engag'd in a War in Bavaria, the Event whereof no Man could answer for: That it was therefore absolutely necessary to put an End to that War in Hungary, that he might wholly apply himself and all his Forces to the

* Eger (taken by Rákóczi on 2nd Jan. 1705)

** Munkács (capitulated on Feb. 16th 1706)

other Parts: That there was no Possibility of ever reducing Prince Ragotzi by force, and therefore quite contrary Measures must be taken, than had 'til then been put in Practice towards that Prince: That they offer'd to be Mediators and Guarantees in that Affair, and to obtain a tolerable Accomodation... This politick Advice met with a good Disposition in the Emperor, not only to give Ear to, but to applaud it, his own Thoughts at that Time being suitable to their Suggestions; and accordingly he immediately offer'd the Malcontents to enter upon the Preliminaries of an Accomodation, which was rejected by them."

There were no further talks because the Hungarian side refused to accept the humiliating conditions stipulated, while Vienna was not prepared to make substantial concessions or to meet the Hungarians' demand that the Emperor Leopold should relinquish his rights to Transylvania in favour of Rákóczi. Following the death of Leopold, the Emperor Joseph I attempted to win the support of the Hungarian magnates and to this end he was prepared to send the Prince's wife who was held in Vienna to Hungary as a peace envoy.

"Still it was hop'd, that by degrees they might be delivered from that Resolution and to that End, altering their Methods they began mightily to caress Prince Ragotzi's Wife, whom the Emperor caus'd to be brought out of the Monastery to which she was confin'd and conducted to Vienna, where all the Imperial Court treated her with the greatest Respect and Show of Kindness imaginable. The present Empress, the Dowager, and the Arch-Duchesses receiv'd her into their Apartments with extraordinary Courtesy. The Empress, in particular, told her, that it was from her Prudence and Piety that the great Work of Peace, that the managing of so important an Affair was reserv'd for her Virtue and her Zeal for the publick Good; and that since Prince Ragotzi had now granted that which could never before be obtain'd of the Malcontents, which was a Cessation of Arms, it was convenient, that she, with the Emperor's Leave, should improve the happy Opportunity, towards seeing her Husband again and prevailing upon him to consent to an Accomodation. The Princess, who had as much Spirit as her Husband, and was passionately fond of him, was overjoy'd to think she might, under that Colour, have the Happiness of seeing and embracing him again but could entertain no Thoughts of persuading him to quit his Pretensions to Transilvania, in Exchange for the County of Burgau, which the Emperor offer'd him... However, she answer'd, she would most readily undertake to persuade her Husband to any thing that might tend to a good Accomodation; that it was an extraordinary Grief to her to consider the Calamities the poor People endur'd by that intestine War; and, in short, that the Emperor need only cause his Intentions to be made known to her, and she would endeavour to comply with them as far as possible.

The Council of Vienna cancel'd very great Designs under this affected Way of Proceeding, and flatter'd itself that one of two Things must be the Result of it, viz. that either the Princess would succeed, according to the Emperor's Intention, and out of Love to her Children, would prevail with her Husband to accept of this propos'd Exchange of his Pretensions, for the County of Burgau, which would put the Prince into the Emperor's Power, who would not fail in Time to find Means to wreak his Revenge on him; or, if this did not succeed, the Contrivance would, at least, raise a Jealousy between the Prince and the Malcontents, who would not believe that the Princess would undertake that Journey, unless Matters were privately concerted with her Husband."

The manipulations of the Court, however,

failed to produce the expected result and, as a consequence, the peace talks conducted in Nagyszombat were stopped in August 1706. The book lists the twenty-three demands formulated by the Hungarians and the Emperor's response adding a manifesto which was published as early as 1704 in France, trying to summarize the Hungarian arguments for West Europeans. He comments as follows:

"By this Manifesto, which the Malcontents caus'd to be printed, we may judge of the Emperor's, who, on the other Hand, treated them as Rebels and Traytors, because the Estates having, as he said, in 1687, acknowledg'd him legally as hereditary King, they would not consent to that Inheritance acquir'd to the House of Austria by so unjust a Title, and which destroys the Liberty of Election. The Reader, who is not prepossess'd or led away by Partially, may judge whether the Malcontents had wrongfully Recourse to Arms, or whether, when a Nation protest against what is done by an Assembly that is brib'd, and under Restraint, it has not just Cause to assert its Privileges, and require the restoring of them. They were not for taking the Crown from King Joseph the 1st, tho' they pretend they had a Right so to do according to the Precedent of Peter the German, whom they had call'd; but they would have Joseph the 1st renounce that Inheritance extorted contrary to Law; and in their future Elections, have full Liberty of calling to the Crown whomsoever they should think fit; they requir'd that Post of General Ban, or Governor for Life, who is the Protector of their Laws, and of the People, against the King, should be restor'd, and in the Hands of a Hungarian; that the German Governors, and the foreign Troops in Garrison in all their strong Places, should be withdrawn; that the Employments in the Kingdom should be given to Natives; and the forfeited Estates restor'd. The Emperor, their King, on the other Hand, pretended to maintain his Family in the Inheritance of the Crown, which he said was settled by the Assembly of the Estates at Presburg; to place a German Governor in Hungary during Pleasure, and to continue the Suppression of a perpetual Ban, chosen by the People, as being a main Check on his Authority; and besides all this, would garrison all Places with Strangers, and not restore the forfeited Estates. These were the Pretensions on both Sides. Now, who was in the Right?

The book leaves no doubt as to the side it favours.

Then a brief summary is given of the events after 1706. He tells that Rákóczi thanked Queen Anne for her "friendly Offices", that he was proclaimed Prince of Transylvania, and that the Estates assembled at Ónod declared the Habsburg dynasty to have forfeited their rights to the Hungarian throne. (The text of the Declaration is given.) The author goes on to tell of events at the Diet convened by the Vienna Court, and briefly sums up the story of the fighting. The laying down of arms is commented thus:

"These Misfortunes daunted Count Caroli, who thereupon, about the Beginning of the Year 1711, made some Overtures for an Accomodation to General Palfi, which he sent to Vienna; and the Heer Locher was sent thence to the Army, to treat with the Malcontents. On the 17th of April dy'd the Emperor Joseph, of the small Pox, of which the Hungarians it seems had not timely Notice, for on the 29th of the same Month, Count Caroli, not being recover'd out of his Fright, with others of his Party and without the Consent of Prince Ragotzi, sign'd the following articles of Accomodation." The text of the 1711 peace treaty follows.

The life story of Rákóczi is concluded by the description of his arrival in France and the reception extended to the Prince in exile.

II

A careful search suggests that the *Account* is a translation from the French.

A book *Histoire du Prince Ragotzi ou la guerre des mecontents sous son commandement* was published in Paris in 1707 by an anonymous author. Two versions are known. One was given the imprimatur by no lesser man than Fontenelle, one of the pioneers of the Enlightenment and royal censor, who gave permission on November 8, 1706 for the book to be published. The decision reached Claude Cellier, a printer and bookseller in Paris on December 24th. There is no difference in the text in another edition which carries a highly interesting imprint: *A Cassovie, chez François Lancelot, au Grand Hercule.* False imprints were fashionable at the time and they were used extensively in publications criticizing French policy. Most were published in the Netherlands. This opportunity was taken advantage of not only by the enemies of the French monarchy but also by its propagators who adopted this method in an effort to attract attention.

Historians were in doubt for a considerable time as to the identity of the author of the book but it was not difficult to discover the writer. The April 1707 issue of *Les nouvelles de la Republique des lettres*, a periodical published in Holland, said:

"A book was published early this year under the title *L'Histoire du Prince Ragotzi ou la Guerre des Mecontens sous son commandement*, à Paris, chez Claude Cellier *in* 12, 434 p." This is not sufficient to prove that Le Noble was its author, but it resolves all the doubts as to the place and date of publication. The Paris journal *Journal des savants* carried a notice as late as 1708 and introduces it thus:

"Since the war in Hungary accounts for the major part of the story, Monsieur Le Noble meant to seek its causes and that is what he made to be the material of the first volume of his work." It is quite obvious here who the author was.

The Verdun *Journal Historique* carries the following in its issue of April 1708: "A few months ago a book of 412 pages in 12 folios entitled *Histoire du Prince Ragotski ou la guerre des Mecontens sous son commandment* was published by Monsieur Cellier's printing office. It is sufficient to mention the author to form a favourable opinion on the beauty and fineness of its style. The book was written by Monsieur Le Noble." This is unconcealed praise.

Le Noble did not deny that he was the author. No. 59 of his pamphlet series *Nouveaux entretiens politiques* which was published in March 1707 advertised new books, including the following: *La Vie du Prince Ragotzi ou la Guerre des Mecontents sous son Commandement*, in 12/par *M. Le Noble.*" This means that Monsieur Le Noble was prepared to accept authorship right at the moment it came of the presses and anonymity was meant to attract attention.

Who was Eustache Le Noble? French reference books tend to stress different elements of a life of adventure rather than discuss his writing though that is far from insignificant.

The obituary printed in the issue of *Journal Historique* of May 1711 states: "On February 3rd the republic of letters lost a philosopher, an orator, a poet, a historian, a theologian, a jurist, and a political writer ("politique" in the original French text) all in one by the death of one man. Monsieur Eustache Le Noble, who was equally skilled in all the above disciplines, a man who earned so high a reputation through works intended for the general public... Whatever of the fields he chose, his work invariably showed firm morality and refined and witty satire." Even allowing for the usual exaggerations of obituaries, it can safely be accepted that Le Noble was a man of diverse talent and a sound satirist.

He was born in Troyes in 1643 a member of the nobility of office. His father was said to have been in touch with Colbert. He began his studies in his native city and went to Paris to study law. In 1667 he visited

Italy. When 35 he was appointed Procurator General of the Parliament of Metz where he seems to have run into debt and, in accordance with the custom of the time, he sold his office. The sum he received, however, turned to be insufficient and he found himself in a debtor's prison. In gaol he met a beautiful woman who dealt in spices, who had been sentenced for immoral conduct. The adventurous love story of the two was combined with Le Noble's political activities; successive periods spent in prison followed by exile and brief spells of a happy-go-lucky life in Paris—that was the story of his life.

However, Le Noble was not simply a scandalous figure. I quote what he had to say about himself in the Preface to the *École du monde*, "The troubles that have pursued me for over fifteen years are quite unique. I have lost everything except the perfect peace of mind which is inseparable from innocence. Ill fate has deprived me of everything except my steadfastness and my desire to draw a lesson from my own sufferings allowing me to be of use to my country." He was known as an epicurean to his contemporaries who possessed a certain measure of civil courage.

His writing was meant to secure him a living. The Minister of Police d'Argenson helped him occasionally and made it possible for him to publish pamphlets in support of the policy pursued by the French Court. He drew most of his income, however, from the publishers who tried to take maximum advantage of Le Noble's diverse talents and his increasing popularity.

He was a prisoner when he wrote the series of pamphlets *Pierre de touche politique* with which he entered the political debate concerning the war waged by the League of Augsburg. Though it seems as though Le Noble was the mouthpiece of official French policy, he experienced difficulties in getting his pamphlets published so much so that he was forced to discontinue them in 1691. Two years later he started another series *Les travaux d'Hercule* which survived until 1695. During the war of Spanish Succession Le Noble issued pamphlets under the title *Nouveaux Entretiens Politiques.*

In addition to pamphlets he also tried his hand at writing historical works, novels, short stories, comedies or even fables which were highly appreciated by his contemporaries, including Bayle.

In his pamphlets Le Noble often discussed the Hungarian question. He dealt first with the uprising led by Imre Thököly and then with the War of Independence under Rákóczi's leadership. This made him more than familiar with the outstanding Hungarians of his age and writing on politics, history and geography that was fairly abundant in Hungary at that time. Since the war waged the Hungarians enjoyed the support of Louis XIV., Le Noble came out in support of the uprising quite openly even in the most difficult times; his approach was more open than that of the official press in France. It can safely be said that the biography of Prince Rákóczi which was, in effect, designed to meet current needs was the result of Le Noble's sincere interest in the question.

Though the English version is a literal translation of Le Noble's work it could accomplish what its author could not despite his promise: it continued after 1707 the biography of the Prince. This is confined to giving a brief summary of subsequent events and the publication of a couple of important documents. It does not imitate the fictional style favoured by Le Noble.

English articulate public opinion was opposed to the Hungarian uprising led by Rákóczi at the time of the War of Spanish Succession: all it called for was the assurance of civil rights, in particular, the freedom of religion. It offered a compromise as an alternative—as Defoe's *Weekly Review** reported—to both the Habsburg Emperor and the Hungarians, making it possible for

* See Professor Köpeczi's article on Defoe in NHQ No. 8.

Vienna to deploy more substantial forces in the West.

Relations between Austria and England deteriorated in 1711 in connection with the peace talks, and Swift accused the Court in Vienna of failing to give adequate support to the allied countries against France, and of refusing to reach a reasonable compromise with the Hungarians. This was not a move by the English government in support of Rákóczi who was already in exile. When, en route to France by ship the Prince landed in England at the end of 1713, the authorities in London did all in their power to induce him to depart in haste. Regardless some people in England came to sympathize with Prince Rákóczi and the cause he represented, and when war broke out between Austria and Turkey in 1716, the booksellers thought it was a good idea to publish in English a French work defending the policy pursued by King Louis XIV of France, and sympathizing with Rákóczi, without indicating the origin of the text.

BÉLA KÖPECZI

LUKÁCS'S "HEIDELBERG AESTHETICS"

Philosophie der Kunst (1912–1914); *Heidelberg Aesthetics* (1916–1918)

The existence of these works by Lukács had for a long time been a legend: we knew of them, we believed that they had existed —since one chapter had appeared also in *Logos*—but the manuscript itself had disappeared and thus turned willy-nilly into a legend. It was found later, if I remember right, by Arnold Hauser. It was found late, although while Lukács still was alive. And he himself seemed taken aback, as if it had been a surprise to him too that the legend proved to be reality.

One of the two, *Philosophie der Kunst** closed the period of essays, the period which was constituted by the famous papers of *Die Seele und die Formen;* the other, the *Heidelberg Aesthetics* continued the interrupted *Philosophie der Kunst* in another form, from other points of departure. Between the two works Lukács toyed with the idea of a book on Dostoevsky, the surviving fragments of which have also been found. Of the two it was the *Heidelberg Aesthetics* that made for the most exciting reading for me, for several reasons. First of all, while reading it one is seized by a strange feeling, as if one witnessed a ghost. We meet here numerous fundamental ideas of the great *Aesthetics*, which was the crown of Lukács's Marxist work—in an embryonic form, but in a purity that is still able to exert an influence. Thus, the later concept of intensive totality, the train of thought of the homogeneous medium, the counterposing of the "totality of man" to the "whole man" arises already here, and as the cornerstone of a systematic aesthetics. In the knowledge of the manuscript and of Lukács's early creative period, György Márkus was justified in commenting that although the Marxist period represented indeed a new start, a theoretical break with his youth—i.e., a discontinuity of thinking—nevertheless numerous positions argued in this work lived on right to his old age.* Because, says Márkus quoting Lukács, "essential" men have only one idea right through their life. True, one which is so monumental that a lesser person could not bear it.

* Chapter 1 of *Philosophie der Kunst* appeared in No. 44 of NHQ.

* György Márkus: "Soul and Life: The Young Lukács and the Problem of 'Culture'." *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle*, Nos. 5–6, 1973.

This volume is indeed an investigation full of tension—though it is far from easy reading. Lukács wrote these pages in the terminology of Husserl, arguing in the context of neo-Kantian problems, but already with an attitude attempting to break through the Kantian horizon towards Hegel, and although the contemporary reader is already aware of the solution—the later final outcome—he has nevertheless difficulty in enjoying the text, the work. But it is worth the trouble, and not only because in these two books one may discover the nuclei of the later aesthetics, but also because we have to deal here with a curiosity in the history of scholarship. Following Husserl this was an attempt to write a phenomenological aesthetics. We here witness the seizing of aesthetic subjectivity which is able to lift the tie to reality—a peculiar, re-modelled reality—into the medium of "pure aesthetics". It must have been reckoned an unheard-of audacity at that time to write that a work of art was transcendent, that is, it set out from the interconnections of the real world and wanted to intervene in the movements of reality. In the eyes of neo-Kantian public opinion and the followers of pure art this appeared simply as a philosophic scandal, if not a barbarism.

Of course, time has left its imprint on some categories. Thus, for instance, also on that uncertain description of subjectivity which wished to get hold of the artistic "interior," the *genius*. True, time has passed by this category without replacing this abstract theory of subjectivity by a comprehensive and reassuring Marxist theory of subjectivity. Thus the reader is fascinated again and again by the experience of discovering in the arguments and schemes of thought of the tens and twenties premonitions of today, that is the signs of a genius.

One of the most exciting discoveries of the *Heidelberg Aesthetics* is the category of *misunderstanding*. Its essence is that the reception of the artist and of the work can only occur through the transmission of misunderstandings. It is in principle impossible to understand and to empathize with the identical. The truth is that our own Marxist theory of reception also works with this concept, even if it does not dare to use such a radical expression. When we reread and rearrange the works of the past, we obviously "misunderstand" them as well; that is, we interpret the original texts, action, situation in another way than the one intended by the author when the work was created, or the one the contemporary public recognized it as. In Marxist aesthetics this idea exists, but somehow as an exception, as if the possibility were present for an authentic reception of the "same" interpretation. Lukács made this concept radical by considering *every* reception a misunderstanding: to understand the work "in the same way" (as the artist or his contemporary) may only be the consequence of a contingency which is outside aesthetics. The secret of the aesthetic effect is exactly that the work says more (other) than the artist creating it put into it, or wanted to express by it. And it says even more than its own period was able to discover in it. Aesthetic enjoyment includes the understanding of meanings that were seized by the artist but perhaps not even perceived by him. These are the most important meanings for posterity, this is one of the criteria of the lasting quality of a work. "It is a necessary consequence of the leap between the creator and the work that what has been created can never be present entirely in the consciousness of the creator only; while creative perception and will are directed at the work in order to assist it into existence, this perception and will necessary believes itself to be carrying out something different from what it in fact executes. Thus every creator becomes a Saul, who sets out to look for his father's asses and finds a kingdom."

But why can the misunderstanding penetrate deeper, why can the reader and posterity know more about the work, its

meaning, its message—than its creator? The objection is well-known which wants to remove this concept from aesthetics and criticism, declaring that the art expert or the public can know only less than the artist of his own work. Incidentally, how does he know what the artist thought when he created his painting or his novel? Lukács's answer is simple: he knows more, because the reception of the work is also an aesthetic act, part of a creative process, the re-creation of the work. Without the subject of the recipient a novel or a painting is just as unable to speak as an unfinished play is in the absence of a performance. And this creative contribution, however elementary and minute, however much it is built out of symbols and references provided by the artist, is able to take the work further than was imagined by the artist. The further thinking by the recipient is guided by the times in which he lives, by the medium which feeds his individuality and problems. The reader or the art expert simply places his contemporary problems—which have, of course, been individually experienced by him too—onto similar ones offered by the work. He has already reached a deeper layer than where the illusions of the creator had been.

Today, in the times of structuralism, symbolism and the doctrines of lyric form, the exaggerated but far-reaching theory of form of the *Heidelberg Aesthetics* makes a big bang. Lukács developed the theory of the determinant role of form while writing his first systematic aesthetics. This theory is burdened by two important conclusions—to mention but those which speak to the present. One is a research programme still unexplored by Marxian aesthetics: for the artist reality (in Lukács's contemporary formulation, the reality of experience) occurs from the beginning in a formal shape. In other words, when the author lives through a situation, a "story"—as opposed to the average person—he lives through it in a certain final, rounded form, which sometimes already points to the message. Somehow he receives the things, events and episodes of life as such a "finished product." He encounters life in formal clothing, this is how things happen to him. It is not in a later phase of work that he will have to find some sort of epic form for otherwise shapeless facts and episodes.

Lukács recounts this discovery in a somewhat mystified way. He attributes this artistic peculiarity to the irrational ability of the genius. In fact he discovered an interconnection without which it is hardly possible to seize more profoundly the genesis of great art. In the workshop of the epigones there are obviously ready-made forms into which the experiences can be packed. The great artist, however, is an autonomous phenomenon who breaks and makes forms: he learns form from life itself. (Here too the nucleus of a later thought by Lukács is present, the forms grow out of the facts of life!) When great narrators begin "to tell stories"—for instance István Örkény tells an anecdote in private company—one feels immediately that this can happen only to the writer that way, that the roundness, moral and "flavour" are attributes of a train of events that are independent of him, but can become so brilliant only in his presence. At the same time we feel also that although the author has "worked" on the story, its nucleus, the skeleton of its form was already given in the event itself. Lukács discovered this particularity of form, that it is rooted in reality itself and is at the same time dependent on the subjectivity of the artist, in the *Heidelberg Aesthetics*.

Another element is that Lukács derives the role of form from the public, the recipient. Form is the medium which makes the content enjoyable at all to the recipient. Form is the guiding medium that directs the experiences of the recipient. The point of a short story is, for instance, an attribute of the content, but looked at from the aspect of the recipient it is a question of building up the lead, delay, the contrast, and

finally the point, where a number of formally given moments have to be built up thoughtfully, for a kind of "manipulation" of the recipient.

The thesis of the determinant role of the idea and of form is undoubtedly of Kantian origin, and is later "retracted" in the thesis of Marxian inspiration of the primacy of content. Yet the *Heidelberg Aesthetics* also already reflects the nuclei of the argument with Kant. Lukács was, of course, not yet a Hegelian, but had already built up in himself the points where his road parted from Kantian aesthetics. This is indicated by the references. The works of Lask—a friend of the young Lukács—and Rickert are mentioned, both of whom worked on a relaxation of the Kantian position. This is indicated even more by the way the argument ran. Lukács did not speak of a form which was autonomously determinant, but of many kinds of forms which were carried by the material of life (the "reality of the experience"), and which are discovered and allowed to speak by the intuition of the artist and his ability to put stress on things. As opposed to the rigid Kantian formalism, here the decisive point is already the flexibility and many-sided possibility of form, a flexibility which is capable of referring to the many-sidedness of content. Quoting from the already mentioned paper by Márkus, here occurs the principle of plurality of form. This idea already points towards the Hegelian studies, though in an overemphasized shape, centred on form.

And yet, even this overexposed theory of form has a lesson for the present. One of the most burning questions of the further development of an aesthetics "centred on content" is also the description and theoretical seizure of the strata of formulation, the structuration of content. We have felt this lack for some time. Marxist aesthetics has emphasized the necessity of research on questions of form for nearly twenty years, fighting sometimes also against the accusation of formalism. This feeling of a void is confirmed by the early Lukács—of course setting out from different premises, and by a system of arguments that is alien to Marxist ideology. This form is able to fulfil its mission in essence only if the live material itself carries an essential message: the *Heidelberg Aesthetics* does not work on the construction of an arbitrary concept of form. Form, as a dynamic element, is an idea which dissolves every rigid, preconceived view of form. And this is contributed to by the fact that the artist conceives the particularities of form postulating a work of art as a function of his creative essence and the character of his ideology. With this formula which is distant and alien in its terminology it nevertheless underlines the necessity of the further development of Marxist aesthetics, it draws attention to the absence of a theoretical solution of the questions of form, problems of genre and miniforms being constructed out of content.

The book struggles right through with a great idea—hopelessly. What is the relation of the work (and of the artist) to ontological reality? It draws many threads between reality and the work, and cuts many others, because at that time Lukács saw the main enemy in naturalism, and this—indirectly—obstructed also the building of concepts that stretched towards reality. But a later category was absent, the theory of reflecting, of feigning. This is the instrument from the lack of which he deduced, in a later autobiographical piece, the failure of these two aesthetic summaries. While reading them, however, we continuously feel the effort and tension which bear witness that Lukács felt this weakness and was looking for the solution. It is perhaps on this account that the old-fashioned questions of the book are still that exciting and why—in certain cases—these questions have remained fresh.

MIKLÓS ALMÁSI

FICTIONALIZING THE SELF

ÁGNES GERGELY: *A chicagói változat* (The Chicago Version). Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1976, 155 pp. In Hungarian

Chance may enter everybody's life. But if every change in fortune is linked with chance, the series of accidents will suggest a regularity, with the causes lying in the person's character and not in the gambols of circumstances.

Magdolna Fenyvessy, the principal character of Ágnes Gergely's third novel, "The Chicago Version," is an actress whose features were formed seemingly by chance. She would have liked to teach Latin, but there was no need for a Latin teacher in her town. On one occasion she recited a poem in a company of friends, and an actor who happened to be present, praised her. Next day she quit her job (she had been a night proofreader at the local daily) and joined the local theatre company as an extra. She was even given major roles on occasion—when the unexpected illness of the leading actress called for pinch-hitting—but she was never successful, and the critics throught her empty and ungifted. Her brief marriage, entered into at a sudden impulse, also turned out to be a misunderstanding. "After some time I married the treasurer of the theatre, his name was Rezső or Dezső, I don't remember any more." The actress-wife could not cook, while the husband would have liked to have good meals, and he was not a theatre-goer because he found the seats uncomfortable. She was lifted from this hopeless mediocrity by an unexpected turn of events; the theater company gave a poetry recital and with her rendition of a beutiful, bitter-nostalgic poem she roused the audience. She received letters and confessions, and for the first time she felt the meaning of touching people. She herself does not know yet what has changed, perhaps it is only that she has hit upon a tone—having identified herself with the sorrow of the poet and his realm of experience—which so far she did not dare to hear within herself, and now with this indirect self-avowal she sparked off the same process in her listeners. This experience stirred her up and she would like to find out what she is really worth, which is her true self, the unsuccessful, confused creature, or the actress who holds audiences spellbound. And then another chance emerges—this time serving her well. They are looking for an actress who speaks English, for a longer American tour, possibly someone without a family. She meets these conditions, and she leaves, and this is how the American continent becomes the site of her self-examination. An international troupe has been assembled for a season in the vicinity of Chicago to try, in their performances, to forge actors with different racial, national and religious backgrounds into a homogeneous company. The experiment yields little artistic result; in the Othello paraphrase they produce all the actors try to assert their own interpretations; perhaps they had too little time at their disposal, or perhaps the method was wrong. But the joint rehearsals, and the encounter with a world that had been strange and alien to all of them (the Hungarian actress found herself in the company of Japanese, Nigerian, Argentinian, Greek, and Ugandan actors), developed a sense of interdependence in them, and a responsiveness and sensitivity towards each other. Wasted lives are revealed, hidden thoughts come to light, a human community was in process of taking shape. The continuation, however, was cut off by the season coming to an end. Their stay expired and the occasional company melted away. And what conclusion does the Hungarian actress draw from her Chicago experience? She tells us on the last page that she is no longer an actress, she lectures on Latin classical authors at the university of her town,

but in the classical texts she looks for, and teaches the examples of, rich, "intensive" lives.

Accidental elements, sudden, seemingly unjustified turns are given a dominating role in the fate of the central character, but it is not difficult to discern their common spring, the lack of self-knowledge, hesitancy, and a resulting sense of uncertainty. Magdolna Fenyvessy was always guided by the judgement of others, this is how she started her stage career, and it has been only under the influence of the new medium of an unusual density, the Chicago company compelling her to become pervaded with the fate of her colleagues, that she discovered her own truth, a truth which she is to express at her teacher's desk in the following words: "We lose nothing if we life intensively." It is not the place where we live that counts, nor the role which has been assigned to us, but the entirety and intensity of the life and role we have assumed. This is how the heroine returns to the occupation of her first choice, in order to try to carry through—instead of the accidentally emerging versions of life—her own, deliberately chosen "Chicago version."

Ágnes Gergely, who is well-known as a poet of the middle generation, has transposed her own American experience. In 1973 she spent nine months in America, as a member of the University of Iowa International Writing Program. Being a complex and intelligent person, her America experience—as also appears from the novel—was neither unambiguously positive nor negative. And being above all a poet, the trip—as is also evident from the book—has offered discoveries about her own self in the first place.

ISTVÁN EÖRSI: *Lonci narancssárgában* (Lonci in Orange). Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1976, 287 pp. In Hungarian

István Eörsi is a writer of an experimental turn of mind. He has tried his hand at most kinds of writing, verse, plays, short stories, essays, and journalism. He is the Hungarian translator of the late, great philosophical works of György Lukács written in German. Eörsi's latest volume adds yet another new facet. It is a book constructed of poems and prose writings—an experiment in going beyond poetic and reading traditions with the help of a new, homogenous work made up of writings of differing kinds.

The four chapters comprise more than sixty writings, most of them very short, and since the typography makes a sharp distinction between poems and prose, it is obviously their emotional and conceptual fellowship which has to provide unity. It becomes clear already in the first chapter that the linking element is the author's ironical approach, present whether the poems and short stories have an allegorizing historical subject, or are of ostentatiously private inspiration. At the same time, Eörsi's bent for moralizing is indicated by moral problems springing from the same root, but treated in different situations; the conflict of individual and common interests, making decisions and taking responsibility, and the relativity of the relation between the categories of good and evil. The various prose writings have virtually no story to be related, they rather raise different versions of an idea, approaching them in an essayistic manner. "The Sorrow of the Minotaur" is the reverse of the ancient myth: the Athenian maidens chosen to be sacrificed are delighted being sick of the Atheneans entangled in their warring, and neglecting them, while the Minotaur has had enough of voracious female sacrifice, he has got exhausted in amorous battles and thus becomes an easy prey to Theseus who attacks it treacherously. "My Version" was written in the margin

of a news item. According to the official report the plane hijacker who whimsically kept changing his demands for twenty-four hours, until he was shot, was insane. Eörsi plays about with the idea that the unknown man perhaps kept changing his demands only in order to illustrate the impotence and exposure of the security service and the government. He builds his idea on the aphorism: "Attitudes deviating from the average are readily branded as mad—while average behaviour counts as reasonable under any circumstances. Is this no insanity?" The majority of the poems are witty puns ("Quatrains," "Scales," "Similes"). The most appropriate of them is one called "When the King's Nakedness," which by turning the familiar tale motif inside out, pokes fun at exhortations which find an explanation for everything: "The king has put on a flesh-coloured robe," shouted the Understanding. "Look, how well the cut at the back fits."

The prose built on several variations of the same subject have role-poems as their counterpart: Eörsi keeps returning to man's chameleonic nature, and expresses the inseparable unity between role and actor in a manner lending it the stamp of a credo: "and nails are sparkling in the arena where I walk on my hands and turn somersaults."

Eörsi's ideas are interesting and their ironical presentation makes the book pleasantly entertaining, but the majority of his writings are rather sketchily written, and they also include some of no weight whatever. The genre experiment has stood the test, since the volume is in a homogeneous mood, and I do not think that after the early surprise wears off anybody is likely to feel overdisturbed by the rotation of prose and verse. But it seems Eörsi was taken up with his own idea—to compose the poems and prose writings into a unity—to such an extent that the writing of individual works and their contents fell into the background, and thus his experiment, and the whole volume, has become stuck at the level of a curio.

PÉTER DOBAI: *Játék a szobákkal* (Game with Rooms). Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1976, 277 pp. In Hungarian

Sometimes it is the easiest questions which are the most difficult to answer. To offer a name as an answer to "Who are you?" is satisfactory only if the questioner falls in with social conventions, and is not interested in the essence of the person concerned. The characters in Péter Dobai's short stories keep stubbornly repeating this question, wanting to get at the conceptual truth, and the answer cannot be evaded, because it is who are doing the asking. (This is the first collection of short stories of the 32-year-old Dobai, coming after two novels: "Bone Millers," 1974, and "Life in Debit," 1975, and two volumes of verse: "Riding Out from an Autumn Forest," 1973, and "Mutations of a Face," 1976.) Dobai's characters, motivated by an obsession for self-definition, pursue the most varied trades and professions. There is a young doctor and an elderly librarian, a cleaning woman and a writer, a girl student and a crossing sweeper. They all appear on the scene—and this abundance of destinies and situations indicates a demand for generalization. The physician character of "You turn from your back onto your belly" works out in his mind dozens of variations to reshape his life which he feels to be monotonous, but he always preserves his real, existing self "in store," and finally, having exploited his energies in reveries, he leaves everything unchanged. The travel guide of "In memory of the twenty-fifth anniversary of our graduation"

is always late for everything, he lets everything he had a right to slip through his fingers. His basic trait, an inability to reach a decision, gets him stuck at taking stock of possibilities, with biological and mental reflexes too slow to realize them. "Cramp and evidence" is a short story in a disquieting mood about the encounter of three people who live through several versions of chance and regular relationships, struggling with the oppressive feeling that their deeds call for an explanation. There is a discrepancy, however, between their aims and the words conveying them. One of them characterizes their confusion in identification, and their becoming inactive as a consequence by saying "it is as if you were in a tunnel, in the middle of the tunnel, without having gone into it, and you don't know whether you are going inwards or outwards, and therefore you stop and remain standing." In "Tissues" Dobai also presents the counterpart of this situation. A man and a woman are living together in a house, in a well-balanced state of rest, finding satisfaction in the other's speechless presence, and not aiming at each other's exclusive possession: "We are on good terms without having to toil for it. Neither of us smiles superfluously." What is this? The ideal way of two people living together, or the acceptance of the impossibility of an ideal coexistence sought using all available means, including words? And if this is harmony, what prize do they pay for it? "If the door is opened by the storm and creaks because of the wind, we wait until the wind slams it shut." They do nothing lest this relationship should change and become distorted. But is it not distorted already if it survives only in inaction?

Dobai keeps returning consistently to his basic subject, the definition of a person, and he moves his characters in situations which strip them of every accidental feature. He gives characterizations extraordinarily rich in information, obviously considering an exact definition to be more important than a telling epithet. And since his protagonists struggle with uncertainty, for the most time they seek in vain for sentences suitable to define themselves, and the stylistic and compositional assurance with which the author is able to seize this hesitant state of consciousness in his short stories is especially striking. At the same time, these poetic criteria which enhance the aesthetic value of the volume also determine the scope of its effect: it is not easy or pleasant reading, and its virtues will probably meet the requirements of only a select few.

LÁSZLÓ VARGA

THE METROPOLITAN FRINGE

GYÖRGY BERKOVITS: Világváros határában *(On the Metropolitan Fringe)*. Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1976. 343 pp. 58 photographs

Infrastructure has become a fashionable word lately. In Eastern Europe as a whole, and therefore in Hungary, the infrastructure has for the past hundred to hundred and twenty years lagged behind industry. It is true too that the speed of industrialization following the socialist revolution (especially during the first decade) further increased the tension between industry and an agriculture becoming industrialized on the one hand, and a slowly developing infrastructure, on the other. The infrastructure absorbs

capital like a sponge without directly refunding anything to the economy. Hungary inherited a poor sort of industry from capitalism, and even that was heavily damaged in 1945. It took years to regain the pre-war production level, and only after that (in 1949–50) could the process of socialist industrialization be started, which was not itself free from bias. The plan to turn Hungary into a country of "iron and steel" did not really take account of the infrastructure. The resulting problems thickened by the end of the 'sixties, handicapping the further growth of the economy and progress towards the human and social goals of socialism. It was then when the term infrastructure first came into fashion. This has to be said before dealing directly with György Berkovits's work, though the term infrastructure very likely does not even occur once in his book.

The book is really a structure of case studies. The cover photograph shows a mess of rural houses, trees and scraggy fences. A backyard is in the foreground, with a dunny and a small white car before it. A woman in peasant clothing opens the door of a scrappy little shed. The metropolis whose fringe is there shown is Budapest, and the subject of the book is the Budapest agglomeration, which includes, at a modest estimate, forty-four villages. The belt itself evolved about a century ago, but its rapid expansion has been the fruit of recent decades. The collectivization and mechanization of agriculture has directed a flow of peasants towards the towns, where building, and factories already in operation, provided them with employment. Industrialization was fastest in Budapest. Men from the depressed areas—the Hungarian Plain, particularly the territory east of the river Tisza, and Szabolcs and Szatmár counties in its north-eastern corner—poured into the capital. Budapest factories provided work, but the capital itself did not really admit the newcomers. Thus they settled in the fifty or so villages on the fringe, whose communal services were unprepared for this rush, remaining unprepared to this very day. About half a million live here, some of them grow their own food leading a double life as factory workers in the capital by day and villagers at night. It is that way of life which György Berkovits describes.

The Buda rural district is one of these areas. How do people live in the villages of the district? "In other words," the author raises the question, "what is the quality of life like in the Buda district?" And he devotes a whole chapter to answer the question. Let me quote from the beginning of the chapter, and again from the end:

"The quality of life cannot be bad, since:

unemployment is unknown, the factories simply snap up people who want to work;

the financial position of the families seems to be sound, according to 1970 figures 65,000 wage earners had 41,988 dependents;

those working are covered by health insurance (that is, they are entitled to health services); something which by now has even become a citizen's right;

(they also have a right to study) only 1.5 per cent of those over ten years of age cannot read and write;

37 per cent of all the dwellings—14,000—were built between 1945 and 1970; more than 90 per cent of the dwellings are privately owned, these being family houses with gardens, that is the house-owner at the same time also owns a garden;

tap water and sewerage are being organized feverishly everywhere;

new shops and servicing facilities are being built;

there are three kinds of transport services getting people to Budapest: trains, local buses and long-distance buses;

cultural services are not expensive either..."

A concise summary at the end of the chapter shows the other side of the picture. The author once again puts the question: "What is the quality of life like in the Buda district?"

And he answers:

"It cannot be good, since:

it is difficult for anyone to get work locally, they have to commute day after day to Budapest;

80 per cent of the people living here earn their livelihood doing manual work, and the financial situation of the families is not prosperous:

those who fall ill have to go to the capital to the polyclinics (with the exception of the inhabitants of Érd), and to hospital, and of course, there is no ambulance station either;

they attended school for a brief few years only, more than half have not even completed the eight forms of the general school;

there are more one-room homes than dwellings with several rooms;

in nearly three thousand homes there is no electricity, not to mention water and sewerage...; the soil is deteriorating and is polluted by the vast amount of human refuse;

buses and trains are overcrowded, there are complaints about the long-distance bus service because it is expensive; in those parts of the area that are traversed by main roads and railway lines, with heavy traffic, there is a lot of noise and the air is polluted;

there are not enough shops and servicing facilities—there are not enough nurseries, kindergartens and schools..."

The growth of the infrastructure requires huge sums which local government budgets are unable to provide, and the major enterprises find it unprofitable to invest at a major rate, mainly because public utilities ought to be introduced first. And also because the servicing enterprises would not be profitable. Those who live there could not afford not to run their own house and garden. What is more they prefer the traditional family division of labour.

"Consequently, the quality of family life is also bad, since:

they can't take it easy, time and energy being taken up by work about the house;

there is no time left for the children, for an understanding attitude towards each other, for expressing solidarity, and thus the peace of the home, and its future, cannot be safely established;

cultural amenities being cheap does not help if there are not enough of them, and if the conditions which could stimulate one to attain the fruits of culture are missing..."

These excerpts characterize the whole volume. One should add that the struggling man behind the generalizations is shown in several live interviews; and there are historical sources as well, looking back at the past of the villages, especially over the last hundred years, when the present situation evolved. The author presents the struggle waged by the local institutions (county, district and village councils as well as other bodies) to solve problems which are far beyond their means.

The book is part of the series "The Discovery of Hungary".* Something should be said yet about it and its predecessor of the same title. In the 'thirties, Hungarian progressive intellectuals, living in the clutch of the system of large estates, all-powerful finance capital and a state drifting towards fascism revealed the conditions of the working people in literary documents, in many newspaper and periodical publications and a whole range of books. (The most outstanding, *The People of the Puszta*, by Gyula Illyés, is available also in English.) It was then, in the second half of the 'thirties, that the series "The Discovery of Hungary" was started. Three volumes were published in quick succession. They

* See László-Bencsik's "How does a man become a worker?" in No. 60.

elicited such a stormy response that the powers took notice and put an end to the noble and courageous undertaking by suppression and trials. Such books were called sociography, which survived becoming incorporated, as it were, amongst the forms of Hungarian literary expression. Whenever the social atmosphere has been auspicious, when there has been a demand for social self-knowledge, both on top and below—among leaders and readers—it has flowered over and over again. From the beginning of the 'sixties, Hungarian society has been living through such a period, and since that time many sociographies have been written and published. There have been debates as well about the place of this kind of social criticism. At the end of the 'sixties, a noted sociologist, István Márkus, argued that a new sociographic series ought to be started and called, to honour one predecessor, "The Discovery of Hungary". József Darvas, Ferenc Erdei, Gyula Ortutay and Iván Boldizsár of the representatives of the old generation of village explorers took up the suggestion, and with the assistance of Szépirodalmi Publishing House and the Ministry of Culture, the plan has been turned into reality. The first volume was published in 1970. It resembled the old books also in size, appearance and typography. Since then two to three new volumes have come out every year. By the time this review goes to print, the 16th volume will have reached the reader. The series was started in time to include a new work by Ferenc Erdei, a classic of Hungarian sociological literature, who has died since. Berkovits is the youngest of the authors in the series: he was born in 1940. He is a teacher, journalist and sociologist. The present book has made his reputation.

Ernő Gondos

AUSTRALIA THE HARD WAY

Kázmér Nagy: *Az én Ausztráliám* (My Australia).
Gondolat. Budapest, 1976, 181 pp.

When will this sort of book appear in English about Hungary? The question naturally occurs to anyone working at the *NHQ*, nor does it lack in legitimacy. That Hungarians should be more interested in America, or England, than the English-speaking world is in Hungary is understandable, but Australia... In Hungary interest in the subject is big enough to warrant a 36,000 first print run of a well-informed, personal account of Australia by an author whose name is unlikely to be known to prospective readers.

A market helps, but a good book has to be written before it is sold, and a good travel book has to be experienced before it is written. These days there is a tendency to type them between planes, and air travel will not even allow you to digest first impressions—or the brief prepared before the journey—as trains and ships used to. At the other extreme there is the English vice and virtue: complete identification with what is written about. That works if we are interested in Norman Douglas, Lawrence Durrell or D. H. Lawrence in the first place, or else if, know-

ing something of a part of the world, we really want to get to know it, as one might read the best local writing if one only knew the language. When we want to know what a country is like with which we are not emotionally involved, we want someone to tell us who looks at the world through *our* eyes, and not *theirs*.

Kázmér Nagy really knows Australia as only a *métèque* of long standing can know it, better in many ways than a native of his own class and education who tends to spend his life sticking to the tracks of a defined experience, residence, leisure, holidays. The conditions of Nagy's admission to Australia —with a free trip thrown in as a bonus— included an agreement on his part to work as directed for two years. Labour is really the *mot juste* in this context, for every migrant under that scheme had *labourer* entered as his occupation, whatever his skills or qualifications. Let's call a spade a spade, it was forced labour all right, but forced labour the Australian way, for good pay, and with the right to strike, in fact with the duty to strike: it would have been most embarrassing to the Australian government if the flotsam and jetsam washed onto Australia's shores by the aftermath of war had gone on working after their Australian mates had downed tools. As an intellectual Nagy was privileged, he was allowed to clean windows at first, later lavatories.

In time Nagy managed to return to his own profession. He edited a Hungarian-language paper for many years until he finally left the country.

The editor of a great daily can afford to ignore individual readers, but whoever writes for a parish pump paper does so at his peril. He must know his readers just about individually, and know the setting in which they live and work better than they do themselves. Easy enough if your parish is a suburb, or a small country town, then regular attendance at the pub, barber's and billiard saloon will do, but the readers of a Hungarian paper published in Australia were spread over a continent. Hungarian readers in Hungary now benefit from the knowledge thus obtained.

No book on Hungary published in English, in Budapest, could possibly be the equivalent of Nagy's on Australia, and not only because he does not see Australians as they wish to be seen. Being a *métèque* he has a chip on his shoulder, he suffered traumas which both sharpen and distort vision; traumas which only those can forget who made a lot of money, and only those amongst them for whom making money is the be-all and end-all of life.

The book has its faults, of course. One is an insensitivity to Australian literature, a complete deafness one could call it. Nagy handles literary information like one using a dictionary in a foreign language he does not understand. (Patrick White is described as an Englishman, and D. H. Lawrence as an Australian writer!) A book that tries to tell one about the soul of a country must show a thorough understanding of its art and literature, even if they are judged to be peripheral to the interests of the man in the street there, and an encyclopaedic, scholarly work cannot afford to make such mistakes. *Az én Ausztráliám* is neither, and makes no claim to be either. If I may be permitted the Irishism, I'm inclined to argue that such howlers add to credibility since they offer negative proof that Nagy did not get his material in libraries or at bohemian pubs or parties. This is no scissors and paste stuff or intellectual gossip, but the distilled wisdom of the archives of hard knocks, his own experience, and that of his own kind. And that surely is what his readers want to know about Australia, they are interested in the Australia experienced by their brothers whom the tides of history swept to those distant shores.

Perhaps I ought to spell out in conclusion what the attentive reader will have gathered by now anyway. Kázmér Nagy found his way to Australia as a post-war refugee. When he had enough of Australia he, who had led

a Hungarian life even in Australia, did not return to his own country, though that had meanwhile become the Hungary of today, but moved on to England where he works for the BBC. He was an unknown young man when he left Hungary, certainly not a name to conjure with, no one publishers would be out to secure for propaganda purposes. He did not write a Communist, or even a Left, book, only an honest one, on a subject obviously of interest to readers in Hungary, a book which fitted in well with a series published by Gondolat. Gondolat still in some ways reflect the purposes of the Society for the Dissemination of Knowledge which used to be their parent organization. As such they have special responsibilities for what Unesco and the *NHQ* call access to culture.

RUDOLF FISCHER

DIMENSIONS OF EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION

JÁNOS SZITA: *Az összeurópai gazdasági együttműködés távlatai* (Perspectives of All-European Economic Cooperation). Kossuth Publishing House, Budapest, 1975, 338 pp.

The problems of cooperation in Europe, including economic cooperation, were placed into the limelight by the Helsinki Final Act. János Szita's book is in effect the first attempt anywhere not only to deal with current issues connected with the subject but to indicate ways and means of coping, outlining future prospects. The book deserves great credit for having processed a great quantity of diverse material (going up to the first half of 1974) covering all economic aspects and groupings. It repeatedly stresses and points out that cooperation—although today its primary vehicle is foreign trade—extends far beyond the limits of the latter.

Relying on a great deal of material János Szita points to the conditions which have laid the groundwork and made cooperation on a global scale indispensable, primarily all-European cooperation. Owing to the exceptionally rapid growth of the forces of production, production has been internationalized; the general trend is for cooperation in the interests of coordinated technological development; mass production has become general, and this requires an extensive market; thus world trade in the past decade has expanded faster than production, and specialization has become more thorough. The great specialization, particularly in European countries, has made the economies of these countries increasingly open.

East-West power relations have changed. Between 1948 and 1973 the share of the C.M.E.A. countries in world industrial production rose from 18 per cent to 33 per cent, and is now increasing at a faster rate than the European average. The socialist countries of Europe play a growing role in world trade as well, although their present share is only about 5 per cent. The C.M.E.A. countries' turn towards an open economy is shown also by the fact that trade within the integration amounts to 60 per cent of total turnover.

The share of Europe in world trade is

considerable (40 per cent), and the nine EEC countries transact 67 per cent of the Western European turnover among themselves.

The book discusses the composition of the turnover in a very interesting manner. The situation that has developed, the author argues, is that the ratio of the exports of industrial finished goods in the exports of capitalist countries is growing more substantially in trade with socialist countries and faster than in the aggregate and intraregional exports of the countries of Western Europe. Between 1955 and 1970 the ratio of industrial finished goods in trade with socialist countries went up from 43 per cent to 73 per cent, and in the aggregate and intraregional exports it rose from 59 per cent to 69 per cent and from 50 per cent to 65 per cent respectively. It ought to be added that the structure of imports from socialist countries is just the reverse, i.e. the overwhelming part of it is made up of primary products. Thus in this situation the composition of East-West trade unilaterally favours the capitalist countries.

This proportion no longer corresponds to the economic structure of the countries concerned, it is not in conformity with the whole state of development of the socialist countries, including that of their external trade. Szita draws the conclusion that it at the same time hinders the dynamic increase in turnover because the dynamic growth of exports of raw materials and agricultural products is held back by the slower development of production, on the one hand, and by the striving of Western European countries for autarky, on the other.

Szita argues that this trend is discriminatory. This discrimination, however, does not follow from the commodity structure alone. The author expounds in a very interesting way that the most-favoured-nation principle does not unconditionally prevail in international trade. He shows that this principle can be said to prevail only if it does so fully and in every respect. Trade agreements today usually deal only with tariffs, considering the overall idea of all-European economic cooperation, it would be to the purpose if European countries agreed to make the most-favoured-nation clause prevail in a general way, and unconditionally, in international trade, by putting an end to every kind of discrimination. If such an understanding were arrived at, an agreement on non-discriminatory trade could be included, becoming a guiding theme. The importance of this is displayed in a GATT survey according to which there are about 800 restrictive regulations influencing trade apart from tariffs.

Szita points out that the future, mostly because of the above-mentioned discriminations, does not point to an improvement in cooperation. A new strategy must be worked out. Attention should be paid mostly to those major economic problems which it is well to approach also on an all-European basis. One has to explore the complex interdependences of international relations and accordingly to coordinate cooperation within a single system. One has to explore the long-range possibilities. On the basis of this one has to determine the main directions of cooperation; in fact, a "European plan" has to be made.

In this plan Szita places great emphasis on industrial cooperation. This would enable mutually profitable trade in certain products of the manufacturing industries.

Cooperation is important also because technological growth is faster than capital concentration. The growth in size of enterprises cannot keep pace with the complexity of final products. Scientific research and the economy have entered into a new type of relationships. The main characteristic of this is that the growing share of intellectual components in the value of products has become decisive in making them competitive. Szita argues that in respect of East-West relations cooperation may become one of the means of the international transfer of up-to-date technologies. He refers to Jenő Baczoni according to whom cooperation is the third

dimension of East-West trade, a more developed sphere of exchange and of commodity-money relations.

In analysing cooperation projects Szita sets forth that Western companies still put up some resistance, they fear that the technological difference between Western firms and socialist enterprises will disappear, and that they will thereby impair their own market conditions. The experiences of the past decade, however, have shown this view to be short-sighted. Even so the socialist countries have been able to attain their development targets. There was a fear, and this fear was entertained by both sides, that cooperation agreements can hardly be regarded as dependence of a higher degree than conventional forms of economic relations.

Szita's words on cooperation are justified by recent facts. An example is, first of all, the skeleton agreement concluded by the Hungarian OMFB (National Commission of Technological Development) with the Brown-Boveri company, covering cooperation both in technology and research, and in the industrial and economic fields.

As regard other areas, Szita discusses cooperation in power supplies, for this is today one of the fundamental world economic problems. The increase in electric power consumption in Europe in higher than in the total consumption of energy. If we take current calculations, then the share of electric energy in the global sources of power will rise from 24 per cent in 1969 to 35 per cent in 1985, and this imperatively calls for the establishment of a united European electric power grid, not to mention that the larger the areas whose electric energy systems are linked up, the greater the savings, and the more likely it is that such systems operate safely.

Szita has some things to say with regard to cooperation in the fields of agriculture and the food processing industry. Discussing socialist and Western European agriculture from the economist's angle, he concludes that the current situation points to the necessity of working out a new international division of labour, and a new strategy of cooperation, and this because the socialist countries have developed large-scale works the size of which makes them fit for the introduction of the most up-to-date technologies. This cannot be expected in Western Europe. It may become one of the characteristic features of all-European cooperation that the advantages offered by the existence of large-scale works will be jointly used. Of course, cooperation in agriculture has as a fundamental condition that the EEC should change its agricultural policy.

These are just random examples. The book presents a detailed discussion of problems arising in different parts of the economy and looks for opportunities for cooperation wherever possible. In addition it thoroughly examines cooperation, which has become of vital importance to all states, in the infrastructure, transport, communication, the exploration and exploitation of new raw material resources, etc. The author does not fail to give his mind to cooperation in environmental protection, this most recent problem of mankind.

He points out that, in addition to economic potentialities, lasting cooperation is subject also to political conditions. These are: (1) readiness to cooperate, to eliminate obstacles; (2) acceptance of the consolidation of security; (3) the governments' agreement to establish an overall, complex and long-range system.

The position of the socialist countries on these issues is clearly positive. Progress depends on the Western answer and the pace of concrete action. It is equally important for the promotion of cooperation to become an organic part of the national economic policies.

All this can be the basis of an institutional system and methods of cooperation. Szita boldly touches upon these questions, he is a realist who does not have his head in the clouds. He finds that the minimum political will to promote cooperation exists, and in the

struggle between advocates and opponents of cooperation those who favour cooperation are gaining ground;

In establishing the institutional system and mechanism he accepts as a starting-point that a new phase is opening in economic cooperation among the countries of Europe. This, however, does not mean that, disregarding the past, a new sort of mechanism or institutional system has to be constructed, for valuable experience has already been gathered in the course of past development. It is interesting how the author discusses the mechanism of cooperation in detail. Progress here can only be cautious. In this respect much can be done by cooperation in economic forecasting; exchanging information in all fields is important. This has to be followed by the establishing of a system of consultations, first in certain particular fields, the number of which will grow in the course of cooperation.

In assessing the problem of the institutional system it is a basic requirement, starting from the perspectives of cooperation, to reach a level in due time which can effectively promote the expansion of economic relations. As a consequence, relations between blocs cannot provide a solution, since genuine cooperation means something in which all European countries take part independently and with full rights.

In discussing institutional systems Szita attributes a great role to various UN agencies, first of all to the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). He is an expert in this field, having been the Hungarian ECE representative for many years. He asserts that this is the only European institution in which broad and continuous cooperation on a governmental level is practised. With a critical eye he also discerns the shackles of the operation of the ECE: its slowness, dependence on the United Nations, etc. He points out that the activities of the ECE are beginning to get off the ground, though it is still unable fully to satisfy the demands of present economic cooperation in Europe. This is why he thinks that the further functioning of ECE calls for reforms.

He gives his attention also to ECE's relations with the UN specialized agencies, of which he first mentions the FAO, since the FAO apparatus concerned with European questions is identical with the ECE apparatus dealing with agricultural problems, and thus world-wide cooperation coordinates with all-European cooperation without any parallelisms.

In this thought-provoking, thorough, scientifically precise and politically well considered book Szita writes that the new institutional system is needed in order that, in case the political preconditions should eventuate, there should be available those means and institutions which might ensure the attainment of the objectives of all-European economic cooperation.

ETEL HARDI

FOREIGN TRADE LAW IN THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES

Iván Szász: *A Uniform Law on International Sales of Goods. The CMEA General Conditions.* Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1976. 240 pp. (In English)

The economic integration process of the socialist C.M.E.A. countries has gathered speed considerably in the last eight to ten years. The Complex Programme (1971), which describes the future economic integration of those countries over approximately fifteen to twenty years, plays an important role in the acceleration of this process. The 15th chapter of the Complex Programme carries the title "Perfection of the legal foundations of co-operation among the C.M.E.A. countries," which shows that both the C.M.E.A. member countries and the C.M.E.A. itself have placed the satisfactory settling of legal questions among the most important issues that have to be coped with. Dr. Szász, who heads the Legal Department of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Trade, the author of numerous articles on legal questions concerning international trade and especially trade among the socialist C.M.E.A. countries, provides a comprehensive commentary on the latest, 1968 text of the General Conditions, compares many important stipulations of the General Conditions with the Uniform Law on Sales of the Common Market (the Hague), and with the guide to legal problems elaborated by UNCITRAL. The comparative method considerably adds to the interest which the legal profession is bound to show in this book.

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I do not think that it diminishes the merits of the author to say that this is in fact the third version of the same work. The first was prepared as a manuscript and it obtained Dr. Szász the candidate's degree of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. A somewhat improved form was published by Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó in Hungarian in 1974. Finally, due to the great interest shown abroad, thanks to the Russian and English language précis published as an appendix to the Hungarian edition, another publisher brought out the expanded and revised English version which is under review.

The practical value of the work is considerably enhanced by the supplement which provides the full text of the C.M.E.A. General Conditions. The book thus satisfies the requirements of both scholarship and practice.

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It is not only the work here reviewed that went through several stages, the same applies to the General Conditions. The C.M.E.A. General Uniform Trade Conditions of 1951 could already be considered the precursor of today's regulations. Later a uniform disposition was provided by the General Conditions in 1958; finally the 1968 General Conditions were prepared. They are still valid.

By creating the General Conditions the C.M.E.A. countries have done for the socialist countries something which has so far had little success in the Western world, that is they created a direct system of norms to be widely applied to international trade. This outstanding legislative achievement was made possible by specific aspects of economic cooperation relying on the identity of the socio-economic systems of the socialist countries, including ownership relations, a socialist planned economy, and foreign trade monopoly, not to mention the process of establishing the international socialist system.

The General Conditions, as opposed to the unification of law in the West European

Common Market which has an essentially identical object, does not divide the regulation of commerce into the conclusion of contracts and the transfer of ownership, but included all dispositions in an interconnected system, within a single agreement.

In contractual relationships the conclusion of the contract itself is the fundamental element which establishes a legal relationship. It is understandable that when the General Conditions regulate international sales, special emphasis is given to this question. In the course of the detailed discussion of the related dispositions, the author interprets these correctly as the role of the agreement of the parties, irrespective of the fact that such a concept is not used by the General Conditions.

The expectations of the parties are realized if the contract is carried out, and the warranty for this is the most exact possible determination of its contents. The method of the regulation of the content of the contract is determined in the General Conditions by relatively cogent dispositions, and in respect of the object of regulation the aim is to provide detailed stipulations, for instance concerning the quality of goods, the quantity of goods, the determination of quantities, the time of delivery, etc. The author discusses these most carefully, but does not keep silent over the fact that there are questions in respect of which the Uniform Law on Sales of the West European Common Market is more detailed (e.g., the rule concerning the time of fulfilment).

In the history of the evolution of the whole of the General Conditions, the regulation of the responsibility for breach of contract is the fastest changing, and most contested, issue. One may ask why the elaboration and further development of the rule governing the responsibility for breach of contract arises again and again. Does this mean that the existing rules are inadequate, that the direction and method of regulation has so far been erroneous, or does the need for further development arise because this is demanded by the evolution of those economic relations which are here regulated? This is the author's question. His answer, with which I agree, is that the General Conditions are a system of norms that are valid in special conditions; the changes in these necessarily demand also the development of this system of norms. On this subject the author analyses the consequences of delays by the seller, breaches of contract by the buyer, as well as causes exempting from responsibility.

It is of great practical importance, and may be considered a success of the socialist unification of law, that the General Conditions organically unite different phases and rules of the validation of claims, the rules of both material law and procedure. This solution makes it possible to form a closed system for the validation of claims and to ensure reliably the decision on claims in due time and according to uniform rules.

The work, which discusses results so far achieved in the unification of law by the socialist countries, is particularly interesting to the legal profession of those countries (e.g., Finland, Mexico, etc.) which have already entered into a special agreement with the C.M.E.A., as well to those countries which have considerable trade relations with the C.M.E.A. This interest in the General Conditions may further the elimination of those obstacles which are thus characterized by Resolution No. 2102 [XX] of the UN General Assembly: "The difference and conflict between the law of individual countries concerning international trade hinder the development of world trade."

SÁNDOR VIDA

ARTS AND ARCHEOLOGY

VERTÈS

Marcell Vértes (Vertès), the illustrator of the works of Longos, Verlaine, Zola, Apollinaire, Colette, Francis Carco, and Frigyes Karinthy, designer of suggestive political posters, whose lithographs, engravings and pen-and-ink sketches extolled the beauty of the female body, and whose drawings portrayed the high life and *demi-monde* of Paris between the two world wars, was born in Újpest near Budapest on August 10, 1895.

He studied at the Budapest Academy of Fine Arts where he was a pupil of Károly Ferenczy, one of the leading Hungarian painters of the period. Vértes already drew cartoons for satirical weeklies, like *Borsszem Jankó, Szamár* and *Április*, in the 1910s. He became widely known thanks to his illustrations to Frigyes Karinthy's *Tanár úr, kérem... (Please Sir!)*, a humorous-philosophical work on student life early this century (1917). In the same year his woodcuts for Arthur Keleti's Renaissance-inspired comedy in verse, "The Love Story of Unhappy Raymondo and Lucky Knight Bertrand", showed his familiarity with graphic reproduction processes. The events of the period delayed publication till 1920.

In the bourgeois democratic revolution in 1918, and under the Republic of Councils in 1919, Vértes designed a number of posters which condemned the Habsburg Monarchy and the *ancien régime*, and passionately supported the revolution ("In the Name of His Majesty, the King!", "Lukachich",* "With Me or Against Me..."). Recent monographs, e.g. Nóra Aradi: *The History of Socialist Art* (1970), judge these posters to be among the most forceful graphic expressions of the revolutionary period.

In the autumn of 1919—after the triumph of the Counter-Revolution—Vértes left the country together with many progressive Hungarian writers and artists (Károly Kernstok, Bertalan Pór, Lajos Tihanyi, Lajos Kassák, László Moholy-Nagy, Béla Uitz, Sándor Barta, Sándor Bortnyik, etc.). He first lived in Vienna where he produced an album in three languages—Hungarian, German and French—under the title *Drawings from Hungarian Hell;* he denounced to the world the atrocities committed by the white territorist officers' commandos of Héjjas, Prónay and Ostenburg in 1919–20 (1921). A few months later he produced a second book of cartoons, *Horthy-Ungarn* of similar tendency (Der Abend-Verlag, Wien, 1921), and he designed covers for books by Hungarian exiled writers (Andor Gábor, Jenő Hajnal, Andor Nagy). In Vienna he met Dóra, his future wife, who stood by him in

* Lieutenant-General Baron Géza Lukachich (1865–1943) was military commander of Budapest in the autumn of 1918. He used ruthless measures against army deserters and left-wing militants.

good and bad times for forty years, she was the model of many of his works.

The Vértes couple left Vienna, and after a short stay in Berlin, went to Paris. There Vértes studied at the Julian Academy. He made his début in 1921, at an exhibition of the Humorists' Salon in Paris: Jean-Louis Forain, the grand old man of French graphic art chaired the jury and he accepted all of Vértes's water-colours. One year later, in 1922, Vértes began to contribute to *Rire*, the erotic and humorous paper.

He continued his progressive graphic work started back in Vienna. In 1922 he illustrated Róbert Tarcali's *Quand Horthy est roi* which revealed the true face of the Hungarian counter-revolutionary government, and he designed posters for the short-lived *Paris Journal*, a paper of Hungarian exiles in France, in 1923. Only two issues appeared. The paper was published with the support of the well-known French author Claude Farrère.

By the twenties Vértes had taken root in Paris, and he "Frenchified" his name to Vertès. He was not a member of any school, neither the surrealists, nor the nonfiguratives, nor the avant-garde; indeed, he emphasized his detachment. His art was post-impressionist, his ideals were Théo Steinlen, and especially Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, but Vertès's tone is less tart and less disillusioned: in contrast to Lautrec's bitter disenchantment Vertès shows a zest for life; gloom and tragedy are absent from his works.

In the twenties and thirties Vertès was amongst the most brilliant and fertile draughtsmen. His main theme was the ecstasy of Paris swinging to the rhythm of jazz after the Great War, of playboys, big bourgeois, prostitutes, Bohemians and outlaws, the colourful, noisy, agitated life of the cosmopolitan metropolis, the enjoyment of fleeting pleasures. His work consists mostly of single prints (many of them were published by *Vogue*), engravings, dry-points and lithographs. His lithograph album *Maisons*—with an introduction by Pierre Mac Orlan's—appeared in 1923, followed in 1924 by another cycle of lithographs, *Dancing*. In the mid-twenties he worked on a series of engravings *Pays à mon gout*. In 1926 he had much success with a series *La Journée de Madame*, the chronicle of a day of a member of the Paris smart set. He shows her in the care of her masseur and her hair-dresser, on horseback in the Bois de Boulogne, behind the steering wheel of her car, in the fashionable bars of the Champs Elysées with her friends, at her dress-maker, painter and lover, in the process of dressing for the evening, in the semi-darkness of her box in the theatre... His next work was a series of engravings in colour, *Le cirque* (1929), and *Dames seules* with a text by Francis Carco (1930). In all these Vertès proved himself as a brilliant draughtsman offering the essence of the represented figures, movements, scenes and streets. He showed he understood the warning of the greatest artists: "Drawing is not identical with pedantic inventory-taking and tinkering with minute details, it is the art of condensation, of omission, of expressing much with a few means..."

He also continued to illustrate books. Francis Carco's *L'amour vénal* and *Rue Pigalle* appeared with his litography and dry points respectively, the first in 1926, the second in 1928. He illustrated Colette's *La vagabonde* (1927) and *Chéri* (1929), Zola's *Nana* (1932) and *Les aventures du roi Pausole* by Pierre Louÿs (1934). His illustrations to Colette were a great success but his own favourites were his drawings for Pierre Louÿs, an almost forgotten writer of the turn of the century, full of worldly wisdom and irony.

He had several exhibitions in Paris in the twenties and thirties (the first in the Galérie Devambez in 1925), his works were exhibited also in the US, and he designed costumes and décor for theatres and operas in Paris, London and New York, including *Le dispute*, a Marivaux revival at the Comédie

Française. He painted murals at the Paris Musée des Arts Modernes and at the New York Metropolitan Museum. In 1932, in acknowledgement of his work as a painter and designer, he was appointed a Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur.

At the outbreak of the Second World War he joined the French army. After Pétain came to power he emigrated to the United States. There he shifted the emphasis of his work from graphic art to painting. He painted one portrait after another of rich and beautiful New York women but he also painted cuddling lovers on the water front, clowns, net-skirted *equestriennes*, ballet pupils, acrobats, strip-tease dancers and acrobatic skaters. In 1949 he published *It's All Mental*, an album with drawings about psychoanalysis. The series is a sharp satire not of Freudianism itself but of those who vulgarize and exploit it for petty ends and of their dupes.

The sale of the expensive first edition did not come up to expectations but the cheaper pocket edition attained a record printing of 70,000. *It's All Mental* was also published in Paris under the title *Complexes*.

After the Scond World War Vertès lived alternately in Paris and New York. The introduction of the catalogue to his exhibition in the Galérie Charpentier in 1946 was written by Jean Cocteau: "Sweet, graceful, charming, adorable, light, gentle... I wish I could remake these epithets worn by too frequent use and clothe Vertès in them as in a new robe... Vertès could have become intoxicated with success and gone to the dogs... He did not. He preserved his self-critical attitude and a line wich many people confound with the contour of the model's body though it is the line of the artist's soul... Salute to Vertès, home from America! Jean Cocteau."

In 1951 he exhibited the imaginary childhood portraits of twenty public and literary figures in the Kleemann Gallery in New York under the title "As They Were—Imaginary Portraits". He portrayed Sir Winston Churchill as a one-year-old baby, Jean Cocteau as a two-year-old, Colette and Eleanor Roosevelt as six-year-olds, General De Gaulle as a nine-year-old, Pablo Picasso and Albert Einstein as eight-year-olds, Jean Paul Sartre as an eleven-year-old and George Bernard Shaw as a twelve-year-old boy. He projected the adult character of these prominent figures into their portraits as children. The collection, which proved both the artists's humour and his ability to reveal character, was purchased holus-bolus by an art collector from Texas and exhibited in several big cities in America, and later also in Paris.

In 1952 Vertès took a trip to London. He worked on the colour film *Moulin Rouge* which was mainly on the life of Toulouse-Lautrec, the Montmartre artist so dear to his heart. The film was directed by John Huston, and José Ferrer played the part of the crippled painter. The drawings "by Lautrec" in the film were done by the hand of Vertès.

In the same year, in 1952, he published his autobiography *Amandes Vertès* with approximately 150 pen-and-ink sketches where he told the story of his life and career, from Újpest to Paris and New York. Vertès also drew the portraits of some old writer friends, from Budapest. He argued in favour of realism in art, particularly portrait painting.

In the post-war period he illustrated more books, such as G. Bauer's *Instants et visages de Paris* (1951) and *Daphnis and Chloé* (1952). The illustrations to *Daphnis and Chloé* competed with Aristide Maillol, the sentimental love story had appeared earlier with the latter's masterly woodcuts. In the fifties Vertès illustrated also some de luxe editions: Paul Verlaine's erotic poems, *Parallèlement* in 1952 and Guilleaume Apollinaire's *Ombre de mon amour* in 1955. The Apollinaire volume was printed only in 100 numbered copies, the editor had acquired the passionate love-letters in verse from the poet's aged and impoverished muse.

In 1935 the Paris Opera presented Offenbach's *Helen of Troy* with scenery and costumes designed by Vertès. Knaur's *Ballett Lexikon* described Vertès's opera and ballet scenic designs as masterpieces. His last exhibition of new work was arranged in Paris in 1958. There he showed his Pierrot designs.

In 1959 Vertès paid a visit to Hungary and donated around a hundred works to the Hungarian National Gallery. The following spring a selection of his graphic work was shown in the Műcsarnok; Vertès attended the opening. Visitors to the exhibition could acquaint themselves with a new technique used by Vertès: the silk-plate reproductive process. Arthur Keleti, the artist's old friend, wrote a beautiful article on the exhibition in the September 1960 issue of *Művészet*, the monthly review of the Federation of Hungarian Artists. In the French bulletin of 1961 of the Hungarian National Gallery the art historian Dénes Pataky discussed the works donated by the artist.

Vertès who had been suffering from diabetes for a number of years died at the age of 66, on November 1, 1961, in Paris. Dénes Pataky who had studied his œuvre wrote in *Művészet* (February 1962): "The cheerful, stylish, elegant works of Marcell Vértes proclaimed the fresh charm of youth and the beauty and sweetness of the world and they will still do so after their creator's death."

Iván Dévényi

THE ART OF THE STREETS

György Konecsni Memorial Poster Exhibition

Saying that György Konecsni (1908–1970) is a classic of the Hungarian poster sounds rather stale today, though there is a new meaning if I remind the reader that Konecsni already deserved such praise in 1932, when he was not twenty-five yet. The students swarmed out of Art School when they heard of a new Konecsni poster on the walls. "I admit that this year's exhibitions left me cold. On the other hand, two posters in the street have engraved themselves on my memory for the rest of my life..." There the great Hungarian humorist Frigyes Karinthy (1887–1938) alluded to a work by the young Konecsni, even though, like most people, he did not know who had designed the poster.

Konecsni's career was a—not unbroken—series of successes, lasting forty years, yet he did not become a star. His formal and technical skill was conspicuous even amongst commercial artists, though that is something you can always expect from them. Konecsni admitted no impediments, that is, the sole impediment, moderation, was set up by his own artistic morality. This brooding, self-critical artist, always had the strength to subordinate his means of expression to the direct message, advertising and educational or political propaganda, in such a way so as only to strenghten these with what he had to say by way of art.

He was born on January 23, 1908, in Kiskunmajsa. He finished the teachers' training college, then between 1927 and 1931 he studied at the Budapest Academy

of Art. His teacher, Gyula Rudnay, was a severely academic painter who was, however, also attracted by romantic stylization. Konecsni left painting already in 1932, and became a poster draughtsman. In his own words:

"What could I have done at that time? I could have turned out tripe for the saloons... There were few patrons then, at the time of the great depression. One thing, however, was boosted by the crisis: advertising. Posters were needed. The reason I became a graphic artist was that there was a demand for draughtsmen. But perhaps one of the reasons why my contact with painting has loosened was that post-impressionism, dominant between the two wars, was absolutely foreign to my nature."

In the early thirties Hungarian art students reacted to the work of the European avant-garde with a much much smaller time-lag than they do today. "It was with such feelings that I left the School, and I felt that it was applied art as against painting, that could grant me such an anti-post-impressionist manifestation. Within that—since the poster is closest to painting after all—I was most interested in the poster."

Here and in what follows, I quote from what Konecsni said when I interviewed him in 1966.

Already with his first two posters he won two Budapest City prizes in 1932; later the Grand Prix at the Paris World Fair of 1937. For designing of one of the rooms of the Hungarian pavilion he was awarded the Diplome d'honneur, then again the Grand Prix at the Triennale of Milan, in 1939. With his posters he twice won the Fuad Golden Challenge Cup of the International Tourism Congress. In Hungary, in 1936, he was awarded the Silver Medal of the Society of Industrial Designers, and in 1939 the Gold Medal of the Industrial Arts Association. He was twice, in 1950 and 1952, awarded the Kossuth Prize.

*

"In the thirties, when I was already successful, my critics contended that I was treading the borderline between painting and drawing. There was a germ of truth in that. Applied graphic art between the two wars was a function of painting, it lived off painting. And now, at the time of—let us say—neo-constructivist aspirations painting is stealing back from applied graphic art those ideas, modes of construction, elements etc. which graphic art had in those days taken over from painting."

Looking at the work of György Konecsni one feels indeed that his drawings were always close to painting. Not that his posters were ever affected by the picturesque lyrical softness, the mellow, iridescent passing over of colours one into another, or even post-impressionism itself. Isms of a different type were present in these posters: first of all Cubism, but neo-Classicism too, and from the outset—decisively—Constructivism and Surrealism—an entire gamut of surrealisms—the current from of this generic term from 1932 right to the end. The associational leaps of Konecsni's posters compelled the passer-by to fill up the intentional gap, to think for himself. This makes these posters even more suggestive.

Such graphic art is the synthesis of contradictions, and it is precisely this that provides a steady equilibrium, the resultant, the result. Cool elegance and emotion, a certain romanticism held, as it were, on a tight leash; strict, firm, poignant formulation and lyrical humanism. Always a certain playfulness, but in such a way that the artist never finds himself under the spell of the game. There is a certain amount of pedantry, he never accepted a problem to be insoluble. His colours are reduced, unequivocal and clear, showing an awareness of the technical limitations of poster-printing. This characteristic steely ring of his colours later assumed a sonorous tone, the effect of patches perhaps became more blurred; this, however, did not soften the pictures, it only rendered them more dra-

matic; the firmly set structure reigned behind the play of soft surfaces and collages.

*

In 1968 Konecsni held a one-man show in three big halls at the Műcsarnok. Can there be such a thing as a retrospective by an applied artist? He cannot show his original designs; those are lost or messed up in the press; and it is often impossible to obtain even the finished prints in good condition after so many years.

Once a poster has been folded it is no longer fit for exhibition. Konecsni simply created a new genre: in ten years he reworked, reconstructed and repainted on fibre sheets using fresh tempera his whole output of posters. It needed incredible energy, and an enormous quantity of work, to paint his one hundred and twenty large boards. He enlarged the one-time standard-format of posters to two and four square metres. He did it on the basis of old prints, photographs and slides. The examples, the models were not always his published posters but the best sketches which the commissioning party at the time had almost invariably rejected. The exhibition was free both of the oppressive corrections of those who had ordered and the weaknesses of the printing trade. In the case of the first—let us call them—replicas the artist still endeavoured to follow the drawings and forms of his younger days with meticulous accuracy, later, however, he could not resist the temptation to correct—as a mature artist—the mistakes of the older works, sometimes even offering the public something completely different. He turned into, as it were, a translator of his own œuvre.

It is almost a commonplace to say that the exhibition place of the poster designer is the street yet this display in the Műcsarnok became a cardinal point for György Konecsni. Since then there were two more displays of his work, both of them posthumous. One was organized by his friends, in the year of his death, in the gallery of the Institute for Cultural Relations under the title of History of the Hungarian Language. He was engaged on this series of pen-and-ink drawings when—literally—while at work he suffered a heart attack, on January 29, 1970, not quite a week after his sixty-second birthday. He planned the series to be fifty sheets, he reached only the tenth. He started from the oldest recorded monument of the Hungarian language, the *Halotti beszéd* (Funeral Oration), and he would in all probability have liked to go as far as the poetry of Attila József.

In the case of this series he undertook a thematic task, without being requested to do so. He attempted to record that which cannot be written down, to transpose language into image. It needed an artist of Konecsni's stature to cope with a task of this nature. It needed a talent of Konecsni's scope to walk so steadily on the perilous borderline of *Malerei und Poesie*. His introductory study was the photographing and sketching of the folk stone sculpture—recent archaeology, as it were—in Zala County, near Lake Balaton. In the works of peasant masters he found the survival of Roman, Romanesque and Renaissance elements, which he made ample use of in evolving his own mode of expression. So he really started to draw the Hungarian language, Hungarian literature, yet in such a way as to avoid even the shadow of visual literariness. Indeed this series is thematic yet not programmatic. On these sheets the artist builds with the substantiality of vaulting, yet he remains playful. He can afford to be archaic, since he is modern. And in the case of every scene, in the illustrations of each and every linguistic record he speaks about something else, yet he is always precise.

In 1976 the Hungarian National Gallery paid the tribute of a memorial exhibition to György Konecsni. Three hundred works were displayed, amongst them a number of the posters already mentioned, and the sheets of "The History of the Hungarian Language". The organizers regarded as their

primary task the first display of what he left behind in his studio: the paintings and drawings made for his desk drawer. There were pen and ball-point drawings, pastes, monotypes, enamel, etc. ..., indeed sculptured roots and branches. The sheer quantity proves that his artist performed five-finger-exercises all the time and that, even within the walls of his studio, he was affected by the international trends, primarily Surrealism—with its all but daily changing outward forms—from emphatically figurative art through tachisme, right up to action painting. Konecsni knew everything. At the time of "socialist realism" for example he, as it were, used his classicist paintings to wrap up historicizing, romantic masters of the nineteenth century.

Visitors view these pictures with certain *déjà vu* feelings not knowing, however, which to link to which world celebrity, it is hard to link them even with the name of Konecsni. It is evident that not all works were made with particular effort, it looks as if the artist did not really take these studies seriously. Thanks to his abilities, a number of his pieces are more perfect than the models of his paraphrases, not infrequently we can find amongst them genuine masterpieces.

I did not agree with the sentimental ideas of those who organized the exhibition, that is that the Painter Prince was forced by the world to spend the whole of his life as a Draughtsman Frog. Konecsni was the greatest Hungarian graphic artist—can anyone ask for more? I did not agree, moreover, with the disease of many museologists —non-selectiveness, presuming that the exhibition is no more than an œuvre-catalogue illustrated by original works.

*

If one calls Konecsni a great artist one has not said enough. I am more accurate if—summarizing his works, his way of life, and influence—I speak of the Konecsni phenomenon. Not every age can boast of a talent of Konecsni's stature, and Konecsni was a magician, a prince—he always had a court—yet this prince was never self-important, he could afford to be modest. He had a sense of humour; it was worth listening to his acrid remarks over coffee or brandy, for he never committed his aesthetics to paper. There was a Konecsni School, but this was everything except a stylistical category, it was rather a style of work, a way of thinking, ethics as he himself put it: "...I let loose my students. There is but one rule: one must work."

Perhaps this is the reason why young Hungarian advertising draughtsmen are so good even today; because their teachers, the one-time Konecsni students, have let them loose later in much the same way.

JÁNOS FRANK

Photo: István Petrás

MARCELL VÉRTES: POSTER (1919, "WITH ME OR AGAINST ME")

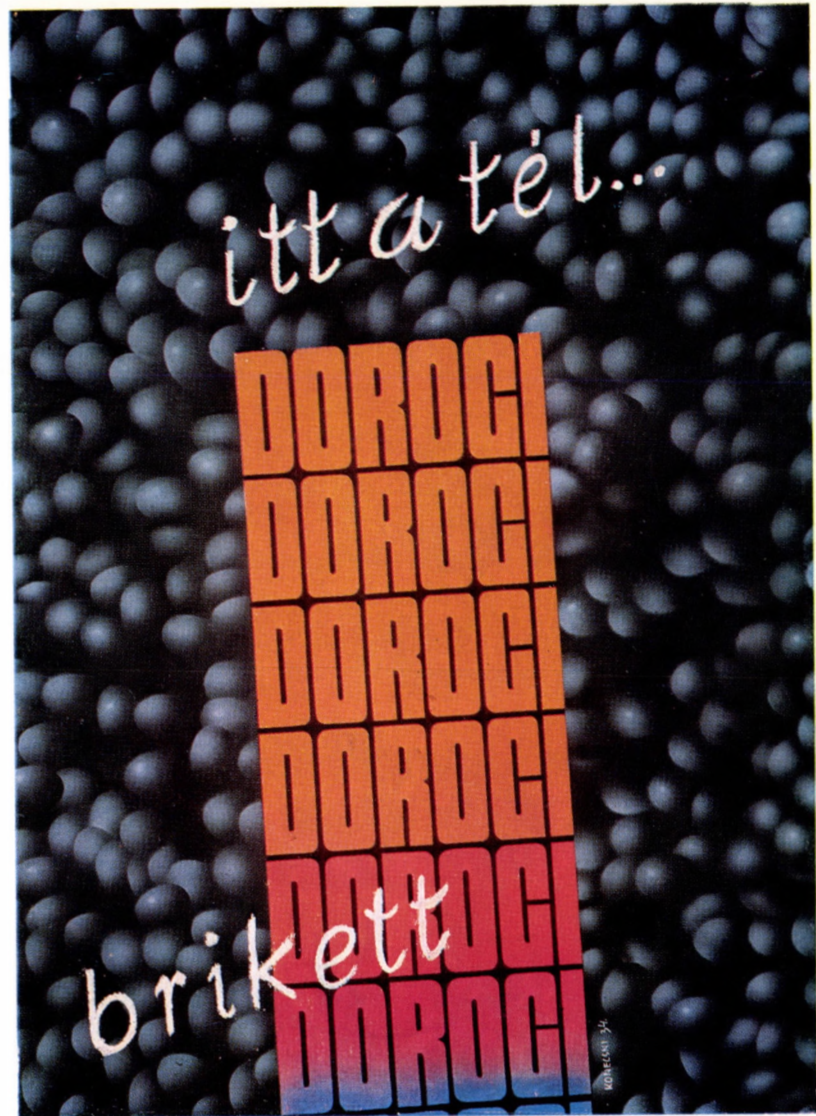
Marcell Vértes: Girl with Horse ▲
(415 × 500 mm, coloured chalk)

Marcell Vértes: Two Sisters (pen and ink, 875 × 560 mm)

Marcell Vértes: Daphnis and Chloé
(pen and ink, 355 × 296 mm)

Photos: István Petrás
Courtesy Hungarian National Gallery

György Konecsni: Gas heats and Cools



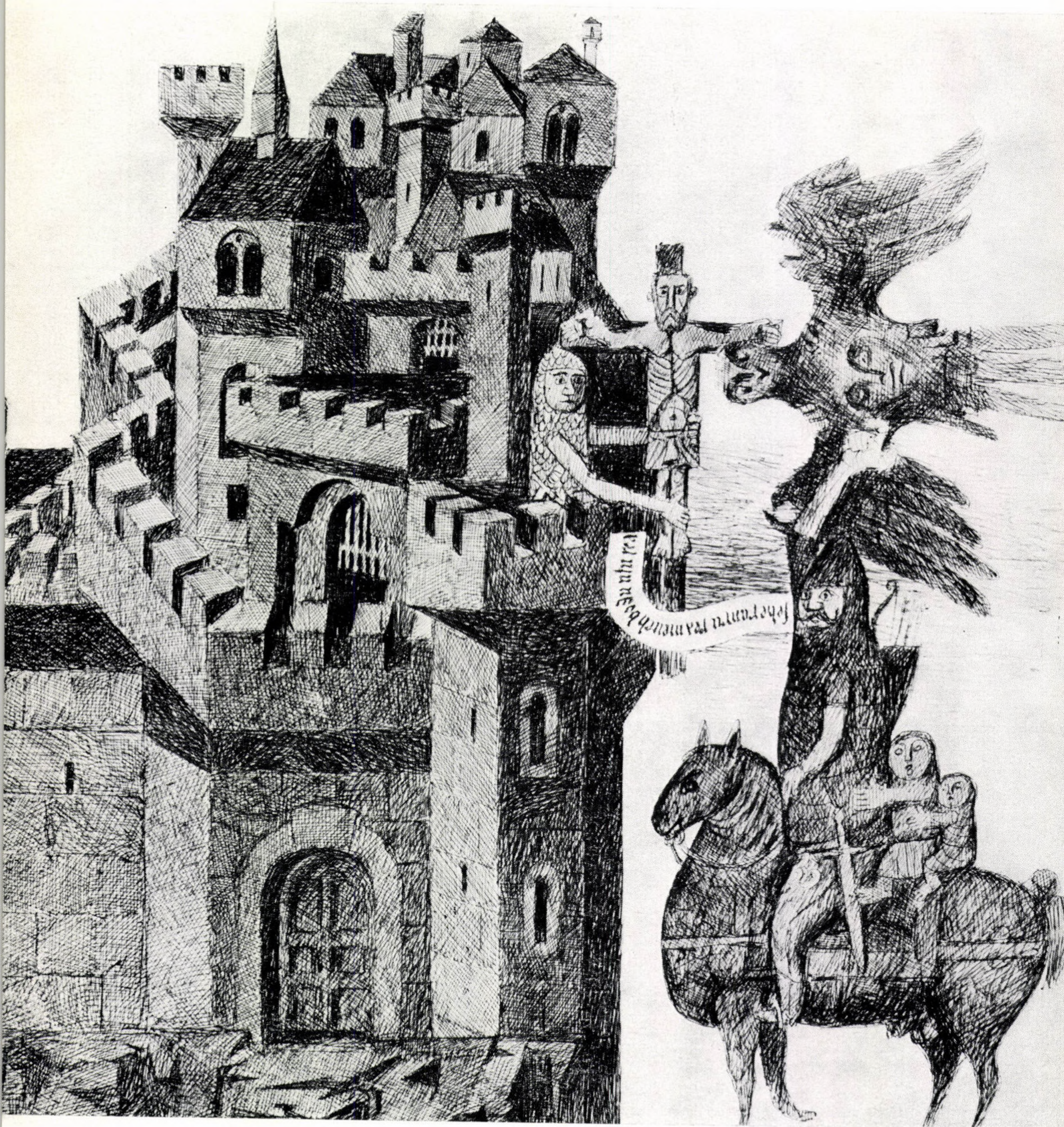
György Konecsni: Coal dust nuts from Dorog

dobolok
katonák
csak elöre!

György Konecsni: I am beating the Drum...
(poster, tempera, 120×90 cm, 1945)

a kenyér itt kezdödik

György Konecsni: That's where bread begins
(poster, tempera, 120×90 cm, 1945)



Zsuzsa Bokor

György Konecsni: Old Hungarian Lament by the Virgin Mother
(ink, 50×50 cm, 1970)

Zsuzsa Bokor

GYÖRGY KONECSNI: FUNERAL ORATION (INK, 50×50, 1970)

A, GYÖRGY KONECSNI: FIGURES (PEN AND INK, 30×44,5 CM, 1946) ▶

B, GYÖRGY KONECSNI: ASSOCIATIONS FROM THE HISTORY OF ART V., ▶
(PEN AND INK, 30×40 CM, 1958)

Zsuzsa Bokor

A,

B,

IMRE SCHRAMMEL—
AN OBSTINATE CERAMIST

In the spring 1976, in Vác, a Baroque cathedral city on the Danube, the friends and students of Imre Schrammel, met in a modern House of Culture, for the unveiling of a new work of this remarkable ceramist.

It is an almost sixty square metres (20 × × 2.62 m.) abstract relief, kneaded clay fired to become terracotta. It is spread on the outer wall of the auditorium of a building with a round ground-plan, in a corridor turned into a foyer. The public and the buffets are below. The area, which is a segment of a circle, is bordered on both sides by glass-walls and doors, while the panoramic view of the outside world, a main road, is also marked off by a glass-wall. The space of the relief is roughly a third of the first storey of the cylindrical block. One can get here through the main entrance from a spacious entrance-hall, over flights of stairs on both sides. In daylight it is supposed to be visible from the small square in front of the building and the adjoining main road as well. In the evening it is illuminated by a festoon of spot-lamps installed under the ceiling. Yet the only way to see the relief for what it is, is to enter through the glass-doors and, walking to and fro, to take it all in gradully.

A struggle goes on over the whole panel. There are grouped forms, strengthening and attacking one another, and there are isolated forms as well. A soft-formed small army, presumably soft to the touch, moves from one direction, while it is all but flooded with a trenchant-edged, hard army with its raw surface and torn margins. But before the encounter would be decided, a soothing, soft whirl comes into being, on whose ruffling edges the rushing-against-one-another of a monent ago quietens down. Here everything is quiet, ostensibly restful. From under the crinkled drapery-prints, the ever more throbbing surface, the body-forms pressed into the negative, run and pass into vaguely emerging forms. The sculpture, the plasticity of the relief follow in depth and height a movement rushing in a linear way on the surface from the highest points afforded by the material to the negatives attenuating to a centimetre. In a given view-segment we always have a given salient point, both horizontally and vertically. This it is that gives an impetus to the majestic movement, streaming from one place to another.

Although accepting the lack of expressiveness of words in conveying visual experience, I myself can only outline a certain version of its impression, I am convinced that it is not only the store of devices, so distinct from words, of visuality that renders the pleasure derived from this work of art so complex and exciting. It is rather the fact that during the realization of a peculiarly distinctive artistic and professional programme, ripening for years, Imre Schrammel himself reached a point which we are wont to term "the summing up". This relief has aimed at—and given a possible solution of—one of the most intriguing problems of the modern artistic tendencies of the century, the time-component of the artist's experience. The complete composing of the work, whose static characte is a result of its very nature, relies equally on the past-present-future feedback mechanism of the experience and the active participation of the chosen view-points of the spectator, which exerts an influence over the basic experience. The work, accepting with striking accuracy the architectonic discipline, the excellent arrangement of the parts, emits, at the same time, with its warm, rubescent, then gradually sallowing terracotta shades of colours a living, flesh-like quality. It creates a tension which is strengthened by the different devices of the deep and high sculpture, the lurking concealment of the chiaroscuro:

dream, reality, memories, finished unfinishedness.

The forty-two years old designer of crockery, potter, ceramist, and sculptor, Imre Schrammel, has taught at the School for Industrial Arts since his own graduation. He always wanted to do something different, something unusual. In his car he carries about with him rotten tree-barks of a massive species of beauty, mossy stones, the most modern, electric drill, a saw, instant adhesive, and a camera. And yet there is no disorder about him, neither of an artistic nor of any other kind. He has never worked with ready-made materials. He is a born doubter, who tries out everything with his own hands, in a sketch, in a clay-mould; in the form of seemingly dry-as-dust constructions or chemical formulae and numbers he brings out in a few minutes the essence of his own ideas or that of others.

Imre Schrammel has enriched the ceramist's craft with his special knowledge and not only with the revival of the passive rudiments of a rich historical tradition. He has elevated raw clay to artistic rank; he has added to it the protean effect, all but adjustable in advance, of firing. This artistic gesture, however, proved the recognition of a deeper truth as well. He has given evidence of the transfiguration of unworked earthen beauty to his colleagues and compatriots, who like to give poor technical standards and poor equipment as an excuse, and to prestigious, leading Western European fellow ceramists, with their splendidly equipped workshops as well. It was from the late sixties onwards that his works became widely known at numerous Hungarian and international exhibitions.

In all these years Imre Schrammel, who always seeks simplicity, has worked out experimentally, and has carried into effect, the simplest way of dealing with basic materials, right down to firing. In the meantime he has reached within himself the acerb conclusion that only what he does with his own hands, restricting chance to a minimum, is really solid. From the end of the sixties he has participated at major potters' symposia (1967, Gmunden, Austria; 1969 and 1970, Siklós, Hungary; 1970, Bechyné, Czechoslovakia; 1972, Stoob, Austria; Bassano del Grappa, Italy; 1973, Memphis, USA; 1974, Mettlach, Federal Republic of Germany; 1975, Jönköping, Sweden).

Schrammel both formally-emotionally and in the use of the material has introduced into the atmosphere of European galleries a new East-Central European, Hungarian style and artistic attitude. His creative imagination, his love of the studio make him happy in the world of innovations, of the search of unknown possibilities. In the final analysis the ceramic relief of the House of Culture at Vác was, for him too, a landmark proving his ability. To the constraint imposed upon the artist by the poor equipment of Hungarian studios Imre Schrammel answered with the wonderfully expressive sculpture of a crystallized formal and material world. While scrutinizing somewhere the soft earth, full of crevices, of a riverbank, Schrammel found out a device, unknown till then, of the craft of the potter. The relief modelled into raw clay chould not be sliced into slabs in a rigid net-system for firing but irregularly and naturally as is done by desiccating earth. True, for that the basic material has to be mixed in the way he is wont to do it.

While designing and making his most recent relief, Imre Schrammel showed himself to be simultaneously an architect, chemist, ceramist, and athlete. He was the creative artist and a child taking a delight in slopping about in the mud. As an architect he kept calculating the proportions of the protuberant wall, contradicting the nature of the clay-relief, and those of the shrinking clay, then the visual angles of the arched wall and the public contemplating from below, the covering to the ceiling, and he pondered on his sheets the load of the pillars, the places of the holding iron-clamps to be fixed in advance in the wall.

Then from one day to another he literally jumped into the clay. In the room where he was working grey heaps of clay towered, on a relatively flat basic plane—and Schrammel sometimes threshed these heaps with a broken wood strip, wading knee-deep in the soft clay, sometimes he grasped a handful, and sometimes threw two or three-kilogram blocks onto one another, then threw himself into it and tortured the raw mass with his arms, his legs, his whole body. All this he did with such a sureness that in the meantime he talked cheerfully to casual visitors and friends, and he alone knew the place of everything unerringly. In 1975–76 Schrammel exhibited a significant work in the House of Culture of Vác. It is a work which is unique in its originality in contemporary Hungarian art.

HEDVIG DVORSZKY

ROMAN ART IN HUNGARY

Thoughts on an Exhibition in Székesfehérvár

For more than twenty years the King Stephen Museum of Székesfehérvár has been headed by the outstanding Roman archaeologist and historian, Jenő Fitz, and his irreplaceable helpmeet and consort, Éva Petres, who herself is engaged on research into prehistoric times. Since then the Museum has loomed large in the cultural life of Hungary. The many international archaeological conferences the Museum has arranged are known far and wide and so is the site at Gorsium, near Székesfehérvár, where it came as no surprise then that Székesfehérvár managed to become the venue of the recent International *Limes* Congress. Exhibitions are as a rule arranged to run concurrently with conferences on archaeology, and so it was this time as well. When the hosts wished to present to the foreign guests of the *Limes* Congress some archaeological titbit they first thought of the collected and selected material of the small bronze sculpture of Pannonia, then they extended the scope of the exhibition to the sculpture of Pannonia from the first to the third century A.D. The co-operation of a whole team of experts was needed to gather and arrange in three rooms the material of one of the most important Hungarian exhibitions of the past few years from pieces borrowed from a whole range of Hungarian museums. Almost all museums possessing Pannonian finds were represented. The fact it was not until recently that an exhibition of this nature was organized, is to be accounted for by the anti-art orientation of Hungarian archaeology in the recent past. And it is for the same reason that this experimental exhibition appears so significant and thought-provoking. For however right and up-to-date is the highlighting of archaeological research with a historical purpose, as against the former, one-sided and somewhat a historical aesthetic trend, usual in German archaeology, nevertheless one cannot approve of a research practice which does not care about the artistic aspects of the heritage of the past. Such neglect sacrifices for the sake of an apparent scholarship one of the most important historical sources: that rich message which gains expression in the arts, concerning the way of thinking

and the emotional world of a given epoch, people, or culture. The interest shown in man is always conductive to an interest in the mind, morals and taste of a society, since failing the knowledge of these we could only see men as creatures endeavouring with mere automatism or instinct to satisfy their elementary needs.

The visitor is overcome with curiosity on entering. What is at stake is whether we can look into the heads and hearts of people about whom in this respect we know next to nothing. The reason we do not is that Pannonia—as so many provinces without established cultural traditions, that have not or have hardly reached standards of urbanization, and which became Roman chiefly through conquest—has not created and has not bequeathed its own literature; the scanty historical sources mention only the most important military and political events. Inscriptions carved into stone that have survived express funeral and other religious pieties and affirm political loyalities of an insignificant part of the inhabitants.

These expectations are only partly fulfilled by the exhibition; to be more precise, it increases one's curiosity instead of satisfying it. The selection shows a certain conventional point of view, a search for artistically valuable and interesting objects. Yet no one could know as yet what is really interesting in Pannonia, in the art of the Roman period. We can only speak of conjectures and hypotheses. Perhaps it is for the same reason that the arrangement of the material seems to be only sketchy, in some places even inconsistent. The organizers have said it straight: the art of Pannonia had not one but several layers, in which the inherent components and those coming from outside not only lived side by side but also crossed one another and interfered with one another. Thus it is evident that to break such an involute texture down into crystal-clear components—if it is possible at all—is at all events a very difficult task.

In the arrangement of the material the organizers sought to divide the art of the whole Roman Empire roughly into the following groups: the central and official (or imperial) trend, the common Roman trend, adapting itself to the taste of the well-to-do and educated ruling class, and finally, the "provincial" trend of the lower classes, varying strongly according to areas, determined by ethnic and social relations, and moved by subterraneous currents. The official artistic trend of the Empire is demonstrated by relatively few pieces at the exhibition itself; it is, however, represented by an excellent bronze portrait of Marcus Aurelius (from the museum of Pécs), which has unfortunately not bean published yet, but has for years been regarded as one of the top pieces of Pannonian sculpture. The bronze head, made, though not in Rome, but at all events in an imperial workshop, is one of those bronze statues of the ruler which probably stood by the score in the towns and military camps in the provinces including Pannonia. None of them had been so far discovered in Hungary, only inscriptions and plinths, and insignificant fragments. It was an ingenious decision of the organizers to place behind the portrait of Marcus Aurelius a long-known Aquincum emperor head. It may well have been the likeness of the philosopher-emperor as well, who waged war so frequently on the Pannonian frontier, but, carved in stone by a local master it is not easy even to identify. The style is not in the least like the standard portraits of the emperor. Thus this piece which, as regards its subject-matter and purpose, was one of the works which served the policy of the government, must be classified, as art, as local sculpture and not an official work. The ruling tendency, however, could be represented not only by works referring expressly to emperors, but also by all those often small pieces in certain cases locally made by itinerant craftsmen, which faithfully followed the Roman trend.

A small bronze goddess holding a cornucopia with a splendid frontal effect, so

characteristic of Roman sculpture and of Roman representative art in general, must be regarded as typical. It is far from classic modelling in the Greek sense, nevertheless, first-rate technically. Much less unequivocal is, however, the artistic classification of a middle-sized stone carving which is linked by its place of discovery (the governor's palace of Aquincum), its subject (Nemesis, holding in her hand the fate of the world) and its style as well to the highest aspirations of Roman art in Pannonia. It is absolutely sure, that it was made there, and even if it was carved by a well-trained itinerant craftsman, he was not an artist of the first rank, or else he could not quite cope with the problems of working in a softer and poorer stone than marble. Thus it is a local work, but part of the mainstream, a work of the highest standard within provincial art, properly so called but "countrified" all the same.

These examples sufficiently illustrate the presence in Roman Hungary of art trends universal on the central imperial, but also on the common Roman, scale; shedding light as well on the multiplicity and intertwined threads of their outward forms and relations to one another. The truly intriguing question, however, refers not to the imperial trends but the art distinct from them, identified with the art of the subject peoples. We can take for granted the presence in every province of imperial art, and it is evident that the largely uniform taste of well to do Roman citizens penetrated the conquered territories, for it is far from sure that every province had its *own*, truly peculiar artistic idiom. In this sense the question is justified whether there existed in fact a genuinely Pannonian art or can we only speak of the art of Pannonia. In Egypt, even under the Romans, there was a characteristically Egyptian art, the successor of the ancient, great Pharaonic tradition, bearing its mark in spite of many kinds of Greek influences. One cannot doubt the essentially Hellenistic character of the art of the Greek provinces; moreover, nobody contests that the art of Syrian territories and towns like Palmyra or Dura Europos, for example, is closer to Parthian than to Roman art. An expert can recognize the peculiar character of the art even of provinces with an almost completely Romanized culture, such as Gaul, for there, on the one hand, the mature taste of Celtic art was powerfully present at the beginning; on the other hand, the rapid and highly developed civilizing of the province had matured is own fruit. It is scarcely possible to recognize the independence, character and style of Pannonian art in such an evident way.

And still there are works in great number, what's more some here exhibited, whose style is clearly different from the official imperial art and the artistic lingua franca of the Roman world. A glance at the splendid male head of the Székesfehérvár Museum whose closed and cubistic plasticity has next to nothing in common with the ruffled and curled surfaces of Roman-style goddesses. It is no less instructive to observe the extremely varied stylistic features prevalent in the major part of sepulchral reliefs, that is stone sculpture of the type most frequently produced locally. On the one hand, we find at the exhibition sepulchral statues and reliefs reminiscent of the block-like shaping of early-archaic Greek sculpture or antique oriental sculpture; on the other, there are many reliefs on which the craftsman has converted reality into ornaments or pieces whose prevalent feature is a certain expressivity informing modern man with an astonishingly kindred feeling or a sketchy expression caring little for "beauty" and formal proportion. It is difficult to ignore the bronze Venus statuette from the Pécs museum whose maker had in mind the graceful and well-worked-out figure of a Greek Aphrodite. Something completely different, a quaintly and suggestively stretching and twisting figure redolent of natural forms, emerged from his hands. It is such examples that compel us to recall from the great legacy

of ancient art, and especially that of a number of Roman provinces, those kindred figures, forms and stylistic similarities which can be paralleled with striking accuracy by the few afore-mentioned, yet further multipliable, "local" artistic idioms.

Thus it is entirely evident that in Pannonia as well there was an artistic world distinct from the prevalent imperial style; what is not clear is only to what extent this subterranean art, protean and contradictory, can be regarded as Pannonian. To obtain an answer much more research will have to be done, primarily in Pannonia itself, but comparative studies as well, covering the whole empire. Only two, highly possible, answers can be suggested. One is that Pannonia, as a Roman administrative and military province, was not an ethnic or cultural unit, thus it is the question that it should be a unit in its art. On the other hand, it is all the more possible that one will be able to isolate, within the protean art of the Roman Empire, artistic provinces characteristic of certain territorial and ethnic zones.

Another possible hypothesis is to assume that the stylistic currents cropping up in various territories of the Empire that were radically different from the subterranean stream and the classic main stream—which can certainly not be accounted for merely by artistic ignorance or lack of training, but represent the various hues of a certain kind of taste—are perhaps explicable for the most part not so much by territorial and ethnic structure as by the social structure, as the expressions of a world of ideas characteristic of the subjects of the Roman ruling class. Whatever result scholarly research will lead to, this much is certain: in putting and answering questions exhibitions like the present one are steps in the right direction.

LÁSZLÓ CASTIGLIONE

NINETY-THREE ARTISTS

János Frank: *Szórabírt műtermek* (Speaking Studios). Magvető, Budapest, 1975, 356 pp.

More or less regularly, interviews prepared by János Frank appeared in the weekly *Élet és Irodalom*. They were read and enjoyed, then swiftly forgotten. No one imagined that lifted out of the significance the moment lent them they might achieve lasting value. Fortunately, Magvető Publishers thought otherwise and, without any kind of editing, published ninety-three of them in simple chronological order.

Szórabírt műtermek became a best-seller, though there are few pictures, none of them in colour of real quality. It seems that the reading public is more mature than the publishing houses imagine. It is not only the coffee-table kind of art book that is popular. People read and appreciate if what they read is good. János Frank's book is also a success in the trade. This is the way to write about contemporary Hungarian art. After the platitudinous sonority of small books and albums, analyses of works and biographies, here, at long last, is a fresh and witty tone. When discussing contemporary art, what we need is not unalterable "eternal truths" and the quest for far-flung

connections but the capturing of the momentary situation, the documentation of problems and attepms to solve them.

This form is perhaps more attractive even for the artists themselves. In an interview a forty-one years old artist can safely say of himself that "all I have hitherto accomplished was but a preparation for something that I will only start in the future"—but what an awkward situation would arise if an art historian were to say that about him in a book!

János Frank writes well. His style is plastic and personal, yet scholarly. This helps to explain the success of the book. Two excellent surveys of contemporary Hungarian art have so far appeared: a portrait-photo series by Károly Koffán, *Társak és kortársak* (Contemporaries) and this volume of interviews. Both are revealingly straightforward, yet no one has been offended, except perhaps those left out. When and who will organize an exhibition worthy of these books?

The major part of the interviews took place between 1966 and 1970. Art is interpreted in the widest possible sense, more widely than artists are wont to do, and room is given to almost anyone from landscape gardeners to photographers, from restorers to the organizers of exhibitions. It is interesting who were left out: industrial designers, unfortunately a sign of the times, and art critics.

The volume, however, covers great distances not only is space but in time as well. Interviews bound to the business of the day open a window into the past, too, and we get a picture of the vital process of twentieth-century Hungarian art. The artists speak about their lives, studies and contemporaries and thus, from the second half of the sixties, we cast a retrospective glance as far back as the turn of the century, and the school of Nagybánya going on through the most important masters and groups of artists to Kernstok, the Eight, Kassák's circle, to the present. It is the artists themselves that make us conscious of historical continuity. Lajos Vajda, Béla Kondor, György Konecsni, István Gádor, Gyula Kaesz are those to whom they refer most frequently as their true masters. The Academy of Art is hardly given a favourable mention but we often hear sentences like: "and then I met with young people of similar aspirations..."

It is the art of the second half of the sixties that unfolds before our eyes in the most pregnant manner. For example, the birth of the modern textile pictures, the new interpretation of materials and techniques, and the sorry plight of the industrial arts as a whole. "I am not a fervent cultivator of industrial art objects, although I am active in handicrafts. I respect the object when it is good, but I would consider the shaping of the object and sculptural work as distinct. However aesthetic it might be, I would never place a tea-cup on exhibition, in the same way as I would not exhibit a car-body beside tapestries or goldsmith's works as an equal unit of the show". One reads with astonishment what a teacher of pottery at the School of Industrial Arts had to say in 1968. After this there is no need to ask what he teaches, that is displayed in shop windows. That was still the period when artist-craftsmen dealt only with visual, mainly large decorating tasks. Industrial design was a despised profession, and the industrial arts were cultivated at anything but a high level. "What I want in fact is a more refined sort of representational art, something in the way of what artisans do, but at the same time close to the visual arts"—said the gold- and silversmith teacher of the School in 1966. Thus it is understandable that the plans, "desires" of his students were "bronzes of a sculptural level". The useful object which is at the same time of a high artistic standard has remained a shopper's dream.

The existing disharmony between the actual task and finished work is betrayed even more conspicuously by the fact that, in the golden age of murals commissions,

only a few artists take into consideration the building as a work of art, the environment of his work. To the all but obligatory question of "what are you working on at the moment?" the answer is often some commission connected with a building. We usually know the function of the building. But not a word is spoken about its shape, proportions, façade, etc. Hence the work to be connected with it will be no more than a mere illustration. Whoever wants something else in theory does not show his intentions in the finished work. Márta Pán, however, a Hungarian sculptor who lives in France declares: "... first of all, I have to adjust myself to the building, only then do I choose the form, size and material of my statues. I regard them as the continuation and not the complementing of the building. They forge a link between architecture and nature. These are the meeting-points of sun, wind, water, space and man." She has made her mark largely thanks to her floating statues (Otterlo: Kröller-Müller Museum etc.). It would do good if Hungarian artists in Hungary were to listen to her words. The new kind of relationship between sculpture and architecture is one of the exciting things about twentieth-century art. Barna Megyeri, for example, shows himself conscious of this: "Architecture, just like sculpture, is a spatial art. The auditorium of a theatre is in fact a negative statue." It is, therefore, particularly disheartening to compare what he has to say there with his sculptures.

We find out a great deal about the tastes and main interests of the given period: what attracted genuine interest and what was merely a passing sensation, what were the fashionable ideas and the real turning-points. We become conscious of the reaction elicited by foreign exhibitions as well as of the influence of reviving Art Nouveau and note, somewhat disconcertedly, that in the second half of the sixties everybody refers to the inspiration he derives from folk art. One can't help feeling that this concept is applied to far too many things, as were the "futuristic" in the early part of the twentieth century and "abstract" in the recent past.

János Frank's style is unlaboured and extremely readable, not argumentative and certainly not "militant". And yet it is unequivocal and always has a well-defined attitude. He is aware that touchy questions do not have to be avoided, but to be asked outright. Thus he always gets a straightforward answer.

There is something for everybody in this book. There are those for whom the most memorable point is that the late Erzsébet Schaár always thought of her best ideas when doing housework or that Dóra Maurer sets great store on keeping her drawing paper in order. Those regularly going to exhibitions have obviously noticed that in the time that has elapsed since than the ideas and projects of the artists, and the fate or their works have undergone great changes. For a reader who is an expert in the field the book is an inexhaustible fountain of information, from encyclopaedic facts to the creation-psychological "self-analysis" or "introspection" of Tamás Hencze. For it is true that the medium in which the painter or the sculptor "makes his statement" is not the word but the palpable matter, yet he has to know what he is doing. He does know it, and sometimes puts it in such poignant and witty as the pop artist Endre Tót: "I want to paint great feelings, but in a way that is hard like a horse's kick."

Although there is no art critic amongst those interviewed one is present all right in the person of the author. His knowledge and scholarship are pre-requisites, therefore they need no emphasis. What has to be admired is his sense of proportion, which shows, in the first place, in the lenght of the interviews. These conversations are like the cunningly adjusted coke slot-machines in Paris, in the boiling heat of summer. They give exactly as much as leaves us just a bit thirsty. He always approaches the artist and his work with respect, yet he never loses his objectivity. His short analyses are

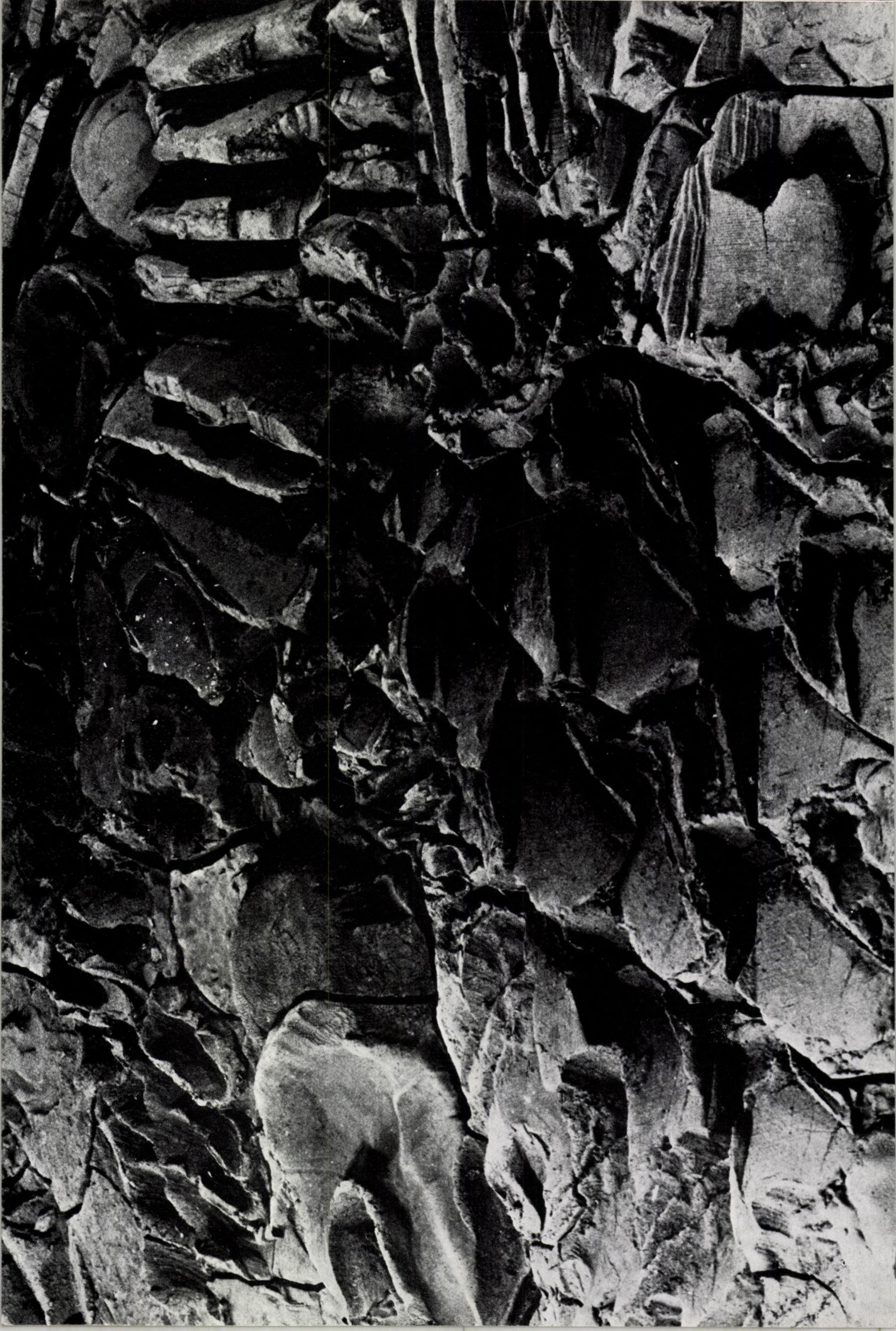
Imre Schrammel: Terracotta relief from the Vác cultural centre (20×2,62 m, 1975–76)

Imre Schrammel: Terracotta Relief (detail)

István Gadl

Imre Schrammel: ▶ Terracotta relief (detail)

István Gadl



Ferenc Gelencsér

HEAD FROM A FUNERARY MONUMENT
(SZÉKESFEHÉRVÁR, KING STEPHEN MUSEUM)

NEMESIS (STONE FIGURE FROM THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE AT AQUINCUM. BUDAPEST HISTORICAL MUSEUM)

Ferenc Gelencsér

◀ VENUS (BRONZE, JANUS PANNONIUS MUSEUM, PÉCS)

GODDESS ON THE THRONE
(BRONZE, MUSEUM OF SZEKSZÁRD)

Ferenc Gelencsér

DETAIL

◀ NEMESIS (HEAD)

Ferenc Gelencsér

highly subjective, and extremely good. It is seldom that he stresses a point, but then we really have to attend to him. This exquisite eye for proportions is also evidenced by his interjections. He knows when to interrupt someone who is up in the clouds with an only too prosaic question, and when to remain completely in the background because the person he interviews is an articulate artist who answers even those questions which the outsider has had no time to formulate within himself.

János Frank tells in his introduction how much he has learned from Kassák, that is from his interviews *Vallomás tizenöt művészről* (Testimony on Fifteen Artists) (1942). No higher praise can be accorded this work than to say that Frank's standards make Kassák's influence evident, though his style and message are very different.

ILDIKÓ NAGY

TIBOR DÉRY IN MARBLE

The classical art of portraiture has had its heights and depths in the course of the centuries. The last golden age was swept away by three currents: academicism, the avant garde and photography. Academic artists embellished the appearance of their model in the name of some ideal although the final work was always a likeness. Members of the avant garde thought that the less of a likeness it was, the better. They replaced the portrait by an icon in their own taste. Early on photography only wanted to replace traditional portrait-painting—making reproduction cheaper, easier and safer—later, when it found its own style, photography wanted to convey a truly authentic picture of the person with shots taken in unselfconscious moments of action and repose without posing, except where photography itself fell into the trap of producing smartened-up retouched portraits.

And yet the classical portrait bringing out someone's characteristic features, cannot be discarded altogether. Examples of this type surface repeatedly, and some of them arrest the attention. Olivér Sigmond's bust of Tibor Déry is interesting not only because of the subject, it is also a work of art.

Tibor Déry's face drew attention already as a young man. He was no Apollo but observant persons were aware of the fine proportions of his features. His forehead although not large, was strongly proportioned: a firm chin was its almost geometrical counterpoint. His delicately proportioned nose and mouth fitted in well into a face that seemed round rather than oval. Eyes gleaming from under the not too marked, arched brows were strikingly beautiful. You looked at a man's features. Those who knew Déry knew that this was the head of a revolutionary intellectual, up in arms against his class, the big bourgeoisie. Those who did not know him noticed too that his unyielding determination was mitigated by frankness and sympathy, his severe energy concealed a certain gayness and readiness to take a risk, and his ascetic hardness was softened by love for his fellowmen.

Déry grew old. If it is true that past middle age everybody is responsible for his face, Déry passed the test with flying colours. The head of the impetuous youth ripened into the head of a man, a writer whose glance radiates the unchanged and indeed deeper and richer spirit of his calling. His thinned hair does not hide his remarkable forehead any more; the thick, long locks of hair on the

back of his head accentuate this beautifully developed occiput. Life's storms ploughed his features. He experienced heights as well as depths. His nose has grown longer and thinner as befits a mocking sage not averse to self-irony; his mouth has become tight-lipped and sharper without losing its expressivity. The face as a whole is enlivened by his observant, penetrating and yet warm gaze. His is the look of an unaffected and humane philosopher.

Olivér Sigmond's bust has preserved all the significant features. Condition's were favourable: the sculptor has been a long-time friend of the writer; he had the opportunity to watch the features, carriage, and mimicry of his model, acquainting himself with his works and way of life. He did not wish to idealize Déry who certainly would have refused any such endeavour. The piece of sculpture is in no particular style—since the artist does not belong to any special school. Although he had started to sculpt early in life and studied for a time with Mestrović his circumstances did not allow him to choose sculpture as a career. He remained an amateur in the best sense of the term. He is unbiased: his attention belongs to his object and gives full play to his instinctive modelling ability. He has modelled Déry several times until he found the best version. He is neither a virtuoso nor an experimenter. Perhaps this head of Déry will remain his only truly outstanding work, the future only can tell. One thing is certain: this sculpture is the result of the happy coincidence of inspiration, experience and thoroughness. It is the best portrait of the writer and a remarkable piece of the real art of portraying, a manifestly unperishable craft.

DEZSŐ KERESZTURY

MARKETING IN HUNGARY

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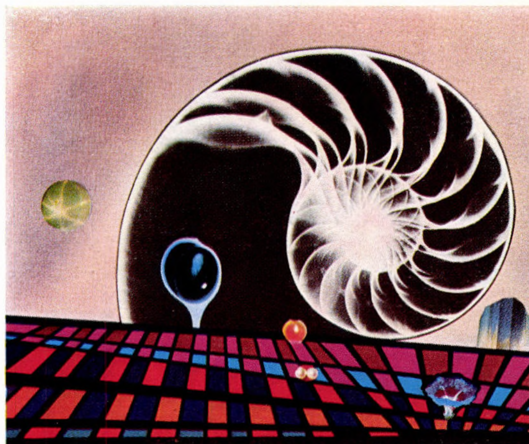
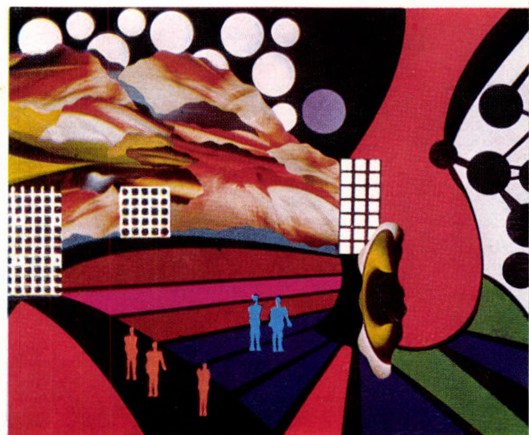
Olivér Zsigmond: Tibor Déry, (1974, life-size)



SÁNDOR REISENBÜCHLER: FRAMES FROM "MOONFLIGHT"

István Somfai



THEATRE AND FILM

MYTH INTO MOVEMENT

The Art of the Animator Sándor Reisenbüchler

Among his varied achievements, Man is also a myth-maker, but in our specialized, dissociated age we have relegated the making of myths, and even the task of perceiving the need for myths, to the artists and poets. Myth can function on many levels: the story of the beggarmaid who marries the king, or the seventh son who wins a princess, can slide into a facile libretto for operetta; but at a deeper, more universal level the patterns of nature, destruction and regeneration, or the evolution of a civilization, can be embodied in stories about Proserpine or about the tower of Babel. It is on this deeper level that the Hungarian animator Sándor Reisenbüchler, approaches the art of film-making.

Over the past fifteen years animation has secured the status of an art form, and all over the world animators like Tchechura, Lenica, Földes, or McLaren have established styles as distinctive on film as any artist on paper or canvas. In the 1960s a new impetus came from America, involving more technology and less graphic art, with new techniques of photographing and printing, new mechanical and electronic devices such as computers and video recorders removing even further the art of animation from the Disney tradition of illustration and storytelling. Film and television have become today's global means of expressing man's preoccupations and consciousness and demand on film-makers are diverse and complicated sometimes to the point of being unreasonable. Mass entertainment is expected to cater for the middle and lower reaches, the playing-safe elements of the collective consciousness, while the highest, the new and adventurous is still the special preserve of the artist of talent, such as Sándor Reisenbüchler. His tangible successes include international prizes gained in New York, the Golden Pelican at Mamaia, the Special Jury Prize at Cannes, and several distinctions in Hungary culminating in the first class of the Balázs Béla Award in 1975.

Reisenbüchler's first film to attract international notice was "The Kidnapping of the Sun and Moon" (*A nap és a hold elrablása*, 1968) inspired by Ferenc Juhász's poem which attracted Reisenbüchler by its tough, hard Eastern tone, combining familiar aspects of folklore with suggestions of older, Oriental myths. The poem is not used on the sound-track, made up from excerpts from Vivaldi, Prokofiev, Penderecki and Orff, but its images and rhythm provide the structure and rhythm of the film. In its opening frames Reisenbüchler used many of the two-dimensional clear-coloured motifs of Hungarian folk art* showing the harmonious coexistance of man and nature, employing folk motifs both for formal detail and for the reassuring effect of familiarity and repetition, the stability of a self-per-

* See NHQ No. 38.

petuating world. When Evil enters as the Dragon whose every step brings desolation, the folklore-shapes, of trees, birds and flowers are transformed into amorphous blobs, not unlike microscopie slides, as they fall apart. As the heads of the Dragon turn into claws and tentacles, the heart of a frog becomes visible and throbs away as a melting, greenish cell. Such images could only be invented by, and be meaningful to, a generation which grew up with the experience of Hiroshima: a generation conditioned by the threatening as well as the liberating powers of science. But the Dragon is overcome by a redeeming hero: man and nature are reborn.

Holocaust and rebirth, the constructive and destructive aspects of science and technology suffuse all Reisenbüchler's work. But there is always a line of dramatic development as well, even in his least ambitious film, made in 1969, after "The Kidnapping of the Sun and Moon." It is based on the words and music of a song by the Illés group, called "When I Was a Little Kid" *(Amikor én kis srác voltam)* about the pleasures of a child discovering the rich texture of the world around him, then reaching a premonition of mutability and the pain involved in growing up, before the strident melody reasserts the joyful theme. The pictorial material consists of stylized images of Budapest, and perhaps its riches tend to overwhelm the simple pop song. Although it is one of the few films in which live-action photography and graphic techniques coalesce satisfactorily, even in 1969 Reisenbüchler expected more from himself than a visually pleasing solution of what was, to him, mainly a technical problem.

Reisenbüchler attended the Oberhausen Festival on his first visit to Western Europe before embarking on his next film. He came into contact with a different social tension, and in films he met a dynamism different from his own Eisenstein-dominated approach. For the first time he saw the outcome of a new film language in which the visual element supersedes the story-line, in the works of Will Hindle, Stan Brakhage and others. The novelty of the American underground arises from replacing montage with collage, a reversal of Eisenstein's method of using montage as collision, by creating a time-space continuum of images massed together, often by multiple superimposition. His new impressions were Reisenbüchler's springboard for his next film, "Barbaric Age" *(Barbárok ideje,* 1971), in which he used extreme methods of condensation, the density achieved by substituting collage for montage. And yet, Reisenbüchler's inner response differs from the USA underground's in one important respect: his films retain a dialectic structure. This may be the inevitable outcome of being brought up on Eisenstein: but in all his films, there is a central pivot of meaning, connecting the images. Nor does he allow a primary emotion or primary experience to dominate: he sets out a complex and often contradictory collection of pictorial postulates, like a series of visual syllogisms which are structured along a planned, determined dramatic development, quite unlike the random or surrealist admixture of the USA underground films.

The theme of "Barbaric Age" is a protest against the restless, oppressive impatience suffusing our age, reducing human values to a minimal, material level. In every corner of the world people feel that somehow we have drifted, or rushed headlong, into a spiritual vacuum. The harmony which once upon a time represented an ideal both for human affections and for man's relations with nature, has been disrupted. Man as a collective being has produced a super-technological environment. This is the source of our alienation, our self-destruction. In "Barbaric Age" images of population, poverty and war follow on technological wonders and conspicuous consumption in sequences which create emotional assonance like the consecutive lines of a rhymed poem.

Still using the techniques of collage, but resulting in a very different pictorial style,

Reisenbüchler chose a historic theme for his next film, "1812," based on Tschaikovsky's overture, but with a dramatic structure following closely Tolstoy's "War and Peace." It is no more bizarre to condense an epic into twelve minutes than to portray the disintegration of twentieth-century civilization in the equally brief space of "Barbaric Age." Pictorial language has the quality of shorthand, capable of turning the time-space continuum into an instant explosion. To find the means for this maximum impact, Reisenbüchler's research covered Ucello's battle scenes, Goya's sketches, Kandinsky's chromatic experiments, and Chagall's poetic dissolving of space, as well as reading through Russian folklore, Gogol and Turgenev as well as Tolstoy.

A combination of thousands of coloured cuttings from periodicals with drawing and painting, over and under layers of clear or painted cells, gives "1812" its jewel-like brilliance. Each frame is designed in accordance with the familiar, classical principles of composition, and as the story of Napoleon's invasion of Russia is likewise familiar, in spite of its density, "1812" does not present the perceptional difficulties inherent in "Barbaric Age" which preceded and "Moon Flight" which followed it. At the 1973 Cannes Film Festival it was awarded a Special Jury Prize.

Of course, Reisenbüchler is not the only animator from Hungary to win fame abroad. The animation studio came into being during the 1950s and within ten years, the Hungarian cartoon was flying high. Gyula Macskássy, József Nepp and Attila Dargay were already well known when the younger and equally talented generation—Marcel Jankovics, György Kovásznai, Zsolt Richly, József Gémes, Péter Szoboszlay, Sándor Reisenbüchler—began their careers. Their first films coincided with the "new wave" of the Hungarian cinema of Jancsó, Szabó, Gaál, and Kovács. Whenever there were seasons or festivals of Hungarian feature films abroad, brilliant animated shorts accompanied them. By 1975 it was even possible to mount a three-day session of Hungarian animation at the National Film Theatre in London, to celebrate twenty years of progress.

As the Pannónia Studio expanded, many artists were drawn into teams producing television series or long features. Reisenbüchler's intense individualism has met with occasional difficulties within the framework of this large organization. It is not always easy to keep to schedules or deadlines for an artist who works alone and to relentlessly high standards. From his first idea, Reisenbüchler works out his own scripts, storyboard and roughs. He designs, draws and paints every single frame himself, usually at home. He assembles and records his own sound-tracks, using music as any layman would, for emotive effects. Only at the final stage does the cameraman join the creative process by turning the frames into kinetic series. Reisenbüchler always works in close rapport with his cameramen (István Harsági, or Irén Dargay) for while it is he who decides the effects needed, the cameraman restructures the designs, with lighting and camera movement above the rostrum, giving a dramatic quality and dynamism to static pictorial compositions.

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His most serious problem is that film, unlike a painting, is damaged by its *raison d'être*, being projected. Each screening fractionally weakens the colours and the sound, and so any artistic film which remains in demand for small, select audiences year after year, slowly wears away. The making of new prints, which is a necessary part of film production and distribution the world over, is not budgeted for either in the Studio or by the distributing companies. This minor weakness in an otherwise efficacious system of subsidy must be mentioned, for the lack of new prints of films such as Reisenbüchler's is not just a matter for regret but something that should be put right.

Reisenbüchler's films could be called experimental only in so far as they stretch his talent, technical possibilities and the audiences' curiosity to the utmost; but they are never experiments. He is a perfectionist, with the meticulousness of a Van Eyck or van der Weyden in every detail, and also an intellectual. His style, his use of colour, movement, graphic detail, montage, collage, visual rhythm, and music are always the outcome of ideas which inspire and influence him. Some critics find this too ambitious for ten or fifteen-minute films; but in the visual arts, time is irrelevant. How long does it take to experience a painting or a sculpture? What is the time-span of a Klee or a Mondrian? Also, hardly any notable poet, artist or composer fails to be influenced by the intellectual currents of his epoch. Reisenbüchler's films attest to his awareness that film is on the threshold of radical change, the beginnings of "expanded cinema."* This is an attempt to mirror the expanded consciousness of the modern mind by the arts, instead of merely preserving historic concepts and re-stating ideas like "classicism" and "romanticism." By now art, and cinematic art in particular, could be expected to reflect the ways in which concepts of reality have changed. It is this expectation which differentiates art from entertainment, since neither the Hollywood-style film, nor commercial television attempt to mirror reality; they mostly preserve memories of a falsified past. Creative film-making, as imagined by Eisenstein, should be possible by now for film-makers who aim at a synthesis of art and science, at rephrasing the myths of the past to give them new meaning.

This is why Reisenbüchler made his latest film, "Moon Flight" (*Ugrás a lehetetlenbe*, 1975) a further expansion of his earlier themes: of the holocaust-and-survival myth told in "The Kidnapping of the Sun and Moon," the questions about values posited in "Barbaric Age", and the cycles of history as depicted in "1812." These themes are now taken into a wider context, in synthesis with astrophysical theories; not as science fiction, but poetry, arising from the search for a new romanticism. Romance is the imaginative response to the unknown, and it is increasingly difficult to find it on the surface of the earth which is now mapped and exploited. The only geophysical secrets left are inside the earth and in outer space; they provide scope for a poetic train of thought, as expressed in "Moon Flight," about man's past and future in the macrocosm.

"Moon Flight" begins with an ancient myth, documented in the monastic libraries of Tibet and also reflected in Slav legends traceable from the Himalayas to the Ukraine, which tells that once upon a time, the earth did not have a moon. The film opens with a romantic series of pictures of Tibet, with religious rites, masks and ritual dances which lead to the Moon Gate of legend: a connecting link between man and the universe, perhaps a legacy from extraterrestrial visitors. The analysis of allegoric symbols in prehistoric legends is combined with current scientific hypotheses, for even after the moon landings, some scientific mysteries still persist, suggested by metal artefacts found by the astronauts, by the structures of the moon which seems to have no chemical relation to the earth, and the even depth of indentations left by meteorites on the moon's surface. It was not science-fiction writers, but scientists who postulated that the moon may have been a giant capsule constructed by humanoid creatures from our own solar system. The film is a poetic fantasy on the idea that one humanoid and highly technical civilization had built space-ships in which they explored the stellar system. In the film's third movement, such a space-ship collides with a belt of radiation strong enough to kill all life aboard. Then the space-ship wanders at random until it drifts into the earth's orbit, causing a giant tidal

* Gene Youngblood: *Expanded Cinema*. Studio Vista, London, 1970.

wave, the first flood. The Flood is another worldwide myth common to most religions: it washed away the Golden Age, shown by Reisenbüchler in a collage of images and motifs culled from many ancient cultures as an ideal world which combined technological skills with aesthetic perfection. This idealized "status quo ante diluvium" bears a close stylistic resemblance to "1812" prompted by its obvious similarity of mood. After the flood, the world is renewed: an inferior and non-homogeneous civilization develops much as we know it today. Earlier in the film, as the moon-ship traversed the universe, Reisenbüchler had already introduced humanoid motifs; and the reiteration of various elements build up the film's emotional structure. It is his sense of style which contrives to unite diverse moods and elements into such a brief, condensed work. He uses stylistic modifications instead of transitions; for instance, jettisoning classical composition, our own civilization is a seeming jumble of criss-crossed illustrations, leading to the moon-cults of our cultural heritage in myth, religion, astronomy and art (of "The White Goddess" by Robert Graves). After nineteenth-century romanticism, almost by way of reaction, the birth of technology heralds the new approach to the moon's mystery: scientific curiosity, depicted in a Jules Verne world of Daumier caricatures and contemporary engravings. From this, the pictorial transition to photographic material leads into space research and the 1969 moon landing.

In the last part of the film the human race, ripe to explode into the solar system, restores the moon as a space-ship. When some cosmic catastrophe—like the cooling of the sun—forces us to evacuate the earth, mankind could escape to another galaxy. The film is a superlative affirmation of the chain of life: no catastrophe is final, the power of survival is inherent in living.

Reisenbüchler's future plans include one full-length film and a six-part series developing still further the ideas in "Moon Flight." The format of these films may change as he works out the details, for his first concern is always to strive for absolute truths, to compress his ideas, condense his imagery, to use the minimum means for maximum expression. "I do not make compromises," he wrote, "because I am absolutely certain that in Hungary as well as abroad there will always be people who have the understanding and the courage to accept emotional experience, who are ready to accept personal catharsis, in each new work of art. They are the wise, they possess the secret of imparting meaning to their lives. For myself, I have discovered that the bounds of creation are unlimited. One can always take a further step, and this is what I always try to do."

Mari Kuttna

DEZSŐ KERESZTURY: NEHÉZ MÉLTÓSÁG ("THE BURDENS OF DIGNITY")

Summer Theatre at Gyula Castle

"Egmont expresses only the love of freedom of a small people, he does not triumph under the blood-soaked flags of freedom, his enemies do not even kill him in an open fight. Even if a man is not a victorius leader in a people's war of independence he can be its initiator, ideal and example." These words are part of Dezső Keresztury's postscript to his translation of *Egmont*, about a man and dramatic character to whom he also referred in his own play on Zrínyi. The parallel is justified. Hungarian history is also rich in heroes and martyrs of wars of independence which failed.

Goethe and Count Egmont were in an easier situation. Egmont's problem was clear: his country was threatened from one direction only, the opposition was clear. His personal position was also unambiguous: the high place from which he challenged the enemy ran in the blood, it was naturally accepted by himself and everybody else. Society and public opinion behind him were relatively unified considering the times; he knew on whose behalf he spoke, he could act as the representative of the united and clear determination and interests of a nation. True, the war of independence had not yet started, so he could not lead it. His death, however, was victory as it occurred: it expressed an openly assumed fate, the loud NO! of a people to the oppressor.

Miklós Zrínyi, Hungarian count, military leader and politician in the seventeenth century, lived in a country torn into three parts, ravaged by two enemies of whom only one was an outside aggressor (the Turkish Sultan), the other, the Habsburg Emperor, was the legitimate King of Hungary. Western Hungary was controlled by the Habsburgs, the central part had been under Turkish occupation since the middle of the sixteenth century, only Transylvania maintained its Hungarian independence, with the approval of the Sultan. For two centuries every hesitation and rationalization was justified in the case of those who sometimes felt that the Turks were the lesser evil. This was the attitude of some princes of Transylvania, the last bastion of Hungarian independence. Not so many years after the death of Zrínyi the balance of forces changed to such an extent that the Turks offered assistance and a last refuge to Zrínyi's niece, Ilona, and her husband, Ferenc Rákóczi I, Prince of Transylvania, who organized a conspiracy against the Habsburgs. In 1551 Bálint Török, a magnate who belonged to the King's party, died as the Sultan's captive; one and a half centuries later, in 1705, Imre Thököly, the King's enemy, ended his life in Turkey as a favourite of the Sultan—and both had served the cause of the Hungarian people "between two savages." By the time of Ferenc Rákóczi II the Turks had been driven out of Hungary. This means that since the fatal battle of Mohács in 1526 where Hungary had suffered a decisive defeat he was the first man who could fight and fail from the clear position of an Egmont.

The parallel is all the more valid as Rákóczi was the first who could fight against the remaining one enemy as the representative of a unified national will. His career was more or less free of the inner conflicts which had ravaged the souls of Hungary's best sons for two hundred years before him.

In earlier times the leading Hungarians —and especially the two Zrínyis, ancestor and great-grandson—had to cope with frightfully difficult tasks. (The ancestor had been commander of a castle and fell in battle against the Turks; the great-grandson was a politician, pamphleteer and poet.)

Their position was never quite clear: they

had received their status from the Habsburg king and if they wanted to use it for the benefit of their country he could deprive them of it any time; when their position and rank as palatine or army commander was decisive, they were ousted from their post, their allies at home and abroad were precarious and untrustworthy; they were swaying in the spheres of attraction of different interests. The outside allies watched the evolution of world politics and distant and small Hungary was only a pawn on their chess-board; among their allies within the country the great magnates always served their narrow class interests either out of conviction or without principles and scruples; the people had no rights and lived in utter poverty, bleeding from many wounds and even the finest and purest Hungarians swayed in confusion among the tumbling stones of triple orientation if they did not posses the second Zrínyi's intellectual horizon and outstanding abilities. Loneliness, doubt, then despair: these spectres lay in wait for the great Hungarians of those times at every turn in their lives, and their doubts grew not only because they did not know whether they could attain their goal but also because they doubted its correctness. In the ambiguous situation which troubled all issues with new complications and dangers they could not be convinced of the soundness of any idea over a longer period.

The position of Zrínyi the great-grandson was ever worse than that of his great forebear. He had learned from the bitter experiences of almost one and a half centuries: the Habsburg king of Hungary was neither able nor did he wish to free the country—his country—from Turkish rule, the contradictions between Hungarian and Habsburg interests were not only tactical but openly strategical even in their appearance. And yet Zrínyi the poet said that the Habsburg king was the lawful Hungarian ruler and that the main enemy were the Turks. A terrible situation: to serve a ruler for whom the country is only a hinterland and who does not even conceal his interests in maintaining Hungary in insecurity.

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Does all this mean that Zrínyi's fate is less dramatic than that of Egmont, i.e. that not only the hero is in a more difficult position but also the writer who writes a play about him? It means one thing at any rate: this literary material is different, and must be handled in a different way. It is not mere chance that this rather dramatic period in history attracted writers of prose fiction much more than playwrights. One of the best plays on this period, Magda Szabó's *Kiálts város* (Cry, City!), did not by chance select an episode complete in itself and a fictitious hero in a fictitious conflict situation: the situation reflected the country's condition and at the same time it could be developed and ended freely. Two plays were written about Zrínyi the soldier, the hero of Szigetvár, but nothing about Zrínyi the poet. In this case the writer must renounce the traditional, one-way dramatic antagonism. The Hungarian Egmont has no Alba as a counterpart. The contrasting situations of the two Zrínyis are well reflected by the circumstance that whereas in the two plays about the sixteenth century soldier Zrínyi the hero did confront the Emperor Maximilian II openly on the stage, although he could be considered a real ally against the Turks, the Zrínyi in Keresztury's play and Leopold Habsburg meet only on the level of a historical puppet show. Leopold is already not the eventual attacker himself full of contradictions but only one, although powerful, enemy. The others, the Turks, are against Zrínyi as before, and Europe as a whole is against Zrínyi because it wants different things in a different way and at a different time. A divided society in a country apparently permanently divided is against him, and as a consequence of all these, his own doubts are also against him. Against so many

enemies no man of even Zrínyi's genius could have a chance, so according to the rules of clear-cut historical situations and the structure of their plays it was not worth organizing and carrying on the fight; any solution or way out would be a flagrant falsification of reality. This means that the scene of the struggle must necessarily be shifted to the only suitable place: the hero's consciousness. Like this the struggle will not be unequal and hence undramatic because here the main interest lies not in the *a priori* hopeless situation but in its acceptance and evaluation by the hero, one of the greatest Hungarian thinkers of the time who belonged to the first rank as man of science, statesman, military leader, and writer but whose ill-fate had thrown him into the Hungary of that century. That is count Miklós Zrínyi. The main question of a play on Zrínyi can be only how a man who sees and feels the hopelessness of the situation deeper than everybody else can live, fight and die.

Dezső Keresztury's concept was to give this realization a dramatic form. For this reason he set his plot in the last year of his hero's life, and shut the much travelled Zrínyi into the fortress of Csáktornya. Limited time and restricted space correspond to the condensed drama of drawing the final balance. By this last year all illusions have faded and died and only confrontation with reality remained. Once more, for the last time, the make-believe alternatives parade before his eyes but rather to definitely expose themselves as impasses. Condottiere of Venice, Turkish puppet prince, father of a family, aristocrat loyal to the dynasty—all these possibilities emerge and present themselves once more for the last time before Zrínyi, and are shown up not so much because they are illusory in themselves (who would trust the promises of the Doge, the Sultan and the King?) but rather because they are alien to his nature: a Miklós Zrínyi out to preserve his identity, ideals and country would not fit into any of these cages. There is one possibility among these improbable alternatives which could suit Zrínyi: leadership of a national united front against the Turks allowing him to exert an influence on the international situation as well. This old plan is embodied for a short while in the last great experience of success, the military operation at Eszék, but this proves to be an illusion as well, the Hungarians are allowed to win only with the permission of the Emperor and this permission extends at most to small actions of local significance. It is forbidden to liberate Hungary, the Hungarian King forbade it. So Zrínyi arrives at his last decision for which he has to fight only with his conscience and his God up to a death amounting to suicide. Keresztury's *trouvaille* has placed great-grandfather and great-grandson into the same frame. The sally of the first Zrínyi from Szigetvár which led to his certain death and the pre-arranged hunting accident of the second Zrníyi at Csáktornya stemmed from the same tragic realization, and their purpose was also identical: breaking out on the one path left open crying NO to "both savages" and thus saving at least the paradigm, the lasting model of the great and uncompromising Hungarian of that unhappy century.

With this idea success depends on the writer's ability to create the hero's intellectual dimension making the audience accept that here national history is being born regardless of the realities and results of the moment: the crucial questions of a people's fate emerge in the thoughts of a lonely, helpless man and get an answer valid in the long term. Keresztury has successfully dealt with the most important part of that task. His Zrínyi is a hero of stature. His thoughts, inner struggles and conclusions derived from events suggest a great man, a great Hungarian and a great thinker. In Keresztury's poetical and dynamic language—one of the attractions of the play—Zrínyi draws his conclusions from reality, and after one year of terrible intellectual labour he gives birth

to the only big deed left to him: his own death.

The playwright would have remained more faithful to this well-chosen idea if he had brought the play's "exterior" action closer to it. The last year of Zrínyi's life in Csáktornya carries with it the danger of a tragicomic and even grotesque effect stemming from his helplessness. It would have been wise to avoid this not to protect some kind of sterile museum greatness but for the sake of showing Zrínyi's essential personality. Keresztury's play puts too much emphasis on news, letters and messengers from the outside world. There is a risk that the play might decompose into the mosaic stones that make it up and, what is more important, it harms the intellectual structure since it presents Zrínyi every now and then as a naïve and credulous dreamer. It is true, of course, that even the wisest man can perceive a gleam of hope in the darkest of situations, and of course, Zrínyi can also be perplexed here and there. Nor can the two "international visions" lend credit to the alternatives presented to Zrínyi since the arguments of the King at the beginning of the play decide Zrínyi's fate from the start: "The interest of the Empire and the Church demands peace with the Turks; the main obstacle to peace is Miklós Zrínyi: he must either be compelled to loyalty or left to fend for himself." We can believe the Habsburgs. They never changed a decision if it was detrimental to Hungarians, and Zrínyi knew this as well as succeeding generations. Hence it is annoying when too much dramatic significance is given to the news brought from Vienna by Esterházy, the necessarily less important representative of the other idea. The manifestations of unjustified optimism from time to time also create the appearance of naïveté. In this last year at Csáktornya, in the light of the events described by Keresztury, it is unlikely that Zrínyi told his wife "the time will come when you will be first among the women of Hungary."

Endre Marton's production is concentrated on interior movement, that is on Zrínyi. Some notices thought him static but this was the only way to overcome the mosaic-like aspects in the play's structure. There is much inner dynamism behind this apparent inertia. There is a table and Zrínyi sits at it at the start of both parts, and often also during the action. He is the centre of this world and of the Hungary of the time. The visual aspest—stage, costumes, exterior movement—are aesthetically beautiful, logical and faultless as always in Marton's productions. Everything tends towards Zrínyi, everything converges on him. Louis XIV, the Grand Vizier, the Emperor, the Doge, and the magnates are much more powerful than Zrínyi, but they are unrealistic, lifeless swaggering puppets who only act out their historical roles but do not add anything of themselves. Zrínyi is the only man alive who does not act out a role but is serving an idea. The manifestations of these great men, and the news and messages which come from them later, are only important on the stage inasmuch as they elicit Zrínyi's reactions; they receive their true value from Zrínyi's response just as the value of the other characters is also measured by Zrínyi's opinion of them. Whenever we feel that Zrínyi's words are not adequate to the situation Imre Sinkovits, as Zrínyi, adds something of his own. We can see how he weighs pros and cons without words, his wonderfully plastic features reflect constant work in one of the age's most exciting intellectual laboratories. Where intellect alone would be flat he complements it with emotion, irony and wit. Presenting a great writer on a stage is almost impossible. Keresztury offers a basis with his talent for language and his inventiveness.

Judit Szántó

COURAGE AND BRAVADO

György Szomjas: "Wind Whistles under their Feet"

As I take my seat my ears are full of the devastating criticism that appeared in the Hungarian press. I was not afraid to read these notices in advance; I am myself fond of controversy, and I cherished a secret thought that perhaps the *betyár* film (*betyár* = Hungarian highwayman or outlaw) by György Szomjas—whose first it is—is not as bad after all as those in the trade thought it. Perhaps, I thought, I will see something in it that others don't. Notices were almost unanimously agreed that the film lacked suspense and that the young director did not really know what kind of a film he intended to make. Listening to the *betyár* song as the titles appeared I was ready to spend an hour and a half being bored, and wondering whether the picture I was going to watch was history, drama, fiction, an educational film, or an adventure story.

Now that I've got it behind me I wonder at my unusual foresight. For to tell the truth, this *betyár* film certainly offers no thrills and since I left the cinema I am still wondering what kind of a fim I saw. It would be a misunderstanding, however, to imagine that since I agree with the other critics on their starting-point my conclusion is as negative as theirs. Far from it. I liked the film, I was not bored for a minute, indeed, I enjoyed myself throughout; and the fact that the film is not amenable to classification is for me more of an exciting surprise rather than a disturbing uncertainty.

Let us leave arguments aside and go see the film itself, the *betyár* story, as it unfolds in the boundless expanse of the Great Hungarian Plain. György Szomjas spirits us back into the thirties of the nineteenth century in order to satisfy our romantic inclinations and ethnographic curiosity. At that time a powerful struggle was going on in the Hungarian plains between farmers desiring to till the soil in growing proportions and the shepherds, drovers and cattlemen. The latter and the *betyárs* sang the same tune and it is sometimes hard to differentiate between herdsman and outlaw. The outcry that follows the appearance of canals, ditches and ploughlands, which signalled the end of free life in the *puszta*, forms one battle-line of all those who are impelled—or compelled—by blood, custom or feeling to side with the old nomadic world. This is the point to my mind which puts the public—whatever their nationality—on the side of the nomads—herdsmen and *betyárs*—and which makes them like the film. It seems as though the situation at the end of the twentieth century were somewhat similar. We are all being gradually ousted from nature by industry, which at the same time deprives increasingly of the possibilities of a natural way of life. That is why I am interested—vitally interested—in this story set in the nineteenth-century *puszta;* this is the timely message of Szomjas's film. That is why, from first to last, I took an, I should say, personal interest in the struggle, knowledge, prowess, and life of the first *betyár* of the *puszta*, Gyurka Csapó. And this is why those who are looking in his person for a western—or eastern, for that matter—hero, and do not find him, are wrong. I think that this first-film Hungarian director did not want to make an adventure film, or sort of thriller; what he wanted to do was to express his nostalgia, his longings as a twentieth-century man for a more natural way of life.

His film is not only far from perfect, it also displays a few unpermissible mistakes. Yet he draws the audience into a good game, and it is one worth playing.

That is why our hearts give a leap when the old *betyár*, Gyurka Csapó, is released from prison. We too can start real life again. As his first deed is to burn the gibbet by

the road so does hope rise in us, who are watching the film, that his endeavour will not be futile. But I must not be understood to imply that, thanks to György Szomjas and his cameraman, Elemér Ragályi, I was presented with a sad elegy. No, this *betyár* film is seasoned with the most modern kind of grotesque humour. Szomjas is well aware of what the profession has done before him, all the usual and hackneyed patterns. He preempts laughter at his expense by exploding the stale and trivial tricks of the super heroes of this brand. Therefore I am free to laugh from the bottom of my heart when the *betyár* chief (as I chose to call him) kisses the girl of the *puszta* who naturally resists, producing a smack that literally reverberates in the plain, or when he always shoots to kill so that blood marking the end of lives always streams exactly from the middle of the forehead. In short, this *betyár* film is at the same time an anti-*betyár* film.

That is why the constable does not chase him too strenuously. When he starts after him, it is just a sort of leisurely, humorous *betyár*-catching chase. The young director tends to line up the *betyár*, causing unrest among the peasants and driving off their cattle and horses, and the constable on the same side. He prefers to show them ladling goulash together or peacefully hobnobbing with each other in a *csárda*, a Hungarian country inn. The constable even directly asks Gyurka Csapó to get him a mare to suit his stallion. For what happens in the course of the film? Having been released from prison and having revenged himself on those who betrayed him, Gyurka Csapó consorts with a young would-be *betyár*, they disarm the constable, but later restore the arms to their rightful owner. In the company of others they steal horses; at the sharing of the booty, however, the young *betyár* puts number one first and they fall out. The young *betyár* gives himself up to the constable who, however, shows better taste. He will not employ a traitor.

Horse-stealing and cattle-rustling is on the increase and the town demands more action from the constable. It is then that one of the fine, grotesque series of scenes has its turn. The *betyár* riding alone and slowly is pursued. All of a sudden he stops and so do his pursers. They do not understand what Gyurka Csapó is about. Then they see: our good-humoured outlaw trains an enormous jet from the saddle into the thirsty soil of the *puszta*. They wait for him to finish and only resume the chase afterwards. A few awkward tussles take place in the tavern between the peasants and the herdsmen. Finally the sub-*betyár* sets a trap for the chief-*betyár:* he sends him to rob the peasants who, however, have no money, while at the same time Gyurka Csapó is forced to pick a hole in the forehead of a peasant who flings himself on him with a pitchfork. Now the army too joins in the chase after the highwayman turned killer. The director used the constable to save the *betyár* for them. He knows that Gyurka holed up in the loft, so he talks to the lieutenant of the soldiers, wishing them good luck in catching the *betyár*. Then he himself pursues the culprit, who—naturally —jumps from the thatched roof straight into the saddle, and who is taken by surprise in one of the ditches by the peasants, armed with hoes and spades, ready to beat him to death on the spot (lynch law on the *puszta!*) but for the intercession of the constable. Thus on one fine winter day the brave lad ends up on a high locust-tree, still shouting to the constable before, with a rope around his neck, chasing his horse from under himself: "You might have chosen a finer trade for yourself, constable!" His sweetheart and betrayer is shot down by a nameless *betyár*, and the typical Hungarian country tavern, the *csárda*, is burning, something that has become almost obligatory at the end of Hungarian films. This is the end of the film, and there are folk-songs from the Great Hungarian Plain... A few daring grotesque shots still recur to my mind.

When the highwaymen rustle a herd of

cattle one of the men just stands there as one rooted to the ground, marking time, but not budging from his place. Then the cameraman, Elemér Ragályi, shows us the reason: the herdsman is warming his feet in a goodly cow-pat, and would not step on the cold grass of dawn for the sake of any herd. Whoever dares to do a thing like that in an "adventure film" is a good director. Another picture, which to my great satisfaction is repeated several times: Gyurka always extracts the old-style pistol from his belt rather deliberately, takes his aim not vertically but turns the pistol sideways. The person aimed at is, in spite of this, always hit on the forehead, looks in wonder from under the brim of the hat, then falls rigidly, at full length, in the happy grass of the Great Hungarian Plain.

György Szomjas, however, is at a loss what to do with his only female character, the *betyár*'s sweetheart. The position of the woman is not clear; she is neither a real *betyár*'s sweetheart nor a real strumpet of the *puszta*, neither faithful nor unfaithful: she is nothing other than a living mistake. The morality and behaviour of the younger *betyár* too remain undefined. He can win neither our sympathy nor our hostility. When, in the duel, he first shoots down Gyurka Csapó's fine black horse and then himself falls at full length beside the horse, hit by the bullet of the chief-*betyár*, we feel absolutely indifferent towards him. He is just a sketchy figure and not a living character. But I have already said that the first film of György Szomjas is certainly not a perfect film: it is a good film, it does awaken is one some hope or nostalgia, and this makes us forget that we are sitting in a cinema. We rather imagine ourselves galloping with Gyurka Csapó on the Great Plain. This good feeling, this gliding, leaves its mark in us for a long time.

Zoltán Fábri: The Fifth Seal

I last wrote about a Zoltán Fábri film in these pages when I reviewed *The Unfinished Sentence* based on Tibor Déry's novel, in No. 59. This time his film is based on a novel by Ferenc Sánta, a writer in his forties. *The Fifth Seal* is set in the last year but one of the war, in 1944, when, after an abortive attempt, in October 1944, by the Regent Miklós Horthy to obtain a ceasefire, the Hungarian Nazis, known as the Arrow-Cross, seized power. This is what the metaphorical title taken from the Book of Revelations refers to. When the Angel of the Apocalypse breaks the fifth seal all of us will be judged by our deeds.

Fábri's new film is indeed a stern moral lesson. It is not a didactic story with a moral (more than one film of that kind was screened in recent years, so bad as to defy description). Success is due, to a large extent, to Sánta, the novelist. His keen moral sensibility, trembling on the verge of obsessions, marked out a clear path for the director. This produced a laconic and very-much-to-the-point Hungarian film. We have the cinema stunned, but we do not regret it, for the ostensibly historical subject torments one with timely recognitions. Having seen the film, I wondered what I would have done, if one of the four Hungarian men in the street whom an Arrow-Cross patrol seizes one night, beating them hollow, and making their release subject to the committal of an outrageous gesture. Of nights these four men take a glass or two of wine in a suburban tavern, talking, sometimes arguing. They are Mr. Gyurica, the watchmaker, Mr. Király, the book salesman, Mr. Kovács, the joiner, and, as the fourth, the powerfully built, angular-featured tavern-keeper. This tavern-keeper is an old acquaintance of the three customers,

for he takes part in the banterings and the political disputes as an equal party. Watchmaker, book salesman, joiner and tavern-keeper; that is, a peculiar cross-section of the Hungary of those days. The formula extends when a war veteran, an invalid with a melancholy face, enters and respectfully takes a seat at the table. Of course, the conversation immediately shifts to the war, which, in the almost unanimous opinion of the small group, is superfluous, vicious and repugnant. No one disagrees except the invalid, who seeks a rational explanation for the war. Every now and then the sound of footsteps and gunfire penetrate from the street. On one occasion the sturdy tavern-keeper leaps to his feet and quickly locks the door. His intuition has not deceived him: within moments the sound of footsteps comes from the stairs, and then somebody wants to open the door and come in. Of course, he cannot, the tavern-keeper listens to the desperate panting. Those around the table prick up their ears in alarm. The fugitive runs out into the street, his booted pursuers on his heels; presently there is the report of guns, and afterwards complete, dumb silence. Fábri brings out in what kind of world we live: in the world of destruction, unlawfulness, and always of unjust, violent death and killing.

The conversation and the drinking continue. They talk of the piece of pork the book salesman had obtained that very day in exchange for valuable books, including a volume of Bosch reproductions. The visions of Bosch envelop from time to time the dark and smoky spaces of the little tavern. His horrors make visible not only that which we cannot see of what is happening in the street, but also the horror-stricken state of mind of the whole country. The five men sitting round the table differ from one another, and they argue differently. To the simple, instinctive tavern-keeper things are always self-evident, to the scornful, somewhat theoretical watchmaker, Gyurica, they are complex; to Mr. Király, the book salesman, everything is practical, whereas to Kovács, the joiner, matters are questions of honour. The invalid is a Dostoevsky-like figure, struggling with himself as well.

In the meantime the conversation is again disturbed, though not stopped, by the sound of shooting and other outside noises. The suspense of the audience is on the increase. They know that the protection this small tavern offers is only temporary and only a semblance, hell must break loose in the form of a door bursting open or a round of bullets. Yet Gyurica, the watchmaker, still has time enough to put a question to Mr. Kovács, the joiner, feigning indifference and coldness, nonchalantly leaning back in his chair, turning the cigarette-holder in the corner of his mouth. The question is preceded by a story about Gyugyu, the slave of Easter Island, and his cruel master with an unutterable name. Gyurica's question runs as follows: "If you die and are born again, which of the two would you like to be, Mr. Kovács?" Kovács is unable to answer, the others rage and fume that Gyurica plagues them with such rot. Only the invalid replies that he wants to be Gyugyu. Gyurica coldly says that he lies. The bearded, nervous invalid with the suffering face is hurt to the quick by their not believing him.

The door opens, and an Arrow-Cross officer and his sergeant, one Macák, enter. A rather silly interlude follows, the gist of which is that the portly Macák with his submachine-gun gets a shot of free brandy. After this the company disperses. The camera (György Illés is the cameraman) follows them. The joiner cannot sleep, unable to make up his mind; the tavern-keeper explains to his wife that he has to pay both the Arrow-Cross lot and the Communists, it is the only way to survive; the book salesman takes the piece of pork to his girlfriend, and in his fuddled stupor this greedy woman becomes part of Bosch's vision. (This sequence is a mistake on Fábri's part: this diffuse, unjustified love scene does not

fit in with the film as a whole.) The war invalid reflects upon suffering being needed for purification; the watchmaker runs his eye over his children, for whom, since the death of his wife, he has to provide. But there are many children in his house, and when a newly brought in small girl tells how she saw her parents die we understand even from the laconic sequence that the watchmaker harbours the sons and daughters of Jews.

This momentary episode is of decisive importance.

The day after, in the evening, the Arrow-Cross men seize the drinking group. The shocked tavern-keeper falls off his chair, and in that posture asks what the whole thing is about; Macák, the leader of the operation, supplies the explanation with a punch of his fist. After that, already in the prison, there follows the mortification and beating of the honest joiner: a girlish-looking Arrow-Cross man calls his wife a whore, he protests: they punch him in the belly, and see him out amidst punches and kicks. Also present on the scene is an Arrow-Cross theoretician, a boss cocky, who explains to the young Arrow-Cross man that these men need not be killed. Better let them go, but let them be living corpses, men who despise themselves for their infamous deed. The plan is to be carried out next morning. The four man, beaten black and blue, are lead to the prison-yard, where the bleeding body of a resistance member is suspended. He is still alive. The prisoners are told by the bigwig that whoever boxes him on the ears twice is free to go away. So this is the time of the breaking of the fifth seal, of the great test, which all of us might face at any time.

Since it turns out that the invalid was the informer, there are only the four of them. Although the joiner does make for the Christ-like crucified man he collapses on his way, he is unable to do it, and they take him back behind bars. The tavern-keeper goes out of his mind, flings himself at the young Arrow-Cross man, and is finished off by a gun burst. The other two keep standing in one place. The Arrow-Cross theoretician realizes that his experiment proved a failure. He is on the point of leaving when the watchmaker, Gyurica, summons him back: he is willing. And despite the entreaty of the book salesman (who is then knocked down by the nimble Macák) he starts off to hit the victim twice, on whose side he is. He is free to go home. We know the reason why he chose this course: without him the children, all those little girls and boys, would fall into the hands of the Arrow-Cross men. He had to accept the shame. His decision is justified and perfect, yet it is disgraceful. For me, this is the message of Fábri's film: complex decisions demand sacrifices. The decision contains a morally unacceptable element, whose mark we can never wipe off. We are right, but we suffer from our crime.

This is what Fábri says with exceptional pictorial force when his hero, the watchmaker, steps out the prison gate with hands held off his body, not lowering his arms until he hears the jeering reminder of the warder. I have never seen a more pitiable victor before than the figure stumbling homewards in the suburban dawn, whom even an air-raid cannot rouse from his helpless anguish. He achieved what he wanted: he has survived to be able to see to the wants of the persecuted children. But his hand is stained with blood, with the blood of the most recently crucified Christ. This blood cannot be washed off.

József Tornai

O. W. RIEGEL

WHAT IS HUNGARIAN IN THE HUNGARIAN CINEMA, III

Hungarians complain, and with good reason, that some of the attention Hungarian films have received internationally is less concerned with the films as films than with the films as a kind of political barometer to indicate the present state of the Cold War and détente or the degree of control by the government, especially in comparison of Eastern Europe. The Hungarian film director who has just completed, at enormous effort, his peculiar vision of reality and dramatic truth, is naturally disheartened when he finds foreign critics discussing his work in terms of how much or how little it deviates from some brand of Marxist orthodoxy.

Politics, Censorship and Cinema

I am myself annoyed by feeling compelled to discuss the subject. I am annoyed not because there are no constraints on expression in Hungary (there are constraints on expression in every country), but because of the shabby political motives, prejudices and misconceptions that underlie what might be called the old-fashioned Cold War attitude toward any work of art from Eastern Europe. In spite of fundamental changes in the last twenty years, this attitude still exists, and I feel compelled to deal with it because it continues to affect the way international audiences look at Hungarian films.

There is a scene in a Chinese play in which two combatants are sword-fighting in a room; a rule of the game is that if a combatant touches a wall, he is dead. The scene has been used as a metaphor in *Walls* by András Kovács to describe Hungary and particularly the creative artist working in Hungary, who can engage in all kinds of movement and cascades of sensational sword-play so long as he keeps a safe distance from the walls. How true is the metaphor?

In the first place, just as all films worthy of the name of art are subversive in some degree, so artists in all societies are ultimately constrained by walls of some kind. The meaningful questions relate to the size of the room and the available space for manœuvre. These conditions vary from country to country, city to city, year to year and minute to minute. An appraisal of censorship made six months ago may prove wildly ludicrous today. Censorship is not primarily determined by ideology. Even in the most permissive countries there are ultimate restraints of self-discipline and of social and governmental tolerance, which can diminish with great rapidity under threat of real or imagined danger.

Secondly, no one can deny that Hungarian film-makers manœuvred in a stuffy arena for a period following the Second World War. After coming to a virtually dead stop in the last year of the war, the Hungarian film industry made some tentative new beginnings and then, roughly coinciding with the nationalization of the film industry in March 1948, entered its Stalinist period of "schematic" (i.e. propaganda) films. The films offered an optimistic view of a new emerging society, and simplified and embellished (falsified) historical films. The capitalists and exploiters of the Horthy régime were shown in a bad light, and the bourgeois society of the 1920s and 1930s as corrupt and unhappy. The future belonged to dynamic "new" men and women of impeccable socialist virtue. The schematic film declined after 1953.

Hungarian film-makers point out that

since the schematic film belongs to the past, it is quite unfair to view contemporary films in terms of the situation in 1952. Of course they are correct. They could also point out, in the interests of historical perspective, that simplistic propaganda in the post-war period was limited in effects and brief in duration compared with the massive prostitution of the film for propaganda during a whole generation between the two world wars. The National Film Committee of that era, which approved film projects and granted subsidies, was primarily interested in protecting the vested interests of landowners over their estates and the government. The result was the production of military and patriotic films, nostalgic films about the by-gone Habsburg Empire, and musicals combining nostalgia and patriotism, sweetened with schmalzy pseudo-Hungarian music, like *Rákóczi March* and *Purple Acacias,* which were enormously popular. The contemporary scene of the time was represented by Hollywood-type sentimental escapist Cinderella stories, with hardly a mention of any serious social or political problem.

If "dealing with the contemporary scene and contemporary issues" is a test for measuring the freedom of the cinema, then the cinema of Hungary must be counted among the most free in the world. But a word of caution is needed, as this test is not a measure of great cinema. Just as the great literary works of the Greek playwrights and Shakespeare were written about events far away and long ago, and were "contemporary" in their own time only by reading-in inferences, so many of the great films of Bergman, Kurosawa, Renoir and others are timeless, or evoke the shadows of forgotten ancestors, or are recollections of distant childhood. Again we are in danger of falling into the error of esteeming films of contemporary criticism not as films but as the signposts of a political climate.

The limits of freedom are revealed best not by what is shown on the screen but by what is not shown. These notes have already referred to some areas of ambiguity or silence, such as emigration and certain lacunae in the national history. Regarding sex, Hungarian films are quite uninhibited when sex is germane to the story. Female nudity is a Jancsó stock-in-trade. Sexual intercourse is graphic in the films of Szabó, Gaál and others. Coitus for my taste is too often joyless, a mechanistic ritual as in Gaál's *The Falcons,* or an object of disgust as in *Abhorrence,* a György Hintsch film from a László Németh novel, which has been called an "epic of frustration". The heroine is so turned-off by sex that life becomes a horrifying nightmare; she is the spiritual sister of the Bergman wife in *Cries and Whispers.* Unthinkable in Hungary, however, are the hard-core voyeur pornographic films of explicit sex and sex fantasies of the *Deep Throat* and *Lonesome Cowboy* variety. Aside from official objection, it is hard to imagine Hungary's "serious" film-makers pandering pornography, especially in the absence of the commercial incentives that inspire such films in the West. Moreover, Hungary has always been, and still is, straightlaced in the arts by "cosmopolitan" Western standards. Naturally I am not speaking of private Hungarian sex practice, which is something else. Private practice may eventually go public, but the time is not now.

Censorship in Hungary is officially defined as the prohibition of the production and marketing of fascist, non-humanitarian and pornographic products which are contrary to the people's interests, to Hungarian foreign policy, and which endanger the power of the working class. This translates as not extending the freedom to criticism of the fundamental political system, or such central political structures as the nationalization of land and industry and the co-operative farm system, or of the government, or of the head of state. In other words, a film like Toledano's *Milhouse,* a

derisive caricature of the then American president, Nixon, is unimaginable. Likewise are manuals of revolution against existing government like *The Revolutionary*, or anti-police polemics like *Red Squad*. While interpretations of Marxism are subject of public debate that spill over into films, no films are anti-Marxist in the sense of attacking the basic ideology.

While these restraints seem to be real ones, upon closer examination it isn't clear that they have much substantive effect on what might be considered a normal range of subject-matter, of the solicitude to the basic interests of Hungarian foreign policy. Gideon Bachmann thinks that Hungarian films persist with a kind of low-profile Socialist Realism, the difference being that whereas formerly films propagandized for the state, now they are made to avoid attacks on it. This assumes a consciousness in film-makers of political function for the state that I am inclined to doubt. Moreover, as a practical matter most films in other countries, while they may not be made to avoid attacks on government, do not in practice attack or encourage attacks on it. Few films in the West attack the basic political system, the system of land-ownership, government, capitalist ideology, or living heads of state. There is an important theoretical difference, of course—whether one *could* make and distribute an outrageously subversive film if he wished. Personally I want to live in a libertarian climate in which any expression is possible in politics or sex, but I must add to this the realization that in the real world the question of absolute freedom is usually academic. Aside from patriotism and societal pressures, one reason for this is economic. Political hard-core subversive films lie on the fringe of the market, too limited in their appeal and audiences to make them financially viable.

From the point of view of the New Left and radical anarchist and other revolutionary movements, Hungarian films are conservative and quite tame. I regret to say that I think a conservative or reactionary American businessman, if he weren't told that the films were made in a Communist country, would be entirely comfortable with many of them. Hungarian films, it should be said, are not conspicuous at festivals of political films. Festivals of political films, by the way, are seldom really radical in the sense of encouraging an upsetting of the *status quo* in politics or social mores. The films are rarely libertarian or even liberal. They are mostly partisan, polemical *anti* films—anti-Fascist, anti-Western imperialism, anti-American, anti-Israeli, anti-white racism. A truly radical revolutionary film advocating the curbing or destruction of the state power system anywhere and everywhere would probably never reach the screen.

What I am trying to say is that to a foreign observer there are no overburdensome constraints in Hungary to prevent the making of great motion pictures. Most of the important films of the West, including those that reflect changing morals and manners and the youth culture, are shown in Hungarian theaters. There are Hungarian films in the international Pantheon; when they fall short the reason is not political or moral censorship but must be sought elsewhere.

The genesis of Hungarian films is in proposals from one of Hungary's producing studios, which either initiate projects themselves or receive projects from film directors, or from writers, cameramen, or anyone else interested in making a film. The crucial hurdle is financing. The money comes from film funds disposed by the Ministry of Culture and, depending upon the prospects they foresee for financial return or prestige, by the organization of theatre exhibiton and by Hungarofilm, the export company that distributes Hungarian films abroad. Each of these agencies reviews the scenario and must decide whether it wishes to invest in the project. The Ministry of Culture, which provides much of the money and has a final veto power, is advised by a com-

mittee representing the government and various segments of cultural life.

On the surface, this looks like a cumbersome, multi-bureaucratic system of control. The film industry is indeed state subsidized, but so is the film industry in many non-socialist countries, the general rule being that the smaller the country and the smaller its domestic market, the larger the required subsidy. A film industry like Hungary's producing an average of twenty feature films and many other kinds of films a year couldn't exist without state subsidy. The other arts, not only film, require state subsidy to flourish, as even the United States with its immense domestic market is finding out.

The Hungarian cultural policy is to subsidize and encourage all of the arts, from ballet to books. A "trash" tax is imposed on entertainment considered in poor taste and of low quality, and the proceeds are applied to the subsidy of cultural products considered of high quality but which have limited appeal. In the motion picture the trash tax is applied to so-called "Class C" films of low-quality popular entertainment. A Hungarian writer on the subject says that retrospectively the tax would be applicable to the propaganda films of the 1950s, which he classifies as "socialist trash".

I am not privy to the deliberations of any of the financing bodies, but I think certain assumptions may be drawn from the evidence of the films that are made. One is that these bodies have respect for the integrity of the "serious" film. Another is that while the Ministry of Culture must consider the political and moral implication of film projects, disputes over censorship issues don't necessarily follow. I suspect, and this is purely speculative, that the proposers of film scenarios seldom seek or encounter confrontation, for the reason that they are attuned to the limits of permissibility, know the "rules of the game" at any particular moment, and are themselves as much responsible for the rules, and in agreement with them, as the financing bodies. This may not be Utopia, but the result is a generally favourable climate for creativity.

How does one account for the aesthetic and political turn-around of the Hungarian film that began in the late 1950s? There was, of course, a whole new society and a whole new generation growing up in it, but specific impulses must have been at work to revolutionize the motion picture. István Nemeskürty in his history of the Hungarian motion piture attributes the change to the government in the post-1956 period, which, he says, noticed a "dangerous stagnation" and ordered reforms in the Academy of Dramatic and Cinematographic Art and the opening of the doors to new, young directorial talent. Hungary also must have noticed the example of other socialist countries, such as Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, which by this time had won considerable artistic acclaim for their films as well as some international distribution. This was manifestly unfair to Hungarian talent and to the Hungarian image in the world, to say nothing of the possibilities of an export business for hard currencies.

I choose to believe that the change was brought about by more than decisions-in-council of government. I would like to believe that the change in the political climate after 1956 created a public demand for "new" films, but "serious" films are not that popular with the Hungarian public, which still prefers histrionics, sentimentality and catchy music. One explanation of the change is that film-makers were influenced by, and translated into film, the precepts of the celebrated Hungarian Marxist philosopher, György Lukács, who preached the importance of self-criticism within the socialist society. What I really believe is that Hungary's film directors and dramaturges provided the primary impulse for greater self-expression and freedom to criticize, kept pushing for it without seeking ideological justification in the works of György Lukács, and took full advantage of the

climate of the Kádár régime, which both encouraged the arts and recognized the value of self-expression and criticism as politically healthy. The go-ahead for self-expression and criticism was embodied in a phrase used by János Kádár, "Those who are not against us are with us."

In other words, I think much of the credit for change must go to the older and middle generation of post-war directors, men like Fábri, Makk and Kovács who had worked in the chill of the Cold War era but nevertheless kept pushing forward with the first liberating steps toward realism and honesty. Many of these same men, along with Félix Máriássy, Zoltán Várkonyi and others, were the teachers at the Academy of Dramatic and Cinematographic Art, from which virtually all Hungarian film workers come. Their principles, and their encouragement of the making of personal, boldly experimental short films by students in the Béla Balázs studio, were crucial in stimulating and liberating the generation of film-makers that came on the scene in the 1960s.

Private Lives

A film that illustrates many of the characteristics of Hungarian films mentioned in these notes is not about national history or oppression or crises of conscience, but about the private lives of ordinary people. This is Pál Zolnay's *Photography*, which portrays how an itinerant photographer and his retoucher-assistant come to a village and in the course of their rounds in search of customers stir the villagers to reveal their past lives and their hopes and fears, which are recorded by an unseen motion picture camera and microphone. The film might be classified as a sociological documentary in the *cinéma vérité* style if it were not for the use of professional actors for the two photographers (their subjects are real-life villagers) and the structural framework that explains the situation and gives the film a beginning and end of a sort. The film begins with the two photographers celebrating New Year's Eve with a frolicking throng on a street in Budapest, which may be a symbol of the illusions of city life. The sequence also serves as contrast to the scenes of sad and austere village life that follow.

The film ends with the photographers back in Budapest again, their gaiety restored. Another departure from *vérité* is an accompanying guitar-player who wanders with the photographers from house to house singing a ballad of beauty, youth and age, of "parents devouring their children" and "mingled blood".

The film works on more than one level of interest. The primary theme is the lives of the villagers, who reveal themselves as locked in their rural destinies, worn by toil and age, and weighed down by the grief and bitterness of personal tragedy, lost youth, lost beauty, and lost illusions. They are without gaiety or forward-looking hopes. The revelations are given special poignancy by the old photographs that hang on the cottage walls, recalling the flight of time. A stooped, dried-up woman of 89, in black dress and headscarf, has one wish, to live five more years; the camera moves in to a photograph on the wall of the old woman as a fresh young bride. A middle-aged couple recalls bitter fighting between their son and the father so violent that police had to be called to remove the son; we are shown in close-up a photograph of the son as a young boy, with a face of angelic sweetness. A man wants a photograph of his mare, Star, but refuses to be photographed himself; he has pride in the mare but not in himself. After a number of other encounters, the camera finally bears down on another old couple, a deaf man and his second wife, who had been known in the village as "The Spinster". They sit together without a word for each other, the man staring stolidly ahead. Yet they seem to have grown together in the silent communication of old age, like two gnarled and weather-beaten trees growing from intermingled roots.

Gradually the woman reveals the tragic past: The man's first wife killed their two daughters. We are shown a photograph of two smiling young girls. The photographers seek out the murderess, a heavy, intense woman who talks compulsively while she continues with her housework. The reasons for the tragedy remain ambiguous. The guitarist's song of parents devouring children and intermingled blood haunt the scene. Then suddenly we are back in Budapest. The village becomes remote, like something dreamt, but anyone who has seen the film is unlikely ever to forget it.

While *Photography* is not a great film, because of the unavoidable limitations of its subject-matter and random structure within its arbitrary frame, it is an exceptionally fine one. The two photographers are skilfully unobtrusive, almost invisible, talking and responding just enough to make the monologues of the villagers plausible and keep them going. Zolnay says that his aim is to "manifest individual interests, desires and dreams in connection with objective reality". But the film is much more than that. Compassion shines through the "objectivity" and touches the heart. Zolnay is also making a comment, wittingly or not, on the Hungarian tradition of contrasting cultures, city (Budapest) and country. Many artists in Hungary continue to line up as spokesmen for one culture or the other although, as I have said before, I have doubts as to how realistic the two-culture tradition is becoming. What is the meaning of *Photography* in this context? Is it demystification of the country, a deglorification of supposed country strengths and virtues? Or does it continue a tradition by portraying the country as special, if not for its strengths and virtues, then for its endurance under suffering? Or is it the message of a city intellectual telling us that the lives of Hungarians are pitiable, in the country as well as in the city?

Another level of interest relates to the art of still photography, photography as a catalyst of strong emotion, and the photograph as a dramatic device to evoke memory, illusion and irony, and to modify vision. In *Photography* only small children take genuine delight in the miracle of the paper likeness. The grown-ups are reluctant sitters. Women regret their lost beauty; some refuse to accept the photographed reality altogether. They prefer the old, retouched photographs in their dark frames hanging on the wall, the bland, unlined faces and the old-fashioned clothes. They prefer the illusions of memory summoned up by these stilted mementos. We try to imagine their thoughts as, smiling sadly, they compare the new photographs with the old. Old photographs are crucial to the film; they take on new meaning and ironic power because of what we know of the present, and the anguish of the present is heightened by the illusions of the past. It is like looking at these sad lives stereoptically, one view through the clear lens of present reality, the other through a magic lens coloured by a filter of emotion-tinted memory.

The role of still photography in Hungarian films is striking. Aside from at least two other films in which still photographers appear as characters, Kovács's *Fallow Land* and Sára's *The Upthrown Stone*, many films use the still photographs for dramatic purposes. Again, as in the case of suicide, I have no statistical evidence that the incidence of still photos is greater in Hungarian than in other films. Still photography is a theme of Antonioni's *Blow-Up*. The freeze frame, essentially a still photograph, has become a cliché of film-making internationally. Classic examples are the final shots of *Jules and Jim* and *Elvira Madigan*. I don't know whether the final protracted shot of the river Tisza at the end of Gaál's *Current* is a freeze frame or not, but it has the effect of one. One of the attractions of the still photograph for Hungarian directors is that it provides a short-cut evocation of the mood, style and emotion of the past to point up and illuminate the irony of the present.

It conventionalizes the memory and nostalgia of history and incorporates history into the present. The quintessential example of this use of the photograph for dramatic purposes has already been described—Makk's *Love*.

Another example of the use of the still photograph to graft, as it were, the illusions and pathos of memory to the living present occurs in Makk's *Catsplay*. The use of the photograph (of the two sisters who are leading characters in the story) is a faithful rendering of István Örkény's stage play, upon which the motion picture is based. In the stage production of the play in a Budapest theater, a photograph of the two sisters in their youth was projected on a large screen on the stage. The woman protagonist, according to the stage directions, comments on the projected photograph "without emotion, objectively". In words that illustrate the mysterious, evocative quality of old photographs, she says, "This snapshot was taken in 1918 or 1919, at Léta, in the county of Szolnok, by a backwater of the river Tisza, near the Sugar Company's housing estate. But one can only guess whether it was daybreak or late afternoon. The only thing that's certain is that it shows us the reigning beauties of the county, the Szkalla girls, in billowing net dresses, our hair windblown, laughing and waving toward the water, running down the hill. But who or what we were running to meet, who or what filled us with joy, that will remain a mystery forever."

Another impression of *Photography* is that the women are stronger than the men, more enduring, more interesting, and more aware of reality and better able to cope with it. This is the impression left on me by many Hungarian films in which the women are more dramatically interesting and generally more admirable characters. Women are the centre of interest in many fine films, Judit Elek's *The Lady from Constantinople*, Makk's *Love*, Gaál's *Dead Landscape*, Fábri's *Ants Nest*, Tamás Rényi's *The Valley*. In such films as Jancsó's *Confrontation* and Szabó's *25 Fireman's Street* women emerge as dominant in the sense that, compared with them, men appear vacillating, paralysed by indecision, futile, and sometimes lethargically stupid. *Sindbad*'s Don Juan hero looks frail and aimless among the sexually determined women of his life. It would be easy to exaggerate on the basis of impressions, but I think there is enough evidence in the films to make one wonder whether the passivism and pessimism of the films is not only Hungarian, but more specifically, male Hungarian.

The Dilemma of Film-makers

One of the ironies of Hungary is that although it is an intensely "literary" country, with a profusion of novelists, short story writers, playwrights and poets who bloom in every city and hamlet, it is best known culturally for its music, which is non-literary, and for its motion pictures which, when they most succeed, are more visual than literary, although some might want to argue the last point. Hungary's most easily identifiable cultural figures internationally are Bartók and Kodály, who are dead, and the film-maker Miklós Jancsó, who is very much alive. The famous émigrés are also largely identified with music and film. I am excluding Hungary's well-known scientists as I don't wish to enter into an argument over whether science is an art.

The conventional explanation of this phenomenon is that music and film speak to everyone who will attend, while the literature is written in a language no one understands outside of Hungary and, when translated, emerges as something different and less effective than what it was. I don't believe that this explanation is entirely valid. I do believe, admittedly by intuition, that Hungarian poetry is untranslatable in the sense of conveying in translation anything like the effect it has upon Hungarian ears,

but as Mihály Sükösd points out in a recent essay, Hungarian novelists who have not done well abroad tend to put the blame upon translation rather than upon their own shortcomings. The excuse of poor translation is less applicable to the theatre, still less to the motion picture, and applies not at all to sculpture and painting.

During a good part of its history the Hungarian motion picture was dominated, for better or worse, by men of letters, mainly novelists and playwrights. Indeed, for a long period the script was everything, and the director was reduced to the role of flunkey to a literary genius. Historically the Hungarian motion picture staggers under the weight of literary and theater classics reverently photographed.

While all of this has drastically changed and the motion picture has come into its own as an autonomous art, I think that it receives less than its due in the sense that its success in the international cinema world lags a considerable distance behind the success of Hungarian music in the musical world. Hungarian films are not as well known and appreciated, for example, as the films of Sweden, which is a smaller country than Hungary in population, or of Japan, which has a language just as mysterious as Magyar and a history and customs more unfamiliar to world audiences than Hungary's. The obvious answer is to universalize the appeal of Hungarian films, but how can this be done without loss in the films of their essential Hungarian character?

This is the dilemma, and it is illustrated by the relative international success of Jancsó with his mythic fables as compared with Gaál and Szabó, whose films are, in my opinion, more rewarding in such qualities as truth and honesty, human observation and levels of meaning. A reason for this situation is that Jancsó provides more spectacle, more easily identifiable opposing forces in conflict, and more virtuosity in photography. In other words, he provides more of what are known as "production values", or, in the term of the trade, "show biz", or showmanship.

In contrast, a film like Gaál's *Baptism* lacks production values in this sense and, I suspect, is slow going and not entirely comprehensible for audiences without knowledge of, and interest in, Hungarian society and recent history. The film, which I personally find engrossing, follows the lives of two friends in the war and post-war years. The film's subtle structure, Gaál says, is based on the sonata. Suggesting a large element of autobiography, the film covers a wide variety of experience in the Hungarian setting: The love-hate relationship of the two friends, the anguish of the war, intra-family relationships, the disturbing confrontation with memories in the person of the friends' old schoolmaster, the problem of the integrity of the writer and artist in the new society—these and other themes interweave in a narrative of acute observation and authenticity, but which I fear is of less than compelling interest to foreign audiences.

From this derives the paradox that the more faithful films are to the Hungarian reality the less acceptable they are likely to be to foreign audiences. I don't have an answer for this dilemma except the lame observation that the international successes of Bergman, Fellini and others are universalized by easily recognizable characters and conflicts made larger than life by not a little exaggeration, contrivance and eye-catching spectacle. Am I suggesting that conscientious directors like Makk, Gaál and Szabó must become better showmen if they wish to pursue the bitch goddess of international celebrity? Confident that they will ignore that kind of advice and go their own ways, I am afraid that I am.

Comedy as a Private Joke

Another example of failure to communicate with non-Magyar audiences is the film comedy. I have seen few of them, and

I must rely on what I have read and heard about them and upon the word of a Hungarian whose judgement I respect and who calls them *merde*. I understand this to be his whimsical way of saying that the comedies are cute, or zany, or meat-headed, designed for undiscriminating mass audiences, and lacking ideas, sophisticated satire and cinematic subtlety. If they entertain their audiences as intended, there is nothing wrong with that. One film I have seen that is supposed to be funny, I think, is Pál Sándor's *Football of the Good Old Days* which is about a poor tailor who is the monomaniacal impressario of a football (soccer) team in the inflation year of 1924. To me the film is amateurish and embarrassingly witless, although it contributes to my thesis on the Hungarian film: the tailor suffers total defeat and is an abject failure. I find it difficult to believe that the film came from a director who has made beautiful films, including the charming *Love Emilia*. I was astonished to learn from Budapest cineastes that they considered *Football* cleverly constructed, full of irony and nostalgia, and, in fact, a kind of minor masterpiece that transcended the "comedy" label.

What I think this means, if one rejects the idea that I am merely stupid, which I do, is that comedy is particularly difficult to communicate to foreigners, as it is based upon the experiences, situations, traditions and customs of popular life, and especially, in the sound film, upon the text and overtones of language. I find some of the Hungarian cartoon films very funny, which means that there are non-verbal ways of communicating the celebrated Hungarian wit.

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As I review these notes I am concerned that some of my analysis may be interpreted as implying a negative attitude toward the Hungarian film. This would be quite contrary to my feelings and intention. An attempt to identify and describe some special characteristics of the Hungarian film should not be confused with disapproval. Naturally not all the films are to my taste, and some I think are failures as films, but taken as a whole they constitute a remarkable body of work that I esteem and that has given me great pleasure and illumination. They consistently have something to say. They are not for every taste. For those who regard the motion picture as a cinematic juke-box for thrills and mindless entertainment they have little appeal, but for those who take the motion picture seriously they offer substantial rewards. As I said at the beginning, the purpose of these notes is not only to try to identify what is Hungarian in the films but also to bring the films to the attention of those who are not now familiar with them, so that others may enjoy the films as much as I have.

At the end of $8^1/_2$, Fellini has all of his characters stroll in costume around and around in a great circle. It is a gracious and loving sequence, much imitated, that evokes the parade of life that the film has portrayed and salutes those who gave flesh to the images and illusions. I have in my mind a similar loving salute to the films of Hungary. My scenario differs from Fellini's by calling for real as well as fictional characters to walk in the circling parade. In deference to History, my procession is led by György Dózsa, heavy-bearded, wearing chain armour and carrying a mace. Then comes the actress Mari Törőcsik, trim and modern in a skirt suit, her face controlled but intense. Behind her is a sober peasant wearing a black hat, baggy pants and black boots, a whip in his hand. The director István Gaál comes next, looking like a Western cowboy, lean and dishevelled, as if he had just dismounted from a cow pony. Then a turn-of-the-century coquette with long curls, billowing skirt and wide-brimmed flowered hat. Then a herdsman from the Hortobágy mounted on a black horse, ramrod straight in the saddle, wearing a sheepskin jacket and with a feather stuck in his hat. The actor Zoltán Latinovits, placid, immobile of face, and

inscrutable. Miklós Jancsó striding, corseted in high sheath-pants. A stooped old woman in somber black, her head covered with a black shawl, her hands gnarled and her face rutted by age and grief. A harried shop foreman, his shirt open at the collar, carrying a black briefcase. A plumed soldier with a moustache, in a green jacket, a rifle on his shoulder. So many more, the Lady from Constantinople, Professor Hannibal, gipsies, miners, factory girls, soccer-players and school-boys. The actors Iván Darvas, András Kozák and Antal Páger, the actresses Éva Ruttkai and Judit Halász, directors, cameramen, cartoonists and scriptwriters. In my fantasy sequence they go round and at a leisurely pace, casually, creatures of a world of make-believe but thoughtful, bearing themselves with dignity. As they come close to the camera they blink or raise a hand, and sometimes, or so I imagine, they even smile.

MUSICAL LIFE

SERIOUS MUSIC ON THE SMALL SCREEN

Hungarian Television's International Competition for Young Directors

Of all the multiplicity of programmes available to television viewers throughout the world, one of the most controversial remains the programme devoted to the performance of serious music. It is controversial in the sense that there is no general agreement about whether the thing is worth doing at all nor, if the desirability of doing it is accepted, about the way in which it should be done. Broadcasting organizations adopt different stances. In my own country, to take the example with which I am obviously most familiar, the BBC has broadcast music programmes on television since the Television Service started in 1936; while the commercial Independent Television stations, after an initial six months flirtation with the Hallé as a "house" orchestra, have, with very few and irregular exceptions, abandoned the field of orchestral music.

On the negative side arguments range from those based on expediency (that the television audience for music programmes is too small to justify such broadcasts) to more lofty arguments that suggest aesthetic objections (that music is primarily an aural art and so best left to radio). Viewers and even colleagues, especially those in radio, have pronounced ideas about it, too. Anyone who has worked in this area is only too deeply familiar with the comment on the televised orchestral concert which goes: "I really don't understand why you can't just show a shot of the whole orchestra all the way through. Then we, the viewers, could choose what, if anything, we want to look at, instead of having it thrust under our noses by some maniac television director who jumps about from one instrument to another in order to show off how clever he is." There is a ready answer to this, of course: it is that the single static full-shot of a body of eighty or so musicians who ought to be playing their hearts out soon reduces them on the television screen to an agglomeration of meaningless blobs.

There are answers to the other objections, too. For example, on the question of audiences for television music: they can be very large. Their size is a result of many contributory causes. Among them are the general cultural situation in the country concerned, the hour at which the programme is broadcast, the repute of the participants, and the "popularity" of the music played. Again, the idea that music is a wholly non-visual art is one that stems largely from the present era, the period of the radio and the gramophone. Until then music was usually seen whenever it was heard; and some would maintain, with Stravinsky, that the sight of the performers is a genuine part of the musical experience.

I do not intend to assemble all the many and diverse arguments for and against music on television. Perhaps none of them is absolutely conclusive. In spite of the steadily

growing number of music broadcasts in our television world, the subject, I am suggesting, is still open to question.

There remains one area where, in my view, there is too little "controversy" in the sense of informed exchange of ideas: namely, in the discussion of the techniques appropriate to the task, or indeed what the essential nature of the task is. Of course, within broadcasting organizations and their training schools there is bound to be a "dialogue" between professionals on the subject, and the relative success or failure of individual music broadcasts is evidence on which both informal and formal discussion frequently takes place. There are international forums for such discussion, too: notable among them are the regular seminars of the International Music Centre and the viewing sessions of the international prize-giving organizations, such as the Italia Prize. The situation is not therefore the total desert that I may have implied. But the oases are few and in the shifting sands only one point must command absolute assent: that the role of the television producer/camera director is absolutely crucial.

It is against this background that the decision of Magyar TV to hold a competition for young directors of serious music is not merely to be politely welcomed but positively applauded. The decision signifies a serious concern, and it is appropriate that Hungary, the country that has given the world so many of its finest musicians, should be the first to organize and foster this unique enterprise.

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What were its unique features? First, it did put the spotlight on the television director himself (or herself) and showed not only the results of his work but also something of that work in progress. Second, the directors' work was done within the framework and time-scale of the competition itself. In all o·her international competitions, my experience is that the work submitted for judgement is completed previously, and therefore it has been done in widely differing time-scales and with different resources available. Third, since the process of the competition and the jury sessions were televised, they were in this way "open" to members of the general public whose perception of the matters at issue was thereby sharpened.

However, before trying to draw any conclusions, it is high time that I gave some account of the proceedings of the competition itself. It began last June when fourteen directors, all under the age of thirty-eight and from eight different countries, came to Budapest to work throughout four days. At this "elimination round" they were required to direct three short pieces, one from each of the categories of instrumental solo, chamber work and orchestral work. The overall repertory ranging from Bach to Bartók had been published beforehand: individual pieces were drawn by ballot only 24 hours before the day of recording. The directors worked under considerable pressure of time, and, in some cases, with the handicap of a foreign language and with comparatively unfamiliar technical resources. The recorded results, of understandably varying quality, were shown to the members of the international jury, of whom I had the honour to be one, under the chairmanship of Miklós Szinetár. At this stage the directors' work was done anonymously. All the competitors opted for the orthodox technique of "straight" shooting of the performers, with one exception. Alexander Mandic, from Yugoslavia, in the course of his presentation of Bartók's *Allegro Barbaro* chose to show some shots of men working on the roof of a nearby building. I understand he had noticed them on his way to the studio, so the decision to include them in his treatment was a last-minute one. By a slight stretch of the imagination one could see some possible relevance to the music, but on the whole I personally thought it was

not an entirely happy idea—the sort of thing a more experienced director might have considered for a moment and then rejected. I certainly do not wish to be invidious and I mention this tiny detail to point to the fact that here was a director who attempted something "different", a motive one might think deserving approval; yet in directing cameras for music the dividing line between a shot that is acceptable and one that is not is often extremely narrow (and the judgement is often a highly subjective one.) For even a shot that is merely mistimed can appear ridiculous although, had the timing been precise, it would have been perfectly fitting. At this stage in the competition there was a fair measure of mistimed shots, imprecise cutting, directors who seemed to have no clear idea of what they were trying to achieve. But there was also some talent emerging, and the jury without too much difficulty arrived at the decision as to which nine competitors should be sent forward to the next stage, to be held in September. They were three Hungarians, two Czechs, and one each from Great Britain, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and the German Democratic Republic.

At the start of the next stage the competitors were required to direct an operatic aria, chosen by lot in June. They had thus had ample time to prepare. Costume was allowed, but not a built set. Two competitors, however, did provide sets by using the technique known as Colour Separation Overlay or Chromakey: by this means the singer appeared in front of a photographed interior. Mandic caught the eyes of the jury by a very free treatment of Leporello's *Catalogue* Aria as an amusing interplay between singer and pianist. Before the showing of each aria, a filmed documentary gave the television audience some insight into each director's attitude and method of work. Six directors were chosen to proceed to the next round, devoted to chamber music: two Hungarians—Apró (who had been placed first in the June rounds) and Molnár; Greenberg, BBC (second in June); Bonaventura (Czech); Heinrich (GDR); and Mandic (Yugoslavia). The pieces, again chosen by lot from the variation movement of Schubert's *Trout Quintet* or the third movement of Bartók's *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion*, gave opportunities respectively for a "classical" visual treatment or a more adventurous style. Split-screen shots appeared in both pieces. In the event, two "classicist" (Apró and Greenberg) and one "expressionist" treatment (Molnár) were elected. These three finalists were then required to present a recording of a chamber piece specially composed for the occasion by Rudolf Maros, followed by a "live" transmission of a piece for full orchestra, drawn at the last moment from Bartók's *Hungarian Pictures*, Strauss's *Fledermaus* Overture and Liszt, *Les Préludes*. It was a sufficiently demanding, even daunting, trial of skill. In the final order Greenberg was placed first, having been given top marks both in aggregate and in the final itself, Apró was second, and Molnár third: a special prize was awarded to Mandic on the strength of his *Catalogue* Aria. The result did not come as a total surprise, for it had become clear earlier that the leaders in the race were likely to be Apró and Greenberg. Both were musical, imaginative, precise, professional, cool, and well-disciplined when on the job in the gallery. Apró seemed to me to use lighting the more effectively of the two. Greenberg pulled out more stops in the final. He has, I think, had more experience than Apró. Both are undoubtedly talented.

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Was it all a success? I would give the answer as a resounding "Yes". I might justifiably be accused of favourable prejudice, since the competition was won by a colleague of mine and as a member of the jury I could even be said to have contributed, through the marks I awarded, to his personal success, though not to his achievement. I believe all fifteen jury mem-

bers, myself included, strove to be as objective as is humanly possible in this, as I have already implied, somewhat subjective field. But leaving all such considerations aside, nobody who took part in whatever capacity could have failed to be impressed by the general spirit of the competitors, the excellence of the musicians who conducted, sang and played, the helpful goodwill and skill of the camera crews, technical staff and interpreters, and the overall aptness of the organization, in which János Vecsernyés was a key figure.

I very much hope that this competition will have its successors, whether in Hungary or elsewhere.

The stated aims of the competition were three: 1. To widen the forms of visual expression of serious music and to improve the artistic efficiency of such programmes. 2. To discover young gifted directors and introduce them to the public. 3. To attract the interest of viewers to the value of musical compositions and the means of interpreting them on the television screen. I would say all three aims were achieved, with some provisos. It was a competition for young directors. Youth can promote the birth and growth of new ideas: it does not necessarily follow that it will do so. At the risk of seeming ungracious, I must say I thought we saw too much student work—which is not calculated to "improve the artistic efficiency" of television music. Moreover, the great temptation of the inexperienced TV music director is to try to do too much, to have too many shots, too much movement: it is a temptation that is increased in the circumstances of a competition. We had some examples of this. On the other hand, I did not see much evidence of work that "widened the forms of visual expression": perhaps that was too much to expect. Whether viewers were captured I cannot say, but I would be surprised if they did not find the introductory documentary element in the programmes far too long. However, this is to be wise after the event: the organizers of the competition were fully justified in setting high aims. It is in the nature of things that, as T. S. Eliot says,

> Between the idea
> And the reality...
> Between the conception
> And the creation...
> Falls the Shadow

In this instance we can be grateful that the Shadow was extremely small.

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Perhaps I may be allowed a small and self-indulgent coda to this account. Some of my colleagues on the jury, with whom it was such a pleasure to work, may have felt that my own awards of marks to the competitors were over-severe: they may well be right. That being so, maybe it will not be amiss if I declare my own fundamental standpoint. After 18 years' work in TV music, much of it as a director of concerts and recitals, I have long concluded that the aim of doing it all is to present the music itself. But how? There are many ways in which TV can contribute to the broadcasting of music. Most of them are, strictly speaking, extra-musical, yet not to be despised for that reason. I am thinking of how TV can convey a sense of occasion, give the background to the composition of a work, show the rapport between conductor and soloist, etc. But I believe there is basically only one purely *musical* contribution TV (or film) can make. Namely, by a subtle paralleling in the camera treatment of the shape and structure of the music it can underline and reinforce the expressive power of that music's formal element.

It is clear to me that this is an ideal that is too exacting to be often completely realized. It is an approach that is most effectively used with works where the formal, architectural element is evidently present. This may seem to rule out most "atmospheric" works from the treatment proposed, and

leave only music written in clearly recognized forms. Of these, sonata form is the most obvious example since it is the basis of most of the first movements (and not only the first movements) of the symphonic/concerto/sonata repertoire. But this would be to take too superficial a view. There is very little music, I might almost say no music, with the possible exception of the more egregious vapourings of the avant-garde, that does not exhibit some intrinsic shape. In my view it is the TV music director's task (as it is the performer's) to discover that shape and to reveal it in the way he draws up his camera script. No two directors are likely to do this in exactly the same way, and this is all to the good. Unless the director keeps this aim in his mind's eye and ear, subsequently in the studio gallery translating it into a series of images, I maintain that his choice of shot and the overall "feel" of his work will seem at best somewhat arbitrary, unmotivated and lacking in inevitability; at worst it will seem downright unmusical. However, to pursue in detail the theory and practice of this approach would take us far outside the scope of this article.

WALTER TODDS

THREE NEW RECORD ALBUMS

JOSEPH HAYDN: The Complete Keyboard Solo Music/1
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The problems related to Haydn's piano works could be more or less clarified recently. The huge body of Haydn's piano works came down to us in countless editions, and they have also been preserved in a long range of contemporaneous manuscript copies —and it was precisely due to the many different sources that the authenticity of both composition and form has been rather difficult to establish. The four volumes of the *Wiener Urtext* Edition (Universal Edition, Vienna) edited by Christa Landon between 1963 and 1972, under the title: Haydn / The Complete Piano Sonatas proved a great help. This complete edition of well over five hundred pages naturally does not contain Haydn's piano works which were written in other than sonata form, that is his variations, capriccios, fantasias, etc.—still, it could serve as the basis for a complete record edition, a pioneering undertaking in the history of recording.

The complete edition will consist of four albums, the first and fourth of which have been already put on the market.

The material of the first album, featuring in the sub-title, comprises the early Haydn sonatas which cannot be dated more closely, and we only know with complete certainty that they originated before 1766. The four records include 19 sonatas and two variations. Due to the fact that at the time of the origin of the works the contest between the harpsichord and the piano was still far from being brought to an issue, and indeed, the former instrument was much more popular, this material is performed on the harpsichord.

I do not want to claim that these works are all masterpieces. Indeed, some of them

are definitely rudimentary, being no match for the maturity of the late Haydn sonatas and other piano works, but it can be said beyond doubt that it is exactly these pieces that form the most interesting part of the material.

The music-lover will obviously know from his own experience that the death of J. S. Bach (1750) marks the end of a period. The musical crop of the 1760s and 1770s —more exactly the emergence of the Viennese classical school—is alien to the tone of the German grand Baroque to such an extent that one may just about say it has nothing to do with it. If one thinks of the music of Bach and Mozart one can hardly believe that Mozart was born merely six years after Bach's death, and that by 1750 Haydn was already eighteen.

This is perfectly bridged by Haydn's piano music. These pieces are characterized by a kind of scintillating lack of determination and exciting duality. The starting-point naturally is the Baroque—only not the German, but the Italian Baroque. The sons of the great Bach—Johann Christian in the first place, and in a certain sense Carl Philipp Emanuel, too—first surrendered to the Italian influence, yielding with great delight to that adored and hated Italy which for centuries had caused so much bitterness to German musicians. True, side by side with submission, the element of absorption also appears in them, they already start the process in the course of which the tone of Italy increasingly became a German, more exactly, Austrian tone in the work of the masters of the Viennese school.

In Haydn's sonatas the heart-rending sentimentality and declining anguish of the Italian late Baroque assume a most enchanting, new form, their effect being enhanced by their almost incidental, unexpected appearance. Take Sonata No. 5 on record I/B. The start of the opening movement consisting of short and repeatedly recapitulated formal sections unequivocally conveys a kind of Viennese classical tone: being, as it is, a transcendent, easily rolling and dancing, spectacular piece of music; but then the movement suddenly switches to the minor key and the same musical material reveals another of its facets: its origin, roots and Baroque descent. This feeling becomes stronger listening to the slow movement. A real aria is here accompanied by the ground bass. And I would like to call attention to this element: it may be set down almost as a rule that in the slow movements the "modern"—that is the Viennese—tone becomes manifest more slowly and with greater difficulty than in the fast ones—the slow movements are more "conservative". On the other hand—and this forms the other side of the picture—it is just this insoluble and irresolvable character which makes these pieces so exciting. It might also be said that we can never be sure of what is to follow.

And meanwhile, virtually unnoticed and incidentally, the Haydn style evolved. It is perhaps the Sonata No. 10. about which we may first say that it is a unified "modern" work, naturally in the Vienna classical sense of the term. True, after this there are several "relapses", these, however, are also beautiful in their own manner.

Two outstanding Hungarian harpsichord players ensure a performance of the highest standard. Their manner of approach differs, and I do not feel it is up to me to decide which one of them is right. Zsuzsa Pertis has long been known for her flair for improvisation and bent for embellishment. She is virtually unable to perform a work twice in the same manner. New and new forms are born with a complete naturalness, and the listener has the feeling as if the performer herself were surprised at what she had played. I think it is unnecessary to point out here that this is exactly what is needed in this music which in many regards may be termed late Baroque. This kind of inventiveness by Zsuzsa Pertis can be especially well observed in the repetition of the various formal sections when, on the

second occasion, she performs the score always in a somewhat different manner.

János Sebestyén is more reserved. It is true, however, that he performs the more modern sonatas—in the above sense of the term—for which this kind of improvisation is not so clearly the right interpretation. Sebestyén achieves a captivating effect with his virtuosity, his graceful and at places virtually incorporeal flying performance. At the same time his powerful characterizing virtuosity is also evident, for example in the Variations in A major, where he daringly separates the mood of the various sections.

To sum up, lovers of the Baroque and Viennese classical music alike will find exciting and interesting music in this album, while those interested in the history of music cannot dispense with Haydn's The Complete Keyboard Solo Music/1, the introductory essay to which has been written by László Somfai, the renowned Hungarian Haydn scholar.

JOSEPH HAYDN: The Complete Keyboard Solo Music/4
Dezső Ránki (Piano) Hungaroton SLPX 11625–27 (Stereo-Mono)

The three records of this album reveal a completely different Haydn, leading us into a different realm both as far as its material and interpretation are concerned. Dezső Ránki performs the last Haydn piano masterpieces. He plays the nine late sonatas, together with the Fantasy in C major *(Capriccio)*, Variations in C major as well as Variations in F minor *(Sonata. Un piccolo divertimento)*.

In the gigantic arch of sonatas Nos. 54–62, according to the numbering of the *Wiener Urtext* Edition, Haydn penetrated through to the last consequences of the Viennese classical period without having completely abandoned his links with the past, the Baroque that had served as his starting-point. This relationship here and now shows a basic transformation. If in the early sonatas he was still Baroque-like, then here already, or more exactly, once again appear some Baroque stylistic marks, without however becoming decisive. (But let us think for a moment: what a decisive turn was brought about in the art of Mozart and Beethoven by their becoming familiar with Bach or Handel.)

In these last works the piano assumes and fulfils by and large the same function as in Beethoven's keyboard music; it becomes an instrument of intimate speech and at the same time of daring experimentation. This is easily understandable if one considers that the piano, after all, is an easily tractable, utterly subjective instrument, easily dispensing with all kinds of support, thus providing virtually unlimited possibilities for the rendition of musical fantasy without any transposition. In other words: neither in string quartets nor in symphonies could Haydn achieve the kind of free, unrestricted and at the same time fantastically interesting treatment of the musical material as on the piano.

Let us take the Sonata in C major, No. 58 (Side II/A). The gesture of grasping and unfolding the simple ornament must really be termed mysterious; this tremendous movement is like some monumental improvisation, but the sketchy character is replaced by the most careful composition. It may be called a variation, but with the subject undergoing such transformations of facets and forms that the term character variation can safely be applied to it. By listening closely it is easy to discern the sudden stops and resurges typical of improvisation, and all this lends a kind of romantic, ragged character to the movement. Haydn topped the Viennese classical period

in a manner that transcends it at the same time, and almost unnoticably led it into the nineteenth century. A similar character can be discerned in the first movement of the Sonata in D major, No. 56. This, too, is a variation, this, too, is a slow movement—and here, too, some improvisatory staccato character emerges, true, once again in the most careful composition. Such opening movements can be conceived only on the piano, *tête-à-tête* with music.

These, of course, are the exceptional cases. (Let me admit that I, for my part, am very fond of exceptions.) The opening movement in Haydn's work is, as a rule, the broadly arching Allegro of sonata form. The "little" and "great" Sonatas in E flat major—Nos. 59 and 62 according to the above-mentioned numbering—which frequently feature in recitals, serve as splendid examples of this principle of construction. In the former Haydn, in an extraordinary manner, hits on the famous ti-ti-ti-ta rhythm of Beethoven's 5th Symphony, and he allocates a huge role to this—essentially "athematic"—rhythm in the "little" Sonata in E flat major as well. The last piece dating from 1794—the "great" Sonata in E flat major, that is—hardly needs introduction being one of Haydn's most frequently performed works.

Of the other pieces I would like to mention only the Variations in F minor, which became known with the inscription *Un piccolo divertimento.* But how unappropriate this description is! During his whole life Haydn had hardly written a more heart-rending, more feverish and darker piano piece. It has a variation form also characteristic of his other works: with two subjects, one in a minor and the other in a major key, making their appearance at the beginning of the piece, each of them being richly varied. The personal tone and confessional character are naturally represented by the first subject and its variations in a minor key: first it sighs and later it turns into a monumental coda.

Dezső Ránki's piano-playing is much too familiar to need enlarging upon. Under his hands the instrument yields all its resistance, and everything on the records is given a thoroughly intelligible and transilluminated interpretation. The happily rolling, ecstatic movements offer a rewarding and effective task, while at the same time the Variations in F minor, at the other atmospheric, emotional and denotational extreme, reveals Ránki's art from the opposed side. Describing these records as immaculate and suggestive is enough, further praise is superfluous.

JOHANNES BRAHMS: Chamber Music/1. Quartets, Quintets, Sextets for Strings. The Bartók Quartet with György Konrád (viola) and Ede Banda (cello). Hungaroton SLPX 11591–95 (Stereo-Mono)

The other major undertaking of the Hungaroton Record Company is the recording of the complete chamber music of Brahms. The album consists of five records. It contains all of Brahms's string chamber music works featuring no other types of instrument (e.g. piano, clarinet, etc.)—two Sextets (Op. 18, 36), three Quartets (Op. 51 No. 1+No. 2 and Op. 67) and two Quintets (Op. 88, 111).

It must be true where English is spoken as well that Brahms only effected a breakthrough to the music-loving masses in recent decades only. I, on my part, know that in Hungary some twenty to thirty years ago—not to mention earlier times—every concert agency or similar body would have considered a programme consisting solely of Brahms works a sure flop. Brahms's orchestral works—mainly and primarily

those—were naturally performed in those years as well, but audiences always showed a reluctance and endured them as some kind of a compulsory task rather than finding real enjoyment. They felt somewhat like the monk—being fond of, rather than averse to, carnal pleasures—feels for his hair-shirt. There is no question that it helps salvation, but you only wear it when you have to.

Brahms's chamber music is gradually gaining ground, too, although by far not so triumphantly as his symphonies, concertos and the *German Requiem*. His violin-piano sonatas are the most liked, and his string chamber music the least. Of these latter it is only the quartets and quintets combined with the piano which are listened to with real pleasure. I should say because they are not known well enough.

When some five years ago the noted Bartók Quartet (Péter Komlós, Sándor Devich, violins; Géza Németh, viola; Károly Botvay, cello) first included the Sextet for Two Violins, Two Violas and Two Cellos in B flat major Op. 18 in its repertoire, there was a perceivable reluctance on the side of the audience. After that everybody was surprised. The work which had not been performed for decades was a resounding success; I have been told by several people that especially during the slow movement they felt they had been familiar with this work from somewhere.

This is little wonder, since the slow movement of this splendid early work follows the harmonic order of a Baroque variation form, the *folia*. But one should not think by any means that here Brahms uses some kind of archaism—the folia form serves him only as a pretext to slip in gradually and hardly noticeably his most personal message. The Brahmsian Baroque in the final analysis is the past percolated through Beethoven's filter, and the apt expression here is not archaization but recollection or resurrection. (The reader should call to mind the famous *Haydn Variations* which, despite the classical subject—or perhaps just because of it?—is most typical Brahms.) Undoubtedly, it is this slow movement that will catch the listener most in this piece, although the sighing nostalgic tone of the first movement also strikes you at the first moment and retains its hold.

I reserve the right to a maximum subjectivity when stating that the Sextets in B flat major and in G major will be closest to those listeners who are not thoroughly familiar with Brahms's chamber music. I myself have succeeded in preserving to the present day the thrill of my first encounter with these two masterpieces, and I still often recall this experience—these two recordings have afforded an opportunity for me to do so. I would like to call attention especially to the piece in G major, particularly to its first movement, because there everything is already together which makes the art of Brahms so important. There is a certain nostalgia and at the same time a concealed combatant character, a chaste passion. I consider this latter to be the most important. It is my belief that Brahms was not fond of Liszt's work primarily because Liszt was inclined to compose even his creative struggle into his pieces. Brahms conceals this struggle. His outbursts, his untamed moments come to explosion always to be followed by almost feeling ashamed, he withdraws, as it were, what he stated before. This, however, does not alter the force and effect of the burst in the least. Here, in the first movement of the Sextet in G major, everything is together and all this appears within the framework of the real Brahms "singing allegro" subject type. The slow (third) movement marked *Poco Adagio* is also a variation, indeed, the Brahmsian character variation. The final movement seems to refer back to Mendelssohn, but it should not be forgotten that here it is Brahms (and not just anybody) who recalls Mendelssohn, and thus the movement again has an evocative effect.

The material of the quartets is somewhat more difficult to grasp: here reminiscence of

any form plays hardly any or no decisive role. The realm of these three works is more fateful and gloomy, especially in the case of the two quartets in minor key in Op. 51. The problems raised seem to be insoluble and unappeasable, and instead of a solution Brahms choses acquiescence. But how dearly he sells it! The last movement of the piece in C minor is replete with astonishing and violent changes (this material is perhaps one grade more fateful than here interpreted!), but the composer always withdraws from the verge of the abyss (Wagner pushes him over—this is the difference between them, this, of course, makes neither of them worse than the other!). With regard to the performance of the slow movements, too, I would like to make only one critical comment: the broad adagio melodies are played in a somewhat "complicated" approach. In other words: the performers to a certain extent "help in" in the interest of achieving the desired effect: as if they trusted less than necessary the effect of the musical material which comes about virtually of its own accord.

Finally the two string quintets.

Behind the pastoral surface of Op. 88 in F major there are also "chaste" tensions, strained from within. (This tonality had worn its pastoral character at least for three centuries already at Brahms's time!) The performers superbly grasp and realize this. Thanks to this the often apparently puzzling work unambiguously reveals its outlines and conceptual charge. Of the last piece, the Quintet in G major, it is perhaps the Adagio which is the most successful. Built together with the scherzo, the second and third movements of the older, traditional form follow one another almost imperceptibly.

ANDRÁS PERNYE

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