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SEVENTY

It seems only yesterday and yet two and a half years have passed since we compiled the sixtieth issue of this journal. Looking for a heading for these introductory paragraphs—the working title for every issue is simply Preface—someone suggested Sixty, and that's what it became. It established a convention—this time I headed my piece Seventy anticipating the editorial conference.

Since NHQ 69 went to press Hungary lost two major poets. István Kormos was killed by a heart attack in October 1977, at the age of 54. English translations of his verse, by Edwin Morgan, appeared in NHQ 25 and 44. Kormos was the son of a poor peasant girl, who never knew his father. He was brought up by his grandmother. He published his first poems soon after the war while an apprentice in a Budapest delicatessen. The literary world immediately took notice. He at first showed the influence of Attila József, Apollinaire, and Hungarian folk poetry, but his voice soon strengthened into one of the most original of post-war verse. He published three volumes of poems altogether. Though having undergone little formal schooling, Kormos, who spent some years in Paris in the sixties, was one of the most knowledgeable about poetry. He did much to shape public taste as an editor at a publishing house specializing in books for young people, and as the author of popular verse-tales for children. Towards the end of his life he became the mentor and counsellor of a whole generation of young poets. His versions of some of the Canterbury Tales, of poems by Burns and Pushkin, Molière's *Sganarelle*, and Russian folk poems are perfect translations and standard Hungarian texts. In this issue we publish two old and two recent poems, as translated by the English poet Alan Dixon.

László Nagy was also carried off by a heart attack, at the age of 53, shortly before we went to press. He was one of the great contemporary Hungarian poets and his verse has been translated into a large number

languages. A profile, accompanied by a number of his poems, will appear in one of our next issues, while "Hommage to Déry" will be included in the next.

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The return of the Hungarian Crown was an event in the strict sense of the term. The Crown of Saint Stephen has shone on Hungarian history for almost a thousand years now, it also attracted the interest of public opinion abroad. Not for many years have the world's media paid as much attention to an event in Hungary. Never before have as many television stations broadcast direct from Budapest as on January 6 1978, when Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, as the personal representative of Jimmy Carter, the President of the United States, handed the Crown and the regalia to Antal Apró, the Chairman of Parliament, the highest elective body of the Hungarian people. The story is here told on two levels. The art historian Dezső Dercsényi describes the Hungarian Crown and the regalia. He points out that there is no scholarly consensus as yet regarding the origin or dating of the upper part of the Crown. Its return will now make a thorough study possible, using up to date methods and instruments. The illustrations are agency pictures taken the day after the Crown was handed back. The author of these lines contributes an account of the ceremony itself and of what it meant to be alive in Budapest that day.

The Crown will continue to be discussed in the next issue. Articles have been commissioned from two historians: György Györffy takes the story from Saint Stephen to the end of the House of Árpád, and Kálmán Benda carries it on to our days.

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The second major group of articles bears an economic character. They remind of an anniversary, discuss present economic and political research, and outline a strategy of foreign trade for the future. Two articles and an interview chart the past, present and future. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Hungarian economic reform Béla Csikós-Nagy, one of its moving spirits, who heads the Materials and Prices Office, discusses the reasons for its introduction, establishes its importance, tells of the criticisms it met with, and points to the ways in which it should be successfully continued. The essence of the major reform of 1968 was briefly that direct planning instructions given by the state to enterprises were largely replaced by the use of economic regulators. From a ten years' perspective, Csikós-Nagy argues, one can look back to 1968 as the year of an extremely success-

ful reform. It bore in mind the situation created by post 1956 economic policy, and the requirements of the future as well. The result was something Csikós-Nagy justifiably calls the Golden Age of the Hungarian economy, which lasted to 1974. The break was produced, as I am sure I need not point out, by the 1973 oil price explosion. Great debates followed in Hungary, some arguing that the country ought to return to directives based on central and compulsory plan indices. As Csikós-Nagy points out, it was not difficult to prove the unsoundness of such views, and after doing so, he establishes that the changed international economic situation prescribes a new strategy.

The first sentence of József Bognár's "A New Foreign Trade Strategy" determines the direction of the argument: "The changes in the world economy in recent years have made the elaboration of a new strategy in foreign trade timely and necessary. It is from the recognition of this fact that Hungarian economists set out, on the basis of their preparatory work the Central Committee of the HSWP passed, at its October 1977 meeting, comprehensive guidelines of economic policy comparable only, in scope and importance, to the 1966 resolution which preceed the introduction of the 1968 reform." Professor Bognár expounds that the resolution seeks the best possible harmony between the inner mainsprings of development of the Hungarian economy and the consequences of economic changes in the world at large. Hungarian foreign trade strategy is explained by being placed in the context of what Dr. Bognár calls the changeover from one period to another in world economy thus making clear its necessity and soundness. In a number of articles published by NHQ József Bognár has argued that, what is going on these days cannot be reduced to the effects of cyclical fluctuations, or to a more forceful assertion of factors already known. His paper is thus, one might well say, not only a report on contemporary Hungarian economic developments, but also a real contribution to economic thinking.

István Hajduska discussed the scientific underpinning of future economic policy with Rezső Nyers, one of the architects of the 1968 reform, who now heads the Institute of Economics of the Academy of Sciences. *Magyar Tudomány*, a periodical published by the Academy, first printed the interview. Rezső Nyers tells of a major project concerned with discovering which are the primary and profitable economic aims of a longer period, measuring the factors involved, and the elasticity of adjustment of the economy, outlining, for the benefit of those responsible for economic policy, the economic mechanism appropriate to the situation expected. In the course of the conversation Rezső Nyers naturally referred to the 1968 reform,

pointing out that at an earlier stage, a one-sided policy of accumulation dominated Hungarian economic policy, then in 1957 a policy of accumulation and consumption was initiated and further elaborated in 1968. Nyers points out why such a policy must be continued, and yet the complexities of the present situation entail the presence of people with conventional minds who believe that when things get tough one ought to get back to their abstract schemes that proved unsound in the past.

Egon Szabady's brief piece on the oldest inhabitants of Hungary has economic aspects as well. The Central Office of Statistics, of which Szabady is the Vice-President, examined the condition of thirteen thousand old men and women. It is generally known that the span of life has grown longer in recent decades, there are more aged, and new problems and situations have arisen as a result throughout the world. In America the Grey Panthers try to improve the position of the aged through public relations work. Everything is not settled in this respect in Hungary either, and for that very reason intensive research is going on into the subject.

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Looking back over the sixty-nine issues that have already appeared, those of us who produce this paper feel justified in telling ourselves and our readers that we always did our best to keep the world informed of the Hungarian situation, of progress and stagnation, plans and their realization, but at the same time immersing ourselves into the currents of ideas that dominate the intellectual life of the world, participating in the process of recognition and analysis has also been part of our endeavours. In years gone by we had to keep a close eye on the international periodical press to stay up to date, lately however, without neglecting the flood of foreign papers and journals of all sorts that reach the editorial office, things have become easier since the workshops that produce Hungarian scholarship, literature and arts, and the connected press, either work along much the same lines, or they react promptly to what is published abroad. We had planned to include an article by Béla Köpeczi on the French "new philosophers" but it had to be held over because of other articles awaiting their term in the limited space available, including a piece by Köpeczi himself, "Culture and the Socialist Way of Life." Köpeczi points out that, since the introduction of the 1968 economic reform, ways of life have found themselves at the centre of interest. Economic growth had reached a standard where the satisfaction of elementary needs was taken for granted, and the community and individuals had to face the problem of what it meant to live, work, and think in a socialist

society. Köpeczi is primarily interested in ways in which culture influences ways of life. He interprets culture in a broad sense, placing no dividing line between science, literature, and the arts, and ideology and attitudes and modes of behaviour. What he means by a socialist way of life is in fact the realization of a new dimension of culture, or rather an attempt to do so. What makes his paper so interesting is not only the philosophic sure-footedness, but also the wealth of facts and figures, and the persuasive way they are employed in the service of a way of life at the centre of which there is a new humanism, that is socialism, the humanism of the twentieth century.

Not that anyone should imagine that the socialist way of life has already come true in Hungary as a matter of course. It is not the purpose of this journal to persuade of such a thing, it is after all our intention to present Hungarian reality *chiaroscuro*, which explains why we publish an interview with Dezső Keresztury under the eye-catching title "Does the Hungarian *Dzsentri* Still Survive?" *Dzsentri* is of course the magyarized form of gentry. The Hungarian phonetic spelling, so odd to English eyes, is used to draw attention to fundamental differences in connotation and extension. Dezső Keresztury is himself a scion of the Hungarian petty nobility. He draws attention to abuses far from rare in Hungary today, the aping of *dzsentri* ways of life in dress, speech, field sports, and furnishings, ways that were obsolete, and even ridiculous, already between the Wars, let alone now.

"Humanism and Socialist Society" is the subject of the leading article of the present issue. The author, Imre Pozsgay, a historian and sociologist by training, is the Minister of Culture. His starting point is that socialism is the first society where the complete liberation of man is part of the essence. That is why the two notions, socialism and humanism, are indivisible. Pozsgay makes no secret of the fact that there were times when this connection was not altogether obvious, precisely as regards the complete assertion of human rights. It is one of the grimaces that distorts the features of our times that human rights are given special emphasis by the enemies of socialism precisely when, in the course of socialist construction, one of the propositions of the Communist Manifesto, that the free growth of every individual is the condition of the free growth of the community is increasingly coming true. Pozsgay does not engage in direct polemics concerning human rights, confining himself to pointing out that as research done in Hungary has shown, basic needs, social security, and job security are fully catered for. For centuries Hungarians have asked: what will we live on? now the question is: how shall we live? A new system of coordinates now determines the notion of human rights, and Pozsgay discusses this in

the light of interests, conflicts of interests, and their reconciliation. He draws the conclusion that the new humanism comes true through the reconciliation of interests, in which both the Party and the State are significantly engaged. Finally Pozsgay discusses possibilities for the further extension of socialist democracy.

The proper use of leisure is one of the great options of a more human life. Sándor Szalai in his "Time and Environment" wittily elaborates on changes in the notion of time. Professor Szalai has the right qualifications for discoursing on the subject since he was in charge of a UN-sponsored time-budget research project which covered urban and suburban dwellers in twelve countries. The resulting essay is provocative in the best sense of the term.

Tibor Klaniczay's "Reflections on national tradition" deals with another dimension of time. What, he asks, is the role of the heritage of the past in a society which underwent revolutionary changes in recent years, a process which is still ongoing. According to Professor Klaniczay Hungarian public opinion, following a short period of transition, is once again showing an interest in national traditions which were successfully integrated with the socialist present.

Reading this preface will make it clear to one and all how important the question of liberty is in our eyes, liberty that is, in the widest, most modern, twentieth century sense of the term, that is one which makes it clear that individual and social liberties can only be examined together, since one enjoys them together, as well as together suffering their absence. In the past couple of years politicians, sociologists, literary historians, philosophers, and the writers and artists themselves have concentrated particularly on the freedom of literature and the arts. "Liberty and Equality Around a Paris Round Table," by the author of these lines, appeared in NHQ 67. In the current issue Pál Pándi looks at the position and prospects of the freedom of the arts.

There is a specific recognizable pattern in the history of debates on artistic freedom, Pándi argues. Such debates always occur within the progressive forces in countries in which the Communists have come to power. Pándi refers to the Paris *Commune*, to the October Revolution and to the 1919 Hungarian Republic of Councils and, relying on such foundations, he tells his reader—a real or imagined friend abroad—how artistic freedom is shaping up in Hungary.

The right to criticize is an organic part of the freedom of literature and art. Pál Pándi discusses this in the literary context. István Bart's press review "Semper Reformare" bears witness to its lively presence in cultural

life in a wider sense. He reports on a press debate on education, which still continues in the pages of the weekly *Élet és Irodalom* as we go to press.

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Hungary's contacts with other countries are discussed on two levels. János Hajdu writes about possibilities that became apparent in the course of a visit which Frigyes Puja, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, paid to Sweden, while Zoltán Halász uses a Hungarian cultural and industrial exhibition in Norway as an *à propos* for an account of changes in the image of Hungary entertained by Norwegians. The first Hungarian–British political and economic Round Table was held in the last month of 1977 at Siklós, in Southern Hungary, in a reconstructed medieval castle. We publish accounts from both the Hungarian and the British angle. The Hungarian authors János Kalanovics and György Varga point out that objectives were achieved and the open and straightforward exchange of opinions contributed to better mutual understanding. The Hungarian participants regretted that cultural questions were not discussed. One can only hope that representatives of culture from both sides will also be amongst those invited when the second British–Hungarian Round Table is convened in Britain, in 1979. Mark Bonham Carter, who led the British delegation, also expressed himself favourably on the work of the Round Table. Discussions were to the point and particularly useful and fruitful in the economic subcommittee. He closes his article with the recognition that members of his delegation became aware that economic cooperation between Hungary and the United Kingdom was simpler than they had thought. This as well is part of the story of changes in the image of Hungary.

News of Professor Lajos Jánossy's death reached the editorial offices after we went to press. He has been a member of the editorial board of this journal since its inception as well as being a frequent contributor. He was an outstanding physicist, whose work on cosmic radiation received international recognition. He was early appointed to a chair at Dublin but returned to Hungary after the Liberation, where he did much both at Budapest University and in the organization of the Central Physics Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences which he headed. He will be missed in the work of the editorial board where he ably represented the point of view of the natural sciences.

THE EDITOR

SOCIALIST SOCIETY AND HUMANISM

by

IMRE POZSGAY

In the theory of scientific socialism and in the practice of socialist construction, as well as in the public mind, the two notions of socialism and humanism have become inseparable. Socialism is the first society whose intrinsic, substantial world comprises the complete liberation of man; the first society in which the satisfaction of human needs is not enforced by pressures from above or from the oppressed classes, but the whole of society works for their satisfaction.

The substance of socialism consists in transforming the whole system of human relations at the same time as it transforms the relations of production. It creates for all working people the opportunity of genuine action, a world of real, organic communities. For this to come about, to make it irreversible, a whole series of class conflicts and revolutionary actions must take place at the beginning of the construction of socialism.

Socialism creates the conditions of social, hence genuine, equality between men. Here, too, equality is realized first in the political, legal sense, in order to create thereby equal chances for all members of society to attain the positions which enable them to have their proportionate share of the goods produced by society, according to work and, in the long run, according to needs. In this sense the suppression of the conditions of capitalist rule is already a decisive step ahead towards social equality. Private ownership was the basis of social inequality and thus the inequality of opportunities. These conditions determined the differing living standards of members of different classes. They made it impossible for the large majority to alter their social standing by using their own talents and efforts. Those few who—often by betraying their own social class—succeeded in making a career were described by the manipulated media as examples of the "unlimited opportunities", within the capitalist system. The bourgeoisie even promoted their career precisely in order to withdraw the most talented

from the ranks of the toiling masses and thus to hinder the formation of a native intelligentsia within the oppressed classes.

In socialism man undergoes a change, the members of society organize their lives in a new way. From the changed social environment they derive a kind of energy thanks to which they can make further changes in this environment and in themselves. Conversion into professionals and progress in the professions, take place in the interest of the masses, not in opposition to them.

Marxist-Leninist theory has recognized and pointed out, and it is also clear from experience, that in the evolution of socialist society there is an inevitable and long transition period in which conspicuous differences survive in the situation of people. The division of labour and the conditions of distribution closely related to economic development, social standing and qualifications, the way of life and practice connected with them, all contain elements which are conducive to the continuation of social differences, occasionally even to the slackening of social mobility and to the accentuation of inequalities. Even at such times, however, deep-seated fundamental processes tend towards the elimination of social inequality, whereby they create the conditions for the blossoming of individual aptitudes, of personal differences between man and man.

The free development of individual aptitudes is one of the conditions for the evolution of community man. To this end it is necessary first of all that citizens should become public persons.

One of the most important tasks in community creation is to prepare the masses for the exercise of their democratic rights. The sense of collective responsibility can evolve only through actual participation in public affairs. In fact, the successful development of socialist society is largely dependent on a majority of citizens with advanced legal consciousness, who consider it natural that rights imply certain responsibilities, too. Such citizens evolve when people consider that state power is not an outside force to be endured but an instrument of their own. An instrument which the citizens use, by their active participation, for social purposes and which they continually renew and keep under democratic control, this being the most important condition for them to feel that the socialist state is for their sake, that it is their own. This kind of participation is a force that creates and develops new institutions, a form of human liberty that can never be realized under capitalism. From this viewpoint it is proper to examine the question of human rights, as well as to ascertain the tasks, besides refuting the unfounded accusations, in the extension and implementation of the changing human rights suited to the substance of socialist society. Marxists cannot

subscribe to the notion of human rights abstracted from history, change, and development, a notion, incidentally, formulated by the bourgeoisie at one time for very real historical reasons against the feudal landowners' powers and privileges. The aim of the campaign launched under the pretext of the protection of human rights is to contest, both historically and actually, the natural and organic relationship between socialism and humanism, and thereby to ensure that socialism and communism, as the societies which satisfy human needs to the highest degree, are depreciated in the eyes of those who, by reason of their real interest, ought to do something for the creation of the new society.

Yet one would go astray and further the aim of the enemies of socialism if socialist thinking were controlled by the question asked, if socialists fought from a hedgehog position, by obeying their defensive instincts. Nor would they attain their object if they opposed to the slanders an idealized image of socialism that exists nowhere. They have to give their attention to the reality of socialism as it evolved historically and in everyday action, to its emerging laws, to its at times contradictory processes, to socialism which nevertheless is alone satisfactory to man.

By exploring and pointing out the real processes of socialist contruction it can be demonstrated that even bourgeois revolutionary ideals expressing universal human aspirations such as liberty, equality, and fraternity really materialize in socialism, because they lower the barriers protecting the class interests of the bourgeoisie.

Human rights

Several ideological and political aspects of this problem area are quite familiar. It is evident that the complex of issues concerning human rights, in spite of this designation, is far from being a simple legal problem; it implies an inquiry into the relationship between the individual and society, into the problem of how far socialism and capitalism satisfy, and how much they can satisfy, "certain fundamental human needs." It would therefore be wrong to refer the contentions around this question merely to the province of comparative law. But it is equally a mistake if we consider, beyond the legal implications, exclusively moral arguments instead of social ones. Those who wish to relegate the highly important historical question of the relationship between the individual and society under the heading of human rights, that is those who emphasize the legal or moral aspects of the problem actually relegate the more comprehensive, more essential

interrelations into the background and gain thereby advantages which could not be attained through well-founded differentiated scientific comparisons analysing the total reality of the two societies; it is important to approach the relationship between individual and society in the context of the fundamental structural relations of social system, the property relations, the interest and power relations. Only in this way can we get out of the tendentiously narrow legal and moral scope of the question raised by the opponents of socialism and thus make the legal and moral arguments presented by socialists more convincing.

If by human rights we understand the comprehensive relationship between the individual and society, then the point at issue is a genuine social question which is always actual: how society is able to satisfy the needs of the individuals, to integrate the individuals, to organize their cooperation, to connect their activity to collective action, including questions which accompany the evolution of every society, questions which capitalism has never solved and which—just because consistent efforts are made to solve them and the objective possibility of their solutions does exist—continually engage the attention of socialist society. In this sense the efforts of the Party to create the unity of society and bring about cooperation between people and groups of people are interrelated with the problems of human rights but are connected also with such sociological investigations in support of the policy as, for instance, research into interest relations.

It follows from the nature of the topic that, beyond its social relevance, it is also relevant to the individual, for it touches upon his specific socio-economic position and his prospects, and precisely because of its concreteness and directness may become a significant mobilizing force. This also encourages socialists to show their concept of human rights and those specific social conditions under which these rights are implemented. Their jurisprudence has attained not unworthy results in demonstrating that human rights cannot be taken for granted in advance, that their origins, their historical foundations cannot be left out of account. Only in this way can it be understood why the functions of human rights in the capitalist system which evolved from feudalism differ from those of human rights in the socialist system overthrowing capitalism. The promoters of the current campaign would like to obscure this radical change of function and to call socialists to account for what they merely keep on promising.

Thus far two historical types of political and legal institutional systems of human rights have evolved: the capitalist and the socialist institutional system of human rights. The difference between the two consists in (1) which socio-political order they reject, (2) which order are they intended

to establish, (3) by which order they have come about, which order do they complement organically. As the bourgeois concept of human rights wholly disclaimed the political and legal institutional system established under feudalism with a view to creating a radically different society, and as it built up an institutional system of (human) rights inspired by the political and power relations of capitalism, so socialism disclaims, on scientific grounds and with political deliberation, the political, legal, and social institutional system of capitalism with a view to creating a radically different society. Socialism will establish and continually perfect the institutional system of human rights of the socialist type inspired by the social and power relations of socialism. Consideration for these socio-historical and political differences helps us find our way about questions of human rights, and failure to take them into account misleads us in judging the political and legal institutional system which necessarily differ according to type of society.

One should have no illusions about the politico-ideological designs behind the question of human rights. But one must see that a substantive and throrough analysis may contain useful elements and yield results, for what is at issue are actual, genuine social questions, and it is only an analysis to the point—namely a scientifically grounded, differentiated analysis—that may ultimately prove favourable to socialism in the ideological struggle.

It is true that, with regard to capitalist conditions, to the situation of the individual under capitalism, Hungarian scholarship often fails to keep abreast of the times, of the latest achievements, and some of the scientific analyses have not yet gone beyond the periods analysed by the classics of Marxism; hence society harbours a mass of illusions and misconceptions. What makes things still more difficult is that Hungarians are not sufficiently acquainted even with their own conditions, that scientists still owe them an analysis of significant social problems, and although the situation analyses given by the Party provide a firm basis for seeing clearly the principal question, there remains a great deal of uncertainty about questions of detail; they often vacillate between an inferiority complex and uncritical complacence. So it happens that even in this area of the ideological struggle Hungarians frequently fall into a trap, into discussions which (in vain does their society have the advantage) cannot bring them favourable results because of shortcomings in their preparation.

They accept those criteria of the rights of man which the opponents of socialism formulate about political rights and personal freedoms taken in the bourgeois sense, or they confine themselves to insisting that in respect of these they are doing at least as well as, or even better than, their op-

ponents, or else they underline to what extent their opponents would have to be censured if judged by their own criteria. But the reality of socialist social conditions does not force them into such disadvantageous debating positions! Maybe they ought repeat more often that the social achievements declared in capitalist countries function more or less because the granting of such rights was imposed upon them by the struggles of their own working classes and by the existence of the world socialist system. It is a historical fact that the economic, cultural, and social rights have been included in the constitutions of a number of bourgeois countries upon the "challenge" of the countries of living socialism.

As far as my scientific knowledge goes, I cannot claim that parliamentary democracy, or more precisely bourgeois parliamentary democracy, is an essential feature of the socialist system. Consequently the usefulness and the outcome of a discussion in which socialists compare their parliamentary democracy with, for instance, British parliamentary democracy, are very doubtful. To some extent socialists stand similarly with "indices" such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, etc. taken in the bourgeois sense. (How freely they function is amply illustrated by today's bourgeois press and the past and present history of the system of mass communication.) Against them socialists need a system of criteria of their own. They have to take further steps to formulate more consciously, at a higher level, the role of socialist democracy, including that of the Party and of the socio-political organizations, and to reckon their role and functions among the socialist human rights. It is from the integrity of socialist society, from the structure of its production and power relations, that they have to deduce the functions of their political institutions, the value criteria of their political and social efficiency, of their democratism.

If socialists interpret the problems of human rights as a matter of the relationship between the individual and society, then they have to see clearly that they are today, as before, at grips with a number of social questions which belong in this sphere of thought. Nor can they evade this in the future either, because socialist progress obliges them to study and solve these problems. Yet the fact that their concept is not sufficiently elaborated to approach and deal with this set of problems indicates certain shortcomings in their activities. Social science exploring reality and creating theory, but maybe also political practice itself has not always paid sufficient attention to the examination of the relationship between the individual and society, to simple questions regarding the structure of individual needs, what are the specific organizational and social relations which open the way to the satisfaction of those needs, and how this harmony

can be promoted by exerting deliberate political influence. In this connection the answer ought to be sought, for instance, in the question why it is that, while the country develops on solid socialist foundations, while the political structure reflects power relations that serve the interests of the whole people and Hungarians live in a society free from exploitation, yet people are often unable to settle their local conflicts and they swallow their everyday worries amidst convulsive pains. By clarifying these questions they can make important theoretical contributions to the consideration of human rights.

Research in Hungary shows that they have completely satisfied one of the fundamental needs, the need for security of existence, for employment; and this is a very great achievement. In their society the most pressing needs are those which concern the material conditions of life. People desire apartments or better apartments, cars and other durable consumer goods. Since this fact is at variance with some of their value judgements, they try to deny or at least to camouflage it, or rather to brand it as an inherited petty-bourgeois phenomenon. Albeit such aspirations imply mostly genuine needs, signs of "conspicuous consumption" can be observed here and there in Hungary as well. But Hungarians have to realize also that human needs concerning the content of labour and its social conditions are becoming more significant (thus participation, democracy). The satisfaction of these needs holds a central place in their policies.

János Kádár, in the Central Committee report to the Eleventh Party Congress, had this to say about the contradictory evolution of public thinking:

"A twofold process has recently taken place: The main tendency is that socialist public spirit has been spreading widely, something that can be clearly seen in the great successes in production, in socialist competition, in 'communist Saturdays,' in the masses' exemplary behaviour at times of natural calamities. At the same time phenomena inconsistent with our socialist principles, with our aims, and with our moral value system revive from time to time. It is important to speak about this, especially in the current situation when, with the increase of material well-being, beside the great social question of 'what to live on' an increasing role is played by the question of 'how to live' as well."

Ideological work can be successful if what one says is in harmony with the knowledge accumulated by everyday and scientific relaization: the content of the ideology has to adapt to the differentiated reality. This requires not merely the validity of the facts in themselves but their presentation in their interconnections, and the development of the tendencies and

processes latent in them. It is a frequent mistake that in analysing the conditions in Hungary socialists leave out of consideration the involvement of social phenomena in historical evolution and their complexity, the permanent need for politically designed and sometimes undesigned social changes: the constantly repeated "specific analysis" of "specific situations", the need to push aside answers that were historically valid in the past but are already obsolete today. It happens often that socialists rigidify their earlier historical truths into unhistorically general ones, and then they are surprised if these do not promote a specific political orientation for our days. Socialists sometimes fail to point out that the formation and satisfaction of human needs are also dependent on the course of this evolution and cannot be qualified according to unhistorical requirements arbitrarily formulated on the basis of different social conditions. The same applies to the way in which they often judge capitalist social conditions and their phenomena.

Evidently in describing capitalist conditions socialists have to point to the facts: for example, that unemployment in the United States has reached 7.5 per cent, that in certain social groups, thus among black people under 20 years it ranges between 30 and 40 per cent, and this phenomenon is related to the increase of criminality and drug addiction. But socialists should not fail to mention that unemployment there has an influence on labour discipline and contributes to the well-being of a part of society, the capitalist class in the first place. Obviously it does not follow from this that unemployment definitely means economic efficiency and vice versa, but the point is that social phenomena under capitalist conditions, but under socialism as well, are very contradictory and cannot be characterized by extreme assessments which divide things into right and wrong, even if they know full well that the principal determining processes of capitalism are antihumanistic.

The key question of the complex of human rights, in my opinion, is how the particular social systems can solve the problem of cooperation between the individual and society, of the accommodation and adaptation of individuals to society. In this respect my starting-point may be the analysis of the nature of power, of the mode of the exercise of power. For this very reason I think that socialist democracy centers on the problem from which the relationship between the individual and society in Hungary can be made clear, for this is what the socialist conception of human rights is built upon. To this end, of course, a concept would be needed which sees the essence of the current developmental stage of socialist democracy in the diverse needs and in the diverse social opportunities for satisfying

those needs. The policy of developing socialist democracy starts from the socio-historical fact that the needs of individuals and groups having different interests must be satisfied at different levels, according to the primacy of the social interest.

Socialist democracy, or rather the reconciliation—with the assistance of the Party—of the needs and of the opportunities for the satisfaction of needs, creates the mechanism through which the actual harmony between the historically evolved needs and conditions comes about, i.e. the demand formulated against socialist society on the pretext of the protection of human rights, "the satisfaction of human needs", is asserted. The development of socialist democracy and the increasingly effective functioning of its institutions also satisfy one of the most basic needs, the need for participation in public life.

From the viewpoint of the satisfaction of this need I wish to speak about two important issues: the interest relations existing in socialism, and the socio-political organizations which express and regulate them, first of all the Party and the state. I think these are the questions which express most particularly the human content about which there is so much discussion in our days.

Clashes and reconciliation of interests

The needs of individuals and groups are organized into interests and are realized as such in socialism too. Unlike societies built upon conditions of exploitation, in socialist society no irreconcilable conflicts arise in the distribution of the goods produced, in the satisfaction of material and intellectual needs. Socialist society, by dint of its foundations, its economic and political construction, humanizes the unavoidable interest relations. This humanization, however, did not and cannot take place without conflicts.

It is clear that at the time of the sharp class struggles for socialism a very idealized picture of the society of the immediate future was fixed in the consciousness of people. Theoretically this idealization could not be accepted, but in the everyday political struggle the masses were mobilized by the faith that the struggle would soon come to a definite end and the society of harmony, order and justice would come within easy reach. Looking back to that period, I have to say today that it was natural in the struggle for power not to speak about the probable contradictions and conflicts of socialist society but to insist on what man would gain by achieving that society.

It was no conscious and deliberate cherishing of illusions but the point was that among people committed to socialism those who had arrived at the rejection of capitalism not in a theoretical way, but through everyday experience, expected more from the great historic change than it could mean in itself; in other words, they had illusory notions about the new social order and the human relations deriving from it.

What seemed understandable and to some degree inevitable at the time of the big change backfired later: it lived on as a harmful illusion. At the time of the voluntaristic distortions of policy (1949–1956) the leaders did not turn against the misbeliefs; what more, they grossly exaggerated the specific, historically limited opportunities. The desire of the leaders for fast and spectacular successes met with the illusions living among part of the masses. This was one cause of the predominance of voluntaristic political practice. Later, with reference to the false dogma about the constant sharpening of the class struggle and to the danger of enemy infiltration everywhere, they took decisions to speed up the building of socialism. thus further strengthening belief in illusions. After the class enemy had suffered a historic defeat, utmost attention ought to have been given to the common interest developing on a new basis, to the subjective interest relations of the working classes and, in case of differing interests, to their reconciliation and integration. Although at that time the external enemy was much to be feared, the balance of forces shifted basically in favour of socialism: therefore the reality of that period not only demanded but would even have required an objective reckoning with the opportunities. The exaggeration of dangers entailed the withering of democratic forums and narrowed down mass support behind the leadership. In effect, this contributed later to the counter-revolutionary onslaught of the class enemy.

The historical antecedents sketchily outlined above also played a role in that there are some who criticize today's practice of socialism from the position of the earlier illusions. There are even some who think that Hungarians retreating and frittering away acquired assets, although they merely deal openly with the inevitable contradictions concealed earlier. Constant dissension is caused by the comparison of the idealized image of socialism living in them with the new society established in the real historical process. They feel that what has been realized is not identical with what they had formerly committed themselves to. In spite of good intentions this nostalgia of those who think in this manner merely gives support to conservative tendencies.

Sometimes, even if it hurts, it is necessary to let the illusions perish and to recognize that the existence of conflicting interests under socialism

is a normal thing, it follows from the interest relations, from the inevitable survival of differing interests.

What then has changed as compared to capitalism? With the liquidation of exploiting classes, with the generalization of social ownership, the basis of anatagonistic conflicts of social dimensions has ceased to exist. This has been the principal aim of the socialist revolution, and this is the greatest achievement of socialism. The power-political relations have helped this achievement and this basis is the basis of socialist institutions. Simultaneously with this transformation of unprecedented dimensions an overall integration has taken place in society.

In judging the clashes of interests under socialism, therefore, one has to start from the fact that the classes whose interests were antagonistically opposed to one another have ceased to exist: the interest of the working class—which itself is the result of complicated interplay of interests—expresses the fundamental and future interests of the whole of society. This is the basis of the elimination of the conflicts affecting the foundations of the whole of society, the basis of the cessation of interest conflicts and the basis of the integration of differences in interest which act in the direction of socialist evolution. It is in the common interest of classes, strata, groups, and individuals to maintain and develop the political consciousness of the integration of interests.

In socialism, too, the fundamental cause of the clashes of interests is to be found in the production of material goods and in their distribution. All other social conflicts—whether they manifest themselves in a clash of opinions or of institutions—spring from this circumstances. In the new system just growing out of capitalism the amount of material and intellectual goods to be distributed among the members of society is still limited, so conflicts can still arise over their distribution. The different groups and individuals, depending on the role they play in social life, can expect to receive their due share of the goods; from this point of view they can challenge the order of distribution. The limited nature of tasks, exclusion from decisions, the mistakes committed in theory and in practice can also lead to conflicts, but these phenomena are likewise related to the relations of production and distribution.

The survival of conflicts under socialism can therefore be ascribed not to man's incorrigible nature or to some mystical cause but to the limitation of available goods or, what is related thereto, to the limited opportunity of participating in decision-making. For this reason conflicts are in themselves neither good nor bad, but are social realities. This is why socialists have broken with the view which considered the semblance of unity of

interests more valuable than genuine unity built upon the dialectic of conflicts of interests and their reconciliation. Thereby socialists can contribute to the achievement of the norm that in socialism the open treatment and suitable regulation of conflicting interests are one of the forces and requirements of social progress.

A favourable consequence of this theoretical and political achievement is that in the solution of conflicts, of clashes of interests, methods suited to the actual stage of social development can be used. This means that in Hungary today, the method that was legitimate and necessary in the period of the struggle for power or the sharp class struggle, the solution by coercion, by authoritative measures of conflicts fomented by the enemy is omitted. The starting-point being that after the socialization of the principal means of production the classes, strata, and social groups in Hungary are, as regards their fundamental interests, oriented towards socialism, but because of their part interests they can be linked up with the social interest only through an intervening medium. Connection with the social interest is mediated by the interest of the working class. This function of the interest of the working class, however, can be realized only with the help of the Marxist-Leninist party.

The humanization of interests

The active role of the Party in the regulation of interest relations and conflicting interests under socialism is needed because, although the economic process is regulated by a mechanism aimed at the appropriate plan targets, yet it cannot be said of this economic process tendencies favourable to socialism will automatically prevail in it without guidance from the political leadership. The predominance of tendencies favourable to socialism can be ensured by a conscious political force relying upon economic laws.

Under the conflicting conditions of group interests the Party can fulfil its integrating function only when, as an organization, rather than getting the upper hand over particular interests it enforces the primacy of the most progressive particular interest. It represents progress on the basis of the differentiated—that is likewise specified—interests of the working class. The social interest is not a kind of *a priori* thing or condition which must merely be recognized and will then be followed faithfully. The social interest is produced, with the drawing force and integrating capacity of the

most progressive part interest, as a result of political struggle and reconciliation. To be integrated, the group interest has to include the social interest. Otherwise the social interest and the policy promoting it do not make sense. It is natural therefore that the Party cannot remain immune to influences emanating from different groups of society; moreover, an important condition of its work is that it should be able to react to these effects. It can react properly however, only if it recognizes the progressive elements in the social processes, in the conflicts; if it does not expect to absorb all currents which, on the pretext of one public interest or another are meant to force upon it a possibly very narrow group interest. As demonstrated by over twenty years of experience, the HSWP is able to avoid these dangers. With a policy allowing for the facts and norms of reality it pays all its attention to fulfilling its interest-integrating function, the guidance of society.

Amidst the increasingly complex social conditions it can solve this task with success if, with a uniform interpretation of the socio-economic aims and of the methods leading to these aims, it maintains and further develops unity of will and action. Only with its ideologico-political unity raised to an ever higher level can it recognize and enforce, beside the hegemony of the social interest, the progressive aspect of conflicts and to push back their retrograde aspect. Hungarian Communists have learned at a high price that the masses, the allies, follow the Party when they know what it wants, when it leaves no doubt as to its principles, aims, and methods. It is only possible to make an alliance with forces that are known to be headed in a certain direction and with those capable of bringing about a unity of interests.

Amidst present socio-political conditions the HSWP, in addition to developing its own organizing abilities, can fulfil its interest-integrating function only if the different group interests can manifest themselves openly and come into conflict with one another. For the clashes of interests to be settled in a manner favourable to social progress, the group interests have to manifest themselves under proper conditions. Much has been done so far to meet this requirement, but still there is some lag. Hungarian socialists might as well say that they are further ahead with their approach to interests than with the development of the organizational framework of interest representation.

The inconsistencies of this representation hinder the higher degree of integration of society. Should the reconciliation of the interests of different social groups not be regulated institutionally, their sense of responsibility would slacken and they might provide ground for attitudes harmful to

society. Such groups could seek solutions to their problems by sidestepping the official institutions of society—with demoralizing effect. In groups which do not feel that society responds to their conflicts, and when and whence they can expect settlement, one often finds people who are able to view the whole world only through the prism of their own situation. Because they conceive their connection with society improperly, they are unable to form a proper judgement on that society. They consider everything according to whether it contributes to improving their situation. If appropriate institutions do not help them to form a proper judgement of the given conflict, if they do not sense the solution, then they can fall under the influence of all sorts of demagogues who, in the unclarified situation, poison the atmosphere. There may be even some who use the lack of regulation for retaining or gaining illegal advantages.

Of course it would be naive and illusory to suppose that a comprehensive system of regulation can be established which would automatically settle all clashes of interests for the good of social progress. What can be done, and it is a great deal, is that by developing institutions optimal conditions be created for the organized assertion of the interests recognized in socialism, and that at the same time everything possible be done in a more active and more purposeful manner than before, to promote the solution of conflicts by reconciling the rightful interests and rejecting what is wrong or unreal. I admit that open, politically conscious possibilities of selection and classification of interests must be enhanced; that is, socialist democracy must be strengthened.

The state and the citizens

The efficiently functioning socialist state is a politico-organizational condition and instrument indispensable today for the integration of the interests expressed by the representative organs in a manner directed by the Party and defined in statutory provisions. Here and now I wish to speak, from the viewpoint of the connection of socialism and humanism, not about the class content of this state, but about the relationship of the socialist state and the citizen.

"All Socialists are agreed that the political state, and with it political authority, will disappear as a result of the coming social revolution, that is that public functions will lose their political character and be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over the interests of society. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the authoritarian political

state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social conditions that gave birth to it have been destroyed." *

I have quoted Engels to prove that the dispute with the anarchists and "left" radicals has been going on for more than a hundred years now about the question of the relationship of the revolutionary proletariat to the state after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. I think the quotation makes the Marxist position clear: the victorious working class maintains the state as an instrument as long as the circumstances warrant. Of course, this declaration does not yet close the matter, because later on the question is whether in today's reality of socialism the conditions warranting the existence of the state have not ceased and whether the functions of the state and the community have really changed into simple administrative functions.

Since the tasks of the socialist state were unusual or even unknown in earlier history, it was very difficult to find appropriate institutions by the aid of which those tasks could be fulfilled. These institutions very often functioned with low efficiency, with bureaucratic distortions, as they do occasionally even today. For this reason, among others, to develop the state is a permanent requirement in socialism. The socialist state is not a necessary evil (only in certain situations does it become distorted); on the contrary, it is the most efficient politico-organizational instrument for the realization of the human and socio-historical aims of socialism.

On account of the conditions it has inherited from capitalism and of its transitory character, socialism still carries contradictions in the solution of which it cannot do without politics and the instrument of politics, the state. Socialism is nearer to the "realm of necessity" than to the "realm of liberty". The material and intellectual goods that can be produced are not yet enough to satisfy the needs. In the economic sphere this contradiction presupposes commodity production, a market, and distribution according to work; in the social sphere the existence of groups of a class character and of a division of labour; in the political sphere the authoritative solution of the interest conflicts for the sake of the whole of society with the priority on the interest of the working class; in the ideological sphere the complex reflection of contradictions.

This complicated structure kept within historically determined limits is the reason why in socialism institutions are needed which can secure the stability, proper orientation and progress of the system.

At the same time, despite all its limitations, socialism is also the first

* Fr. Engels, "On Authority". In: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works* in three vols., Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969. pp. 378–379.

stage of the liberation of man. Therefore the state also becomes, with the help of political democracy, an instrument of man's liberation.

Among the functions of the state, in accordance with the requirements of the system of economic guidance, the regulation of economic processes invariably hold an important place. It is the task of the state to establish —mainly by economic means and by means of economic policy, but if necessary also by administrative means—the economic process of social reproduction with enterprise autonomy in view. It organizes distribution, the conditions of cooperation, the coordination of the sectors of production, on the basis of socialist ownership.

For a long time to come only the state will be able to dispose of and make proper use of the means by which it is possible to recognize and foretell the economic and social effects of the scientific and technological revolution.

The means of the state will continue to be most convenient for the regulation of the relationship between nature and society, for the conscious protection of the human environment. By enlisting the help of science the state can size up and influence demographic conditions, promote the suppression of historical or geographical disadvantages affecting settlements, avert or control natural disasters.

In respect of the ideologico-cultural tasks it will be possible in the foreseeable future mainly by state measures, to organize the appropriate education of the whole of society, to raise the educational level important both for the personality and everyday life of man and for the development of socialist democracy.

In view of the contradictions due to the existence of two world systems the state directs external relations, maintains the necessary armed forces, organizes international economic cooperation, and the international division of labour.

It is not possible for citizens who do not take part in state administration to fulfil administrative functions in society day after day. It is an illusion to believe in such possibility, for most administrative functions call for continuity and organization, and require special qualifications of the leaders. What is not illusory, the democratic political control of administration, the determination of its basic trends by society, is a reason for the implication of the masses in administration worthy of socialism; that is, through the democratic institutions of the state and not through a succession of "administrative" posts.

There is certainly cause for concern that the "seclusion" of administration from those administered may lead to soulless formalism, bureaucratism,

and conservatism in the administrative bodies under socialism as well. This can result in the passivity of the masses, for if the official bodies consider themselves to be assemblies of know-alls and treat the citizens with contempt, one can hardly expect anything else. If the attention of the officials is excessively engrossed in the careful application of unduly detailed regulations, it may happen that they entirely lose sight of the real aim of their work.

Consequently even under socialism the state machinery is pregnant with the danger of certain bureaucratic tendencies. This, however, cannot serve as a basis for attempts to eliminate this indispensable means. With the development of socialist democracy it is possible to fight against that danger, to build up the safeguards against bureaucratism. The fight can be waged on two planes. On the one hand, in the direction of development of democratic institutions of state in which the citizen may become active and, as a subject of the state, and as boss, can follow with attention the working of the state machinery. On the other hand, in the state machinery itself, so as to strengthen in it the characteristic traits of democratic organization: the workers of the machinery should shape the democratism of their own workplace and fight against bureaucratic phenomena. Therefore one of the safeguards of the democratic control of the specialized administrative bodies is the internal democracy of administration itself.

Under socialism the relationship between the individual and society is still basically dependent on the relationship between the citizen and the state. This relationship is realized through the medium of diverse institutions, but it is radically different from what characterized the relationship between the citizen and the state in pre-socialist societies, because working man today, with the help of the various institutions, enters into relations with his own state.

The socialist state and democracy

The development of socialist democracy in state life is connected with the Marxian principle formulated in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme.*

The requirements are not difficult to formulate, but it is difficult to find the convenient ways in which these requirements can be met. It has been stated above that, owing to the present level of the forces of production and because of the requirements of the division of labour, the citizens cannot directly take part in the administration of society day after day, that special professional bodies have to be maintained for this purpose. But this

contradiction can be resolved, since the citizens, when joining organizations and representative institutions, are free to team up in interest groups. Besides, various institutions of direct democracy are available to them though with limited opportunities for the afore-said reasons. (These are the institutions defined in the electoral law, like the house of representatives, meetings of the electorate to nominate candidates, for reporting by members of parliament and of local councils to their constituency, the right of the constituency electorate to recall, etc.)

For historically determined reasons the Marxist-Leninist party plays, among the organizations, an exceptional role in the administration of the socialist state. The citizen exercizes influence on the functioning of the state chiefly in an indirect manner. For him the most effective intervening medium is the Party, an organization which—mainly through the Communists working in state administration—is able to enforce the social interest within the state machinery. In addition to its high degree of consciousness and its ideological unity, the Party possesses the appropriate organizational and political means for the attainment of its aims. The power of the working class and of the labouring masses is realized in the state mostly through the Party. The state can function as a socialist state thanks to party guidance. The entire institutional system of party guidance and socialist democracy prevents the state, as a necessarily detached organization even under socialism, from becoming an alienated agency. The state is subjected to the will and the interests of the working people, of the citizens in the first place through the medium of the Party. This political mechanism which constitutes the surroundings of the state is joined by the social organizations and movements, the trade unions, the Communist Youth League, the Patriotic People's Front, the cooperatives etc., with their functions of interest representation.

Another means available to the citizens is the system of the representative institutions established within the state machinery: the councils as organs of popular representation and the National Assembly. The objective is that, as a consequence of the development of socialist democracy, these institutions of popular representation should fulfil their decision-making and legislative functions with increasing efficiency and their functions of political determination and control over the administrative activities of the state in the spirit of the commission they have received from the citizens.

The democratization of the socialist state according to the intentions of Marxism-Leninism makes it possible for the whole of social life to be democratized and thereby humanized. The development of democracy at the plant is the best evidence that democratization in Hungary is not only

a search for the proper technical means for more efficient administration but it implies the deep-going transformation of human relations.

For this very reason the Party does the right thing when social practice does not judge it to be valuable, or wrong and worthless, on the basis of its consonance with abstract ideals fixed in the minds of some people, but rather on the basis of whether it corresponds to the particular historical, social, and economic realities.

During the past two decades the HSWP has proved in every essential social issue that it is able to take decisions suited to the historical situation, because it has been able to reconcile the daily needs of the masses with the future requirements of social progress. Every important social, economic, political, and cultural undertaking has been achieved in such a way that the living conditions of the working people have not declined considerably and uninterruptedly. Thus the large masses could be convinced by their everyday experience that the great undertakings pointing to the future are not directed against the man of today. This has been and may also in future be one of the most conclusive proofs of the humanizing role of the Party.

This has been possible because the Party followed Lenin's admonition: there cannot be dogmatism where the principal criterion of the doctrine is to correspond to economic laws. This principle is of immense significance not only for economic policy, for the development of productive forces and the production of material goods, but from a more general social point of view, as well. It has taught the Communists to plan and look ahead while remaining within the bounds of possibilities. Following various changes of fortune the Party became a successful and effective guiding force precisely because, in conformity with Marxist-Leninist historicity, it consistently acted relying on the unity of theory and praxis. It undertook to recognize facts as facts even when they contradicted a specific interpretation, because it professes with conviction that in the long run all justice works for socialism.

The policy of the Party promoted the renewal of intellectual life in the country by striving for the hegemony of Marxism rather than making the implementation of Marxism absolute. Namely it realized that in Hungary it is impossible to confine the intellectual currents implying progressive or humanist values to Marxism or to create such an illusion, this is the foremost ideological safeguard of the struggle for the genuine implementation of Marxism. This is how it becomes possible to enter into a political alliance with people whose attitude enables them to carry on the ideologico-theoretical discussion.

As a result of this policy the socialist reorganization of agriculture did

not weaken the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, but rather strengthened it and filled it with confidence. This policy made it possible to integrate strata and different groups on the basis of common interests derived from social conditions of a higher order. This integration finds an expression in socialist national unity. The situation of Hungarian society is not given once and for all but is a structured form of existence which, amidst uncreasing manifestations of the real interest aspirations of the various social groups, the working class, and its Party unite at an ever higher level in the interest of society over and over again.

It is a violation of the interests of the working class, or of the people, if anyone questions the level of integration of Hungarian society and, instead of strengthening its unity, engages in the erection of dividing walls between classes and strata, while leaving out of consideration that the humanist historic mission of the working class is to create a classless society and not to perpetuate class differences.

In the last analysis, of course, humanism means relationship between man and man. If nevertheless the matter at issue here was first of all the rights of man, the relationship between people and organizations, it is primarily because in certain civilizations, both in the advanced capitalist countries and under socialism, human relations are mediated by socially, politically, and legally established organizations. I have meant to make it clear that under capitalism the majority of these organizations, either economic or political, have as an aim to sanction, to confirm the subjection and exploitation of large masses of people.

The forces fighting for liberation, first of all the working classes, create their own political organizations without asking for the consent of the bourgeoisie. In the interest of the free flow of the exploitable labour force necessary for extended reproduction, and in that of the free movement of capital towards larger profits, the bourgeoisie established basic freedoms in accordance with its own interpretation. Under the joint impact of all these incentives the political system of capitalism based on exploitation has been developing and functioning for centuries. These are well-known facts, yet they have to be pointed out here because the discussion is about fundamental issues and socialists are taken to task from a position which cannot be defended if they bring into line against it their own historically vindicated values of a higher order.

In the capitalist countries the parties in power are presented as parties of the people. But those parties watch most vigilantly to see to it that the people do not develop their political will. Partisan oligarchies, alien from the people but always referring to the people, come into existence with a

view, among others, to keeping the people away from the opportunity of any true orientation. The same object is served by a large-scale system of mass communication. They abuse the needs of the people, the masses' desire for security; on this pretext every oligarchy of parties creates security for itself. The people are kept in fear of losing the ground from under their feet if they do not support those in power.

The campaign launched under the pretext of the protection of human rights also bears out that its promoters build upon the political ignorance of the people. They believe that, in inquiring into the question of human rights, the maniupulated masses do not dig down to the roots of the matter, that they fail to investigate the relationship between the individual and society, and content themselves with the political bid of the advanced capitalist countries.

Therefore socialists have to take into account that for the present this kind of capitalism is also part of reality, an active factor the manifestations of which cannot be evaded. They can take over the initiative in all essential matters if their knowledge both of capitalism as it exist and of living socialism is better than in the capitalist camp.

TEN YEARS OF THE HUNGARIAN ECONOMIC REFORM

by

BÉLA CSIKÓS-NAGY

Ten years ago, in 1968, Hungary carried out a large-scale economic reform, since then, instead of giving enterprises direct instructions based upon the central plan the state has been regulating the activity of the enterprises mainly by economic means.

The extremely rich range of means of economic policy includes production and distribution policy, price and income policy, as well as budgetary and monetary policy. Since the state prefers to rely on economic means in the regulation of economic processes, it endeavours to make maximum use of the opportunities provided by the indirect levers, and to issue direct instructions only when and where indirect regulation does not prove effective. This is why Hungarian economic policy attributes particular importance to financial policy, and especially to the financial levers closely linked to economic stimulation.

In the last resort, what is at issue is the activation of the progressive elements which enter into operation in the wake of enterprise autonomy based on interest in profits, and as a result of the assumption of responsibility or the decision taken and the acceptance of risks.

In such a system of economic guidance the degree of conformity to plan is not measured by the extent to which the enterprises obey the various indices laid down in medium-range or annual plans. If the circumstances on which state planning was based change, then it is the divergence from certain indices that may mean a higher degree of conformity to the plan. The essence of regulation relying on economic instruments is precisely flexible adjustment to changing conditions, and this may be realized through the conciliation of the interests of society and of the enterprise.

Flexible adjustment to changing conditions is especially important for the foreign-trade-sensitive Hungarian economy. As the Hungarian economy realizes approximately one half of its national income through the interna-

tional exchange of goods, economic efficiency can only be measured by taking into consideration the competitiveness in the international division of labour. And it is only possible to stand up to international competition through the adequate harmonization and coordination of the decisions made on the macro- and micro levels, and through the development of economic organizational work relying on a broad social foundation.

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From a distance of ten years the economic reform of 1968 can be considered an extremely successful initiative. A great part of the success was due to the careful preparation and to the close cooperation which had been realized in a wide circle comprising party, state, and enterprise officials. But the basis of the success has been primarily the historic process which laid the foundation for the economic reform. In Hungary, even at the beginning of the fifties when regulation based on detailed plan instructions was applied the most rigidly, the principle was asserted that consumer goods could only be manufactured to the extent specified by the delivery contracts made with the commercial enterprises, regardless of the production tasks prescribed by the supervisory organs.

Already in 1957 the Hungarian system of economic guidance budged from its earlier rigidity, and became more practical. After the counter-revolutionary events of 1956 the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party promulgated and realized a new economic policy. In harmony with this policy the state determined new criteria for national economic planning and placed the economy on new foundations. Already at that time Hungarian planners envisioned a model of socialist planned economy in which economic evolution would occur thanks to social initiatives, and in a balanced way.

Discrimination against small commodity-producing agriculture ceased; the compulsory delivery of produce was replaced by free procurement by the state. In the wake of this measure, agriculture entered on the path of progress, and with the dynamic socialist reorganization on a large scale completely new opportunities were opened up for agriculture.

In the state sector of the economy, while maintaining the unity of the planning and regulatory systems, a higher degree of enterprise autonomy evolved. The number of compulsory enterprise plan indices diminished. Uniform central wage rates were abolished. Autonomous enterprise wage regulation was achieved within the limits of the regulation of the basic condition of wages, and the minimum and maximum wage according to

the type of work. The enterprises' interest in profits developed and profit-sharing by the workers and employees was introduced.

The economic reform of 1968 summed up the situation which had evolved, and took future requirements into consideration. In the second half of the sixties the reserves for the extensive development of the economy were being exhausted; the changeover to the intensive stage of development, the more consistent insistance on efficiency became objective necessities.

After 1957 state guidance of agriculture became based on economic levers and the great advantages of this system of guidance over the former one became obvious.

Suprisingly enough, in the new system of regulation the socialist reorganization of agriculture was solved almost "by itself". It was also discovered that in the new situation the production pattern of agriculture was better adjusted to the central state plans than earlier when the plan attempted to regulate the relationship between town and country by administrative measures: the compulsion to sow, the prescription of quantities of produce, compulsory deliveries, and restriction of sales channels. The conclusion was obvious: if in agriculture, which was less organized, regulation relying on economic instruments proved so successful there could be no doubt that it would succeed in state industry, where the advanced institutional system and the high degree of organizational integration made the systematic observation of the economic processes as well as central control and influence through consultations much easier. Here it also had to be taken into consideration that the mechanism of instructions established by the plans placed powerful obstructions in the way of the development of democracy within the plants. Consequently, the economic reform seemed warranted from the aspect of strengthening socialist democracy as well.

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The economic reform of 1968 has repeatedly been criticized in connection with the occurrence of some practical problems. The criticism was especially vigorous in its early years. The dynamism of production was provisionally reduced, the relative weight of rising productivity dropped among the factors of growth, and the overheating of the economy did not diminish in the area of investments. But those who in view of these unfavourable phenomena spoke against the reform disregarded several factors. To point out the most important ones: (1) The economic reform had been adopted in principle in 1965 and as a result of this resolution the economy developed dynamically already prior to 1968, especially in 1967; (2)

Simultaneously with the introduction of the new system of economic guidance there was a change-over from the 48 hour work week to the 44 hour week; (3) The child care allowance was introduced in 1967.

The reduction of the legal work week meant a loss of nearly ten per cent of the work capacity, which could be counter-balanced only gradually through the improvement of productivity. The child care allowance made the difficulties of labour supply most acute, especially in light industry —which employs a lot of female labour—, since many women took advantage of the opportunity to stop working provisionally (for three years).

The analysis covering the years 1967 to 1974 demonstrates clearly the definitely positive changes that resulted from the new system of economic guidance. The annual average growth rate of the economy accelerated perceptibly as compared to the preceding period; labour productivity gradually became the only source of economic growth; the earlier chronic balance of payments problem in relation to the dollar-settlement area ceased; development has been placed on a balanced foundation; reserves of foreign exchange have accumulated; the rise in the standard of living has accelerated; the provisioning of the population has improved considerably; the shortage of goods has diminished, or to be more exact, has been limited to some typical products. This period of economic history may be referred to with justification as the golden age of the Hungarian economy.

The oil price explosion of 1973 caused a rupture in this well-balanced developmental process. The new price relations that evolved on the world market made the structural problem which had already caused some anxiety earlier more acute; from the point of view of the Hungarian economy, the terms of trade deteriorated considerably.

The fundamental and, from the point of view of the Hungarian economy, unfavourable change in the circumstances of the international division of labour made the repeated reappraisal of the system of economic guidance necessary. In the course of such discussions, extreme views are inevitably voiced at times. According to one opinion, a planned economy was sufficient guarantee for a socialist society to protect itself from the effects of unfavourable changes on the world market. This is an obviously absurd assertion, which merely indicates an insufficient familiarity with economic interrelationships. Socialist economic planning enables the state to reflect world market trends in a regulated way, taking the interests of society into consideration. The unfavourable influences may also be delayed. But these influences must be counted with, and must be taken into consideration when making decisions of economic policy.

According to another opinion voiced during the debates, the new system of guidance introduced by the economic reform of 1968 could not be maintained under the conditions that had deteriorated for us on the world market. Hence some felt that it would be necessary to return to the system of state guidance based on centralized compulsory plan indices. It was not too difficult to prove the error of this view. If there are difficulties, and these can only be overcome through a flexible adjustment to the changes in world economy, then a mechanism designed to institutionally abolish the reaction to world economic impulses instead of fostering this reaction is obviously not the solution. The view that prevailed was that the objectives of the fifth Five-Year Plan covering the period 1976–1980 had to be asserted in the spirit of the economic reform of 1968, through the more consistent application of the working hypotheses which had served as its foundation.

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If the state regulates the economic processes not through obligatory plan indices, but by economic means, one has to be careful of course that price adequately fulfils its guiding role in economic decisions. Until 1974, price fulfilled this task satisfactorily. The turning point came about as a result of the acceleration of world inflation. The economic reform of 1968 did not foresee this possibility. Consequently no rational system was available which could be applied as a durable regulator linking foreign trade and domestic prices, under circumstances when relative price stability within the country had to be maintained amidst world inflation. Consequently, there was no other method for the maintenance of relative prices stability than the neutralization of import price rises through subsidies from the state budget. In 1973, 30 per cent of the rate of external inflation, while in 1974 already 70 per cent had to be neutralized. But by so doing the guiding role of price in rational economic decision-making has been extremely weakened, since inflation increases the price level through the changes of the relative prices.

When it was decided that state guidance relying on economic means should remain in force, the elaboration of a new price policy became urgent. This began in 1975. Its essential elements may be summarized as follows:

1 The incorporation of lasting external price trends (changed price relations) into the Hungarian price system, through price adjustments in stages.

2 An active exchange rate policy, the periodic reevaluation of the Hungarian currency *(forint)* in order to make possible the link between domestic

and foreign trade prices through a domestic price level increase which is lower than the rise of world prices.

3 Changing producers' price ratios should be translated into consumer price ratios, and the consumption pattern would be affected accordingly.

This new concept of price policy was not only accepted by the political leadership but its implementation was declared urgent. In this context, important price measures were adopted in 1975 and in 1976. Price increases were accelerated. At the contemporary rate of world inflation, Hungary is able to keep its price mechanism operating through an average annual increase of approximately 3,5 per cent of the consumer price level, yet avoid a return to regulation by central instructions in the system of economic guidance. This has been taken into consideration by the fifth Five-Year Plan covering the period 1976–1980. Nominal income and nominal wages have increased accordingly.

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While at the beginning of the seventies the correctness of the reform measures was sometimes questioned, nowadays one sometimes hears that in practice state guidance left long ago the path indicated by the reform. This assumption reflects a naïveté. There is a very clear difference between the old and the new systems of guidance. In the first case, the state breaks down the entire structure of indices of the national economic plan to the individual enterprises in accordance with the requirements of the institutional system, and the whole mechanism of economic management of the observation of processes and of operative reports is adjusted to this. In the latter case, the state formulates in the system of central plans—relying partly on consultations with the more important enterprises—the processes of a planned evolution of the economy, but without basing the qualification of enterprise work on plan directives.

The criticism that the economic guiding organs apply direct regulators to a greater extent than originally intended or than necessary is already more justified. But this has to be interpreted correctly. What is involved, is not so much retrogression than an absence of the progress expected.

At the start of the new system of management two circumstances had to be taken into consideration. First, that the regulation of the economy in an indirect way presupposes an advanced monetary system, the creation of which is not a question of resolution by the state. In a foreign trade-sensitive economy a high degree of social mobility, a balanced economy, and an export potential are required for such regulation. And Hungary hoped

to achieve these capabilities precisely through the new system of economic guidance. Second, it was clear that the planned regulation of the socialist economy was impossible without recourse to direct means. If the social interest is made concrete by a complex national economic plan, targets are set which cannot be realized merely by means of financial policy. But the planners had believed that non-financial means would be necessary mainly in the process of transforming the macro-structure, in the implementation of this process according to plan.

For the sake of the undisturbed transition to the new system of management direct regulating measures were built into the mechanism to a greater extent than would have been correct in principle. Some of the direct means built into the mechanism were—without their range being circumscribed exactly—described as "brakes," implying that is should be possible to remove these from the mechanism after the period of transition, perhaps by the beginning of the seventies. We have not succeeded in putting this hypothesis into practice. Some old problems proved more stubborn than expected, and more time is required to overcome them than previously supposed. In addition, new problems arose, the solution of which required corrections in the system of management. These corrections, in general, increased the role of the direct means of regulation. Thus, in a peculiar way, the maintenance of the new system of economic guidance was accompanied by the limitation of the principles that serves as its foundation.

The laying of the foundations of the concepts for the sixth Five-Year Plan, covering the period 1981–1985, is now in progress. In this connection questions regarding perfecting the mechanism are again in the forefront.

It is permissible to speak of "perfecting the mechanism," since the principles of the economic reform have proved successful. This was established by the last Congress of the HSWP; yet the elements of the mechanism must be modified or developed in accordance with practical requirements.

A NEW FOREIGN TRADE STRATEGY

by

JÓZSEF BOGNÁR

The changes in the world economy in recent years have made the elaboration of a new strategy in foreign trade timely and necessary. Hungarian experts on economic policy set out from this realization, and the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party adopted on the basis of their preparatory work, at its October 1977 session, comprehensive guidelines of economic policy. The expected consequences of these guidelines can only be compared to the resolution of 1966 which opened the way to the introduction of the new system of economic guidance in 1968. The recent resolution contains the basic principles of a new Hungarian trade strategy which seeks to create the greatest possible harmony between the 'internal' evolution of the Hungarian economy and the consequences of the fundamental changes which have occurred in world economy. The adoption and publication of the guidelines have been followed by the elaboration of a detailed action programme which carefully lays down the tasks of the various economic and planning organs in the realization of this strategy, and of which the transformation of the pattern of production is one of the decisive components. Foreign trade strategy is not equivalent to economic policy—since the latter has numerous other components as well—, but it is undeniable that in today's world economic situation the requirements of economic policy and of the foreign trade nearly coincide in a small economy sensitive to external economic influences. The reason for the present and future priority of trade requirements is precisely that their achievement is a *goal* which is the prerequisite of the achievement of the other economic and social objectives.

It is obvious that the organization or researcher dealing with the involved issues of foreign trade strategy has to answer, today, first of all the question: what is the significance of those world economic changes or tremors

which we have experienced in the past four to five years, and the direct or indirect effects of which are already felt, tolerated, enjoyed, or suffered by every inhabitant of this globe. A new foreign trade strategy represents an answer to this question, and such an answer must be formulated in some way by every national economy and every enterprise of international size, even if the answer be negative; i.e. if the national economy or enterprise in question holds that it does not need to undertake essential changes in its policies.

The latter attitude means that the 'appraising' body or individual does not consider the changes in question sufficiently essential and lasting to count with their consequences in its system of rational actions. This is why cautious people may avoid action but not commitment, because on essential matters the omission of action already amounts to a commitment.

It is clear that the changes in world economy which have been mentioned and have occasioned this train of thought are being considered in different ways in science—including the science of economics—in economic policy, and in business life. There are some who voice reservations concerning the nature, extent, or durability of the changes, and the breadth or intensity of their consequences. These reservations are the products of diverging philosophies. Their origin ranges from the "traditional" views of the labour movement, through yesterday's technical and scientific picture of the world, to entrepreneurial optimism. These reservations originate with the opinion that although the present changes in world economy are essential, their extent is limited and their consequences temporary, hence today's 'swings' will be replaced tomorrow by a more balanced situation. In this sense they consider the present situation 'abnormal,' or at least the most extreme pole of a normal situation, and they are confident that tomorrow a 'more normal' situation will occur, i.e. the amplitude of the swings will be reduced considerably. From this appraisal the representatives of each concept deduce conclusions which correspond to their views: the representatives of the traditional labour movement views are confident that the changes do not substantially affect the socialist economy; those who represent the technical and scientific optimism of yester-year trust that the further acceleration of technical progress will solve the pressing problems even if the present type of economic evolution continues; and the business world places its hopes on the further perfection of its own activities. The representatives of these views do not deny that troubles and difficulties exist: inflation and unemployment in the capitalist world, the slow progress of efficiency in a socialist economy in which this progress would be the principal driving

force of growth, or the extraordinary situation and disturbances in the developing countries, but they nevertheless think that in spite of these problems economic growth will return to its course, and the unequal distribution of goods, income, and knowledge will not result in a catastrophy on a world or regional scale.

Other scholars and researchers, however—among whom some take their inspiration from the natural and others from the social sciences—attempt to understand the phenomena of these world economic changes through a radically different approach, and consequently they arrive at a substantially different appraisal.

Change-over from one period to another

It will perhaps make it easier for the reader to find his way among the different views, if I explain—very briefly in relation to the importance of the issues—why it is necessary to speak, in my view, of a change-over from one period to another in world economy.

The circumstance that world population will increase to six thousand millions by the turn of the century, and will later go up to 12–15 thousand millions—in spite of any birth control—raises the problem how many people, at what standard of living and with what economic organization the earth will be able to support. While in answering this question, the relationship between population and non-renewable natural resources, and the relationship between man and nature must be considered: i.e. generally, the dialectics of the forms of coexistence between man and nature. It is obvious that what was amply sufficient for 1,500 million people (the world population at the beginning of the 20th century) will prove insufficient for 6, 12 or 15 thousand million people. In addition, it has to be taken into consideration that on the globe of today or tomorrow relatively balanced living conditions have to be created, which—by the nature of things—means levelling upwards.

Furthermore, it has to be taken into account that today's methods of economic management and utilization are of a wasteful nature (losses in energy, the well-known phenomenon of the "devouring of metals," throw-away packages, the intentional shortening of the lifespan of goods, fast obsolescence, production and piling up of arms at the time of the technical revolution, etc.), and these cannot be maintained even if the non-renewable resources were available in adequate quantities.

It is also well-known that the present technical and economic conditions

degrade the natural environment to a degree which cannot be permitted. This circumstance is the more dangerous, the larger and the regionally more evenly distributed production gets.

The deterioration of the environmental conditions is hastened by one-sided views concerning the relationship of man and nature derived from the philosophy of the industrial revolution. The unlimited use (in the form of spoiling) of 'free goods' (air and water) did not represent a cost factor, while the hindering of degradation was considered an 'expensive' solution which would ruin the competitiveness of the enterprise.

The above-mentioned objective problems are partly the result of such matters as the dissolution of the traditional colonial economic system, which represents a huge progress in the history of mankind, but radically transforms the economic organizational and interest conditions. To the huge, vertical multinational corporations it was 'all the same' to what phase of the production and distribution process the profit belonged; but the national economies for which the source of energy or an important raw material means the sole or one of the main opportunities, are interested in the high prices of the raw material.

We can see, moreover, that technical progress—especially due to the intertwining of the military and the civilian economies, and to the new biological discoveries—has more and more dangerous variations, and these require international and social relations from which we are still very far removed.

Yet another problem is that interdependence, in the economic sense of the word, is steadily growing, which means that greater attention should be paid to the effect of economic decisions on other economies, yet the actions of the national economies are still built on the principle of 'enlightened self-interest'.

It is in consideration of the consequences of these interrelations and contradictions, affecting the fundamental conditions of human life (and not only the economy) that I think—together with numerous other scholars and researchers—that what is involved today are not cyclical changes or the appearance of existing and familiar factors in a graver form, but a change-over from one period to another in world economy.

In the course of this change-over the circumstances of human economic management change, as does the substance of the system of rational economic management and action.

Of course, one has to continue to act rationally in the economy, but the rationality of the answers to be given to impulses that may be expected in the future must be guaranteed by a new system of action and thought.

By this evaluation I have already hinted at the fact that a substantial part of today's answers are to be considered 'irrational,' or 'narrowly rational' in comparison to the complexity of the socio-economic processes.

Economic indices

Those Hungarian experts who participated in the formulation of the foreign trade strategy, and those bodies responsible for the decisions, by and large accepted the last described concept of the essence of the world economic changes. Obviously a rather involved route leads from the world of long-range forecasts to the world of medium-range, specific economic action. It is clear that specific economic action does not react primarily to certain processes and changes, but to those economic indices which mediate the processes and changes in question. Consequently, action is not taken on the basis of the position of the non-renewable resources in the coming decades, but on the basis of changes in their price, supply, and the position of substitute goods, if any. In addition, action has various domains from the business life (the stock and commodity exchange) to the decision and starting of medium-range investments. It is obvious that it is not possible to play the stock exchange or to purchase in the commodity markets on the basis of the signals and conclusions of long-range forecasts. On the other hand, one must not decide medium-range investments on the basis of today's stock exchange or commodity market situation, because those investment projects will become productive under the market conditions which will prevail four to five years from now.

It is a different question—and both science and governments must deal with this real problem—to what extent the present world of political and economic phenomena and the information systems (indices) make the consideration of long-range aspects possible in the course of specific economic-political action. To a very small extent, I believe, and this may create a dangerous situation in an era when the long-range cosnequences of actions have increasing importance, and the consequences often occur in a sector different from that of the action. It has been suggested, e.g. at the Stockholm meeting of the Club of Rome that several indices be built into the information and interest conditions which would make economic leadership more sensitive to long-range occurrences.

While pondering over this justified demand, it must of course be considered that the indices mentioned are not only instruments of information as to the actual state of the economy but the carriers of specific interests

and counter-interests. If they are changed or complemented, due attention must be paid to the interconnections between the change and the interest relations. To be sure, 'more neutral' indices (more independent of the interest relations) can be thought up, but their effect will be more limited and slower, precisely because of their "freedom from interest."

Changes in the growth model

This is still a story of the future, and consequently the contradiction must be bridged in the economy in such a way that one answers to short-term impulses with a policy which takes medium- and long-term aspects into consideration as well.

This occurred essentially in course of the elaboration of the guidelines concerning the Hungarian foreign trade strategy. The understanding of the expected trends of the change-over from one period to another in the world economy is manifested by the elaboration of a new foreign trade strategy, since in the adaptation to or the diverting of short-term or cyclical phenomena "only" rational decisions and actions of economic policy are needed the components of which are themselves within the range of means of short-term economic phenomena. The actions and instruments which preponderate in the strategy will have noticeable effects only after some years. In this way, the world of phenomena which has occasioned the new foreign trade strategy as a comprehensive action concept, is the resultant of several factors. Among these, we wish to emphasize three.

a) Socialist Hungarian economy has entered the period of intensive development, in which the foreign trade sector becomes the dynamic driving force of economic growth,

b) the short-term economic factors of world economic changes,

c) the long-term social, international, political, and economic factors of world economic changes.

It has to be pointed out that in the formation of economic phenomena and processes, in their consequences, and in the formulation of a pertinent policy the effects of the three factors are intertwined.

The formulation of the new strategy (long-term economic policy) has been made necessary by radical change in trade (costs, efficiency, prices) resulting from the growth and development of Hungarian economy. These radical changes rendered the equilibrium of the economy temporarily unstable, since the earlier equilibrium was based on an earlier appraisal of economic activities of a different nature. The cost of energy and raw materials,

which make up the majority of Hungarian imports, have markedly increased. At the earlier price and value relations the Hungarian imports could be paid for by sufficient exports, although the export structure was not up-to-date; or to be more exact, Hungarian products had penetrated the markets of industrialized capitalist countries with an assortment of goods which only satisfied the demands of the strata of enterprises disposing of medium purchasing power. But at the time of the crisis the growth of the Western economies came to a halt, and consequently the dynamism of their imports slowed down; it was found that part of the Hungarian export goods were crisis sensitive, and due to sales difficulties the competition became extremely acute. Due to this fundamental change in the situation Hungary's balance of payments has been deficitary for several years, which means that economic growth does not rest on a sufficiently firm foundation.

Considering the characteristics of the Hungarian economy (an extreme sensitivity to foreign trade and especially to imports) the equilibrium could not be restored through the reduction of imports. This would have resulted immediately in a considerable decrease in growth, including exports, since these depend largely on the importation of raw materials.

One may well ask whether the "normal rate" of growth must be maintained? (I am thinking of an annual 5 per cent, seeing that since the introduction of the new system of economic guidance in 1968 the Hungarian economy has been growing faster, by 6–6.5 per cent annually.) In order to give a correct answer to this question, a large number of factors, results, and consequences must be appraised.

Among the considerations of a socio-political nature it has to be stressed that every healthy society—including socialist society—has a "natural" dynamism. Since the industrial revolution this natural dynamism has been concentrated in the economy, because some necessary changes are of an economic nature, whereas others require economic means. The capitalist economy—due to its expansive nature (a question which I do not want to dwell on here)—transferred a considerable part of economic dynamism to trade relations (until the era of the "welfare society" this was entirely unequivocal), and consequently the countries with a stronger dynamism colonized the countries with a weaker dynamism.

In the first period of its evolution, the socialist economy concentrated primarily on the internal production and market, which is not only understandable after a social revolution, but was an inevitable trend.

At the normal rate of growth the "natural dynamism" can be maintained, and economic policy may find a way to carry out the necessary changes.

A lower growth rate would have a very negative effect on social stability and would be accompanied by considerable internal dangers and conflicts.

From an international aspect one must also think of the growing interdependence among the various economies. It is common knowledge that the disturbances and conflicts in international economic relations have rapid consequences in international politics too.

Finally, it must be remembered that the great contradiction of the contemporary world exists between the economic needs of mankind and the economic systems and organizations called upon to satisfy them. It is quite obvious that the present world—especially if one includes the third world—would need not less but more goods. This is why every view which wishes to stop or minimalize economic growth is naive and harmful.

It also seems obvious that the bottlenecks (the factors slowing down growth) of an economy that depends considerably on imports (and the Hungarian is such an economy in every respect) can be eliminated or substantially reduced only by increasing or developing foreign trade. The Hungarian economy must strengthen its links with the world market—similarly to the other European socialist countries—because it is only in this way that it can make a higher share of its products 'convertible,' which again is a prerequisite for an increase in imports.

It is obvious that the maintenance of the "normal growth rate" is possible only on the basis of a new growth model and new priorities of economic policy. Not every component of the new "growth model" is as yet known. Even scientific research has limited itself to the communication of some postulates rather than the elaboration of comprehensive concepts and alternatives of economic policy. It is obvious, however, that the new model must be conceived in the spirit of economizing energy and raw materials; i.e. it must reduce the quantity of energy and raw materials needed for the production of one unit of national income. For this reason, the sources of loss must be reduced in mining, production, and utilization through better equipment and more work. It may be assumed that the re-cycling of some raw materials must be carried out. Certain practices must be revised, including the durability of products ("deterioration of quality on account of considerations of economic policy") to throw-away packages, which are on the one hand wasteful, and on the other make society pay for the economic "improvement" achieved (in cost relations or in consumption).

The gradual transformation of the "growth model" is connected with the new situation that has been brought about by the change-over from one period to another in the world economy. Here we referred only to

some characteristics of the new model, which will of course have to be supplemented by numerous other characteristics in order for it to become comprehensive.

Export-oriented, selective development

Among the priorities of economic policy—which are already included directly or indirectly in the guiding principles of the structural change—I should like to emphasize two: the increased role of trade factors, and the consistent implementation of a policy of selective development.

In the past decade the foreign trade sector had become a growth-promoting factor in the Hungarian economy. In practice this trend asserted itself more rapidly and conspicuously in imports than in exports. The importation of technical goods (primarily of production equipment) promoted the development of new branches of industry as well as the renewal of traditional branches, and through its cross effects it also speeded up the technical development of related branches that functioned as their supplier or customer. The sector of consumption was also affected positively, and the role of external effects in the creation of more up-to-date ways of living and habits which evolved in the past decade and a half, must not be underestimated. Finally, Hungary's more active participation in international financial operations, and the raising of credits (which is also a variation of imports) have also contributed to the acceleration of growth.

On the other hand, today and in the future the role of exports in the promotion of growth and in the organization of the economy becomes ever more important. It is not only a matter of exports permitting more imports but also that they establish new links in the division of work both abroad and domestically. It is through production for export that those branches become selected which ensure the dynamic renewal and modernization of the domestic economic structure. It is through the organizational strength of exports that the organizational forms of the economy are transformed (e.g. the complex-vertical organizational forms become more important), as well as the methods of cooperation between the various branches and factories (the division of tasks, responsibility, and profits), and the terms of interest. For the fulfilment of these complex tasks, more highly qualified specialists, more thorough market research and better salesmanship are necessary, which would of course react on the domestic economy and elicit performances which could not have been realized otherwise.

The first question concerning developmental policy is always the criteria of selection. In the resolution, the requirements of the policy of selection

and of the new foreign trade strategy appear together and linked to each other. Consequently, it is a matter of an export-oriented selective developmental policy, which means that out of the various economic activities which potentially compete against each other, support and stimulation is given primarily to those which provide the best result from the foreign trade aspect. The selective developmental policy, however, not only increases exports, but imports too, which means that those outdated and unprofitable economic activities which can be replaced by advantageous import and cooperation structures must be halted. In the case of a selective developmental policy—especially in a small country—it is necessary to break with the finished product orientation, especially its "mystified" varieties. At present Hungary produces an unjustifiably large number of different products (finished products) along with a servicing capacity which is average or substantially weaker than average. A substantial change would already result if the factories producing outdated products, or products which are difficult to sell or are unprofitable, would change over to serving more dynamic branches the products of which are exportable.

This short sketch of the substance and feasibility of the selective developmental policy should make it obvious that the resolution, or the organizations responsible for the resolution, do not think in technostructures. Obviously, in every national economy and at every point of time the economic activities have a certain structure.

These structures may be summed up and compared to the structures of other countries. It goes without saying that every national economy endeavours to achieve a developed, modern structure, but—apart from politically acute situations—one of the decisive conditions for an advantageous structure is the favourable saleability of products on the world market.

It must also be taken into consideration that in the case of accelerated technical progress, a rapid introduction of new products and a flexible transfer of the emphasis—especially if we consider also the possibility of dramatic turns in international politics and the rapid shift in the economic balance of power—the ability to change radically and efficiently (on the level of factory and society) is much more important than the structure itself, since the latter is on the one hand static, and on the other, its advantageous or less advantageous nature is a function of economic changes. (The 1st factor is often disregarded by the technocrats.)

There isn't much profit in a relatively developed structure the products of which cannot sell, or can sell only at depressed prices, eventually at the cost of huge subsidies.

Economic levers

The guidelines also enumerate in detail the system of economic levers of an export-oriented, selective developmental policy.

The range of levers is extremely wide but conforms in every respect to the system of economic guidance introduced in 1968, placing greater emphasis on the foreign trade factors or impulses. The system of guidance relies on the regulation of economic questions by economic means, and this characteristic can only be strengthened in a period when it becomes even more necessary and useful to adapt the consequences of the commodity-money and market conditions. Our system of guidance relies on the concept that the economic instruments are the most important, but naturally not the exclusive means of economic guidance. It must be taken into consideration that economic activity is social and that the changes achieved through various economic means have an intense socio-political effect. They influence socio-political stability and equilibrium, as well as public opinion regarding the regime or system in power. In this context, the effect and consequences provoked by some of the economic factors cannot always be tolerated within the given social system. It should also be considered that the classical economic means no longer provide a model of economic growth, a rational need since the change over from one period to the other in the world economy. In general, the classical economic means indicate sensitively enough the events taking place at short or medium range, but are—as already mentioned—insensitive to the long-term needs and requirements.

By these comments and reservations I meant to refer primarily to the fact that in the guidance of the economy, means other than economic must also be applied; for instance, economic organization, since in Hungary it is believed that vertical units or associations (based on the sequence of processes) represent a more advanced and efficient framework of cooperation than the horizontal forms which have been (without justification) more frequent in Hungary. The training of more qualified cadres, a broader knowledge of external markets and of the national economic policies, bringing production closer to the market, the correct choice of emphases in economic policy, and similar factors also belong to the development of the system of guidance.

To prevent misunderstandings, I should point out that in speaking of a certain imperfection of the economic instruments I always refer *to requirements* and never to another system of guidance, e.g. to instructions. It is undebatable that economic instruments express numerous essential inter-

connections (e.g. the long-term ones) but imperfectly, but it is also clear that direct instructions are good only for a single posited case and a single posited situation without giving the person responsible an opportunity to carry out an intelligent modification in case he does not meet with the posited situation.

The socialist economic model

In this context, we may consider the new foreign trade strategy basically the counterpart in economic policy to the new system of guidance introduced in 1968. In 1966, in course of the preparation of the reform, interesting debates occurred on the relationship between the system of guidance and economic policy. Some of the economists emphasized that parallel to the elaboration of the system of guidance the elaboration of a new economic policy was also necessary. Others hoped that the new system of guidance would lay bare new interconnections, the perfection of which would make the formulation of a new concept of economic policy easier. Later, regardless of the outcome of the debate, and due to 'tactical considerations' it was decided that it was more useful to concentrate on one question at a time, viz. the reform of the system of guidance. Otherwise the range of the opponents of the reform might have become wider, and the camp of the supporters may have become divided, neither of which was desirable. But nowadays, the situation resulting from the change-over from one period to the other in world economy has made the elaboration of a new economic policy mandatory. This new economic policy, on the one hand is closely coordinated with the system of guidance, and on the other, makes its further development necessary. In 1968 reference was often made to the fact that the reform was not only, nor even primarily, a single interconnected measure, but the product of a new way of thinking which would also exercise an influence after the introduction of the reform and would mobilize for its perfection. Consequently, the new foreign trade strategy is not only the counterpart to the system of guidance, but also a new and long-term effective force which necessitates the development of the system of guidance.

In the introduction I have already pointed out that the new economic strategy represents at the same time an attempt to fit the foreign trade factor into the operation of the socialist economy in accordance with the new internal and external requirements. This is also necessary because some of the driving forces of the socialist economy—e.g. the labour surplus—have already been exhausted, and other driving forces are available only to

a limited extent since the change-over from one period to the other in world economy (e.g. investments, since they have become more costly on the one hand, and on the other, price equalization has to be carried out with a considerable portion of the available financial means).

But the Hungarian economy is only the economy of a single European socialist country; the question is why does one speak of "the" socialist economy in general? Because I believe that this process (the fitting of the foreign trade factor into socialist economy in a new way) will occur sooner or later in every European socialist (CMEA) country.

The reader may be justified in asking on what basis I claim that the fitting of the foreign trade relations into economic policy in a new way will sooner or later occur in every European socialist or CMEA country? I am of course aware that there are very important differences in the position and socio-political environment of the various economies. It is obvious that a huge economy spanning two continents reacts to the same impulses in a different way than the economy of a small country (even if both are socialist). It is also clear that the world economic changes are rather beneficial to some countries (socialist countries rich in fuels and raw materials), are balanced in respect to other countries, and are again unequivocally unfavourable for others (it is clear that the Hungarian economy belongs to the third category.) But these very essential differences mean "only" that the efficient fitting of the foreign trade relations into the national economy will be realized at different points in time and through the application of different methods. It must also be pointed out that the restriction of the effects of the foreign trade factor is not an inevitably accessory of the socialist economic model, as is, for instance, such a fundamental requirement as the abolition of unemployment. The restriction of the effects of this factor, or its introduction in a form that is not harmful, has occurred in the socialist countries due to similar impulses and in order to meet specific situations. After every social revolution the economic interests and needs of strata oppressed in the past must first be satisfied. Consequently, the domestic market represents the crux of the evolution, which means a departure from the classical principles of the division of labour. But obviously it was not to wait with the satisfaction of the needs mentioned until the branches of industry producing for the domestic market caught up with the international cost level. Second, because there was a blockade, or an embargo, or cold war at the beginning, and in such circumstances economic growth could not depend on external markets. These two circumstances, however, which caused the developmental type of the socialist economy to turn inward, have changed radically. Nowadays

a dynamic foreign trade activity is not an obstacle but a requisite for the satisfaction of internal needs at a higher level. The present international conditions are of course far from ideal, but they make it possible, and even inevitable, that Hungary should rely on external markets to a greater extent in the division of work.

Of course, the decades of isolation have resulted in a structure, and have even caused fossilization, but there is sufficient rationality and mobility in the socialist economies to act in accordance with their own interests.

I believe, it is superfluous to point out that the fitting of the foreign trade factor into the national economy in a new way—in the interest of which the Hungarian economy now undertakes the first resolute steps—is not only in the enlightened self-interest of the socialist countries, but also in the world economic and world political interest. Let us add that peaceful co-existence, international cooperation, and the satisfactory solution of the great tasks of our era—of which I spoke in the first part of this essay—cannot even be imagined any other way.

The fitting of the foreign trade factor into the socialist economy in a new way means approaching the questions of the international division of labour in a new way and on a new basis.

More up-to-date, more efficient, and more active forms of the divisions of labour must be developed within the socialist integration. In this endeavour a greater role must be given, on the one hand, to economic instruments, and on the other, to export orientation, which means that the facts and results of cooperation must also appear on the third market. The cooperation among the socialist enterprises of different countries for such purposes makes it possible for Hungary to undertake greater and more complex tasks in the future, especially in the third world.

A new distribution of wealth is necessary with the third world, and this one of the great postulates of this period. Positive concepts are necessary in this area too, because relations cannot be built in such a way that we first of all seek what not to do—in order to avoid misunderstandings. On such occasions, the reticence may come from noble motives, but only lively relations, which renew themselves, expand, and serve the interests of both parties, bring actual results. In case of an adequate division of work, Hungary must undertake to buy more finished or semi-finished products from the rapidly industrializing countries of the third world; and, in general, Hungary should shift activities. The growing, lively relations offer new opportunities, including various forms of assistance.

A new division of work is also necessary with the industrialized capitalist world, since both parties may receive impulses through trade resulting in

normal economic dynamism, raise the standard of living and promote the development of the third world. This is all the more necessary, since the instability and insecurity of the contemporary world and of the contemporary economy are primarily connected with this question, and may be resolved only through rational and generous progress in the solution of this problem.

A division of work of this nature—which increases the system of interdependence between the states—builds confidence and may assist in the replacement of "the balance of mutual terror" by a more rational security system.

This new system of the division of work—i.e. the fitting of the foreign trade factor into the socialist economy in a new way—should mean the most positive answer to the great challenge of the change-over from one period to the other in the world economy to the present and future generations.

Contemplating the answer which the guidelines on foreign trade strategy imply in the light of the change over from one period to the other, I realize that the effect of the international political or economic action of small countries is necessarily limited; but a small country may also act in a spirit which is in harmony with the rational interests and noble endeavours of mankind.

THE HUNGARIAN CROWN

by

DEZSŐ DERCSÉNYI

Almost thirty-three years after the end of the Second World War the regalia of the kings of Hungary are once again in Budapest. They were not only indispensable for a coronation and symbols of statehood, they are also valuable works of art. A brief survey helps to show what scholarship has achieved so far in clearing up their origins and the alterations they underwent.

The sword and the orb

The regalia date from different periods. The newest are the orb, and the sword which was made in the sixteenth century. A patriarchal cross is placed on the spherical, gild silver body of the orb. The coat of arms suggests the reign of King Caroberto of Anjou (1307–1342). The orb appears on the coronation mantle in the eleventh century and on the royal seals from the second half of the twelfth century onward. The present orb may have been made as a substitute for an earlier lost piece.

The mantle

The oldest item is the coronation mantle, which Saint Stephen (997–1038) donated as a chasuble to the Székesfehérvár cathedral in 1031. The bell-shaped chasuble of scarlet silk is embroidered with silk-yarn intertwined with gold threads. The rich architectural composition around Christ who appears three times represents the Celestial Jerusalem; apostles and prophets enthroned are seen in the architectonic framework, as well as angels, several saints and head and shoulders portraits of living persons

at the hem. Among them are the donors, Queen Gisela and King Stephen wearing a crown, holding the orb, as well as, presumably, Saint Emeric, the son of the royal couple, who died young, leaving King Stephen without an heir apparent. The inscriptions are Leonine verses in Latin. One of them tells distinctly that King Stephen and Queen Gisela had the chasuble made in 1031 and donated it to the Székesfehérvár church of the Blessed Virgin; it thus only became the coronation mantle at a later date.

The iconography, of which the saintly choir and the inscriptions offer unanimous evidence, points to the *Te Deum*. The basic material of the mantle-chasuble is purplish-hued Byzantine scarlet silk interwoven with tiny rosettes. The embroidery technique is Byzantine. The place of origin is defined by the combination of a Western iconography with Byzantine materials and a Byzantine technique. The technique was introduced in the West by Greek nuns, and there is no doubt that the chasuble was made in a convent where there were such nuns. The style and kindred objects suggest Bavaria, perhaps Ratisbon, if this plausible explanation—Queen Gisela herself was a Bavarian princess—were not excluded by the known facts.

King Stephen, whose wife was the sister of the Emperor Henry II, lived at peace with his Western neighbour, the Holy Roman Empire. After the death of King Stephen's German brother-in-law, however, this peace was broken, since Henry's successor, Conrad II, claimed the king of Hungary as his vassal. The attack by the Emperor, in 1030, met with failure. It is hardly questionable that it was in remembrance of this grave political and military situation that the chasuble and the iconography of the *Te Deum* exalting God in gratitude for victory were made—maybe as an offering. But it is also certain that a work of art of such quality is hardly likely to have been produced in Bavaria in such a situation.

Ancient tradition has it that Queen Gisela herself helped embroider the chasuble, allegedly made in a nunnery in the vicinity of Veszprém in Western Hungary. A Greek-language copy of the deed of foundation of this nunnery has also come down to us. In addition we know of still other Greek nunneries in Hungary, e.g. at Somlóvásárhely, likewise in Western Hungary, also founded by King Stephen. These nunneries were perhaps founded to help outfit the Church in Hungary, particularly with fabrics, something for which the king was responsible, thus there existed a basis which permits us to consider the chasuble to have been made on Hungarian soil.

In the second half of the twelfth century the bell-shaped chasuble was cut open in front, destroying thereby part of an embroidery of the portrayal

of Christ. The time of its alteration is rendered probable by the motifs and style of the beadwork clasped collar fitting the neck.

The sceptre

The sceptre is a Hungarian work dating from the twelfth century, at least this is suggested by the gold-wire filigree work of its gilded silver-covered stem. The rock-crystal ball displays the entailed figures of three lions. In contrast to the stem, the ball is an example of Fatimide crystal-cutting, and may well have been part of the family treasury of the House of Árpád for some considerable time.

The Crown

The Crown has undoubtedly had the most chequered fate of the regalia. It was, for many centuries, a most important symbol of Hungarian statehood. A monarch was not recognized as lawful king of Hungary unless crowned with the crown of Saint Stephen. I shall here summarize the most important moments of its history* since the crown as a work of art cannot really be understood without it.

Contemporary sources tell that around the year 1000 King Stephen received from Pope Sylvester II a crown which was later seized by the Holy Roman Emperor Henry III, who in 1044 interfered in Hungarian succession struggles, and then returned the crown to Rome. As late as 1074 its presence was mentioned there.

A speech made between 1165 and 1167 by Michael Anchialus, later Patriarch of Constantinople, refers to the crown as being kept in the coronation church, Székesfehérvár Cathedral. During the Mongol invasion which almost completely devastated Hungary (1241–42) the Crown fell into the hands of Duke Frederick II of Austria, but was returned soon after. In 1304 it was placed upon the head of the heir to the Czech throne, Wenceslas, who was put to flight, taking the crown with him. In 1307 the crown was seized by a Hungarian oligarch who gave it to Caroberto of Anjou only in 1310. On this occasion Caroberto was crowned king of Hungary for the third time. This event clearly indicates that the Hungarians—mainly, of course, the governing class—recognized as king of

* The story is told in greater detail in NHQ 51

Hungary only the man who had been crowned with Saint Stephen's crown at Székesfehérvár. In 1440 the Crown, which was carefully guarded in Visegrád Castle, was stolen and smuggled out of the country by Helene Kottanner, a lady-in-waiting of the queen dowager Elisabeth. Only in 1463 was it retrieved by King Matthias Corvinus from the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III. During the Turkish period in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries, it was kept in Pozsony, then Joseph II had it removed to Vienna, since he was unwilling to let himself be crowned (that is why he was nicknamed the "hatted king"). There the crown was kept from 1784 to 1790 but was taken to Buda immediately after the king's death. After the collapse of the Hungarian cause in 1849 it was hidden for a short time, but soon found, then kept at the Royal Palace in Buda until the autumn of 1944.

This brief survey shows that there was good reason to keep a watchful eye on the crown. Therefore the Hungarian diet, from the end of the fifteenth century on, elected four magnates to be custodians of the crown. They were not accountable to the king. Such care needlessly prevented art historians from closely examining the crown. In 1792 the noted historian József Koller, later Bishop of Pécs, in 1857 the German art historian Franz Bock, and in 1880 four scholars appointed by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences were given the opportunity to examine it. In 1896, during the millennial celebration of the Hungarian Conquest, it was on public display for three days. In 1916, on the occasion of the coronation of the last king of Hungary, Charles IV (the Habsburg Emperor Charles I), two art historians were allowed to examine the crown. In 1928 Otto Falke, the eminent German scholar, was allowed to examine it. In 1938, on the 900th anniversary of Saint Stephen's death, it was again exhibited (the present writer also saw it then), but there was no possibility of making any closer examination. In the autumn of 1944 it was taken to the West, together with the gold reserves of the National Bank of Hungary, and fell into the hands of the U.S. Army at Mattsee, 25 kilometres north of Salzburg. In 1951 the Secretary of State declared it "property of special status" and deposited it at Fort Knox. Thereby this work of art of exceptional artistic and historical value began a new life. It was examined by a number of experts, none of whom were Hungarian. In January 1978, after long negotiations, the coronation jewels were ceremoniously returned.

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MTI, Hungarian Photo Agency

The Hungarian Crown

The Sceptre

The Orb

MTI, Hungarian Photo Agency

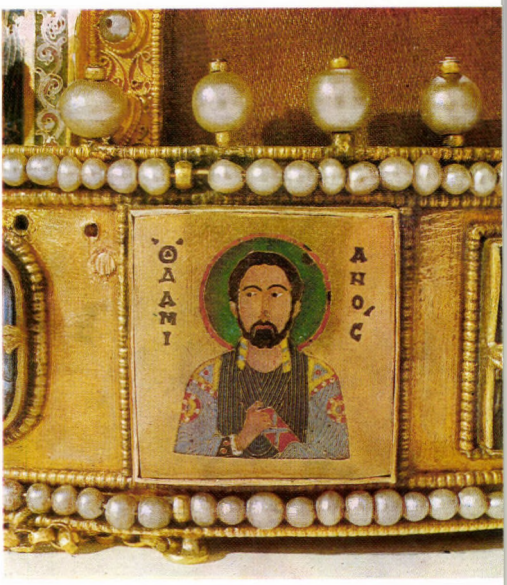
St. Andrew and St. Philip on the lateral band of the Latin (i.e. upper) crown. Gold-enamel

MTI, Hungarian Photo Agency

The Byzantine (i.e. lower) crown: Christ Pantocrator and the Byzantine emperor Michael Ducas. Gold-enamel

The Byzantine (lower) crown:
Constantine Porphyrogenitus; Géza I, King of Hungary; St. George, St. Damian. All gold-enamel

MTI, Hungarian Photo Agenc



It is to be noted that, although the presumption that the crown as a whole could be identical with that sent by Pope Sylvester II was rejected already at the end of the eighteenth century, there are no older similar objects other than the regalia of the Holy Roman Empire. In contrast to the latter, the Royal Crown of Hungary is still today a subject of dispute, and there is no scholarly consensus with regard either to the origin and age of parts of the crown or to the date of its assemblage.

The pre-war Hungarian scholarly view was expressed in 1938, in the light of earlier opinions, combined with his own analysis of the parts, by Tibor Gerevich, an art historian, who had been amongst those allowed to see the Crown in 1916.

He argued that the Crown consists of two parts of different ages. The upper, *corona latina*, made up of four bands bent in a semicircular arch, was made in Rome around the year 1000, so it could be identical with the Sylvester crown. (This was also the view of Otto Falke, with the difference that he thought it to be Milan work.) The *corona greca* was presented to King Géza I of Hungary (1074–1077) by Michael Ducas, the Byzantine emperor. This open circlet was made in the imperial workshop between 1074 and 1077.

As to the joining of the two parts, opinions differ. Those presumed by one or another, with greater or lesser reason, to have been responsible for today's form of the Crown, range all the way from Géza I—who might have been primarily interested in the combination of Saint Stephen's Crown with the gift of the Byzantine emperor—up to Matthias Corvinus (1458–1490). Ödön Polner argued that the Crown retrieved from Frederick III had been altered by King Matthias. The Hungarian scholarly consensus favoured the view that the Latin and Greek crowns had been put together during the reign of Béla III (1172–1190), a position argued by the Byzantinist Gyula Moravcsik.

King Béla III, one of the greatest of the House of Árpád, being the adopted son and heir presumptive of the Emperor Manuel Comnenos, was brought up in Constantinople and was therefore familiar with the customs of the court and the regalia. He may therefore have been interested in creating something like the imperial crown by putting the two crowns together. Such a hypothesis is supported by his known aspirations. After a son was born to Manuel, Béla was forced to resign his rights to the throne, but in the troubles that broke out after the emperor's death he thought there was a chance of obtaining imperial power.

All these theories were fundamentally upset by a thorough examination of the Crown abroad. An American art historian, J. P. Kelleher, who

wrote his doctoral dissertation on the Hungarian Crown, argued that the enamelled plates on the arches of the upper part had originally been straight and had served to decorate some flat object, a book cover perhaps or a reliquary. Together with the bands supporting the plates, they were later bent to close in an arch. In Kelleher's reconstruction the plates portraying the twelve apostles—with the Pantocrator (Christ Enthroned) at the centre—formed the frame of a flat object.

Arnold Boeckler, one of the German specialists who in 1946 examined the Crown, argued similarly, with the essential difference that he supposed that the enamel work of the upper part was Hungarian, from the twelfth century, and he thought the circlet bearing an eleventh century Greek inscription, the *corona graeca*, to be the product of twelfth-century alteration as well. He did not think that the translucent enamelled plates *(pinnae)* were Byzantine work but barbarian, possibly Hungarian, as well.

Magda Bárány-Oberschall—who had seen the crown still in Budapest—in a book published in 1961 argued that the semicircular arches dated from the time of Saint Stephen and had been made in a German workshop in the Emperor Otto's time. She thought the upper part to be most closely related to the crown of the Oswald reliquary of Hildesheim. Later research, however, showed the latter to have been made not around 1000 but a hundred years later.

The chronologically latest publication outside Hungary is a monumental volume by József Deér dealing with the Holy Crown of Hungary, published in Vienna in 1966. Deér, reviewing earlier theories and comparing views acceptable to him with the known facts of Hungarian history, reached the conclusion that the crown in its present form was assembled in haste from older pieces in the royal treasury in time to serve for the coronation of Stephen V in 1270. According to Deér the arches are the work of an early thirteenth-century Hungarian goldsmith. They fit in stylistically with the Hungarian art of the time, particularly as evidenced in stone carving. The *corona graeca* was based on Ducas' gift, which Béla III had altered for his wife, Anne of Antioch. The only parallel of the setting of the gems is on a ring found in the tomb of King Béla III.

The "new" solution imitating Saint Stephen's crown was necessary because, upon the death of Béla IV, Stephen V's father, the young king's sister, Princess Anne, looted the royal treasury and escaped, with other treasures including too crowns, to the court of Ottokar II in Prague. The king of Hungary could recover part of the treasures only after long quarrels, but Stephen V never regained possession of the Crown, which he urgently needed to be recognized as king of Hungary.

The hypothesis surprised the Hungarian scholars. They would certainly not have dared to argue such a demythologizing hypothesis in Hungary in 1966. While admitting the virtues of this monumental publication, they challenged precisely the historical basis of the argument.

The close connection which Deér's keen sight discerned really exists between the setting of Béla III's ring and the gems of the *corona graeca*. The almandine ring with an Arabic inscription (Abd'Allah ibn Mu'hammed, pointing perhaps to the first owner), in whose box some holy relic or poison had been kept, had been enlarged, presumably just for Béla III, whose skeleton shows him to have been a thick-boned man. The ring, therefore, in spite of the rare way of gem-setting, cannot be definitely dated as twelfth-century work, be it Byzantine or Hungarian.

The story of the theft of the Crown likewise met with scepticism. The symbolic character and importance of the crown had evolved by that time. As early as 1256 it was called the "Holy Crown," most probably after the fashion of the "Holy" Roman Empire, but mainly also because it was associated with the person of the first canonized king of Hungary, Saint Stephen. It was not kept in the royal treasury but, as we have seen, for a hundred years already it had been guarded in the coronation church, Székesfehérvár Cathedral, presumably in one of its towers, and it can hardly be supposed that the king of Hungary could have resigned himself to its theft and disappearance, still less that the magnates of the realm, who knew the Crown, would have rested content with the use of a copy at the coronation.

In 1976 a new hypothesis worth considering was put forward by Szabolcs Vajay, a Hungarian who lives in Paris. He argued that the crown given by Pope Sylvester II, which was returned from Rome, never found its way back to Hungary. After 1044, his argument runs, the kings of Hungary were crowned with a crown received from Constantine Monomachos. This was then used until King Salamon of Hungary, who had fled to Pozsony Castle, had it buried in the eleventh century. It was found in dubious circumstances in 1860 and is now in the Hungarian National Museum. Thus King Géza I was crowned with the gift sent by the Emperor Michael Ducas.

Vajay also maintains the view that the enamelled plates of the upper part of the Crown originally decorated some flat object, which came to Hungary with the dowry of Béla III's second wife in 1173. The object itself, together with the *pinnae* and the *pendilia* (pendent chains) were, according to Vajay, produced in a workshop in Outre-Mer. The two parts were put together by King Béla III in 1185, before starting on a campaign to secure the Byzantine throne. He then needed a crown like those worn by the emperor

and the empress. The urgency with which the work was done explains the slipshod assembly.

Another interesting supposition of Vajay's is that the oblique gold cross on top of the crown originates from Saint Stephen's orb, and this is why the crown was held to be Saint Stephen's. It is true, however, that on the coronation mantle Saint Stephen holds an orb showing a Byzantine cross. He was represented in this manner by royal seals up to the end of the thirteenth-century, except that the cross on them had become a patriarchal one, and Hungarian scholars have long presumed that the application of the patriarchal cross (on the orb as well) was of Byzantine origin and dated back to Béla III.

Recent Hungarian research could thus take apart the arguments advanced by different hypotheses, but since the Crown itself was not at home and could not be inspected, a definitive position had to be postponed until the Crown could be examined at home using up-to-date equipment.

Now the Crown is in Budapest, it is open for inspection, and a scientific examination may well have started by the time this appears in print. The following summary starting from the way things look at present has not, of course, been made with the purpose of publishing well-established recent discoveries. On the contrary, it is my purpose, while giving a description of the Crown, to call attention to questions that await clarification.

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To the uninitiated the Crown appears to be small, though the diameter varies between 20.3 cm to 21.6 cm, and its circumference is around 72 cm, which is remarkable for a man's head. As evidenced by photographs made at the last coronation ceremony in 1916, it was too large for Charles of Habsburg, who had a head of normal size. It is likely that originally this gold object weighing a little more than two kilogrammes used to be placed on a round velvet or silk cap. The present gold-woven lining was made for the coronation of Francis Joseph in 1867, and that was when the former, presumably much older, lining was destroyed.

The upper part consisting of semicircular bands, the *corona latina*, was made of finer and thinner gold than the diadem-like circlet sent by Michael Ducas. Two apostles are placed on each of the four bands making altogether eight. They are held together by the enamelled plate showing the Pantocrator, among palm-trees, that is in Paradise. Rising above the plate, and piercing it roughly, is a cylindrical, hollow gold cross terminating in small balls. The shape is unimportant but the way it is placed shows that it was fitted

at a time when the iconography of the Pantocrator was no longer known. The cross became inclined, in consequence of a rough blow, during the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries.

The plates showing the apostles with an inscription in Latin characters were made in an open-work enamel technique, a transition to cloisonné enamel. It was en vogue in the eleventh century. Gerevich identified the style of the apostles as that of eighth-century Irish miniatures. He argues that this style was transmitted by the still extant enormous illuminated manuscript collection of the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino either to its own goldsmith's workshop or one in Rome. Deér, on the other hand, argues that the sharp contours framing the apostles, and even more so the framing ornamentation, point to Hungarian Romanesque stonecarvings being closely related to the style of the twelfth-century carvings in Pécs Cathedral, which later influenced similar work all over the country.

The difficulties are iconographic in the first place. Why was the most important Pantocrator placed on top where it could not be seen even if there were no cross over it. It is difficult to find a reason for the placing of the apostles who are always ranged around Christ or by his side in a certain way with Saint Peter and Saint Paul receiving special emphasis. But the missing four plates cannot be placed in a way which would permit the hierarchical order of apostles to come into evidence. So far it has been impossible to shape them into a satisfactory reconstruction that would fit the present crown. Either in continuation of the existing plates laid on the bands, in a helmet-like manner, or in gaps between the existing plates, would be unsatisfactory. Finally it is incontestable that adjusting the enamelled plates and their joining with the *corona graeca* look like an overhasty job rather than a carefully executed work. The same can be said of the *pinnae*, the translucent enamelled plates fastened to the Greek crown.

All these arguments seem to confirm the position of Kelleher, Deér, and Vajay, that the upper part of the crown was not originally made for a closed crown, but for some flat object, that was bent later. This is primarily a technical problem. Could rigid enamelled plates have been bent? The expert goldsmiths who have examined the crown say yes, but so far there have been no published microchemical or technological analyses of the material to support this view.

The bands bearing the plates are covered with filigree work in which an abundance of gems and pearls are placed. The glitter of these and of the enamel gives the upper part a warm light-green colour effect.

The lower part of the crown looked less problematic. The cloisonné enamel, with Greek inscriptions, facilitates dating. Beside the half-length portrait of Michael Ducas (1071–1078) it features also his son, the co-emperor Constantine, and Géza I of Hungary who reigned from 1074 to 1077. Therefore the origin of the Crown—if Géza received it as king and not prince—must have taken place within the four years of Géza's reign. It is in keeping with Hungarian–Byzantine relations of the time. The defeated emperor, by sending a Crown whose open shape implies submission, made approaches to the victorious king of Hungary who had treated the Byzantine captives in a chivalrous manner. The presentation of the Crown would have solved also the difficulty that by that time Saint Stephen's Crown had been returned to the Pope in Rome from where it had been sent. The Byzantine one was therefore used to crown King Géza.

In addition to the above imperial and royal personages, the open Crown shows cloisonné-enamel head and shoulder images of the Pantocrator, the Archangel Gabriel, Saint Demetrios, Saint George, and Saints Cosmas, and Damian. But, as with the *corona latina*, practically insoluble iconographic problems have come up here as well. First of all, the reappearance of the Pantocrator, now in the axis of the front view of the crown, so as to cover up almost completely the apostle plate running down behind it, furthermore, the two saintly physicians, Cosmas and Damian, always appear together by the emperor's side, but here they stand apart. Finally, the weightiest argument: according to Byzantine etiquette a monarch could not wear his own likeness. To offset this contradiction it was supposed that the Crown was a gift not for the king of Hungary, but for his wife, a member of the Byzantine family Synadene, although this hypothesis does not, of course, explain the irregularities of the iconography.

The circlet bearing the cloisonné-enamelled plates of the *corona graeca* is ornamented with pearls above and below. In front there are translucent greenish-blue cloisonné plates triangular in form and closed in a semi-circular arch (the *pinnae*), with fitted gems at the vertices and with bird's-eye drawings. The empty spaces between the enamelled plates of the circlet are decorated with large-size gems which, as already mentioned, are fixed in their gold-and-pearl frames by a setting reminiscent of a treble claw. The cloisonné plates made of poorer gold and also of a lower quality are from the Zeuxippus imperial workshop in Constantinople. Hanging from four gold chains on either side of the circlet are trefoil-shaped pendant ornaments, the *pendilia*, in keeping with the regulations of the imperial court of Constantinople.

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Let me sum up views on the evolution of the Crown. What must be established first of all is the time of making indicated by this closed crown form.

This crown form was not current at the time of Saint Stephen, the open form seen on the head of King Stephen on the coronation mantle was the usual one. Although the mantle was certainly made in Hungary in 1031, it is, of course, questionable whether King Stephen is represented on it with the crown received from Pope Sylvester II, since there were several crowns in every royal treasury. It is beyond question, however, that the crown shown on the mantle corresponded to contemporaneous crown forms known from miniatures (e.g. the crowns of the Holy Roman Emperor Otto III and King Mesko II of Poland). On the other hand, the present form of the Hungarian Crown follows the example of the crowns of the East Roman and the Holy Roman Empires. Balkan princes had such crowns made for themselves, just as a token of their independence, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. If one imagines the Hungarian Crown without the cross standing in its present place, its oriental character becomes more pronounced.

Uhlirz is closest to the earlier Hungarian viewpoint, according to which the upper part dates from the time of Stephen, the lower being made in the 1070s, the two being fitted together very likely in the reign of Béla III in the twelfth century. Uhlirz published this view in 1951. It differs from the earlier official one as regards the provenance of the craftsmanship. According to Uhlirz the bands originate in Frankish territory on the Rhine, the openwork enamel comes from Limoges or Trèves, while the filigree work and the assemblage was done in Essen. The most important conclusion arrived at by Magda Bárány-Oberschall is that the enamel technique of the apostle plates is a transition between full and recessed cloisonné enamel, which she believes to have taken place around 1100. She also places the craftsmanship of the plates in German territory. It is she who argued first that, if the monarch could not wear his own likeness, then the circlet may have been a woman's crown which Synadene, the Greek wife of King Géza I of Hungary, received from the emperor. According to Kelleher the crown with a Greek inscription and that with a Latin inscription were joined at the time of King Coloman (1095–1116). Boeckler's hypothesis, that the enamelled plates of the semicircular upper part are Hungarian work from the twelfth century, is refuted by the fact that, however developed one may consider Hungarian goldsmithery to have been, written documents and later objects make it unlikely that any work of so rich and fine quality should have been done in the country at the time.

The essence of József Deér's hypothesis, namely that the Crown had been hastily put together from remaining pieces of the royal treasury in the 1270s, has been dealt with in detail above, where I have pointed to criticism by historians. According to him the bands had been intended to be the frame of some flat object and were bent later as arches of the upper part, the Pantocrator plate of the upper crown being made after the Pantocrator of the Ducas crown, in the second half of the twelfth century. The filigree seen there is related to that on the sceptre. The Greek crown, or rather its enamelled plates, may have originally been part of some vessel or some fancy chest, being first used as parts of a crown at the time of Béla III, probably when the crown meant for his wife, Anne of Antioch, was made.

It appears from this brief survey that opinions widely differ regarding the origin and craftsmanship of the Royal Crown of Hungary. This is not surprising. Only Kelleher and Boeckler of the authors discussed above had an opportunity to examine the crown more closely, and as I have pointed out, there are no known material analyses which might help one see more clearly as regards alterations.

The crown has now come back to its rightful owner, the Hungarian nation. Its seclusion, caused by Hungarian laws and practice before the Second World War and by its uncertain legal status later, has now come to an end. One may hope that Hungarian scholars, perhaps with the participation of experts from abroad, will now be able to answer all those questions that could not be answered in the past.

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THE CROWN'S DAY

by

IVÁN BOLDIZSÁR

Friday, January 6th. Epiphany. Mornings belong to the air-waves. I had made up my mind at midnight already to listen to the *Morgenjournal* on *Österreich I* at seven. Would there be advance notice of the return of the Hungarian Crown, would correspondents on the spot phone in reports? Meanwhile I'd turn the knob a fraction to the left, to the West German *Südwestfunk*. Would they even mention the *Stefanskrone?* Then, at eight, I'd move to shortwave and get the 7 a.m. G.M.T. news on the BBC World Service. I did tune in to Vienna already at a quarter to seven. Was the Liszt I heard mere chance, I wondered. Then I felt unexpected anxiety: what if this way I missed what Kossuth Radio Budapest has to say, the station which bore the name of the man who deprived the Habsburgs of the Crown of Hungary. There was something else at the back of my anxiety and now, twenty-four hours later I feel embarrassed to write it down: what if Hungarian Radio gives the Crown less time than those abroad? After all, for close to a lifetime, as one age changed to another, there was not much talk about it. What does the Crown mean to a young man today, and even to one not so young? Not much more than what the papers have published for a few weeks past, really rediscovering what in our time, and that of our fathers was identical with the notion of nation. Now it is being returned to the Hungarian people which is accepting it symbolizing that it was precisely in these crownless thirty years that the people became the nation, that the notion of people, the teeming humanity that inhabited the country, and the political nation, became one and indivisible, as they had never before been in Hungary.

That is how the Crown—the Crown of Saint Stephen and of Saint Ladislas, of Coloman Beauclerk, of Louis the Great and Matthias the Just, but also of the elected but uncrowned king, István Bocskai, Prince of Transylvania, and of Kossuth, who hid it on his flight after the dynasty

was dethroned—became the Crown of the people, becoming a symbol in a new and complete sense.

Back to Radio Kossuth. It certainly wouldn't make my day if the Crown were mentioned only in second or fifth place, perhaps only after Sadat's tight-rope walking, or Carter's travelling negotiations, amongst the home news. What sort of bad habits are these, the dried up annual rings on the tree of my generation, which maintain, or revive, the anxiety that the radio, the press, and television do not give the proper weight and tone to that which interests us most, and is the most important as well? The Morning Chronicle is on, and the arrival home that day of the Crown is not only given pride of place, before everything else, as a news item, there is a worthy commentary on the event and its importance as well.

I only lend one ear to it, literally, the other is trained on Vienna. There it figures third as a news item, and though last amongst the correspondent's reports, the person on the line is none other than Barbara Coudenhove-Kalergi, the daughter of the prophet of the between the wars Pan-Europe Movement. A few years ago she, and her aged father, proposed Otto von Habsburg, of all people, as the chairman of their organization. This morning she approves the return of the Hungarian Crown, exploiting the opportunity to praise current Hungarian policies.

The *Südwestfunk* have a news item on the Crown but the protests of certain Hungarian professional exiles in America are given more prominence than warranted by the result. The BBC too report the event, and comment on it. They refer to the Reuter correspondent in Budapest. "The Crown of Saint Stephen has in the course of the centuries become the mystic symbol of authority." (At times like that I'm always happy I learnt short-hand.) This skill comes in even handier, when, later, a German station cites an AP Special Correspondent. "Prominent Communists and Catholics are both in readiness to welcome back Saint Stephen's 977 years old Crown on its return home, this symbol of national identity whose mere sight has brought tears to the eyes of generations of Hungarians."

That is a fine piece of poetic journalism, that does my ears good, though I don't think that generations of Hungarians have had a chance to see the Crown all that often. And did they shed tears?

A.M.

Mid-morning belongs to the telephone. The very first call makes my spine shiver, poetry always chances on the truth, even if journalism is its starting: M. Cs. is on the line. Is it true that they sent me an invitation

to the Ceremony in Parliament? And if it is, can I go? (She knows that I am at home, confined to an arm-chair, with a leg in plaster, because of a tear in my Achilles tendon.) I'll be there all right, I said, limping in my plaster cast. This sort of thing happens once every 977 years, and I'm not likely to be around next time. There won't be a next time, she said with determination. Then she told me she had already seen the Crown—not the original but a faithful reproduction—some ten years ago, in the Vatican Museum. Not only the Crown as an object, but it's very notion had been absent from her mental make-up until then. Long before she turned Communist, as a secondary school girl, she had already been a committed republican. "But imagine, there in Rome, I stood in front of it, looked at it, and suddenly my eyes were filled with tears."

"Why"?—I asked.

"I don't know. I didn't know at the time either. Perhaps I thought that this band of metal, or rather the original, had touched the forehead of Saint Stephen. The whole history of Hungary had it on its head, or had held it in its hand. Don't laugh at me. I was angry as well. Those who kept back the original threw doubt on the very existence of the Hungarian State. They imagine we don't even exist if we haven't got the Crown. And yet I, carrying a Hungarian passport was precisely in the place from where the Crown was sent. Do you get that?"

I think, I did.

There are people whose tongue relaxes on the phone more than face to face. Answering the person who phoned me I too started to speak of things I had not thought about for decades. I have seen the Crown, not only in 1938 when it was exhibited for a few days on the occasion of the Eucharistic Congress. But I have seen it on King Charles' head, from my aunt's window. King Charles IV coronation procession passed there. I was four at the time, how could I remember? Simply because my mother had often told me the story. I asked why the cross was not straight? Then I asked who the soldiers were who strutted next to the well-mounted king. The Gentlemen of the Crown Guard my mother said. Don't they have to fight? (My father was on active service). My mother and aunt laughed. No, they don't have to go. Then I'll become a Gentleman of the Crown Guard, I declared.

I had hardly replaced the receiver when the phone rang again. It did not stop all morning. Everyone suddenly seemed overcome with a desire to communicate. A schoolmate, we had been in the same class, rang. I don't think we normally talk more than once or twice a year. His affairs have settled now, he gets a decent pension and he often travels abroad as well, but of the past thirty two years he spent the first ten in an internment camp,

in forced domicile, and later in Budapest, stoking a furnace. He only rang because he felt happy. "This Crown business is great", he said. When he heard I'd be present, he was glad, as an old friend. "Please represent me there as well," he asked. I promised I would.

Many journalists I know came from London, Paris, or Vienna. One only wanted to have lunch. Another asked if I was sure everyone in Hungary welcomed President Carter's decision. I did not catch on at first hearing. He repeated and explained. Some of the Hungarians in America had argued in front of the courts that "patriots in Hungary would protest as well, if they only could." I asked him when he had got here. "Two days ago." "And 48 hours were not enough to prove that it was lunacy to say that?" "Of course." But he knew me personally and wanted to hear me say it as well. May he quote me, name and all?

I like to imagine that after all these years I am beginning to get to know the western media. And still there are surprises. At home as well. A friend's daughter, a nurse, who has to get up at five, stayed up till a quarter past eleven last night to watch the arrival of the Crown at Ferihegy Airport in the late-night news on television. It was that late because of Verdi's Otello, recorded for television which for some reason beyond my comprehension could not be interrupted even between acts. I had stayed up as well, with drooping eye-lids.

An unexpected visitor, Csanád Tóth, arrived after ringing shortly before. He had flown in from Washington the day before. The creeping vines of human life indivisibly intertwine on the tree of fate. László Tóth, Csanád's father, was my first editor, back in the early thirties, and I was his son's first boss, in September 1956. I gave him a job, although it was not easy, but it was one way of repaying a small part of the huge debt of gratitude I owed his father, László Tóth had found room in *Nemzeti Újság* for my "sociographies", and for other articles as well which did not in any way harmonize with the line of the paper.* He had to face trumped up charges, was condemned, and died in prison in 1951. His son, in the United States, argued against those who put obstacles in the way of the return of the Crown. He was in Budapest as a not so long appointed high official of the State Department, and as Secretary of State Vance's special interpreter. They needed somebody who would not be guilty of the howlers President Carter's interpreter was guilty of in Warsaw.

I was happy that he came, and that he had made such a success of it, and I was even gladder to hear his views about the Crown and the Old

* Sociographies were written as literature, and report life in the raw especially in country areas. *Nemzeti Újság* was a Catholic middle-class paper.

Country. Then he too surprised me. What did I think, was Gyula Illyés invited to the ceremony in Parliament? And if he was, would he turn up? I could only gape. I was sure of both answers but still I rang Illyés. I chose my words carefully, lest he think I was out of my mind for even asking. Of course he'd be there and, naturally, he was happy to go.

Tóth sighed with relief. He had hoped so himself, like most Hungarians in America, but some had used the name of Gyula Illyés, the great poet, as pirates will a nation's flag, to stir up trouble and befoul the atmosphere.

P.M.

I can't drive with a leg in plaster. Professor Bognár offered to take me in his car. He had been at the airport the night before, they had stood on concrete for forty minutes in the icy wind, but nobody minded. The only members of the American delegation he knew were Albert Szent-Györgyi, the Nobel Laureate, and Zoltán Gombos, the editor of *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*, a paper published in Hungarian in the United States.

A crowd was waiting in Kossuth Lajos tér. They know they could not see the Crown that day. Did the magnetic field of the event attract them? Did they want to see all those taking part as they arrived? There are many young people among them. Bognár got out at the Lion Gate. Lucky they had recently taken down the scaffolding which had concealed the neo-gothic façade for two years, as real gothic cathedrals are often hidden for two hundred. This dissociation of thoughts helps over the moments of waiting. The car took me to gate VI. I could take a lift from there to the Domed Hall. József Somogyi, the sculptor, joined me. He had a heart attack six months before and tried to avoid stairs. "What will it be like?" we asked each other simultaneously. A sort of delaying question. We felt that our good fate had made us the gift of an . . . event—what kind of event? Historical? That word has somehow become debased coinage in recent decades.

The ceremony was due to start at four, a slip attached to the invitation asked that we get there by three thirty. We met László Nagy, the poet, in the corridor, let me add, while correcting proofs: it was the last time I saw him alive, as we reached the Hall, Gábor Garai, the poet, András Kovács, the film director, Sándor Sára, the director-cameraman, and György Györffy, the historian of the age of Saint Stephen, had just got to the top of the wide, red-carpeted main staircase. Endre Illés, the writer-publisher, was getting his breath back in the ante-chamber. Éva Ruttkai, the actress,

was coming up the stairs, talking to Magda Szabó, the novelist and István Vas, the poet. I had imagined that in the half hour waiting period we would arrange ourselves, taking our appointed places, and there we would wait for the Crown and the Regalia to be brought in. It wasn't three thirty yet, and few were around. I startled and had to stop, leaning on my stick. I had caught an unexpected glimpse of the Crown which was there, right at the geometrical centre of the Hall.

I turned aside and waited. I wanted to see it in full awareness. I delayed the moment that would not return. Meanwhile I sensed rather than saw that four rectangles had been carved out of the Hall. The Hungarian guests assembled in a rectangle to the right of the main staircase, marked by a cord. The rectangle on the right was empty, that is where the delegates of the American nation would be. Two more rectangles are on the Danube side, they belong to the press and the mass media. They are crowded already, journalists from home and abroad are literally rubbing shoulders, film and television cameras are lined up. The cameras have begun to click, photographers are climbing on chairs and stools all over the place. "Come on. Let's look at it together." Dezső Keresztury, the poet-scholar is here. The crowd isn't dense in our rectangle yet, it's easy to edge one's way forward. Two meters from the centre point. I raised my head. There it is, in front of me.

How small it is!

I must have said it aloud, for Professor Ligeti answered: "The Domed Hall is large."

He is right. These days past we have often seen the Crown photographed close-up. A newspaper photograph never gets as close to a human head, and the Crown fits that, precisely. Could it have been an optical illusion? Yes. The spatially huge dome, as it were a crown a thousand times over, covers it to suppress it. But could be that the thousand years that radiate from the stuff it's made of, and its history, magnified it in our minds.

It would be good to move close, bend over it, spelling out the Latin and Greek inscriptions, recognizing the pictures, the apostles, Byzantine and Hungarian monarchs and above them Christ Pantocrator. (Better still to touch it, at least with the tips of my fingers. The Pala d'Oro at the back of the main altar in St Mark's in Venice is the contemporary of Saint Stephen's Crown. The gold is the same deep yellow, the golden plates with portraits in enamel are the twins of the figures on the Hungarian Crown. Emeralds, rubies, diamonds, zephyrs, pearls: who'd tell where there are more and which are the bigger. Last time I was there I could not resist the temptation and I touched the Pala d'Oro. It was cold like all

metal, glassy like every precious stone, and still it was good to feel it on my skin. I hope that when our Crown is put on show soon at the National Museum it will be guarded so one can take a close look, but busy-bodying fingers won't be able to touch it.

I must have been looking at it for a minute at least *drei Schritte vom Leib* as they said in the K.u.K. army, from a distance of three paces as befitted its dignity and feudal origin. By then it had lost its smallness. It is as big as it is in the photo-archives of our minds. The gold is a darker yellow than I had imagined and as I remembered it from seeing it back in '38. I now first took it in that there is a sort of bright gold brocade between the crossing bands. That must obviously have had its origin at the 1867 coronation. All the photographs, those in colour as well, show it to be the same colour as the lower circlet and the crossing band. One can see now that it is darker, more bronzelike, as if the golden weave had oxydized.

The poets Gyula Illyés and Ferenc Juhász arrived together, with the author and theatre manager László Gyurkó. We let them through to the corner closest to the Crown. I wonder if Illyés is thinking of what occurred to me when I saw it? That he as well, and a few others of the older ones present had met with the Crown before, or rather the Holy Crown as it was called then, not with the bodily splendour in gold, precious stones and enamel, but with the symbol it was in our youth. Do young people today, I wonder, know that Hungary then was a kingdom without a king, and that sentences were therefore passed "in the name of the Holy Crown"? The Holy Crown was invoked, when Gyula Illyés, György Sárközi, Ferenc Erdei, Géza Féja and Imre Kovács, the editors of the literary monthly *Válasz*, were found guilty in 1938 of besmirching the nation for publishing the proclamation of the March Front. I faced the same charge, aged twenty-six, in a country town court, because of what I had published about those who lived in a shanty-town below the bishop's palace on the hill. That in whose name sentence was passed then rests here in front of us now, on red velvet, in front of the representatives of those in whose name the courts pass sentence now.

The huge lights on the round gallery are switched on. The photographers act like jumping jacks, there is in-fighting around the Crown and the regalia, naturally only at a respectable distance from them. The television cameras are operating too. The more powerful lights are there too because of the changing of the guard. The well-built lads surround the Crown on both sides. Under the more powerful lights the huge jewel as it were rises from its cushion, you can see the darker enamel figures better now, on both the circlet and the crossing bands. This was when I first took notice

of the regalia. Left front the orb, the sceptre behind it, the sword on the right. The sword is the baby brother, four centuries younger. The coronation mantle is spread behind the table on which the Crown and the regalia lie. Much golden embroidery on brocade, that is all one can see. Spread like that it is a four meter segment, like a legendary bird with spread wings.

In all this light I looked up, to the upper galleries, for the very first time. I have often been to Parliament, I have attended celebrations and receptions in this hall, but I had never looked up before. For the first time I saw that statues in colour of the kings were placed right around, starting with Princes Árpád and Géza, the kings only followed. Saint Stephen comes first. I recognize Saint Ladislas by the battle axe with which he struck the rock from which water sprang, and Coloman Beauclerk by his books. Louis the Great is only a guess, but Matthias is already like his surviving portrait. Who else is there? Maria Theresia with her huge heaving bosom; in the postmillenary enthusiasm they even found room for Francis I. Or isn't it him? Who cares, looking at then made me aware that I don't associate the Crown with kings. It was more of an ancient symbol even then, and now that it has got back to its rightful owner, the Hungarian nation, it expresses continuity. Today is the day the Crown of Saint Stephen first found its way to Parliament, and there is nothing contingent about this. This is the necessity of history.

Four o'clock

The lights are switched on at four precisely. Prime Minister György Lázár, Deputy Prime Minister György Aczél, and Chairman of the House Antal Apró appear at the northern crosspassage, while the delegation of the United States, ushered in by Foreign Minister Frigyes Puja enters from the South, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance at the head, Mrs Vance, in a large arctic blue fox hat, at his side, behind them Ambassador and Mrs Kaiser. Of the others I recognise Senator Adlai Stevenson who closely resembles his late father, Professor István Deák from Columbia University behind him, then a tall gentleman in a clerical collar who must be Father Geno Baroni, Undersecretary for Housing and Urban Development, that young man looking like a basket ball player must be Representative Hamilton who has for years made his personal cause what the honour of every American legislator should have demanded: returning the Hungarian Crown to Hungary. Albert Szent-Györgyi, the Nobel Prize laureate follows, a boyish eighty five, more swift on his feet than those who could be his sons and grandsons.

The delegation, one after the other, shake the hands of all those Hungarian whom the Protocol Section had placed in the front row of the rectangle. First Cardinal László Lékai, Archbishop of Esztergom, then Antal Ijjas, Archbishop of Kalocsa and Bishop Cserháti of Pécs. The Protestants followed, Bishops Zoltán Káldy (Lutheran) and Tibor Bartha (Calvinist); then Bishop József Ferenc of the Unitarians and Imre Héber, representing the Hungarian Jews. Gyula Kállai, Chairman of the Patriotic People's Front was next, after him three ministers: Imre Pozsgay, Minister of Culture, Károly Polinszky, Minister of Education, and Dr. Mihály Korom, Minister of Justice. After them Mrs Duschek, Vice President of the Trades Union Council, Professor Szentágothai, the President of the Academy, Gyula Illyés, and there they are in the centre shaking the hands of György Aczél, György Lázár, Mrs Apró and Antal Apró. The Americans take their places and the Hungarian Anthem is struck-up.

I had withdrawn while the handshaking was going on. The plaster on my leg was bothering me, I had to sit down. Attentive hands had placed a chair for me at the southern end of the cross passage. I could see the Crown and the two delegations. The Anthem came over loudspeakers, as played by a Symphony Orchestra. Everyone stood to attention, even the photographers', cameras paused for half a minute. I watched the lips of my compatriots and could see them moving as mine did: "Has this people atoned for its past and things to come." I remembered that Kölcsey had called his poem: "Hymn from the stormy centuries of the Hungarian people." It gives you a sense of wonder to think that this work of the hands of men, this noble piece of jewelry has survived those storms and the centuries. And so has the people.

The American Anthem is a cheerful march, as befits a young nation whose past started when the Hungarian Crown was already eight hundred years old. Never before had the two anthems together filled these halls.

Secretary of State Vance's address was translated faultlessly, and fortunately not sentence by sentence, but with thought following thought by my old trainee-editor. It was nice to start with Colonel Mihály Kovács who had founded George Washington's cavalry. Is there anyone in Hungary who knows his name? His name and renown were returned with the Crown. Cyrus Vance recalled some of the meetings of an old and small nation, and a young and large one. Kossuth's "proud name" naturally comes first. For a moment Attila József is present: Vance evoked his line about the Hungarians who stumbled to America, while actually saying: swept by the tide. There is some circumlocution in the way he described the manner of the Crown's reaching the West, but it would be blasphemous

at this historical moment to mention those who dragged it away from Buda. It does one good to hear President Carter's letter: he is proud to be able to return this priceless treasure to the Hungarian people. The long overdue gesture is given timely accents by the President's representative's reference to the spirit of the Helsinki Final Document and its strengthening to which both nations are basically committed. The act of returning the Crown, he said, expresses the strengthening of the traditional friendship between the two nations.

The implementation of the *act* follows. Cyrus Vance does not hand over the Crown as many had imagined—me included—but does so symbolically, by a handshake, accompanied by Hungaro-American applause.

When Antal Apró starts speaking he is flanked by the Vice-Chairmen of the House: János Péter, Sarolta Raffai and János Inokai, with Foreign Minister Frigyes Puja and János Nagy, a Deputy Foreign Minister, behind him. The greatness of the hour undoubtedly weighs on Apró. His voice is softer and more veiled than Vance's and an attendant moves the microphone closer to him. Vance's had been a good speech, and this is beautiful as well. It is elevated and dignified, reflecting satisfaction and the country's joy, but it shows a sense of proportion, also when looking back to the past. He referred to things said by the head of the delegation bringing the Crown back about the glorious chapters in the history of the Hungarian nation, and the hard tests it underwent, but he only mentioned the recent past, the point in time when the Crown was taken away, with the country in ruins, bleeding from a thousand wounds, mourning six hundred thousand dead. It looked to me as if he turned towards the Crown. He would be right to do so, the Hungarian people had not lost as many in war since the existence of the Crown. The climate of détente whose warmth had brought back the Crown, fills one with the saintly hope that it will never do so again.

The Appeal, that second Hungarian National Anthem, is struck up. The beauty of its rarely heard tune made this thoughtful and eventful moment even more emotional. It would not surprise me if my neighbours noticed that my eyes were brighter than usual, for that is what I see here, and there, as well.

Soft words of command. The commander of the guard orders his soldiers to about-turn. Two on each side got hold of the low table on which the Crown and the regalia are placed, others the table of the mantle, and they take them out into the neighbouring Hunters' Hall, moving with measured, ceremonial steps. As the doors close behind them the words of the Appeal are heard: "This is where you have to live and die."

Many waiters on many trays fetch champagne. Hungarians clink glasses

with Hungarians, with Americans, and with American Hungarians. The rectangles dissolve, the journalists 'attack' the two speakers, the Hungarian Prime Minister, the American Senator, the Cardinal-Archbishop, the American Undersecretary. Human nature, emotionally moved, responds with overflowing good humour.

Evening

At home, on television, I see again what I had lived through as an eye and ear-witness, and if the occasion will excuse the pun, as a crown-witness as well. One of television cameras was in the upper gallery, and oddly enough the Crown did not look small from there, the mantle, however, which I had taken to be a segment, being on eye-level, looked a semi-circle. The speeches were clearer, I could understand every syllable. The idea of time itself changes facing something made by man 977 years ago, now, an hour later, I witnessed what I had participated in.

Night

Professor Bognár sent his car for me once again, we're off back to the Parliament, to a banquet in the Hunter's Hall. Once the Hungarians invited are all gathered together, we line up in the Domed Hall that's what protocol demands, and avait our guests. Every American shakes the hand of every Hungarian, one after the other, like four hours earlier, but now as people who know each other.

Laughing and exclamations of surprise amongst the Americans. They discovered that Albert Szent-Györgyi had got there first, and had joined us, the hosts, instead of being with the guests.

It was my luck to sit next to Secretary of State Vance's secretary. I explained the nature of *barack*, Hungarian apricot brandy, to her. I told her that paprika grew green and only dried red.

I translated the name of the white wine, *Badacsonyi kéknyelű* (blue-stalk) served with grilled goose-liver, and I even tried to tell her what Mount Badacsony was like. Choucroute was easier, first because I couldn't swallow a bite any more, while my neighbour was ready to tackle another cabbage roll, secondly because they gave us Bull's Blood of Eger to go with it, and I found bull's blood easier to translate than blue-stalk. Speaking of Eger I mentioned the siege and the "stars", the defenders.

When we reached the Tokay I mentioned "The vines of Tokaj", a line from the National Anthem, and at her request I translated the Anthem. "And what was that beautiful music, right at the end," she asked. I told her, and translated that too. She emptied her second glass of Tokay and turned to me:

"Let me tell you, a fortnight ago I hardly knew where Hungary was. But this afternoon, when I heard that tune, and saw them take out the Crown real steady, the Crown which we returned, I started to cry. Do you get that?"

I think, I did.

(Translated by Rudolf Fischer)

ISTVÁN KORMOS

POEMS

Translated by Alan Dixon

POOR YORICK

Some time beyond my death
say five hundred and five years
no one will know of me
that I Yorick endured
my skull being cast aside
cross-sectioned with a saw
a worthy gravedigger
will designate it cup
martins will sip from its brim

Alas my friends
you won't be around yourselves

My tongue which long ago
sang in Hungarian
orphaned descendants know
can't even call a dog
that tongue of mine is dust
my heart a handful of earth
for everything which lives
rots at a dither

To grandma I would chatter
I ran barefoot across
the stubble's needled sea
my feet drumsticks of bone
my clumsy finger fumbled
alarmed over the print

unravelling the Old
and the New Testament
I had to kneel in a corner
to drag big pails about
my collarbone a yoke
strontium in my knee

I played at chess with you
guffawed so much with you
when sitting down with you
I could not be with you
at 8 Báthory Street
knocked up my guillotine
but nevertheless I reached
Atlantic shores on foot

Kormos the surname which
my mother handed down
István a martyr's name
I gained at christening
since then I have been called
Pistika Piska Pista
the last a horse's name
as long as there were horses
Cicelle Cormieux
plain Yorick in the end
that is to say poor Yorick

THE WOLF-HUNT

siberia was where you said you'd go to hunt the wolf
up to the arctic latitudes where wolves roam in their packs
straight to the middle with your gun! you'd topple three!
their blood spatters the snow! and you would suck snow-blood!
you stretch the skin of the wolf by the side of my bed
because my step is cold on stone and I snuffle and sneeze
you cut its flesh with an indian knife for eagles to eat
for busterkeaton you will keep a bunch of claws

you sat beside a table next to draw an aeroplane
like two boeings two seagulls flew in your green sky
and when your little chair tumbled you gazed at distances
you pushed away your mother's hand which held a sponge
you dreamed your boots were pursuing a wolf across the snow
your bounding boots made footprints resembling snow-birds' prints

YELLOW RAIN

Knots of the grey sky-net are shredded by
crane-calls, through reek of decomposing trout
rot-stinks attack the eyes which are gazing from
the threshold of a modest peasant hut;
wind tangles into straps the witchweed stalks
to catch at ankles; throaty bagpipes drone;
distended clouds fling down their yellow drops
over the drooping maize, pumpkins lie split
helpless by strokes, and stuck into a molehill
I see the stem of a discarded pipe,
a shred of ribbon from a child's blue cap,
a tin which held American shrimp-paste
stamped into furrows by oblivious heels;
like Nazarenes they seem to turn the cheek;
French soil, I think, with Ronsard's window facing,
cold on my nape a yellow drop falls, spattering;
the death of grass and other foolish matters
are sickening to me; I kick some lumps of earth
into the river, Indre or Cher, I don't know which,
because this NOW is surely a dream and I
shall never waking set my foot on the banks
of Cher or Indre, in the dark my hands
direct a glass of water to my mouth,
through holes in the dream Eva, Cécile escape.

THE WANDERINGS OF N. N.

I sit or stand in a Viking boat,
more often than not I'm by myself,
seals, porpoises and flying fish
are magnetised to my wake and surf.

My sail, it is my tightened shirt
flap-flapping at the wind's behest;
salt from the water becomes my star
and blossoms on my birthmarked chest.

I must say this: to flying fish,
seals, porpoises, the mind was home;
that's not to mention my Viking boat
which rolled in non-existent foam.

And how it rolled! The spars and planks
wailed like a desolated child;
as my bared feet were ankle-deep
the ice-wolf and the snow-dog howled.

From some blue island I could hear
the music of a wedding feast
which made me think there would be girls
to whom I'd go to quench my thirst.

A swaying forest of naked limbs
against the lids of my closed eyes
led me to crave on neck and brow
for crossed and agitated thighs.

Their laps had wells where I could drink;
that kind of nonsense I believed.
Why had I such a rabid thirst
oh my good God!

We had no wedding music where
they buried grandma without a priest;
the paint dried on the coffin of
Mária Ujj, deceased.

THE PROVIDER

(Short story)

by

ENDRE VÉSZI

1

On this ice-etched morning, the tramway clattering like scrap-iron, raced along Erzsébet királyné útja between houses that looked numbed and provincial; and this running and rushing seemed as though it were trying to overtake a constantly receding destination. Brownish-grey juice melted from the boots collected on the boarded floor of the ancient car. Two men, aged about forty and fifty, sat beside one another on one of the benches although the car was practically empty, and there was plenty of room. Perhaps they sought defence against the cold. The older, cloth-capped, wizened, bitter features, held a briefcase with straps in his lap. The other, chubby-cheeked, vernal blue eyed; the early morning frost had ignited glowing blotches in his transparent complexion. An elegant green fur felt hat, with a copper pine-cone in its braiding, covered his round crew-cut head. With a bit of imagination you could hear the sound of the hunting horn, the baying of hounds, straining at the leash, the din echoing among the tall trees. The cloth-capped chap imagined all this but smiled inwardly because he tended to be of an ironical turn of mind.

The chubby-cheeked one, on the brink of an imaginary hunt, talked incessantly in his elation, he stuffed his neighbour with words. From time to time, he beat the floor with his weathered double-stitched ancient skiing boots. The one with the wizened face watched from under the flap of his cloth-cap, with a controlling glint in his murky grey eyes, but said nothing. Clichés poured about the approaching Christmas, about the hidden presents, the twin girls who would be 15 on New Year's Eve, but mainly about his wife who was a very clever woman, yet perhaps precisely because of this, her constitution and nervous system were sensitive to an extreme. She had to be treated, he said with a mixture of anguish and pride, as though she were a china doll. "In fact, I could call myself a happy man..." he re-

peated several times. Later, as one who had taken his companion into his most intimate confidence, he lowered his voice and leaning toward his neighbour's wrinkled grey ear whispered: "This is really between you and me, she's a little frigid in bed and I on the other hand..." he trailed off, sniggering lasciviously to demonstrate his sensuality, which suited the owner of a green fur felt hat. The subject of his occupation came up. How could it have been avoided? He was a meter-reader for the public dues office and he had been provided with wonderful arch-supports for his shoes since he had to hoof it a lot and trudge through deep mud. He tried to express the special features of his job with a few choice words. And he returned to the subject of his wife. He said he worried about her, but constantly. Her early death from leukemia had been predicted and then what would become of him and the twins?

A splendid idea crossed the mind of the wizened faced passenger—he would get off at the next stop and free himself from this fellow with the Tyrolean hat; he would escape this head-tormenting flow of nonsense. But all of a sudden his travelling companion leaned in front of him, wanting to tell him something face to face. His face suddenly took on a queer look, the patchy redness vanished from the skin, and the fleshy face turned ashen. The petulant lips opened and in that freezing tram the low flat forehead became icy white. In an agony, he reached into his winter coat and with spasmodic movements pulled out a fob watch. "For my wife," he began, but could not finish because he fell from the bench. The Tyrolean hat with the pressed copper pine-cone in the band rolled away on the muddy slats. The man with the cloth-cap reached after his neighbour and touched a large strange mass, a mass much heavier than he which he was incapable of moving. He had to step over him to stop the tram.

At Miskolci utca, they lifted the body off the car. There was still some life in it though the pistons faltered. A passer-by tried to force some brandy from a hip flask between the man's teeth but the liquor trickled down the bluish, childishly fleshy chin. The doctor, as the phrase goes, could only establish that the man had died. They took down the name of the man with the wizened face as he had been the last to speak with the deceased and had been his silent confessor, the unintentional witness to his death. He was hurrying home, his body tormented, from night shift. The whole procedure had wasted a lot of time.

Antal Augustus worked in the non-ferrous metals foundry of a service parts works on the Váci út, in the northern industrial area of Budapest. He was a quiet man who kept himself to himself.

He lived with his elderly sister-in-law in a oneroom and alcove flat in Zugló, ever since his wife, a good twenty years ago, had taken off for parts foreign with a neighbouring tenant, on the very day her husband was due to celebrate his 30th birthday. He had been heart-broken over it, but had been too ashamed to hawk around his pain. It was the sister-in-law who had proclaimed, at the top of her voice, news of the wife's harlotry to all and sundry.

As the raw and open pain eased, he missed only the Sunday dinners. Later, even this feeling of loss faded. Gradually, he came to enjoy not having to answer questions; in fact, he did not have to ask any questions himself. Although the lack of liberty had never bothered him. He began to rejoice in a theoretical freedom, for the opportunity that opened to him was not very new; but rather, the fact of not having to take advantage of it was pleasant.

When he stepped into the small flat permeated with the odour of cinnamon—at the end of the circular gallery on the third floor of a raw-bricked tenement—his sister-in-law, who was employed in an artificial limbs works, on a bakelite press, was no longer at home. She was hurrying, taking trams toward Róbert Károly körút, in the opposite direction, but the mulled wine with cinnamon was waiting for Antal Augustus on the top of the still warm electric hotplate. Later it was he who would heat up the mulled wine, when Nelly, his sister-in-law, came home from her icy trip.

He filled a rose-patterned cup with the hot spiced wine. Then he stood under the shower which was always too hot because it was impossible to regulate. Stiffly starched sheets awaited him. At first, they chafed his skin; by the fourth or fifth day they were softer, but it wasn't until Nelly was ready to change them, that they became really comfortable.

Another time he promptly slipped under the quilt with his creaking bones, but now he sat on the edge of the bed, thinking over the death of the man in the Tyrolean hat. That was the transparent mechanism of human life. Later, behind the curtain of light sleep, he imagined he heard the ticking of a clock which grew louder and louder, the hard metal rods beat on his ear drums then on his heart. He sat up in bed, the ticking stopped. Outside, the afternoon was turning yellow and brown. Suddenly, it came to him, the last movement of the dying man as he reached into his coat and took out his old fob watch which he entrusted to his care. It was that watch which was hammering in his coat pocket. He got up, took his old wrinkled winter coat and brought it into the room. It took him a long time to find the watch, an ancient double-lidded Omega, in the deep pocket that retained

the dank cold of the morning. The fragile hands still showed the time; the minute hand continued to move obstinately. But the ticking, this delicate, silvery music, was perceptible only when he held it near his ear.

He was so engrossed with the watch that he forgot to heat the cinnamon wine; yet, it was time. Nelly, as always, arrived home in an irritated flurry. The distance between the illuminated press and the cinnamon-fragrant warm kitchen was too great. She had her strong and scornful opinion of the early morning incident.

"That sort of thing could only happen to you. Someone sitting exactly next to you should fall off the bench dead. That's just like you."

The foundryman was thinking meanwhile that he had to deliver the watch to the widow as soon as possible. But he couldn't remember the name or the address, he could see only the pasty face turning grey and the Tyrolean hat rolling down the tram.

2

The flat of the deceased was in a house with a double courtyard opposite the great market hall. The wide gates, once designed for four-wheeled carriages, were barricaded by dust bins filled with ashes. Stinging icy sleet was falling. Antal Augustus, having finished his night shift, walked up the spiral red-marble stairs that had hollows worn into them. A small round spy-hole opened in the great double doors, its copper socket resembled that of an inquisitive eye.

"Are you from the trade union?" a woman asked in a full, pleasant, slightly husky voice. "Then what do you want?" came the new but now anxious question.

It was difficult to speak through the door. He was exhausted and impatient. He was tired having had to track the dead man's address.

"I brought back his watch," he said, unable to think of a more intelligent explanation. The safety lock clicked. He would have stepped in but the woman, massive as a building, blocked the doorstep. However, this rare fatness did not spill over shapelessly. It was the outward form of an enormous living organism which could be called well-proportioned. The pleasant face was a shadowy brown, the eyes were large, the thick black hair, pulled tight and parted in the middle, shone with a warm light. The woman wore a lightly frayed, quilted negligée that had once been sky-blue, and on her feet, which were gracefully tiny in comparison with her body, she wore slippers whose embroidery was faded but which were still well-shaped.

"What do you mean his watch?" she asked only now and backed away a little. She emanated violet-scented soap. Are you from the police? This supposition brought the tragedy close. She breathed quickly.

"God forbid!"

"Why God forbid?" she regained her objectivity and stepped back inside. "The police are responsible. A case of death," she said sternly. She caught sight of the watch in the creased-faced visitor's hand. She clapped her tiny padded hands. "Good Lord, how did you get a hold of this?"

"I was there when your husband passed away."

Transparent tears covered the smooth shiny corners of her eyes.

"Do come in."

They sat down in a spacious room with a high ceiling. The alcove overlooking the spare courtyard was divided off by heavy curtains. The once yellow walls were overlayed with the grey coating of time. Everything here sagged, was dark brown, and ancient. On the chairs and stools in front of the window were green plants, an ineradicable jungle, which made the visitor feel, as a soft dilapidated armchair swallowed him up, that it was constantly spreading towards the inside of the room.

The woman, holding the watch, sat facing him.

"So you were there when the accident... when my husband passed away. What were his last words?" She was suddenly overcome with doubt and disparagement. Did he have any last words at all?

"He spoke of you and the children and said Christmas was getting close."

The woman lifted her enormous bulk from the armchair. She reddened and her bulging brown eyes shone moistly.

"Me and the children?" she stepped up to the visitor. "You see, yesterday was my husband's day off. The question is what was he doing on a tram going toward Zugló? No it's not even a question. He was wearing his green fur felt hat?" Her heavy breasts rose and fell ."He was chasing some skirt. This was his indestructible passion. Chasing after strange women. He made most of them believe he was an agronomist on a state farm and that he was chairman of a shooting association."

She settled back into the soft armchair, became one with it and thus, elemental sobbing shook both her and the chair as one living being. "He chased women, rushed into death with that weak heart of his." She brightened and regained her composure. "Didn't he say anything about where he hid the bank book, the secret savings bank book?"

"He only gave me the watch", said the visitor haltingly, entrapped in the armchair.

This threw the woman into a fever again. She stood up with surprising agility, that huge body on those tiny feet, what an extraordinary feat of statics.

"I'm an unfortunate woman, you understand. Here I am alone with the twins and both have speech defects, because of their father. I have medical proof of that. Now, tell me what are we to do? Please look." She opened the cupboard wide. "This is what he left us." There were a few tins, dripping in a jar, and a piece of bacon growing yellow and rancid. "He simply fell off the bench dead and left us for good. With his Tyrolean hat. That's also typical. He led a double life, I tell you." She approached him with her huge body. "I'm a well-read woman, my mother. . ." Full, guttural sobbing burst out of her breast and filled the room. "Suffice it to say that my mother. . ." She could not continue, she talked of something else. "Early morning, in a tram on his way to Zugló. When I could have got him breakfast in bed! Do you understand? Well yes, the double life. He must have told you that he was an agronomist. . ."

The wizened-faced foundryman, bone-weary from the night shift, knew now that he would never escape. The armchair would absorb and finally digest him.

"No, no," he protested, "he told me that he read meters."

"He read meters!" The woman filled a half glass of water from a pitcher. The water was stale. "I can't drink cold water because of my throat. They predicted my imminent death." Her face brightened again. "He read meters. That's what he told you? Come now." She took a dish of walnuts from the cupboard and began to munch. "He was employed by the justice department. I should say," she pondered a little, "he was a member of the bailiff's staff. Well at first, he was un upholsterer, but here his pay took quite a jump." The expression on her face always announced the emotional impact of the next sentence. "His whores," she said harshly, "he got them to believe that he was some kind of plant-geneticist. Hybrids, something like that. Just look," she pointed to a row of books. "He always had his nose in these. Lysenko and that stuff. Please take a look." Again sobs shook her massive body. "And now, what is going to become of us, please tell me. Unfortunately, I am altogether unable to work. I haven't been out of the house for two years. He fetched our food everyday in dinner pails. Stale food, but still it was food. I can't even stand beside a gas-cooker. Now, please tell me," she came nearer and nearer, her face, that enormous, tear-stained face of a child. "What is to become of us? There's not even a piece of bread in the house. And the twins will be coming home in the afternoon."

"We'll see about that," said the visitor simply. "So you need bread. Anything else?"

The tears trickled off the woman's firm fleshy face, her brown eyes lit up. "At most, let us say, half a kilo... a kilo of apples. Vitamins for the twins," she laughed.

The man pulled on his soaked heavy winter coat and nodded. He was on his way out, the widow followed close behind. "And maybe... if you would be so kind, a dozen eggs, if possible. And if it isn't too much... here in the market, right there as you go in, you can get grilled chicken. Perhaps half a chicken. But if it isn't too big, a whole one. The main thing is that it be well-done. Please write all that down." He heard the soft warm voice behind him in the dank cold of the straicase.

When he stepped out the gate, an exhilarating hope refreshing body and soul ran through him. He had returned the watch, the tram season ticket was in his pocket. Get right away. But he only then noticed that he was holding a big, shabby synthetic shopping net, like a hand that clutched at him, the widow's. He suddenly realized that he had a responsibility. He knew, no matter how much he was looking forward to the cinnamon wine and the freshly made bed, he would not be going home for a long time. Fighting his way across the slushy street through the intermittently moving vehicles, he went to buy the roast chicken and bread.

The bells of a nearby chapel rang noon; the people around there called it the distillery chapel. But he heard it only in his dreams, he tumbled into bed as soon as he got home. He didn't even drink the cinnamon wine which had long grown cold. He didn't even take of his shirt, fatigue swept him away like a whirlpool. As that force dragged him down in spirals, he saw everything that he had lived through since the morning as being under water. He heard the widow's grateful words, "so there is a providence after all," as an echo, and his own words also reverberated off the walls. To the childishly inquisitive question, "your name is very interesting. How do you happen to come by it?", he replied in the dream. He was a foundling, found in August in the city park. The widow, in his dream? in reality? laughed richly and her short fat fingers hung on the dry hand of the foundryman like tendrils.

It was difficult to distinguish dream from reality but his skin told him that magnetic glances crawled on his face. He shook off sleep as if in self-defence and groaning, began to awaken. Two improbably tall, horse-faced little girls stood beside the bed, wearing identical blue coats and blue caps crocheted at home. Their dark blazing eyes expressed a devout almost rapturous encouragement: wake up! wake up! Behind them stood Nelly,

his sister-in-law in her withered quaintness, at once fresh and wizened like winter fruit.

One of the girls, identical with the other, struggled with every word and licked her lower lip; where she broke down, her sister with the very same speech defect began to deliver the message with which they had been entrusted.

"Mother wants you to know... to know... please tomorrow morning... after your shift..."

The other twin helped out.

"...please... a matter of life and death... life and death... immediately!"

Matter of life and death. The faultless enunciation of this difficult phrase was a miracle of remedial training.

"Because if not... because if not..." the first twin, actually the messenger, her face turning grey, entering fully into the spirit of the probable consequence if he did not come, continued even more spasmodically. "Because if not... Mother will drink nicotine."

WILL DRINK NICOTINE.

And already the enormous body, the proportionately constructed body lay there among them gasping for breath. The foundryman sat on the edge of the bed.

"Tell your mother that I'll be there," he said, his speech sounding spare.

The twins, dressed in blue from top to toe, their cotton stockings, even their shoes were blue, left with a loud goodbye.

"What is this woman to you?" asked his sister-in-law with undisguised suspicion.

3

Dazed from drowsiness, he again faced the enormous woman who spoke to him in such a heartfelt voice. She would initiate him into the weighty secrets of her life once and for all. She opened both doors of the cupboard.

"The twins told the truth. Here is the nicotine," she said objectively like a guide. She shut the doors and sat back in the armchair. "I can see into your heart. Here's my hand. I know of whom I ask what I want to ask." The bottle of nicotine was backing her words. She rose out of the armchair and slowly approached. "I would like to ask you to say a few words at the funeral. At the grave side." The dense eyeballs shone again. "As though you were an old friend."

Though in a daze, the foundryman said that next week he would be working the morning shift and that he had never spoken at anyone's.

"Just stay on the night shift, please. You will be needed. Mention family duties. After all, the poor soul breathed his last in your arms. And you've never spoken at a funeral? My dear sir, there's nothing to it. Just praise him. Say only good things about the dead."

The day's shopping was still to be done. The handle of the peeling synthetic net bag clung familiarly close to his palm. The task of the day changed only in that instead of roast chicken he had to fetch rib-roast and instead of mixed pickles and green paprika in vinegar, he had to fetch sour pickles.

Numb, submitting to a force stronger than he, he trudged through the mucky slush. The bread is perhaps not overly fresh, he fretted and by the time he arrived, the widow was waiting for him with an unwieldy package tied up with string.

"His burial clothes have to be taken to him, poor man. Of course, he was wearing his Sunday best," she sighed. "When it happened, he sure must have been chasing some skirt, the poor wretch. The municipal council has to be notified. You will do that for us, won't you?"

He went where he was sent, carrying the package that was coming apart. He walked down the basement of the mortuary, thick pipes and cables above him. Not a soul to be seen anywhere and not a door. The paper package came apart and a faded trouser leg hung out. Finally, after the frightful long walk he came to a door smeared with grey paint. Loud, uproarious laughter could be heard behind it. There was a notice "Please ring!" His anxiety vanished—human voices, laughter. He relaxed, rang the doorbell and opened the door. At his eye level, he saw yellowish stiff soles of feet grappling onto the air, gnarled toes.

"In whose name?" asked a blond, pale young man in whose narrowly opening mouth glinted a gold tooth.

"I brought this for the one with the Tyrolean hat," he muttered, taken by surprise. He just couldn't think of the man's name.

4

The next night, a casting mould full of liquid metal on the running gear tipped over and burned a man to death. He had been Antal's good friend for twenty years, and had once been a witness at his wedding. The body, burnt to a cinder, lay on the light yellow sand like a strange variation of

meta-human possibilities, like a terrifying symbol. The fatal accident happened in the middle of the night shift. Augustus ran from the river of fire which scattered the kind of silver red stars you could see in colour films proclaiming the beauty of work. He witnessed his friend's death; he watched helplessly as he staggered under the tail of the metal comet and his fingers clutched the air convulsively. The sound that burst forth from his throat was a screech that he had never heard before.

The investigation, the scrupulous recording of evidence, took up the rest of the night. The workplace, otherwise full of bright colours and movement, familiar nooks and crannies, had become a location. But as Laci Márton, the worker burnt to death, lay on the sand covered with sacks, Antal Augustus was obsessed by the delusion that the dead man would get up, burst into loud laughter and announce with his own dry sarcastic way that it was all a joke, though it ended with a bigger bang than usual. However, his friend didn't get up from the sand at the appropriate stage of the investigation. The joke promised to be a long one. At that point, Antal Augustus noticed, as pain shot through him, that his left hand was badly injured, not by burning metal, but, running, he had knocked it against a sharp surface. He was too ashamed to have the wound dressed. He wrapped the cut hand in a handkerchief. In his helpless confusion, he stood blinking underneath the lamps in the swathes of cigarette smoke. He closed his eyes, but to no avail. The image of Laci Márton crucified in agony seared into his eyes, into his brain. And now he felt that he had somehow betrayed his friend, he had left him alone. Their paths had parted, they were taking him out, somewhere else. From now on he would be the "never again."

When the questioning was over, he too slipped away and smuggled out his wounded throbbing hand as a *corpus delicti*. He felt like a coward fit only for the ash-can, although he himself knew that there was nothing he could have done. Not even a friend's loyalty, eye-guards, asbestos clothing were a defence against the cascade of burning metal. There should be some kind of a shield of a peculiar alloy, a suit of armour, some miraculous intervention. With his eyes closed, he saw the figure of a man with a helmet and shield, a Greek or Roman a modern man in jeans, in the yellow and blue lights of the metal-pouring hall.

When he got off the tram, sliding his shoes along a glassily tinkling, sparkling icy row of trees, he looked at his left hand which was swollen and a shiny purple. They washed the wound clean in the district doctor's surgery, dressed it, and certified him sick. A kind of quiet satisfaction began to murmur within him; finally he would be free of the widow of the

man in the Tyrolean hat. He was physically entitled to it. He wouldn't have to take care of the complicated and petty matters the dead man had left behind. As he walked up the stairs between the high walls of the staircase, he cherished the hope that now he could close the door and fall into oblivion or rather into the colourful chaos of sleep like one who tastes the delights of *temporary death*. But Nelly, his sister-in-law, was waiting for him. It was as if she were on call, he thought listlessly.

"I heard what happened on the wireless." The withered apple face glowed, the withered apple breasts heaved. "Oh my God!" she threw up her finely lined, pink hands. "You too! What happened to your hand."

"Keep your shirt on, Nelly. Nichevo. I'm all right, but Laci Márton is finished! Do you remember him?" He stiffly turned down the cinnamon wine, the breakfast brought on a tray. "Just go to work. I'll take care of everything myself." Then, more roughly than gratefully, in his suit with the wide stripes and the colour of coffee grounds which serves as his Sunday best, just managing to kick off his yellow shoes, he threw himself into bed and pulled the quilt over his head.

"But my dear brother-in-law," cried Nelly in amazement, "you're not completely yourself, my dear brother-in-law." The man set up in the bed and yelled something which was not even intended to be a reply but rather a complaint, a sobbing.

"Don't you understand, Laci Márton is no more. That stinking bronze gobbled him up as Dózsa was by it's kind."

"Here's a tranquillizer," cried the old woman helplessly, because that was all she was now, a helpless old woman.

After an incalculable period of time, inner and outer time had flowed together and become mixed up, his skin again signalled the spidery glances that crawled on his face. An icy nervousness woke him and with the anger of one caught red-handed, raised his head from the bed. The lamps were burning and the muddy-coloured night stuck thickly to the window panes. The day had gone by. How many days? He could hear voices whispering in the room, sighing and as if someone were panting. "At last, at last,"

Although the party concerned smelled a rat, he looked around curiously, suspecting the presence of someone *undesirable*, someone who had taken advantage of his helplessness had come into the room, someone he had not let in. But at the same time, he accused himself of bad faith, no, no, this was impossible. And yet, close by his bed stood the widow of the dead member of the executioner's staff. And standing on either side of her were the twins with the blazing eyes—all three dressed in blue from top to toe.

And somewhere behind them with her sweet winter fruit face was his sister-in-law.

"Our dear benefactor," the widow began to speak in an emotional deep voice like the sound of an organ, a voice which could be produced only by such a monumental body. "We heard the news on the wireless and rushed right over!"

One of the twins with the speech defect interrupted with surprisingly flawless articulation.

"Mother couldn't fit in the taxi!"

The other tittered with her mouth closed tight.

"Here's an orange, refresh yourself," the widow took out a Cuban orange from a loudly rustling paper bag and fell to peeling it with her nimble fleshy fingers. Now it would come, the gushing, the self-praise, see: the worry that induced her to get out. But no... "Nothing has changed. Everything is so dirty in winter, isn't it? And people in this sludge! Please take it." She held out sections of the orange sweetly, familiarly.

"I don't like oranges," protested Antal Augustus disagreeably. "I'd rather have wine and soda, Nelly."

The enormous woman sat on the edge of the bed, the balance changed dangerously.

"But it is so good at these times," the widow said gently.

"There's no soda at home." His sister-in-law caught her brother-in-law's nervousness; besides she was afraid the bed would collapse under the extraordinary load.

"Run and get some soda, give them some bottles, my dear," commanded the woman who could move her tremendous body with such agility. "There'll be some soda right away." The twins moved promptly, their eyes burned feverishly. The sister-in-law brought the siphon-bottles. "You've got some money with you. Hurry! I was so worried about you, our dear benefactor. Death does not pick and choose, does it? Good men, bad men, it makes no difference! The main thing is that the statistics be satisfied."

"But we still need you." She turned with her whole body with all her heart to the man in the bed who had slipped back under the quilt which he pulled up to his chin. The radiant shining smooth sun-disk, this splendid great face, floated above him and the woman's voice became sweet and low.

"The funeral will take place next Tuesday in Keresztúr," she whispered. "Just rest so you'll be fit for the last farewell. Because I don't want the bailiff's union... you understand... they're a good bunch, to be sure, they're *all heart*. They're sending assistance." Her breasts heaved from emotion. "They've sent preserves, salami, chocolate biscuits... but let

that wretch be buried properly by the priests." This close, her radiant skin emanated the sweet fragrance of a carnation. "Since the wretch was such a fraud and told such beautiful stories to his whores, speak, our dear benefactor, let's say... in the name of his hunting companions. Yes, that would be splendid."

At that moment, the twins came back, blue and serious, each carrying a siphon.

Translated by Erzsébet Csicsery-Rónay

AMY KÁROLYI

POEMS

Translated by Daniel Hoffman

FAITH

I can more devoutly
believe in the flying suitcase
than in the propositions of physics.

More real to me
is the ascension of the Virgin
than the equal rights of women.

Where the brochures begin,
my faith ends.

My faith commences
where Lazarus
rises and walks.

MEDITATION ON YORICK'S SKULL

No more badinage no quarrels
out there the gossips lie down too
the loud ones in their feathered hats
the embittered silent ones with their veins of blue

those beyond the grave still jealous
with daggers where their hearts were, mirrors for eyes,
the implacable few

and the hurt ones who weep
tears that never dry
nourishing the trees
secret wellspring in the deep

and bachelors with hearts shrivelled like bunches
of pressed flowers
in boarding-houses they ate tepid lunches
and gained the universe
but their cufflinks dwindled to nothing

and the blameless mothers
gauntleted in pansies
in little velvet dresses waiting
for the trump to play

and the rich aunts
requiescat
beneath great chunks of stone
pressed flat

and the poets, heroes, statesmen
on whom the torchlight doubly shone
some spread out bronze hands
some spread hands of stone

and the cedars turn brown and wither
where in revenge the disinterred
cuts the roots of the tree—neither
yours nor mine
but his own

luckiest the unremembered
sunken existence
unmarked

DEATH WATCH

Under marble cheeks and shadow-lashes
the soul is hiding still,
not yet decided to depart the soul
is taking leave
  stays on awhile
Here was its estate, its home was here
not yet decided to depart the soul
huddles for another night
lodged in the shadow of the woven lashes
the curve of two hands makes it stay
one last night spent at its estate
the soul must move out by tomorrow

but still the face is there, the velvet cushion
it huddles for another night
the house will be debris by dawn
  when it may venture forth alone.

INTERVIEWS

THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF ECONOMIC POLICY

Talking with Rezső Nyers

Rezső Nyers, head of the Institute of Economics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, is asked first of all what is actually considered the realm of economic policy.

A: By socialist economic policy is meant most generally the planned guidance of the economic processes, the appropriate guidance of the economic activity of people. Its implementation must take into account the socio-economic factors which basically determine the course of economic development. Exploring the laws and mechanism of these interrelations and the possibilities of their utilization constitute perhaps the most important research area of Marxist economics. This is why the Institute attributes a fundamental role in the shaping and realization of economic policy to scientific investigations bearing upon optimum economic development.

Q: The reply suggests that in this case we are dealing with a large-scale scientific undertaking affecting all aspects of everyday life and serving the most practical ends.

A: This is so, and we are not a bit ashamed of it. In a manner applicable to the main context of research we wish to define the scope of our communal economic action, the primary and accessory aims for the period ahead of us: furthermore, to size up the factors of uncertainty and to outline the economic mechanism which serves the aims best. Thus it is not a matter of elaborating fundamental theoretical categories or the laws of socialist economy on the basis of a given experience. Rather the economists are seeking new experiences. Actually I believe that the effort to clear up the practical problems pertaining to Hungarian economic development will contribute to the general theory of socialist economics. Surely the objective interrelations and tendencies uncovered during research will become indispensable material for abstract theoretical generalizations. I may add that laying the scientific foundations of the development of economic policy—the examination of certain questions concerning growth factors, efficiency and equilibrium, the economic mechanism, the international division of labour—call for direct theoretical research, and thus belongs within the scope of the main line.

Q: Is there any specific reason why this question should be placed on the agenda with such emphasis, and be dealt with by so considerable an apparatus?

A: I think that recognition of both the fundamental role of the economy and the importance of scientific activity (activity making use of the results obtained by science) follow almost naturally from the principle of scientific socialism. Looking at things from this angle, Hungarian economic leadership endeavours to put principle increasingly into practice; so one might talk about de-

velopment in the linking of theory with practice. Over and above this, however, pressing reasons intervene, and I see three such pressing reasons. First: the realization of a developed socialist society requires an economy that is of greater dimensions and in particular qualitatively more developed than it is at present and, should Hungary drop behind in the quantitative and qualitative development of the economy, she would fall far short of the principal social aim. It follows from this aim that one cannot force this development, cannot pursue a one-sided "policy of accumulation," but one must carry out in economic policy the "orientation of accumulation-consumption" begun in 1957 and improved in 1968; this produces slower growth at short range, but more valuable growth in the long run, while pressing for the better utilization of efficiency reserves. Second: now and in future the growth elements of the Hungarian national economy will change, a new kind of link will be needed between labour and technology; and this too is urgent. Third: the epoch-making changes in world economy have brought about a different international environment and situation, and this is not simply a matter of foreign trade, but the entire development is affected by the way Hungary adapts herself to the new situation. The current situation is complicated by the fact that the people who think in terms of conventional situations and plans may feel that return to their old plans can be the solution, whereas the continuation of the process initiated in 1968 is indicated for those who demand the new ones.

Looking at it objectively, I must add that the research related to economic policy, in spite of unquestionable results, has fallen behind the requirements of society. In the preliminary study we have expounded in detail the areas where we think we lag behind.

Q: As appears from the foregoing, the project study is completed. After thorough discussions the goals of research which determine the specific tasks within the large and ramified subject area have taken shape. Which are these goals?

A: These have been defined by admitting that the research to be promoted is that which concerns some exceptionally important domain of economic policy; moreover, those which are aimed at the resolution of problems within essential sectors of economic policy. Hence seven research projects have taken shape. Here I enumerate them only briefly. First: complex investigation of the elaboration and realization of our economic policy. Second: the rate of our economic growth, and transformation of the economic structure, with special regard to the industrial structure and the manpower problem. Third: laying the scientific foundations of a policy on living standards (distribution of income, consumption, living conditions, way of life). Fourth: development of the system of economic management (economic mechanism). Fifth: laying the scientific foundations of an industrial policy, with special regard to the intensive development and organizational system of industry. Sixth: laying the scientific foundations of an agrarian policy, with special regard to the industrialization of agriculture. Seventh: economic cooperation and integration of the CMEA countries, with special regard to the external economic relations of Hungary.

Q: As far as I know, researchers on other scientific teams deal with several questions which occasionally touch upon the seven projects you have mentioned. Haven't the planners taken them into account?

A: In any case we are justified in paying particular attention to the results of pertinent research. In our preliminary study we have specified five such tasks. These are as follows: The socialist enterprise. Developmental tendencies of the world economy, with special regard to Hungarian economic policy and planning. The scientific and technological revolution, its social requisites and predictable consequences in the evolution of Hungarian society. The complex scientific investigation of improvements in

public administration. Fundamental criteria and developmental tendencies of the socialist way of life.

Q: I suppose the Institute of Economics could not by itself undertake to work up all seven subjects. Does any kind of division of labour prevail among the various institutes?

A: We have already agreed on this, too. The institutes that are the "bases" for the particular subjects have been designated. Our Institute is the "host" of the first, second, and seventh projects. The third is taken care of by the Economics Department of the Central Statistical Office, the fourth by the Economic Planning Institute of the National Planning Office, the fifth by the Industrial Economics Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the sixth by the Research Institute for Agricultural Economics. In addition to those enumerated here more than twenty research institutes, university departments, banks, social organizations, and scientifically experienced and qualified workers of the HSWP Central Committee make individual or joint contributions to the undertaking. I will add that the task requires precise coordination and organized cooperation in research first of all among specialists in various branches of economics, furthermore among representatives of other fields, especially sociologists, lawyers, philosophers, and technicians.

Q: All this goes to show that those who are engaged in the organization of this big undertaking are not in an enviable position. It appears from your reply that you did your best to eliminate, possibly well in advance, all obstacles in the way to the earliest possible start of actual work.

A: Each project of research is attended to by a coordination council. The composition of these bodies is intended, while keeping in mind coordination between the main projects, to promote cooperation with representatives of related specialized branches of science. Our research and other researches of an economic and sociological character are concerned, in addition to the said subjects, with tasks in which there are many points of contact or even overlappings. It would be futile to strive for fixed boundary lines. Continuous and operative coordination will be needed at the points of contact and the overlaps. In certain questions we consider parallel work conceivable and even appropriate, especially where conflict of opinion promises to be productive. But it may also happen that it is unnecessary to use up energies in this manner when it does not promote the synthesis of the final result. As regards the present state of the undertaking, we have reached the second phase of planning, when specific projects are being designed on the basis of the study. At the same time, research has begun as well.

Q: So every main or partial task has its own host, as far as the appropriate institutes are concerned. Have the researchers been found? Persons who regard their task not merely as a compulsory exercise assigned to them, but as an opportunity to satisfy their own interest, their creative ambition?

A: I can safely say that the seven main projects have already been assigned to competent research teams. Of course, the internal relationship between the individual and his task is not indifferent. If a person fails to identify with a job he has undertaken only because he had been asked to take it on, he willy-nilly handles it as a minor affair, because his mind is on his favourite subject. Of course, it would be a wild-goose chase to expect to find in all cases individuals whose regular occupation is his hobby. I am of the opinion that we have to show due regard for the researcher's sphere of interest, but it is possible and necessary to enroll those whose field of interest includes the subject assigned to them. I know from experience that the great majority understand that the sense of vocation and passion of today's researcher is characterized by particular responsiveness not only to the laws of science but also to the needs of society. A much greater problem is the fact that adequate research teams have not been found for a few basic but new areas. Thus it has become necessary to increase con-

siderably the number of participants dealing with CMEA matters. I repeat: the economists are firmly convinced that this complex task can and should be suitably directed if we wish to do our job thoroughly and to reach the set aim in good time. This is in the process of realization at the Institute of Economics. At present about one-third of our scientific personnel are engaged in laying the foundations of economic policy, and the rest of them deal with general theoretical questions, or with particular subjects.

Q: The preliminary study mentions, as we have remarked in our conversation, that research related to economic policy is lagging. I assume you have ascertained the obstacles in order to eliminate this lag, and to ensure that nothing impedes or delays your work. What has caused this lag in spite of the undeniable positive results?

A: One of the causes was certainly the prevalence of dogmatism, or a rigid adherence to the theory (doctrinairism) in the actual work of construction. The scientists involved have underestimated, for example, the role of sociology, applied mathematics, and social psychology; they thought there was no special need for such branches of science. They attached no importance to spontaneous changes in society, because they believed that society would in every respect develop as prescribed by administrative measures. It would be a mistake, however, to automatically impute every lag to dogmatism. Undoubtedly for a long time the haphazard relationship between science and practice has also contributed to the lag; the only link between them was brought about by necessity. And, at the beginning, the necessity hardly ever arose. At the outset the process of growth went on with spectacular speed in the socialist economy. When problems arose, they could be solved by the extant methods, the possibilities seemed to be practically inexhaustible. These sources, however, became exhausted during the early sixties. It became obvious that the promotion of the closed model of national economy was no longer feasible in the old manner, the problems could only be solved within an international framework. The hard facts imperatively demanded the permanent contribution of science. Beyond dogmatism and the economic events which had an unexpected effect, the third cause of the lag was, in my opinion, lack of courage in the application of the relevant sciences, the low degree of intellectual efficiency. At the beginning of the building of socialism there was a lack of ardour in scientific life, there were no lively debates; for different reasons, the habitual errors plaquing scientific pursuits became manifest in our field of science, too. I wish to emphasize, however, that this lag was only relative and temporary. In view of the vigorous development initiated in 1957, we have no reason to complain. If one thinks of this twenty-year period, one could speak of a steady pace in making up for the lag. By the way, I should note here: it is welcome news that these very days our Academy is considering the recognition of politology as an autonomous branch of science within the system of the political sciences under socialism.

Q: In speaking of the social and scientific significance of research, the preliminary study contemplates a reasonable division of labour between science and politics, and expresses the hope that scientific research in economic policy can promote more profitable relations between science and politics within that field. What do you have in mind? That scientists will think more politically or that politicians will think more scientifically?

A: I feel that both are needed. I do not mean, of course, that I think the effect must make itself felt unilaterally in any direction whatsoever, nor do I think that there can be a kind of measurable equilibrium when science is sufficiently politicized, and politics is sufficiently scientific. I think rather that politics needs a more scientific approach and the social sciences need a wider political horizon. I insist that the politician should consider the areas of society approached by science, and that it is essential for the

scientist to understand and know politics. The initiator (or non-initiator) in the relationship between the two is, it seems to me, usually the politician.

Q: To come back to the work of this Institute in laying the scientific foundations for the improvement of economic policy, does this great task imply that you cannot undertake to fulfil the demands or, if you like it, "orders" received from other institutes?

A: In comparison with other scientific workshops dealing with similar subjects, our Institute generally receives fewer assignments of this character But we fulfil specific commissions to a certain extent if their subject tallies with the main line of research and contributes to our practical knowledge. We have accepted such an "order" from the Ikarus Factory, whereby we can fulfil a specific industrial policy aim and a scientific research goal at the same time. Nor do we refuse to comply with other request of a similar character.

Q: In conclusion, a personal question. You are not the first researcher to have previously dealt with his subject as a member of the cabinet. What does this past mean in your present scientific pursuits?

A: It is an advantage and a disadvantage at the same time. I think the advantageous effects preponderate, since I could embark on my work here in possession of a wider horizon, of political knowledge and experience. Consequently I endeavour to organize and coordinate this complex work first of all in my capacity as a politician. As a politician I have always sought to contribute to the utilization of scientific results, but this has entailed a serious limitation in the cultivation of science. From the point of view of my present job this is certainly a disadvantage, but it can be overcome. I see that the staff of the Institute understands the situation, and I try to view my possibilities realistically, so I can hope that my former career as a politician will be to the advantage, rather than to the disadvantage, of our Institute.

ISTVÁN HAJDUSKA

DOES THE HUNGARIAN *DZSENTRI* STILL SURVIVE?

Talking with Dezső Keresztury

M.: Not long ago at a meeting of artists in Szentendre you passionately castigated today's aping of the dzsentri.* *Aren't you seeing phantoms when you talk about the survival of the* dzsentroid** *mentality? Especially, because as far as I know, you yourself are of dzsentri origin.*

K.: You're right. I am of *dzsentri* origin. I never made a secret of it, it is nothing to be ashamed of. Very few people today are aware that a better kind of *dzsentri* existed in Hungary, an educated class of noble descent who were able to manage an estate, ply a trade and manage an enterprise. And this better sort of noble who, if he fell on evil days, was not ashamed to study, keep up with the demands of the times, stood on his own feet and made a decent living. My parents were of this kind. My father, who served as mayor of my native town, per-

*The word *dzsentri* is of course identical with *gentry*; the Hungarian phonetic spelling is used nevertheless since the terms differ not only in the penumbra of their meaning but also in the specific connotation. In Hungary the *dzsentri* were members of the nobility who often lacked a nobleman's estate but still insisted on the style, and manners of the nobility.

** A Common Hungarian term referring to the aping of the less savoury aspects of *dzsentri* behaviour by such as are not members of the nobility, and hence not of the *dzsentri* either.

formed his duties austerely and to everyone's satisfaction. My mother, who was widowed and left with five children, ran the farm herself and worked from morning till night. As you can see, there were members of the dzsentri in Hungary who acquired material and moral recognition through hard work and by selflessly serving the common good. However, these were forgotten in time, even in books, and it was the image of the declassé, stupid *dzsentri* who twined their name and title into coin that came down to posterity; those strutters without responsibility who, as the "ruling class", tried to add lustre to its spurious distinction. Why, they were the servants of a feudal system long obsolete in the 20th century. It was with good reason that they became the stumbling block of every serious movement of social reform. If I scold today's dzsentrism, I am not thinking of the adoption of an attitude toward morality and public life which is worth something even today, but of the sudden appearance of the dzsentroid mentality in the most unexpected places and in the most surprising ways. I am sensitive to this today also because as a family tradition, ever since my youth such domineering ways have always repelled me. And if you ask whether this dzsentroid mentality is still alive, I must say that it has survived with unheard-of adaptability under socialist circumstances unfavourable to it.

M.: Why was yesterday's dzsentroid *style so irritatingly ridiculous and why is today's version so ridiculously irritating?*

K.: Because it's a parade of apes. Why did the impoverished nobility turn into the *dzsentri?* To show off. Gentry, of course, is an English word. It is common knowledge that during the reform period emerging at the beginning of the 19th century, the educated, eminent Hungarian aristocracy and nobility turned toward England to learn the techniques of bloodless revolution and the new economics. Thus they established many connections with the English gentry. The decline began after the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867. Later, the upwardly mobile bourgeoisie, many of whom were of foreign origin, and the emerging middle class of civil servants acquired titles and rank, many married into the impoverished, emply-headed, lazy and high-living dzsentri. That was when the process started which every social critic has pointed to since. Instead of empathizing morally with what it meant to be Hungarian, they accommodated outwardly to everything that the concept of dzsentri, which had degenerated into social embellishment, meant—the pseudo-Hungarian hussar's pelisse, the crane-feathered caps, boots of cordovan leather and the ancestral swords, and the not always genuine letters patent of nobility were transformed into the empty paraphernalia of the process of assimilation. These has such disastrous consequences because this assimilation did not produce a genuine sense of identity. Who provided the "Hungarian patina", the national "bon ton"? The heroes of pseudo-Hungarian revelry, those heel-clickers, the famous duelling bravos. These were truly figures in a fearful dance of death.

The genuine was separated from the pseud. The decent nobleman did not have to prove at all costs who he was. Thus he could reach a real understanding with the traditional urban citizenry who were raised in the spirit of moral ideals. Yet the nobility who were committed to serving the public good were quickly submerged by the gaudy splendour of the dzsentroid false nobility, the "nothing but outside show" life-style.

But let us stop here for a moment. When we criticize the unconscious dzsentri apers, we must do so with compassion and understanding. Hundreds of thousands of now adult peasant and working class men and women grew up in that world of snobbish, empty Hungarians not knowing that there was anything else. I criticize those of today's shooting parties which are organized for the appearance of imaginary and flaunted distinc-

tion. If I am annoyed by those who send their children to school in official cars (it was a carriage in the old days), I am aware of the power the desires and conditioned reflexes of their youth have over them. But yet, we cannot be lovingly indulgent, if, let us say, a hunt is used as a badge of rank, a social event that excludes others, as a cover for a clique, if the neo-distinction of riding revives an outworn ideology ridiculous even yesterday, that of the Hungarians as a "nation of horsemen".

M.: But where does all this come from?

K.: "The well of time is bottomless" wrote Thomas Mann in *Joseph and his Brethren*. The roots are deep and entangled. They originate mainly from the illusions that spread after the compromise of 1867 when the so-called "historic class" of Hungarians were persuaded that it was victorious because its mannerisms set the tone of the nation. Members of the government wore *Magyar grande tenue*, the braided "attila" came into fashion (of course, few know today that a German tailor in Pest invented the whole lot). The revelry (when in the 1930's, for example, a "real Hungarian" feast was organised for the Prince of Wales) was no longer enjoyment but a status symbol with Gypsy music.

M.: But why did you fly into such a passion at the artist's meeting in Szentendre?

K.: Perhaps because I felt that the sense of identity, taste and social point of view of the new nation has become confused. Instead of looking for the deeper, more substantial traditions, instead of finding their roots in the really good and raising their crests high in the clean pure heights exposed to the winds of the world, they imitate pseudo and harmful appearances. We are witnessing the revival of some kind of spurious "K.u.K." fashion. Calling everyone doctor, for example, is in vogue, as formerly in the world of the "absentee lawyers" when doctor's degrees could be bought for money. It has become very important whether I "tutoie" or "vousvoie" another man. The hunt and the dinner table is the place for behind-the-scenes discussion of public affairs. Games of cards are insignia of rank, and whether one keeps a mistress. "My compliments" as a greeting. Instead of the carriage, an official car, instead of the valet, the chauffeur on government payroll goes shopping and does the trivial domestic chores. He is the caretaker. And if anything has changed in this, it is only that the former dzsentri used to pay for it out of their own pockets or credit. I could mention the mendacious new insignias of rank—the palatial villas, the "partys" and armoried or at least monogrammed gold signet rings... Judging people by what circle their frieds belong to, and the old "tradition" of abusing power, as the sherriffs of old abused power. Many of the brand-new bathrooms, the new peasant houses with fences painted in loud colours which have become signs of prosperity are dishearteningly grotesque phenomena.

M.: Don't you think that all this is transitory, the growing pains of the masses who are rising to the level of burgher prosperity within socialism?

K.: It's a good thing you said burgher. In the 1950's they were always talking about the "remanants of burgher upbringing". These were castigated, rooted out, eradicated. But at that time, to be sure, where were the real burgher remnants? Was there a strong class of burghers mellowed in its customs here? But let's not confuse "middle class" with the burghers! The empty world of the Hungarian dzsentri show through today's remnants also, that middle-class which kow-towed to the high-ups and kicked below stairs. Instead of pillorying the remnants of burghers virtues, we should celebrate their survival which can be observed here and there. Among the working class and peasants that are rising to prosperity, the pseudo-dzsentri conventions are flourishing, unfortunately, like salpetre on the walls. That is why I flew into such a rage and that is why I say, we must get to the bottom of this to show these apers fo the dzsentroid con-

ventions what *genuine* traditions are. For example, there were nobles here who often found themselves at odds with their own class because they lived and worked with integrity and did not become unprincipled. They were good sheriffs, good sub-prefects, public-spirited clergymen, doctors who watched over the health of villages under their care, lawyers and engineers who worked for the advancement of their towns. This cream of professional men who were partly of *dzsentri* origin, time and again opposed Szálasi and the German occupiers and many of its members were taken to internment camps. I say this from my own personal recollections as I remember those days well when the sub-prefect of Somogy county was interned, the chief constable was fired for sabotaging the enclosing of the ghetto. I remember those members of the dzsentri peasants, workers and citizens who even yesterday denied what the good-for-nothing dzsentri never denied: "no sacrifice is too great for status."

ANDRÁS MEZEI

FROM THE PRESS

"SEMPER REFORMARE"—DEBATE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

It is hardly necessary to demonstrate that the state of education is always and everywhere a pointer to the degree of development of a society. Society reveals itself through it, and may even reveal what it would like to be in the future since school planners are expected to make long-range forecasts, and report cards have some value only if they take into consideration the human opportunities, i.e. if they indicate a task for the individual.

In Hungarian society the careful examination of the system, form, content of education and, first of all, of its purpose has become once again a timely issue. Recently an a major debate took place on the complete and general reform of education—a reform the implementation of which has already started. The extension of the debate was evidence enough that the public has divested itself of its age-old indifference and has grown very passionate on the subject. It is almost more radical than the experts on education themselves and its impatiently waiting for the destruction of the present structure which it considers outdated and ineffective because it cannot meet its most elementary tasks. It should come as no surprise then that the exchange of views in the press has started again at the time the first measures preparing the reform (to be completed only in the 90's) are to be implemented. This time an article by György Száraz has started the avalanche. (I published an account of his article on Anti-semitism in No. 65 of this journal.) *Semper Reformare!* was the title of the lengthy piece published in the October 29th, 1977, issue of the literary and political weekly *Élet és Irodalom*. It is a draft paper, Száraz claimed and, indeed, he takes an inventory of the shortcomings and worries of public education beginning wiht his experience of the declining role of individual teachers in today's (necessarily) mass schools, continuing by asking whether the school is able to make up for the backwardness "of underprivileged pupils" (i.e. those from families of lower educational standards) and, in general, what is the new school supposed to teach; he is painfully worried even about the decline in general efficiency of schools, that is the increase in the number of those who do not finish the compulsory eight forms of general school.

Indeed, it is interesting and very characteristic that the debate concentrated on character training, training in manners, and ideology.* "The greatest dilemma of the present system of teaching is precisely what will become a dialectical unity in the schools of the future: the contradiction between mass

* Hungarian uses a single term *nevelés* for teaching and character bulding.

and individual education. Thus it is not a matter of closing but of solving. It is an obligation and requirement or, if you like, the demand of our age. Unless we accept the science-fiction model: the division of society into egg-heads and semi-illiterates. The progress of education just like universal progress which guides it, is somethimes an accelerating, sometimes a decelerating process where revolutionary and backward periods alternate. There have never been lasting periods of immobility. Since 1945 the whole system of education and teaching has been in incessant and accelerating if periodic motion. The old basic principle of education, continous reform, is even more valid today." (György Száraz)

The problem really is, to put it in a bit oversimplified manner, that in Hungary a system concentrating on the training of an élite has been replaced by a system of general education in the strictest sense of the word; the limited means, however, did not allow for the mobilization of adequate national resources. This means that there has been a relative decrease in the standard of the present Hungarian school which teaches a larger number of children at the low, medium or even high level, and teaches them more subjects than ever before: but it seems to have paid for these spectacular results by driving the teacher's work into the background. It rewarded teachers by overburdening them and consequently by lowering their social status. György Száraz writes, "The number of applicants to universities and colleges has hardly changed recently. On the other hand, the number of young people who passed the entrance examination successfully, has steadily decreased from 60.81 per cent in 1971 to 46.58 per cent by 1975. It is almost certain that this indicates a decrease even in the level of knowledge of those who did not apply for admission to institutes of higher education. The decline of the average can be equally felt inwell equipped big schools, in some cases even more strongly. Because of heavy enrolment, these schools are also the site of the flattest routine work. The information explosion, and the social demand adjusted to the accelerated development—automation, mechanization, new trades and special fields as well as the extension of the basis of education and the average increase of the level of education result in qualitative and quantitative requirements which taken together make the mechanization of education almost necessary. The contradiction of quality and quantity, however, could not be resolved so far. This may be, at least one of the causes of the decrease in achievement."

"The quantitative requirement still seems to be more imperative: the relationship between teacher and student is beginning to resemble, out of necessity, that of the drill-sergeant and recruit. The purpose of drilling is to reach a certain average level. (Individual achievement at team level is of zero value.) Because of the general objective, it is important that this average be as high as possible; however, this will necessarily remain equal to the highest efficiency of the weakest member of the unit. Although the teacher, unlike the drill-sergeant, will not try of depress the highest achievements to the standard level, he is not able to assist properly the outstanding talents. ...Thus overloading and underloading appear at the same time in the mechanical requirement of the average. The school geared for the average cannot provide the right load for students who show outstanding achievement. The otherwise overworked, indifferent, or uneducated parents are unable to provide the extra load at home."

The same complaint is made by István Nemeskürty, a some-time teacher himself, now e film and literary critic. "There is, of course, a basic knowledge indispensable to everyone and to be acquired by everyone in the interests of society. Unfortunately, however, this is precisely what we are most apt to forget in the keen competition where the best qualified child will be the one who spits out data, rattles off dates and formulae,

does not ask and does not answer, does not attract attention, does not make his teacher nervous by being an individual, is not fidgety; in the meantime students who graduated from university or college are unable to make the subject agree with the predicate, their vocabulary is astonishingly limited, they cannot express themselves worth a damn, they are unable to tell even those around them about their inner life —even though they would like to—why? because we have forgotten to teach them to compose, debate, meditate, consider, contradict, choose between good and bad, what they like or dislike." (*Élet és Irodalom*, 12 Nov. 1977.)

The competition between "science" and "humanities" subjects emerges here—although it may be considered traditional ever since the liquidation of the "classical grammar school" after the war and the sacrifice of Greek and Latin. Lately a debate erupted regarding the number of history classes. "Are you an educated man or a versatile charlatan?" Robert Schiller, chemical engineer, asks in his article. "György Száraz, apparently fascinated by the tons of specialized publications and the statistics of the Patents Office recognizes as an undeniable truth that it is only possible to keep pace with developments, by teaching the so-called science subjects at a higher level and by an increased number of classes. Nothing could offend the sciences more than this argument. Scientific progress cannot be judged on the basis of a growing number of data. On the contrary, the trend is to reduce our accumulating knowledge to ever fewer basic principles. . . . The completed systems, at least those worth teaching, are not extensive, though they may be difficult. The more we are able to reduce phenomena to principles, the fewer words we need to describe then. . . The integrated teaching of the sciences in the process of realization clearly intends to introduce such methods in the secondary school, or even earlier. Why increase the number of classes? Why should we confuse science education with technical information, and the young man who is familiar with the practical problems of life with the versatile charlatan? Our economy requires schools to train experts, not indigested technical knowledge that echoes in our studetns' heads as did lines of Latin texts and poems our grandfathers learned by heart. (*Élet és Irodalom*, 3 Dec. 1977.)

(Let me enclose in parentheses some of the remarks of András Farkas, a student in secondary school). "I quote from the third year biology textbook: 'On both sides of the cell-wall a liquid divergent in its ion composition, but of identical osmosis, the so-called intracellular or extracellular liquid respectively, may be found. One of the causes of differences is that the dissolved proteins can be found within the cell and because of their colloidal measure cannot get out of the semipermeable lipoproteid cell-membrane. (Well, this short text is probably quite understandable and can be put to good use by a 16- or 17-year-old youngster, who would like to become a librarian, or a programmer.)

All these contradictions should be bridged by the teacher, until the reform will so radically transform the curriculum, school, and school system that one shall be happy to face new problems. Everybody who contributes to the debate brings up some former teacher of his and complains about the mechanical character of school in our days. Száraz writes, "That our education becomes impersonal is a necessary negative concomitant of our cultural revolution."

How do teachers look at it? György Zalka, principal of a school in Győr writes, "Public opinion keeps in mind a teacher's long vacation, his ample leisure that is much less than generally assumed. The modernization of education, in contrast to popular belief, does not require less, but more and more complex work from the teacher. Twenty or thirty years ago their main instrument was explanation and chalk. Today they have to operate at least

six or eight types of machines. In a single year they review the work of several hundred students (exercise-book, assignments, drawings, and tests), and this is not the same as the traditional correction of papers, although that was not an amusing pastime either. Long ago a university degree granted a teacher knowledge that would last him for decades. Now they could well be tested again at a state examination every ten years. They are obliged to study continually, the feeling of falling behind is suffocating."

"Their mandatory working hours are not a few a week, as some believe, but forty-eight. Out of this the time devoted to actual instruction is twenty or thirty, and teachers are subjected to incessant pressure every day, their attention is divided in several directions. The preparation of experiments, of large numbers of demonstrations, is extremely time-consuming. Because of the feminization of this profession members of the staff are often absent, substitute teachers have to be resorted to, and some teachers teach in two shifts. Teachers who come to the staff room during free periods become ever rarer. They spend ten to twelve hours a week on the average in assessing the students' work, correcting them, and particularly on class preparation. Yet who keeps track of the time spent at the youth organization, or the time spent on preparing for anniversaries, competitions, and quiz programmes which even pupils get tired of, furthermore the hours spent at meetings, consulting hours, visiting families, accompanying the pupils to sports events, army days, swimming coaching, the school dentist, the pictures, the theatre, museums, concerts, picture galleries, the circus, visiting factories, name-giving ceremonies, retirement parties, and God knows what other social occasions? Not to mention hobby groups, courses, and different kinds of voluntary work! They often have some second job to round out their earnings. The majority of teachers do not save money to spend on a car, a plot, or a summer house. Many of them don't even have a home. Nevertheless we often find teachers in responsible positions in public life. They fill up the lecture halls and listen to speakers who are often less educated than they, only to enable the organizers to fulfil their quotas in organizing the public." (*Élet és Irodalom*, 26 Nov. 1977.)

And the present minor reform, too, can only be carried by burdening the teachers further. "The modifications coincide with the concern about the education of a second 'demographic wave.' In the kindergartens it will culminate at the turn of the decade, enrolling 160 000 children more than in 1970. In the primary schools it will culminate in 1987. Then here will be 1,3 million pupils, a quarter of a million more then at the demographic trough of 1973 and 1974. The building of schoolrooms, the extension of school lunch service, the provision of the necessary school equipment, the extensive expansion needed for this single type of school only, will cost thousands of millions and bring the primary school again in the forefront; even though the problems of education at the secondary level will not be resolved either, by that time. The shortage of primary school and kindergarten teachers, considering the expanding demands of higher education, makes teacher training difficult just when the whole profession sits down at the school-desk again to learn the spirit and letter of the new documents of education." (Gábor Kronstein, *Élet és Irodalom*, 26 Nov. 1977.)

All this of course, does not mean that either this minor reform or the approaching major one are ill-considered or badly timed since nobody doubts that reform is pressing. Concerning the expectations which have accumulated and the many things to be improved by the coming reform (apart from the fact that it will streamline the curriculum) I want to quote the remarks of Csaba Varga, a young researcher in education and a teacher. "When we examined the teenagers' course of life and the influences they were

affected by, we could not fail but note that they had not received stimulating or elevating community experiences from their families, the youth clubs, or school itself. Looking at it from another aspect it can be stated that school democracy is only formal in spite of ministerial resolutions to the contrary. The staff and students do not form a community. Students have hardly any role, or only a few have, and school does not become the training ground for life. To oversimplify, I can say if there is no role, there is no action, if there is no activity, there is no solidarity, no individuality, etc." (*Élet és Irodalom*, 19 Nov. 1977.)

Csaba Varga calls upon the school to account for nothing less than our human ideal. Rightly and, it seems, reasonably, too. "In the past five years over ten times I have been in charge of a small group at a reading camp for sixth-grade pupils (around the age of twelve), as well as for specialized workers at cooperatives. I have carried out several surveys among teenagers about their idea of the future, that is if they have any, about their individual plans, about their ideals. There is no space for details, but the essence can be summarized as follows: they have but a practical idea of their future, and even this idea is, first of all, a plan for economic investment. One way or another they will choose some trade, but they will not opt for an attitude: they will hardly devote their lives to community goals. They have found no ethical purpose in life. The family, their friends, the media or their school have not educated them so as to develop in them even in an abstract form or in the bud a concept of the future. Yet they were eager to receive any information, ethical advice, explanation of way of life, that offered even a medium of framework or guidance. I can safely say they longed to reveal their inner life and to have friends."

There has never been such a uniform "debate." Because everybody agrees on the basic issue that the reform cannot be postponed lest public education should become the mental, spiritual, economic, and historical bottleneck of Hungary at the end of the 20th century, or in the 21st century. It will require enormous efforts of society, for in vain is the teacher the key figure of the reform, and in vain is there general agreement, the reform is a matter of economic efficiency, too. Gábor Kronstein writes in his above mentioned article: "How much would a real reform cost? The calculations have already been made. Experts examined three versions: a four-year secondary school to follow an eight-year general school, a three-year secondary school to follow a general school of nine grades, and a 10+2 version. The sums received as a result referred to the enrolment figures from 1973, therefore imagine an additional expense of 25–30 per cent necessitated by the demographic wave. According to the economists version A would cost 26,000, version B 28,000, and version C 40,000 million forints. (The present salary adjustment of teachers cost 1,300 million forints.) The reform would require five, ten, and 16 000 new schoolrooms respectively. In 1976–77 there were thirty-nine thousand schoolrooms in the country.) Further it would be necessary to train another 20, 35, 43,000 teachers respectively, apart from the replacement of 30 000 teachers who will retire by 1990."

For the time being there is a minor reform, and there is a debate; both are the indispensable precondition of the major reform.

István Bart

ECOLOGY AND ETHOLOGY

On October 1st, 1977, the National Council for the Protection of Nature and the Environment was founded in this country, and thus the conservation of the environment also came under the supervision and direction of the State. Until then, the Council was only concerned with the protection of nature. Its history reaches back to the end of the last century when ornithologists, amongst them Ottó Herman in the first place, founded societies for the protection of birds, animals and nature. The official publication of the movement and the Council is still the illustrated magazine *Búvár*, which has just reached its 33rd volume. Certain changes have been made regarding content, for in recent months it has tended to include an increasing number of articles on ecological subjects. In April 1976, Parliament passed an Act concerning the protection of the environment: "In the interests of preserving the environment within the Hungarian People's Republic, the following are under protection: *a)* the soil *b)* water *c)* the air *d)* natural life *e)* the landscape *f)* inhabited regions." The law covers these six areas in detail, listing penal sanctions where appropriate further determining that "the Council of Ministers will establish detailed regulations regarding the control and organization of the protection of the environment." As a result the amalgamated Council for the Protection of Nature and the Environment, which is under the direct control of the Council of Ministers, came into being. All this doesn't mean that before the establishment of the Council there was no protection of the environment in Hungary. At the beginning of the 70's, the National Council for the Environment was organized following the proposals put forward by the Presidium of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. This coordinated extensive voluntary and state activities; the council has functioning urban, county and district subcommittees. Moreover, since the law came into being it has appointed special committees which are concerned with the six areas cited these committees are composed of hydrologists, research chemists, architects, agronomists, foresters—in brief, ecology experts. The honorary committees report to the National Committee of the Patriotic People's Front, and bring the scientific work to be done to the attention of the responsible bodies, such as the various research institutes of the Academy.

Many departments and research institutes are employed in working on the complex environmental protection programme of the Balaton region. Conservation work in the Balaton concerns not only Hungarians but also many visitors from other countries. This is why the Council of Ministers passed a resolution to back the environmental protection project. Hungary's largest lake and its surrounding area have gradually become increasingly polluted over the past twenty years. Research has revealed the destruction which has occurred in the flora and fauna of the region, and there is a demand that immediate measures be taken to restore the lake to a healthy biological condition.

Dr. Jenő Ponyi, head of the Academy's Biological Research Institute at Tihany, has written a two-part paper "Biological Changes in the Balaton", which was published in the 3rd and 4th 1977 issues of *Búvár*. The inclusion of the Balaton in the Five Year Plan, and the 10,5 million forint budgeted are significant, and allow the set objectives to be reached. The protection of the lake's water is aided by the recognition of the importance of the *Kis Balaton* (Little Balaton), A reservoir whose capacity will be one hundred million cubic metres is under construction. The main advantage of this will be that the highly polluted water of the River Zala will only be able to flow into the Balaton after thorough biological cleansing.

The author analyzes the fluctuation of the water level, the time it takes for the water to be changed as well as making recommendations regarding regulation. The mudding process of the Balaton has quickened over the last decade and the quality of the waters flowing into it has deteriorated; this is due to waste organic matter include domestic sewage and the waste of animal factories. In the case of organic matter, the aim is that it should as soon as possible be returned to the biological cycle. According to the 1971 figures, agro-enterprises alone use up about 994.3 tons of pesticides in the Balaton catchment area where the streams are generally polluted. About 26,806 tons of eroded soil find their way into the lake, and by far the most is from cultivated agricultural, that is chemically treated, areas. The author states that the biological changes in evidence in the Balaton show an obvious connection with Man's activities in attempting to transform nature, which have not always proved to be successful. He then summarizes the most important tasks to be done concerning the protection of the Balaton's environment in ten points, from an increase of the capacity of water purifying areas to fishing and reed-management.

The papers dealing with the Balaton and also the resolution of the ministerial council concerning the preparation and execution of the organized project fit in well with an account of the World Hydrological Conference. The representatives of five international organizations met in Budapest and discussed the pollution of rivers and the protection of the natural environment. The seminar was organized by WHO and the National Water Board. The participants unanimously agreed that widespread pollution fundamentally changes the hydrobiosphere, as well as the human environment. Conservation is therefore important, devolving on governments and water management organizations. In Hungary in 1950, 312 million cubic metres of sewage flowed into the rivers from towns and villages and industrial works annually; in 1960 this was increased to 520 million and in 1977 to 1.2 thousand million. The Hungarian water management organizations marked out two model territories, and after five years of experimentation they were able to establish which methods were suitable for regulating the quality of water.

From the above it transpires that the protection of water is accorded first priority in Hungary. However, *Búvár* endeavours to deal with every aspect of environmental protection. Another of the articles discusses lead pollution which affects plants growing by the side of busy motorways. This problem (together with lead pollution of the air, or biosphere) concerns the poisoning of plants consumed by grazing animals. It is dangerous not only to the cattle but also to people who consume their meat or milk. Investigations undertaken in Hungary showed that poisoning was most widespread within 50 metres of the roadside. For this reason it is suggested that animals should not be grazed within this strip of land, and that if possible evergreens ought to be planted to form a protective barrier.

Búvár well combines reporting, keeping issues alive and the explanation of practical examples of certain ecological systems. Almost every issue provides information on Hungary's protected territories, landscapes, and animals threatened by extinction, together with the international and national measures taken for their preservation; internationally known ornithologists such as Dénes Jánossy and Egon Schmidt write about vultures, eagles and song-birds. Mention is also made of aged trees, the biological equilibrium of nature, continental ecological systems, the conservation activities of young people and the work undertaken by ornithology camps. News and information on foreign magazines completes this heterogenous, and in truth many-sided, magazine.

An article on the complex scientific research programme of the member-states of

the Council for Mutual Economic Aid, appeared in *Természet Világa* (The World of Nature), which is a monthly publication issued by the Society for the Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge. This magazine is truly heterogenous with a powerful bias towards the natural sciences. The featured subject of the December issue is an article on world energy resources. This is followed by an interview with the Soviet Academician V. L. Ginzburg on so-termed para-physical phenomena. An article "How Shall We Write Mathematics" by Pál Halmos, a professor of mathematics at the University of Indiana, is followed by reports on the tribalism among mammals, natural rarities, protected animals and the metamorphosis of solid bodies. But enthusiasts of archaeology will also find something to interest them in news concerning the discovery of an iron-age settlement. Even followers of folk art will not be disappointed since Juli Dudás' naive painting of a wedding feast graces the front cover. (The back cover has a photograph of a young seal.) This magazine also contains a wealth of documentation to commemorate the birth of Carl Friedrich Gauss 200 years ago, not forgetting that Gauss' great contemporary, and no less a genius, was János Bolyai, a Hungarian mathematician. There is also an interview with the Nobel-Prize-laureate chemist Dorothy Hodgkin.

All this is naturally related to the protection of the environment if one takes a look at the six territories marked out by the Hungarian statute, for even if one thinks only of inhabited areas one is brought up against the effects of gardening, legal and social questions, public health, meteorology, biology and indeed with every sort of popular science subject. The weekly magazine of the Society for the Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge, *Élet és Tudomány* (Life and Science) endeavours to answer these questions in a popular format. Articles on the life of seagulls or ants are part of ethology and thus are connected with the protection of the natural world as are articles on the damage done to trees by the salting of roads in winter.

There is another ethological and zoological montly *Állatvilág* (Animal World) which contributes to the work of environmental conservation by examining and throwing light upon the relationship between fauna and Man, as well as looking at the behaviour and social place of animals. *Búvár* also deals with domestication as a conscious moulding of the environment, but this theme is also dealt with by *Állatvilág* and a kynological review.

I still haven't mentioned the Academy's publication *Magyar Tudomány* (Hungarian Science), the various specialized publications offering information on many branches of research, *Magyar Mezőgazdaság* (Hungarian Agriculture), as well as weekly publications reporting on the protection of the environment, and the daily papers which provide information on the most important issues and decisions.

ÁGNES SZÉCHY

SURVEYS

THE FIRST HUNGARIAN-BRITISH ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE

A TIMELY IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS

by

JÁNOS KALANOVICS—GYÖRGY VARGA

I

The idea and practice of round-table conferences ensuring the informal exchange of ideas is no novelty among Hungarian and British experts. Scientists of the two countries have met on several occasions for consultations at various levels and on various subjects. Meetings of economists deserve particular mention. Pursuing these commendable traditions, a Hungarian–British Round-Table Conference was held from the 11th to the 15th November, 1977, in Hungary, in Siklós Castle; this was the first meeting of its kind at which politics and economics were equally represented. Starting from the favourable experiences gained at earlier meetings, this recent exchange of ideas was organized on a broader basis. The idea of extending the scope of the emeting was British.

The visit to London, in 1976, of a group from the Hungarian Institute for Foreign Affairs as well as the Budapest visit of one from the Great Britain/East Europe Centre were part and parcel of the preliminaries. It was then that the idea arose that politicians and economists of the two countries should together discuss the issues of mutual interest. The meeting was organized by the Hungarian Institute for Foreign Affairs. A four-member committee headed by Deputy Minister János Szita made the necessary preparations; politicians and economists participated as well as representatives of scholarly institutions from both countries were members of the delegations.

As Dr. David Owen, the Foreign Secretary pointed out in a letter adressed to participants, of the Siklós meeting, the Round-Table was held at a most important time, running concurrent with the Belgrade meeting on the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act. It is natural, therefore, that the problems bound up with détente in Europe, with disarmement, the world economic situation, international cooperation and bilateral relations occupied pride of place on the agenda. This was indicat ed by the preliminary list of subjects, encompassing, as it did, a wide range of questions.

At the opening, plenary, session the two co-chairmen, Mark Bonham Carter and János Szita, outlined the scope and character of the conference. Later, Ambassador János Bartha, section head in the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, and M. W. Atkinson, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the British Embassy in Budapest, evaluated the present state of relations between the two countries and their prospects. Both speakers stressed that Hungarian–British relations are free of problems and open to development. At the same time, there are many unexploited possibilities. High-level visits are of great importance for further progress in bilateral relations.

Ambassador János Bartha pointed out that the two countries' agreement on the importance of the recommendations and the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, and of the intensification of the process of détente serves as a most appropriate basis for the further development of relations.

At the same time, he expressed the conviction that the time has come to further raise the level of political contacts. A visit to Hungary by Prime Minister James Callaghan, who has a standing invitation, would have a stimulating effect on the development of bilateral relations.

A number of agreements evidences the development of Hungarian–British relations. The number of holiday visitors as well as the exchange of information and of cultural values have expanded. It is true, though, that in the latter sphere much more has been done—and to a great extent with state support—by Hungary than by Britain.

In spite of doubtless improvement, neither of the two parties can be satisfied with the volume of trade between the two countries; this is clearly shown by Britain occupying sixth place only among the non-socialist trading partners of the Hungarian People's Republic, lagging behind Switzerland and Italy. Greater activity on both sides would be needed for bringing about a change the prerequisites for which are at hand. Finally, Ambassador János Bartha pointed out that Hungary considers the intensification of political relations, the expansion of technical and scientific contacts and of cultural exchange as both timely and necessary. All this can greatly contribute to the improvement of the atmosphere in Europe, to the consolidation of European security and cooperation.

After the opening session, the conference continued its work in two committees. The group discussing political questions—headed by Gyula Gyovai, director of the Hungarian Institute for Foreign Affairs, and Rhodes James, M.P.—dealt, in the first place, with the problems of détente and disarmament as well as with the appraisal of results achieved since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act.

II

The first subject dealt with by the political working party was the evaluation of the short-term and long-term prospects of détente, and an appraisal of the relationship between progress and change. In the opinion of British participants, there are substantial differences in results achieved in political and military détente. They agreed that political accords must be equalled in the military sphere so as to ensure the durability of the process of détente. The Hungarian contributors to the debate stressed the importance of considering present-day realities in Europe, and of increasing mutual confidence. The objective is, on the one hand, the bringing about of a European security system the precondition of which is close cooperation between the states concerned and, on the other, the reduction, of the importance of military blocks or their elimination. In addition to the progress in bilateral relations, multilateral relations should also be expanded and stabilized; however, in order to attain the goal mentioned, it is also necessary to consolidate the situation that has evolved and to solve the undoubtedly complicated military problems. All this certainly does not mean that long-term aims, should be abandoned while progressing with shorter steps in every sphere. It is desirable to give preference to those issues where understanding can be reached more easily and with greater speed.

The process of détente undoubtedly slowed down to a certain extent, especially in the first half of 1977, first and foremost in the relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, the SALT II negotiations, etc. Relations between these two great powers are the key problem of progress in Europe. It is clear that not only the socialist countries are interested in interna-

tional détente. Détente is in the fundamental interest of each and every country.

The issue of disarmament elicited a lively debate, particularly when examining to what extent the balance of forces asserts itself in our days. Some members of the British delegation argued that the military presence in Central Europe of the Soviet Union—or rather, its increased military strength in this area—has upset the equilibrium, thus acting as a brake on the process of détente. The members of the Hungarian delegation emphasized that the presence of Soviet forces in Central Europe is incorrect terminology since there are not only Soviet forces in the area but also the forces of other Socialist countries, that is the united military forces of the member states of the Warsaw Treaty. At the same time, the Soviet presence in Central Europe counterbalances the Western forces in other parts of the world. One cannot speak, therefore, about an "upsetting" of the balance of forces. It is fundamentally important to stress, as far as this set of problems is concerned, that one should make no accusations but rather aim at understanding, searching for the possibilities of solution.

The working group surveyed the results attained since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in August 1975, emphasizing that one can register important results that have been achieved in a number of spheres during the period in question. Concerning this subject, both delegations attributed considerable importance to the question of human rights. According to British contributions to the debate, the implementation of the recommendations of the "Third Basket" gave rise to some anxiety in Western Europe. Hungarian contributors, however, stressed the necessity for a complex interpretation of the Helsinki recommendations, disapproving of the arbitrary singling out of one question or another. Human rights cannot be scrutinized from a particular angle only, they must be examined as an entity. This comes down to saying that fundamental human rights—such as the right to work, to study, the right to education, etc.—should be examined in their interrelations with the rights of the individual. Besides, the subject is closely bound up with the question of non-interference with the internal affairs of sovereign states.

The Helsinki Final Act put a number of norms of behaviour on record that have for some time been more or less the basic principles of inter-state relations. As Hungarian participants pointed out, the Helsinki Final Act and the UN Charter are closely interrelated. It would be wrong to interpret events as if the document signed at Helsinki had frozen the possibilities of progress. On the contrary, Helsinki threw the gates wide open to détente and East-West cooperation.

It became evident from contributions to the Round-Table that government and public opinion, both in Hungary and Britain, expected much from the Belgrade meeting. More explicitly, they hope that the meeting will further straighten the path of cooperation between countries of two differing social systems, for international détente, and, last but not least, disarmament.

III

Hungarian and British economists at the conference discussed three major groups of questions:

—the present situation of the world economy and the trends of development to be expected;
—relations between CMEA and the Common Market;
—the situation of the Hungarian and the British economy.

Among the problems of the first group, the examination of the reasons for the slow growth of the economies of the developed capitalist countries evoked special interest. Inflation and the fear of eventually accelerating inflation are considered the reasons for

slow economic growth by the majority of British economists. Hungarian economists, however, argued that inflation is but a reflection and an expression of deeper structural problems.

Agreeing with this line of thought, some of the British economists pointed out that there are social changes as well at the background of inflation. They added that, in view of the social and economic consequences, the problem of unemployment acquired increasing emphasis.

It was underscored by all that mutual economic interdependence was a reality. As a consequence, economic policy within a country can hardly be appropriate to solve the economic problems of the capitalist world. All this raises the issue of reappraising the activity of international economic institutions and the reform of the entire system of such institutions. Participants agreed that neither the methods of the Keynes school nor those recommended so far by the monetary school have supplied a satisfactory answer and solution to the present-day problems of the capitalist world. The monetary system of Bretton Woods collapsed in the early 1970s. Hungarian economists pointed out that, as a consequence of the expansion of East-West credit relations, the socialist countries are, in an indirect way, already part and parcel of the international monetary system, a fact increasing the necessity of creating a system of institutions that adequately expresses present-day realities. The British economists agreed that only an international monetary system was viable in which member states of CMEA participated as well.

The multinationals constitute a qualitatively new element in the capitalist economic structure; they build up a peculiar market system—that, in a way, has become autonomous—and this also plays a role in the widening gap between costs and prices.

Protectionism gaining momentum in the economically developed capitalist countries —and first of all in those of the Common Market—was the central subject of the second group of questions. In the opinion of the British participants, protecting one's economy was the moral obligation of Common Market countries suffering from considerable unemployment and standing on the brink of inflation, even if this contradicted the general practices of international trade. With Greece, Portugal, and Spain having applied to join the Common Market is up against additional difficulties, since their membership would make the problems of Common Market agricultural policy– contradictory enough already—even more acute, modifying the direction of the flow of capital and likely to further increase the employment difficulties of the Nine. The British experts explained that the agricultural policy of the European Community does not serve Great Britain's interests either and that after the expansion of integration additional difficulties are likely to emerge.

As a consequence of all this, East-West economic relations have been relegated to the background among foreign trade considerations of some Common Market countries. The participants agreed, that protectionism cannot replace structural solutions and can, in the long run, exercise an unfavourable influence on the system of international economic relations.

One of the propositions argued at the conference deserves special attention. It was put foward by the British participants in the first place. They pointed out that Hungarian exports were directed precisely towards the most protectionist segments of the market of the Common Market countries. Thus, the structural concentration of Hungarian exports is such as to come up against protectionist barriers raised by the Common Market countries on the one hand, and the competition of developing countries which enjoy preferential treatment on the other.

Protectionism, as a factor impeding economic cooperation and the freedom of trade, and that also has a negative effect on

political relations, should, of course, be condemned. A far from homogenous proposal submitted by the British side that the socialist countries "should, on the principle of reciprocity, give something in return for the Western countries' ensuring, unconditionally and without restrictions, the application of the most favoured nation clause and putting an end to discriminative quantitative limitations," elicited particularly sharp reactions from the Hungarian economists present. They pointed out that the eventual abolition of discriminatory measures and of protectionism would simply mean putting an end to disadvantageous treatment and the implementation of the principles of the GATT and the Helsinki Final Act, and would by no means be equivalent to granting special privileges to the socialist countries.

The exchange of ideas confirmed the supposition that neither an acceleration of economic growth in the capitalist countries nor the pulling down of protectionist barriers can be counted upon in the near future. The circumstances make the renovation of the Hungarian structure of production and a certain change in market orientation a most urgent task.

The discussion of the third group of questions assumed the character of an exchange of experience. The economists informed one another about work in progress on the modernization of the structure of production, and on the economic policy determining the process and the methods employed.

British participants described British economic policy saying it had been too accommodating in the past, i.e. it had only followed events with more or less delay, and had not been farseeing enough. Economic policy having been devoid of a spirit of innovation, the British economy had little active influence on world economic development. Some of the British participants asserted that British economic policy lacked the strategic spirit; decisions were mainly made following the pressures of the moment and long-term effects were not considered at all.

In the OECD countries, the structure of industrial production is undergoing profound changes. This transformation is expressed in comprehensive programmes of industrial policy in a number of countries.

With a delay, in 1975, the British government became conscious that a national economic plan centred on a strategy of industrial development was needed. With this aim in view, international comparisons were made, primarily with industries in the Federal Republic of Germany, the major competitor. On the basis of this comparison, the conclusion was drawn that the slow growth of the British economy cannot be explained by differences in the structure of industries of the two countries. The real difference lies in the levels of productivity. The surveys showed that almost all British industries lag behind those in West Germany as far as productivity is concerned. (This is not, of course, true of individual factories or firms.)

The conclusion was drawn from preliminary investigations that the prerequisites for increasing the competitiveness of this or that can mainly be found in the factors affecting them in particular. This work can be done effectively by specialists with a thorough knowledge of the field. Starting from this consideration, a specially appointed council set up advising the forty sub-committees. The majority of these examined sections of the engineering industry; but the sub-committees as a whole covered about two-thirds of industrial production.

Major firms, state bodies and trade unions were all represented.

The British economists called attention to two important circumstances. The first was that the very composition of the committees reflected the recognition that structural transformation cannot entirely be left to the market mechanism; structural advance—and, in some spheres, retreat—must be influenced by state policy as well. The

second circumstance worthy of attention was the membership of the trade unions in these committees. This served to increase their interest and committedness. The British economists also mentioned that although attention was devoted to problems of industrial structure as long as five years ago, too many efforts were concentrated at the time on questions of production. Present inquiries into structure are characterized by market analysis in the first place; and starting from these analyses, the inquiries then proceed to production policy.

The British economists present showed great interest in the experiences connected with the transformation of the production structure of Hungarian industry. The Hungarian economists pointed out that although capitalist recession and high-rate inflation had numerous unfavourable effects on the economy of Hungary, the policy of economic development did not plump for economic isolation.

Based on an analysis of recent world economic tendencies that proved to be lasting, the transformation and modernization of the present product structure and improvement in competitiveness have become the central aims of Hungarian economic policy. Economic theorists and market-research experts have been widely consulted, present production structures intensively analysed and the alternative options of modernization worked out with their help. The resolution on the guiding principles of long-term foreign trade policy and of the development of production structure—a resolution passed at the October 1977 meeting of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party—crowned this activity.*

The communiqué issued after the meeting outlined the strategy of development of the Hungarian economy under the modified internal and external circumstances.

Accommodation to the new world economic situation had begun earlier of course. E.g., an overall programme of rationalization for the utilization of energy was worked out; and, from 1975 on, the National Bank of Hungary grants credits, on special conditions, to companies pledging to pay back, in three to five years, the funds granted, from an exports surplus originating from the investment in question. This special credit contingent is esteemed as the equivalent of £640 to 650 million, and great parts of it have already been granted to enterprises who have applied.

The Hungarian economists pointed out that external resources are also used for the development of the economy. These resources from abroad contribute, first and foremost, to the improvement of export potentialities, and, as the facts mentioned above go to show, the mode of use offers sufficient security.

The Hungarian participants mentioned that, in order to transform the structure of production, some objective difficulties—in the spheres of technology, organization, and management—must be overcome from time to time. Conservatism and clinging to established habits must also be fought. Greater manpower mobility is a prerequisite for bringing about a more elastic structure of production.

The economists of the two countries agreed that it would be commendable to continue the discussion of the theoretical and practical questions of structural policy. This subject is likely to have stressed importance in the economic policies of both countries for some years to come.

IV

At the closing session, the co-chairmen of the working committees appraised three days of activity; then the two co-chairmen of the conference summed up the experiences and results of the first Hungarian–British Round-Table. The unanimous opinion was that the conference reached its goal: the

* See on this issue József Bognár's article on p. 38.

frank and open-minded exchange of ideas contributed to a better knowledge of the views and ideas of one another and to the discussion of subjects of mutual interest. According to one of the British participants, the conference contributed to bridging the information gap, and this is a noteworthy result.

Members of both delegations proved to be experts who had done their homework. The conference showed that political and economic problems are closely interwoven; and that the idea of organizing a Round-Table with the participation of both politicians and economists proved to be a sound one.

The head and some of the members of of the British delegation praised the efficient organization and the frank and open-minded way in which the problems were approached.

It might perhaps be advisable to discuss culture as well next time round. Films, books, and works of art have much to contribute to developing relations between the countries, in furthering mutual acquaintance, and in bridging the information gap. The presence of artists and arts administrators would make deliberations even more meaningful.

The participants agreed that the next, i.e. the second, Hungarian–British Round-Table should be held in Great Britain, in 1979.

A PROMISE OF FURTHER AND BETTER DIALOGUES

by

MARK BONHAM CARTER

In the second week of November last year, the first Hungarian–British Round Table Conference took place at Siklós and I welcome the opportunity of contributing my reflection on the Conference to The New Hungarian Quarterly.

As the leader of the British delegation and as a member of the Governing Body of the Great Britain/East Europe Centre which, together with the Hungarian Institute for Foreign Affairs, co-sponsored the Conference, I should like to begin by expressing on behalf of my British colleagues and myself our warm gratitude to our Hungarian hosts for the excellent arrangements and for their generous hospitality.

One week before the Conference in Siklós, I was the British Co-Chairman at the Tenth Anglo-Polish Round Table Conference which was held at Ditchley Park in England. Both these Conferences discussed East–West relations in the light of Helsinki/Belgrade; relations between our two countries; economic problems in the same context and recent political and economic developments in our respective countries. In both Conferences each side was represented by about 15 people, making 30 in all, and the delegations were composed of politicians, academics, journalists, one or two officials, and people from the world of finance and industry.

The procedure at these Round Table Conferences follows Chatham House rules,* i.e. it is legitimate to report the arguments used and the facts deployed outside and subsequent to the Conference but no statement or opinion should be attributed to any member of the Conference nor is any formal record kept of the proceedings. We do not

* Rules governing discussions at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) in London.

expect any immediate results from the discussions. Those who come attend in their individual capacity to express their own views no matter how idiosyncratic, not as representatives of a party or organization or Ministry. Round Table Conferences are an investment in the future based on the belief that there should be nothing we cannot discuss together: that discussion leads to a greater understanding of each other and of each other's societies: that we should not conceal the very real differences between us: and that by this process of debate we will discover areas of agreement and common concern.

The Hungarian–British Conference was a logical development of work done by the Great Britain/East Europe Centre since it was established ten years ago. In these years it has encouraged meetings between professionals and organized four economic colloquia with Hungary. Believing these meetings to have been useful we thought the pialogue should be extended to embrace the more delicate and difficult field of politics—a proposition to which our Hungarian colleagues readily agreed. In the course of the ten Anglo-Polish Conferences that have been held, the freedom and frankness of our discussions has steadily increased. The first Hungarian–British Conference laid the foundations for a similar development in subsequent meetings between our two countries. We have invited our Hungarian colleagues for a second conference to be held in this country in 1979. They have accepted and it only remains to settle the date.

At Siklós, after an opening plenary session, the delegates divided into political and economic committees. In the political committee a number of potentially contentious matters were discussed. Someone asked whether we were working towards the dissolution or the stabilization of the division within Europe represented by CMEA/EEC and NATO/Warsaw Pact. And if the latter, which comes first? A reduction of military forces in Europe on either side or the building up of confidence between the two sides as the prerequisite of effective measures of arms control? The British, who did not have a "delegation" view and who differed among themselves on many points of substance and emphasis, tended to give priority to confidence-building measures, the Hungarians to a variety of arms control proposals. The British also asked to be told the purpose of the Soviet military strength in Central Europe. There is a Soviet argument that the growth of their military power has brought about détente and is designed to prevent war. The British found it difficult to see the existence of a strong military power in that light. Its presence diminished confidence and they could not but ask what were the political consequences.

There was also a substantial discussion of Euro-Communism, its significance for and impact on the Communist movement (if any). One British member said that attitudes in the West to Euro-Communism would be affected by the attitudes of "Euro-Communists" to reversibility. They appeared to accept the ballot box as a means of attaining power, but if having attained power they were defeated in a subsequent election, would they accept the verdict of the electorate and relinquish power? If not, they were asking us to play a game of football with assymetrical rules. One side would have a goal, the other would not. The best that the side with a goal could do was to draw. The worst that the side without a goal could do would be to draw, and uniquely it had the chance to win. To this question the Hungarians gave what appeared to be an authoritative answer. The world "Euro-Communism" had no right to exist. Communism was indivisible and the basic doctrine was the same everywhere. There were, however, differences between communist parties, not least in the West, and it was mistaken to lump them all together as a monolithic, homogeneous entity. The new features which differentiated communist

parties in the West were adaptations to the various situations in which they found themselves, among which the governing factors were: the international situation, the internal situation in their respective countries, and the historical background of the countries in question. It was to be concluded from this that the answer to the question of reversibility would vary in response to these and other factors.

Human Rights were discussed at some length. The Hungarians drew a distinction between "social rights," for example the right to work, and "civil rights" on which they suggested the West concentrated. While accepting there was something in this point, the British said that they did not see social and civil rights as necessarily antithetical. It was desirable that both should be safeguarded and it was admitted that present levels of unemployment in the West showed our failure to secure a social right. On a more tactical issue there was some disagreement within and between delegations as to whether Human Rights could best be secured by quiet bi- or multilateral diplomacy or by public statements. The British were from time to time asked to explain President Carter's motives for making such a public issue of this matter.

Finally, in the political committee the British said that they regarded Basket III, which followed from Principle VII, as no less important than Baskets I and II. It was an essential part of the Final Act and we would not accept that to raise matters affecting Human Rights represented an interference in the internal affairs of another state.

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The Economic Committee conducted its discussions in an extremely relaxed and open atmosphere. One could hardly talk of an "English" or a "Hungarian" side but rather of a mixed group of experts discussing subjects of common interest in an informal fashion, using typically the method of question and answer rather than formal statements. The three main themes discussed were:

1 world economic issues;

2 relations between EEC and CMEA; and

3 trends in the two national economies.

On (1), discussion focussed on the likely trend of unemployment and inflation in the world economy, and on the effects world trends would have on the members of CMEA. There was general agreement that these effects would be adverse, and there was general recognition of the growing interdependence of the different economic systems. There was some discussion of the role of multinational enterprises within the general context of world investment. The Committee reflected on the desirability of a new Bretton Woods, but this time including the Socialist countries; but there was little feeling that this was an immediate possibility. All in all, the analysis of world economic prospects had a sombre tone, despite the sprightliness of the comments.

On (2), considerable time was spent on exploring the way in which the institutions of the EEC and CMEA actually work. Inevitably the discussion moved on to the possibility of closer links between the two, but again the conclusions tended to be negative—not because anybody thought closer links undesirable *per se*, but because we all realized the practical difficulties, especially on the EEC side.

In the third session, considerable time again was spent on mutual education as to the ways our two economies worked, and on the main current trends and prospects. The discussion concentrated on the problems of resource allocation in the two economies, within the context of overall macro- and micro-economic policy; and on the methods and objectives of investment policy. This last session proved particularly enlightening.

An important and mutually instructive part of the Conference was a discussion in plenary session of the political and economic experience in our respective countries over

the two preceding years. This topic was introduced by brief reports from the two Co-Chairmen of the delegations and led to a lively debate between and within the British and Hungarian delegations.

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It is impossible to assess, still less to quantify, the value of these Conferences. I can only say that from my personal experience I know that since 1963 the quality of the discussions at Anglo-Polish Conferences has immensely improved, that most British delegates who attend believe them to be worthwhile and come back with a feeling that they have a better understanding of Polish society. The Hungarian Conference was the first and unquestionably gave promise of leading to further and even better dialogues in the future on political and economic issues including domestic issues without an understanding of which the relations between our two countries are largely unintelligible. Within the Economic Committee the standard of debate was of outstanding quality as those who took part will confirm. At the end of the Conference one Hungarian said that it had helped to strengthen the feeling that we were not working against each other and a member of the British delegation said that he had learned that economic cooperation between Hungary and the UK should be easier than he had previously supposed. These two statements confirm my conviction that what we were doing, which will surely develop in the future, was well worthwhile.

BÉLA KÖPECZI

CULTURE AND THE SOCIALIST WAY OF LIFE

For years the question of way of life has been in the focus in Hungary. This recent interest is prompted by the fact that the economic development of society has reached a level where the satisfaction of the basic necessities of life is no longer the only question on the agenda, and both the community and the individual have to define what it means to live, work, and think in a socialist society.

Hereafter I shall discuss only one aspect of this complex question—the way of life from its cultural aspect, primarily "intellectual culture"; more precisely, I shall examine how culture affects the evolution of the way of life. True enough, this is a loaded question, but I have to assume responsibility for this bias, although fully aware that the cause of culture does not depend on subjective factors only.

I

When I speak of *intellectual culture*, I mean not only the achievements of science, literature, and the arts, but also have in mind the social reflections on these activities, and the impact of culture exercised through the mediation of institutions. This implies a broad definition of the concept of culture, which does not separate intellectual from material culture, nor from ideology, attitude, and way of life.

In global social dimensions, culture can be measured primarily by the extent of the utilization of opportunities provided by

education. Let us begin with formal education. In Hungary in 1975, 1.5 per cent of the population above the age of ten did not attend any school, 58.2 per cent of those above the age of fifteen completed the eighth grade, 17.6 per cent graduated from secondary school, whereas 5.1 per cent of the population above the age of eighteen obtained a higher degree. It is enough to compare these figures with data from 1949, according to which 4.8 per cent of the population above ten did not attend any school, 20.6 per cent above fifteen completed the eighth grade, 5.5 per cent graduated from secondary school, and 1.7 per cent above eighteen obtained a higher degree. Over the past 30 years, the most striking progress has occurred in the category of those who completed the eighth grade, which indicates first of all that the general educational level of the masses has improved. But considerable changes have taken place with regard to secondary and university education as well.

To study the effect of the level of education on the formation of people's way of life, we can draw conclusions from statistics on employment and housekeeping and data on consumption and time allotment.

The rise in the level of education contributed to the meeting of certain work requirements. The modernization of industry and the development of agricultural technology required a more cultured and better qualified labour force; thus the goals of the scientific-technological revolution, economic development, and cultural revolution coincided. At the current stage of development, however, new contradictions emerged between the requirements of the technological-scientific revolution, and the level of general education and qualifications of certain strata, and these contradictions represent serious difficulties from the point of view of economic development as well.

During the first phase of development the opening of schools to workers and peasants was meant to help overcome the lag; moreover, workers were granted opportunities for continuing their education, leading to the establishment of evening and correspondence courses at various levels. Since then, one can witness a contradictory trend. There has been a decrease in the number of those attending primary-school courses for workers after 1960, and secondary-school and university courses after 1965! In 1960, 200,065 persons—9.4 per cent of those in school—attended adult education courses in the framework of the school system. The situation has improved somewhat since then: in 1974–75, 255,110 persons—12.2 per cent of those in school—attended schools at various levels. There has been progress in the organization of vocational training as well. There came an improvement primarily as a result of the resolution on education and general education of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, which proves that political measures may bring about considerable improvement in the area of education as well, if they are supported by adqeuate financial means.

The relationship between educational level and income rates is even more contradictory. Many of the unskilled and semi-skilled workers—and not only the older ones—have not completed primary school. Even today, a stratum of an extremely low educational level continues to be "reproduced," a process facilitated by the shortage of labour. There are contradictions between income policy and the educational level in other areas as well, primarily in certain intellectual or professional activities.

The educational level also influences the consumption of goods and its structure, including spending on cultural items. According to the data of a survey in 1973 in Hungary, among intellectuals and professionals 6.4 per cent (1,579 forints annually) of the per capita net income was allocated for cultural purposes, among industrial workers, the corresponding figure

was 5.2 per cent (979 forints), among peasants 3.6 per cent (664 forints). Naturally, this social categorization is not identical with categorization on the basis of the educational level, but in general, the intellectuals have a secondary-school diploma or a higher degree, most of the industrial workers have completed their elementary-school education and vocational training, whereas among peasants there is a relatively high number of those who have not even completed primary school. The conclusion to be drawn is that, generally speaking, a higher educational level has created higher cultural demands, but no appropriate harmony exists between economic and educational goals and, in the long run, this leads to the reduction of the social prestige of education.

These same tendencies are reflected by the data on public education as well—with certain deviations. The number of television owners has increased in all categories, according to the data of a survey in 1972; television viewers included 1.6 times more people with an elementary-school education as opposed to those who have not completed primary school, 1.9 more with a secondary-school education, and twice as many with a university degree. Naturally, television watching also depends on other factors, including an inferior infrastructure in the villages, income relations, and changes in the way of living; but the educational level is an important factor, especially with regard to the type of programme chosen.

Differences are even clearer concerning the purchase of papers, periodicals, and books, and theatre and cinema attendance. In 1973, intellectuals spent 150 forints on papers and periodicals, workers 101, peasants 72; intellectuals spent 141 forints on books, workers 33, and peasants only 18. On the average, intellectuals spent 27 forints on theatre tickets, workers 12, and peasants 3. On cinema, 38 forints were spent in the first category, 26 in the second, and 9 in the third. In these cases, too, differences can be explained not only by the educational level, but also by other factors; however, content analysis shows that the educational level is a basic differentiating factor from the point of view of the extent and form of utilization of the existing cultural opportunities.

Time allotment data indicate relations between the way of life and education. According to data of a survey in 1972, on the average 10.1 hours are spent on recreation, 9.8 hours for work—including communication and housekeeping—and a remaining 4.1 hours for leisure time. According to a 1974 survey, the latter figure is only 4 hours: 0.4 hours for reading and study, 0.8 for fostering social contacts, 1.2 for watching television, 0.2 for listening to radio, and 1.4 for sports and other activities.—A study of these activites from the point of view of various layers shows that 87 per cent of the intellectuals, 79 per cent of other intellectual workers, 56 per cent of skilled workers, 32 per cent of semi-skilled workers, and 25 per cent of agricultural workers read in their leisure time.

All these data show that some 18 per cent of people devote considerable time and energy to education, 36 per cent a medium amount, and 46 per cent hardly any. The first category includes primarily intellectuals, the second skilled workers, and the third unskilled and semi-skilled workers. The greatest demand for education is among young people under the age of 30, whose overwhelming majority have at least completed their primary-school education.

2

What is the reason behind the fact that —despite major progress—there are considerable differences between the various strata regarding their relations to culture, and from the point of view of the utilization of cultural and educational institutions?

Naturally, the goal cannot be that every social stratum should utilize the possibilities of education equally, but it can be the aim to obtain general and professional education corresponding to the place occupied in the social division of labour, to the development of working and leisure time activities, and to meet the best tendencies on the personal level.

The material, objective circumstances —apart from the serious housing shortage, and the differences between rural and urban conditions—do not provide an adequate explanation of the backwardness of certain strata.

In Hungary today, the housing shortage has also affected education. Over the past 15 years, 1.1 million flats have been built, and in the period up to 1990, another 1.4 million will be constructed—that is, within a generation, 2.5 million flats are to be constructed in a country of 10.5 million inhabitants. At present, however, there are more than 300,000 applicants for flats, and there are several hundreds of thousands more who do not have an adequate flat. Electricity no longer causes a problem in the countryside, but water supply and sewage do not exist in some places, and the network of cultural institutions is not yet complete.

At the same time, certain material factors indicate a levelling of social differences on the one hand, and the establishment of cultural opportunities on the other. Suffice to mention that in 1975 there were 228 washing-machines, 220 refrigerators, 226 TV sets, and 55 cars per 1,000 persons in Hungary. Household appliances contributed to better opportunities for cultural activities by increasing leisure time; television provided masses of people with new possibilities of education, and progress in transportation opened up the way for gathering more information both at home and abroad. More than 2 million Hungarians travel abroad every year, and 3 million people have travelled inside the country.

Eating habits have improved and so has hygiene as can be clearly seen from the data on medical services and the consumption of pharmaceutical products. It is also true, unfortunately, that Hungary leads in alcohol consumption and the number of suicides.

Experience has lately shown that besides objective factors, subjective ideas also play an important role in education. Wide sections of the population—because of a lack of material incentives—underestimate culture. Many separate knowledge from behaviour and, consequently, the rise in educational level is not always accompanied by a new, socialist way of life. It can be noted, for instance, that in their private life, peasants and workers have often adopted the way of life of the former petty bourgeoisie. I refer primarily of the outward appearances of that way of life, and not necessarily to petty-bourgeois mentality, although the two often coincide. Also many remember the life style of the gentry and—though not in every respect—try to imitate it in certain forms of social life. And last but not least, the ideals of the "consumer society" also play a part, partly because they reflect the demand for a higher living standard, partly because—due to the application of modern technology—they appear to be more modern, and finally because they are also related to certain fashions of mass culture.

3

I would like to discuss the relationships between education and the system of needs and values primarily from the aspect of subjective factors, mainly factors of consciousness.

The content of every culture is determined by the needs and values of the given classes. Marx says that needs are produced in a way similar to goods and work-skills. Needs are affected by the society's economic and technological development, the inherited or new demands of members of society, and their aspirations; they cover the whole range

of areas from basic necessities to intellectual life. Values are specific characteristics of objects and phenomena, which manifest themselves in relation to man and society; meaning that they are the expression of interests, and not only individual interests, but legal, moral, and aesthetic norms of a given society, class, stratum, group, which consciously or less consciously are reflected in the individual. Every society establishes a dominant system of needs and values, which is the system of the ruling class. Oppressed classes have their own system of needs and values, even if incomplete and full of contradictions.

During its short period of existence, socialist society has not established a system of needs and values in every sphere of activity and consciousness; at the same time, the changes taking place in this society raise needs which require a revision of old values and norms, and alongside it, the completion of the system of needs and values.

Without any sort of scientific elaboration at hand, I shall attempt to discuss some questions of the socialist system of needs and values.

Work occupies a central place in the system of needs and values of the socialist society. Everybody accepts this, in principle, but we know that in practice one of the biggest problems is the loose work morale, which is not merely a matter of consciousness. If we approach the question from the side of education, it is striking what a small role consciousness plays in the choice of careers. Data from polls carried out among workers prove that many young people chose a profession not of their own free will, but because no other possibility existed in their opinion, or because they accepted the advice of their kin and surroundings. I would like to emphasize that in this case I do not think of necessity resulting from objective conditions, but simply of lack of information.

This does not necessarily lead to dissatisfaction, but in many cases it does give birth to aversion or indifference to the work chosen out of necessity. An important precondition for improving the choice of career is adequate knowledge not only of the profession, but also of one's own abilities and of the opportunities available. Family and friends can have role in this, but the school should have primary respons ibility. In my opinion, advice in the choice of career should become one of the most important elements of relations between school and practice.

In socialist society, full employment and alongside it security of existence are natural requirements. Persons who are not sufficiently conscious may take an unfair advantage of the situation, especially if they see that they can get along by remaining idle. The majority of the people want to work, but the elaboration of a sensible rapport to work remains a problem for everybody. It is the task of education and of the whole range of cultural activities to demonstrate that work in general is valid and interesting. It seems that the interest young people show in the scientific-technological revolution is not utilized, and it is unrelated to work.

The conscious personality-forming relationship between material incentives and work well done is not appropriately utilized either. Much is said about creativity, but it is almost exclusively related to leisure time activities, although many examples from the past and present prove that true creative activity is realized precisely in work well chosen.

In other words, relation to work is considered excessively from the aspect of politics and production, and not from that of the interest and involvement of the individual. Of course, the dangers and negative aspects of work, including overspecialization or the dangers of automation, should not be concealed. Excessive and debilitating division of labour leads to alienation, if society does not deal with them. Socialist society has the ability to deal with these problems, but this ability has to be realized.

Hungarians must think in terms of the

system of needs and values when analysing work in their society, what significance we should attribute it from the point of view not only of production, but also of the development of the life of the community and the shaping of personality, and what means could be employed to realize the concept of liberated work.

The system of values of socialism implies that the individual not become isolated, and care for the community in which he or she lives, and care for the problems of the world in general.

One aspect of this issue is public man, meaning that the individual would become involved in the community. Civic education is a major issue of our time, and only the appropriate solution of this problem can enable people to take advantage of socialist democracy, only people who understand social matters can excercise their rights and responsibilities. This implies the strengthening of the spirit of socialist democracy and patriotism.

This political activity in the broader sense of the word can be exercised in smaller communities, work place, at the provincial or national level alike, but this is only one aspect of community attitude. The relationship with the community also includes the aspect of *private life*, the culture of which is even less developed. From a socio-economic point of view, the old feudal or capitalistic relations have been superseded, but the new forms and contents of communication are far from having been established. It is typical that there are many who are confused about formulas of address, and even more so with their content. The almost endless list of the various problems include attitudes to love, family, children, the meaning of friendship, relationship with colleagues at the place of work and outside it, the relationship between employer and employee, etc. On the one hand, old stereotypes survive and on the other, breaking with them often results in rudeness, the rejection of all formality. Naturally, I do not urge standardization, but feel that this confusion covers both ideological and psychological problems, and this is why this phenomenon deserves attention.

Socialist society provides the opportunity for man to fully develop his or her personality. Such fulfilment, however, requires a rise in consciousness first fo all, a knowledge of one's abilities and an awareness of goals. Many do not take advantage of the opportunities, and neglect self-knowledge, not to say knowledge of the world. The problem is that the society's institutional network is still unable to carry out that very minute educational work that would be required to reach every individual. Perhaps Hungarians rely too much on the ability of institutions to solve individual ideological and moral problems, or that of groups and strata. "Pure" political problems are placed at the centre of ideological education, at times are given undue emphasis, even Marxism as a philosophical system does not impress everyone as realistic enough, whereas scientific, aesthetic, and ethical questions are often discussed in isolation. The question of everyday consciousness arises. Hungarians like to start out from the highest degree of objectivation, from the great works of science, literature, and arts, when carrying out cultural work, and rightly so, because they want to disseminate values; yet the state of the everyday consciousness of certain strata should also be taken into consideration.

Although transitional, the system of values of socialist society is based on the realistic humanism of our age. Its optimism, its creative and collective character, its endeavour to bring about the harmonious formation of personality, its ideology based on dialectical and historical materialism, and last but not least, activity and praxis aimed at the establishment of the objective conditions of progress are all factors which distinguish it from the technocratic neopositivist or individualist and irrational trends emerging in the developed capitalist countries. Certain traits of the socialist way

of life have also taken a practical form; suffice to mention the socialist brigade movement.

The question is not that we have to start out from some sort of abstract goals, a system of needs and values which exists only in theory; the right tendencies which can be developed by the means of education —among other things—already exist. I say "among other things" because adequate economic and social conditions must also be established to enable these tendencies to really develop.

4

In 1974, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party adopted a resolution on the position and the developmental tasks of general education.* This followed a resolution on the further des velopment of education adopted two year-earlier. Both resolution emphasized education through different means, methods, and systems of institutions.

The resolution on general education states that "the further building of the socialist society calls for workers who are professionally well qualified, meet the requirements of production and work morale, perform their work consciously, expediently and productively, and are imbued by the spirit of collectivity." Furthermore, that "general education cannot be limited to the dissemination and mediation of culture and education; an important task of it is the promotion of the establishment of the socialist way of life and socialist attitudes, the spiritual and emotional identification with socialist principles, the development of a collective spirit, of an operative force, and of public activity. Socialist general education should promote the establishment of a social atmosphere, in which the meeting of the requirements of a sensible life and work for public goals represent the social value, and are most highly appreciated, and in which the acquisition and utilization of consumer goods take place sensibly and depend on actual needs."

In harmony with this resolution of 1976 a bill on general education was adopted. It stated: "The building of socialist society, the extension of socialist democracy, the development of production, science, and technology, the progress of social consciousness, changes in the way of life, and increasing leisure time require an ever broader education from the man of our time. The foremost need of developed socialist society is the development of people who have a general education and are professionally competent, who are continuously improving, have a socialist ideology, and have a collective spirit; that our whole nation participate in the achievement, development and promotion of culture." Nowadays, when there is much talk about human rights, it is worth mentioning that the bill underlines: "The Hungarian People's Republic provides the opportunity for all its citizens to acquire a basic general and professional education, to improve their education, attain the values of national, universal, and primarily socialist culture, and develop individual creativity. Participation in general education is a civic right; and at the same time, it is the obligation of every citizen—in accordance with his or her ability, qualification, and interest—towards himself or herself and society."

Both the resolution of the Central Committee and the bill adopted by Parliament prove that the Hungarian society has realized the importance of education, and not only from the aspect of the dissemination of knowledge, but also with a view to the development of society as a whole and the formation of man; the competent forums have also determined the goals and means which may assist in the development of educational activities.

* Regarding this matter, see No. 56 of the NHQ.

PÁL PÁNDI

FREEDOM OF THE ARTS IN HUNGARY

A friend from abroad wanted information on "freedom of the arts" in Hungary. I told him that the subject deserved an entire book; but for the present I will limit myself to a few subjects from the vast complex of issues.

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I am convinced that the pertinent experiences of the socialist countries are reciprocally instructive. This reciprocity is based, apart from the common ideology, on the circumstance that they became acquainted with the subject in the course of the struggle for power, of the emerging socialist state.

Within the debates on artistic freedom it is worth noting the special chain of controversies in the aftermath of the takeover of power along Communist lines.

The Paris Commune had hardly triumphed when discussions already started about the freedom of the arts. Directly after the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution a divergence of opinions on the matter became manifest. No sooner had the Hungarian Republic of Councils established itself in 1919 that a debate flared up about interpretations of artistic freedom.

After 1945 the ecstasy of freedom filled the Hungarian art world. This was all the more natural as the conservative, near-fascist and fascist official circles of the Horthy régime had banned not only Communist-inspired literature but had also tried to repress the avant-garde and all forms of culture having to do with radical bourgeois democracy. In contrast to the contemptible censorship of the counter-revolution the liberation has brought the joy and intellectual effervescence of a freedom that would not tolerate censorship. Much naiveté and more illusions were blended in this ecstasy. Yet all significant artists of the age considered it a natural criterion of freedom that there should be no freedom for works recalling the counter-revolution and Fascism —precisely in defence of freedom. Thus, consciously or unconsciously, the *philosophical* interpretation of the concept of freedom began to take shape and, as for the general tendency of this process, older and younger Marxists, progressive populist writers, and bourgeois democrats held similar views.

I refrain from continuing this historical survey even though the temptation is great. Now, after thirty years of socialist, Marxist, and democratic experience, I must embark on the interpretation of artistic freedom with some definitions. First: in Hungary every citizen has the right to artistic creation if it is individual activity not requiring the material support of the people, the state. This means that there is a difference between the freedom of writing sonnets and the freedom of shooting a 90-minute feature film. Anybody may write any script he likes, but the realization of the work may raise practical problems. To simplify my own task let me stick to the poet, short-story writer, and painter, i.e. I shall discuss the freedom of individual artistic creation. It is obvious that an unpublished work existing in one copy only cannot entail administrative measures, whatever its contents. We can exclude, however, this extreme case of artistic activity from further consideration because no real creator would want to write for his desk-drawer, and unknown art works do not benefit the public. Obviously the proof of our concepts and principles cannot reside in this extreme case but in the works which are published, i.e. the criterion of publication.

Second: however paradoxical it may seem, I continue this article on artistic freedom with the statement that anti-human,

pro-Fascist works, or works inciting against other races and people cannot be published. Neither does pornography get published; this, of course, does not mean that eroticism in art is banned. All these principles are a firm part of Hungarian cultural policy. Party members and non-party writers agree on the criteria of prohibition; so do older writers who remember the years of dogmatism and personality cult and the attacks of revisionism, and their younger colleagues who had been too young to reflect on events in the difficult fifties. These criteria have never produced tensions or conflicts in the practical application of creative freedom, particularly in the last twenty years.

The sphere and source of possible tensions and conflicts lie elsewhere. As far as I can tell the basis for conflict is not uniform, there are different types of tensions and conflicts. Before giving a general idea about them I wish to make the positive side of my viewpoint clear and unambiguous. I see the maximal freedom of the arts in close correlation with the deepest possible aesthetic apprehension of reality. Hence the *sine qua non* of all support of realism in art is the encouragement to render the totality of life. I can only repeat that the validity of Marxism is total, hence the power of the socialist artist resides in his ability—if he is talented enough—to produce in his art a comprehensive view of the world. So if the condition of freedom of artistic creation is the artistic truth of a work, we can also say that freedom of the arts is the condition of truth in artistic creation. Thus I interpret freedom in the sense of this philosophy: in brief, this means that freedom is the realization of necessity.

In art, cultural policy, and critical practice this philosophical concept of freedom is accompanied by a practical concept of freedom as well: the question of the freedom of creative work intended for the public. This second concept is not independent of the philosophical concept of freedom and in some points they are so closely related that they may produce a conflict situation—but they are not identical.

I will discuss here only two questions (two "freedom problems") from my own experience. According to the judgement of the Party Marxism is a directing force and has a directing role in the present ideological situation in Hungary; at the same time the ideological state of the masses is characterized by the hegemony of Marxism. Hence as yet it cannot be said that in Hungary Marxism is a universally valid ideology. In the fifties some diagnoses by political leaders supported by their prestige had mistaken wishes for reality and had asserted that the Hungarian people were uniformly Marxist; but the Hungarians had to pay a high price for this error. The assertion of this hegemony does not mean, of course, that this ideological state should be maintained; it means, on the one hand, that the Party and the state mean to pursue their historical work on the basis of the actual situation and, on the other hand, that they wish to cover, patiently, at a normal pace, the path leading from the hegemony of Marxism to its universal assertion. Hungarian Marxists work together with some who perform their tasks on weekdays and go to church on Sundays, as well as with those who do a honest day's work and in their spare time, among friends, pursue their petty-bourgeois or bourgeois day-dreams. The general assertion of Marxism will perhaps be completed only by the next generation or the generation thereafter; until then, instead of the precipitate proclamation of ideological homogeneity, Hungarian Marxists must try to tread the path of reality which, although thorny and difficult, is at least exempt of illusions.

This state of things leaves its marks on the arts, Marxism being here too in a position of hegemony. Let us bypass now the possibly pious cello-player, the tenor champion of liberalism, or the actor flirting with existentialism. Let us stick to the writers in whose works ideology shows more

clearly than in the delightful play of the cellist or in the enraptured voice of the tenor. Quite a few talented writers are attached to some kind of fideism (for instance the poet János Pilinszky), or feel close to existentialism (the writer Miklós Mészöly), or express their nostalgia for a Utopian system of justice in their poetical criticism of the actual situation (such as György Konrád). The books of these authors are published by Hungarian publishing houses—at times after some debate—and they often appear in journals first. Their reception by the public varies: the esoteric novelist is at most the sensation of a narrow circle, whereas the gifted poet is read by a wider public.

Two negatives factors and one positive make the publication of their works possible. There is nothing in their writings that would fall under the criteria of prohibition. Moreover, a work of art is not automatically identical with its author's ideology: it can be better, more revealing, and even more progressive than its author's philosophical concept as expressed in words. (Naturally it can be also worse.) And finally the positive factor: these authors are gifted, and talent and progress have an affinity for each other despite all obstacles. This consideration is the basis of the freedom of the arts in practice that exists in Hungary and I need not explain that its everyday application entails many worries, difficulties, errors, or misunderstandings. Maybe I need not explain either that in the working of this mechanism Marxist criticism plays a considerable role. It also seems to me that Marxist reviewers do not enjoy "immunity" but that Marxist criticism has an organic function in the country's intellectual life. A few unsuccessful reviews will not destroy this function, and neither will insinuating attacks break it up.

One more pertinent fact should be mentioned: in the course of socialist construction a type of artist evolves who does not identify himself with all aspects of socialist ideology, yet does not oppose the great history-shaping work of socialism. In the words of Lunacharsky this type "is subjected to the conflicting influences of several classes," and these contradictions show in his works. I think artistic and critical activity in the country is able to cope with these problems openly. Public opinion, within realistic limits, is able to appreciate the principle put into practice that more freedom, with all the risks it entails, does not mean less socialism, on the contrary, it requires the stepping up of socialist creative energies. The state is powerful enough to oblige the artist or writer to put these works away into desk-drawers. There had been a time when not only works were put away and not merely into desk-drawers. We have got beyond this stage, and art now evolves in the sometimes rough, biting, and draughty atmosphere of publicity based on principles.

Artists and publishers, critics and officials with a common ideological and political position may have differences of opinion that affect the philosophical or practical interpretation of the freedom of art. As far as I know, in the last ten or twenty years some works have become the subject of greater or smaller clashes concerning their publication or distribution, but these happened only after their appearance in print; of course, in theory or in practice such differences of opinion can emerge before the appearance of a work and affect its very publication. I am thinking particularly of cases touching upon the bases of society, questions cutting into the quick of matters. In this process of often acrimonious debate the exchange of opinions, well-considered publishing practices, and Marxist criticism must play a major role.

One question in these practically inevitable debates touches upon the philosophical interpretation of creative freedom from a practical side. If freedom is the realization of necessity (in this case its elevation into artistic creation in the sense

of György Lukács: "valid literature should make the true, artistic, and realistic picture of contemporary man the component of mankind's consciousness"), the question may arise, who is competent to determine what is necessary? Who decides upon the criteria of necessity, etc.? To provide a genuine answer to this question one must detach himself from unblinking faith and subjectivism. Concerning the basic questions of society, it is obvious that, the possibilities for establishing the objective necessities conditioning essential social spheres are centred in the Marxist-Leninist parties which integrate the methods and results of science and react sensitively to the pulse of public opinion. Hence, the Party is not a mystically endowed proclaimer of necessity, but rather it struggles for the perception of this necessity and is always disposed to correct possible errors or further develop its position on a specific issue according to changed conditions! Moreover, in my experience, the Party does not consider itself the only body competent to reveal and detect the necessities in many fields. Quite correctly it concentrates on the main questions of domestic and international life, and does not consider its task to solve every minor problem. On the other hand, it is a fact that in the Communist movement the Party often suggests and initiates those norms of human behaviour, the "stylistical traits" of human communication, that may promote the application of socialist humanism in "small matters" as well.

I repeat that the Party can follow its guidelines and perform its historically justified work only if it works in close rapport with science and public opinion. So the necessities are determined not by one person or two, but—and this process becomes increasingly conscious in socialist democracy—the Party can attain the competence which enables its optimal approach to the evaluation of necessities in fundamental social question if it works in symbiosis with the non-party masses.

It is possible that in special objectivations such as art the objective necessity is established even in the process of creation, either in interaction with political directives or formulations, or in relative independence from them. The emphasis is on truth and not on the question of prestige, of who was the first to enounce it. The consequences of the artist's ability to visualize problems in a healthy socialist society become part of the political stream of thought directed by the Party, and this suggestive or revealing vision is not regarded by the Party as a curtailment of its competence but, on the contrary, as a communal, artistic attitude, as a feed-back to be encouraged. Art, on the other hand, if aware of its responsibility, cannot brush aside the directives of the Party which assist in the deeper apprehension of reality. This train of thought makes the process appear more harmonious than in real life. In daily life these tendencies assert themselves at the price of frictions and conflicts. Some artists are afraid to lose the sovereignty of their art under the impact of political inspirations, and some officials may be unable to see at the same time the primacy of politics and the specific features of artistic creation, its specific and unique way of expression. In spite of it all, Hungarians must strive to develop and consolidate the partnership of politics and art.

I have outlined a few Hungarian experiences relative to the interpretation of artistic freedom. They all indicate that we must couple the consistency of principles with maximum patience and persuasion, because patience without principle is as meaningless as a principle without followers. Our mission is not to sing the song of freedom alone in the desert, but to work in the thick of society and do our best in our own sphere to help the truth of freedom and the freedom of true art to assert themselves.

SÁNDOR SZALAI

TIME AND ENVIRONMENT

THE HUMAN USE OF TIME

The calendar and the clock

Social life in the industrially developed parts of the world, and especially in modern urban-industrial surroundings, shows an ever growing dependence on the clock and an ever growing independence of the calendar.

The calendar reflects the natural rhythm imposed on terrestrial life by the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, in particular of the sun and the moon. Many great religions trace the origins of the calendar back to the act of Creation. According to the Book of Genesis, God said: "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for *signs*, and for *seasons*, and for *days*, and *years*". And indeed, since times immemorial, all living beings, men, beasts and plants alike, had to adapt themselves in one way or another to the change of the seasons, the tidal ebb and flow of the seas, the alternation of day and night; the yearlong variations in the duration of daylight and nocturnal darkness—natural processes of a periodical and cyclical character, all displayed in the calendar.

In earliest times, when man was still a cavedweller or nomadic hunter and food-gatherer, and even much later, when man settled to till the soil and breed animals, the schedule of his everyday life was mainly determined by this natural rhythm. He had to use his time in accordance with it. Spring, summer, autumn and winter, dry and rainly seasons, high and low tides, sunrise and sunset were very much in control of the daily and yearly schedule of his activities, directed him what to do, and what to leave undone, when to work and when to rest. The game he hunted, the berries or mussels he gathered, and later the fields he tilled and the flocks he tended, briefly the whole biosphere in which, and off which, he lived, was subject to the beat of the same natural rhythm as man himself.

Some innovations in traditional agricultural life—the introduction of irrigation and of methods for preserving food, the development of roads and of heated and ventilated durable housing, the invention of the transparent window and of improved lighting utensils like the candlestick, etc., certainly contributed something towards making man somewhat more independent from seasonal and diurnal changes imposed by the heavenly clockwork.

Nevertheless, progress was slow. It is slow even now in those parts of the world where traditional agricultural ways still prevail and hence the rule of nature's rhythm over human activities remains essentially unchanged.

The mechanical clock and the measurement or scheduling of human work and leisure by equally divided hours and minutes of uniformly passing physical time are an invention of the modern industrial era. It became widespread as a consequence of manufacturing and industrial workdays or shifts of fixed durations with a clearly separated workplace and home. As Lewis Mumford once said, it was not the hissing of the steam-engine but rather the ticking of the clock that signaled the beginning of our industrial age.

The point is not that people who lived in agricultural societies of the past could not obtain alarm-clocks or wristwatches because none were available at that time but that they had no need and could not have found any use for gadgets that indicate evenly divided hours and minutes of

uniformly passing physical time—a kind of time alien to the natural rhythm governing their life.

In our world of time-tables and schedules of all sorts, it sounds almost funny to learn when reading Herodotus that this great traveller and well informed man never met with the concept "hour" and could not even find the right word for it. True, a few centuries later, in Rome, the period between sunrise and sunset, that is the main period of human activity varying in length with the changing seasons, was divided into twelve parts called hours ("horae"). The sixth hour of this period, the *sexta hora*, was the time of the *siesta*.

As daylight was longer in summer than in winter, the "hours" of antiquity, a twelfth part of the day, lasted less long in winter than is summer. But this was not how people felt about them. In fact, we know that in those ancient times people complained a lot about the "unreliability" of the public water-clocks, the *clepsydrae*. Of course, these showed the time independently of the change of seasons and consequently were "slow" in winter (when the hours of daylight were soon over) but "fast" in summer (when daylight and its twelfth part, the hour, lasted much longer). Ctesibius, the great engineer of Alexandria, found a remedy. He designed various dials for water-clocks with shorter and longer spaces for the hours. Exchanging these dials with the seasonal changes in the length of daylight, he succeeded at last in adjusting the physical time of the water-clocks to the daily routine of social activity.

Even Caesar found it quite natural to determine time by the order of camp life and not the other way round. He speaks, for instance, of events at the time of the third watch, although possibilities of fixing physical time had long been known even at his time. Nobody ever cared in Athens or Rome to divide the *night* into hours. What for? With the exception of a few guardsmen and revellers, the use of time stopped when darkness set in. People went to bed. No night shifts, no late evening news, no late-late shows, no nothing...

The clock in the human environment

The scene changed fairly abruptly with the advent of the mechanical clock—wherever it made its appearance, it was at first a rather expensive and bulky mechanism which could be put to public use only by mounting it in church-towers or on the pediment of city-halls and other prominent public buildings.

All these early clocks had but *one* hand, an "hour-hand". The need for taking account of minutes, not to speak of seconds, arose only when people had already got accustomed to living "by the clock" and to adapt their daily life, even "minute" details of it, to the tick-tock of this mechanical device.

A mechanical device—that is just the point! The clock, the time-piece, the wrist-watch we have is a *machine*, a member of the great family of machines which became the prime movers of industrialization and on the development of which all further industrial progress depends even in our days. The clock *is* a machine and therefore speaks the *language* of machines. Its unchanging tick-tock, the evenly divided uniformly flowing time of 24 hours per day, 60 minutes per hour and 60 seconds per minute meted out by it, corresponds exactly to the beat, the huff and puff, the whirring, buzzing and whizzing of machinery on which industrial production depends.

Clock-time, or "physical time" as the scientists call it, shows no traces of the natural rhythm of seasons, days and nights, lengthening and shortening hours of daylight of which we spoke earlier. The monotonous, implacable tick-tock of our clocks and watches serves as a varrier for the rhythm to which people working with machines, servicing machines and profiting from machines must adapt themselves in some

way or other to get all those benefits and comforts with which modern industry provides to us—at a price.

With the progress of industrialization and urbanization, clocks became more and more an integral part of the human environment and increasingly obtained control of people's everyday activities, of their use of time.

Recent surveys show, for instance, that in highly developed countries up to 90 per cent or more of the adult population (e.g., 92.5 per cent in the Brussels–Nodebais district in Belgium, or 98.1 in the environs of Hoyerswerda in the GDR) own not only a clock or alarm clock in their household but also a watch. 1 per cent or less of adults in the more or less well developed countries which have been surveyed in this respect own neither a watch, nor some sort of clock in their households. On the other hand, in a less developed country such as Peru, which certainly does not belong to the least developed countries of the Third World, it has been found that even on a survey site encompassing the bustling port of Callao and some adjoining parts of Lima, the capital of the country, the proportion of the adult population without either watch or a clock at its disposal amounted to 21 per cent. * In quite a number of poor African and Asian countries the overwhelming majority of the rural population has no access whatsoever to clocks, public or private, and cannot read the time.

The clockwork of industrial society

The pulse of life in modern urban-industrial surroundings is set by the clock. Industrial society has in fact established a clockwork of its own that imposes its beat as powerfully or even more powerfully on everyday activities than the natural, rhythm of the alternating nights and days and of the changing seasons had imposed itself on life in traditional agricultural civilizations.

The extent to which modern man managed to make a watch in effect a part of his own body is highly characteristic. The wristwatch is still the one and only mechanical implement which he can wear on his naked skin without being in any way incommoded by it. He loves to wear the shackles of physical time on his wrist and he has perfected the tiny automation to such a degree that he can turn a somersault, plunge into a swimming pool, make love, or go to sleep without takin it off his body.

In stark contrast to earlier times when the main daily period of human work and leisure and indeed of all social activities lasted from sunrise to sunset we now have an uninterrupted succession of 24-hour days. Modern industry could not even exist without being in business around the clock, regardless of seasons, regardless of daylight and nocturnal darkness. After all, it has to provide light at night, heat in the winter, ice and colled air in the summer, ventilation without wind, and many other such amenities, whenever people want it and can pay for it. Thanks to a special modern industry all sorts of amusements, experiences and adventures, news reports, musical shows, movies, travelogues, even religious services, are "on tap" for 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. People can get about, drive, travel or fly at night and in practically any kind of weather.

The reverse of the medal shows quite a different picture. Let us however, leave the notorious dysfunctional and destructive effect of contemporary industrial production processes on the human environment out of account for the moment, visualizing instead the less conspicuous but very profound effects of the industrial clockwork on ways of life and on the everyday activities of people—on the use they can make of their time.

* Alexander Szalai (ed.): The Use of Time: Daily Activities of Urban and Suburban Populations in Twelve Countries. Mouton. The Hague–Paris, 1972.

Modern industry requires great numbers of people ready to do their work at fixed hours. An ever growing part of industrial production processes is of a continuous character. The wheels must be kept turning day and night. Hence the need for late afternoon and night shifts, for the uninterrupted operation of many plants over the weekend.

Automation provides scant help in this respect. It may reduce the numbers of workforce needed in any single plant but with the spread of automation a rising proportion of the workforce has to adapt itself to working times spread over the night and over the weekend. Highly automated production processes require continuous operation instead of "batch production" by their very nature and will not redeem investment costs if used in any other way. The progress of automation promises to shorten considerably the daily and weekly working time of a great number of people. However, the very same people will have to accept to do their work at "impossible hours".

Computers are able to do big jobs in milli-, micro- and even nano-seconds. Programming, and more recently: multiprogramming, sees to it that they never stop for a moment and are ready to share their precious time with any number of faraway "users" who may call on their services any time and request immediate answers. Of course, such big electronic beasts have to be watched, fed and served incessantly, regardless of human living, working and sleeping habits. They are quick in enforcing the rule of the industrial clockwork over an ever wider circle of human activities.

Industrial development and the use of time

Naturally, the rule of the industrial clockwork over people's everyday activities is by no means complete nor is it ever accepted without resistance.

True, the wearing of a watch has become in our industrially civilized life almost as indispensable as wearing clothes. Still, it is worthwhile to point out that we rarely cast a glance at this physical measuring instrument in order to check the time and duration of our really private activities. In our privacy, we tend to look at the watch merely to make sure not to miss some task imposed by the great society surrounding us. We hardly ever feel the need to find out how long we have been reading, chatting with friends, playing with our children. We positively never want to fix the exact time when we kissed our loved one. Looking at a watch while courting or making love is an insult to the partner who will surely resent it. The more private the character of an activity, the less we feel any need to check its time and duration and the less are we able to reconstruct from memory its temporal parameters. Kant remarked very wisely that time which appears to be short when we spend it, becomes long in remembrance, while time which seems to drag when we pass through it, leaves a short trace in memory.

Those who have some experience in so-called time-budget research, i.e. in the study of the use people make of their time, know fairly well the difficulties of establishing the actual time demand of daily activities falling into a person's free time of activities more or less devoid of social duties and "leisurely" spent.*

From a subjective point of view, the reign of physical time, or clock-time covers, even in our industrial civilization, first of all the period of daily work and its accessories (commuting to and from the working place, etc.) and other parts of the waking stage, whose utilization in time and contents are regulated by the social clockwork. The busy period between the ringing of the alarm-clock and the moment one leaves for work is an example. All that is left, that is if there is anything, of the remainder of the 24

* See Sándor Szalai's article in NHQ 16.

hours not claimed by the physiological demand of sleep, by some other physiological necessities of lesser duration, and—last but not least—by unavoidable household and family obligations (home chores, child care), is called leisure which, if undisturbed, is not governed by the constraints of the physical clock inside us in the same way.

People in highly developed industrial countries complain nowadays not so much about long daily working hours but rather about the scarcity or even the complete lack of leisure in their daily lives. (This is not an overstatement. Practically every major time-budget survey carried out nowadays in urban-industrial surroundings finds a certain number of employed women with small children, who work a daily "double shift" in industry and household, and who cannot report a single minute of leisure during the week, not even on Sundays, when they have to catch up on housework left undone).

An interesting finding was made in the course of the Multinational Time-Budget Research Project which was undertaken in the late sixties and early seventies under the aegis of the International Social Science Council. This project surveyed the daily activities of urban and suburban populations in a number of countries which had attained various degrees of industrial development. The scale extended from moderately industrialized countries like Bulgaria and Yugoslavia up to countries in the forefront of industrialization like the GDR, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States.

It was found, quite surprisingly, that as soon as a real industrial take-off has been achieved, the whole structure of people's everyday activities, the daily schedule of social life, the use people make of their time, i.e. their entire time-budget, becomes thoroughly adapted to the requirements of industrial production, that is to the clockwork of industrial society.

Thus, for instance, the time-budget of the population, in the small Bulgarian industrial town of Kazanlik in the famous Valley of Roses, is in its basic traits far more like the time-budget of the population of Jackson, Michigan which is closely linked to the supermodern automobile and airplane industry of Detroit and Chicago, than to the time-budget of Bulgarian peasants in some forlorn valley of the Balkan Mountains where traditional agricultural ways of life still prevail.

Workingmen in Kazanlik and in Jackson, Michigan both work fixed hours, and draw a sharp and unchangeable line between their working lows and their leisure, their place of work and separated from their home are separated, they are away from their family where doing their job, rise, have meals and go to bed in accordance with the timing of their work shift, and so forth. This is what really determines their use of time. The fact that one of them uses a jolting old local train for commuting while the other uses his own car in the rush hour traffic, or that one of them may spend his time in the evening by reading a book or listening to an old-fashioned radio while the other may sit at the same time before his brand new colour television set—does not make such a big difference in time use.

What *is* essentially different is the time use of some two thousand million people who still live under the conditions of the pre-industrial age or under even more ancestral conditions in the less developed countries of the Third World.

As yet little time-budget research has been done on these countries. This is not simply due to a lack of interest on the part of social scientists, or to technical difficulties like those incurred when trying to establish the time-budget of people who have no watches and have no need to know the "exact time."

Time indoors and time outdoors

The truth is that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to apply the concept of physical

time and the customary categories of time use to the doings of people who do not live around the clock but whose life is regulated by sunrise and sunset, by the changing tides and the changing seasons.

Imagine a shepherd sitting under a tree, watching the flock from the corner of his eye and in the mean time carving artful motifs on a stick, as he learned to do from his father or grandfather. Is he "working" or is he enjoying "leisure"? Suddenly he may look at the sun, stand up, go to the well to water his sheep. Should we ask him what time it is and at what hours of the day he is want to draw water from the well? Does he "commute" to his working place or does he just wander around with his flock? When does he go on "vacation"? The questions of the time-budgeter obviously do not fit the situation.

However, let us not overstate the case. It is of course by no means impossible to make some qualitatively and quantitatively valid comparisons between the time use of people living in modern industrial civilizations and of people who are still subject to the conditions of traditional agricultural societies or who follow even more ancient ways of life.

In order to achieve comparability between such vastly dissimilar types of "time husbandry", one must of course refrain from the use of industrially loaded categories like "fixed hours of work", "domestic work" as opposed to "paid work", "commuting", "vacationing", etc. Terms like these are simply unapplicable to traditional rural life.

In contrast, the measurement of time spent "indoors" and "outdoors" is applicable to the everyday life of people in societies which are very differently positioned along the developmental scale.

It would be wrong to think that the proportions of time people spend daily in closed premises ("under a roof") and in the open ("under the sky") depend mainly on natural factors like the climate and the seasons. This may have been true once upon a time when man had built up as yet few defences against the forces of nature. But right from the beginning of historical times, the whole course of socio-economic development was characterized by a steadily growing control of man over the natural environment and by a constant effort to adapt the environment and living conditions to needs and wishes. That is why historical man began to erect walls, built houses, and developed finally the whole practice of "living indoors", one of the greatest innovations in the history of mankind.

The whole process of getting ever more independent from nature and its calendar was enormously speeded up by industrialization. One of the most impressive of the rate of change is the quick shift of everyday life from outdoors to indoors in industrial society.

It is still true that—everything else being equal—people who live in comfortably warm and sunny regions tend to spend more time outdoors, in the open air, than people who are exposed to a cold and rainy climate. However, if we turn the question round and ask what determines the ratio of time spent indoors in the case of countries without such large climatic differences then the answer is clearly the following.

The more industrialization progresses, the more time people spend indoors. An increasing part of their daily activities is transferred from the open air to closed premises.

The bulk of industrial goods has always been produced intramurally, i.e. in workshops and plants built for just that purpose. Even in agricultural production more and more work is nowadays losing its open air character. Drivers of tractors and hervesters sit in cabins mounted on their vehicles and may even enjoy there the advantages of air-conditioning. The poultry yard and pigstyes are being increasingly replaced by mechanized egg, poultry and pork factories. Chickens, ducks and pigs are bred, reared, fattened,

killed and processed there without ever having been put out to pasture; men and women who tend the animals are locked up with them in the same premises.

In modern urban-industrial surroundings few people walk to their working place, few people get around, commute and travel on foot. The large numbers who ride cars, trams and buses, travel essentially indoors, that is in closed premises on wheels. Subways have, of course, their own special "indoors" under the surface.

Modern city-dwellers spend little time sitting around in their gardens because not many of them a garden next to their home, except those who own a cottage in suburbia, or a "weekend house" still further away from the city. The agora, the forum and the marketplace, where people of earlier times spent many hours of the day walking, talking, shopping, doing business and discussing politics under the sky, have been replaced by department stores, supermarkets, stock exchanges, conference halls, clubs and cafeterias which provide an opportunity to carry out the same civic activities intramurally.

Add indoor swimming pools, indoor skating rings and indoor tennis courts, and roofed stadia with artificial turf. Add TV which makes it unnecessary to walk in the evening even as far as the corner cinema. Add the phone which permits long chats with friends, colleagues and business partners without ever leaving home.

After all that perhaps no more explanation is needed why industrialization, as we know it today, has so dramatically reduced time spent in the open and has transferred such a great part of everyday activities to the artificial but in many ways very comfortable and practical environment industrial man has created for himself indoors.

There is naturally a reaction. People are longing for more open air than has been left to them. They banish traffic from some parts of cities in order to be able to take a walk once again and do some window-shopping. They promulgate zoning laws, try to restore atrophied parks and polluted beaches, go camping... Environmentalists, formerly regarded as cranks, fanatics and utopians, have gained public recognition and are sometimes even listened to. But is that enough?

Nothing can stop industrial development. In spite of all precarious "side effects" on the natural environment and on condition of human life, private and public, its benefits and its irreplaceable contribution to the welfare of mankind outweigh by far any harm it has ever done. And quite apart from this, nobody has ever proposed a viable alternative to industrial development in solving the basic problem: hwo to feed and to ensure acceptable living conditions to a population of more than four thousand million, more than half of whom are at present lacking the resources to satisfy at least teir most basic human needs.

All the problems discusses here are related to industrial life and industrial development as we know it now. The need for radical improvements is quite obvious. I do not believe, however, that radical improvements can be achieved in such matters only, or mainly, by making radical choices of the "yes or no"-type.

What we need is not the restauration of the absolute rule of the calendar and the banishment of the clock. Nor the reverse of such a decision.

What we need is not a vote for or against industrialization, for or against urbanization, for or against more time spent outdoors than indoors, and the like.

What we really need is a better balance between all such extremes: better balanced socio-economic development, better balanced use of the natural and the man-made environment, better balanced time-budget of everyday work and leisure, and—last but not least—a better use of one's life, outdoors and indoors, under all skies and under all roofs, in public places, work places and in the privacy of homes.

TIBOR KLANICZAY

REFLECTIONS ON NATIONAL TRADITION

I

The notion and character of national tradition

Tradition can be called the passing down of collective experience and values from one generation to the next. It is therefore in a constant interaction, at times in harmony, at times in conflict, with progress and development. Ongoing renewal or a bold break can be present in production as well as in society, and especially in culture. Past experience, accumulated and incorporated in tradition, may prove to be indispensable even in the most radical turn of events; although breaking with tradition or even its elimination is emphasized at times, the nascent new gradually reincorporates more and more of the lost tradition. In the first place it takes back of tradition what is in direct harmony with its objectives. Thereafter it pulls back, if indirectly, all that can be put to good use, in one way or another, and finally it strives to recognize tradition as such, as its predecessor.

The ways of employing cultural tradition and man's relationship with tradition are defined by class interests. A social class endeavouring to seize power always stresses the new, and attacks the traditions of the earlier social order, picking out only revolutionary elements closely dovetailing with its own interests.

At a later stage the social class in question aims to broaden its basis in tradition, striving to reach every past cultural value within the sphere of its objectives that can be described as "progressive." After consolidating its power, and making sure that the defeated enemies of the new social order can hardly profit from tradition, the new class is ready to see itself as its residuary legatee.

National tradition can be described as a defined part of universal cultural traditions, a separate segment possessing internal cohesion and laws of its own. In a limited sense national tradition, as a full system, belongs to a specific community or nation alone. Thus national tradition comprises the full historic experience of a national community and is its spiritual and cultural product: historical values live on in constant interaction with the present. The content of tradition is not limited to the exclusive "national" elements of tradition since the values of the given community before its existence as a nation also form and integral part of tradition. In the case of the Hungarians, not only the values of a society that became a nation state in the nineteenth century, and not exclusively the manifestations of the national conscience of former centuries are part of the national treasury of tradition. All that this society has created since its existence, and that is related to the past of Hungarians as an ethnic group, also belongs to the rich pool of tradition. What is more, the country, and the pre-Hungarian values of the nation's present territory (e.g., the Roman relics) are incorporated in traditions as well.

Humanity now lives within a system of national societies. Each must therefore use, as well as it can, its own national traditions as well as the general, common traditions of humanity. This applies to capitalist and socialist nations. However, neither the interpretation nor the concept of tradition are identical in those cases; national traditions differ in bourgeois and in socialist societies.

It would be wrong to think that assertion of class interests is only a matter of selection, i.e., if one believed that certain phenomena belong to the traditions of a bourgeois nation, and others to the socialist

traditions. Both bourgeois and socialist nations, unless they are out to mutilate their own traditions, will sooner or later have to own to the national tradition as a whole. The only difference will appear in conception interpretation, ranking, or other hierarchical order. Saint Stephen, the first Hungarian king, the seventeenth-century poet Zrínyi, and the nineteenth-century poets Vörösmarty and Petőfi were held in high esteem by the bourgeois nation as they are by the socialist. The bourgeoisie generally endeavours to incorporate past deeds or cultural values, though they be unambiguously hostile from their point of view, naturally with appropriate distortions and falsifications. Thus there have been attempts to include the Paris Commune in the bourgeois-nationalist tradition, and to fit Garcia Lorca into the culture of the Franco regime.

Deliberate selection is only timely in the initial, revolutionary period of a new nation. In Hungary the cult of revolutionary tradition became understandably and necessarily exclusive in the period of struggle for power, pushing into background, and at times handling with suspicion, non-revolutionary elements of the invaluable national tradition. After the early power struggle, at the time of national mobilization for the building of socialism, apart from continuing to value revolutinary tradition as the highest—more stress was accorded to the notion of progressive tradition. This meant the extension of a deliberately nurtured tradition, disseminated in public thinking, to every phenomenon that, though non-revolutionary in itself, pointed in the direction of revolution, and in fact prepared for radical change, confronting class exploitation and defending popular interests. Nowadays progressive tradition is too tight a framework, unless it be expanded robbing it of meaning. In the present consolidated socialism, the Hungarian public will have to heed value as such, apart from whether something happens to be progressive or not. There is a special duty to preserve all of national tradition of great value, turning it into a treasure owned by everybody. Could the murals of medieval churches, or the works of one of the great masters of the language, Cardinal Péter Pázmány, Archbishop of Esztergom, and a champion of the Counter-Reformation, or Prince Pál Eszterházy's works, amongst the greatest of old Hungarian music, be called part of the heritage? Unless the intention was to make fun of progress in a social-political sense, it would be sophistic to try and classify these things of great cultural value as part of the progressive tradition. At the same time, no one could deny that they are part of the Hungarian national tradition, and no efforts should be spared in caring for them. (There is a statue of Cardinal Pázmány in Budapest, Eszterházy's music has been released on records, and the murals have been restored to their original beauty.)

At the present phase of development and most probably for a long time to come, class interests will be present in the notion of the socialist nation not through an elimination of this or that but through proper interpretation and ranking. There is nothing the nation values that the socialist nation could renounce or leave to decay. The socialist interpretation of tradition should differ from the bourgeois way in that the former cares for the values of the past in a more complete manner and with greater responsibility as the working people can be considered the legitimate in heritor of all human and national values. The bourgeoisie, owing to their narrower class interests, was able to recognize the whole stock of the national heritage. It cultivated in the first place and popularized that which separated from or contrasted with other nations. Since a bourgeois nation lives in a web of insoluble problems with other nations, national tradition merely strengthens separation, that is self-defence, or aggressive aspirations as the case may be. But stress is laid on the humanistic values of the national

tradition in a socialist nation advocating the principles of internationalism, and the assessment of those elements that bring the socialist nation closer to other nations, uniting rather than dividing, comes to the forefront of interest.

The function of national tradition in current thinking

Keeping traditions awake is always important for the inner cohesion of a given community. This is so in the case of a family, a village, town, or institution, and applies in a more powerful way to the life of society, that is a nation as a whole. Firmly rooting national traditions in current public thinking strengthens the given community and develops the sense of belonging to that community. This community is socialist Hungarian society. Tending national traditions therefore objectively furthers the cohesion of socialist society, they are a source which simply cannot be neglected but must be exploited and mobilized to the fullest possible extent. One should be made aware that there are a thousand links that tie us to this place, that we belong to this community.

This takes us to the most complex part of the problem since one could easily reach improper, nationalist conclusions. People might argue that national feeling should be strengthened since this pays better than developing socialist ways of thinking. As against this sort of pseudo-interpretation, let us seek that part of self-awareness where the liveliness of national commitment is indispensable for a man of socialist conviction, and where nothing can replace that at the current stage of development.

Our starting-point should be that as a matter of course everyone is born into a family. A child does not try and find another father just because his own buys less candy, or allows more of a rough house. The feeling of belonging to a nation equally ought to go without saying. We are born into a nation, that is not a matter of choice but something given. Just as it would seem absurd to want to belong to a family that gives one better living conditions, so it would be crazy to make more pay a criterion of belonging to a nation, more precisely, which of the nations ensures one a higher standard of living.

The universal truth, that it is better to live in socialism than in capitalism, cannot be automatically transferred to every individual. There is nothing surprising about someone assuring better living conditions for himself in another country. In this respect, every economically underdeveloped country suffers drawbacks since a more advanced country (more advanced in living standards), like it or not, has a certain attractive power. So let us not cherish the illusions that the citizens of socialist Hungary live and remain here because all of them are better off than anywhere else. That argument turns on those who put it forward the very moment a Hungarian doctor, engineer, scientist, or even skilled worker reaches the recognition that some other country offers him higher rewards for his work, and what is more, he even gets such proposals to such effect. This could happen even if all the economic leeway is made up, and Hungary were competitive with the more advanced countries. Even then, for one reason or another, someone might see better opportunities for himself somewhere else. It would suffice if these people acted indifferently towards the human and moral values and superiority of their country, seeing welfare in material terms alone, and that is unfortunately far from rare, and that would be sufficient reason to break camp and move elsewhere.

In the present age of technological progress, in a mechanical world that necessarily favours material and interest considerations, that kind of attraction can be extremely powerful. Science and technology are rightly and necessarily gaining

ground in human thinking, and they are cosmopolite by nature. Scientific knowledge can on principle be utilized anywhere. That is why the attraction is and remains strong for people to capitalize their knowledge in a country—other than their motherland—where the best financial conditions are assured.

Socialist consciousness alone will not sufficiently withstand such attraction partly because socialist consciousness does not as yet penetrate the whole of the society, and partly because people with socialist ways of thinking can live in other countries, and actually do live in many parts of the world. That is why it is the feeling of belonging to this community, to the nation, the homeland that in all circumstances links, or can link, people to this country. Apart from the native language the national tradition is the strongest bond that retains and even strengthens that feeling.

Naturally one should not go to extremes. In an age when the world turns increasingly international, and contacts between countries speedily develop, a certain degree of migration is just about inevitable. Irrespective of political regimes, the number of people constantly increases who for various reasons settle down in another country for a shorter or longer spell, or for good. For a long time now a large number of Hungarians have settled abroad, and Hungary as well owes much to immigrants. Migration to a certain extent is quite healthy and no kind of national consciousness can ever stop it. But national consciousness helps to make such cases exceptional, and to maintain such people within the ideological and moral ties of the national, though not the social ones.

Consideration should be given to the cultural attractions of greater, more advanced civilizations as well, apart from the materialist aspects. One even unwillingly experiences open or latent longings for Italy, Paris or other temptations of capitalism, or the success of imperialist undermining, or materialism, or even a yearning for adventure. It is rather a question of a natural cultural magic that has, for understandable reasons, been valid and is still valid today, irrespective of socio-political implications. Nations poorer in cultural traditions can never perfectly counterbalance such an influence; but they can reduce those influences to their own value, if they are aware of their own culture, whatever it may be, and if its values are deeply imbedded in the national tradition.

When I emphasize that love of country, and an awareness of belonging to a nation, that is the keeping alive of national traditions strengthens links with the socialist nation, and particular to non-socialist minded people, that is not a question of tactics. It would be wrong to imagine that national traditions serve to attract to the socialist country men and women and sections of society who are not socialist minded, people backward in their thinking. The national heritage must be as alive a factor for socialists as for anyone. National traditions are at the same time a universal value, a part of universal human culture for which we are responsible and whose nurturing, protection and preservation require no tactics, but a long-term strategy.

Contradictions in the respect accorded to national traditions

Over the past twenty-five years the Hungarian socialist state has not neglected to embrace, cherish and make known the precious traditions of the country's past. On the contrary, one may assert with every justification that more such efforts have been made in the past twenty years than even before. A new hierarchy of traditional values has been established, and the treasures of the past have been uncovered and publicized to an unprecedented degree. A long list of past achievements could be drawn up in the field, starting with the central

position accorded to revolutionary values, the popular and critical editions of the classics of Hungarian literature, research into and publication of long-forgotten relics, the restoration of art monuments, the nurturing and collection of folk culture, and the successful activity of scholarly institution in the study of the Hungarian language, literature, history, leading to synthesis based on scientific standards. Add the widespread popularizing work, the worthy and crowd-pulling celebrations of national anniversaries (Dózsa, the leader of a peasant revolt in 1514, Rákóczi, the poets Petőfi and Ady) and initiatives in particular towns or regions caring for local traditions. Special importance should be attached to the fact that, mainly owing to carefully planned scholarly work, these local celebrations were arranged following well considered ideas, thus proving most effective.

If, despite all this, and particularly in 1973 and 1974 there were anxieties that the bonds of nationhood are loosening and a section of Hungarian society is losing touch with the national past, one must draw the conclusion that work in the field of national tradition has not been quite satisfactory. The reasons must be sought in certain deficiences and one-sided, contradictory ways of treating national tradition.

In trying to track down those weaknesses, one ought in the first place think of a lack of coordination of basically right trends, and the damage done to each other's achievements. Simultaneously with the fact that we constantly stress the importance of the national values, and do much for them, other primarily important objectives weaken efforts. National traditions are gradually eliminated from the thinking of young people to give more room to the natural sciences and technology.

A practically uninterrupted process goes on right before our eyes. What really happens is that history and literature keep shrinking in the school curriculum to the benefit of the natural sciences. More and more values are dropped by education and the consciousness of future generations every year. This process not only means that young people will know less and less of the national past that they so badly need to counteract the tempting siren song of the wide world, but also that teachers, mainly those teaching Hungarian literature and history, those mostly responsible for preserving and carrying on tradition, will lose heart, and withdraw from the fray.

It is important for Hungary to work out a long-range research plan concentrating forces on tasks indispensable for the country's present and future, but it is wrong that none of the central long-range plans envisage research into the national tradition (history, literature, language, art, music, ethnography, etc.).

Naturally this does not mean that such research does not get the necessary or possible support support. It is rather a question of efforts as part of the long-range national plan to do something special, timely and important, in addition to what is done anyway as a matter routine. This basically sound objective can unwillingly go hand in hand with lowering the prestige of research into the national tradition, in fact it can provoke its temporary decline. It happens that efforts previously directed to Hungarian literature and history are regrouped and concentrate on tasks figuring in the long-term plans. A scholar working on the poets Csokonai or Petőfi may be led to believe that it would do more good to change direction and examine literary aspects of the contemporary scientific and technological revolution that, as part of the long-term plan, is seen as a more important task than the study of literary classics. The national neglect of older traditions unwillingly qualifies as second-rate all scholars and institutions working in this field, as doing something that is not prescribed, or demanded, but merely tolerated, or perhaps cheerfully accepted. This is a good example to illustrate how a good idea can bring about anomalies of national

studies. Of course all this could be corrected by including the main tasks concerning the national tradition into the national scientific plan. It is hoped this will happen sometime in the future.

The frequent campaigns that become most apparent in the cult of anniversaries, confirm how unsatisfactory the nurturing of traditions is. It is a proper thing to commemorate an anniversary in a way worthy of it, but the nurturing of national treasures must not be turned into an occasional jubilee. The 500th anniversary of the death of the first great Hungarian poet, Janus Pannonius (who wrote in Latin), was honourably celebrated. On that occasion his poems were published in four different volumes and editions. All four were different in content. The only thing sad about them was that the last previous edition of poems by Janus Pannonius had come out in Hungary twenty years earlier, in 1953. It would have looked incomparably better, if all the parties concerned had not come awake at the same time. One of the greatest strengths of tradition is continuity. Traditions should therefore be never linked to anniversaries, only to be put out like flickering flames.

Historiography plays a most essential part in keeping national traditions awake. But Marxist historiography, in its role of forming human consciousness, has not displayed sufficient effectiveness yet. Historians have done much in the past 25 years. At the same time popularization has lagged far behind. This cannot in the least be accounted for by the fact that—for laymen—history has become somewhat less interesting. Actually the latest trends is historiography have rightly and necessarily placed the emphasis on basic subjects of research other than the story of events and the examination of personalities. The recognition of deeper, more concealed laws is undoubtedly a more fundamental task than describing developments. But the teaching of history cannot really follow this trend. Abstract laws are memorized at school instead of interesting, captivating and edifying incidents, imagination stirring historical conflicts and the stories of great men. It is especially in school that the dehumanizing of history takes on a tremendous scale, with abstract laws moving into the forefront owershadowing man and culture. It is not enough to uncover national tradition and the historic past if the means and methods are lacking to pass the achievements on to the broad masses, presenting them in an acceptable, interesting and attractive manner. Although interesting and successful efforts are made to this end, there is still much to be done and many resources remain untapped. In Hungary, e.g., there is no popular history periodical to present the interesting issues of Hungarian and world history in a colourful, richly illustrated manner thereby generating interest, as is successfully done in other countries.

Short-circuiting the national historical consciousness

When it comes to nurturing national traditions the main and perhaps the gravest irregularity is the shortening in time of public interest in the past. The average Hungarian feels he is the inheritor of a rather short past. In public consciousness Hungarian history will sooner or later be viewed in the light of a mere hundred or hundred and fifty years. Less and less, and practically nothing of the pre-nineteenth-century Hungarian literature will be taught at schools. Older chapters of Hungarian history, taken out of context, will remain senseless and boring. Popularization again regards only the values of the more recent age as worthy of dissemination. For a long time there was a stop in book publishing of pre-nineteenth-century Hungarian literature, and only recently has there been a change for the better.

It is customary to explain the neglect of the past by a lack of interest. But this

argument is misleading as were the 1976 commemorations of the 1526 battle of Mohács. The commemorations on the 450th anniversary proved how false that argument was when books of history bacame best-sellers overnight. Balassi's or Zrínyi's poems, or *Kuruc* songs, or chronicles, or the Hungarian flower songs are never remaindered. That applies to foreign literature as well. Older classics never gather dust on storeroom shelves. The argument that the ancient past has little or nothing to teach today's public is also lame. It is true that the history and literature of the recent past are more directly linked to the present and it is also obvious that nineteenth and twentieth-century Hungarian literature which is unsurpassably richer than older literature, should occupy a much more prominent place in the public consciousness.

It does not follow, however, that older literature and history have no timely lesson to teach.

The point is that it is not immaterial whether a nation has 150 or a thousand years' past. The depth of the past has a special power from the point of view of national cohesion. It is certainly no mere contingency that younger nations are making desperate efforts, even in socialist conditions, to prove and document a long past and established culture. Younger nations—like Canada—are striving to keep in evidence every spot and stone that recalls a notable event. What would they give to have a place where books were written as long ago as 900 years ago? Hungarians tend to cast a nonchalant glance at something as close as the eighteenth century, as if they were ashamed of the distant past—as some sort of feudal or clerical lumber-room—forgetting that thereby one renounces the larger part of history.

Pruning the past starts off a dangerous process. It is wrong to think that there will be keener interest in, e.g., the nineteenth century, if one diverts attention from more distant centuries. Quite the contrary! Cut off from their roots, the great values of the nineteenth century will appear less interesting. Deprived of their historical antecedents, their significance will not emerge. One should regard great national treasures in a twofold relation, first, in their international content, in order that their real place in universal human culture be clearly seen; it should not be placed neither at the bottom, nor at the top, taking away unjustified places from other works. The other aspect is the domestic national historical perspective. One should clearly point out the road national culture took until it produced a given thing. Just as neglect of the former system of connections leads to provincial short-sightedness, the omission of the latter deprives one of enjoying the magic of the present as opposed to the past.

Renouncing the continuity of tradition

The question of continuity is closely linked to what has been said before. Something that has a long-lasting continuity or is interrupted temporarily, but is reorganized, unwillingly creates confidence and attests to power. There is some sense in business firms stressing their 100 or 150-year-old or even older history. They are well aware that the client will automatically think that if a firm has managed to survive for that long, it must be worth something, and must possess experience that from the start ensures something extra. Cultural and scientific institutions also should insist on continuity. The Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei claims to be 374 years old. Actually, being founded in 1603, it ceased to exist in the 1630s without any fanfare. It was only in 1745 that the first unsuccessful attempts were made to revive the academy. In 1804 the academy was re-established at long last, and has been continuously functioning ever since. It was a matter of course for those striving to revive the academy, that they regarded the new one as the direct successor of the former, that

the latter should consciously be associated with the noble heritage of the former. Alas, similar continuity of tradition, preservation and handing down of certain moral capital to later generations was never frequent or customary in Hungary. Ignoring the past, new creations entailing unnecessary waste of energy have prevailed here. This was practically a historical malady in Hungary. In the Middle Ages, e.g., universities were established in Cracow, Prague, and Vienna, which, despite a number of crises, have survived. In Hungary, however, in the course of a century or more universities were established on four occasions, each time at another place, taking no account of predecessors. Naturally all four had a short life. When, at last, in the eigtheenth century, the predecessor of the present university of Budapest, was established in Nagyszombat it lacked the traditions of the university in nearby Pozsony, which dated back to the time of King Matthias Corvinus (fifteenth century). In descussing this subject one ought to ask whether the students of today's Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest are aware that they are attending a more than 300-year-old institution? That the university's name was changed to *Eötvös Loránd* was justified by the change of structure and profile, but was it right to discretely conceal the role of the founder removing his bust and portrait?

The case of the teachers' training college at Nyíregyháza is an outstanding example of breaking continuity of tradition. The cultural centre of north-eastern Hungary, looking back to several hundreds of years, and progressive without any reservations, was Sárospatak, with its college, library and relics. Since it was run by the Calvinist Church it ceased to exist in its old form in the early 1950s. It soon became clear that this part of the country needed a teachers' training college and one was actually established in the second half of the fifties, in nearby Nyíregyháza. That could be justified by numerous practical and structural, or other reasons. But in a broader sense it was to be regretted that the new college did not become the direct successor of Sárospatak which looked back to four hundred years of operation. But aside from the power of tradition, a large library would have met intellectual demands at Sárospatak, one which is now hardly used. Meanwhile the new college has to make desperate efforts with other schools to create its own stock of books. There is a fine example of unnecessarily broken traditions, and a typical case of wasted values and resources.

A long list of examples could be drawn up including the often recurring superfluous changes of street names. Naturally the picture is not complete and the negative examples should not be generalized. Lately there have been endeavours on the part of certain schools and institutions to revive their past, and restore a continuity, which was perhaps unnecessarily broken. It is desirable that this trend should strengthen in the future.

II

The strength of the visible past

The visible relics of the past such as art and historical monuments have a special part in keeping awake the instinctive and conscious bonds with the homeland and the past of the nation. Hungarian restoration and preservation authorities have been most active. A huge state subsidy and social support help the work of skilled and devoted experts. Despite these factors, their efforts lag behind those of other countries.

Hungary is relatively poor in art monuments. Within the present boundaries of Hungary most of the architectural relics were destroyed. But it does not follow that it is less worthwhile to allocate money to the restoration of art monuments here—as one could not restore monuments to attract the world—but quite the contrary; the greater losses should stimulate to exert more efforts.

A work of art is not merely a tourist bait, though this is not to be neglected, and there is ample scope in this field which remains unexploited. Monuments of art are one of the most effective means of developing historical consciousness apart from the aesthetic aspects. With Hungarians gradually becoming a nation of car owners, motor tourism is expanding and it could soon be achieved that week-end motorists be given the opportunity to gaze at interesting beautiful relics of the Hungarian past, which radiate a historical atmosphere.

If despite all promising achievements the situation is far from solved, then more than ever, financial means should be made available. In Slovakia not only the more or less safe churches and castles have been largely restored, but also the ramshackle strongholds of Szepes, Trencsén, Beckó, etc. that have played such a great role in Hungarian history: the scientific conditions for part restoration being met, one should therefore be ashamed of the state of the royal castle at Visegrád, though experts boast of outstanding results at the nearby Matthias palace —where work is however proceeding at a snail's pace.

Protection of monuments naturally costs a great deal of money, but it is not always a lack of finance that accounts for the fact that present values are not truly in the public consciousness. In many instances greater care and attention are lacking. Why can't they put up signs on roads to show that there are notable art monuments nearby. Even in France, a country incomparably richer in monuments, every now and then there are signs remindign trippers that "Romanesque Church 3 km from here," or "Renaissance castle nearby." Why can't trippers on their way to Salgótarján be told that one kilometre off the main road they can see a beautifully restored medieval church at Mátraverebély. Or why can't similar signs tell visitors and Hungarians alike on the road to Miskolc of the nearby crypt at Feldebrő, with the oldest wall paintings in Hungary, etc. But let us stick to Budapest: visitors to the ruins on Margaret Island will hardly think that they are stepping on an unmarked tombstone of King Stephen V of Hungary. That king was not among the greatest of rulers, not even a memorable, but since the sarcophagus of one of the most tyrannical Grand Dukes of Moscow is there among the rest, finely polished, then we should be ready to grant a modest tombstone to a Hungarian king. The crudest fate is set of the country houses. In the post-war years it was only natural to use the abandoned and largely damaged houses of landowners for public purposes since that way most of them were saved— though sometimes their wall paintings were ruined. They were turned into schools, hospitals, alms houses, offices, homes for children, tractor drivers' training schools, etc. In most of the cases such use could only be regarded as temporary since the buildings are hardly fit for the above-mentioned purposes, and if they were altered, then invaluable monuments of art may perish. In other countries, where abandoned houses were used for similar purposes at the outset, hospitals and schools later moved, and the houses were restored to their original beauty to fulfil cultural or scientific purposes. Similar efforts have also been made in Hungary, and there has been some progress like the tractor schools which moved out of Nádasdy House at Sárvár, and the Esterházy Palace of Fertőd has been restored. But still these are lesser results than in neighbouring Slovakia where travellers can view museums or outposts of university or academic institutions in the majority of the country houses. In Hungary, if someone visits the Ráday château at Pécel, that was one of the homes of national literary revival of the late eighteenth century, he will find a hospital there and may have difficulty finding the Rococo frescoes painted by Gedeon Ráday himself. In the vicinity of Budapest, there is the shameful sight of the Grassalkovich château at Gödöllő, one of

the most beautiful Baroque buildings in Hungary, now in a state of decay.

Thus the hitherto achieved sound results in the Hungarian protection of art monuments should be improved on. That is obviously possible only if the issue is raised to government level and a more elaborate and financially better backed programme ensures conditions for faster progress. Educational work also must be stepped up so that society as a whole feel it a common task to protect nurture and make known every monument of art and historic relic in the country. Not only national consciousness and the feeling of being part of the homeland will strenghten but social morality will also benefit. Such an act teaches one to protect values, and to honour the work of forebears. That is badly needed since the protection of art monuments is unfortunately not a Hungarian virtue. The sad fact that relatively many of Hungarian historic monuments were destroyed throughout the ages, is not just due to Turks, Tartars and wars in general. Other nations also suffered wars, the Turks subjugated other nations as well, and yet other nations, not in the least our closest neighbours, were able to save more of the values of their historic past.

Numerous examples could be quoted to illustrate how vivid the instinct to preserve values, and save and keep awake precious traditions and the need of reconstruction after destructions have been in other countries. In the Middle Ages the cities and cathedrals of south-eastern Italy were knocked about by Lombards, Normans, Saracens, Hungarians, Frenchmen, Spaniards Turks practically every hundred years, they were rebuilt in no time, more beautifully than before. A number of the great medieval Serbain monasteries survived 500 years of Turkish occupation, and at places, aside from the buildings and frescoes, gold and silverware, always easy prey, were saved. Yet there was plenty of ravaging done, but when the tide of war passed, the survivors immediately started erecting roofs over what remained, touching up the paintings, thereby shielding them from decay. One should mention the Orthodox monastery of Mesic, near Versec in the Bánát in what used to be Hungary. It was completely destroyed by Turks in a fit of senseless rage in 1716. As soon they were expelled three surviving monks and a fourth, Moses Stefanovici, who later joined them, travelled the countryside with a collecting box and within four years they were able to start reconstruction work. When, after 23 years of hard work, in 1745, they ran out of money, the monk travelled as far as Saint Petersburg to the Czarina Elizabeth, the daughter of Peter the Great, and obtained icons, money and liturgical books. The ancient building still stands, though the appearance is Baroque. That is what an Orthodox monk with a beggar's bowl accomplished. The wealthy archbishops of Esztergom, prince primates of Hungary, did not trouble to save their own cathedral built by King Béla III, a pearl of Hungarian Romanesque architecture, though the walls of the burnt-out cathedral still stood after the Turks had been expelled, and the *Kuruc* wars had ended. When, late in the eighteenth century, reconstruction was finally discussed, the walls had collapsed, the carved stones scattered, and the magnificient main portal, the *porta speciosa*, was in pieces. A completely new, artistically uncharacteristic colossus of a building was built instead. The cathedral of Székesfehérvár, for centuries the place where kings of Hungary were crowned and buried, that could have been restored without difficulty after the expulsion of the Turks, met a similar fate. The sepulchral chapel of King Louis the Great was used even in the eighteenth century, but no one cared to maintain it; the sepulchral chapel of King Matthias also survived the dawn of the nineteenth century: it was pulled down in 1800. Is there any need to give more examples? Let me point out instead that the power and vitality of a nation's culture are manifest not only in its capacity to create

something new—luckily there has never been a problem with that—but in its ability to preserve and reconstruct. It would have been better to learn that centuries ago, but it is not too late to do so now.

Not canonization

National tradition, which can be a living source of socialist patriotism, may also be a source of nationalism. Especially if national tradition becomes some sort of holy writ. Tradition ought to be known and well preserved but not canonized. It is a sign of provincial short-sightedness in Hungary when the whole of public opinion winces if a scholar or writer dares to rethink some past event or person possibly pointing out the warts on some national hero, or contradictions in a progressive movement. Only a weak national consciousness will not tolerate criticism. This is obvious to Hungarians as well where other nations are involved. No one in Hungary minds reading about some of the weaknesses in Goethe's character but Petőfi is another story.

Discrepancies in the appreciation of tradition are inevitable. It follows from the spirit of local patriotism that has lately been emerging, and which despite its exaggerations and teething troubles, plays a positive part in the nurturing of national traditions. There is nothing in a town or region giving preference to its own natives. There is not need for everyone to make efforts to get to know, like, and appreciate everything in the national tradition.

The nurturing of national tradition can never be imagined on the strength of a unified central principle or plan. Without local initiatives and activities society and the state would never have the power and the energy to look after every past value. Within reasonable limits space should be given to healthy competition, and to a certain mobility of values.

As I consider tradition as a living force and not as a collection behind a showcase, reappreciations and criticisms will both happen and are sound in the final analysis. Even if in the heat of a discovery or debate there tend to be overratings or exaggerated criticisms. The more serious initial troubles include overappreciation and sobering criticism, and the accentuation of the shady sides is sometimes really needed. It is a grave mistake to blame the critics of the national tradition, and the discoverers of the dark chapters of the national past for the weakening of national consciousness, as has happened several times in the recent past. What I have in mind here are the critical remarks by Erik Molnár concerning the *kuruc* wars as well as István Nemeskürty's book on the Mohács disaster or *Cold Days* by Tibor Cseres which was filmed by András Kovács. All three tended to be associated in the consciousness of many as parts of a harmful process of deheroization and a tendency to destroy national consciousness. What happened really? Erik Molnár argued against nationalist elements what survived in Marxist historiography, and pointed out the errors of evalution in telling the story of the early seventeenth-century rebellions. In the process he tended to draw wrong or rigid conclusions, like, e.g., he doubted the existence or even possibility of popular patriotism, but they were soon corrected by other historians. As a sound effect of his work research into anti-Habsburg movements and especially the history of national ideas gathered momentum after being neglected following Hungary's liberation in 1945. The progress made was largely due to Erik Molnár. Is it wrong that one sees this progressive movement with greater realism today, as achievements and limitations, instead of a *kuruc* myth? István Nemeskürty made his name by trying to make people recognize certain forgotten or unsatisfactorily known national values through research into the history of sixteenth-century Hungarian literature. Coming to the Mohács disaster in 1526 he was

shocked and cried out in anger at the powerlessness and irresponsibility of the ruling classes. Is it wrong if readers awaken to the truth that not only the power behind Sultan Soleiman but the wickedness of Hungarian magnates contributed to the catastrophe, and that it is only make-believe to think that the Turks came out of the blue and destroyed a flourishing Hungarian realm. Contemporary writers like Szerémi, Forgács and others knew this, naturally they also were blamed for centuries for being pessimists and showing prejudice. There may be errors, sloppy judgements and subjectivity in Nemeskürty's book—historians must have had reasons to criticize him—but it is permeated with a passion for the Hungarian past, something that he manages to pass on to the reader. Even if it causes many to shudder, it also makes them think and become interested in one of Hungary's greatest tragedies. Is it unnecessary for Hungarians of today to look into the shocking and revealing mirror of *Cold Days* which tells of the 1941 massacre by Hungarian troops of Jews and Serbians. Are the crimes of Hungarian fascism so well known in the public to the postwar generation? Nobody has dared to give a negative answer to these questions. At the same time it was said that writers should have told the story of Hungarian anti-fascism and Hungarian heroism with the same artistic power. That is a real need, for it is just as important as the showing up of crimes. But a similarly powerful representation of the positive side of history not being available is no reason to deplore the fact that one side—though unfortunately the bigger one—of truth has been presented. Indifference towards the past, and not exposing the mistakes and negative aspects, is the bigger trouble. Only he can be proud of the traditions of the nation, who has the courage to face its weaknesses and crimes, like the poets Zrínyi, Kölcsey or Ady.

Criticism, and periodical or continuous re-evaluation of a live national tradition, that is a concomitant of progress in research, which will prevent the formation of nationalist myths. Such harmful myths are always connected with a one-sided, arbitrary and exclusive emphasis of one part of tradition, certain traditions being declared right and worthy of imitation, and raised to the rank of norm, of laws beyond criticism. Even the absolutization or mystification of the most progressive traditions is basically harmful, not matter whether it is a national tradition of the *kuruc* age or that of the literary folklore in the nineteenth century. Such traditions are always invaluable and invigorating as long as they are seen in their own historical context, with their necessary limitations, as, the imposing, attractive but outdated phenomena of the past. But they become harmful as soon as they are turned into taboos or presented as models worthy of imitation. Just as a national tradition must be honoured, all kinds of national norms should be criticized and rejected. Codification of that sort was, and has always been, typically a bourgeois endeavour: the bourgeois nation has striven at all times to create abstract, timeless national ideals, in order to fight all new phenomena and all that is modern. That is why it is important to keep tradition awake. With its richness and versatility it documents itself the constant existence of progress and change, and the mere knowledge of it hinders the declaration of a segment of tradition as the only salutary phenomenon. In case not only a single age, trade, personality, or attitude is received with acclaim we will not have to be afraid of the fact that the cult of precious traditions pushes us into one-sidedness, or provincial nationalism. It is not justified to overemphasize revolutionary tradition in a one-sided manner, to the detriment of everything else. It should be honoured as the greatest tradition of history, a tradition moving society onwards with the greatest power, and should be regarded as a necessarily exceptional peak.

Mythicizing a tradition is related to the question of the national character. Certain characteristics—hard to define for the most part—have developed in every nation following as a result of the racial, historical, and social factors that go to make it up. One important factor is language that determines to a certain extent the thinking mechanism of those speaking it. History, and the characteristic social structure of the nation, and other factors develop certain spiritual and mental features that become manifest mostly in the collective experience of national development, in national traditions. The recognizable, tangible national character is a constantly changing, developing capacity where continuity is essential as well as the growth of new elements and the slow fading of certain older ones. It follows that the national character has no permanent model; every attempt aiming to codify it, thereby defining its eternal traits, is nothing but a false myth. National culture, literature, and art are not advanced by those who, looking backward, strive to imitate past national features, but by those who enrich national culture with bold new solutions and expand the national character with new elements. In order to avoid a temporary, provisional break in national continuity, national tradition should become part of every creative mind just as language is. Those who are part of a tradition must boldly strive to go beyond it.

National one-sidedness, its dangers and antidote

The question may arise whether the nurturing of national tradition, the emphasis on its importance, and efforts to make it widely known do not entail the danger of isolation, and are not in contradiction with the internationalist objective of closing the gap among nations, and reducing still existing differences. In many instances a fear of such dangers holds some people back from supporting a national tradition, and may lead to a suspicion of nationalism just for their initiative in awakening the national past. Yet the cultivation of national history and culture are never nationalism. They can, however, lead to nationalism if they go hand in hand with ignoring or disregarding the values of other nations. Therefore the nurturing of national traditions should be inseparable from making public the great universal traditions of mankind. The narrow and more extensive aspects of the heritage should be present in public thinking in close interaction.

The exclusive assertion of national traditions and the neglect of other nations' cultural values suggest a completely false perspective. If one does not see the place Hungarian values occupy in international life, then one tends to develop an unjustified feeling of national superiority. On many occasions it is only ignorance or stupidity that make one say of some cultural or literary fact that it is unique, exclusively Hungarian, unsurpassed in value throughout the world. Care should be taken in the use of superlatives. We should respect our national values not for their size, but becasue they are ours, and belong to us. We ought to be glad of them even though aware that other nations have produced something better in the same category.

The possibilities and danger of misjudgement are not one-way ones. There is an inclination to overemphasize the smallness of the country and nation compared with others possessing a greater and richer cultural heritage. Seeing the wealth of Italian art and French literature, we tend to dwarf our relics to the extent of leaving them to gather dust on the shelf. People making such comparisons are especially inclined to regard very few products of Hungarian culture as worthy of respect and support. There is also another extreme attitude, an illusion cherished by many Hungarians of absolute superiority compared with the other nations of Eastern Europe. Despite all

efforts the knowledge of the neighbouring countries is still at a very low ebb in Hungary. Hungarians do not know enough of their neighbours to realize that Croats, Czechs, Serbians, and Rumanians also look back on a past of a thousand or close to a thousand years and great cultural wealth. Most Hungarians think that Russian culture began at the earliest with Peter the Great, what was before him being nothing but barbaric backwardness. Some kind of incomprehensible aversion to publishing books on the cultural heritage of the neighbouring nations, especially Slavs, prevails in Hungary. A well-written book by Professor Likhachev, an honourary member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, on the cultural life of Russia in the age of the Renaissance appeared only after long delays and when Helikon made a beautiful book of the autobiography of the Archpriest Avvakum, a masterpiece of old Russian literature, a critic in one of the dailies noted that it was a waste of energy. Where are the Hungarian editions of the great Croat Renaissance literature, or books on the wall paintings of the Moldavian monasteries? And when will Hungarian book publishing undertake to publish translations of the masterpieces of Polish literature? There is a real need to increase work on the Hungarian national traditions, but one should also see to it that the public acknowledges and properly appreciates the culture of the neighbouring nations, which at times surpasses what this country has produced.

There is a particular need to do that in the case of those who shared a country with Hungarians for many centuries, whose national traditions are in many cases those of Hungarians as well. Miklós Zrínyi (1508–1566), who defended the castle of Szigetvár, is a national hero for Hungarians and Croatians alike. The historic epic *Szigeti Veszedelem* (Menace of Sziget, 1646) by his great-grandson, also Miklós Zrínyi, is considered a classic by Hungarians and Croats alike. And what should one say about Péter Beniczky (1606–1664), who wrote verse in Hungarian and Slovak, János Kájoni (1629–1687), who called himself Valachus but wrote his songs in Hungarian, or the Slovak-speaking Jan Jesensky calling himself a "nobilis Hungarus" and yet he died a martyr's death for Czech freedom? As part of Hungarian national traditions we respect a number of writers, artists, historical personalities, or artistic relics that are also claimed by other nations. If one considers these facts, then the most delicate of the Hungarian national tradition, the memory of old Hungary, and the cause of the former Hungarian territories and the Hungarian minorities living there will have less touchy difficulties for us.

The basis of the argument cannot be anything but strict historic reality and facts. We have absolutely no reason to be bashfully silent about the existence of the Hungary of the past or of the presence of Hungarians in neighbouring countries, not exceptionally as newcomers, but as natives of those territories in the majority of the cases. But we should also bear in mind that the Hungary of yore was the territory on which several nations lived right from the start, and the cultural heritage or numerous manifestations of it, of that area belong to them as well in many cases. One-sided appropriations of common traditions and common values—on the part of anybody—are self-deceptive manoeuvres that sooner or later react on themselves.

The vividness, increased respect and nurturing of the Hungarian national tradition cannot entail any kind of nationalism, and does not oppose internationalist objectives. Against the latter—with regard to traditions—one only offends if one displays indifference towards the culture of other nations. The salutary part of a national tradition strengthening national consciousness should go hand in hand with the effect of universal culture exemplifying interdependence and respect for each other on the part of the nations.

JÁNOS HAJDU

HUNGARY AND SWEDEN: PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION

Towards the end of 1977 Hungarian Foreign Minister Frigyes Puja visited Stockholm. His official host was Foreign Minister Karin Söder, but he had opportunity for an exchange of views with Prime Minister Thorbjörn Fälldin, as well. Frigyes Puja also paid a courtesy call on King Carl Gustaf XVI.

Once relations between two countries reach a certain level of development, or when at least one of them earnestly strives to continue improving relations, it is customary for Foreign Ministers, and in their wake for other cabinet members, to call on the other country on the invitation of their opposite numbers. Over and above the routine business performed by the permanent diplomatic missions, the members of the cabinet size up work done so far and seek new ways to improve things at the same time.

Looking over the files covering the past few years of Hungarian–Swedish relations, one comes to the conclusion that the greater part of such intiatives originated from Budapest. It is also true, that, whenever Stockholm responded to overtures of this kind, some result followed. A few examples will be mentioned later. Before calling the reader's attention to certain points of interest, however, I shall try to answer the question whether, in the shadow of powerful political and economic forces of our days, the development of relations between two small nations like Hungary and Sweden can exercise any influence on international events. To approach the question without illusion: it was proved at the time of the Cold War that, amid the conditions of the total confrontation of the two systems, the neutrality of such an otherwise important factor as Sweden was ineffectual in changing the general picture to any notable degree. And, although the memory of what distinguished Swedish personalities had done in 1944 by sending food in aid to save the lives of tens of thousands of Hungarian children (the present writer among them) was alive both in the official mind in Hungary and in the hearts of Hungarians, yet nobody could ignore the realities of the 1950's. While Sweden, preserving her military neutrality, essentially sought protection for interests due to her social system in a Western political and economic integration, there was no possibility of developing Hungarian–Swedish relations.

Only when the ice of the Cold War began to melt, and the improvement of East-West relations was gaining momentum, could Hungarians satisfy themselves again that Sweden was one of those small nations against whom they have never in the course of their history nourished either antipathy or prejudice, and that their interests and their intentions to strengthen relationships between the two countries coincided with mutual economic interests.

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It is an inconstestable achievement of Hungary's foreign policy that with her Western neutral neighbour, Austria, and with a geographically remote country which is nevertheless close to Hungary owing to ethnic kinship, Finland, she has over the years built up relationships which, even according to outside observers, can serve as a desirable model for active peaceful coexistence of countries with differing social systems. On the Swedish side it could be ascertained that the Hungarian initiatives are sincere and what Hungary has in mind are not merely formal acts but concrete actions, substantially realizable cooperation

e.g. in the economic field, in the harmonization and mutual promotion of cultural interests, for which an opportunity has recently been provided by the Belgrade meeting.

The latter is of interest both as a concrete example of the development of bilateral relations and evidence that small nations are also capable of making substantive contributions to highly significant political processes. It is widely known how much discussion there has been and there still is, about the interpretation and implementation of the third basket of the Helsinki Final Act. The farther ahead Europe goes on the road of peaceful coexistence, the more the exchange of information and of views, including the exchange of research results and works of art, and the quality and trends of this exchange, will engage the attention of politicians and others as well. But the experts have had rather little to tell and confer about the fact that there has been very little progress in the dissemination of culture produced in the languages of the small nations of Europe—in languages spoken by relatively few people—among communities of other languages, although this should really be one of the key problems of the exchange of cultural values.

Hungarians have been grappling with this problem not only since Helsinki, and although the Swedes, as members of the great Indo-European linguistic community, are less isolated than Hungarians, the latter have discovered their common interests in this matter precisely in Belgrade. Stockholm was the venue of a conference in which Hungarian writers and publishers as well participated, and where what shall and can be done, on the one hand, to promote communication between the small languages and, on the other, to ensure that works written in small languages are regularly translated into major languages was discussed. In conferring with the Hungarian colleague, the Swedish Foreign Minister did not repeat the commonplaces in use in countries accustomed to the domination of the market according to which real values anyway find their way to the consumer. In Sweden, for many decades now, it has been natural for the state effectively to support the most diverse manifestations of cultural life, the publishing of books among them. Therefore, in the spirit of Helsinki, they now consider setting up a fund in order to encourage financially the exchange of values which, if exposed to the strains of market conditions, would never cross the language barrier.

With her experience of the socialist practice of cultural policy, Hungary cannot only refer to achievements but is also largely interested in seeing that those in the same boat do not grow tired of the efforts needed to attain this objective. For it will take more than a couple of years to reach a point where it will be natural not only for socialist Hungary to publish works by Swedish or Icelandic, Estonian or Macedonian authors, but that cultural interchange should develop in all directions.

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Of course the development of Hungary's economic relations with Sweden will in the future as well be subjected to the laws of the market, although the present writer was captivated in Stockholm by a remark that, of essentially identical business propositions one usually accepts the offer of someone well known, though this is precisely where the role of politicians—not only in implementing economic considerations in business decisions—should begin.

Hungary imports from other Western countries a great number of products which she might purchase on favourable terms from Sweden, and vice versa. This is so in part because Hungary and Sweden have not traditionally been important markets for each other. Consequently there are still great reserves for developing relations. Today, however, this could only be one element

of a really dynamic development. Progressive and open-minded economists find it essential to build up economic relations between countries having differetnt system as part of a tendency which not olny brings closer the possibility of a global solution of global problems, but is also a most effective remedy for mutual threats. That the acceptance of economic interdependence is conceivable only in an atmosphere of trust.

Sweden and Hungary are among the countries which are shielded from the wind of world politics and are consequently, owing to their smaller size, fitter than others for experimentation. On the Hungarian side nobody has reason to suppose that either Swedish politicians or Swedish business circles will try, when the opportunity arises, to take advantage of any of their economic positions. On the other hand, the Hungarian economy has the reputation of a solid partner with rigorous commercial standards and suitable technological facilities, mature enough for undertakings the essence of which is the transplatation of Swedish technology into Hungarian conditions of production.

There are a few examples. The mixed enterprise established by Volvo and Csepel Automobile Works, called VOLCOM, was founded in 1975 and will, by 1978, reach a production level that will make it a serious factor on the world market of special vehicles. Four wheel drive vehicles of the Lapplander type are produced at Csepel; Swedish know-how and fittings and Swedish marketing experience, on the one hand, Hungarian production capacity and labour and Hungary's market openings, on the other hand, and the sale of the bulk of the products in third countries—these are the essential criteria of cooperation. Looked at from the Hungarian angle, VOLCOM is a most promising experiment and the most important so far. The further readiness of Hungarian managers for similar undertakings will in no small measure be influenced by the experience gained with VOLCOM. Hungarian economists see in such and similar enterprises the future great chance of Hungary's intensive participation in the international division of labour. Another Swedish–Hungarian joint project, which is now in its tenth-year is the cooperation between Mecman AB and the Fine Equipment Factory of Eger which produces pneumatic elements.

All things considered, Swedish-Hungarian economic relations make up only a very small fraction of Sweden's external trade, neither does Sweden lead among capitalist countries as a Hungarian foreign trade partner. The future promises no dramatic change. But if Hungary can straighten out her trade balance with Sweden in the interests of her economic policy, i.e. by cancelling out her deficit not by reducing imports but by increasing exports, then solid development seems to be assured.

It would be nice if Hungarian town planners and ecologists as well as all those who are responsible for various aspect of social security could more often find occasion for a study trip to Sweden. Although the Swedish social system is not socialist by Marxian standards, yet this modern, man-centred welfare state can boast of some structural achievements (with certain limitations becoming visible as things go on) which are really instructive.

ZOLTÁN HALÁSZ

HUNGARY'S NEW IMAGE IN NORWAY

Live-in on the Munkedamsveien

Budapest is not as far from Oslo as some might imagine. I became aware of this the very first day. A fair haired moustached young journalist arrived late at the press conference of the Hungarian Exhibition and, making his excuses, explained that his plane could not take off because of an Arctic storm. He had come from Hammerfest, the northernmost town in Norway, which was further from Oslo, as the crow flies, than Rome. By comparison Budapest, a mere two hours flight, could be called a neighbourhood town. Norway is truly the biggest small country in Europe. Its area is three times as big as Hungary's, and eight times that of Switzerland's, but barely four million live there, most of them in small towns and villages separated by fjords, lakes and mountains. Oslo has 400.000 inhabitants, Bergen, the second city, 40.000. "We are a provincial country," they say about themselves, as we Hungarians do, with a certain pride and not a little self-irony, the latter being one of the basic character traits of Norvegians. Come to think of it, that provincial country gave the world Björnson and Ibsen, Grieg and Niels Henrik Abel, the great mathematician. Norway either could not escape national stereotyping, discussed, it will be remembered, by Enrico Fulchignoni in the pages of this journal.* Fish and ships, and polar journeys of discovery: most of us associate Norway with such notions. Not that I wish to question these for a moment. One thinks back with terror or admiration to the Fram making its way amidst the icefloes, or to the Amundsen legend which turned into a modern Nordic saga with that journey of tragic outcome undertaken to rescue Nobile. And yet how one-dimensional that image is compared to present realities. What are more typical are one of the highest standards of living in the world, with an annual per capita G.N.P. of $ 6000, less than 10 per cent of which is due to agriculture and fisheries, on the one hand, and on the other, a sort of resistance to the temptations of the consumer society, repelling them, or at least trying to moderate their effects.

The aim of the Oslo Hungarian Fair was to try to adjust the Norwegian image of Hungary to the changes which the transformation of the last decades produced in Hungarian reality. The venue offered by the Lord Mayor of Oslo was far from commonplace. One of the city's old quarters was recently demolished and replaced by a modern district. Blocks of flats, huge office blocks, terraced shops, and an Aalto inspired functional concerthall with outstanding acoustic properties. I really took to the harmonic geometric play of white marble surfaces broken by sheets of glass and metal, but my Oslo friends showed themselves less enthusiastic. First I thought that the sort of nostalgia was at play which we in Budapest felt when the small houses, back lane and small restaurants of Tabán, on the slopes of Gellért Hill, and lately of Óbuda fell victim to urban reconstruction. Later I discovered that more was at play in Oslo. Norway has too few ancient monuments, for historic reasons, and also because recently as well too many old and precious houses perished, some timber buildings falling victim to the flames, others to the demolisher's pickaxe, too hurriedly applied.

On the Munkedamsveien, the main artery of this new district the people of Oslo think somewhat artificial, an institution is operating that is officially known as the *Oslo Informasjonssenter* but which is, in truth

*See NHQ 25: National Stereotypes, p. 149–155.

much more than that. The upper floors frequently house exhibitions and displays of various sorts that sometimes graphically present local problems, such as the plans of the urban administration, and those of people arguing against them, and at others evoke the life of neighbouring or distant towns. On the lower floor of the *Informasjonssenter* on the other hand, those who use it have brought into being a place of social togetherness lacking all rigidity and constraint, where a genuine informality rules. Some watch colour television transmissions of the invitable ice hockey games or ski-jumping, others listen to music, or dance to it, in the discothèque, and it may well happen that, at the very same time, in another room, environmentalists mercilessly cross-examine the chief engineer of a factory. All this happens *en famille*, young couples take along their offspring who get rid of their surplus energies on a variety of slides, pedalled toycars and other devices in complete safety. There are self-help kitchens too where those who do not wish to use the cafeteria may prepare caloric-replacements for themselves, and their families. A real live-in, and for the participants, as well as for the thousands odd passers-by who dropped in, the displays of the Hungarian fair proved a most interesting experience.

Photographs showing what was done in Hungary to protect ancient monuments offered food for thought to many, judging by remarks in the visitor's book largely because of the destruction of old buildings in Norway which I already mentioned. Since the Kodály method of teaching singing is in use in a number of schools in Norway, the connected display found a broad echo. Hungarian folk-lore had a dual effect—Lapps turned up from the distant north, including the journalist I mentioned by way of introduction, to look at what their distant kin, the Hungarians, produced. I discovered that they refer to themselves as *Sam*, not Lapps, and that, even after all these thousand of years, there is a certain similarity between their folklore and that of the Hungarians down south. Folk art is becoming fashionable these days amongst the young in Norway. That is why they were interested in Hungarian folk-lore. One night, as part of the live-in, we all made music and sang together, Norwegians, Hungarians, and Finns who happened to be around. The other side of the coin was the interest shown, and it proved a surprise to a certain degree, in sophisticated Hungarian industrial products of world standard. They made up the bulk of the goods on display, since the fair bore a trade character in the first place.

Askelladen and Lúdas Matyi

Hungary either arranges or takes part in more than a hundred exhibitions a year in just about every part of the world. Their main aim is the furthering of the growth of bilateral economic links. An extension of commodity trade, and in recent years of the growing number of industrial production cooperation agreements cannot be imagined in any other way except by mutual familiarity with each other's products and with the industrial and economic background that produced them. The Oslo Hungarian Fair also primarily served the growth of mutual economic relations by putting on display Hungarian goods, and possibilities for cooperation. Commodity trade between the two countries, though growing in recent years (total volume was worth 154 million Norvegian Crowns in 1976) is only responsible for 3 per cent of total Hungarian foreign trade, and for a smaller proportion still of Norwegian trade. At the same time there can be no doubt that mutual resources would make it possible to multiply turnover in the years to come, given mutual efforts, in the first place growing familiarity with each other's needs, productive resources, and opportunities for cooperation. Foreign trade

is vital to Hungary, since raw material and fuel resources are scarce. Roughly half of Hungarian national income is directly or indirectly linked to foreign trade. Behaviour prompted by economic needs also expresses a certain political position. Trade with countries near and far, and joint long-term undertakings by firms operating on different sides of the frontier serve peaceful cooperation. Economic interests strengthen the policy of coexistence. But, though the country's products are on display for economic reasons in the first place, they also serve to bring the image that many thousands of visitors entertain about Hungary closer to reality since the products made by a variety of industries in Hungary speak louder then words about the progress the country has made as a result of the efforts of recent decades. These products are truly suitable to help create the image of a modern industrial society, amending the obsolete stereotype of Hungary whose principal features I know I'll be forgiven for not detailing here and now. The Norwegians cottoned on to the changes and know what to make of them, since Norway itself was a poor country early this century, and hard work took it where it is now, not to mention a fair helping of good luck.

A Norwegian friend told me about their own folk hero Askelladen as an *à propos*. This enterprising laddie, whom every Norwegian loves as his own, is time and again helped by good luck to find something very useful and valuable. As we all know, the Askeladden of fairy tales and of reality, recently struck oil on the sea-bed of the North Sea.

Unfortunately I could not trump that story with a Hungarian one. Our very own Lúdas Matyi—Matt, the goose boy—never found anything pasturing his geese. And yet he could somehow improve his lot by giving a good hiding to his wicked master Döbrögi. That's somehow how the changes that were made in Hungary started, soon after the Second World War.

Bokmal, Ny norsk

When outsiders write about Norway they return again and again sometimes with astonishment sometimes ironically to the struggle of the two native languages, *bokmal* and *ny norsk* which has been going on quietly, but without interruption, for a century or more. The first is the official literary language, the linguists trace its origin back to the Danish period when the country's leaders, and landowners, spoke Danish. As a result many Danish expressions and turns of speech found their way into the language. *Ny norsk*, that is new Norwegian, owes its origin to dialects spoken in the South West and West of Norway which Ivar Aasen made use of around the middle of the last century to create *ny norsk*, a language with a coherent vocabulary and grammar. All Norwegians perfectly understand *the other*, yet they insist on their own. Books and newspapers are published in both languages, wherever the inhabitants so desire *ny norsk* is taught in schools, though *bokmal* is more widespread as a medium of education. An interesting overtone is that Norwegians, Danes and Swedes can communicate easily, each speaking their own, nevertheless Oslo Television provides Norwegian subtitles for Danish and Swedish films though viewers understand the Danish or Swedish text without difficulty.

Others might think this is all very funny, Hungarians certainly don't, we understand linguistic sensitivity, since for many long and dangerous years of Hungarian history, national survival was linked to that of the language. Nor does Ivar Aasen's language building occasion surprise to Hungarians, remembering Ferenc Kazinczy, and the language reform movement he led towards the end of the 18th century which created tens of thousands of new words out of a variety of elements, thus making Hungarian a suitable medium of expression for the notions of the age. I think Norwegians understood and showed understanding for

Hungarian sensitivities regarding language and culture which are much like theirs, and which prompted us to include certain aspects of Hungarian culture in a Fair that really concentrated on the economy. The works of Liszt, Bartók or Kodály are part of universal culture, that is self-evident in Norway as well. Less well known contemporary Hungarian music, works by Kurtág, Bozay, Durkó or Balassa, to mention only a few of the composers presented not only as scores or records but also live, over Oslo Radio, also met with a considerable response. Spreading the good word proved less successful as regards literature. Folk art and music books published by Corvina and scientific and technical books issued by the Publishing House of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences were on display, but not one of them in Norwegian, though, to be fair, Norwegian translations of Hungarian books should really be the responsibility of Norwegian publishers and not of Budapest ones. Little has, however, been done in this respects so far.

Perhaps a bitter-sweet experience may not be amiss at this point. The scene was set in a narrow street in an old part of town, more precisely the home of Halldis Moren Vesaas, one of the best of women poets. To start with the sweet, Halldis Moren Vesaas radiating beauty which time could not wash away. She celebrated her 70th birthday in 1977. Rolph Jacobsen, another great contemporary Norwegian poet, spoke the congratulatory words, H. Aschehoug and Co published a selection of her verse, and a volume of autobiographical prose, a memorial to her marriage to Tarje Vesaas, appeared as well. Tarje Vesaas is known beyond the country's frontiers, he was a master of Norwegian prose published in many other languages as well, including Hungarian. Halldis Moren-Vesaas has written no verse since his death six years ago. Writing her memoirs she relived the third of a century they spent together. It was a stormy and splendid period. Moren-Vesaas was a precursor of women's lib. in the ultra-conservative Norway of the 1930s. She agitated not only for the social equality of her sex, but *horribile dictu*, sexual equality as well. Her poetry aroused consternation and enthusiasm. A dramatic turn of events followed, the war and the German occupation. The bitterness elicited by violence and offences to human dignity is still very much alive. "Personally we had no real trouble," she said. "My husband and I quietly retired to our farm at Telemark, in the mountains. We wrote but we did not publish." Quiet retirement, as it turned out consisted of giving refuge to those condemned to death and Russian Pows who had managed to escape from confinement. Moren-Vesaas' antifascist poems were spread in secret, in typescript, by the patriots. Then came liberation. The Nazis layed down their arms, Quisling was put up against the wall of the medieval fortress of Akershus, and a new age started. First poverty and reconstruction, then the problems of the consumer society that soon became overpowering Moren-Vesaas's verse kept up with the changes like a sensitive seismograph. "During the War we all hoped that a different age would start after it," she said, "we had faith in the coming of social justice and a new fraternity. I tried to do my bit with the modest means at my disposal."

Moren-Vesaas is a committed poet, not to a party or movement, but to human fellowship. The gigantic anthology—huge in size, and in objectives—which she edited, and largely translated, together with Hartvig Kitan and Sigmund Skard, bears witness to this. It covers four thousand years, from the ancient beginning to our own days. Its publication, in 1968, by Det Norske Samlaget, has remained unique in the country's book world. Now to the bitter drop: the index which lists them all, all the world's poets, from Aischylos to Auden, Baudelaire to Blok, Carducci to Rosalie de Castro, Dante to Ruben Dario... and Valéry to Vosnezhensky, does not contain

a single Hungarian name. No Petőfi, no Ady, or Attila József, and no living Hungarian poet either. Am I being prejudiced for feeling shocked, and unable to grasp this? I don't think so. It was precisely in the current issue of *Vinduuet*, the Oslo literary monthly, that I read, in an article signed Terje Skalstad, that "Petőfi is amongst the most important of the world's poets."

Moren-Vesaas said sadly, almost apologetically: "The trouble is technical. We have no translators." That's how it is, I'm sure. We Hungarians are more fortunate there. Thanks to the work of the late Henrik Hajdu, and of István Bernáth, still hard at work, and of many others, we were able to familiarize ourselves with a broad spectrum of Scandinavian literature, all the way from the Icelandic Sagas to the verse of Rolph Jacobsen. It seems, unfortunately, that Norway lacks the likes of Henrik Hajdu and István Bernáth. But perhaps things will change, could be as a result of the Belgrade meeting one of whose subject was helping cultural contacts between countries big and small. Displays and functions like the Oslo Hungarian Fair may well, in the future, also contribute to better mutual understanding.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE HUNGARIAN NATIONAL LIBRARY

The manufacture and collection of books in Hungary dates back to the eleventh century. The Bibliotheca Corviniana* of King Matthias (1458–1490) and the rich libraries of humanist prelates were the natural sequence of the book culture that had flourished in medieval monasteries and royal chanceries. The Illuminated Chronicle, a splendid manuscript commissioned by King Louis I, the Great, who ruled from 1342 to 1382, is further evidence that these cultural centres did not spring up overnight. The founding of the first Hungarian universities (Pécs 1367, Óbuda 1389, Pozsony 1467) and of the earliest printing workshop which produced the well-known Chronicle of Buda in 1473 are evidence of a cultural boom.

This court culture, however, which could have become the start of a national library and museum in Hungary, perished by the middle of the sixteenth century, ruined by the increasing onslaughts of the Turks and the occupation that followed the battle of Mohács;** the occupation of the central part of the country including Buda lasted over 150 years. When the Habsburg dynasty took over it contributed to the destruction of this culture with its attempts at cultural centralization. For the next 400 years Hungarian "society" instead of the state assumed the role of preserving and developing culture and education in the country. Thus in the age of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation the cities, churches, and their patrons not only established schools all over the country but alos a national network of scientific and school libraries.

By the end of the eighteenth century the time was ripe for collecting and preserving this intellectual production: this was done by Count Ferenc Széchényi, a prominent aristocrat, the father of the reformer István Széchenyi.

Founding of the National Library

Ferenc Széchényi (1754–1820) came from a family of large land-owners; as Lord Lieutenant, then Deputy Lord of Justice of several counties, he was active in the country's politics. He shared the ideas of the age of enlightenment, and had a high regard for books and other sources of knowledge. He was also influenced by the cultural patriotism that developed in the country in opposition to the imperialistic aspirations of the Habsburgs. Like many others, he wished to refute the charges of Hungarian barbarims with evidence of scientific activity in the country; this prompted him to ferret out

* See NHQ 33
** See NHQ 65

and collect the printed or written documents of Hungarian literature and science. His determination was strengthened by the impression he had gained in European and especially English libraries.

He tried to procure every work by Hungarian authors whether printed in Hungary or abroad. He also collected literature about Hungary. As a result of this work the dream of many generations of scholars came true by the end of the eighteenth century; a national library was established and handed over to the public, thus fulfilling the needs of contemporary students.

Ferenc Széchényi stated in his deed of foundation on November 25, 1802: "I donate this library... and my scientific material which, in part, is listed in a printed catalogue... to my country for the use and benefit of its community, inspired by my ever-present ambition to be of use to them." In 1806 he wrote that the purpose of his gift had been "to familiarize my compatriots yearning for knowledge with the use of a public library and thereby promote true and useful enlightenment." He wrote proudly: "Through this institute and by means of the catalogue printed at my expense foreign countries have been offered the opportunity of ascertaining the marvellous progress achieved by the kingdom of Hungary in the domains of science and culture."

Ferenc Széchényi had laid the foundation of a real national library representing the nation's culture. The fonds consisted of approximately 13,000 volumes, over 12,000 manuscripts, and many hundreds of maps and engravings. In 1818 Széchényi complemented the basic collection with material from abroad. This acquisition was called the "reference library" since the works it contained were to serve as background material to research on Hungary, i.e. help to find and elucidate the connections of Hungarian culture with world history, world literature, and world culture.

Széchényi's double gift to the library has in fact determined the main thrust of its collection to this day. This includes the acquisition of printed, written, or otherwise reproduced documents made in Hungary, and the acquisition of similarly produced foreign publications which are either in the Hungarian language or contain references to Hungary. A third category of material is also to be acquired: works that are necessary for the scientific study of the "Hungarica" material. These concepts are still valid after almost 200 years: it is focused on the "Hungarica," and is based on the realization that the library's treasures should be made known to Hungarian and foreign scholars by means of printed catalogues; that with the help of these publications, such as a national bibliographical series, the books reflecting Hungarian scientific achievements should be publicized in and outside the country, and finally, that the collection should be accessible to both scholars and the general public.

*

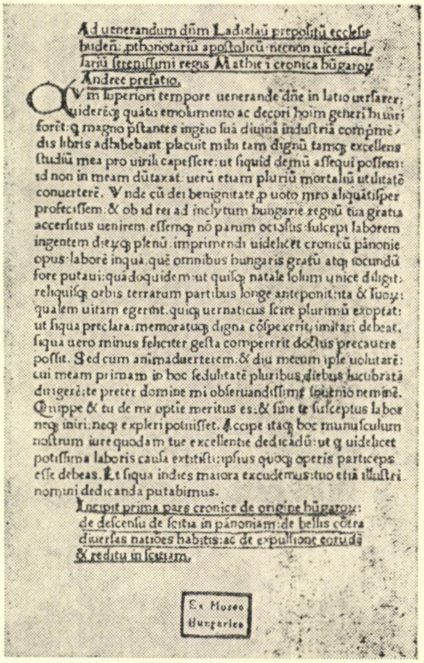
Széchényi's Hungarian collection consisted of 20,000, and his foreign library of approximately 10,000 volumes, in addition to a considerable number of documents.

In 1825 the Hungarian National Museum and the National Széchényi Library jointly purchased the collections of Miklós Jankovich (1773–1856) and thus came into the possession of peerless treasures. (In 1808 the National Széchényi Library had become part of the National Museum; this organizational arrangement lasted until 1949 when the library was officially detached and established as a separate institution.) Jankovich, a wealthy member of the middle nobility, pursued varied scientific interests, and participated in the establishment of several cultural institutions but he was, above all, the most prominent Hungarian art collector. The library acquired from him almost 300 medieval manuscripts, many early records written in the Hungarian language, valuable manuscripts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, ap-

proximately 500 incunabula, and tens of thousands of items pertaining to Hungary. The private libraries of many great men were incorporated in the collection. They were to include—to mention only the most prominent—the library of Lajos Kossuth, and of Imre Madách, the author of *The Tragedy of Man*.

Since 1804 the stock of the library has increased considerably by copyright deposits, bequests, donations, purchases, and international exchange—especially after the liberation in 1945. At present the collection contains about 5 million items (1,800,000 books, 1,900,000 periodicals and newspapers, 500,000 manuscripts, 100,000 pieces of music, 160,000 maps and millions of leaflets and other materials [films, engravings, etc.]).

In conformity with its character the national library is called upon to collect not only books, periodicals, and newspapers but all other types of material such as manuscripts, pieces of music, maps, etc.



Ad uenerandum dnm Ladizlaũ prepositũ ecclesie buden. pthonotariũ apostolicũ necnon uicecãcellariũ serenissimi regis Mathie i cronica hũgarorum Andree prefatio.

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Incipit prima pars cronice de origine hũgarorum: de descensu de scitia in pãnoniam: de bellis cõtra diuersas natiões habitis: ac de expulsione eorudẽ & reditu in sciciam.

Ex Museo Hungarico

The first book printed in Hungary: "Chronica Hungarorum," Buda, 1474

Scenes from the Passion in the Pray Codex, end of 12th century

The Library Proper

Since it is a national library the Széchényi Library is obliged to collect all editions of every Hungarian publication. Hence the book collection contains all Hungarian literary and scientific works.

The library has an extensive holding of works on Hungary published abroad. These "Hungarica" consist in the first place of works in the Hungarian language, the intellectual products of Hungarians past and present who, at different times, had emigrated to and settled in foreign countries, and the works of the members of Hungarian ethnic groups in neighbouring countries whose connection with Hungarian culture

is indicated by the very use of the mother tongue.

On the basis of the same linguistic considerations publications translated from the Hungarian original into other languages are also listed as Hungarica.

There is a third group of Hungarica: the works of authors who do not write in Hungarian but nevertheless have personal ties or working relations with Hungary. It is often very difficult to determine who belongs to this group.

The works relating to Hungary are selected: only those that deal mainly with the country or its people are included in the collection.

This collection of books produced in former Hungary, or in contemporary Hungary reduced to one-third of its size, of Hungarian books edited abroad and of books on Hungary, make these holdings important for Central and Eastern European scientific research. The holdings pertain to the past of several nations who for centuries have lived as neighbours and partly within the boundaries of the former Hungarian state; incidentally, the most complete collection of many Slovak, Serbian, Slovenian, Rumanian, Bulgarian, and Greek prints made in the printing offices of Buda and Pest is preserved in the Széchényi Library.

Furthermore, because of its fortunate composition, the holdings from abroad reflect the Central European extension of almost all social and political movements, ideas or literary styles of modern times. The library also offers sources to the students of Hungarian history and literature, and of the language and culture of Hungarians and related peoples.

*

The collection of newspapers and periodicals consists of almost 2 million items. Its value is not only determined by size, but much more by the circumstance that about 75 per cent of the Hungarian newspapers in the collection, both from Hungary and abroad, are the only extant copies in the country. It was József Szinnyei Sr. (1830–1913), the greatest Hungarian bibliographer of his time and collector of the most comprehensive Hungarian biographical data, who had become aware of the scientific importance of newspapers neglected until then by bibliographers and who assembled the surviving newspaper holdings in Hungary into a single collection.

Hungarian periodicals and newspapers printed abroad are very valuable, being the principal documentary source on the life and culture of Hungarians living beyond the country's frontiers.

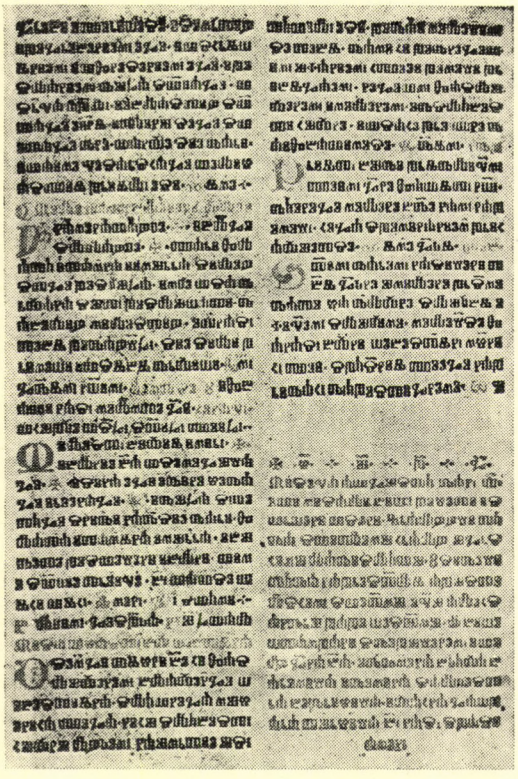
NOVA
POSONIENSIA.
ANNO CHRISTI MDCC XXI.
DIE XXX. JULII.

Title page of a copy of the oldest weekly published in Hungary in the Széchényi Library, the "Nova Posoniensia," 30 July 1721

The contemporary foreign press is represented by approximately 1,400 titles from 1945 to 1970. 400 are printed in the neighbouring socialist countries and 1,000 in the Western countries.

The library has also a sizable collection of old newspapers from the neighbouring countries—of unique scholarly significance.

The collection of brochures and posters offers valuable information about the Hungarian past. It contains leaflets and programmes from the early eighteenth century, printed notices (since 1800), illustrated posters (since 1885), engravings, and picture postcards.



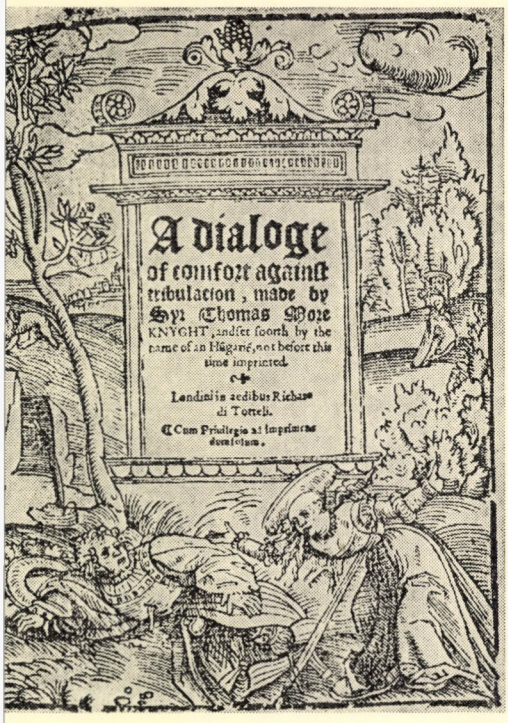
Page from the "Missale Glagoliticum," printed at Zengg in 1494. The only surviving complete copy of this work using the oldest glagolitic type-faces.

The collection pertaining to theatre history offers to the students of the theatre a stock of modern books, newspapers, and periodicals, and also plays and playbills with many pictures pertaining to performances in Hungary. The most valuable part of this collection consists of approximately 9,000 scenery and costume designs including the works of Carl Maurer and Pietro Travaglia—two well-known artist of the Esterházy theatres—and many unique items of design by nineteenth and twentieth-century artists.

The collection of old books contains over 1,700 books printed in the first half-century of typography. This is the richest collection of incunabula in Hungary, i.e. one quarter of the entire stock (about 7,100 items). Among its outstanding treasures are the fragment of Gutenberg's *42-line Bible*, the first illustrated world chronicle compiled by Hartmann Schedel, and several early editions of Ptolemy's *Cosmographia* with maps.

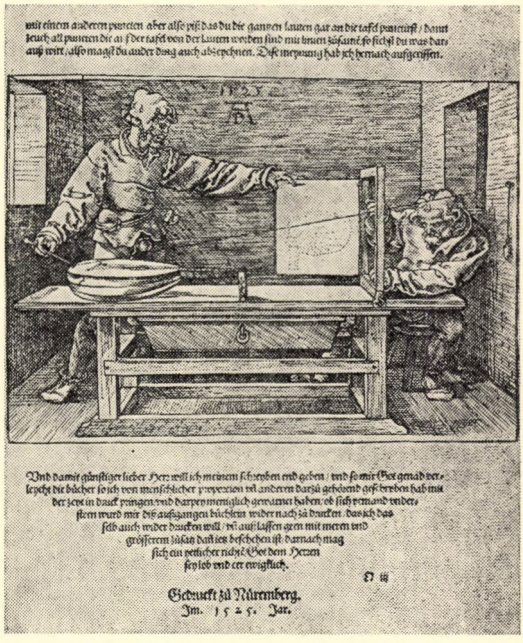
The most beautiful volume produced by Gutenberg's early disciples is Peter Schöffer's *Gratianus Decretum* printed in 1472 with great care for typographical arrangement, in red and black. The printing house of Sweynheym and Pennartz in Subiaco, pioneers in Italian typography, is represented by Cicero's *De Oratore*, and Aldus Manutius of Venice by the first Greek edition of the works of Aristotle. The library possesses the only complete copy of the *Chronica Hungarorum*, the first book printed in Hungary (1473); the collection also includes the *Missale Glagoliticum* published in 1494 in Zengg, the only other known copy of which is in Leningrad. A rare incunabulum relating to Hungary is King Matthias' lawbook, the *Constitutiones incliti regni Hungariae*, and Georgius de Hungaria's *Arithmetica* printed in 1499 in Schoonhoven.

The 1546 Basel edition of Hippocrates' *Opera*, the works of Thomas More and John Wycliffe, Albrecht Dürer's illustrated books, and the *Civitates orbis terrarum*, a popular work by Georg Braun and Franz



Title page of Sir Thomas More's "A dialoge of comfort," London, 1553

John Wyclif: "Dialogorum libri quattuor." Worms, 1525. Title page



Last page of Albrecht Dürer's "Underweysung der Messung mit dem Zirkel," Nüremberg, 1525

oldest Hungarian bibliography, David Czvittinger's *Specimen Hungariae Literatae.*

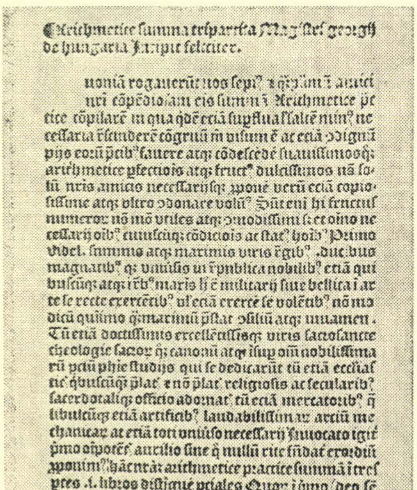
This holding of 8,500 volumes is the richest collection of old Hungarian books in the country and it serves as sources for Hungarian linguistics, the history of literature, and of typography. The collection contains the earliest printed Hungarian texts

Title page of "Constitutiones incliti regni ungarie," King Matthias' law-book, showing the King and his coat of arms. End of 15th century

produced in Cracow, and the first Hungarian book edited in Hungary, the translation of the New Testament by János Sylvester (Sárvár, 1541), the works of Hungarian authors from the Baroque and under the Reformation including the military writings of Miklós Zrínyi and Ferenc Rákóczi II, prince of Transylvania. One of the earliest travel books in Hungarian was the *Europica varietas* of Mátyás Szepsi Csombor (Kassa, 1620) with an interesting description of many countries, including England, its cities, and its inhabitants. Likewise of scientific value are several minor works of Maximilianus Transilvanus (the first to give an account of the circumnavigation of the globe), and Pál Jászberény's two books: *A new Torch to the Latine Tongue ... Fax nova linguae Latinae,* and his *Institutionum grammaticarum,* parts I and II.

The collection of Hungarica includes 5,000 old books, leaflets, and editions with engravings which contain references to Hungary and were published abroad. This collection has been bequeathed to the library by a bibliographer, Count Sándor Apponyi.

Most of the documents pertain to the Turkish wars in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries and of the wars of independence against the Habsburgs in the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries; the engravings record the heroes and scenes of these events. Interesting information on Hungary is provided by Edward Brown's *A Brief Account of Some Travels in Hungary,* a work reprinted several times. *The History of the Troubles of Hungarie* (London, 1600) by Martin Fumée is an account of the war against the Turks; so is Giovanni Botero's work: *Relations of the Most Famous Kingdoms... Throughout the World.* Ibrahim Müteferrika, founder of the first publishing house in Turkey, was born in Hungary; he edited 17 valuable works between 1729 and 1792.


Arithmetice summa tripartita Mag'stri georgij de hungaria incipit feliciter.

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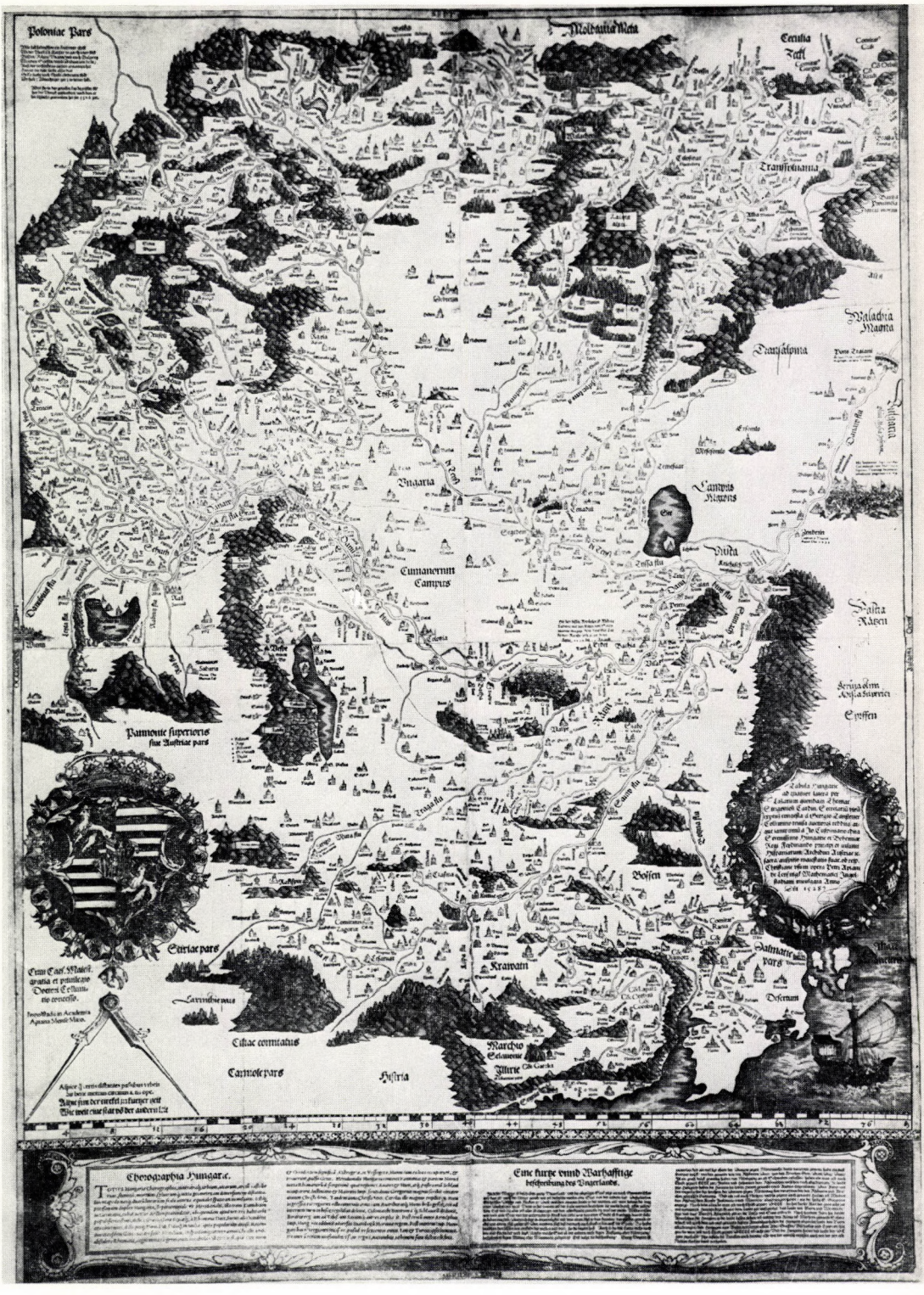
Georgius de Hungaria: "Arithmetica," Schoonhoven, 1499



"Tabula Hungariae," 1528, the first surviving printed map of Hungary, based on sketches by Lázár, a scribe

ALL ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY NATIONAL SZÉCHÉNYI LIBRARY

Zoltán Szuchovszky

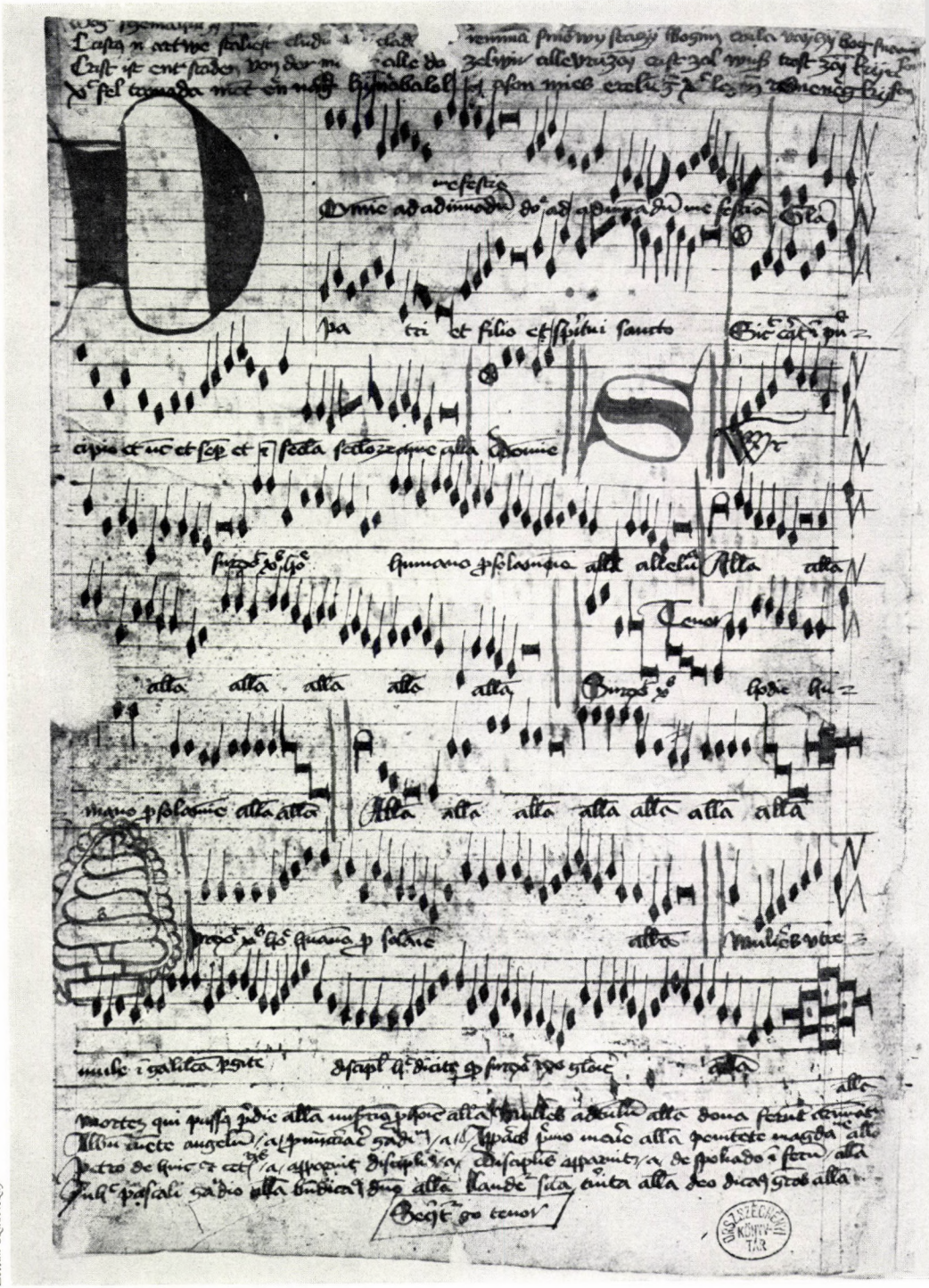
Page from the breviary of Domokos Kálmáncsehi, provost of Székesfehérvár; the provost's coat of arms can be seen in the top centre.

Page from the Psalter of Orbán Dóczi, bishop of Eger. The Dóczi coat of arms is at the bottom. 15th century

Csaba Gabler

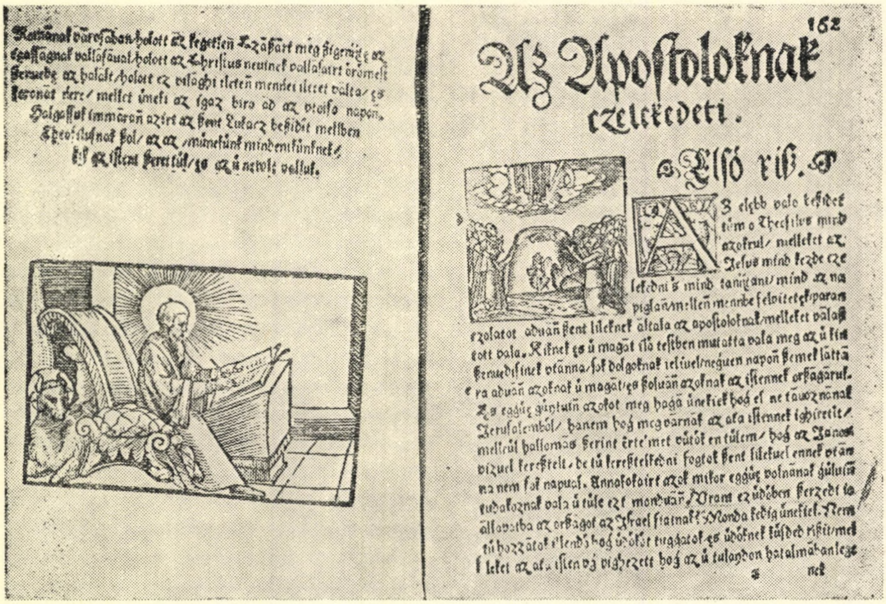
Initial from the "Picture Chronicle" (between 1374–76)
King Stephen in full armour, shown as a Saint

The list of contents of Saint Jerome's "Commentari in Epistolas S. Pauli," one of the codices in the Bibliotheca Corviniana. Illuminated by Gherardo and Monte di Giovanni, Florence, 1488



Zoltán Szabovszky

A polyphonic score, cca. 1430, recently recovered from the binding of an incunabulum; there is a 4-line poem in Hungarian in the upper edge of the page



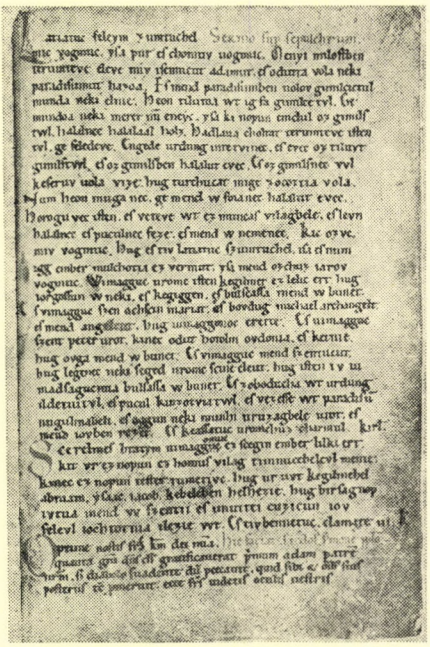
Page from the first book in Hungarian printed in Hungary, the New Testament in János Sylvester's translation. Sárvár-Újsziget, 1541

Together with four of his publications purchased in 1977 the library is now in possession of 12 of his editions.

The manuscripts collection contains only a few items from the Middle Ages: most Hungarian medieval manuscripts perished or were dispersed in the vicissitudes of the country's history. Typically, most of the manuscripts relating to Hungary in the Széchényi Library have come home from foreign parts.

Nevertheless, the best Latin sources on medieval Hungary are to be found in the library. The most famous is the *gesta* about the Hungarian Conquest by an author who called himself P. Magister and has successfully preserved his incognito up to now, despite heated scientific debates about his identity. This "Anonymus" wrote his work at the end of the twelfth century. The medieval manuscripts of the legends about Saint Stephen, the founder king of the Hungarian state, are also in the collection. Perhaps the finest item among the Hungarian manuscripts is the Illuminated Chronicle. This uniquely beautiful manuscript was written under the reign of Louis Anjou around 1370, and it describes Hungarian history up to the reign of his father, Caroberto. The extraordinary value of the manuscript resides in its illustrations, the 130 artistic miniatures which also provide a source for the events and personalities of Hungarian history.

A larger number of manuscripts have survived from the fifteenth century: they include some items from King Matthias' library, the Corvina. This extraordinary collection could have been the basis for the further development of the arts and sciences in Hungary but, after 1526, with the beginning of the Turkish domination, it became dispersed. The 32 manuscripts now in the National Library were returned to Hungary in different ways. The latest was purchased in 1965 at a London auction by



The "Funeral Oration", the first surviving continuous text in Hungarian, from the end of the 12th century. In the Pray Codex, made in Northern Hungary

the Hungarian state. Most Corvinas were made by Italian artists—some of them well-known, such as Attavante, Boccardino, Vecchio, Gherardo and Monte di Giovanni—but some were produced in the king's own workshop in Buda. The love of artistic manuscripts was not a privilege of the royal court: one of the most beautiful is the breviary of Domokos Kálmáncsehi, provost of Székesfehérvár, also the work of an Italian artist, bearing elaborate, individually styled ornaments.

In sharp contrast to the Corvinas the earliest records of the Hungarian language are in paper editions of modest appearance. The most important is the first unbroken record of the Hungarian language—by the same token the first Finno-Ugrian written text—the Funeral Oration, contained in a Sacramentale of the twelfth century, the so-called Pray Codex. The Jókai Codex from the fifteenth century is the first book with an integrally Hungarian text: it tells the legend of Saint Francis of Assisi. Legends, sermons, collections of psalms and parables, and fragments of the first Bible translation compose the collection of Hungarian records serving as a source of literature and language prior to 1526. One of them is *The Fight for Szabács* recording the battles against the Turks in the fifteenth century. This collection of early records is still growing: quite recently manuscript sheets with musical notations were found in the cover-board of a book from around 1430 which recorded the texts and melodies of motets. On the margin of the sheet is the Hungarian text of a four-line hymn—the second oldest surviving Hungarian poem.

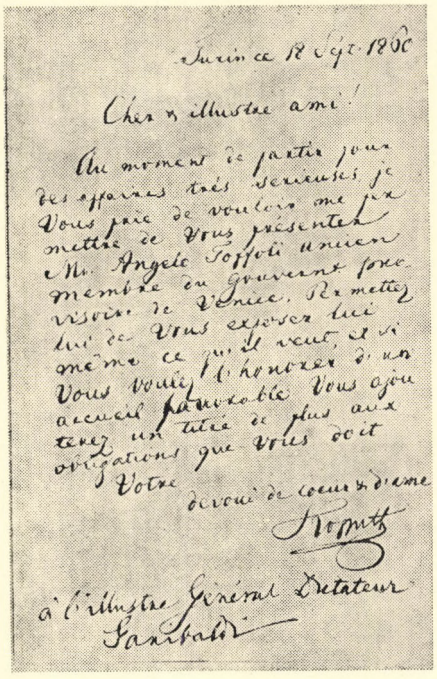
More recent centuries are represented by a diversity of manuscripts: literary and scientific works, study notes, diaries, collections of poems and documents, works relating to law, cookery books, medical prescriptions, and some letters or correspondence. The library has rich material from the leading figures of the War of Independence in 1848–49 and the subsequent emigration; manuscripts by and about Sándor Petőfi; interesting works and letters by Lajos Kossuth, many of which were addressed to English and American personalities and came to Hungary in the recent past; the entire legacy of Ferenc Pulszky, Kossuth's one-time secretary, later curator of the National Museum, containing international correspondence which throws light on the ramified diplomatic activity of Hungarian emigrants; many manuscripts of Mór Jókai, a Hungarian novelist in the nineteenth century, etc.

Obviously manuscripts from the first half of the twentieth century occupy a major place in the collection. The collection includes entire legacies and important fonds pertaining to poets, writers, journalists, etc.

Apart from the national material some documents in the library are of interest to

foreign scholars. One of the oldest foreign manuscripts is from the eighth century: a document of Anglo-Saxon provenance, the fragment of a legend about the life of St. Cuthbert. One of the library's treasures is a manuscript from the tenth century, the story of Apollonius (now exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of New York), the Vergilius Codex copied in the tenth-eleventh century and the only extant copy of Boethius' philosophical work. The German, Dutch, Greek, and Old Church Slavonic manuscipts and fragments contain important sources of literary and cultural history: the first German translation of Saint Augustine's *De civitate Dei* from the fifteenth century or a Glagolitic fragment, the earliest written record in Croatian, from the first half of the twelfth century.

The collection of music consists mostly of manuscripts and scores of Hungarian music, with many important documents pertaining to the history of music. The hand-written and printed books of the Bártfa Collection date back to the Renaissance, the golden age of choral polyphony in the sixteenth century. From the records of Baroque music the *Te Deum* (1760) of Johann Joseph Fux (1660–1741), the greatest Austrian master of the Baroque, merits a special mention. This is the oldest dated and signed musical score in the library—it came from the Esterházy archives where it had been in the possession of Joseph Haydn. This archive was the source of most hand-written and printed scores of Viennese classicist music, including the original manuscript of almost a hundred compositions by Joseph Haydn, the contemporary copies and first editions of many of his works, and personal memories of the time when he worked in Hungary. From the same period there are the manuscripts of Gregorius Joseph Werner, the conductor at the Esterházy theatre before Haydn, Michael Haydn, his younger brother, Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, Beethoven's music teacher, Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf who succeeded Michael


Turin ce 18 Sept. 1860

Cher & illustre ami!

Au moment de partir pour des affaires très sérieuses je vous prie de vouloir me fixer mettre de vous présenter Mr. Angelo Toffoli un[illegible] membre du Gouvernement provisoire de Venise. Il remettra lui-même ce qu'il veut et si vous voulez l'honorer d'un accueil favorable vous ajouterez un titre de plus aux obligations que vous doit

Votre

dévoué de coeur & d'âme

Kossuth

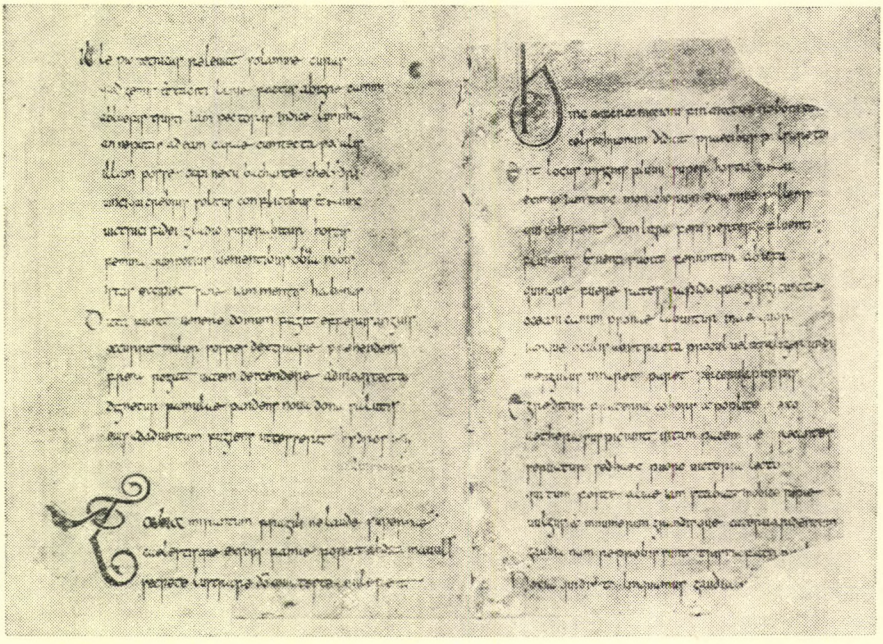
à l'illustre Général Dictateur Garibaldi

A holograph letter of Lajos Kossuth addressed to Garibaldi from his exile in Turin, dated 18 September 1860

Haydn as conductor in Nagyvárad, and Franz Xaver Süssmayr, Mozart's pupil who completed the *Requiem*.

Most important for Hungarian musical history is the collection of Ferenc Liszt's autographs, to which valuable manuscripts have been added of late. The documents of Hungarian musical history increase continually with the works of Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály. Part of Ernő Dohnányi's bequest is also here.

The collection of maps is unique in the country as regards Hungarian material; it also has international interest. Among the printed documents the most important item is Hungary's oldest map extant a wood engraving made by a Hungarian scribe called Lázár in 1528. His *Tabula Hungariae ad quatuor latera*, is one of the best cartographic works of his time, and its rich material of



The oldest Western European manuscript in the Széchényi Library, a fragment from an 8th-century life of St. Cuthbert, probably made in England

place-names makes it a valuable document. Another treasure is the collection of the prints of Enea Lanfranconi which consists of 105 pieces and contains maps of Hungary made in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries. The large map of Hungary made by Johann Christoph Müller in 1709 is of historical importance; the same can be said of the work of a Spaniard, Carlo Wasquez, whose "Topography of the Free Royal Towns of Buda and Pest" (around 1835) is a valuable document.

There are important hand-made maps such as the works of Sámuel Mikoviny, a Hungarian cartographer from the eighteenth century.

A much-treasured item in the collection of atlases is the first Hungarian *Parvus Atlas Hungariae* published in 1689, the work of Gábor Hevenesi. László Perczel's globe of a diameter of 132 centimetres made in 1862 is remarkable because it is one of the largest in Hungary, and also because it is hand-made with the utmost precision.

In the international collection the navigation map of Gratiosus Benincasa made in 1474 is famous. Best known among the monumental and significant atlases are the ones from the *Blaeu officina*, hand-illuminated and decorated with landscapes. Matheus Greuter's 47 cm. diametre globe made in 1632 also deserves special attention.

*

The Széchényi Library celebrating its 175th birthday does not consider its collecting activity completed; on the contrary, it continues to develop and only recently —along with other cultural institutions—it has bestowed great care on recording Hungaricae in collections in and outside the country, acquiring at least copies and making them accessible to researchers.

MÁRIA NÉMETH

RECENT POETRY

György Rónay: *Kakucsi rózsák* (Roses of Kakucs) Magvető, 1977. 183 pp. Endre Vészi: *Titokzatos párbuzamok* (Mysterious Parallels) Magvető, 1977. 133 pp. István Csukás: *A felidézett toronyszoba* (The Tower Room Evoked) Szépirodalmi, 1977. 227 pp.

György Rónay was born in 1913, the same year as my mother. I think that all of us who on account of our age could be his sons, or perhaps his younger brothers, are his pupils, are indebted to him. We did not learn spectacular things from him, at least I didn't, but in the literal sense of the term we learned a profession, a craft, philology. He introduced comprehensively 20th century French poetry in Hungarian; he did this in two excellent anthologies, adding an introduction to the second which even today, even judged by international standards, remains one of the best. In 1956 he translated the poets of the French Renaissance, and we might wonder which are better, the translations, or the comments he added? Ten years ago he published an excellently documented book on French and European classicism. And earlier, about thirty years ago, he translated poems by Novalis and Hölderlin, and with this he did more than anyone else to help Hungarians become acquainted with German romanticism. At a youthful age he translated the sonnets of Michelangelo. After all this, it is almost incidental that he also happens to be a translator of Goethe, Kafka, Saint-Exupéry, and others. But it is not incidental that he has written noteworthy studies on virtually all the major Hungarian writers of the past one hundred and fifty years, and has spoken with devout, respectful attention and care of the first poems, novels, and essays of writers younger than he. His curiosity, devotion to work, and respect for values have not diminished. Perhaps even more characteristic of Rónay is that in June 1939 he spoke of Nizan's novel *Conspiration* as a model to follow. He was a professed Catholic then, just as he is today, and for decades he has edited the prestigious Catholic periodical *Vigilia.**

One may find splendid poets and translators of verse with broad interests, and philologists with a wide knowledge of literature in Hungary in this century. But perhaps there are none within whom the ability to translate, poetic sensibility, and philological passion have resulted in such a synthesis as in Rónay. The essays introducing his literary translations are masterpieces of professional philology. He has translated and analyzed Ronsard and Scève, Malherbe and Rimbaud, Claudel and Éluard; he has written about their lives and circumstances, and helped to understand their techniques without any pretentiousness, and without attempting to force his interpretation on the reader. We are his pupils, because he has acquainted us with countless foreign authors, irrespective of trend, age and persuasion, and he has given us explanations which, if you like, have even helped us not to agree with them.

He is a versatile and sensitive writer. He writes novels, dramas, poems and even more, comments reminiscent of Alain's *Propos*. I found it necessary to say all this about him before commenting on his most recent volume of poems, *Roses of Kakucs*. The title poem belongs to the cycle titled *Autobiographical Fragments*. "Three roses on my table: they stemmed from the dust of my maternal ancestors", the poet writes, and adds: "roses of Kakucs, flowers of my birthplace".

*News reached us of György Rónay's death on 11 April 1978, at the age of 65, when this review was already in proof.–The Editor.

Perhaps the most characteristic attribute of the new book is the personal tone, which imbues particularly those poems from the cycle of *Autobiographical Fragments* which tell us about orphanhood, motherlessness, and the search for a father, defencelessness, and the moment of maturing to manhood: that moment, or rather those moments in which he becomes aware that he can no longer count on a father, and—his hopes are in vain—he has no masters or teachers either. It is from these poems that the reader understands the biographical, psychological motives of György Rónay's ethics, the devotion to work, and—for want of a better word—the fairness, which emanates from his entire life's work. His modesty is still that of old, but he now reveals a segment of his experiences that has been essentially unknown up to now. Obviously it is not by chance that he now speaks without self-pity of his childhood distresses, because it is now that he can speak of his grandchildren, and of the joy which, despite his ailments, life grants him in the years of respite.

One of the important cycles of the volume is *Serapion Legends* alluding to E. T. A. Hoffmann. Here Sartre's Catholic translator argues with *Huis Clos*. I quote in a prose translation: "The Others, I repeat, are not Hell. The Others are Compassion. It is not as if I did not know the crimes of Stupidity and Power. Look over my body: my skin is covered with scars all the way up from my ankles. Yet there no longer is anger in me, only compassion".

The description of nature, the artistic portrait and the paraphrase of the scriptures have always been the principal motifs of Rónay's poetry, and lovely examples of them may be found in "*Roses of Kakucs.*"

*

Endre Vészi writes poetry, novels, short stories, and plays alike. His first volume of verse appeared in 1935, and the current one, the *Mysterious Parallels*, is the thirteenth in this series. His new book closes with an essay titled *Swan above the Courtyard* and the subtitle *My Road to Poetry*. In this we may read the following: "For this essay, quoting my own poetry, I might even use this title: 'My homeland is my mother tongue'. Or expanded: 'my proof of naturalization'. From early childhood to this day, while keenly observing my parents, I have concluded that my fate would certainly lack justification, if some kind of inner and unalterable obsession had not endowed me with that pretentious, but certainly moving conviction, that in my personal misfortune, and at times the jeopardy of my life, the very existence of Hungarian poetry has been threatened. I thought of this in the early days of April 1945—who knows on what day—when in a several kilometres long chain of deportees, in a swirling blizzard I staggered over the Eisenerz Pass escorted by SA and SS guards on motorcycles".

These lines refer to his poem titled "My Homeland is my Mother Tongue" written earlier, in the middle of the 1960's (I quote in a prose translation): "I have no ancestor, who is proud, neither roots, which are branched, my homeland is my mother tongue, that is not even such a narrow world, and whatever my loneliness is like, humanism is my existence, I understand a few sentences pronounced by the three thousand million."

The Hungarian reader, going over these lines, associates them with one of the poems of Attila József (1905–1937). Attila József was one of the greatest poets of the 20th century, a consistent Marxist who also drew much on Freud, and who created a synthesis of precise concepts with fascinating imagery and musicality. Endre Vészi, the one-time printer's apprentice, was liberated by Attila József. For decades Vészi again and again evoked the memory of the great poet, and in *Mysterious Parallels* he devotes a cycle of poems to him titled "The Birth of a Heavenly Body". Let me mention here that in *Roses of Kakucs* György Rónay also

speaks of Attila József, and so does István Csukás, whose volume I shall review below.

"Only rarely do I dream of my mother nowadays"—writes the poet in the first line of his volume, "but occasionally a doorway, a street, a house" brings her memory to life. The memory and the loss of his mother permeate the title-giving poem, the volume titled *Mysterious Parallels*, and Endre Vészi's entire work like a leading motif—just as Attila József's mother had at one time. Perhaps it is as a consequence of his former privations and sufferings that the words and images of food return with striking frequency in his poetry.

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István Csukás was born in 1936 and his first volume appeared in 1962. *The Tower Room Evoked* is a selection. The tower room evoked in one of his poems was the residence or lodging of young artists embarking on their careers, and their chance companions. The poet thought to find in it the "ozone of youth": "I suspected secrets, alchemy, the gold-making of poetry tirelessly"... But the assessment of the one who remembers is entirely different: (I quote in prose) "the whitening fear of an air raid was in the room, the self-consuming army's the last move of the month was in the room".

This is Csukás, the severe critic of his own illusions and errors. And he strives to define his place in the world with immoderate discipline. He came from the countryside "with a peasant lung" to the capital, after receiving his high school diploma from a music school. He was at various times a law student and a liberal arts student. In one of his ballads the poet, who left school with a "defiant heart," recalls the one-time class mates who had also come up from the provinces.

Presumably thanks to his musical lore he possesses an extensive poetic melodic treasury, as well as the ability to speak with the voice of other poets. He does not write pastiches, and he does not imitate, but playing on the instrument of other poets at one and the same time he characterizes them, and enhances his own possibilities. Deceased and contemporary poets: friends who people Csukás' world, particularly since his childhood has "rarified to inaccessibility". The experience of other poets is partly the test of his own experiences, and partly the prefiguraation of his own destiny. The volume titled *The Tower Room Evoked* is, as a matter of fact, a fragment of his autobiography. Important facts to be appreciated in this autobiography are the actual or occasionally only spiritual encounters with other poets. And poets may be truly present only if we have them speak in their own voices. He evokes the figure, the work, or the memory of a personal meeting with some poet in a strikingly large number of poems. In their sum total they profess a way of life and a mission that cannot be set aside.

"*After the First Lap*," an expression borrowed from athletics, is the title of one of his poems. I quote its last two lines (in prose) because they formulate concisely the aims of the poet entering his "shivering manhood": "and like an eyewitness, who has survived—I am beginning to count the dead".

Among his relatively small number of love poems there are a number of miniature portraits: this is the way the poet wishes to preserve "fading" youth. "The perennial faith of love preserves", he professes. In a moving poem he speaks of the joy of an easy encounter of bodies, elsewhere he relates the complexity of the road leading to love, and, elsewhere he cautions against ridiculing the love of ageing women.

Csukás is a poet and not a philosopher. Thus he does not have an elaborate system. Yet every fibre of his verse is the poetry of a moralist. A moralist, who sometimes seemingly flippantly, but in reality very severely, takes account of the facts and opportunities of life, and casts aside easy solutions with determination.

LÁSZLÓ FERENCZI

YOUNG WRITERS

Péter Nádas: *Egy családregény vége* ("The Ending to a Family Tale"), Szépirodalmi, 1977, 230 pp.; Péter Esterházy: *Pápai vizeken ne kalózkodj* ("Don't go Pirating in Papal Waters"), Magvető, 1977, 211 pp.; Ferenc Temesi: *Látom, nekem kell lemennem* ("I see it's me who has to go down."), Szépirodalmi, 1977, 225 pp.

In 1966 a young man of thirty-three created a sensation with two novellas which appeared in the Budapest monthly *Kortárs*. *A Biblia* ("The Bible") and *A Pince* ("The Cellar") showed that Péter Nádas had a marked talent for realist writing. His first book was published the following year.

The Bible is set in the fifties, that is to say in the Stalinist period. Dojdika, the narrator, is a boy of twelve, whose parents are Party officials. The family lives in a villa in the Buda hills. Dojdika's parents are busy people and the young boy is looked after by an odd domineering grandmother. The only love he knows comes from a young house-maid, Szidike, who is responsible for his first sexual experience. When the crotchety old grandmother suspects the girl of theft, Szidike returns to her village. The climax of the story occurs when the family goes for a drive to the servant's poverty-stricken home. Here for the first time the youth experiences blatant and scandalous social differences. The explanation of the success of this autobiographical work is the skilful rendering of the typical thinking of the young boy and the presentation of the socially isolated Party bureaucrats of the fifties. In "The Cellar" the political impact is less evident. With ironic and philosophical reflecion it describe the tragicomically confined way of life and the frightening solitude of a photographer's assistant. The story is clearly influenced by Dostoevsky and shows a felicitous application of the existentialist perception of life's commonplaces. Here again the writer with his unusually ripe style creates an evocative atmosphere.

In 1969 six stories appeared as part of a second volume, *Kulcskereső játék* ("The Key-Hunting Game"). The best story in the volume is *Klára asszony háza* ("Widow Klára's House"). The central character is the widow of a martyr of the Hungarian workers' movement; for a long time she has been living on her own. She dedicates all of her time to writing about the sole remembrance of her husband. However a new housekeeper arrives, the foolish and not so young Jucika. The idyllic life comes to an end. Among the silent walls weeping and laughter alternate; heated arguments and delicate reconciliations succeed one another. With mixed feelings the martyr's widow accepts the real world's invasion of her sanctified home. In fact she also enjoys the stormy eruptions, but at the same time she fears that they may intrude upon her silent life. Once more the temperamental housekeeper solves the dilemma. After a tempestuous night spent with a young lad who lives next door she disappears. The rest of the story takes place partly in the world of bureaucrats and partly in the world of The Bible which we already know. From perceptive observation and from interesting reflection the prematurely old and wise child-narrator builds up grotesque or nostalgic stories.

In the six years following The Key-Hunting Game Péter Nádas published no fiction. In 1977 his novel *Egy családregény vége* ("The Ending of a Family Tale") was published, again promising political thrills. The story is set in 1949 in the Rákosi period when trumped up charges of treason were laid against László Rajk, first Minister

of the Interior and later Foreign Minister in the Rákosi period. However when the work is considered as a whole its political interest proves to be secondary.

The novel describes the outlook and reactions of three different generations. At the same time it tries to trace the story of the male line of a Jewish family. The grandfather, who stands for an impractical and unrealistic view of life, withdraws into a mythopoeic insanity. His son suffers moral bankruptcy turning into the instrument of the oppressive police machinery preparing the prosecution case for the show trial. The grandson, however, one of the elect of the new powers quickly goes to pieces under the strain of oppressive educational methods of the élite school.

The portrayal of the cruelty of the fascist-like education in cadet schools with their unquestioning carrying out of orders and methods of mental torture first appeared in Hungarian twenty years ago in Géza Ottlik's outstanding *Iskola a határon* ("School at the Frontier"). In the present story's frightening episode set in the institution Péter Nádas once again portrays the terrible spiritual effects of those methods and the mood of the very early fifties. This epilogue is however not just a clever imitation in altered circumstances of the undoubted achievements of Ottlik's novel with its sensitive rendering of mental cruelty. The family's fate carried by Péter Simon, the adolescent main character, is sealed in the institution. Only if he chooses the path of annihilation, the explosion of self-destruction, can he avoid the degradation of the beastly misery of perpetual servitude.

The grandfather of the young central character narrates the complicated allegorical family history, indeed the grandfather is the most memorable character of this part. His son is a high-ranking detective officer and from his false trial evidence broadcast over the radio the members of the family find out that the Rajk trial is a fabrication.

Next to the family history and the epilogue in the training home the largest part of the story is taken up by the observations of the sensitive adolescent youth who reminds us of Péter Nádas's earlier child-narrator. The location is also unchanged; the scene is set in two neighbouring villas in the socially isolated bureaucrat district. The daily activities of the highly imaginative youth, Péter Simon, his sexual games with the neighbour's daughter and his wanderings round the secluded garden, are the best parts of the novel. Up to the epilogue in the training home these childhood imaginings and surrealistically influenced experiences frame the political and historical message.

The writer does not place the episodes in chronological sequence, he uses them rather like musical motifs. At first he releases only a few details, later he returns to them more and more frequently then, at a suitable moment, he suddenly produces their interconnections in a polyphonic interpretation. The child's world is presented in this way, and so the connections and interactions become part of the flow of life and explain each other in a synchronic pattern. The scenes of the grandfather's death and of the grandmother's final illness and death are the high points. But there is nothing behind these scenes and they are unable to support the general scheme.

Nádas does not entirely succeed in working together the three basic themes of his story—the world of childhood experience, the family history, and the epilogue in the training home. The narrative of the grandfather besides being dull does not reveal the old man's peculiar and eccentric character. Further it interrupts the flow of the novel and remains extraneous to its organic arrangement. Likewise the intrusion into the novel of the language of the Rajk trial bursts the framework of the child's directly observed story. The unnecessary change of style in the epilogue causes the central character to be torn from his own small world and he simply arrives in new surroundings. There is insufficient time for the

preparation and absorption of this switch. Péter Nádas's novel, in spite of its disproportions and structural inconsistencies, is an interesting experiment at synthesis. It encourages one to believe that, with the further development of Nádas's original realist talents, he will prove able to write a novel of society as well.

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Péter Esterházy, born in 1950, is a gifted representative of the generation of the seventies. His first work published in 1976 was *Fancsikó és Pinta* ("Fancsikó and Pinta") with its delightful mood and sophisticated outlook reflecting a child's view of life.*

The title of his second volume *Pápai vizeken ne kalózkodj* ("Don't Go Pirating in Papal Waters") is a comic paraphrase of a Catholic confessional anecdote. The first, eponymous, story clarifies the meaning. The expression reached the Hungarian store of anecdotes from a late medieval record of crimes. The main character, a trickster, misunderstands the Church order, later revoked, suspending the sovereignty of Papal territorial water. He believes that "pirating in Papal Waters" means no more than splashing in the holy-water container in the church. So he makes a detailed confession although really no sin was committed. The somewhat unserious fear of breaking senseless or incomprehensible orders, the simultaneously humorous and painful ambivalence of the peculiar feeling of a sinless guilty conscience are fundamental themes not only of this first story. The joys and fears of the commitment of spiritual irregularities delimit to the very last the best stories of the three cycles which make up the collection. The tricks of the young man, turning everything into a game, are not really contained in the overt meaning of the timidly committed venial sins. The harmless deviations reveal the young man's inner struggle with an adult world lived in accordance with stupid rules. In a second interpretation the humorous mischief committed for the most part in his imagination shows up and ridicules the defensive conduct of the trickster. The implicit goal of the trickster is social criticism. His goal expresses the gentle but insistent protest of young people seeking a more harmonious life, one opposed to the confused and self-devouring life-style of their parents' generation.

Up to this point the background to Péter Esterházy's writings was the gentle and obstinately cheerful revolt against the everyday worries and complaints of the adult world; this revolt when examined more closely is still not yet clearly defined, but it is a more harmonious search, overlooking the errors of others. In its aesthetic understanding it seeks a superior life-style.

Even more credibly he lays down the condition that the maker of this new life-style believes that this ideal life can be brought about only in a restrained manner. At the same time in almost all his writing he provides his hero with the chance of bringing his tasks to fruition. He encourages him with the only half-suspected consolation that his past errors were not entirely unintelligent, nor were his wishes completely hopeless, because although perhaps only in part, and indirectly, he may realize the past in the ever freer and more malleable future.

In the best stories of the volume there is, of course, no trace of such a complicated train of thought. Witty twists, enchanting playfulness, startling association of ideas, original observation, cunning composition, structural success, and the linguistic ideas are all the more successful. The title story illuminates the everyday activities of the apprentice waiter by shifting the entire story to the future. The everyday activities of a young man training for work take on a new perspective from the shift in time, and the

* See Imre Kis-Pintér's notice in NHQ 67.

waiter-scenes—hardly holding out the promise of easy work—begin to sparkle in a sarcastically idyllic light.

A pillanat rése ("A Split Second") is a more bitterly playful piece of writing. Its main character is a headwaiter, really, a very unloveable figure. Guests arrive at the restaurant. It comes to light that the guests are his divorced wife, with a new man, and their daughter. The girl does not know that the headwaiter is her father and tries to be kind to him so that she can find out his name. The writer never says so, but it is clear that this very day is the last day of the waiter's life which ends in suicide.

There is another very good tale in the waiter-cycle but it is difficult to tell its story. The main characters are the young waiter and Maria, the mature, beautiful, and moderately virtuous coffee-girl, as well as once again a guest, Dr. Temesi. Temesi's main source of pride is that leather consumer goods are made of genuine pigskin. The conversations of the three people reveal Esterházy's talent for bringing out attractively wry and impudently adolescent comedy.

The writer calls the second group of short stories "playful texts." The warning introducing the first story holds good for all of them—"this story is not intended to paint a streak of light in the author's halo but rather to embroider laughter on the faces of his brothers." The three stories of this group are thematically related to each other, although in each the main characters are different, and indeed they belong to different social classes. In the first variation in the working out of the key idea a deceived husband imagines somewhat childishly that he may take his revenge on a certain Károly. So he imagines that because Károly has seduced his wife he may punish him by bullying him, or by seducing Károly's wife, or simply by spitting on him. The second variation presents a pedantic but dirty character who has "strong breath." He cuts his wife to pieces and then nervously and jokingly tries to imitate the habits of tenement cats. In the key idea's third variation we gain a gruesome insight into the private life of a dog-catcher. Moral problems do not bother the dog-catcher living at the animal level. If during his walk he does not succeed in picking up a suitable woman he chooses a cat for himself and skilfully executes it.

The third part of the book is a somewhat lengthy grotesque satire *Spionnovella* ("A Spy Story"). In the introduction Esterházy says that the main character is a "charming small-time detective" who divides the world into two parts—"beautiful" and "ugly." This story is the writer's most ambitious piece and the hardest to follow. His intention is clear—he wishes to write a parody of the shallow detective story, but to do so in such a way that he reveals through the main characters (the detectives and their boss who uphold the moral order) the professionally induced mental deficiencies which result in total insanity. With this state of affairs facing every detective each detective simply withdraws into his own disguise and the criminals, the apprehended, the arrested, and those caught in the act exist only in imagination. Two short extracts convey precisely the flavour of the story. "They got Mancy," the boss tells a detective. "Who?" "The guy we were talking about at lunch the other day." "But, Chief, the whole Mancy-thing was a put-up job." "Maybe, but we nailed Mancy". Of a third detective we learn that he "shut himself up in his room with just a chair and worked everything out by staring at a high output lamp."

In its grotesque overwroughtness and in its dialogues' inclining to absurdity and lapsing into nervous fits, it is not difficult to discern the general influence of Franz Kafka and the somewhat closer affinity with Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*. Esterházy himself senses the derivative nature of his work and toys with a self-belittling impudence. For this reason he inserts into the text critical

self-parody and sly apologetic asides. For example—"My attraction to fill in words does not, fortunately, come from any desire on my part for social recognition because in a curtained room where the unsociable belong any such desire quickly disappears; such activity is rather a path to inner security. In no way am I stupid." Or—"To write in a slapdash fashion is no great art, and there you have it."

From a writer like Esterházy we must expect deadly precise composition. In his stories he rouses our interest not with what he relates, rather with the way he relates them. If he makes compromises over language, style, or structural problems, if he is content with easy solutions then he renounces the essence of art.

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Ferenc Temesi, who is one year older than Péter Esterházy, teaches English in a secondary school. His first work *Látom, nekem kell lemennem* ("I see it's me who has to go down") is unusually colourful. There is really no other story which is similarly structured.

The first story is structured like a film-script but draws in more and more from all sides. The second portrays the emptying of a drawer filled with papers. The next takes up one after the other the notes written with a red ballpoint pen in the margins of a library book. The fourth, more or less conventional, reports the events of the writer's theatrical period. The next is a very subjective diary of a journey through England. This is followed by a mosaic story composed of old tales. Another story carries the subtitle—"The title comes from a dictionary of definitions." The time sequence of another follows the progression of a school-year and is structured after the increasing seriousness of the first school-books of the primary school. Another story is an imaginary tale set in the future and without a pause is retold a second time. Another is the hasty draft of a story interwoven with the writer's instructions, with adjectives and adverbs left out of their place, half-complete similes, and isolated episodes. One tale is an amusing textual crossword puzzle. Another story is the ironical collection of replies given by a grade eleven high-school girl to a comprehensive questionnaire. Another tale is also a choice collection from a street post-box "on a smiling Tuesday morning."

Some of the stories are not in prose but in free verse. Here we find a *Manifesto* which with each criticism reveals more of the writer's ambitions. It runs as follows:—

I CANNOT TELL YOU ANYTHING AT ALL

1 because I do not want to repeat others
2 because I do not want to repeat myself
3 because you repeat others
4 because you repeat yourself
5 because you want to say something
6 because you do not want to say anything
7 because nothing ever happens to me
8 because nothing ever happens to you
9 because things always happen elsewhere, where nothing ever happens.

The entire collection of stories is the living refutation of this frivolous and sceptical manifesto. The proof of this is that something invariably happens to the gifted and sensitive person even if nothing happens, mainly however the proof is that something really happens to the writer, if he writes.

Of the sentences, written with apparent casual carelessness but actually with conscious calculation and artistic care, and from the inexhaustible structural games there emerges the witty autobiography of an individual struggling with himself and the world with an attentive lyrically shaped self-expression; and there emerges also his external conditions and the individual stages of his inner quest.

We learn that Győző, the hero of the stories, was the son of school-teachers, and in his early childhood he rode a scooter,

played games with buttons, read. and daydreamed. His father was fond of cards, his sister was surrounded by boyfriends, grandfather was a veteran Communist. We learn of his sweetheart romances and his seduction of young women. He played in a rock group and was a member of a gang run by well-mannered fellows. After this he worked looking after boats and then was an arts student and sat hours on end in the library resembling the museum's "Mummy No. 11527." Although a little ashamed of the fact he studied and read voraciously. By and by he spent a few weeks in England, practised writing poetry but finally became a short-story writer.

It is possible to reassemble the external events of his life from the short stories, and, more importantly, his inner development from the chaos of feeling—the story of the character's quest and the origins of the writer's awareness.

He flees from the events of the external world perceived in a radar-like fashion, but pleasingly fargmentary, and its shamefully or scandalously inflated sensations to the imaginary, falsely coherent world of an oversensitive youth. There he finds nothing more than the frighteningly homely pseudo-processes which his fantasy increasingly churns out and he becomes consumed by an unbearable anger. At first he seeks a way out in the voluntary familiarity of small communities. Later, following the beckoning of his amorous inclinations, he tries in a rather roundabout way to find a mate among the girls. In this he exposes himself to life's experiences fraught with disappointments. Slowly the feelings of an ever more and more productive solitary life take shape. He writes down his inner experiences and draws together the usable fragments of the apparently shattered outer world. From these he begins to create his works—"stories" as he puts it. He discovers that everything he reaches out towards comes together in an organic fashion and—as it were seizing hold of the joy of the game—he tenaciously continues his search. Meanwhile, thickening the text with aphoristic sayings his personality poures forth his inviolate view of life and also his philosophy with its particular entry into the world. Beginning from the first small painful formulation —"I may be the kindest whistling between a boy and a girl" and safely journeying through the expression of self-pity—"a lean university student whose glance is so sad as if every misfortune would befall him" —he arrives at the blazoning forth of his heroically hopeless artistic task—"We must redeem God, that I believe."

Here begins the true vocation of the writer, one might say.

ZOLTÁN ISZLAI

NEW CORVINA BOOKS

Irén Kisdégi-Kirimi: *Csendéletek a Magyar Nemzeti Galériában* (Still Lifes in the Hungarian National Gallery). Corvina, 1977, 28 pp., with 36 colour plates. Hungarian and English editions

The picture-album and the coffee-table book rate as sophisticated gifts: the reader not too conversant with art may like to rely on assistance offered by reference-books ranging from subjects such as "Woman in Art," "Genre Paintings" to, as may happen, that of "Still Lifes." How far he gets, that is, how near to painting, depends considerably on his guide, the author or assembler of such a compilation.

The compiler of this volume was *ab ovo* limited by the fact that her assignment was to bring together the still-life material of a single Budapest collection hence, reproductions of works of highly mixed value are placed next to one another on the pages of this nicely produced work. Alongside the idyllic still-lifes, tending towards the art of the chocolate-box, of Oszkár Glatz, István Csók, Péter Benedek, Adolf Fényes (and the list could be extended) we encounter, from picture No. 18 to No. 28, one work from each of the best Hungarian artists of the first part of the century: the tense and exciting still-lifes of Iványi-Grünwald, Vaszary, Márffy, Czigány, Czóbel, Tihanyi, Berény, Kmetty, István Nagy, Nagy-Balogh, and Derkovits are matched only by the Károly Ferenczy still-life to be found in the first part of the volume and the Gadányi, Ámos, and Bálint reproductions at the end. Even if unwittingly, it is definitely a virtue of the volume that the false idyll and the genuine work contrast so distinctly with one another, are so thoroughly distinguishable in it. The range of themes is indeed appropriate for gauging artistic quality since, in thematic painting, it was the genre of the still-life that performed roughly the same function as the works titled "composition" play among non-figurative paintings: these works are studies of pictorial structure, of strict, saturated organization of forms and surface design.

It is another matter how the public, whose demand and taste for Christmas gifts are perhaps far too satisfied by this volume (let me add: as they are also by the collection of the National Gallery, represented by the volume), can actually acquire knowledge from it. The thematic presentation of painting is a didactic and at the same time risky business: it tends to perpetuate the taste yearning for idylls. Yet so many (ineffective) sighs are uttered in the columns of the various art magazines! And even if we cannot regard the publication of good prints of the still-lifes of the National Gallery as taste-forming—at least not in the desired way—but rather as having an educational effect, the rest already depends on whether the reader buys the book and pays a visit to the National Gallery for the sake of János Szentgyörgyi and Gábor Stettner or the outstanding works of Lajos Tihanyi and Derkovits.

Mária G. Aggházy: *Italian and Spanish Sculpture in the Collection of Old Sculpture of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts.* Corvina, 1977, 35 pp., 48 colour plates and 17 black-and-white illustrations. In English.

This brief and essentially popularizing work of Mária Aggházy, a sort of album, is the product of considerable erudition of long and profound research work. The author is a long-time student of Baroque sculpture, and a number of her studies have been published; she confidently helps the reader find his way about in Italian and Spanish sculpture, from the beginnings, taking the early Byzantine influences as their starting-point, down to the late eighteenth century, giving sensitive descriptions of the works in which the historical aspects (frequently motif-historical, formal historical) are dealt with in a perfectly natural way.

Since this volume presents the material of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, and it is through this material that it sketches out the seven-century-long history of sculpture, it gives a brief *apercu* of the past of the collection as well; obviously important. for the fate of the works is a factor in their legend, value, and (although in this particular instance the issue does not arise) their price in the art trade. The sculpture collection of

the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts was founded by Károly Pulszky (1853–1899), the first curator, who had bought from art dealers in Florence, Venice, and Brescia. At that time the collection did not as yet include samples from all of the significant epochs and turning-points of Italian sculpture, but the deficiencies were subsequently made good by the works—mainly bronze statuettes—which the sculptor István Ferenczy had collected in Rome, and which had been added to the collection in 1914 from his bequest.

Of outstanding significance amongst these bronze statuettes is *The Warrior on Rearing Horse* which, in 1969, at the 22nd International Congress on Art History, organized in Budapest, came into the centre of interest. This statuette was first attributed to Leonardo da Vinci by Simon Meller. The work of Mária Aggházy also corroborates the view of some participants of the congress, that this bronze statuette is indeed Leonardo's work, portraying the French King Francis I. The aged master accepted the invitation of Francis I in 1516, and portrayed him in a series of small equestrian statuettes. Beside the enumeration of the historical sources, Mária Aggházy's stylistical analysis, the comparison of the bronze statue with Leonardo's earlier sketches, first and fore mostwith his drawings for the fresco *The Battle of Anghiari*, also corroborate that we are confronted with an authentic work of Leonardo.

This brief review cannot survey the breadth of knowledge the reader finds in Mária Aggházy's book. I must, however, emphasize that it is a high-standard volume produced in a manner worthy of its contents, a piece of educational literature on a high level, which will render even the uninitiated reader a more receptive, more keen-sighted beholder of the plastic art.

ÉVA FORGÁCS

BÁLINT BALASSI AND HERNÁN CORTÉS

Balassi and Cortés?

How can the greatest sixteenth-century poet of the Hungarian Renaissance and Mexico's conqueror, the ill-famed conquistador, be placed side by side? Bálint Balassi (1554–1594), the minstrel of Turkish and Hungarian battles, did military service at castles along the Hungarian border, and the farthest points of his wanderings were Vienna and Northern Poland, more precisely Danzig, today's Gdansk where, although he admired the sea on the shallow shores of the Gulf of Vistula, he perhaps never set foot aboard a ship.

Balassi himself answers the question in the prologue to his pastoral play titled *Szép magyar komédia* ("A Nice Hungarian Comedy") written in the winter of 1588–89 on the basis of an Italian play, where one may read: "If studies did not harm our father King Matthias and Emperor Charles, nay, they proved very useful, and astrology likewise, *if studies did not bring shame or did not harm Ferdinandus Cortes who was an excellent writer of verse (who in the greatest part conquered the whole of India, whose name is Nova Terra, for Emperor Charles)*, . . ., why do we have a horror of good and wise science . . . ?"

The extended version of this essay provided with scholarly explanations and a bibliography appeared in *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, a periodical of the Institute of Literary Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, No. 5–6, 1976, in the so-called "Balassi Issue" under the title "Balassi Bálint és az Oceánum" (Bálint Balassi and the Ocean), and an offprint was made from it as the 37th item of the series titled *Renaissance Füzetek*. The essay is the first part of a monograph in preparation titled "The Image of the New World in Old Hungarian Culture."

Hence according to Bálint Balassi, "studies" (humanist culture) and the science of astrology did not harm either Matthias Corvinus, the great Renaissance king of the fifteenth century, nor Emperor Charles V, nor even the Spanish monarch's famous commander, Hernán Cortés, who conquered a great part of the New World. On the contrary, it had been to their benefit, as he writes a few lines further: "to whom God has given good science in addition to a brave heart, he will sharpen the edge of his sword and not blunt it."

The good science improving the edge of Hernán Cortés' sword was his ability to write verse, since the conquistador, as Balassi states, was "an excellent writer of verse." This mysterious reference had indeed astounded Hungarian researchers working on Balassi. In 1959 the most noted specialist on Balassi, Professor Sándor Eckhardt, declared without beating about the bush that he had no idea "where Balassi got the idea that Cortés, who discovered Mexico, was 'an excellent writer of verse', for bibliographies know nothing about Cortés' poems." This discouraging statement made two decades ago has not encouraged anybody to investigate the matter further.

The examples quoted by Bálint Balassi, who had an immense erudition, reflect broad views and up-to-date sixteenth-century knowledge; his acquaintance with history and geography and his natural knowledge of America were uncommon. Let us take a closer look at the specialized literature and see whether Bálint Balassi's statement can be supported after all.

Hernán Cortés who crushed ancient Aztec culture is represented as a somber figure by posterity even though the literary value of his letters addressed to Charles V, in which he reports of the subjugation of Mexico, is acknowledged. The Hungarian poet Lőrinc Orczy who lived at the end of the eighteenth century and whose poems are sceptical and bitter definitely cursed in him his poem titled "Amerikában kezdődött háború elején" (It Began in America at the Beginning of War) and he did the same to Amerigo Vespucci who had given his name to the New World:

I wish Vespuz had gone lost with his
broken galley,
And Cortez with his army of horses
spitting fire,
Indus could now gather pearls in peace and
quiet,
And would not worship gods who are rude
and miserly.

The Czech Ivan Olbracht was of the same opinion in the 1940s; in his famous historical novel *The Conqueror* he personified Hitler himself in the figure of the mass-murderer Cortés. When Fascism was raging this forced metaphor was as appropriate as Balassi's complex parable, since the blood-thirsty lack of inhibition of the Renaissance and humanist feeling were equally characteristic of the sixteenth-century Hungarian soldier poet.

Another novelist chronicler, the Hungarian László Passuth, also emphasizes the ambiguity of Cortés' personality in his popular novel about the conquest of Mexico *Raingod Wails Mexico* written in 1938 and translated into a number of languages. At the beginning of the novel the young Cortés registers at the university of Salamanca, and further on Cortés helps with the excavation of Roman antiquities. Neither does Olbracht express doubts regarding the conquistador's erudition, for he used the same source as Passuth: the monograph of William Prescott, an American historian, on the conquests of Mexico and Peru published in several editions and several languages since 1843. Prescott writes that Cortés, unlike Pizarro, could be considered a cultivated person: he acquired the Latin language to some extent and learned to write prose and *even verses* which in the view

of an old author "were somewhat esteemed with regard to Cortés' authorship."

The "old author" referred to is a Spanish historian called Argensola. Argensola's chronicle, however, appeared more than three decades after Balassi's death, in 1630, so the Hungarian poet cannot have been familiar with it. But was there no chronicler in Cortés' "army of horses spitting fire," among those half thousand wild Spanish mercenaries who set their foot on Mexican soil in 1519?

Oh, yes, there was one and it was el Capitán Bernal Díaz del Castillo who fifty years later, in 1568, when only he and five other soldiers from Cortés' first Spanish army were still alive, undertook to write the real history of Mexico's conquest. The *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España* is the real history of the conquest of New Spain in which Díaz describes Cortés, the scholar and cultivated soldier, with objective enthusiasm, and mentions, of course, his ability to write verse: "He knew Latin well and always spoke with scholars in this language. He could write verses, too, and in general, had a good pen..." Díaz history also reports on poems actually written by Cortés. When he writes about the Spanish soldiers constantly longing for gold who wrote pasquinades on the walls of the Mexican palace of Cortés because of all the booty at his disposal, Díaz notes that Cortés "has never tried to find the culprits, but wrote in response wittier pasquinades next to theirs." We know, however, from one of Balassi's poems that "Palaces, houses, strong fortresses, and towns go to piece in time," and "writing engraved even in marble... wears off and may be lost"—so quick decay was the fate of the Cortés verses, written on walls.

Díaz' chronicle, however, has preserved a witty Cortés epigram consisting of three lines. As to the circumstances I will not quote his work, after all, for Balassi could not have had access to the *Historia verdadera* either, since it was printed only in 1632.

Díaz' famous memoirs, however, put us on the right track, for the author reveals that he tried to correct the prejudices of López de Gómara's book against Cortés. Gómara had been the confessor of the Cortés family, and his work on the conquest of the Indies and of New Spain, *Hispania victrix, historia general de las Indias y de la Nueva Hispania*, contains a detailed biography of Cortés. After Spanish editions it was published in Italian by a Venetian printer as early as 1564, and this book (or an extract of it) could well have reached Balassi, who had a good knowledge of Italian. I failed to come across it in Hungarian libraries, but the staff of the Clementina Library, the library of the University of Prague, kindly brought out both the Spanish and the Italian edition, in the winter of 1976, when I visited there. The chapter about the "Silver cannon sent by Cortés to the emperor" makes it obvious that Captain Díaz had not corrected anything here, but had taken over Gómara's description word for word, probably because he himself had witnessed the famous event recorded by López Gómara:

"Cortés had sent the emperor 70 thousand gold castellanos... as well as a cannon made of silver to the value of 24 thousand gold pesos. It was a wonderful piece made rather for the eyes than for use... It was decorated by the relief of a phoenix, and the following text had been minted on it:

Esta ave nació sin par
yo en serviros sin segundo,
y vos sin igual en el mundo.

(Nothing like this bird was ever born
Nobody can serve you as well as I,
Since no one is your equal in this world.)

"...I noticed that this cannon evoked envy, and certain people at Court even took offence mainly because of the inscription,

although the masses praised Cortés to the skies, since I believe that no silver gun has ever been cast except for the one sent by Cortés. The verse was made by himself and it did not sound bad. A number of people tried to imitate his intellectual excellence as well as his poetic abilities, but they failed..."

L. Passuth was so kind as to translate the Gómara quotation for me. I was obliged to turn to him for help since, in the wake of Díaz, he had already published the Hungarian text of the epigram in his novel entitled *Raingod Weeps for Mexico.*

Phoenix is the name of this strange bird,
A rarer one was never born,
Such a true servant I am to thee,
My emperor, the world has never borne
a greater one than you.

This Cortés poem was known to Bálint Balassi. In particular, the circumstances surrounding the epigram must have aroused his interest. The proud conquistador who had his own epigram engraved on the gun-barrel recalls the Hungarian Renaissance soldier-poet, as he translates the poet Marullus from Latin while lying on the grass of the fragrant meadow next to his good horse. And the gun brings to memory an illustration of it I found on an artistic world map, including Mexico and Peru, drawn by István Szamosközy, a historian from Transylvania in the early part of the seventeenth century; one can see a two-wheeled smoking gun, very probably a *culebrían*, i.e. a "battle snake," shelling the Aztec metropolis built upon the middle of the lake.

Reading about the famous actions of Hernán Cortés the whole dramatic history of Mexico's conquest must have become clear to Balassi: the truly great "Cortés poem," the violent epic of the Conquest. Balassi, however, had not recorded any epic, objective aspect of the Conquest. He bent over López de Gómara's book as a poet, and with unerring lyrical sensitivity and identification picked out from the Cortés biography that strange bit of information later scholars did not care about at all.

Bálint Balassi's literary experience of the sea and his knowledge of America can be completed by his real experiences of the sea. As mentioned previously, he reached the coast of the Baltic Sea, in the course of his wanderings in Poland, and the memory of the Gulf of Vistula near Gdańsk prompted him to compose the following great poetic summation:

Oh, you great round blue sky, palace
of glory, light and stars,
Landscape of the perfumed earth, renewed
with flowers and covered
by beautiful green,
Mortlake of the great sea carrying galleys
and breeding wonders.

Mortlake is in reality but a boggy, shallow, dead body of water; Balassi, however, transforms it into a big sea, and in one of his poems directly into an ocean. He might have done so not only because of his poetic inclination to exaggerate. From the quiet surf of the Gulf of Vistula he must have heard reports of distant continents, the raging noise of immense oceans, the din of weapons as peoples and cultures clash, for he even knew about Hernán Cortés, in command of the Spaniards' "fire spitting army of horses," that he "excelled in writing verses."

SÁNDOR IVÁN KOVÁCS

SENIOR CITIZENS

Magyarország legöregebb lakói (The Oldest Inhabitants of Hungary), Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, Budapest, 1977, 345 pp.

The fast improvement in the mortality trend during the past century has basically altered the population pattern—first in the industrially developed countries and then, in the past few decades and in our days, in the economically less developed areas of the world. As a result, the meaning of the terms "young", "middle-aged" or "old" is today entirely different from what it was fifty or a hundred years ago. The question of who rates as young or old essentially depends on the opinion of members of the society, in which one lives, or their majority, and it is obvious that every person shapes his ideas from the angle of his own age.

This essential change is the pattern, outlook and feeling, however considerable, took place by and large unnoticed. It coincided in time with the technological and scientific revolutions in whose shadow it was given relatively little attention. It was noticed when the differences in this respect between developed and undeveloped regions became evident. In the thirties, for example, when transport was accelerating and communication between different parts of the world became systematic and general, the average expectation of life was already 60 in Europe, and only just 30 in Africa and Asia. These differences have remained, though reduced in some measure. In the developed and the developing countries the respective figures were 65 and 40 years in the 1950's, while today they are around 70 and 50, although there are still quite a number of countries in tropical Africa and Asia where the expectation of life ranges between 40 and 45.

All this—combined with a decline of fertility—has basically changed the age-composition of the population, first of all in the developed countries. The economic and social consequences are well known. The proportion of retired people has grown, and their way of life, with all its social and psychological effects, has become common. Beyond the related and often debated financial and socio-political problems, however, this evolution has posed special problems in social politicy and public health. There has been a rapid growth in the number of old people who need special care in addition to general social provisions (old-age pension, social insurance, etc.).

Although there is no clear and unequivocal definition of the age at which the need for such increased care arises (this differs significantly according to individual and environmental conditions), somewhat arbitrarily and conventionally the age-group above 80 is considered as a category needing increased care and consequently this is usually the object of surveys of this kind. The old-age survey related to the 1970 census in Hungary also dealt with people over 80. Within this category a complete census was taken of all those over 90 (nearly 7.000)* and a 5 per cent sample was taken of those between 80 and 89 (nearly 146,000). The publication under review contains the results. The present review generally gives the data of the two age-groups together, except for those points in which the groups essentially differ.

The afore-said process of the lengthening of the life expectancy suddenly increased the number of the oldest people (those over 80 years) in Hungary, too. A hundred year ago there were fewer than only less than

* The census recorded 8,800 persons over 90, but the old-age survey (three months later) found only 6,800 persons, primarily because of the deaths.

10,000 persons over 80 in the country, the 1970 census found more than 154,000. The first chapter of the volume describes this process. It is worthy of note that the rapid growth has been caused essentially by an improvement in mortality under 80; beyond the 80th and especially the 85th year there is no considerable change. Consequently the population over 80 is essentially replaced every ten years, and its increase is due exclusively to the fact that the deceased are replaced by a growing number of those who live to be 70 and over.

Relying on the data of ten censuses, the volume traces those over 80 who were already included in the census of 1890. Of the 2.6 million males and females under 20 years at that time only about 1.5 million were alive in 1941, and 154,000 in 1970. The sex ratio which was nearly equal at the start shifted increasingly in favour of women; in 1970 there were already 1.763 women to 1,000 men. Among those over 90 there are twice as many women as men.

A separate chapter deals with the role of genetic factors. The significance of this issue is indicated by data which show that the parents and brothers or sisters of the enumerated persons lived longer than the average.

Chapters treating the social origins of the oldest people as well as their educational and economic status reflect conditions at the close of the 19th century. The majority (two thirds) were of peasant origin; their fathers were either independent farmers or agricultural labourers. About one quarter of the fathers were manual workers outside agriculture and 6 to 7 per cent had non-manual occupations.

Nearly three quarters of those over 80 attended primary school only; a considerable proportion of them completed only a few grades. About 8 to 10 per cent did not attend school; the higher proportion was made of females. The proportion of those who finished the four-year junior secondary school following primary school, or 3–4 grades of the eight-year secondary school, ranged from 5 to 10 per cent (it is remarkable that women made up the greater part here as well.) Four per cent of the men and 2 per cent of the women held secondary school leaving certificates and 4 per cent of the men and 1 per cent of the women had university degrees.

*

The enumerated persons display features which are in harmony with the general transformation of society as regards intergenerational mobility. Restratification can be observed to tend from agriculture to industry and, in a lesser degree, from manual jobs to white collar ones. Mobility contrary to these general tendencies is extremely rare.

The actual growth in the number of those doing non-manual work, which in Hungary at that time was still minimal (7 per cent), explained why only half of persons in the category were children of fathers of similar occupations; the fathers of the other half held manual jobs. Their composition by parentage workers was therefore relatively heterogeneous i.e. inflow mobility was relatively high. At the same time, considering the proportion of those leaving their original status, this professional and clerical group proved a closed one i.e. out-flow mobility was low. Their children went overwhelmingly into similar occupations, it occurred very rarely that they became manual workers, or that, using the language of the social value system prevailing at the time and still haunting our days, they "graded down" into the ranks of industrial or agricultural workers.

The rigidity of the Hungarian society of the times prior to the Great War is illustrated also by the ratio of those moving out of the manual worker and peasant groups. It appears that the social status of a family essentially perpetuated, i.e. determined for three generations, the continuation of occupations. 93 per cent of the persons who started as manual workers had fathers who

were also manual workers, and 94 per cent of their children also started in similar jobs.

Changes in technology and economics made their effect felt in social stratification in another respect as well. Although it was a general tendency that children all their lives remained within the parents' social group, it is an indication of industrialization, of the change in the economic pattern, that the children of 40 per cent of those engaged in agriculture had other than agricultural occupations; the overwhelming part of these opted for industry, the building trades or other manual labour, the smaller part of them did clerical or professional work.

There was a certain intergenerational mobility also in respect of manual workers in industry and the building industry and clerical and professional people. It was extremely rare, however, for a manual worker who had left agriculture to return to there.

Conditions preceding the Great War are reflected also in data concerning the start of work. The great majority of interviewed persons began working at the age of 10 to 14. (Of course, this is connected with the generally low level of education referred to above.)

The mode of life of the oldest people is determined also by their family conditions. Surveys of the situation of the aged arrive at the recurring conclusion that marriage; which substitutes for other social and human relations which with the passing of time become less intense and are even broken off, is of growing importance in the life of aged persons. According to the survey there is in this respect an extremely large difference between aged men and women. The vast majority of women over 80 are widows; on the other hand, the spouses of half of the male age group of 80–89, and even those of a quarter of the males over 90, are alive. It was found that the males registered as widowers lived in widowhood for a considerably shorter time than widowed females.

The overwhelming majority of the aged subjects had children. The average number of children was 4, of whom 2 only were alive at the time the census was taken. The century-long decline in fertility is indicated by the fact that the aged had barely more grandchildren than children; the number of grandchildren for every child living to be 20 was only 1.5.

The importance of children for the mode of life of the aged is evident. The vast majority of old people living in a common household with relatives live with their own children.

The survey dealt also with the material situation and living conditions of the oldest. Their overwhelming majority (the males first of all) enjoyed old-age pensions or allowances. The amount of these allowances, however, was low especially in the case of females, for whom widow's pensions were of prime importance. Whether they lived alone or in a common household with relatives was the most decisive factor in their financial situation and general circumstances. The proportion of women aged 80–89 living alone was relatively high (20 per cent). The proportion of those living in old people's homes was, owing to the lack of accommodation, merely 5 to 8 per cent.

Concerning health the survey inquired into mobility in the first place. In this respect there is a substantial difference between those under and those over 90. 15 to 20 per cent of the latter are unable to walk, not even in their homes, nearly one third never leave the house, and the majority cannot, or can only with much difficulty, go up or down stairs. Fifteen to 20 per cent of those over 90 need the help of others in dressing and washing as well; and more than one third are week-sighted or hard of hearing.

About half of the aged persons (both males and females, people under and over 90 years alike) were middlingly adequately well fed, 40 to 45 per cent were thin. Fat or excessively corpulent persons were rare

(4 to 7 per cent) among both males and the females. At the same time the majority of the interviewed persons claimed to have been well fed in childhood, or in maturity or at all times in a general way.

It appears that more than two thirds of the males had more or less regularly drank alcoholic beverages as adults; this ratio had been somewhat reduced by old age. On the other hand, the majority of females did not drink as adults either, and even those who had drunk before abstained in old age. Three quarters of the males smoked as adults; but about half the smokers had given up smoking by old age. The habit of smoking was rare among the aged female subjects both as young adults and in old age.

Answers the subjects gave as to what had enabled them to reach a high age are of psychological interest. A considerable number of the answers, particularly those of female subjects, contained religious explanations: "God's will", "a pious life". Men generally referred to living as one should (hard work, moderation, peaceful family life, the right food). Both males and females equally attributed importance to inherited qualities and a balanced state of mind. Remarkably few subjects mentioned external circumstances as favourable factors; at most the answers of males referred to good air or the natural environment.

It may not be surprising that among the 13,000 aged subjects who had survived all vicissitudes of two world wars, with both their antecedents and their aftermaths, there were eight al together who said that the secret of long life was that "wars had given them a miss, history had not weighed on them".

EGON SZABADY

ARTS AND ARCHEOLOGY

TWO SURVEYS OF CONTEMPORARY HUNGARIAN ART

Exhibitions at the Historical Museum of Budapest and the King Stephen Museum at Székesfehérvár

With works selected from its own materials or borrowed from other collections, the Historical Museum of Budapest has duplicated an exhibition already presented in Warsaw. The subject of the exhibition is the main trends in the Hungarian arts of the past thirty years. The organizers found the correct proportions in featuring sub-periods in chronological order. They have presented the optimistic burst of activity of the post-1945 years with sufficient nuance, but without superfluous details; they have provided a restrained, wisely cautious picture of the artificially socialist art of the fifties (1949–1956); all this in the first third of the exhibition so that, in the remainder, the élan of the sixties may be given the right emphasis.

The first group of artists represented at the exhibit were the successors of the masters of the Nagybánya school in the early part of the century; their works are rich in traditional pictorial and humanist values. In addition to the elegant world of Aurél Bernáth, and the more rugged lyricism of István Szönyi, Ferenc Medgyessy with his rustic, robust sculptures does not seem out of place. On the strength of the evidence of the exhibition itself and of art history, it was not they, however, who were the protagonists of the first phase of development, from 1945 until 1949, but the "European School", which was inspired by contemporary European Art and has made this inspiration into the seed of further development. The puppets of Margit Anna that imply tragedy, the monsters of Ferenc Martyn, the idols of József Jakovits, and the metamorphosis of the flora of Piroska Szántó all indicate potentials, concepts—inspired by biology and depth-psychology—which point to and crystallize in the art of Dezső Kornis.

Beside the "traditionalists" and the "abstracts," the exhibition also takes note of a third road exemplified by the pictures of Endre Domanovszky and Jenő Barcsay, and the statues of Jenő Kerényi. By uniting a politically conscious selection of subjects with authentic artistic concerns, this trend might have played a positive role from the viewpoint of the communal art of the future. The demand for such an art was formulated at the turn of 1948–49, at an exhibition titled "Towards a Communal Art," and those most alive to social impulses responded to it by propounding cooperation between architects, sculptors, and painters, and by the revival of monumental genres. But the spontaneously socialist artistic concepts, subsisting on inward motivation, did not, unfortunately, survive the announcement of the new programme, they were not given a chance to evolve.

But the political and artistic turn of 1949 catered to the naturalism enunciated by Sándor Ék already in 1946, and ousted those stylistical trends which could not be incorporated into that framework. Understandably enough, the organizers were reluctant to represent Hungarian art by the oil-portrait of Rákosi conversing with the peasants' deputations, or a painting of a tram-conductor with a whistle which epitomized all that was wrong in the official aesthetics of the time, so what remained was the presentation of József Somogyi's sculpture "The Smelter," and of a few works made on the edges of the period, and rather atypical of it. To throw light upon the pause or break which the early fifties signified for most true artists, a break marked by sudden silence, would be the task of a special exhibition.

The Spring Exhibition mounted in 1957 revived nearly everyone, although art had not had time to surmount the difficulties; but the present exhibition, arriving at the sixties, produces, by its impressive presentation of exuberant creative forces, an illusion of quasi-continuity, of unbroken development. The works of Endre Bálint, Tibor Csernus, Ignác Kokas, and Béla Kondor were the backbone of this ensemble; according to conservative criticism they were the "muddle-heads" and "half-talents" who, contrary forces notwithstanding, we have since learned to hold in high esteem. The gamut of the art of these painters ranged from tragic or dramatic tones to an elegiac acquiescence, variegated by the demystification and the acceptance of the heritage of the past by a naïve absorption in fables and self-lacerating sarcasm. One thing, however, seemed alien to their nature, and this became evident at the exhibition as well: the tepid idyll of some of the sculptures, the dilution into platitude of the ideals (István Kiss: "Family," József Somogyi: "Family"), seemed out of place.

The representation of the sculptors was, for that matter, more restrained at the exhibition than that of the painters. The casts of Ferenc Martyn gave the impression of a revelation; Erzsébet Schaár, Tibor Vilt, and Imre Varga cut a figure befitting their reputation, while Somogyi was shown at his best by his "Corpus." Although the "Buglers" of Tamás Vigh was a good choice, the sculptor remained somewhat eclipsed with but a single work shown.

We can only deplore that, towards the end of the exhibition, arriving at the seventies (but it is the same in actuality, and not only in the museum), the élan seems to slacken, and the strictly observed rhythm becomes rather prolix and slovenly. The high standards had previously served the purpose well; here, however, because of the deplorable exclusion of the artists and aspirations of the youngest generation, the collection has acquired an academic character.

The significance of the exhibition of the Historical Museum of Budapest, where an infallible scale of values and a pertinent presentation of the historical process have finally come together, is not diminished in essentials by these reservations; particularly if one recalls similar exhibitions organized previously embracing the whole of the post-Liberation era. Two years ago at a review of statues intended for public squares and of monumental painting, and later at the exhibition of the Hungarian National Gallery, mounted in its new abode in the Buda Palace, the greatest contemporary Hungarian public art collection, it was the jury of the Department of Fine and Applied Arts, that had shown its staggering incompetence in its patronizing and collecting work. What the Historical Museum of Budapest can be credited with, however, is not only competence in selection, discrimination, and the ability to borrow good works from various collections, but also with a knowledge of how to collect, and how to patronize—in the gentlest sense of the word—art and artists.

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In Székesfehérvár, the King Stephen Museum has presented a selection from its own twentieth-century material, and primarily from the purchases of the past ten to fifteen years. This collection has enriched the picture of recent Hungarian art presented at the exhibition discussed above with additional facets, including the presentation of one or two phenomena from the preceding period.

The Székesfehérvár exhibition was not, and could not be, systematic. From the art of the activists of 1910 and the twenties up to the present, it has laid particular stress on those aspects which appeared most important from the viewpoint of the organizers of the collection, and which, given the straitened pecuniary circumstances, the Museum could afford. The selection was, at the same time, a summary of previous exhibits since it occasionally referred back to the exhibitions of the Eight and the activists, of Lajos Vajda, Dezső Kornis, the European School, Erzsébet Schaár, and Tibor Vilt—namely those exhibits which played an extremely important role, especially in the sixties, in the initiation of self-awareness and value-consciousness in Hungarian arts.

The pre-1945 period was represented by activist drawings (József Nemes Lampérth, János Schadl), statues, and tapestries on the borderline between classicism and modernity (the sculptures of Ferenc Medgyessy and the gobelins of Noémi Ferenczy) and other genres. Béni Ferenczy's bronze "Boy Nude", made in 1919, with its inflections disregarding academic canons, and the "Primeval Mountain" of Lajos Vajda (1939), where it was the black linear formations, hatched on the sheet of foxed paper, that metamorphosed into a visionary world were especially worthy of note in this section.

The European School was represented by three artists: Margit Anna, Dezső Kornis, and Júlia Vajda. The work of Kornis, who but seldom appeared before the public, was highlighted by a small but pert selection, including both his "early" organical and geometrical compositions, and the "recent" calligraphies and enamel attempts. There was enough material to study the art of Lili Ország; her large serial pictures were not really in their place at the Budapest exhibition. Here she figured with her surrealistic period and her most recent compositions of historical and archaic motifs. The painter and graphic artist who died an early death a few years back, Béla Kondor was, to everyone's surprise, relatively underrepresented. The refined paintings of Judit Kaponya breathing an air of intimacy produced a felicitous effect in the context. The show did not omit Pál Deim either, whose bowling-pin figures painted with the help of varied materials and in various contexts formed the cadenza of the Budapest exhibition.

The Székesfehérvárians did not limit themselves to specific generations, nor even strictly speaking to styles and concepts, but cast a look at those generations, trends, and genres which had been crowded out of the Budapest exhibition. Their collection redeemed its debt to geometrical abstraction, giving especial prominence to Tamás Hencze, perhaps the most original Hungarian exponent of the trend; it signalled the leavening influence of Kassák, who died in 1967, with two of his abstract compositions from the late fifties, and has given gleanings from those tendencies which seek their ways outside the customary bounds of fine arts, for example in photography. The photographs of György Lőrinczy and of Csaba Koncz resort respectively to the microstructure of objects, and to colour and patch effects; Miklós Erdélyi and Károly Halász have already looked a bit farther, the former seeking the appropriate formulation of his concepts by the montage of past and present together, the latter by resorting to the devices of the video. Recent art-craft was represented by the works of a textile designer, Marianne Szabó, with her folk-story-like textile relief titled "Path

of Life." Thanks to international relations, non-Hungarians, to wit a Hungarian-born American, has also been included in the collection exhibit: György Kepes.

Taken as a whole, the exhibition made a harmonious, unified general impression. Its character was determined by orientation towards modern forms, and within this compass it appeared natural that the guiding thread should be provided by the European School and its aftermath.

ZOLTÁN NAGY

THE ART OF THE MEDAL

The International Medal Association organized its seventeenth biennale combined with a congress, in September 1977, in Budapest. The event was a good opportunity for the exhibiting institutions to organize a veritable medal season. In Hungary in the course of this, in the capital and in the provinces, we were shown not only the works of the contemporary exponents of the genre (at the First All-Hungarian Medal Biennale of Sopron; the medal exhibition of sculptor-artist Sándor Tóth, Nyíregyháza, Benczúr Gallery; the Art of the Medal in 1977, Csontváry Gallery, Budapest) but, in Szentendre, a survey of the past thirty years. At the same time, the Hungarian National Gallery, aside from the exhibition and congress of the FIDEM, also made room for one of the genres closest to the medal: a numismatical exhibition.

Naturally, the most informative survey of the actual place of the art of medalling was provided by the colossal show of the FIDEM, displaying an international material. The excellent equipment, the remarkably constructed show-cases, the ingeniously designed space of the hall, the lighting, the slide projectors, would all have been insufficient however to enable the visitor to examine the 1,665 medals which had arrived from 25 countries without getting bored or tired, had not the works themselves caused real excitement. This variegated collection has faithfully shown not only the transformation which the genre has undergone in the past twenty to thirty years, but also the diverse roles the medal may play in the artistic life of a particular country; for the medal is less and less the small round metal plate on the one side of which a portrait can be seen, with an emblematical or allegorical figure on the other, and which, with highly restricted devices of expression, serves, in fact, one purpose: the solemn commemoration of some event or person. The works of the French Michel Bogratchev, François Stahly, Claude Bouscau, the Polish Roman Grazyna, the Spanish Antonio Gonzales Herranz, the Swedish Björn Selder, or the Hungarian Enikő Szöllőssy are only examples taken at random to show that the medal may also be a three-dimensional object, which has nothing to do with commemoration.

Hence, on the one hand, the compass of the genre is broadening while, on the other hand, it is becoming narrower. True, at the exhibition, the cast or repoussé objects of art, made by the artist with his own hand, in one or two copies, and clearly showing the marks of his or her craft, showing the stroke-engraving or some other procedure, were placed side by side with the struck or galvanized commemorative medals, duplicated mechanically, in a great number of copies. It is these latter that are traditional in the approach, their themes, as well as style. It was precisely these that—with their con-

ventionality and insipidity—caused the greatest disappointment. The International Medal Association and the Hungarian counterpart—the organizer of the congress—sensible of how unelucidated the problem was, have designated as the subject-matter of the lectures precisely the question of the dissimilarities between the struck commemorative medal and the non-series medal. The originality of the duplicated and of the unique copies evokes the same notions, the same unfinished sequences of ideas as that have caused so many discussions in other departments of the arts as well. Because of the use of the modern procedures for duplication graphics and painting are also wrestling with similar difficulties. It is unfortunate that, in the lectures, despite the preliminary plans, this was left virtually undiscussed; albeit it remains unquestionable that, from the viewpoint of the judgement of not only the genre value, but also that of the artistic value, the results of the work by hand and that of the machine should be distinguished from one another.

The questions of genre cast some light on other field, too, beyond the art of medalling. A great figure of Hungarian art history, Károly Lyka, proclaimed in 1924 that medalling thrives where culture, the other branches of art also thrive, since the medal is *par excellence* a medium mirroring the more advanced or more restricted relationships between people. After viewing the FIDEM's exhibition one may state just the opposite today. Those countries whose art is worthy of attention, because they say something essentially authentic, or because they attempt to do something which has so far been without precedent: these countries do not give their best talents to the art of medal-making. Readily apparent was the poor quality of the material sent by the United States. The point in question is not so much that thirty works are insufficient to provide a true picture of the medalling art of such a big country, but that high achievements in sculpture and painting do not entail high achievement in the art of medal design. The seventy-two medals sent by the Soviet Union, which had a traditional flavour, also fell short of the expectations. The Federal Republic of Germany figures with a collection much larger than that of the Soviet Union—unfortunately not with a lot more outstanding. Even the more interesting among the 170 medals drowned in the great flood of pieces seen already for a thousand times and displaying hackneyed solutions. As for the medals of the artists figuring with the largest individual collections, they did not deserve the special place designated for them. In spite of the refined modelling and the interest of the material, the porcelains of Siegmund Schüth are, monotonous in their cool classicism, while the works of the two Tommaso Geracis are mediocre. It is here that the contradiction between the demand by men for usually custom-made medals on one hand, and the spontaneity and novelty expected in artistic expression on the other becomes manifest. That is how we may account for the gulf between the traditional style of the medal intended for an official prize or commemorative medal and, on the other hand, the high standards of individual creative aspirations.

In addition to the countries already mentioned, Austria with 18 and Japan with 19 medals prove that the less may well be more also. The Austrian Elfriede Rohr distinguished herself with three, extremely fine and, as for conception, modern pieces; while the Japanese material excelled with its originality. The European eye, it seems, is invariably entranced by the outlook rooted in the Far Eastern traditions, which seems to place the objects surrounding us in a new dimension. The meticulous effigy of plants and pebbles—or that of only a hand or a fish—was exhilarating with its unusual tones. Just like the Dutch medals; they managed to eschew the high-falutin forms. These pieces, which gave the impression of amateur works, but precisely because of that seemed more sincere, are imbued with

intimacy, inward-turning, and subjective feelings. The works of Marianne Letterie, Ger Zijlstra, or Ruth Brower are all but deliberate reversions to the simplicity of handicraft techniques. The Spanish works were also worthy of note, not only those of Julio Lopez Hernandez, but also those of David Lechuga Estebán.

The most varied material was presented by the country which had organized the International Medal Association, France. Amongst the close to 140 medals there were outstanding works of high aesthetical value (for instance, the works of Michel Bogratchev Claude Bouscau, Marcel Chauvenet, Jean-Pierre Demarchi, Karl Jean Longuet, François Stahly, or the Hungarian-born Étienne Hajdu and Pierre Székely), included are the medals of reputed artists as well (as that of Jean Bertholle or of Émile Giglioli), but there are countless honest masterly achievements subsisting on the high-standard traditions of the French medalling art of the early part of the century. The most extensive material was presented, apart from the Federal Republic of Germany and France, by Poland (143), Czechoslovakia (128), and, naturally, Hungary, which had given space to the exhibition. And, if the art of medal design of the three countries is similar in many respects, it is not in any way inferior to that of the others. Indeed, in many respects it surpasses Western Europe, which has a longer tradition. Czechoslovakia can claim the works of so eminent an artist as Ladislav Kozák, and Poland that of Madélaine Wasciszewska-Dobrucka, although their medals originate with the great traditions of French medalling art. Their form is simple, while their approach is built on condensation, on abbreviation based on signs. Moreover, we could see a host of examples to show how quickly changes in technique or attitude in other areas of the visual arts are to be felt in the art of medal-making as well. This process is most evident here in East-Central Europe.

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The stylistical transformation of the medal takes place in two directions: either the plane surface becomes increasingly three dimensional broken up by piercings, or bosses of a high protuberance; the work turns into a veritable statuette, carrying aesthetic values as a message all its own (as the works of the Czech Luboš Ružička, the Polish Stefan Dusa, Antoni Kostrzewa, Edward Lagowski, Barbara Lis-Romanczuk, or Mieczyslaw Zdanowicz, among others). The other approach is to resort to the effects of painting and graphics. The Polish Jacek Dworski and Ryszard Stryjecki evoke the montage technique; within the same work the texture of the surfaces is different, pictures of differing perspectives are superimposed on one another. Krysztian Jarnuszkiewicz models his work as though he placed several planes on top of one another. The works of the Czech Peter Oriesek and Stefan Prokop build on the pictorial effects of plane surfaces, the merger or visionary metamorphosis of forms. On the medals of the Polish Adolf Ryszka we can discern the impression left by the modelling tool.

These technical devices drawing on other genres all serve to highlight the artist's individuality. They frequently verge on non-figurative art, and become far-removed from the limitations of applied art.

The characteristic features of the medalling art of the Eastern European countries indicate what changes have taken place during the past few decades, and outline a brief phase of the historical development of the medal; they also provide an answer to the question why these of all countries are among the first, albeit neither in painting nor in sculpture are they assigned such an important role. Thus the Hungarian observer at the exhibition might well feel satisfied when comparing the material from his own country with that of other countries.

For it is beyond question that for once there is no need to feel ashamed of Hungarian artists. And though the selection might have been better and more powerful,

Zoltán Bohus, Enikő Szöllősy, Márta Lugossy, Tamás Asszonyi, Róbert Csikszentmihályi, and Ádám Farkas—even though each figures with but a few medals—evidently belong in the front ranks of the art of medalling. The use and aesthetic combination of new materials do not transform their works into jewellery with a decorative function, yet they remove them from the traditional objects of art as well. What is it, then, that these few artists are seeking? To make the medal, by dint of their sculptural conception, the tectonic quality, and the visual excitement, into a work of art in its own right, to withdraw it from the category of applied art. To arrive at an understanding of how this transvaluation of the medal has come about, however, we must cast a historical glance over the last thirty years of the Hungarian art of medal design.

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The historical *aperçu* is made possible by the exhibition at the Museum of Szentendre. At the exhibition entitled "Hungarian Medal Anthology" we cannot see a single medal reproduced in a great number of copies, nor significant pieces to represent the outstanding talents of the last three or four years. The aim of the exhibition, lining up the best medals of thirty years, is "to collect together some 300 works of the best of the Hungarian medalling art... in a manner related to the activity of Béni Ferenczy,"* writes the catalogue. The exhibition is indeed built around this outstanding sculptor. His influence on his contemporaries and students is underlined, too, by the suggestive organization. And indeed, it would be hard to outline this period in any other way, since Béni Ferenczy's personality had, up to the end of his life in 1967, played a tremendous role; he gave an entirely new orientation to medalling. The radiation of his art went beyond Hungary.

His development was determined more or less by the historical framework. At the beginning of the war, this brilliant talent returned home to Budapest with high hopes after a life of vicissitudes, a stay in Moscow and subsequently in Vienna. But even after the war he was hardly given the opportunity of working as a sculptor. In his isolation, lacking commissions, the medal became his chief means of expression.

Béni Ferenczy was the first to apply in the art of medalling that unfettered subjectivity which has become indispensable in modern sculpture and painting. At the outset, this was only sincerity warranted by the situation, since he was not working on commissions or for special occasions, only rarely did he touch subjects determined in advance. He himself chose the subjects of his medals, raising a monument to the memory of the persons closest to his heart, to artists and friends. His series presenting the great figures of European art history, and which he had begun back in the Soviet Union, continuing it in the fifties in Budapest, is a lyrical confession: art on art. In it Cézanne and Velasquez, Michelangelo and the great personalities of Hungarian poetry appear side by side. Here he has combined a characteristic style with a craftsmanship comparable to that of the artists of the quattrocento. It is small wonder if not only his immediate students, Tamás Vigh* and István Martsa, came under the magic spell of his radiant intellect, but also his contemporaries, Miklós Borsos for example.** With a different technique, Borsos adopted a similar approach. There is nothing more instructive than to see these works side by side made under each other's inspiration.

The fifties, owing to a singular quirk of history, were propitious for the intimate genres; it was then that, beside medalling, the graphic arts revived, and it was then that small sculpture struggled its way up to a

* See NHQ 57.

* See NHQ 53.
** See NHQ 20, 35, 64.

level which today we take for granted. Under the shadow of the uninspired "realism" compulsory at the exhibitions of that period, and that of the juries remodelling the works made to order over and over again, none but the man and work far-removed from officialdom could evolve unhampered. It was this that imparted to the art of medalling its sudden significance. And since then the genre has progressed virtually according to laws of its own.

Miklós Borsos too has Ferenczy to thank for the conception of his first medals, yet before long he bravely simplifies, taking his own course. With his works spontaneity and playfulness enter within the limited compass of the art of medalling.

In the early sixties the genre is thriving. The works of Erika Ligeti, Gábor Gáti, Márta Lessenyei, and Sándor Tóth are characterized by ingenuity, originality, and lieveliness. The great medallist personality after Borsos and Ferenczy, Andráss Kiss Nagy,* is already an accomplished artist. He is the one who, together with Tamás Vigh, holds now the first place. Projecting from their polished medals are full, boldly protuberant forms, the surface being cleaved through by lines. Their drastic art is bordering on the non-figurative.

At this point all traditional representation disappears from the medal. It speaks the simplicity of a geometry perhaps that of a gently undulating surface, the beauty of the material and of elemental forms. The new talents in sculpture fill up the surface of the medal with figures, floral motifs, or representations of objects. Róbert Csikszentmihályi* and Tamás Asszonyi consider the figures as motifs, they are demure and removed from the store of forms out of which they construct their art. This is evinced by Asszony's medal-building cabinet, where we can find every one of the components of his works, the small female figures—and it is virtually the beholder who has to set them in order. Csikszentmihályi aligns plants, trees, and shells as "études" for a major musical composition; their attunement remains to be done, but the observer perceives that these pieces properly belong to a greater consonance.

Thanks to the altered form of expression, and the new thematics, the medal has really become "adapted for the perpetuation of life's every vibration," as the sculptor Sándor Kiss writes in the catalogue of the medal exhibition which, mounted in the Csontváry Gallery of Budapest, presents the harvest of the year 1977. Unfortunately, however, the material I have seen here points to stagnancy, the repetition of old values. The voice of the future belongs to those whom —although in a small number—we could see at the exhibition of the FIDEM. Bohus, Szöllősy,** Farkas,*** Lugossy construct new formal systems and structures, variations on designs, visual logical chains. They seek to create art on one hundred centimetres square.

MÁRIA ILLYÉS

* See NHQ 64.

* See NHQ 46.
** See NHQ 58.
*** See NHQ 63.

THE COLONY OF ARTISTS AT GÖDÖLLŐ
(1904–20)

Exhibition in the Katona József Museum at Kecskemét

In 1861 the English Pre-Raphaelites founded a handicraft trade guild. Aside from their activity as painters, their intent was to extend the range of artistic influence to every object of human contrivance surrounding man. Their initiative was felt throughout Europe, and in Hungary in 1904, it became the model for asimilar group, the Colony of Artists at Gödöllő.

It was in 1901 that Aladár Körösfői-Kriesch, who was to become one of the leading personalities of the colony, left Budapest to live in Gödöllő, a near-by village surrounded by woods and groves and a Royal Residence and attached estates. In 1904 Körösfői published a book on Ruskin and the English Pre-Raphaelites, and set up, across from his house, a weaving workshop, that would turn out carpets, tapestries, setteespreads, and cushions on the basis of artistic designs and with artistic craftsmanship.

In acquainting himself with the precepts of Ruskin and Morris, Körösfői-Kriesch was assisted by Percyval Tudor-Hart, subsequently an artist-craftsman of repute who, as a student of the Académie Julian of Paris, made friends with Sándor Nagy, a friend of Körösfői. In 1897 they visited Körösfői, then still painting at Diód, in Transylvania (the drawings he made in Hungary are presented by A. A. MacGregor in his book on Tudor-Hart, London–Genève, 1961.) Tradition has it that this young man of American extraction, but who had studied in Britain as well, was the first to tell his friends about the English craft guild. Then, in 1900, Walter Crane paid a visit to Hungary, and delivered a lecture in Budapest, the text of which was published in Hungarian under the title *Felolvasás* [Lecture] in Budapest in 1900. He toured the provinces which had a flourishing folk art, and expressed the opinion that the rich world of form and colour of this art could become the basis of a *sui generis* Art Nouveau style. Naturally it was his exhibition, consisting of more than a thousand pieces, that wielded the greatest influence over Hungarian art. The first Hungarian work introducing Ruskin appeared in 1903 (Sarolta Geőcze, *Ruskin élete és tanítása*) [Ruskin's Life and Teachings], Budapest) moreover, Ruskin's *Unto This Last* was published in 1904.

While the transformation of factory-work was the starting-point and the goal in the theories of Ruskin's circle and of Crane, in Gödöllő—in view of the predominantly agrarian character of the country—it was the relationship of the peasantry and the intelligentsia that formed the core of the artists' concerns. They employed weaving techniques evolved by the peasantry for the execution of artistic designs, while at the same time they contributed with samplebooks to the preservation of domestic industry among the peasants. Semi-skilled peasant girls were employed at the weaving workshop of Gödöllő which, by 1907, was already organised into a small-scale plant and became, from then on, a training shop of the Budapest School for Industrial Arts. At the same time Körösfői and the members of the group which, by 1907, had already turned into a colony of artists, paid regular visits to Kalotaszeg in Transylvania and Mezőkövesd in Northern Hungary to collect folk motifs, to familiarise themselves with the traditional principles of composition of folk art, and the techniques of the Transylvanian wood frame architecture. The counterparts of the Gödöllő artists, that is artists who found their inspiration in folk art, were to be found in the Nordic countries, as well as in Poland and Russia.

We may observe the use of structures and motifs derived from peasant architecture, combined with new building materials (reinforced concrete) in the architecture of István Medgyaszay, the designer of the atelier-houses in Gödöllő, and that of the draftsman of the carpet weavers' house, Ede Thoroczkai-Wigand. The free but functional style, and the constructive character of their buildings, are related to contemporary English architecture. The furniture, presented at several domestic and international exhibitions, had been designed by Thoroczkai and Körösfői (in both cases the names they assumed refer to place-names in Transylvania), on the basis of the selfsame principles. They stress structure even when their forms are not inspired by folk art. Only on Sándor Nagy's leather-craft can one discern the well-known undulating lines of Art Nouveau. (Their executor was the head of the carpet-shop, Leo Belmonte who, subsequently, in Paris, frequently wove the designs of Tudor-Hart). On the carpets and other woven works one may recognize the motifs found on peasant homespuns and embroideries, combined with the traditional store of forms of the carpets which are termed Transylvanian on the ground of their provenance, but which originate in Asia Minor. On the tapestries called picture-carpets, one may find folk anecdotes or mythical themes. A fine example is Körösfői's tapestry titled Stags, which not only employs a recurrent decorative motif of folk art, but also refers to the legend regarding the origins of the Hungarian people. On his tapestry "Eagles above the Grave of the Hero" Transylvanian burial motifs come alive in remembrance of those who lost their life in the First World War. It is on his tapestry "Women of Kalotaszeg" that the amalgamation of the one-dimensional art of Art Nouveau, the formal and compositional world of folk art, and the transcendental tendency of symbolism meet in a most effective way.

Another group of the tapestries—different as to themes—is more closely related to the Pre-Raphaelite tradition. Körösfői's tapestry "The Good Helmsman", the whereabouts of which is presently unknown is, with its Christ figure, an example of the new, simple introverted religious art, which may be linked to the name of W. H. Hunt. His gobelin titled "Cassandra" representing a mythological figure is akin to the works of Burne-Jones. The limber contours, the birds nestling close to the body and those in the air, the undulance of the landscape impart a musical effect to her work.

The Pre-Raphaelite tradition is alive, too, in Körösfői's paintings, primarily in his female portraits, in the graceful movements, the intimate beauty of the figures. Sándor Nagy's "Double Portrait", with the nuanced elaboration of the features, their scarcely noticeable tilt, the projection of the world within, is likewise a result of this tradition. On István Zichy's painting "Hands" the soft gesture of the female figure and the rhythmical composition of the picture are significant in this regard. The members of the colony of artists have filled many a commission for large-scale works. The greater part of their frescoes and stained glass windows, with the swaying figures, the ballad-like or heavenly beings, and the strictly musical composition, are also related to the branch of symbolism represented by the Pre-Raphaelites, but they omit the drawing-like quality, preferring to give free play to the linear figure-creating technique of Art Nouveau (the frescoes of the Academy of Music at Budapest by Körösfői in 1907, or the stained glass windows of the Cultural Centre of Marosvásárhely by Sándor Nagy). As regards harmonically composed ensembles, their greatest undertaking was the full decoration and furniture of the Cultural Centre of Marosvásárhely. The stained glass windows, the frescoes, the decorative painting, the sculptured ornaments, the furniture have all been designed by them.

They aspired to harmony as well when their attention turned towards the art of

István Petrás

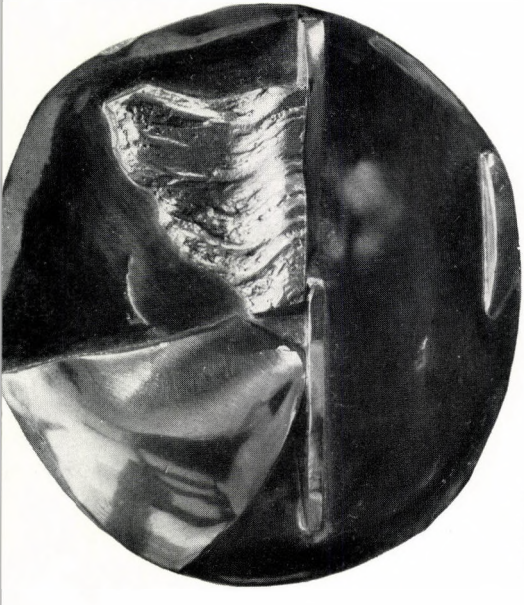
Miklós Borsos:
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.
Bronze, 95 mm; 1977

Ferenc Kovács

Béni Ferenczy:
Goya.
Bronze, 86 mm; 1934

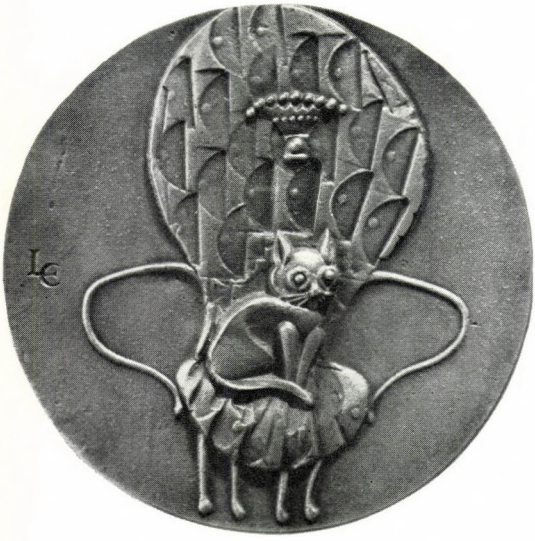
András Kis Nagy:
Victory.
Bronze, 86 mm; 1976

Tamás Vígh:
Academy Medal.
Bronze, 95 mm; 1976

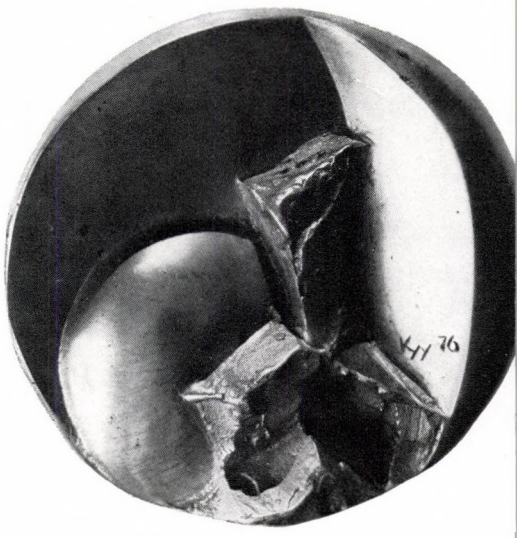


István Petrás

Ferenc Kovács



Erika Ligeti: Pussy Queen, from "Democratic Royalty," a series.
Bronze, 110 mm; 1977



György Kiss:
Sun-disk II.
Bronze, 77 mm; 1976

Tamás Asszonyi:
Torso IV.
Bronze, 75 mm; 1976

Róbert Csíkszentmihályi:
Etude I: Naiade.
Bronze, 87 mm; 1977

Gyula Kiss Kovács:
Strings I. Bronze, 170×190 mm; 1977

Iván Szabó: Weeping under
the Tree of Life. Bronze, 125 mm; 1976

Ádám Farkas:
Summer at Szentendre.
Bronze, 80×80 mm; 1976

József Somogyi:
Meadows. Bronze, 115×100 mm;
1976

István Petrás

Ignác Kokas:
The prodigal son.
Oil and tempera
on wood,
171 × 160 cm; 1968
Ágnes Bakos

Judit Kaponya:
Joseph is sold by his
brethren.
oil, 47 × 50 cm,
1975
Ferenc Gelencsér

Ágnes Bakos

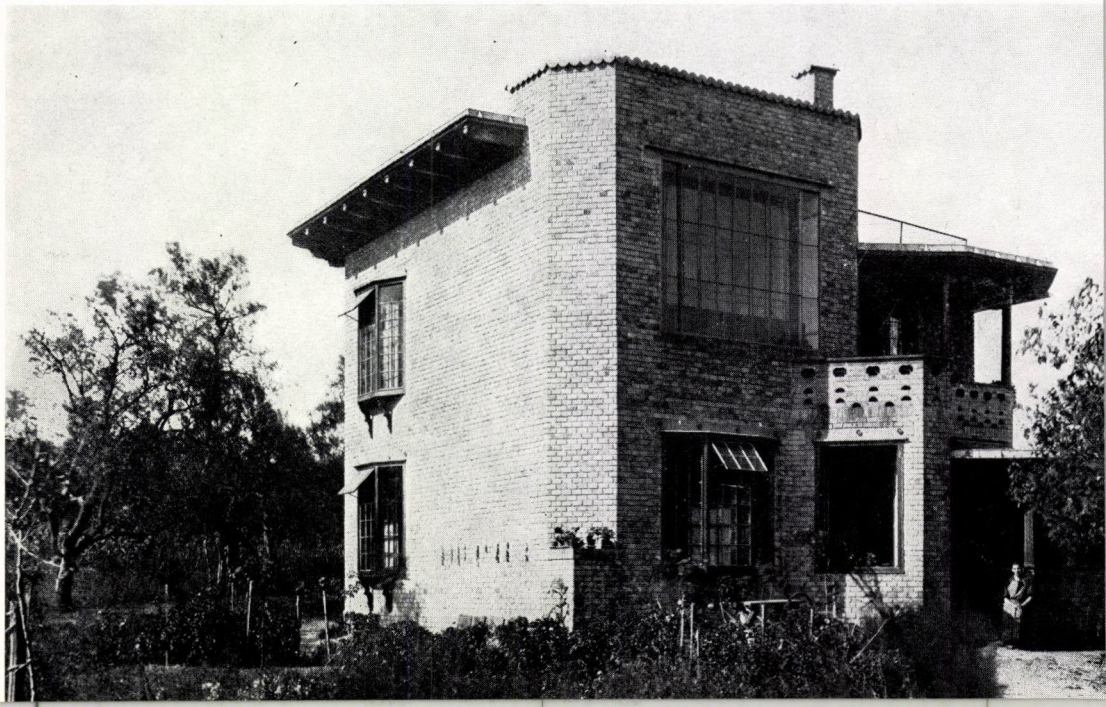
FERENC MARTYN: THE MONSTERS OF FASCISM.
BRONZE, 60 CM; 1945

Ödön Moiret: Woman.
Bronze, 47 cm; 1911

György Makky

István Zichy: Hands.
Oil on canvas. 80.5×62.5 cm; 1911

Sándor Nagy's Studio at Gödöllő.
Designed by István Medgyaszay, 1905–1906

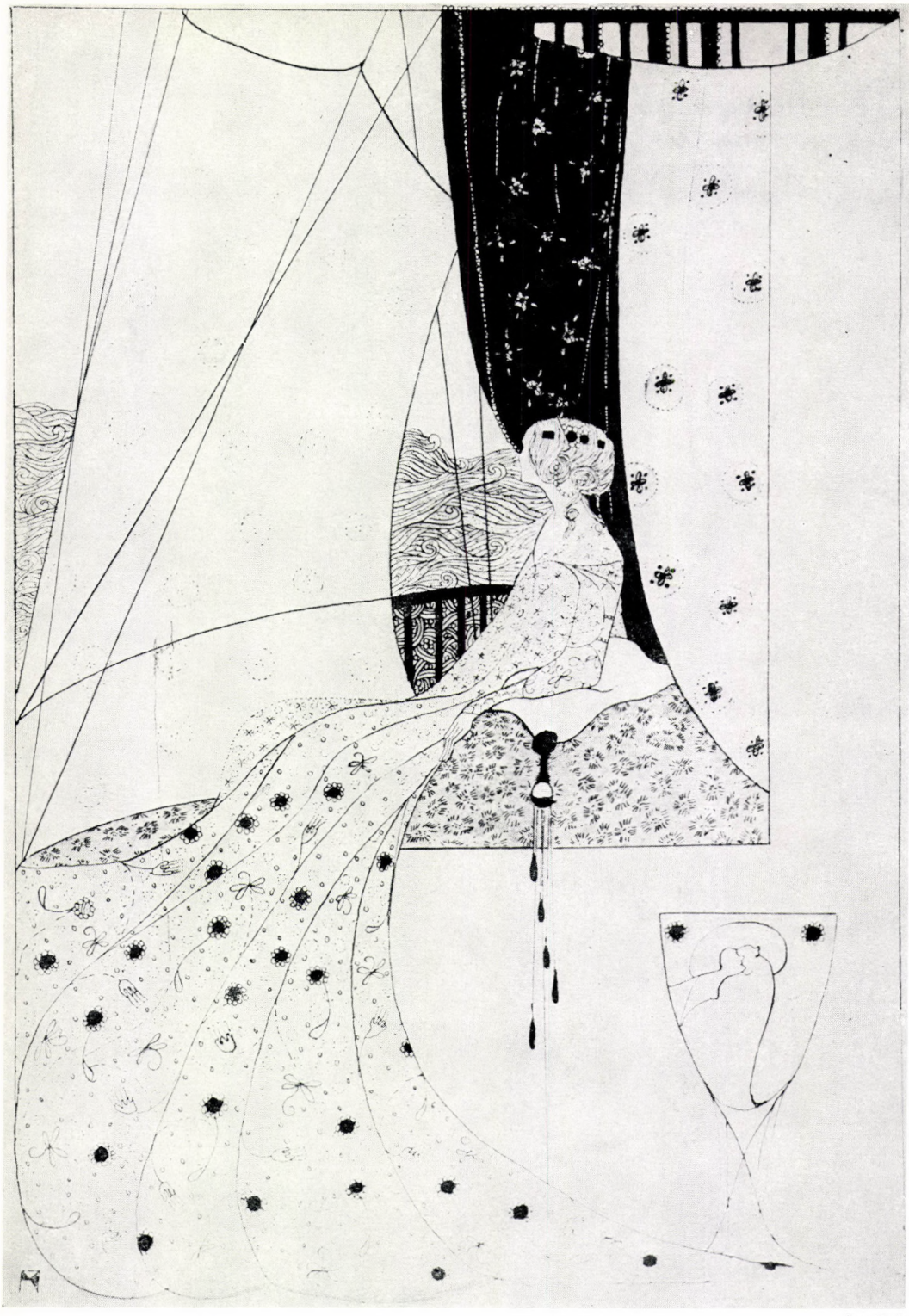


Imre Kathy

ALADÁR KŐRÖSFŐI-KRIESCH: WOMEN FROM KALOTASZEG. WOOL TAPESTRY, DONE IN THE SCHERREBEK TECHNIQUE. 152×145 CM; CCA 1908

SÁNDOR NAGY: DOUBLE PORTRAIT. TEMPERA, 40×57 CM; 1907

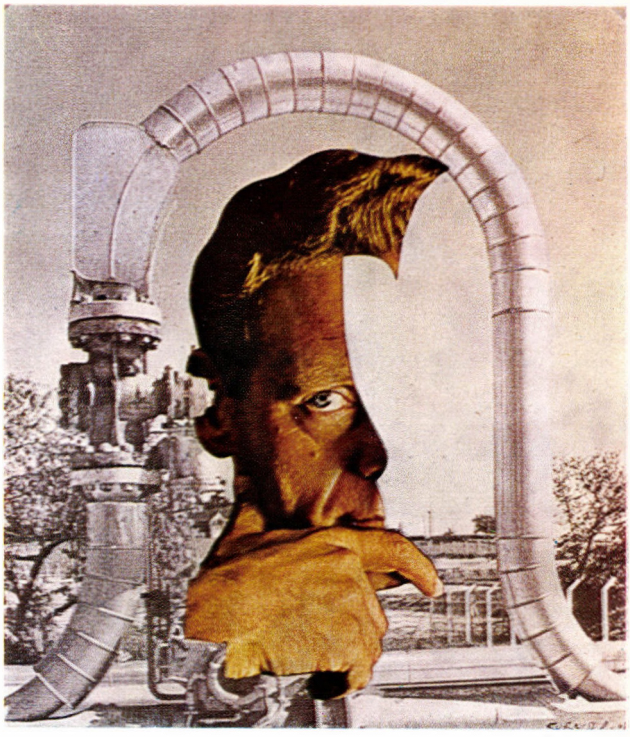
Alfred Schiller, Countesy Corvina Press



Imre Kathy

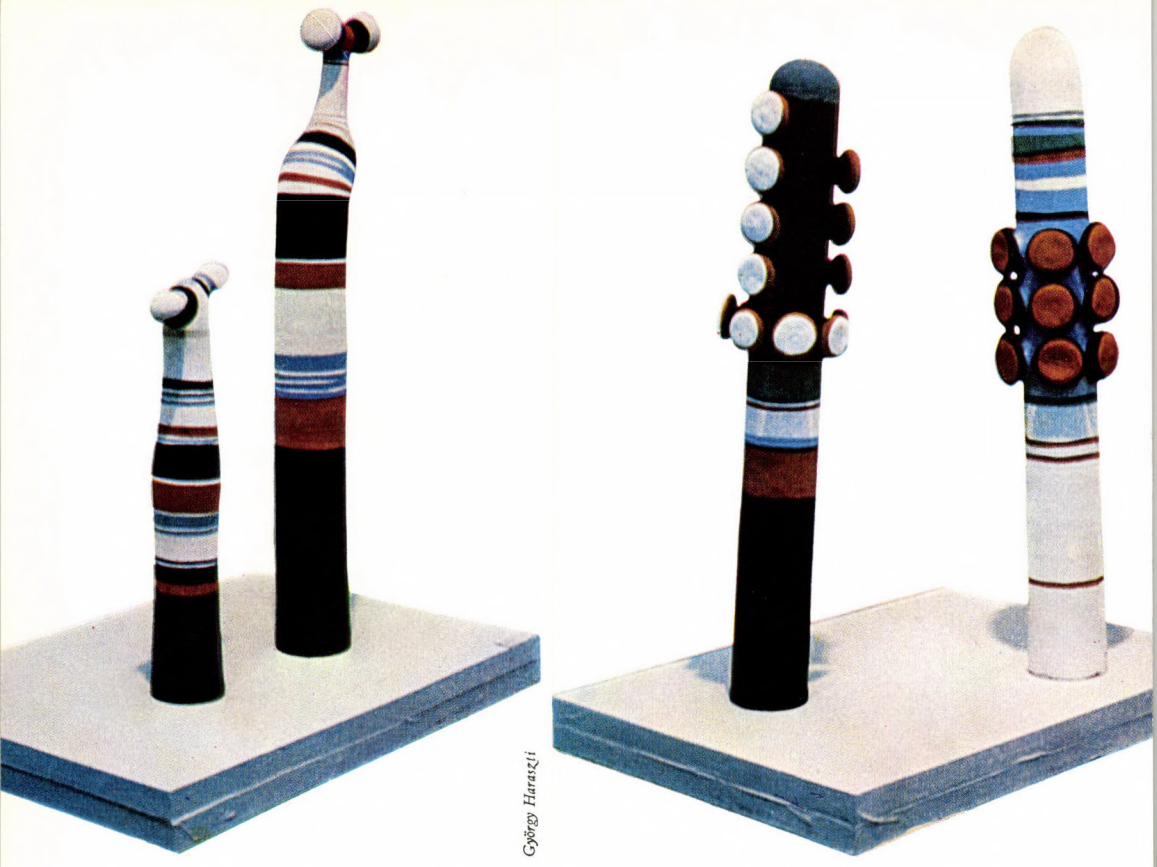
REZSŐ MIHÁLYI: ISEULT. INK, 40×29 CM; CCA 1909

Dezső Korniss:
Montages from a series:
"Techniques", 25 × 32 cm;
1967.



Courtesy Hatvani Museum, Hatvan, Ákos Kovács

Dezső Korniss: Bandits. Oil, on canvas,
36 × 37 cm; 1976–77

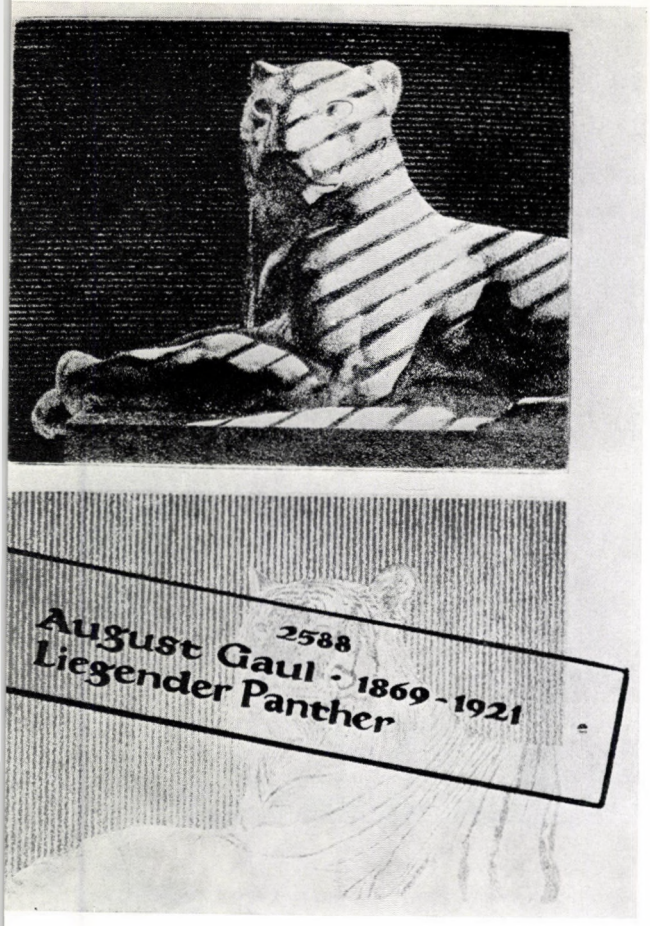


György Haraszti

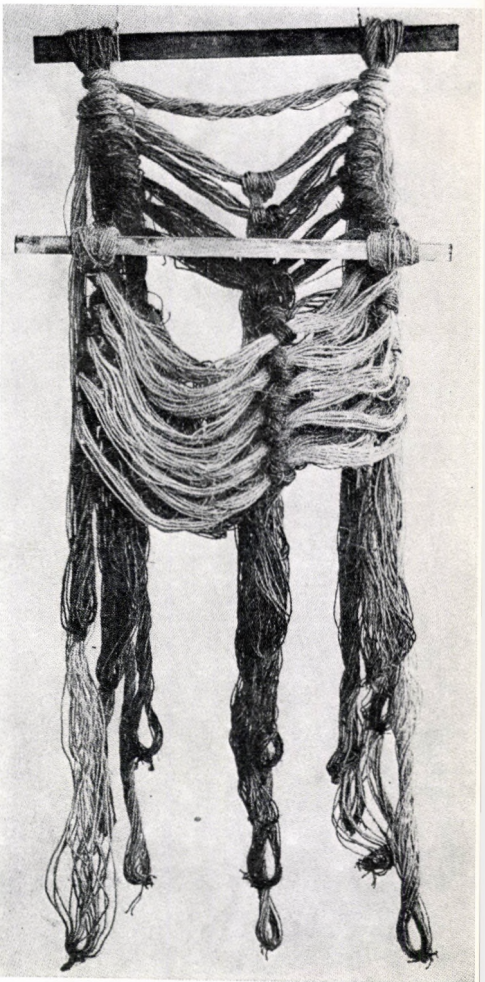
MARGIT GERLE: MIRACULOUS TREES, TERRACOTTA ENGOBE, 105 CM; 1977

ZSUZSA PÉRELY: CHILDHOOD, TAPESTRY, 80 × 170 CM; 1977

Károly Szé

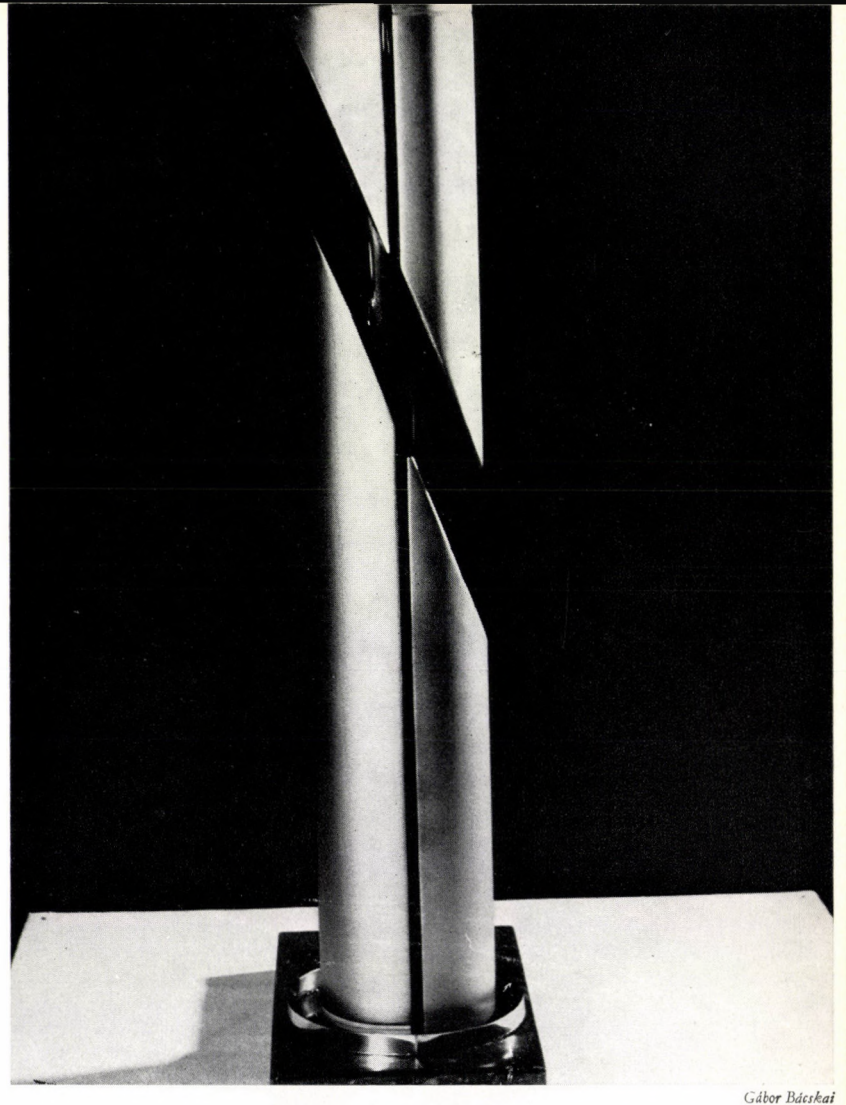


Miklós András Sáros:
Striped panther.
Coloured engraving,
41 × 31 cm; 1977
László Sáros



Lujza Gecser: Spatial divider.
Spun rope, 1977
László Lelkes

MÁRIA LUGOSSY: SEVERED CYLINDER.



Gábor Bácskai

MÁRIA LUGOSSY:

books. The illustrations befitting the contents in style, the book-ornaments, and printing types of Sándor Nagy and his wife, of Körösfői, and of Rezső Mihály follow the example of Kelmscott Press, founded by Morris in 1891. Several members of the Colony produced series of graphics which were never published as illustrations, but were nevertheless inspired by some literary work. With his oriental, biblical, and mythical range of themes, his arched lines, with his peculiar stipple technique, Rezső Mihály proved a worthy adherent of Beardsley's graphic style. Beardsley's influence in Hungary is noticeable on other artists as well, witness Lajos Kozma's illustrations. Beardsley's art was introduced to the Hungarian art-world by the journal *Magyar Iparművészet* in 1907, in an article which must have had considerable effect on Rezső Mihály, his aquatints, his Isolde, his rococo scenes, and his typical allegorical female figures. Other graphic series were influenced by Walter Crane's social interest, or resort to the synthetic forms devised by the French painting of the *fin de siècle*. The few surviving sheets of Jenő Remsey's scattered drawings, "The Yoke," and "The Moloch" were made under the influence of Socialist poetry. He was able to depict the message condensed into headwords free from allegories. His devices were the forceful contours, a glowing world of colours, and sweeping forms, which reached their full fruition in the poster art of the 1919 Hungarian Republic of Councils.

It may have been as a result of the British connections of the colony of artists at Gödöllő that, in the 1910's, the yearbooks of the journal *Studio* gave regular accounts of the colony, in articles titled *Hungarian Architecture and Decoration* by A. S. Levetus. The colony of artists, however, included members whose style appears to be independent of this frame of reference. On the gloomy-toned landscapes of Endre Frecskay and Ervin Raáb it is rather the influence of the studies at Munich that may be felt. The sombre, vague forms covering the drawings are characteristic of the symbolistic view of the landscape, of the mysterious, unfathomable nature, which seldom admits a human figure. Nature, on these pictures, is not a world providing a home, but an alienated, self-contained cosmos. On these pictures, the pantheism of German romanticism, which may be termed symbolical, has swung into its exact opposite. One of the sculptors of the colony of artists, Ferenc Sidló, had also studied in Munich. In the work of the other sculptor, Ödön Moiret, it is the influence of his studies in Brussels that may be observed. His sculptures conceptualizing symbolical themes are enriched by a refined decorative quality. Contrasting with all of them is the graphic style of Árpád Juhász. Juhász was the one who adhered most consistently to the themes of folk art, of folk anecdotes. He was travelling round the country most of his life, and the multitude of his pencil drawings reflect his nostalgia for simple ways and simple art.

Although the colony of artist disintegrated with the outbreak of the First World War, the weaving workshop continued to operate until the death of Aladár Körösfői-Kriesch in 1920. Their first great exhibition was organised in 1909, in the Műcsarnok.

The commemorative exhibition mounted in the autumn of 1977, in the Katona József Museum of Kecskemét, endeavoured to assemble the scattered works of the colony and of the textile work-shop, founded seventy years earlier, thereby contributing to the research on the turn of the century in Hungary. Both the exhibition and the material I presented here indicate that, although the establishment of the colony of artists was parallel to the Art Nouveau movement, and occasionally gives evidence of some its characteristic traits, it was related—as regards its origins and works—to the art of the English Pre-Raphaelites, that is to the symbolism of the turn of the century.

KATALIN KESERŰ

CHARM, IRONY, DRAMA

Exhibitions of Dezső Kornis, András Miklós Sáros, Margit Gerle, Mária Lugossy

"A grand œuvre compels one to speak clearly and befittingly. The solemnity of the task is enhanced by the occasion, since a Kornis exhibition is as rare as a blue diamond. I should like to be an advocate for these works, albeit they speak and have spoken for themselves from the very outset... If I yearn to caress a patch or a surface, I have to choose the ripples of his brush. When I yearn for a well-tempered timbre or sound, I must turn to his compositions. Not only charm and irony have their say here, but also drama..." I quote the introduction by the late László Nagy, the poet, to the catalogue of Dezső Kornis' one-man show. The exhibition has been mounted in the Hatvany Lajos Museum at Hatvan, the curator of which is Ákos Kovács. He is a very young man, and this pocket museum is also very young, but already has prestige and standing. One is seldom overcome by a première mood as electrified as the one I experienced in the two tiny halls of this provincial art exhibition. Many had made the journey from the capital, including a surprisingly large number of writers and poets, the author of the introduction to the catalogue, László Nagy, among them.

The small exhibition was merely Kornis' calling-card; it could not cover the enormous production of the seventy-year-old artist, which would be impossible if only because his entire production is so varied both in length and breadth, in technique, style, and vision. There is, perhaps, but one constant factor: Kornis' message. By the variety of his production I realized that he, too, has periods, but at the termination of certain of his cycles he does not break with them for once and all: after long years he refers back to them. Moreover, he is the kind of artist who speaks several idioms simultaneously, from the surrealistic to the geometrical, from motion-picture to calligraphy. The Hatvany Lajos Museum did well not to rest content with the latest works; the exhibition was, to some extent, also retrospective. As a matter of fact, the show was divided into two sections, the "Rezeda 9" collection, and the paintings.

There is nothing mystical in the appellation "Rezeda 9". It was in 1972, at number 9 Rezeda utca, in the apartment of a young architect, that Kornis, together with three young artists, Gábor Attalai, Imre Bak, and Tibor Csiky, mounted an essentially "concept art" exhibition. The works were not hung on the walls; we, the beholders, had to pick them out of boxes. The contents of Kornis' box has now been placed on the walls of the Hatvany Museum. The painter's studio work, from the broad spectrum of 1930 to 1973, constitutes a complementary section. The "Prologue" and the "Writings" are alphabetical compositions, "From the National Colours" is a water-colour and monotype sequence. In the latter the artist has pictorially and conceptually analysed the Hungarian national colours, the red, white, and green. Added to this was a genre Kornis is especially fond of, a cycle of montages, the "From the Past of a Town", the "Technology", the "Biochemistry", and the "Fashion". Their titles indicate their contents fairly accurately. The painter sizes up his age, the past, present, and indeed, the future, with irony, nostalgia, and a critical edge; it is part and parcel of his style, moreover, that he frequently resorts to a temporal simultaneity (this has nothing to do with futuristic simultaneism). These are classic surrealistic montages, yet what is interesting here is not the notion of montage as such, but the manner in which

Kornis has done it. What he invents always hits upon the only appropriate form and proportion.

From Kornis' pictorial material the organizers have set off the so-called *szűr*-motifs. The embroidered *szűr* is a Hungarian peasant attire, a loose-fitting, felt cloak with sleeves which men wear slung over their shoulder. The cloak is trimmed by a copious, mottled floral pattern, in compliance with traditions or according to the tailor's fancy. What Kornis was seeking in the *szűr*-motifs was not the folk-art origins, but the structural patterns of the motifs. The designs of the *szűr*-maker are unnatural, and they can be put only in particular places, at least as great an emphasis is given to the plain surface of the *szűr* as to the flowers. It is after this transposition of values that Kornis paints his own picture. There is no "pictoriality," the even application of paint is exquisite, every borderline is sharply defined; this artist, as far back as thirty years before the Hard Edge, painted on this selfsame hard manner. His intense colours resound, yet the sureness of the picture is easy on the eyes. There are but few artist in the world who have such great technical mastery and patience, who are so susceptible to expression, who formulate so articulately—articulately to a fault—without any pretence at virtuosity. Such expression as that of Kornis is the product of consummate lucidity, a brave, decided opinion. This clarity of Kornis', the sophisticated simplicity of the works, the differentiation of the colours are so powerful that they show through even on reproductions.

He personifies the "Szűr-Motif" at least relatively speaking: the red-white-green tulip-man with the neck of a violin, with its own heart, and even little legs made of small sticks. The "Robbers" is an abstract floral work: it is jet-black. Its background is a trenchant chrome yellow, red spots appear in unexpected places, and at the stem of the tulip flower, beside the hardness which is a habit of the artist, one finds a horizontal, oblongue, pink, only too pictorial patch having its own tonality. Perhaps his masterpiece—at least here at the exhibition—is the "Shepherds". He has forced his black-and-red tulips right down into the left bottom corner. He who is bent on doing so may even read human figures —the shepherds—into them: their head is a flower, their hands are leaves, yet the curiosity of it lies elsewhere. The entire scene is in the corner, the greater part of the field, including its centre, has been left blank—an allusion to the felt of the *szűr* and the ratio of the *szűr's* fancy-stitch trimmings. In the upper right-hand corner he crowns the huge white patch with a red isosceles triangle—as if in counterpoint to the shepherds—while the flooring is an even green.

So the painting is red above, white in the middle, and green below: again the colours of the Hungarian flag.

*

The critic may luxuriate in technical terms at András Miklós Sáros' one-man show, mounted in the Studio Gallery of young artists: hyperrealism, classical graphics, Conceptual Art, Verism, Mannerism, Surrealism. Let me add that in the art of Sáros there is not a vestige of eclecticism; indeed, the entire exhibition is structured and uniform.

Hyperrealism is, by the way, the normal attitude of the artist. He is a brilliant draughtsman who aspires to the dispassionate coldness of the photograph; still, the heritage of Rembrandt, the etching of his engraving needle render his pictures "juicier" and more individual "Peace", "Dresden Memory". On his "Small Bust", composed, as it were, of lettuce leaves, I perceive the pre-surrealistic traditions of the sixteenth-century Mannerist, Arcimboldo, while on his recent sheets he has returned to classical surrealism; it is as though we were viewing his drawing through a glass filled

with water, and on these the leap of his ingenious thoughts, too, is on a larger scale: e.g. "Streaked Panther", "The Pill". The "Blériot Memorial Leaf" is a Conceptual work, as is the "Shooting Gallery", on which, alongside the booth of a rifle association, there are gargantuan pieces of ordnance, visibly trained on a small town.

The heart of the exhibition is, beyond all question, the "Breakfast" (copperplate engraving), the breakfast of a worker from the gas works, or a cable maintenance man: a small loaf of bread, sausage, and pickled paprika. The locale is the opening of a manhole, beside it is the hefty lid, and the food is supplemented by accessories such as the worker's penknife, pickaxe and steel helmet. All the appurtenances are on the ground, next to the hatchway. The artist, however, has increased the tension, intensifying the verisimilitude to an extreme: underneath the etching, one finds the actual objects a real shaft-eye, pickaxe, etc.

As for the victuals, the artist has replaced them daily by fresh ones.

*

It looks as though we were strolling in some tropical garden a never-never garden in the Adolf Fényes Gallery: the dramatis personae of Margit Gerle's ceramics exhibition are pseudo-plants or pieces which at all events evoke organical images, but they are also redolent of the crumbling sepulchral stones of ancient graveyards. After all, the graveyard too is a garden: a sepulchral garden.

All of Gerle's works are ensembles of several objects—the most traditional objects, moulded on a primitive potter's wheel. The "Wonder Trees" is composed of slender, regular solids, vertically and rather stiffly implanted in the ground, adorned with a bistre-white-green-ochre cross-stripe system, added to which is a different type of system of bosses and blisters fastened by short necks to the basic pattern. The forms, glittering with an even white glaze, of the "Poisonous Plants", with their enormous berries resemble, in their surface effect, the porcelain insulating spools of telegraph wires. Likewise vertical are the "Streaked Sprouts", as are the "Wonder Trees" yet they are not stiffly erect, but sway and keep bowing as the *kopjafa*-s, the wooden headboards, found in ancient Hungarian graveyards; here also the brown-white-ochre zebra pattern is dominant. The "Sock-Wearers" are figures or, rather, they might be idols, related to the above-mentioned more or less consistently vertical ensembles; it is also a reference to the bobby-sockers or the surviving vogue (in Hungary) of horizontally striped socks. The "Married Couple" is two semi-globes or bells placed side by side, mouth to mouth, but the artist might just as well have given them a different title, for here it is absolutely of no consequence what association the author of the work had in mind, nor what associations of ideas these ceramic products evoke in us, the beholders.

Gerle's ceramics were accompanied at the exhibit by a masterful and conceptually pertinent serigraphical material.

*

Mária Lugossy, albeit she has studied the gold and silversmith's craft, has less and less inclination to making jewelry; when she does work on small objects she seems to enjoy doing plaquettes. The bulk of her work is plastic art, spatial sculpture. It is barely two years since this artist has finished her studies, yet already she can claim a production worthy of an aged master. Her metallic sculptures demand not only invention, but a spate of work that would be hard and painstaking even for a man, and yields little at that. Most of her pieces presented at the Helikon Gallery are mirror-polished, rust-proof steel compositions; she frequently combines this material with glass and plexiglass, and her work is as

precise as the execution of a surgical instrument. Her materials, then, are the rigid, soothingly cool metal, suggestive of assurance, and glass; and, as a matter of fact, Lugossy's deportment also tallies with the cool reserve of her fancied steel. These are the austere sculptures of an austere artist: Her work snaps commands, much as she disciplines herself.

All is geometrical, angular, or at least of a regular arc; to be sure, the curve is not alien to her, for Mária Lugossy is not a dogmatist. Her works are pregnant with extremely complex thoughts and sequences of thought: even her clocks designed for public squares, which are clearly practical (not included in the exhibition), just like the other Lugossy sculptures, are cathartic works.

Her works are extremely diversified in their shape, yet their messages are identical. The fat ring, assembled of metal and plexiglass, the "Saturn", is a horizontal object —that is, one which has to be viewed from the top; "Utópia" is likewise a horizontal object. Its base is a perfectly regular, circular biconcave lens form, but in its superstructure it seems as if the artist became already somewhat removed from pure geometry; in the undulating line of the metal we may detect the turns of the vesica-piscis motif of the Gothic plate-tracery. The "Breaking Free" is a disc stood on its rim, and its two hemispheres are separated transversally by an actually lit tubular lamp. The "Cut-off Cylinder" is a delustred metallic block of a decidedly vertical emphasis, bisected at an angle of about seventy degrees by a hand still more emphatic inits firmness. This is one of the most characteristic pieces of the artist; it is neither taller nor shorter, neither thicker nor thinner than right, the cut is where it should be, not an inch below indeed, it is seldom that a sculptor hits so exactly upon the right proportions of a composition, in conformity with unwritten canons.

Lugossy, it seems, has grown tired of the glitter, her most recent works are different even in content; and so are the size, the weight, and the relative density of these works. Each of these factors becomes more significant, and the surface of the iron refers to the grey of old silver. The block, interpenetrated by a curvilinear form, of the "Steel Sculpture" appears to be lapidary, unsophisticated, only after closer scrutiny do we realize how complex and elaborate this relief is, just like the similarly embossed "Relationship," assembled from the profiles of the positive and the negative forms.

Mária Lugossy, at her one-woman show, captivated me not so much with her entirely novel form of expression as that *je ne sais quoi:* her talent. This is the distinctive mark of her art.

JÁNOS FRANK

THREE YOUNG TEXTILE DESIGNERS

Zsuzsa Péreli—Lujza Gecser—Anna Szilasi

After the boom, some ten years ago, in Hungarian textile art, following the brilliant work of the first generation* it appears as if the young had got stuck in their tracks, as if they had grown into conservative old women. Perhaps their academic training was at fault. Recently, however, those in their twenties seem to have made up the leeway, they are active, alive, really young, and so fertile that, in addition to group exhibitions, customary for textiles in Hungary, they have, in succession, presented their own one-man, or rather, one-woman, shows.

It is a characteristic feature of Hungarian textile designing that there are as many

* See NHQ 37, 56 on Irén Bódy, Margit Szilvitzky, Zsuzsa Szenes, Hédi Tarján, Marianne Szabó, Irén Balázs, Gizella Solti.

schools as artists. This is true of the three young women discussed below as well. They have nothing in common, excepting courage, ideas, and talent.

*

Zsuzsa Péreli is a Gobelin-artist, a master and devotee of weaving. The Gobelin calls for immense craftsmanship, special sensitivity, and culture, as well as a readiness for much painstaking work with small results. The modern Gobelin is generally patterned on the conventions of the great periods —such as the nineteenth century—of the art; to be sure, the living cut their cloth to suit their own intellectual figure. But not a few Gobelin-makers prefer to use the abstract-surrealistic idiom of mid-twentieth-century.

At the display in the Fészek Artists' Club we can tell that a Péreli Gobelin is different, her performance is a surprising *scherzando* in place of the usual *maestoso*. She takes after the romanticism of the nineteenth century, and the *fin de siècle* as well as the early twentieth century. Her world rests, for the most part, on what for textiles at least is known as the *style liberty*, and not even on outstanding works but the commonplace pieces, indeed, sometimes even the art of the chocolate-box itself. What recurs are Gobelin-adaptations of the old photographic likenesses, sepia family portraits decorating the homes of the petty bourgeoisie and prosperous peasantry. This photographic manner, of course, can only be executed with the masterful draughtsmanship that is Péreli's own, since the presence of the photograph can be imitated only by the finest work. These monochromatic pseudo-photographs, as I would call them, are usually framed with kaleidoscopic, luxuriant festoon ornaments, redolent of the epoch of the *style liberty*, which intensified to a point where they are still more strident.

Péreli's very choice of subject is telling. She wove an Asta Nielsen portrait, the "Small Angel" is a hatted little girl in polka-dotted dress, fatuously looking at us and leaning on her elbow with arms crossed like Baroque cherubs over clouds. The podgy little girl of "Infant Years" is like a bag of potatoes, she is expressly repulsive. The positioning of the standing small child is ingenious, since the artist has incorporated the small figure in a narrow, horizontal rectangular shape, to be framed in turn with her festoon ornament. The Gobelin "30 Years of Happiness" was likewise based on old photographs. The husband, looking like a sheep, his hair *en brosse*, wearning a morning coat, is obviously smaller than his proud corseted wife, who is wearing an enormous plumed hat.

It is not only that irony is a component of the works of Zsuzsa Péreli, but her art is irony itself, and also consciously accepted self-irony. Already at her début the young artist carried off a prize with one of her tapestries, in the centre of which she wove a circular Gobelin, showing a turreted chateau on the shores of a lake.

*

Lujza Gecser's textile sculptures have an intended purpose, more precisely a pseudo-function. Her spatial textiles in the ceremonial hall of the Museum of Applied Arts attested this particularly. The subject of the outsize (2×3×2 metres) "Bridges," spun and burled from coarse sisal, are four parallel forms hinting at bridges. This is related to steel constructions as well, and even more so to Far-Eastern cable-bridges, that is, it is a paraphrase, recast many times over, of all these. The magnetism of the earth describes an all but regular semi-circle with this cordy structure, only its own weight and the adventitious bundles of cord correct the geometrical line. This textile work not only wants its share of the third dimension, but is also claims to control it. In size it might as well vie with the dimensions of a monumental sculptural group erected in a public square, true, it was entered for this contest on different terms, naturally with different materials, with a

different purpose. Its spatial effect too is displayed in a manner different to that of a classical statue: here the active and the passive are equal in rank, just as the law of action and reaction.

With "Fibres Sustaining One Another" the specification is the title itself. This is an open-work plane composition, placed in space, of bigger-bellied and more obtuse-arked cavities, kept in fine consonance, logical even in their buoyancy. This taut enfilade of netting, composed of highly coloured and colourless elements, seems to be simple, but when I wanted to sketch it in my note-book, I became conscious of how refined and intricate a construction it really is.

The composite piece "Textiles of Velem" received its name from a hill village on the Austrian frontier. There is a House of Creation of textile designers in Velem. The most strikingly marked object in the composition is constituted by perpendicular and horizontal plaits, the artist has also availed herself of the supporting strength of two horizontal poles, but for the rest, these thin yarns are little affected by the pull of gravity, they become tangled without let or hindrance. The attentively designed range of colours of the work, consisting of a carefully composed blue, three kinds of mauve, and strawberry is noteworthy. At the back —proceeding rearwards—follow the other more unsophisticated forms. They are varied by the interpenetration of harpoon-like forms hardened with plaster of Paris. The "Textiles of Velem" are not one *object d'art*, but not many either. Thus arranged, this is rather an action.

The "Synthetic Resin" is also an action. Here it seems as if Lujza Gecser had set these fourteen skeins of yarn, pre-shrunk, dissolved in synthetic resin, in the space of a real theatre. They gleefully dance a freakish ballet to Gecser's choreography. The synthetic resin has—just like a snapshot—captured a momentary conformation of the structureless burls of yarn, a typical textile behaviour. Hence the gambolling repertoire piece of the fourteen dancers is still, yet its kinetical content is manifest.

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There are no oil paintings in one of the rooms, facing to the Danube, of the Hungarian National Gallery, but the fabrics of *Anna Szilasi*—dorsals, materials for hangings, weavings suspended in space, that is, showing both sides, tassels, and textiles reminiscent of bell-ropes. Her fabrics are natural: wool, cotton, and flax. Szilasi is a *par excellence* weaver, she generally works on a narrow hand-loom, the straps gained in this fashion are then stitched side by side, and of those she moulds the horizontal or upright oblong shape of her tapestry.

At first impression one knows that Szilasi is inspired by folk-craft. I happen to know that she regularly travels in search of folk-art, and has discovered hidden regions which ethnographers have passed by. Anna Szilasi not only weaves her own material, she even dyes her own yarn, just like the peasants. She creates for herself an autochthonous world of colours. She is fond of blue, green, and crimson. An extremely vivid, aniline-hued bishops' purple is her handmark. A Szilasi stands in glaring contrast to other works at any group exhibition. Just like folk artists, she likes to mismatch clashing colours such as the rustic pink with vermilion, or green and yellow, engendering an effect like seconds in music. At the same time, she uses crude surfaces, faded blues in other places and for other purposes than is customary, despite her love of colours she does not shrink from a conscious poverty of colours either.

But do not let us regard her as a folk artist forgetting about the world in her introversion: folk-lore is no more than raw material for her, she manages her patches, smooth and rustic textile structures with the sovereignty of the collage artist, putting her instincts—or more exactly, the semblance of spontaneity—into the service of her own clear ideas.

J. F.

THEATRE AND FILM

VARIATIONS ON CONSCIENCE

István Csurka: *Nagytakarítás* ("Spring Cleaning"); Gyula Illyés: *Csak az igazat* ("Nothing but the Truth"); Endre Fejes: *Jó estét nyár, jó estét szerelem* ("Good Evening Summer, Good Evening Love")

The plot of Csurka's "Spring Cleaning" is based on his own short story *Üvegek és asszonyok* ("Bottles and Women").* The adulterous husband performs the last ceremony before the ultimate liquidation of an intrigue: namely, he makes order in the flat lent to him by a friend. In view of the fact that at every rendezvous he and his mistress had consumed enormous quantities of liquor, the prerequisite for cleaning the flat is getting rid of the empty or almost empty bottles of wine, cognac, champagne, and whisky. The husband does not even attempt to redeem them at the store, but deliberately smashes the bottles to smithereens. Facing the huge rubbish bin dragged into the apartment he feels actually a martyr. The self-pity of this Don Juan condemned to forced labour stems from his disgust at the endless task he is expected to accomplish, and from wounded vanity since he ends this comfortable liaison not of his own free will but at the wish of his mistress, a married woman.

While blaming his mistress for wanting to liberate herself from the burden of a double life his wife suddenly emerges from the deeper layers of his consciousness. This awkward *tête-à-tête* lasts only until the appearance of the mistress on the same imaginary stage. And while the two women are engaged in an almost cosy chat their victim, the adulterous husband, curses the entire female sex. One slight ray of hope is left to him: a new, desirable female silhouette is passing before the window and the conquering male again swells up within the lethargic husband—a hopeful "perhaps" of the lusting would-be seducer.

The author added a fully superfluous first part to his comedy presented at the József Attila Theatre which discloses something mentioned in the story only in half a sentence; namely that the owner of the borrowed apartment is being treated in a T.B. sanatorium. And if the author has induced this earnest, woman-crazy fellow to appear on stage, he must provide him with a role: for want of something better, he becomes the *deus ex machina*. The adventure of the boss and his typist does not end because of the young woman's distaste for the double life or because of the exhaustion of their relationship but simply because the owner of the apartment has been cured. This dramatically irrelevant exterior circumstance has been invented out of structural necessity; Csurka motivates it with his hero's determination to break with her anyway.

Of course, the two women appear on stage in person, not merely in the husband's imagination. The wife is clever, she has sex-appeal and commands respect, the demented mistress is charming and stupid.

* See NHQ 62.

She is the well-known grey moth flying into the light out of curiosity and snobism, to forget her miserable cabbage-smelling sublet room and the drudgery of her double-shift work for a few hours, and live in the cognac-sprayed dream world of the borrowed flat.

"Bottles and Women" had been inspired by a bizarre idea, and its essence had been the situation itself which really called for the stage; but a single idea cannot fill a whole evening. The plot, the marriage quadrangle, constitutes the comedy with which everybody is bored to death yet of which, in fact, nobody ever tires. Csurka is gifted enough to fill out this framework without giving it his full attention: his humour and mocking irony let loose for two hours season the commonplace conflict with some original ideas.

Luckily Csurka is seldom satisfied with so little. This time also he has tried to deepen the comedy into social satire; the attempt has brought some results worthy of Csurka, especially in characterization. The two couples in the play represent two worlds which, although coexisting in our society, are very far apart: the go-getters and those who will never get very far. Csurka rendered the successful and unsuccessful climbers with the same irony, but in vain did he sketch his figures together with their social background if in the process of developing the plot he did not fill in the outlines and left unexploited the opportunities for satire created by himself for the sole purpose of expounding a moral thesis. The somewhat melodramatic apotheosis of marital faithfulness does not seem to fit Csurka. The longer he explains their sins to his characters, the more passionately he preaches the Word to the audience the more he totters on the podium to which he is unaccustomed as a playwright.

The original title contemplated by Csurka had been "Amphibians." This would have referred to the phenomenon that people forced or willing to lie in their private life are two-faced also in their public activities—and *vice versa*. The bureaucrats who wear a different face, behaviour, or ideology at home and at their work-place ultimately go to pieces in this role-playing ambivalence. There is a kernel of truth in all this, but in this case the story is not about the two sides of the same medal. The marriage conflict treated on this level can only be conceived as a comedy in 1977. On the other hand, role playing chameleons and schizophrenia in public life are problems of much greater weight that cannot be crowded into the framework of a traditional comedy puffed up into a social drama unless they are smashed to smithereens like the husband's cognac bottles.

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Gyula Illyés: *Csak az igazat* ("Nothing but the Truth"). The title comprises two one-act plays which, although independent of each other in theme and structure, belong together. The 75-year-old poet and dramatist meant to give the same impact to these two poignant works: "The sifting out, synthetizing, and etching into our hearts, of a not yet understood or forgotten truth." From different angles, on the basis of different standards, and coming to different conclusions he discusses the same moral issue: the responsibility of the intellectual.

The scene of the first play is a dreary prison cell at an undetermined period or time, whereas the second takes place in a twentieth-century study equipped with a library and telephone. The Egyptian scribe and the Budapest poet meet only in the spectators' consciousness but the intention of the author has been precisely this confrontation unrealizable on the stage.

Egyiptomi világosság ("Light of Egypt") is based on a short story written in the thirties by Lajos Nagy, an outstanding prose writer between the two world wars. Nagy was a realist, politically engaged, and progressive writer who wrote almost exclusively about

contemporary subjects; but here, in the story *Egyiptomi íródeák* ("Egyptian Scribe"), he made an exception and turned to the world of timeless past. The court of the pharaohs, their social and intellectual absolutism offered him the chance to say important things about his own age. Both Lajos Nagy and Illyés carefully avoided every pretense of historical fidelity. For example, the unjustly detained scribe, the bentback subject of the pharaohs tells the interrogators that he had been born at Apostag (a Hungarian village, the birthplace of Lajos Nagy).

Illyés' play—that is, its subject—belongs to the past in a double sense. But if we listen to the problems of the unjustly accused scribe who feigns ignorance of everything, even of the knowledge, already available, the work becomes frighteningly timely. The hero of "Light of Egypt" is at the same time attracted and repelled by knowledge. And when he finally realizes the risk of proclaiming the truth he wavers again. In his historical plays Gyula Illyés has presented many examples of patriotism and moral integrity; now, treating the fate of the defenceless ordinary man who rejects the alternative of heroism he warns us that "the victim can also proclaim the truth by betraying it, by appealing to our sense of shame."

The second play takes place in 1945—here Illyés takes the side of the accused poet. This historical situation is still alive in the memory of many Hungarians. After 25 years of Horthy rule, Fascism and Nazi ravings, political screening committees composed of anti-fascist workers, peasants, and intellectuals were set up, their chief task being to investigate the past of officials occupying key or not so key posts.

Not every man of letters stood the test of self-examination and calling to account. The poet, the hero of Illyés' second play, meets the charges with his head erect. He accepts the moral burden of self-examination but is convinced of his moral superiority over his accusers, over the committee of literary men who bow to his talent, and over the star witnesses who want to forgive him. For the sake of averting the likely concerns and polemics Illyés declared firmly that his work was not a *drame à clefs* because "this key could fit into an appallingly great number of locks and show up as many destinies all over the world"—so that it could not be considered an individual case.

Yet the Hungarian spectator with a certain amount of inside information cannot refrain from comparing the play to the true story of a real poet, Lőrinc Szabó, a friend of Illyés. Lőrinc Szabó was one of the great Hungarian poets of the years between the two world wars; he died in 1957. It is a fact that his biographers, guided by unconditional respect for his poetic work, used to distinguish between the immaculate poet and the far from immaculate journalist. (Illyés, his oldest friend, accepts him fully.)

If the spectator is able to comply with the author's wish—an almost hopeless undertaking—and abstract the play from the personal and historical conflict of the hero's recognizable model, he is still bound to ask many questions on the basis of his own experiences. The actual facts tend to imperil the boat steered by Illyés so masterfully. True, the bearings—in keeping with the nature of the monodrama—are kept throughout the entire course by the soul-searching poet. But while he navigates round the rocks in his hero's career he avoids the storms of drama and searches the bays and havens of compromise and self-justification. In this way psychological authenticity is not associated with historical authenticity in the minds of Hungarian audiences and so they do not experience a continuation and fulfilment of the catharsis aroused by "Light of Egypt."

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In 1968, when the novel by Endre Fejes "Good Evening Summer, Good Evening Love" appeared, many people still re-

membered the real murderer with the razor who, to mask his unfavourable appearance and shyness, used to court and conquer his female acquaintances by pretending to be a Greek diplomat until—fearing exposure—he put an end to his affairs by committing murder. When the novel was adapted for television, critics, lawyers, and psychologists joined viewers in debating what the pseudo-Victor Edman, a nice and quite attractive fellow who revolted against the hypocrisy of society and the unfair distribution of material wealth, had in common with the brutal murderer known from the papers and how they should judge the character created by Fejes.

Now that the hero, originally intended for the cinema, has met his fate and has been transferred first to the small screen, and then to the stage, the old dispute revived again. Some claimed that the play's timeliness had faded, others argued that the subject was still alive and that the play remained as current and valid as it had been ten years ago. The Boy in the Dark Suit is a young skilled worker who has come from the village to the capital; he lives in one half of a sublet and is ambitious and industrious in his own way, but looks with envy on the life around him, on the fair and unfair advantages to be had for money, on the obtuse admiration of everything foreign evinced by the attractive chicks unattainable to him because they want to capitalize on their beauty.

Of course, this is not the only sight young workers see from their work-benches in today's Hungary. Indeed, youngsters such as the Boy in the Dark Suit have the chance to get along by honest means—they can study, become engineers, etc. Fejes knows this well and he gives glimpses of these opportunities several times in the play, but "Good Evening Summer, Good Evening Love" is not about the strong-willed who choose the difficult path but about a weak young man who chases illusions. There are many like him hanging aronnd in bars and jangling the keys of their non-extant car, yet they do not degenerate into murderers.

Murder is not the inevitable, psychologically well-founded, socially typical final station of the fate of the Boy in the Dark Suit; it is a large question-mark at the end of his fictitious career. The first version of the novel had already been built on a very real social conflict and told an extreme and fatal tale. The structure of the stage version presented with Gábor Presser's captivating pop-music attracts the public's attention to this deliberately shown difference. In the story of the Boy in the Dark Suit we accept the romantic and melodramatic elements we would certainly object ot in a realistic social novel. So it does not matter that the hero deceives the girls and wants only social and emotional relationship with them rather than money or sex, and that his good looks make it unlikely that sexual misery, the feeling of inferiority, or shyness drove him to the fatal path. It is clear that Fejes' play as staged by László Marton at the Vígszínház Theatre is not the fictitious story of a sexually deprived psychopath but the criticism of the illusions and deformations in society, and of the intellectual and moral surrender to them; although merciless, this criticism is emotionally based and is out to awaken emotions.

This musical differs from others of its kind inasmuch as it does not mean to fascinate the spectator with a dazzling show but tries to convey some essential ideas. There is no dance, no chorus, there are no final pageants; the only thing is that at some points the story continues with music. The musical items do not express some generalized contents, they simply "advance" the plot, they stress its dramatic turning-points. Most of Presser's songs are suggestive and powerful, though not always on the same level. Unfortunately the organ-grinder's song, the title song "Good evening summer..." is the least characteristic of all.

ANNA FÖLDES

THE HISTORIC AND THE FAMILY MEAT GRINDER

Sándor Sára: Eighty Hussars; Márta Mészáros: The Two of Them

Should a foreigner sit here in my place watching this film of two hours and ten minutes, simply as an outsider, he would perhaps cry out in amazement and indignation: why do these soldiers walk into the meat-grinder of their own free will? The truth is, they haven't got a chance to avoid it, no more than of the grinder breaking down and finally not grinding them up altogether. Why then do they start out and why do they press forward across rivers and ever higher mountains, up steep cliffs where their horses' hooves slip back with dreadful thumps. Or were this foreigner to learn that these eighty hussars are the embodiment and consummation of a historic moment, would he still deem this voluntary and general destruction inconceivable? If we were to place the actual history of the Hungarian War of Independence of 1848–49 behind these eighty, when not one but many similar troops of hussars started home from the various towns and barracks of the Habsburg empire to add their sabres to Kossuth's and Bem's revolution, would then this foreigner watch the operation of the grinder, and the ever brighter glance of its victims, as Hungarians do? As I do?

I, too, watch with horror the turning of the grinder, as it consumes now a horse, now a man, now ten horses, now ten men, now horses and bones, men and blood and flesh and faces and arms and hopes and possibilities—impossibilities.

Can one, and must one, watch it in any other way?

Is it possible to watch the whole impossible story in a different way, when roused by the anti-Austrian demonstrations and slogans of the Poles, and encouraged by the news and letters arriving from home, a whole troop of Hungarian hussars swears to ride back home from Poland, across the peaks of the Carpathians, through the wheels of the Habsburg military machinery. One has clear misgivings that trouble will befall these amazingly naive boys who feel everything, but do not think anything over. Everything they do is improvised. But it is questionable whether they would do anything at all if they were to start appraising the chances of success and failure. All the great uprisings in Hungarian history, starting with György Dózsa's peasant revolt of 1514, have borne out that the Hungarians can embark on national uprisings only in this way, offhand and without any premeditation. Other nations have taken much better planned and better prepared political and military decisions. But, of course, there are also improvising communities similar to the Hungarians.

Sándor Sára, the director of this, his third, full-length feature film (*The Upthrown Stone*, 1967; *Pheasant Tomorrow*, 1974), and the author of the script, Sándor Csoóri, have used this episode of 19th-century Hungarian history not so much to present the actual episode, but much rather to reflect upon Hungarian history as a whole. Sára, one of the outstanding Hungarian cameramen, once again shot his film himself. His shots, sequences, and cuts are built into the structure, message, and scenes of the film more organically than ever before. The opening shots, showing the brick-paved principal square of a Polish town, and the troop of Hungarian hussars riding in with a display of military strength similar to the rumble of tanks, or the forest clearing replete with an impressionistic profusion of light and colour, where Szilveszter Bódog, Lieutenant of Hussars, teaches young Polish ladies

to ride, are sufficiently monumental and dazzling to serve as the foundation on which the story of the whole infernal escape, flight, agony, and destruction can be built. We have hardly recovered from the impact of the first sequences, and Sára already shows us a river-bank with the half naked mounted hussars jumping in the water and a wild competition developing among them. Some fall headlong, others manage to hold on to their horses. Meanwhile András Korsós, a stocky lad with the features of a Tartar, escapes by hiding behind the boat of a Polish fisherman. In the next scene the captain orders his lieutenant Bódog to get hold of the deserter at any price. By that time András is hiding up on the mountain in a log cabin, but he is discovered by a Polish shepherd who reports him to the authorities. Two of his fellow hussars come to fetch him, and the result is a ruthless flogging administered in the principal square already familiar from the first scene. This, however, is just a minor incident and cause of the events to come. What is of greater moment is the mass demonstration organized by Polish students, women, and citizens before the windows of the Austrian military headquarters, and of the commander-in-chief of the Austrian occupation troops, General Krüger. First, however, we see the general undergoing medical treatment: his doctor places wriggling leaches one after another on the general's plump chest. It is like this, with leaches on his breast, that the supercilious, witty, and stiff general negotiates with the delegate of the Poles, a young priest, who demands the freeing of the arrested Polish students. Their debate degenerates into a quarrel and the general has the priest detained as well. Upon this the demonstrators march under the general's window, carrying his coffin in the procession. And by the evening the demonstrators organize a torchlight procession, singing the Polish anthem, and they send a little boy with a rag doll up the façade of the general's house. The doll is hanging there limply, the girls bind ribbons with the Polish national colours on the rifles of the Imperial soldiers who have been called out. A shot is fired, and the little boy falls off the wall dead. Further shots make the demonstrators flee in panic. The square has been surrounded however. Leaving their dead behind the Poles run towards the line of the Hungarian hussars. Bódog wants to use his gun, but he is warned by the lieutenant that this would be justified only against attackers. The Poles run past the Hungarian horses unhurt.

Now the general is slightly furious: he relieves the captain of his command because of his softness. Earlier the hussar lieutenant had resorted to torture to extract information from his soldiers as to the name of the accomplice of the deserter, and regarding the recipient of the letter from Hungary which had incited the men to go home. With saddles held over their heads, the hussars have had to run through sand and marsh until they get completely exhausted, yet they still did not crack. In these scenes Sára's shots are as exact, realistic, and replete with meaning as the best Japanese films. The cruel punishment, and the example of the Polish demonstrators and victims, have their inevitable effect: the hussars decide to flee home. They want to fight for Hungarian freedom at home, along with Kossuth. Sára and Csoóri know, however, that it is not easy for soldiers to resign themselves to break their oath. There has to be something to give the last push towards the realization of their aim: a hussar corporal draws his sabre and wants to prevent his men from taking an oath on returning home. This was all they needed for their decision to sweep away every obstacle. They disarm the corporal, and keep back the new lieutenant and 2nd Lt. Bódog who arrive into the barrack-yard. 2nd Lt. Bódog fires, the hussars return the fire, the lieutenant dies, and one of the hussars is gravely wounded.

So much blood already at the start.

But early in the morning the squadron sets out riding gaily and energetically towards the mountains. They carry with them the wounded hussar and 2nd Lt. Bódog bound to his horse. They start out towards the invisible grinder, the first trial, which takes the form of a broad river that has to be crossed on horseback. Sára depicts the multitude of horses and riders struggling with the current and each other with an incredible dramatic force. It is here that the film's spell begins, its gripping irresistiblity—the hussars tumbling into the water, the roaring horses gasping for breath, their moist, distended nostrils; the transformation of man–beast–river into one single dramatic element foreshadows the shock which has been prepared by the screenwriter and director. The film presents a system of tense images and tension of plot. Having crossed the river the hussars, drenched to the bones, spot Imperial cavalrymen on the opposite bank, and then they discern Captain Paál swimming his horse towards them. They do not fire. The lieutenant has come to make them return, but to no avail. Actually, he does not even want to succeed, his sympathies are with his hussars. For form's sake he orders them to tie him up just as they did with 2nd Lt. Bódog, and take him along. Much higher up in the Carpathians the hussars are preparing the funeral of their comrade who died on the way, when their sentry reports the advance of Imperial cavalry on the narrow mountain path. It is impossible to turn back. Should they join battle? Paál warns them that back home they need live soldiers and not dead ones. After a short debate they place 2nd Lt. Bódog at the head of the squadron wearing the lieutenant's shako. Thus they proceed and encounter the unsuspecting Austrians. And this, when the two rows of horsemen peacefully salute each other, again shows Sára's virtuosity: this is the tensest moment, in which anything might happen. And Sára indicates the extent of the risk through close-ups of the hussars' faces.

The director's particular style can be felt throughout, up to the very last shot. He made his film about a troop of hussars, but did not want to present an indistinct, blurred mass. He sets the figures of the two officers, and András Korsós with his characteristically Asiatic face, side by side with the rejoicing, strained, and expressive features of the old hussars and all the rest of them, who in their suffering or understanding become increasingly familiar to the spectator. The effect is so strong that even a non-Hungarian must be able to feel something of it, because this experience is the experience of interdependence. These hussars die while suffering and fighting so clearly for a common cause and for one another that it is not the cruelty, perchance futility of their death and tribulations that lives on in us, but much rather the common undertaking, the common inspiration, as the poet Attila József defined the nation nearly a hundred years later.

And without even noticing it, one begins to see a whole nation in the eighty hussars when, extricating themselves from an unexpected raid during their lunch break, they set eyes on the highest, seemingly insurmountable, snow-capped peaks of the Carpathians. The snowy crests melting into the hazy distance convey Sára's message like a vision: the contradiction between the will and vital instinct of a small community on the one hand, and historical impossibility, on the other. "As from today God Almighty is our general," thus throws Paál the rope of hope and hopelessness to his hussars while all of them look up and start out along the trackless rocky path. And this God Almighty does not hold out much good for his tiny, mounted creatures in their hussar's jackets. Some of them get lost, and the others do not answer their beacon lights lest they attract the attention of the Imperials, and for the same reason they cannot free their captured comrade either. Hunger also sets in. First it only hits the men. They have to blackmail the priest of

a Polish mountain village—while he happens to be celebrating mass—by threatening to kill the three village people they have taken as hostages should the priest not give them enough food for eighty people. But then the moment also comes when the first horse is no longer able to climb up a steep, smooth cliff. This is one of the saddest and most expressive shots of the film: three times does the hussar try to force his horse up that damned white rock, but its hoof keeps slipping back helplessly. "There's no going up here, mate," shouts another, mustachioed, hussar. How many times did Hungarians attempt to get up the smooth wall of history during their uprisings, and yet it was impossible, and they always had to realize that will-power and purpose are not enough, the roads too have to be chosen more carefully.

And the moment comes when a horse stops, has to be unharnessed and allowed to turn back. It occurs in a narrow cleft, in pouring rain. The beautiful horse sets out sadly, timidly, hesitatingly backwards on the mountain side, without its rider, left to its fate, and forecasting the equally sad future of its master and his mates. Then, already high up where the clouds gather rumbling and sending forth flashes of lightning, among the rugged confusion of rocks, another horse collapses. It is shot dead by its master. Soon after the lieutenant is forced to shoot one of the hussars who wanted them to leave the horses behind because he felt they could get home only without them. His intention turns into murderous rage, and a more serious bloodshed can only be prevented by a crack shot. By now men and beasts are drenched, starved, and more and more exhausted. The hussars proceed through misty mountain forests like sick, weird ghosts. In pouring rain they span a rope between the trees and doze off on it. Towards the morning Captain Paál and Lieutenant Bódog watch the drenched, totally exhausted hussars as they drop to the ground one after the other—with eyes that recognize fate. It is then that the lieutenant tells Bódog, with whom he had argued so much about their venture, since Bódog could only gradually overcome his officer's individualism in the interest of the community: "You see, this is not a real fight, this is a base war where you arrive at the battle-field in a state of exhaustion, dragging along on all fours, because the enemy has sneakily ruined you already beforehand. And only then, when you have no strength left, does he say, well, you may strike."

The hussars still overrun an Austrian post by ruse, and arm themselves. By then only a single night's ride separates them from the Hungarian border. At dawn, in the mist they listen enthusiastically and happily to the chime of the home bells. But by then the grinder is in full swing. The Imperials have completely surrounded the hussars and when they answer the call to surrender with an attempt at break-through, the rifles, lances, and canons start mowing them down, pursuing and massacring the men even unto the marshy, reed-covered waters, so that only a few of them manage to drag themselves to the opposite bank. There they collapse, on the mother earth of the homeland, bleeding, half-dead. On the other side there is but silence, we only see the death-agony of an injured horse, a greatcoat floating on the water, the body of a hussar run through by a sword. The wounded Captain Paál would have been carried to the reeds by one of his hussars, but he got pierced through by a lance, whereas the lieutenant was shot at close range by an Austrian infantryman. The dying victim looked full into the face of his murderer up to the last moment, with an overclouded look.

The Imperials heave the dead and wounded onto an ox-cart. Then they carry out a symbolic but dreadful decimation. They align the living and dead members of the squadron as if at roll-call. The decimating Austrian warrant-officer counts in German and at the

figure "zehn" he breaks the stick. The spectator may worry whether he faces a living hussar or merely a pole with a nameplate on it. And the counting starts again and again. And there are captured hussars who were caught alive and now must die like this. Lieutenant Bódog is also sentenced to death, after the officer in charge of the execution has broken the Hungarian's sabre in two. The next to last take shows the second lieutenant as he salutes with his half sword before his ghost squadron. The last take shows the firing of the shot of execution, and blood starting to trickle from the officer's ears.

Existentialism has elaborated the situation of moral victory and physical defeat, so familiar since the ancient Greek drama, into a philosophical and ethical system. But only for the individual. This philosophy does not know the laws of the community, of historical action. In their film Sándor Sára and Sándor Csoóri draw the historical and dramatic conclusion of moral victory and physical defeat for a national community. And thus there is no question of the premeditated Thermopylean death of Leonidas and the other Spartans. Instead we see a typically Hungarian attitude: the eighty hussars launch their revolt and escape back home with that innocent confidence that everything is bound to turn out well—both a moral and a physical victory. This is the constantly recurring error and virtue of the Hungarians. They pay a tremendous price for their historic undertakings, and still, even if in an ambiguous manner, they somehow or other manage to promote a better fate with their failures. Of course, with cruel sequences about cruelty, and by their plot that leaves no room for evasion or solution, Sára and Csoóri also suggest that by recognizing this very law, Hungarians have to follow as their example those peoples who are able to supplement their moral victory with physical victory: those are the nations that really shape communities and history.

A Hungarian Streetcar Named Desire

It may seem strange that the fame of a Hungarian film reaches Hungary by detour from abroad. I went to see *The Two of Them*, encouraged by a full-page enthusiastic review carried in *Newsweek*. I have seen Márta Mészáros' films from the very first and I even reviewed *Adoption* in NHQ. I have never been enthralled by them. This is why I did not see *Nine Months*. However, the film festivals of the world seem to pay no attention to my objections, as the Hungarian director has received one prize after the other at international festivals. I am sure this will also be the case with *The Two of Them*.

This time, I feel, it will not be without good reason. This Mészáros film is better than the ones I have seen previously. I have quite a few bones to pick with this one, too, but it remains a fact that here the sociological approach does not dominate expression completely. This time, too, Mészáros has tackled a rather direct thesis, meaning to prove that, since marriage is a hopeless proposition, especially for women, the hapless wives should discover each other's friendship. The idea is not a new one, although film-makers have omitted it, as far as I know, from their deeper messages. Márta Mészáros, however, succumbs to this truth with a "conviction" characteristic of her, and devises a bad husband and a bad marriage for the two wives who make friends with one another. Once again her cameraman was János Kende.

The film begins with the picture of an isolated tall building on the outskirts. It is a modern structure: a girls' hostel. It is winter, and trodden ice covers the broad road more or less cleared of snow that leads up to the building. Inside we meet the lovely house-mother in her forties, played by Marina Vlady. Mészáros sets her at variance with Juli, one of the young factory workers, who is played by the high-strung, at times hysterical Lili Monori, already

known from several Mészáros films. The two women are perfect opposites. Upon the gentle warning of the house-mother to take her little daughter away from the hostel since it is against the rules to keep her there, the fearless and outspoken mother throws harsh words at Mari's head. Upon which the directrice orders her out of her room only to go after her immediately, and embrace the woman who still lingers behind the door, telling her that she might stay with her daughter in her own two-room apartment.

Meanwhile the beautiful, gentle, and refined directrice who—as Juli later tells her—"loves everybody," receives a telegramme telling her that her mother died, and she has to leave for Budapest. Here we get to know her husband, an engineer about to leave for Mongolia, and her two children. Juli's husband also appears in the film. The woman is not willing to meet him, she knows that his alcoholism makes every attempt at starting things anew hopeless. It is the kindly and much too beautiful directrice who goes down to the lobby to talk to the husband, and after a short dispute she invites the husband (who proves to be in love with his wife), up to her flat. He offers chocolate to his daughter lying in bed, and promises her that soon they will live together again. But when he tries to convince Juli of this beautiful future, the nervous woman puts him off aggressively, and asks him to leave her alone: she wants to live at last in peace. Later naturally she makes love with him nevertheless, standing against the wall of the small flat's kitchen which echoes every sound.

From here on I begin to understand that the two marriages have gone bad in two different ways: in Juli's there is emotion, passion, and sexuality, but the woman's intractable and ruthless disposition, and the husband's alcoholism—which perhaps has developed just because of this—and his roughness which degenerates into wife-battering, make it impossible for them to provide a home for their quiet little daughter. The affairs of the elderly couple are settled, except that the twenty years they spent together have stamped out any direct, living emotions, any sexual or responsive relationship between them. I was somewhat depressed by the stereotype of this parallel. But Juli acts and speaks the unexpected with such a natural passion and everyday sincerity in the film, and Marina Vlady's mature beauty is so overhelming that I remained full of expectations regarding the yarn of the story.

On a nice snowy winter evening Mari is seen home by someone and their intimate walk and conversation ends in some serious kissing. After that the woman even attempts to arouse the loving spirit in her husband who comes to visit her. Their love-making, however, again only yields the usual, one-sided satisfaction. The woman lying prostrate on the floor with outspread legs, and the satiated husband turning to the wall may be one of the symbols of the film. But then, these too are rather hackneyed pictures. What might still come after this attempt of Mari's? A dance session at the club during which the directrice gets completely drunk. Juli and her husband take her home to Budapest by train. The husband, who leads a sober life, and who is preparing to leave for Mongolia, becomes so scandalized that he hurls insults at his wife. What can a beautiful woman, yearning for understanding but mortally offended, do at such a time? With a strained shriek she hurls the plate of scrambled eggs she happens to have in her hand at the kitchen window. That ends everything between the two of them. The husband, this cardboard character who for me is completely devoid of interest, finally leaves for Mongolia, and they do not even kiss farewell at the railroad station.

The thing starts to become exciting. After all, nothing remains now but to feel sympathy for the sexy, only "somewhat" alcoholic other husband. Mari can now visit this brilliant but always misunderstood, unappreciated, unrewarded factory technician

at his flat. The woman empties the glasses of brandy offered by the host one after the other. He himself does not drink, for he has found, he says, that the whole thing is only a matter of will-power. This appeals to the beautiful Mari just as much as she herself appeals to the iron-willed alcoholic. They are on the verge of being drawn to the encitingly worn-out couch of the diggings, but then Mari decides to take leave of Juli's husband. Left to himself, the husband carefully corks the remaining brandy. Well, I say to myself, here comes the happy ending. But then Juli appears, sobbing desperately that her husband has once again overindulged. The two women hurry to his flat and with united effort drag the man into a car and carry him to the detoxication ward of a hospital. After this there seems to be nothing left for Mari—whether she is driven by her desire or sheer charity one cannot tell—but to go in place of Juli to visit the hero of the detoxication cure. Juli's daughter accompanies her. She, too, has to see the human wrecks among whom his father has landed, and who now gets into a fit of rage because of vomiting from the antidotes —while the woman looks on—and flies with extraordinary rudeness at the bewildered woman unable to move. He refuses her charity, and finally, in front of the whole ward, calls the pale, powerless, beautiful woman a whore. The doctor arrives, has the patient taken to his room, and administers him sedatives. Mari goes home dismayed, along the broad snowy road we have seen in the opening shot of the film. At the end of the road stands the lonely modern building, the girls' hostel. Juli comes to meet Mari who holds her daughter by her hand. "What's new?" "Nothing, he's feeling well," Mari lies, I do not quite understand why. The little girl, however, interrupts, "It's not true, he isn't well, nothing is well!"

The tall building comes nearer in the winter landscape, and the film ends. And I feel I have not become much wiser, and I also think, Márta Mészáros has perhaps not even noticed that in fact she has produced in her film the Hungarian *Streetcar Named Desire*. The drunkard husband could be Stanley Kowalski; Stella, at the mercy of his rudeness and sexuality becomes Juli, whereas Mari is the delicate third party, Blanche, morally stamped to the ground by Juli's husband, who somehow gets drawn into the maelstrom of the younger couple.

József Tornai

MUSICAL LIFE

RECORDS AND SCORES

J. S. BACH: SUITES FOR ORCHESTRA BWV 1066–1069
BRANDENBURG CONCERTOS Nos. 1–6 BWV 1046–51 Hungaroton SLPX 11787–88, and SLPX 11849–50 Stereo-Mono. Liszt Ferenc Chamber Orchestra Conducted by Frigyes Sándor

I shall not even try to suggest that the world has never seen anything like these recordings. Of all Bach's works these have actually been performed most often both in concert halls and recording studios. I might even say at once, by way of introduction, that on eight record sides in all here and there are makeshift solutions and various minor inaccuracies—which could have been corrected with more careful editing or the re-recording of details. Nevertheless it is my feeling that these records are worth listening to. Allow me to explain why.

When Bach composed the *Brandenburg Concertos* he created works of an individual character. Let us just consider an "Opus" by Vivaldi, consisting of twelve concertos, both in orchestration and musical arrangement. This is the very essence of a Renaissance or Baroque series: The composer strives to present to the performer and the listener the same material, but always approached from a different angle. Bach's art—and particularly in the *Brandenburg Concertos*—is different. He included six works in a single series which, strictly speaking, are each of an individual character, differing from one another in every respect. Even with regard to orchestration. Every one of the *Brandenburg Concertos* is composed for a different combination of instruments.

It is for this reason that each piece in the series of recordings is filled with unusually lovely and also less successful details.

The new recording marked *Brandenburg Concertos* is worth hearing first of all because of No. 6 in B flat major. Bach did not use violins in this work; speaking in modern terms the violas play the highest part in the string orchestra. For this reason many of the large orchestra recordings there evidence an unaccountable growl. If any work is practicable for a chamber music orchestra it is this one. The Liszt Ferenc Chamber Orchestra creates a delicate realm of sound with splendid linearity and plasticity, and the last (the third) movement is right in the Bach spirit of rustic tone quality. Bach's humour shows in the syncopation in the second part of the theme, and in the application of shifted accents which the performers observe with such care.

László Czidra's name has often been mentiond by me in the pages of this journal. We can enjoy his playing of the recorder in the second and the fourth concertos (in the latter Vilmos Stadler plays the second recorder). Czidra has an unusually sensitive feeling for the tender and complete ornaments and broad melodic phrases, it is his playing that makes one understand truly why this instrument was then called *flauto dolce*, or *flute douce*. In the *Second Brandenburg*

Concerto László Csiba (trumpet) plays this formidably virtuoso part with incredible ease.

The *Fourth Brandenburg Concerto* is notoriously J. S. Bach's most difficult violin concerto (besides the two recorders a violin also faces the orchestra). János Rolla, the leader of the chamber orchestra, produces that light Italian sound which most clearly reveals the influence that the birthplace of the concerto form exercised on Bach. I must in truth say that numerous better recordings of the *Third Brandenburg Concerto* are known to me. The closing movement sounds a bit precipitate. Zsuzsa Pertis (harpsichord) plays a fine cadenza in place of the omitted (never composed) third movement.

The *Suites for Orchestra* are similarly not of an evenly high standard. In addition to the soloists listed above Péter Pongrác (oboe) and Lóránt Kovács (flute) particularly deserve to be mentioned, the latter as the soloist of the well-known *Suite No. 2. in B minor.*

IGNAZ PLEYEL (1757–1831)
KONZERT FÜR KLARINETTE UND ORCHESTER
B-dur (B flat major)
(Score, piano reduction, instrumental parts)
Edited by György Balassa
Editio Musica Budapest, 1976/77

I give preference to clarinet works not merely because I was once a clarinettist myself but first of all because this instrument's solo literature is relatively small, or at least was believed to be small until recently, and at the same time a great many people are fond of it nowadays and play it. Thanks to Editio Musica Budapest one clearly sees today how many outstanding works were written by lesser or greater composers of the Haydn–Mozart era for this truly beautiful instrument. A lion's share in the discovery of these works was played by the tireless scholarship and enthusiasm of György Balassa, who is otherwise a professor of clarinet at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest.

When a few months ago the sixth volume of the *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales "Einzeldrucke vor 1800"* (Bärenreiter, Kassel, Basel, etc., 1976. Redaktion Karlheinz Schlager) appeared, the spine of which bears the encyclopaedic definition "MONTALBANO–PLEYEL"—even the musicologists were astounded that the mere enumeration of titles of works by Ignaz Pleyel took up about 150 pages. (More than 2,300 published compositions!) Fortune endowed him with longevity. He was born a bare eighteen months after Mozart and yet outlived Beethoven by four and a half years.

Pleyel's "Konzert" under discussion originated around 1790, that is, towards the end of Mozart's life and is now published for the first time. It shows the influence of both Haydn and Mozart. The orchestra also follows the classical model in every respect: the *Clarinetto principale* is accompanied by two oboes and two horns and string orchestra.

Of course a comparison of Pleyel's work with one of Mozarts' finest concertos, the *Clarinet Concerto* (K. 622) is out of the question when it comes to musicianship. But it is certain that he knew as much as Mozart about the instrument, and his skill in writing for it was unrivalled. One might say that Pleyel went almost too far in serving the instrument. The result is a virtuoso concerto of great impact and brilliant texture. Perhaps it is a bit more regular than a true masterpiece, the material of the closing rondo sounds naive—the episode in minor key in the latter, however, makes one wonder, whether Pleyel's musical ability and creative imagination are of greater worth than we had originally believed.

The work is now published fully orchestrated as well as in an arrangement with a piano accompaniment.

FRANÇOIS DEVIENNE (1759–1803)
TRIOS FÜR FLÖTE, KLARINETTE UND FAGOTT AUS OP. 61 (Part material)
Edited by György Balassa
Editio Musica Budapest, 1977

The exceptionally elegant works by Devienne, especially his chamber music combined with the clarinet, has only received proper attention in the past twenty odd years. The players of this instrument are certainly well aware of their own needs, principally because the Baroque masters were not familiar with the clarinet.

These three trios were written for domestic chamber music performance. The treatment of the flute and the bassoon are exceptionally instrumental in character, but the composer lacks the skill of Pleyel in handling the clarinet. The first trio (G major) was very likely written for the C clarinet, and its performance with the present B flat clarinet is not a simple matter. There are no problems of this nature in the rest of the pieces.

GAETANO DONIZETTI
MISERERE
IN RE MINORE A QUATTRO VOCI CON ORCHESTRA
Musicotheca Classica No. 6
Edited by István Máriássy
Editio Musica Budapest, 1976.

Like the other two works this one was published in collaboration with Eulenburg Edition—for the time being only as an orchestral score and a piano arrangement.

This is the first publication of the manuscript in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana —as a fresh indication of the ever growing interest in the sacred music written by Italian operatic composers. Another setting of the 50th psalm by Donizetti is also known, for this reason this is called the "small miserere." (The composer set only the first five verses.)

Donizetti's tragic feelings are in the focal point of the composition: the dark hues, the tormented mood, dramatic features rooted in the text permeate the piece. The handling of the four-voice choir is generally homophonic, massive, and chordal in character, only for one or two moments are contrapuntal ambitions displayed to some extent. The work is therefore not difficult to perform, but at the same time it is highly effective. The accompaniment makes use of two oboes, two horns, and two trumpets, as well as one trombone and a string orchestra.

ANDRÁS PERNYE

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

BART, István (b. 1944). Translator, journalist, editor at Európa Publishing House in Budapest. A regular contributor to this journal.

BOGNÁR, József (b. 1917). Economist, Member of Parliament, Heads the Research Institute on World Economy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Member of the Editorial Board of, as well as a frequent contributor to, NHQ. See "Changes in the World Economy and Hungarian Economic Policy," NHQ 52, "A New Civilization Model?" 63, and "The Outlines of a New System of International Economic Relations," 66.

CSIKÓS-NAGY, Béla (b. 1915). Undersecretary of State, Chairman of the National Prices and Materials Office. Has published and lectured on price policy and other economic questions in Hungary and abroad. See "Socialist Economic Theory and the New Mechanism," NHQ 28, "The Monetary Framework of a Socialist Economy," 33, "Anti-Inflationary Policies," 55, and "Hungarian Price Policy," 59.

DERCSÉNYI, Dezső (b. 1910). Art historian, Director of the National Inspectorate of Historical Monuments in Budapest. Has published numerous works on medieval Hungarian art. See "Hungarian Art in the Age of St. Stephen," NHQ 39, "Protection of Historical Monuments," 46, and "Sopron's Modern Ancient History," 62.

FERENCZI, László (b. 1937). Our regular poetry reviewer. See his essay on Endre Ady, NHQ 66, and on Gyula Illyés, 68.

FORGÁCS, Éva (b. 1947). Art historian, on the staff of the Budapest Museum of Applied Arts. Specializes in the art of the 1920s, including the Bauhaus. Has published *Kollázs és montázs* ("Collage and Montage"), Corvina, Budapest, 1976, and studies on the Bauhaus and Ernő Kállai. See "Ernő Kállai: Art Critic of a Changing Age," NHQ 64, "Lajos Kassák Memorial Museum in Old Buda," 67, and "Three Books on Art and Artists," 68.

FÖLDES, Anna (b. 1931). Our regular theatre critic.

FRANK, János (b. 1925). One of our regular art critics.

HAJDU, János (b. 1934). Journalist on the staff of *Népszabadság*, commentator on international affairs on Hungarian Television as well. In 1968–69 correspondent in South-East Asia, 1970 to 1974 in Bonn. He spent three months in 1975 on a study tour of the United States on a State Department scholarship. See "Human Rights on Hungarian Television," NHQ 68.

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ILLYÉS, Mária (b. 1942). Art critic, on the staff of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts. Her main field is contemporary painting. See her reviews in NHQ 67, 68, 69.

ISZLAI, Zoltán (b. 1933). Poet, author, critic, on the staff of *Élet és Irodalom*, a literary weekly. One of our regular book reviewers.

KALANOVICS, János (b. 1932). Scientific Secretary of the Hungarian Institute for Foreign Affairs. Studied law and sociology, 1953–1977 worked in the diplomatic service.

KÁROLYI, Amy (b. 1909). Poet, translator, wife of the poet Sándor Weöres. Has published seven volumes of poems, tales for children, and verse translations. See her poems in NHQ 45. Hungarian titles of her poems in this volume: *Hit; Meditáció Yorick koponyája fölött; Halottvirrasztó.*

KESERŰ, Katalin (b. 1946), Art historian. Her main field research is Hungarian art and applied art at the turn of the century and their connections abroad. Works at the Department of Art History of Budapest University. See her article on László Moholy Nagy, NHQ 57.

KLANICZAY, Tibor (b. 1923). Professor of Hungarian Literature at Budapest University. His main field is Hungarian literature in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. His numerous works include: *Renaissance és barokk* (Renaissance and baroque) 1961, *A múlt nagy korszakai* (The great ages of the past) 1973, *Hagyományok ébresztése* (The bringing to life of traditions) 1976.

KORMOS, István (1923–1977). Poet. Worked for many years at Móra, a Budapest publishing house for children and young people. Has published three volumes of poems, several popular verse tales for children, and translations from Chaucer, Burns, Pushkin, et al., and Russian folk poetry, and also edited anthologies. See his poems in NHQ 25, 44. Hungarian titles of his poems in this volume: *Szegény Yorick; Farkasvadászat; Sárga eső; N. N. bolyongásai.*

KOVÁCS, Sándor Iván (b. 1937). Literary historian. Editor of *Kortárs*, a Budapest literary monthly. Has published several studies on old Hungarian literature. See "Albert Szenci Molnár, The Encyclopedist," NHQ 57.

KÖPECZI, Béla (b. 1922). Historian and literary historian, Deputy Secretary General of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, member of the Editorial Board of this review. Has published an extensive study on the relations between Ferenc Rákóczi II and 18th century France (1966), as well as another book on Rákóczi himself (1974). See "Ferenc Rákóczi II, the Man and his Cause," NHQ 61, "The Famous Prince Ragotzi," 65, and "Can We Learn from History," a review on Dániel Csatáry's book, 69.

MEZEI, András (b. 1930). Poet, novelist; journalist, on the staff of *Élet és Irodalom*, a Budapest literary weekly to which he has been contributing a regular interview series. Has published several volumes of poems, a novel, as well as edited anthologies. See his poems in NHQ 65.

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PÁNDI, Pál (b. 1926). Editor of *Kritika*, a literary monthly. Literary historian, critic. Professor of Hungarian literature at the University of Budapest. Has done extensive research in, and published numerous studies on Hungarian literature in the first half of the 19th Century and Sándor Petőfi.

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POZSGAY, Imre (b. 1933). Minister of Culture. Graduated in History and Philosophy from the University of Szeged and the Budapest Lenin Institute. Worked at the Bács County Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and was later Deputy Editor of *Társadalmi Szemle*, the Party's theoretical monthly. Does research in sociology, philosophy and aesthetics. See "Philosophy and Social Development," NHQ 62; "The Scope and Limits of Legislating on Culture," 66; "Nation and Mankind", 68.

SZABADY, Egon (b. 1917). Demographer, Vice President of the Central Bureau of Statistics, Head of the Demographic Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Editor of *Demográfia*, a monthly, member of the Editorial Board of this journal. See "The Objectives of Demographic Policy," NHQ 56, and "Family Centred Population Policy in Hungary," 57.

SZALAI, Sándor (b. 1912). Sociologist. Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, adviser to the Academy's Research Group for the Organization of Sciences. Member of the editorial board of this journal. See "The 150 Years of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences," NHQ 57, "Complex Social Effects of New Technology," 59, "The Extended Present," 61, and "Time Budget Research on Women" 64.

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VARGA, György (b. 1932). Economist, editor of *Gazdaság*, an economic quarterly. Has published books on comparative economics. See "A Conference of British and Hungarian Economists," NHQ 54, and "World Congress on Economic Integration," 57.

VÉSZI, Endre (b. 1916). Poet, novelist, story writer. An engraver by training, he began his literary carreer by publishing poems while still working in his trade in the 30s. Out of his 35 volumes 20 contain short stories and novels, 11 are volumes of poetry, and 4 contain plays for the stage, television and radio.

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