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SURVEYS

IMPATIENT YOUTH

by

† LÁSZLÓ BÓKA

As Professor of Hungarian Literature at the Loránd Eötvös University in Budapest, I pass my life among the young. As a member of the board of the Society for Scientific Education I am also consistently concerned with the educational and leisure problems of young workers and peasants. These facts in themselves are sufficient to prove my competence in any discussion on the problems of contemporary Hungarian youth. But my passionate interest in the question springs equally from the fact that I am a poet and a writer. I am one of those who, thanks to their sense of fun, and to the imagination indispensable to their vocation, never quite grow up. I feel much nearer to the mental processes of youth than to those grey rules of thought I have been obliged to learn from my grown-up contemporaries but cannot successfully apply, even on an ironical level. As the author of works which have provoked no little debate, I have become accustomed to accepting the views of young readers ruthless in argument and judgement, rather than those of the more soft-spoken critics.

This is my justification for taking sides in the issue under discussion. And if in addition I can assure the reader that I am not one of the old who ape the young, that I do not dress youthfully, nor dye the grey locks on my balding scalp, nor model my hair-cut on the young, but quietly resign myself to the laws of nature which have been at work on me too, then I may perhaps be allowed to speak of our youth with some claim to credence.

Introducing the Problem

After the shock of 1956 there was a short interruption of university teaching, and when it was resumed in the spring of 1957 the young people that lined the benches in lecture-room and seminar were grim, apathetic

and inaccessible. I met with the same experience when visiting the countryside or conducting a literary evening at some factory. My own much-tried generation, which had passed through a world war, two revolutions and a counter-revolution in its childhood, and had learned to know fascism at a time when Mussolini's African campaign and the Spanish Civil War were preparing the way for the Second World War, recovered far more easily from the crisis of 1956 than the younger generation brought up in modern Hungarian society. The latter turned back into itself after 1956 and began to cast up accounts with its fathers, with itself, and with its own future. I remember an occasion when a gifted student of mine called on me, whom I knew had withdrawn from all public activities, did not even take part in evening debates in the college where he lived, and was only to be found in the library. When we had finished our discussion of his work, he bowed and took his leave. I called him back.

"May I ask you a personal question?" I said.

He nodded with an air of reserve.

"Are you a reactionary?" I asked.

His impassive expression broke, changed to surprise, and his whole face came alive with feeling.

"Let me shake your hand, Professor," he exclaimed with emotion in his voice.

I was not sure whether this appeal to shake hands was not some ironical impertinence, but I stretched my hand towards him. He took it, shook it, and sat back in his chair.

"Don't think I'm mad. But I've read in the newspapers that I'm a reactionary counter-revolutionary who desires the Horthy oppression to return. And I've read that I've not been taken in by counter-revolutionary propaganda, but am building socialism with enthusiasm. Only nobody has ever bothered to ask *me* what I am; all they ever did was talk *about* me. That's why I wanted to shake your hand. Out of gratitude. And if you want to know I'll tell you right away. We are not reactionary, only doubting; we are not prepared to be enthusiastic to order, to applaud obediently. We want to have a look at what is behind all the words..."

I have not related this anecdote for the sake of the story. Its young hero is now a teacher in the provinces, and frequently comes to me with interesting problems concerning the youth of the country when he is lured up to the capital by its scientific libraries. I have told the story to explain how the problems of Hungarian youth stem from 1956 and can only be approached from this starting-point. And our only source in any discussion on youth must be youth itself. Not only its opinions of itself, but also its

achievements and its creative work. Behind every line written here there is some living person, or a group of young people, or what they have written, or the quality of their work; there is the sound of feet on a dance-floor, laughter, a boy's confession. My conclusions may be contested, but not the material on which they are based.

Against a Rigid Classification

We are not concerned here with the "angry young men" or the problem of "hooliganism"; one has to be careful in using professional definitions—things we can label are no longer a real problem. Such types may and must be registered only as extreme cases: *may* be registered because they represent after all only a very small percentage of world youth, *must* be registered because in their very extremism they are symptomatic and therefore tend to be characteristic.

It is also to classify too rigidly to differentiate—as we sometimes do—between Western "angry young men" and Eastern "hooliganism," supporting the differentiation by the claim that in the West the young are made morally irresponsible by the fear of war and the fear of bolshevism, and with us by boredom, by an over-planned, over-regulated life. I can hardly believe the fear of nuclear death to be absent from the youth of the socialist countries; nor do I imagine the nerves of American, British or French youngsters are less exacerbated by the automatic mechanism of over-organisation and over-administration. It was from a French student I heard the phrase *"la prévoyance soporifique"* which, according to him, governed the adult world. But it would also be wrong if, in analysing the problem which largely characterizes youth on a world-wide scale, we were to look only at the political, social and moral background of our era and to forget that adolescence has always been prolific in inner crises and that the young, at that stage of their development, are disturbed by the ordinary biological processes of growth.

In discussing the problems of contemporary Hungarian youth, therefore, and searching for the special characteristics that distinguish it, I do not for a moment forget that these symptoms are only gradations of difference both in the age-old crisis of youth through the centuries, and in the general symptoms of the crisis of modern youth. In the same way Byronism was not given its name because it was thought to be a type of "Weltschmerz" peculiar to English youth, but because it was Byron who, in terms of captivating liveliness, first described the phenomenon.

Is There Really a Crisis of Youth?

Though we are entitled to speak of crisis symptoms, I would not dare to speak of a crisis. And that neither on the rather cynical ground often advanced that crises attached to a given stage of life cannot properly be called such because in any case they are outgrown later; nor by the optimistic assertion that with the development of our society all the causes which give rise to critical situations will be remedied in the next stage of evolution. We are perfectly well aware that injuries suffered in youth may poison adult life, and even more that young people suffering such injury may, in their adult life, obstruct by their actions the natural course of progress.

I do not speak of a crisis of Hungarian youth because its restlessness is based on very real foundations and its revolt is taking place at a very high level; the symptoms carry themselves the possibility of a healthy and natural solution. Let me add that the reaction of the adult section of our society is—to me—surprisingly moderate. Even those who have no understanding, and take refuge behind the crumbling bastions of parental authority, teacher's dignity, and snorts of "we were different," do not clamour for the restless youngsters to be burned at the stake; at the worst part of them find a vent for their feelings in denouncing socialism and claiming that the Christian manners and morals of the old world guided the young into better channels.

What Is It All About?

In essence we are dealing with two generations, the one between 15 and 20 years of age, the other between 20 and 30. Needless to say, these limits are not to be taken pedantically; I have purposely avoided rigid limits according to historical periods. Yet the two young generations are separated by the fact that those belonging to the former have no memories of fascist rule, of the war, not even of the inner struggles involved in the socialist transformation of the country, while those of the other, the older generation, still carry in their nerves the horrors of Nazism and war, and took part themselves in the political conflicts developing after 1945. The real difference between the two generations does not reside in their conscious experiences in Hungarian society; this sharp divergence is merely one of appearance; what the thirty-year-olds saw with their own eyes, the fifteen-year-olds heard about in eye-witness accounts from their fathers and grandfathers.

The real difference is to be found in their position in relation to the adults, to their fathers. This, I maintain, is the decisive question in the difference between the two generations. Their problems may seem to be the same, they may seem to be angered by the same things, but as soon as the conversation turns on the subject of their fathers, a sharp distinction emerges. A contemporary of mine, an engineering expert well-known in scientific circles, has two sons. He has plenty of complaints about both of them; but his complaints about his 24-year-old son culminate in—"just imagine, he argues with me all the time; ticks me off, tries to lecture me, makes me responsible for the past; to hear him talk you'd think I had been Horthy's right-hand man and helped Rákosi in his abuse of the law." But he has no such complaints about his younger son. I took occasion to ask the younger boy, who is nineteen, whether it is true that, unlike his brother, he talks to his father with respect. "Well," he answered, "what's the point of all that useless argument? My brother's an idiot, he hasn't yet discovered that every argument with Father is pointless, we don't speak the same language. It only gives Father pain. And even if we should convince him, would that change anything?" Don't imagine there is some cynical young intellectual behind these words; he said it sadly, sympathetically, he spoke of his father and brother as if they were two dear but sick persons.

With no small pride we may claim that the struggle between the generations, the murderous conflict between fathers and sons, is unknown in our form of society. This is true in the sense that the fathers have no need to fear the cannibalistic morality of the past, in which the sons devour their fathers, and no need to obstruct their sons' advancement for fear of their own position. Socialist society does not know this struggle for survival between father and son. Nor is there the same conflict between fathers and sons as once existed in terms of human progress versus conservatism. The conflict is not ideological, even if the more arrogant adults are ready to brand all criticism levelled at them as an attack on principles and concepts, and if the young sometimes create this impression with their provocative exaggerations and brutal censure.

A young peasant working in a cooperative farm spoke to me of his father, who was one of its founders, is now its chairman, and a Party member. "To my father everything is a victory or a betrayal. If we gather the harvest in time, then he thinks socialism has won. If we do not succeed in something, then we have let the building of socialism down, we have betrayed the Party. But the harvest is being gathered everywhere, and sometimes it is late in other places too. What do you think? Is it such a great matter as long as we honestly do our work?" It was my impression that the victory of

socialism was no less important to the young peasant than to his father, but that to him socialist society was already far more a matter of course.

A former classmate of mine, now a foreman in a large factory, slapped his son's face during a factory celebration on hearing the boy remark: „All right, we've met every one of the deadlines and we've surpassed every one of the target figures. So what?" Defending his hasty blow, the father said that the boy had belittled their work and the results of their labour, and had callously disregarded the pride of the factory in their achievement. Where the father was wrong was to forget that his son worked in the same factory and his work too had contributed to the overfulfilment of the plan.

What is important is that fathers and sons do not think in the same terms, and the conflict between them either explodes into fruitless argument or—and this is more dangerous—silently widens the gulf between them. "What's the point of all that useless argument?" "So what?" This is more serious than a conflict over their livelihood, since the gulf is widened on a higher level. Fortunately, however, the conflict is not a tragic one.

The Symptoms Are Clear

The long hair hanging round the face, the beard copied from old pictures, are a revolt against the uniformity of clean-shaved faces and trim moustaches. After the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 hair cut short and the abolition of the beard were the outward symbols of revolt against the traditions of Czarist Russia. (A friend of mine from the Soviet Union told me that his father had called his sons "eccentric, unmanly and even unpatriotic" because they did not wear beards, and complained of the "moral decadence" of youth...")

The tight pants with pockets in surprising places that appear to be held together with small copper knobs instead of cotton thread, the heavy knit outer wear, the coats of peculiar cut and colour, the fancy ties, the bizarre mixture of black and violent colours, are all a revolt against the conformity of male fashion that began to develop after the victory of the bourgeois revolution of the eighteenth century, and which finally lost all individuality with the spread of machine-made clothing and mass-produced designs. (In the immediate past the revolt had been restricted to artists, but they abandoned it as soon as the *hoi polloi* began to run around as well in velvet coats, berets and wide-brimmed hats. The real artists themselves began to demonstrate against the artists' "uniform" by electing to wear the most impersonal types of bourgeois fashion).

And when a young man with his bizarre hair-do and peculiar clothes turns to ask a girl to dance, and a minute later they are twisting in strange contortions to jazz rhythms with an expression of beatitude on their faces, then my generation collapses, because this type of dance is essentially different to what we were used to when, at dancing school or a party, Mummy and Daddy duly present, we asked a young girl to dance. But if we look more closely at this strange, jerky dance, we may discover with surprise that this too is a revolt, a real mass revolt. These young people, who in fact, hardly touch each other, have given back to the dance its former ritualistic, rhythmic character.

As I see it, this is true from Paris to Irkutsk. As I see it, these young people are revolting in favour of a greater expansion of individuality and freedom of personality and against hypocrisy and lies. When this happens in the west, we are ready with the answer. We say that western youth revolts against the uniformity of the bourgeois world, and against bourgeois hypocrisy. Adults in the west, for their part, say that their youth is in revolt against the spectre of bolshevism, destroying individuality, demanding uniformity and conformity. But what do we say about our own youth?

What many people say—that the follies of western youth have infected part of our young people—is not true. Apart from the fact that only a romantic imagination believes it possible to erect an "iron curtain" (or Chinese wall?) against the natural process of mutual influence, this explanation fails on three counts. In the first place it is by no means proved that youth rages out of pure folly, and even less that this youthful rage is due to contagion. In the second place, I am a materialist and am loath to believe that the attraction of some passing folly could prove stronger than the economic, social and political realities of our existence. And in the third place, whenever we refer to "part" of our youth, the hidden implication is that we do not of course refer to the best part, but to the wayward, the second-rate, those who ape foreigners. Well, this is just not true. When I speak of our Hungarian "angry young men," I am not thinking of juvenile perverts or delinquents, who may be found in any social system in the world. (Not that I allege that all young men are affected by these crisis symptoms, nor do I deny that many are quite free of them. But they touch everyone, and those who are not themselves affected have more understanding for the angry young men than they are prepared to avow.)

What is nearest to the truth is that the angry young men of Hungary want more freedom to develop their personality and more liberty, and that they hate hypocrisy. They are quite ready to say all this themselves, if one approaches them not in order to censure but simply in order to converse.

"What Are You Suggesting?"

What, is there no difference between them? What, is there too little opportunity under socialism for the personality to assert itself? Is there insufficient freedom? Is there hypocrisy?

Does socialism make young people angry?

If I have to answer the question whether there is a difference between them, I will definitely answer in the affirmative no matter how similar the symptoms in east and west; there is a difference, even though the reasons are similar.

But if you ask whether socialism bears any responsibility for the anger of the young men, I have to answer, to some extent, yes. To phrase it more precisely, the young people of Hungary are restless because they have suffered from the historic mistakes of socialist development, because they have been made impatient by socialism itself, and because they are young.

West and east in this context do not refer to points of the compass or climates and races, but to the capitalist and socialist social and economic order, and the two do not merge even in a problem where the question of age plays a dominant role.

When western youth revolts because it cannot assert its individuality, because it lacks freedom, because it is fettered by a hypocritical society, it can be described as a crisis, because opportunities for the development of personality are consistently decreasing (Raskolnikow, Julien Sorel began the revolt against this trend in the last century); bourgeois liberalism, bourgeois democracy can be identified with freedom only in terms of an unforgettable and hallowed tradition of the past.

We, on the other hand, when we investigate the crisis-symptoms of our Hungarian youth, find behind them the social and age syndrome caused by the tension between socialist theory and Stalinist practice. This is not an inner crisis of socialism, but the gulf between correct theory and its abuse, exposed in the Soviet Union by the communists who passed judgment on it and discarded it at the 20th, and 22nd Congresses of the Party of the Soviet Union. In Hungary, where the attempt was made to blur over the end of the Stalinist period, this led to the tragic turn of events of 1956.

When the young people of Hungary are individualistic and clamour for freedom, they do not want to restore bourgeois liberalism and bourgeois democracy. They are demanding the kind of socialist freedom and communist personality first brought to their knowledge by Marxist–Leninist theory. This was absent under the Stalinist leadership of Rákosi; and it is the affirmation of this freedom which they now consider too slow.

When the young revolt against hypocrisy, they are in revolt against administrative methods of leadership too often taking the place of socialist collectivism, against the too frequent appearance of petty bourgeois homilies under the guise of socialist morality, against the slightest discrepancies between theory and practice.

So this is what we are suggesting, quite calmly and frankly; to the extent our young people revolt, they are justified by the slow pace and erratic divagations of our inner development. Their revolt is not directed against our ideology or our political system, but against tardiness in applying our ideology, and against defects in our system.

Let me add that they are not always right. Because—and here what is characteristic of their age comes into play—they are impatient, and unwilling to accept the fact that the discovery of a certain truth does not mean that it can be put into practice at once.

If western youth in revolt to-day are called angry, we are fully justified in calling ours impatient.

The young are prepared to believe that defects will disappear, but why so slowly, they ask. "If we can go to the moon with the speed of a rocket, why on earth have we got to *walk* from the bad to the good? Life is too short to be patient," said a young man to me.

If you have followed my train of thought so far and have accepted it, do not stop now. I am not, of course, trying to make you believe that our young people put on moccasins and jeans and knitted "twist waistcoats," grow beards, and go out into the streets with their hair falling over their eyes screaming: „We demand a faster socialist development, a truer socialist humanism, we want state capitalism replaced by a collective popular socialist state!" Not only do I not want to mislead my readers, but I am not in the habit of lying to myself. When I claim that the reason for the wild impatience of our youth is their opposition to the present stage of socialist development, I am not thinking of any conscious political attitude, especially not in so far as the younger group are concerned.

I only claim that the generation which came to adolescence after the liberation following the Second World War, which grew up as members of democratic youth movements and later as young Party members or sympathisers, failed in the stress and fever of the work they had quite properly undertaken, to notice where the leadership had diverged from Leninist principles and got bogged down in the morass of the personality cult and ideological dogmatism. When this generation were suddenly faced with the realization that their selfless labours had not served the good cause alone, that part of their ideals were unfit to be anybody's ideals, they became

disillusioned; and when once more they found their way they began to demand with impatience the immediate improvement of everything in sight. The younger ones, those who first began to think for themselves after 1956 and for whom the years of the personality cult are no more than a fragment of history, are impatient because they cannot understand why we are so proud of our world, freed from dogmatism and uninfected by the personality cult. They appreciate that these defects have been overcome, but proceed to ask why then so many shortcomings still exist. Why can't everything be put right faster?

This is an impatience born of a moral attitude.

The son of a childhood friend of mine—his father was a printer, he is a building worker—works on the construction of a huge complex of blocks of flats. I visited him at the building site in his lunch hour, and this is what I heard from him.

"Just look at this lift! You used to see narrow lifts like this in the old blocks of flats in the inner city, where delivery boys and servants carrying parcels weren't allowed to use them, and had to walk up the servants' stairs at the back! Look at this miserable lift, as skinny as if it were on a reducing diet, because according to the plan it has to be so narrow it's like an orthopaedic appliance! As if it had been designed exclusively for jockeys, ballet dancers and cancer patients! The stairs on the other hand are enormously wide. When I brought this up at a works meeting, a bloke explained that it wasn't yet possible to build narrow staircases in our country, because our working people didn't yet want built-in furniture, but moved into their flats with large wardrobes and old-fashioned furniture that couldn't be carried up narrow staircases. That's true, of course, for the time being. And the chap proceeded to tell me I had forgotten that we live in a transitional period. Transitional period! How long are we going to mark time between the Flood and the twentieth century? And if we do live in a transitional period, so what? Perhaps we ought to start looking for a revisionist, third force solution like designing a large shaft in which there is sufficient room for both a normal size lift and stairs wide enough to allow them to take their grandmother's sideboard up into their blooming flats!"

A former fellow prisoner of war, the chairman of a cooperative farm on the Great Plains, told me that his family is saving for a car. They have a savings-account into which they put all extra income, like premiums and rewards. But he complained that his son would not contribute to the savings like his daughters and sons-in-law. "He doesn't want the car, although he has a mania for going to town on Saturdays and making trips to Budapest." The son kept silent, but when I said after dinner that I would go for a stroll

in the village, he joined me. "Don't think I begrudge them the money," he said. "According to my father I don't contribute with the others because I waste my money in hooligan pursuits. Just because I don't wear my high boots after work, because I have a tape recorder and a portable radio. But with all his big savings my father is giving up the substance for the shadow. I want to live well right here. I don't want to have to admit by buying a darned Volkswagen that one has got to get away from here. I don't like living in village conditions either, but why do we? It's not a car that's needed here, but a modern housing settlement and proper twentieth century living conditions." This young man is not typical, because in general the young people of Hungary are car-mad, but it is still characteristic in that it shows an interesting sort of impatience.

Unquestionably both the young men I have quoted are looking for some sort of perfection here and now, and I am convinced that they have learned this demand for the absolute from Marx—the Marx who in 1847 proclaimed "Workers of the World, Unite!" although at the time that was certainly a far-distant utopia, and if I listen to my Chinese friends, it seems to be still far off to-day. They learned it from Lenin, who demanded a thorough knowledge of Hegel from Marxists, though even to-day there are few who know Hegel thoroughly.

A former student of mine, to-day a busy critic, wrote me a letter à la Werther against conformity and against any compromise, supported by an appeal to practical arguments and reasons. He ended by writing—"Hemingway's old fisherman drags from the sea the skeleton stripped of the last rag of flesh by the sharks; because even if one is knocked out, one should never give up the fight."

A world which has the dialectics of contradictions as its basic ideology makes compromise impossible. And if our world sometimes mistakenly construes false contradictions, if its dialectic is not the pure dialectic of logic, then this youth revolts just as if it were given naturalistic stage food instead of real food.

Where is All This Leading?

How can I tell? To put it at its least, the various strands lead in different directions. Extremes, contrasts, the urge to differ, may on the one hand lead, as the history of art shows, to the development of a style productive of new masterpieces, and on the other to outlandish creations behind which lurk the dabbler and the charlatan. What is quite certain is that in both science

and the arts everything new began with an urge to differ, and in social life with a revolution that destroyed everything old.

If I look at the individual strands... the jazz craze, for instance. Where did its influence begin? With "Mah Ragtime Baby" in the nineties, with "New Coon in Town" in the eighties, or the "Original Dixieland Jazz Band" in the nineteen-tens, or with the slave settlements of the Gold Coast, the Ivory Coast and the Slave Coast, with sad farewells to Africa? If so, the road from there led in two directions, on the one hand to the breakdown of the rigid traditions of classical music, a new emphasis on wind and percussion instruments (Bartók, Hindemith, Schönberg, Alban Berg, etc.), the new poly-rhythmical possibilities offered by syncopation, the triumph of improvisation and folk tunes adaptations; on the other to the relentless fight we are witnessing today and which, in the past, knocked the whip from the hands of negro-whipping ancestors, tore away the moral foundation for whipping based on the Bible and Puritan Protestantism, and exposed to ridicule the hypocritical and perennial lie of all colonialists about the advancement and civilization of backward peoples. It is as ludicrous to speak of the need to civilize Louis Armstrong or Mary Lou Williams as it would be to speak of the racial and cultural inferiority of Stravinsky or Britten.

If I look at the individual strands—...literary taste, for instance. Is it pure coincidence that Hemingway, Salinger and Golding are so popular in our country? What is it that attracts us to them? In Hemingway, there is no doubt, his style, free from false emotion and flowery writing, a highly simplified style, which in our eyes adds up to a human attitude, a moral value in itself. In Golding we respect the merciless consistency of his approach, in Salinger the power to reveal the inner resolution, the promise of the future in those who revolt, the recognition of the real man in the untried stripling. I once attacked one of my young friends. "Would you like Salinger as much if he were not a western author?" Very calmly he put me right. He explained that they liked the same characteristics in Sholokhov's "Quiet Flows the Don," in Solzhenitzyn, in the Hungarian writers József Lengyel, Magda Szabó or Ferenc Sánta, in every author in every literature who calls a spade a spade, who indulges in no ready-made sentiment, whose lesson or moral is only implicit, not explicit, in the narration itself, in other words, who does not teach or moralize but narrates. And when I remember that these are the same young people formerly taught to applaud in unison, when I remember with what aesthetic legerdermain we tried to persuade them that in certain conditions realism was fiery romanticism, I cannot deny they have a case, all the more so as I consider Hemingway is indeed the

representative writer of our epoch, I also cannot be argued into believing that Golding is an inhuman fatalist, since I believe that what he has given the world is the warning of a humanist, and I would make Salinger compulsory reading for parents and teachers.

I had better not give further examples, lest I too am dubbed angry or impatient, or at least an accomplice.

Where is all this leading?

Can you believe it possible that the path the young people take could lead elsewhere than the path taken by mankind? It leads in the same direction that we adults, we who are in power, who direct and manage, are going; it leads to the far view their youthful eyes can see but our aging eyes now fear to regard.

What Is To Be Done?

Do not be under any impression that these views of mine have been submitted to a meeting to be discussed by Party members, teachers, psychologists and doctors and that what I have written was the result of long joint discussions. I can assure you that there are just as many people here dissenting from my views as there are Western European readers shaking their heads in disagreement.

What then, in my opinion, is to be done?

I believe that we, the adults, must set free the powers of initiative now slumbering within us and accept with greater freedom the moral imperatives of social responsibility. We must abandon all forms of cant, renounce all hypocritical dogma, and accept no other authority than the authority of work and achievement.

Youth is a diamond. Flashing with the colours of the rainbow. A diamond, cutting with a crash through all cheap and common glass. A diamond. It catches fire and burns easily. Youth has to be carefully watched, for it is at once an instrument and a gem. And it must be used with courage.

WHERE THE CENTURIES MEET

First impressions and second thoughts from a Latin-American diary

by

IVÁN BOLDIZSÁR

March 16th, 1964.
Rio de Janeiro

Great loves begin with disenchantment. The sun was not shining at Rio. Yesterday afternoon I wound my scarf round my neck in Paris, for the sharp spring wind was a little too uncivil, though the sky was blue and smiling. I waved towards it. Tomorrow I'll be bathing in the ocean, I thought. I did not see much of the ocean. By the time the Air France stewardess with the butterfly air had handed me my early morning orange juice, we were flying over the coastline of South America. I looked down and pulled back with a shock. They say that space men have colour delusions during parts of their flight, but what could have happened to my eyes? Far below us a river ran into the sea, and it was blood red. I looked down again. From a height of thirty thousand feet I saw as much of the river as half the course of our Tisza. It was red all the way.

The butterfly flitted back. "*Préferez-vous une pamplemousse?*" (She called it by the French name instead of saying *grape-fruit* and in these days of *franglais* it won her my special respect.)

"No," I stammered. "But that thing... that red thing down there?"

"That's the Amazon, *monsieur*," she said. "We shall be landing in an hour's time."

It is not the blood of innumerable South American revolutions that has made the Amazon red, particularly since they are mostly bloodless. (Since I learned the very first week that in Latin America the converse of every proposition is also true, I hasten to add—with the exception of Mexico, where they are bloody. But by the second month I had also learnt that exceptions do not prove the rule under the Southern Cross and immediately to the North of it, but only make it more complex. Mexico has had no

revolution for the past quarter of a century.) During my first afternoon at Rio the Brazilian scholar and writer Dr. Paulo Rónai (vide George Mikes: "Everybody is Hungarian") told me it is the iron ore of the soil that makes the Amazon red. But then he said the river I saw was not the Amazon. If for no other reason, I shall have to go back to Brazil one day to decide this question.

The jet landed an hour later. A shiny, dense white cloud seemed to rise from of the soil. By the time I had covered the distance from the plane to the airport buildings, I felt as if the heat and damp had crept through to my skin and sweated out again. I must have looked very uncomfortable in my flannel suit, for the butterfly, by way of a farewell and an explanation, smiled at me and said: "*Humidade.*" This was one of the words I was to hear most frequently in Rio de Janeiro. The other was *Lacerda.* Neither of these words are apt to endear the Brazilian people to anyone.

I had expected a blaze of light, a brilliant torrent of sunshine, but all I got was heat. Off with the thick suit. A bath—quick—if not in the ocean, then at least in a tub. But a second disappointment followed close on the first. My friends had reserved a room for me and had written to reassure me that they would lend me some money at the airport till I got mine changed. There was not a trace of a known figure to be seen. At the Air France desk I told them I had been their passenger and asked for a coin to operate the telephone booth. The clerk gave me three. "And come back if you don't get through with the third." (A touch of home at last!)

The telephone did not swallow my coins as at home, but it also failed to put me through. The porter shuffled about impatiently outside. He said something to me in Portuguese, and at first I started with surprise, for it sounded as though he was talking Russian. I often had the same feeling later on, sitting in front of a wireless or a television set during the days of the *coup*, listening to the interminable speeches, and by that time even understanding the words I had learnt in the meantime. The same double vowels as in Russian, the same eternal softening of the consonants, the same soft *d*-s, *t*-s and *n*-s that can only by truly reproduced in the Hungarian orthography, by *gy*, *ty* and *ny*. They also have the habit of speaking in the diminutive, like the Russians. Even their "thank you" is *obrigadinho.*

The porter demanded his money, so that he could go and look for a new passenger. I went to the window marked CAIXA and was about to change five dollars. The Air France clerk, however, must have been very sincere in his concern for the company's passengers, for he ran out from behind his desk and seized my hand. "For God's sake! Surely you don't want to change your dollars here? They'll only give you 1280. In town you'd get 1400."

And since this was three days after President Goulart's famous speech and the political and stock exchange barometer was already beginning to fluctuate, by the time I got into town the dollar exchange rate was 1550 cruzeiros, by early afternoon it was 1700, and by the evening the hotel porter was anxiously begging me to change my money at once, for the rate was 1800. He could not get it into his head that I had not come to Brazil to make dollar deals, and that I was really indifferent to these magnificent opportunities. "But *senhor*, all the tourists..." He was right. By next day the rate went down to 1750. But he was not right after all—a week later it went up to 1900. By this time I also watched the daily dance of the cruzeiro round the dollar, though I only changed my money once a week at whatever rate happened to be valid at the time.

The Air France man did not change me my five dollars at the 1400 rate, he was really disinterested. He paid the porter, argued with him, sent him to hell, and told me not to budge an inch from my suitcases for luggage was definetely "movable property" in these parts.

I asked to whom I was to return the loan, but he patted me on the back with a laugh, careful not to leave out a square inch all the way from my shoulder blades to my pelvis, saying "Welcome to the marvellous city." I was to hear the expression *cidade marevilhosa* time and again after this, and myself to use it even more often. The Brazilians, particularly the Cariocas, which is the name for the inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro, love being paid compliments. I would never have thought when in Paris of insisting to Frenchmen that theirs was the "City of Light," of calling London "unique" when talking to a Londoner, of telling Romans that their city was eternal, of Viennese that theirs was *gemütlich*.

But wait a minute. What would I myself say if a foreign guest to Budapest told me to my face that my home town is the "Pearl of the Danube." Or the "Most Beautifully Situated City In The World." I would say deprecatingly—"Oh no, please don't exaggerate," but I would not consider him devoid of taste, oh, no, as one would for similar commonplaces about Paris, London, Rome or Vienna. This sort of childishness is not confined to Rio, we in Budapest have a touch of it ourselves. Or rather—as I now reflect six months later, on supplementing my Rio diary with afterthoughts, and leaving hardly a stone unturned in the process—ours is a male type of childishness, that of the Brazilians is female. Not exactly girlish but a riper and more full-blown feminity.

My friends finally put in an appearance and had not a word to say about how late they had been. (See above—*Femininity*.) They whisked me off to their car, upon which the porter again appeared, explained something to

them, and got paid a second time. He winked at me, and I winked back. I felt that this was the moment I had really arrived in Brazil.

* * *

In the evening my friends took me to a huge open-air restaurant. Six hundred *churrasco* were being roasted at a time, on a dozen grills. My friends solemnly admired them. I was impatient. I can never manage to become emotional about food, especially food en masse. Far more attractive to me than these six hundred *churrasco* was one single steak frying in a pan under a walnut-tree on the hillside over Balatonfüred. (Here I was, left home a day and already back there in my mind's eye). And there at least you could see the sky beyond the walnut-tree. This reminded me that it was my first night south of the Equator. Ever since Jules Verne I had always, like every European boy, longed to see the Southern Cross. Where was it?

My friend pointed to a spot in the sky. "There it is, don't you see it?"

I did'nt. My friend turned my head the way a conscientious barber would when washing one's hair. "There, look straight ahead. It's shining brilliantly, a little bluish, lovelier than any other star."

I made no answer. I could not understand it at all. I had not yet learned that the Brazilians just cannot say no. If the visitor wants to see the Southern Cross, he must be shown it.

But I was soon to receive a real lesson in Brazilian ways. My friend ordered grilled liver. "You'll have to wait a little," answered the waiter. We waited and chatted. After a bit, my friend beckoned to the waiter. "What's up?" "I said you'd have to wait a little, *senhor.*" We waited and grew hungrier. The third time my friend angrily enquired:

"How long shall we have to wait?"

"Till tomorrow morning, sir," said the waiter. "We've run short of liver, but there'll be more tomorrow."

My friend did not fly off the handle, but just nodded and ordered another dish. He understood the waiter, in fact he was in full agreement with him. He also could not possibly have been so impolite as to answer "no" to a request or a question, let alone an order. Unfortunately I did not stay in Brazil long enough, or perhaps I should have gone there twenty-five years less old and twenty-five years less married. I might have found out whether in their private lives the ladies also find it impossible to say no.

March 19th
São Paulo

Tonight I really did see the Southern Cross. I was sitting in the garden of a suburban bungalow. The sky was clear. Here there is less of that blasted humidity, for the city lies two thousand feet above sea level, and this is the altitude of Rio. I looked up at the dark blue sky which was really just as the novelists describe it, it was like a glass bell, you could almost hear it tinkle. I felt as though I was holding a newspaper upside down. The letters of the constellations were all in their places, but I could make no sense of them. My host realized that I was a stranger to the stars of the Southern hemisphere. He showed me the Southern Cross, and soon the whole family was buzzing kindly round me, squeezing my hands, patting my back—all the way up and down of course—and kissing both my cheeks. "To celebrate your first glimpse of the Southern Cross. Lovely, isn't it?"

Ever since reading Jules Verne, I had imagined it to be a brilliant star. I thought it would look like a cross-shaped jewel. In fact it is not a single star but a constellation. It does not shine brightly, it merely flickers. It is not like a cross, but more kite-shaped. "Lovely, isn't it?", my host repeated.

I seem to be on the way to Brasilianizing myself. I was unable to say no. From now on, throughout South America, whenever I was surprised or startled, whenever logic got a severe jolt, I reminded myself that even the star-studded sky above us was different here. The people of Europe are different in their ways, customs and languages. But in South America the very way of thinking must be different, for their instincts and reflexes are different from ours. They stand in a different relation to the sky, the points of the compass, the heavenly bodies and the seasons. Yesterday I asked for a northern room at the Othon Palace Hotel. The porter looked at me as though he wanted to say something, but thought better of it and exchanged my door-key without a murmur. "Twentieth floor, north side, sir." At twelve noon today, the sun poured into my room with such intensity, that I was forced to seek refuge elsewhere. The waning moon I saw in my host's garden this evening—and I no longer dared to comment—is not the usual, familiar old C-shape, but a bulging U. It is March, and the shops are holding their end-of-summer sales and the autumn term has just begun at the schools. The water in the bathtub swirls in the opposite direction round the plug-hole-from right to left, anti-clockwise.

If you want to settle down here, you have to change your life. If you are a visitor, you have to re-programme your brain, as though it were a computer.

March 20th

I spent all this afternoon re-programming, only to begin over again at midnight. This afternoon I prepared the first lecture I was to deliver here. I had written the outline at home and the title had been announced in the Federation of Brazilian Writers. Even the *Estado de São Paulo* had published a short notice to that effect, despite the fact that during these politically pregnant weeks this most respectable journal was allergic to everything but unpleasant news about the Eastern half of Europe. With the exception of course (see my notes of March 16th on rules and their exceptions, and Brazilian exceptions to exceptions), the large advertisements for the Hungarian exhibition which had just been opened in São Paulo, and which flourished in their columns in peaceful coexistence with, for instance, cold-war articles on the oppression of the Catholics in Hungary, concocted according to cliché No. F/2/4326/1952. "Eastern and Western ideas in contemporary Hungarian literature," was the title of the lecture. I stopped at the first word. What would they mean here by Western ideas? What we associate with the West is for the Brazilians the East, or the North. But the North is also different, not only in its associations but as a physical fact. For us it means cold regions, for the Brazilians equatorial heat. I rewrote my lecture from beginning to end.

It is past midnight, and I have just started it all over again. I have come to a different continent, but is it really a different world? Well, of course it is; that is not the point. Of course you knew at home that the people, their customs and reflexes would be different, that the sky and the compass would spring surprises on you. Indeed you expected all this. But the strange feelings, the dizziness, the way you kept stopping in the street and looking back, the way you searched your brains with your eyes shut to make out where you had seen it all before; that occasional sense of another, almost Utopian world, this must spring from some other source. But what?

After the lecture we went for a walk. I want to recall the images of that stroll, to find an answer. I was invited to give the lecture at the Rua 24 de Maio in the heart of the city, where the blood-stream of traffic circulates through one-way streets. We had hardly walked five minutes before the traffic was again moving in both directions, another three and the neon street lighting had given way to dim lamps, two more and there was a man in front of a tiny steepled, porticoed house straight from one of Grimm's fairy tales, lighting a gas lamp with a long pole. How I had loved watching the gas-lighter on the Danube Embankment in Pest when I was a child; and the height of my delight came when he let me have the hook and

stretch up to give the small tap a shove and open the gas. My Brazilian friends thought it had been the little candy-box house that had sent me off into a reverie, so they took me by the arm and without changing direction, conducted me in another five minutes to a spacious square. The twin of the little doll's house was at the corner of the street which led to it, but the actual square—larger than the Hősök tere in Pest, or even than the Concorde in Paris—did not contain a single low building. Instead it was surrounded by eight or ten skyscrapers, scattered along the four sides of the square with vacant gaps between them. Not one of them was less than twenty storeys high, but they all stood separately, tall and slender; you got the impression the twentieth storey was swaying in the wind. They were a kind of vertical version of the narrow ribbon-strips of cultivation that used to be so characteristic of the Hungarian countryside. And they were horribly ugly. "Site values have risen" my friends explained. "Everybody's building upwards." A German-born Brazilian bent close to me and whispered: "*Gründerzeit gen Himmel,*" which I shall not even try and translate.

On my way here, I had bought myself a Brazilian guidebook in Paris. It was published in 1961 and said São Paulo had three million inhabitants. It added that in 1870 there were twenty thousand, and in 1900 a hundred thousand. They have now topped the five million mark Brazilians say, and with a touch of self-irony they look at their watches, wait a second, and say: "Five million and one hundred..." And remark that a house is built here every hour. It is a fantastic, contradictory and fascinating city.

From the vertical ribbon square we went back to the Place of the Republic in the centre of the city. From here, the São Paulo skyline already competes with that of New York, for these skyscrapers are newer, and if only they are fitted into a well-composed panorama, they will certainly be more beautiful. Modern Brazilian architecture vies with the Italian for world primacy, both of course taking their inspiration from Le Corbusier. Beyond the Place of the Republic a palace is just being built. (I use the word *palace* deliberately.) I watch it from my window every morning. It is like the bows of an ocean liner as you look up at them from a dinghy at sea. It has both majesty and grace.

I wanted to go and look at it then, at night, for the builders were working on it and it was brilliantly floodlit. My friends had been murmuring about an Italian restaurant for some time, but in matters of hospitality the Brazilians (and the Uruguayans and the Chileans and the Peruvians) know no peer, so they came with me. I backed away a little, to get a better view of the thirty-six-storey house. Fifty feet, then a hundred. And bumped against a wooden fence. My friends waved a hand. „This is still here."

"This" was a slum, the kind of slum you saw in the anti-capitalist pamphlets of the early nineteen hundreds. My *paulista* friends made a disparaging gesture. "That's nothing. You should see the *favelas* at Rio." (I did. You can't help seeing them.) "Let's get on to that Italian restaurant, shall we."

At dinner one of our friends looked at his watch, hurriedly got up and prepared to rush off. He had some business to see to at Rio that night. "But how will you catch a plane right now?"

"Now? They take off every half hour. There's an air-lift, didn't you know? We go by air, just as we would by train."

Someone else went one further. „Or by bus."

The impressions of the evening ended with the airport scene, for my friends finally took me out to see the air-lift.

"How do you like Brazil?" they asked. (Everyone always asked me that.) I did not reply that night, but later I found the answer. After midnight, as I mulled over with the images of the evening, I discovered the origin of my unease. In visiting Brazil you not only pass into another world, but into another era, indeed into several eras at once. Brazil is a creature born of the marriage of mythology with science fiction. Its head is in the twenty-first century, its neck in the twentieth, the body in the seventeenth.

April 1st.
Rio de Janeiro

Today was the day of the military coup. The papers call it "the revolution." In the morning the trades unions proclaimed a general strike over the radio. Everyone responded. Then they called on the people, the dwellers of the *favelas*, to march on the inner part of the city and defend the Republican Constitution and the President. The people of the *favelas* came down from the hillsides. It was a fine day so they went down to the *praia*—the beach.

I also had a swim, sunbathed a while, then went into the city. In one place some soldiers had blocked the road. Two streets further down, I got through. A handful of students scattered leaflets near the Rio Branco. Two tanks came along, and the students disappeared.

I walked for an hour and I heard no shooting. It was hot, so I went back to the *praia*, to the rest of the *cariocas*.

In the afternoon the sky became cloudy. The broadcasting stations talked of victory, each according to the party it backed.

A trunk call from Budapest: "What's happened to you in the revolution?" They were anxious. I said I had just come from the beach. The call was interrupted and they have never quite believed me since.

At about five o'clock I noticed from the window of my hotel that some boys and girls had appeared in the window of the block of flats opposite, and were throwing bits of torn-up newspaper out on the street. More and more windows, more and more improvised confetti.

I rushed down and asked the hall porter what it was all about. "Oh nothing. It's just that they're glad. It's a carnival custom in Rio."

"Yes, but what are they glad about?"

"Jango's abdicated." That was Goulart's nickname.

The "revolution" was over.

April 7th
Montevideo

I arrived at noon, yesterday. From the moment we landed I felt that the atmosphere here—in both senses of the word—would be a relief after Brazil. The air was no longer saturated with damp heat, and the tension caused by the newly triumphant junta was also absent. During my last days in Brazil—as some of the previous pages of my diary show—I was tormented by homesickness. Here it passed away. I almost felt as though I had come home. Indeed I had—home to Europe. The flavour of the air, the very colour of the sky, is different. Last night I looked up and would not have been a bit surprised to see the Great Bear.

Another thing that helped to dispel my homesickness was the sight of the first espresso machine. Brazil for all its profound contradictions, is one of the world's most wonderful countries. I was a trifle amused at the *cidade maravilhosa*, and when I first heard of the *pais do futuro* I was a little irritated. Now, looking back from beneath this clear twilight sky, I am increasingly inclined to agree. Brazil is a country of the future, and her people, particularly those outside the chalk circle of political life, are gifted, charming and upright. But they have no idea how to make coffee. It was in the world's largest coffee-producing country that I drank the worst coffee, eclipsing even the Berlin *Blümchenkaffee*.

In Montevideo they give you real Budapest coffee in small glasses. The coffee was my third acquaintance in Uruguay. The first was a gentleman in a morning coat at the airport. He came up to me, introduced himself, handed me his card and asked me to put up at the Hotel Nogaro. I was happy to be able to tell him that that had been my intention in any case. He was not at all happy, because, as he told me, this would cost him five dollars. Would I not be so kind as to say at the hotel thet I had chosen the Nogaro on his advice?

My second acquaintance was the driver of the Panair do Brasil airport car. I was the only passenger in the old eight-seater, and I felt forty years younger. That was when I had last seen this type of Chevrolet. Our feeble European intellect imagines all American cars in both the Americas as brand new. The driver explained that there was a three hundred per cent customs tariff on cars. The old cars are kept going till they disintegrate, or a new motor or chassis of the old type us smuggled in.

The driver offered to take me into the city along the *playa*, instead of taking the shorter road. And as though he had overheard my conversation with the gentleman in the morning coat and now wanted to rectify any notions I might have entertained of Uruguayan behaviour, he added that he would not charge extra for the détour but was taking me that way because it was a very beautiful route and he himself preferred it. He really did refuse to take more than the twenty peso on which we had agreed. I repaid his kindness in South American currency—with a compliment. "Your *playa* is really beautiful," I said. "Finer than the Copacabana."

It was an ideal transaction. It cost no one anything, and we both profited from it.

I drank my third acquaintance, Budapest coffee, and went for a stroll in the city. The church opposite the Nogaro, on the other side of the large square, bears a startling likeness to the Great Church in Debrecen. Otherwise the city is a mixture of Bucharest and Zürich. Reminiscent of Bucharest in the climate, the style of the early twentieth century houses, the street vendors, the baskets of fruit and roast meat stalls, and the Latin faces. Reminiscent of Zürich in the climate, the style of the early twentieth century houses, the luxurious shop windows, the Nordic faces, and above all the banks, banks, banks. In the inner city every second building is a bank, and the intervening building contains at least one money-changer or money-lender. The latter must have a hard job, for I heard this morning that even the largest banks, where gold-braided rear-admirals help the clients out of their taxis, charge an interest rate of thirty-eight per cent. Since I do not wish to borrow money from a bank, I think I shall like Montevideo.

April 10th

Lunch with Mario Benedetti. I first went to his flat in 18 de Julio. They don't use the word street here in writing or speech, either before of after the street's name. He lives on the seventh floor. From above, the city looks even more Mediterranean. Is it the colour of the tiles? Or the palm trees

stretching over the rooftops? I do not know. Perhaps it is rather the noise and bustle of the city, the smell in the air, and the uproarious laughter of Mario Benedetti. I am an incorrigible teller of funny stories but I have probably never had so grateful an audience as this young dramatist and critic, who is Italian not only in his name. He started explaining, almost excusing himself, about his double qualifications. You cannot make a living by writing plays. The theatres are good, but the audiences are small. "We are a small people." I reassured him that we also had many Janus-faced writers, and that we too were a small people.

"You? How can say that? Why, there are ten million of you!"

It was a strange feeling. We go round the world saying—with a little self-petting and rather as an excuse—that we are a small people, though at home we have lately been avoiding the expression. And now we are all of a sudden being called an elder brother by someone.

"Uruguay has thirty-three and a half million inhabitants," said Benedetti standing on the balcony of his flat, and looking out over the sea or La Plata so I should not notice the little twinkle behind his glasses.

I walked into his trap: "But I thought..."

"You were wrong. 23 million sheep, 8 million cattle and two and a half million people. Of these over a million live in Montevideo."

The country is twice the size of Hungary. There are so few people in the countryside, that if two cars meet on the highway they stop for a chat. What does if feel like to be a Uruguayan, I wondered aloud.

Benedetti thought I was continuing his joke:

"It all depends whether you belong to the two and a half million or the eight million."

We laughed. We were laughing all the time. But I told him that my question had been meant seriously. At that moment, however, the novelist Martinez Moreno arrived and Benedetti immediately fell on him.

„If I'm Janus, then what about you?" And turning to me he explained that Martinez also practised as a lawyer. He then went on to admit that he himself had yet a third job, as the employee of a insurance company.

"You have to make a living somehow."

At this they added, more to each other than to me, that I would not understand this anyway, for in our part of the world the writers lived in clover, and they were the Soviet millionaries. I did not succeed in convincing them that writers in Hungary were not State employees, that they did not receive bountiful monthly salaries, and that most of them were also Janus-faced. "But you've got some sort of fund, haven't you, that provides for you?"

There was no point in complicating matters by trying to explain the role and the activities of the Literary Fund. I remembered how irregularly I had paid my dues and what kindly but strict letters they sent me. And that they took four per cent of all my fees and royalties—over and above the tax—in return for which... well I for my part had never... No, I was sure Mario and Carlos would not understand.

They took me out to lunch on the *playa* and Martinez invited me to coffee. It was a pretty little house with a garden, next to a big park. The study was lined with books. I soon discovered the shelf of my host's works and took down a thick volume. "*Il paradon,*" we had talked of it just before, and Martinez had told me that it was the title that had most outraged the authorities: "The Firing Wall."

I had just opened the book to browse in it, when I noticed a huge, furry-legged bluish-black spider on the wall behind it, as it moved away and began climbing upwards.

"What's this?" I asked, going nearer. The two writers leapt back and Martinez started shouting: "*Maria! Maria! Una tarantella!*"

His wife ran in, a broom in her hand. We men took up defensive positions in the second line, behind the armchairs. Maria managed at the second stroke to kill the poisonous spider high up on the wall, where it left a little stain.

"*Il paradon,*" I said.

They did not laugh. Its bite can be deadly.

Martinez clutched his head. "You must not think that we always have tarantellas climbing about on our walls. We've lived here twelve years, but we've never seen one before."

Maria: "I suppose you'll go home now and write that the Uruguayan writers' houses are full of poisonous spiders."

"Of course, I won't," I said.

April 11th

This evening I delivered a lecture at the "Young Dramatists' Studio" of the *El Galpon* theatre. Galpon means a shed, explained my new friend and honorary brother Danilo Trelles, who took me over during my stay in Uruguay. In civilian life he is the commercial manager of SAS, but there are always more writers, film people, painters and musicians than air passengers in his office at Rio Branco. He is so modest that he waited until the last day, when I had practically one foot in the plane, before showing me his film, *Vidas secas*, made from the novel of the Brazilian Graciliano

Ramos. Ramos is the Brazilian Zsigmond Móricz, and the film challenges comparison with Móricz's short story, "The Barbarians," in its spare style, emotional appeal and stirring force. The fact that "The Barbarians" is not bracketed with Hemingway's "After the Storm" in the world's literary opinion, is something that does not cease to rankle with us Hungarians. Trelles too, smiled at my indignation. Galpon, as I have explained, means a shed, because that is where they first played. The Galpon is today more than a theatre. It is a movement. "Aesthetic?" I asked. "More than that, now."

By the time they had grown out of the shed, they had the whole youth of Montevideo behind them. Not just the actors, the directors, the writers and painters, but the audiences as well. They started a nation-wide collection tob uild a new theatre for it. The target sum was reached a month ago.

For the time being they are playing in a derelict, ancient movie-house and working, studying and living in some abandoned shops nearby. The environment reminded me of Joan Littlewood's theatre in London. In one of the rooms backstage they were drawing posters, in another they were filing addresses, in the third a programme leaflet was being edited for printing, in the fourth room a group was drinking coffee and eating salad, while in the place that served for a foyer some twenty young boys and girls chattered, rushed in and out, worked, did nothing in particular, and were happy.

We were shepherded into a narrow room. Seated around a long table were the Young Dramatists, including two elderly ladies and a middle-aged man. I had prepared my lecture thoroughly. I wanted to begin with present-day Hungarian audiences, the relation between audience and theatre, then to reach back to the traditions and golden age at the beginning of the century, and some of its shadier aspects. Later I intended to jump from Ferenc Molnár back to the "Tragedy of Man," I even had a good idea about the break with accepted traditions, and I was then going to talk about the organization of the Hungarian theatre, the peculiarities of the various theatres, the Village Theatre, season tickets, and so forth concluding with the repertory system.

I began and within five minutes I realised that I was boring them. I stopped. They thought I was thirsty and pured me some wine. "We're sorry, it's not Chilean." This was the first time I had heard the Chilean wines praised. I drank the local variety. "Now, what do you really want to hear about?"

They encouraged me to continue.

"What do you really want to hear about?" I insisted almost rudely.

"Not theory," answered Rolando Speranza.

"Tell us what Hungarian authors are writing," said Hugo Bolón. One of his plays ridiculed the *vie en rose*, the rose-scented dreams of young girls. I have been told it is an amusing piece, and a sad one.

There was nothing for it, I started telling them the contents of last season's Hungarian plays. "Is this what you want to hear?" Yes, that was it. But would I please tell them the ones that are about present-day Hungary? An hour later I was regretting that I had not gone to see Y.Z.'s anaemic piece at the X. theatre, because for lack of anything better, or rather when all my other material had run out, I was reduced to relating its contents. Yes, certainly, having in a brief pause for wine-drinking quickly cribbed it from the Quarterly's theatre column. And, oh, Thalia, gracious muse, do not hold it against me, but in my dire distress, necessity and vanity, I also told them the contents of the play I am now working on, carefully omitting to mention that not a single act had yet been completed.

They feverishly noted down what I was saying, and looked at each other with significant "I told you so" looks over themes which I was almost ashamed to recount. Yet even these were news to them, news of another world, a brand-new, newborn, and so far unknown world. When I sat down exhausted, they brought up more wine, olives, small fishes, *paprika*, sausages, cheese and ten kinds of salad. Who were these young people? What did they want? What did they think? As though simply continuing my interrupted conversation with Benedetti, I asked them point blank: "What is it like, being a Uruguayan?"

They were not a bit surprised at the question, but rather at the fact that I should have thought of it. For they themselves often speak of the subject. In difficult situations, I said, all small peoples search for their own identity. The English or the French would never dream of writing essays and books about "The meaning of being English". Or French. As for us, between the two Wars, and particularly during the late thirties when the German pressure and Fascist oppression began to fog our brains, we examined all the branches of Hungarian history, language, literature, ethnography, music and art in turn, seeking with scientifically punctilious, with painfully pedantic care, what being Hungarian really meant. Was there a book about this? Monsieur Verdoux, a staff member of the weekly *Marcha* with an elegant style knew Hungarian and would be happy to translate it.

"All right, I'll send it," I said. But they must understand that this was no longer a live topic in Hungary."

"Is it prohibited?"

Of course, I should have been more careful about what I said. I ought to have realized that at the back of the minds of all West Europeans and

South Americans and North Africans and Middle Easterners—and probably also of the North Americans and the Indians, but I have not been there to see—memories of the Stalin period are still predominant.

No, it was not prohibited. There were years when anyone who brought up the question would have been accused of chauvinism. Nowadays we felt we had found our place and established our identity. "But you?" I said. "How do you define yourselves? The South American Switzerland?"

They did not welcome the suggestion at all. "That's as though you had read it in the Financial Times." Then one of them said that they had no real literature, no mirror in which to recognize their own features. Another said the trouble was that they had no traditions.

"But we have," contended the third. "Take Batlle, for instance." "You call that a tradition? Why, I knew him personally." That of course is no argument. Batlle is a new tradition, and new traditions are what matter in new societies. How fortunate that Trelles had explained this Batlle business to me at our very first lunch. And how fortunate that we had had an István Széchenyi a century earlier; it made it easy to understand a man who set out to travel and see things and learn everything was newest, best and most useful for his backward people. Then he came home and entered politics. So far the parallel is perfect. Széchenyi failed, though some of his reforms did not. Batlle was elected President of the Republic, and was able to carry out his reforms. He introduced social insurance, workers' pensions, and collective agreements, almost before the workers had demanded them.

Danilo Trelles argued that the lack of traditional values was the main trouble. Indeed, he has written an essay on the subject: "*Una cultura sin valores tradicionales.*" They had it somewhere there in a drawer. They found it and handed it to me.

I thumbed through it, while they went on among themselves with their eternal argument. At last it seemed, they had reached agreement. Speranza was their spokesman:

"We are the critics of the critics."

Arrival at Santiago and into Chilean Politics

April 19th
Santiago de Chile

I set off from home without a typewriter and for the fifth week in succession this has been annoying me. I was at last able to borrow one today and it has got almost all the Hungarian letters, they are moreover *mas o me-*

nos in their right places. These three words are *more or less* the most important ones in any South American country. They are woven once or twice into every sentence. "*Parlez vous français?*" I ask a new acquaintance. "*Mas o menos,*" he replies, and I then know that he can stammer a couple of sentences at the most. I thereupon ask him *mas o menos* politely to talk Spanish, for if it is not spoken too fast I can *mas o menos* understand what is being said.

There is also a fourth word of extreme importance: *mañana,* tomorrow. This by no means implies the day following today. If someone said to me in Brazil: "My dearest friend, this is the happiest day of my life, at last I have made your acquaintance, do come and have dinner with us tomorrow, I'll ring you," I could perfectly safely go off to another city, for I knew that the happy new friend would not ring me and would not dream of inviting me to dinner. And most important of all, he also knew that I knew. However, two or three days later he would call for me at the hotel, take me home and treat me to a feast that still makes my liver ache when I recall it.

I have only been here thirty-six hours, but I have already come to know lots of people, and strange as it may sound, I feel I have already made some friends. This is Chile.

The flight over the Andes was unbelievably beautiful. We flew over a fifteen-thousand-foot mountain range. There was snow on the peaks, but elsewhere not a blade of grass or a solitary bush to be seen, the slopes were as bare as an egg. This reminded me—for I had plenty of time for my mind to wander—that the Italian expression for picking faults was "to look for the hairs on an egg." I wondered whether there was any English, French or German equivalent, but none came to mind. The mountains are a brownish red, and from above they really look just like the relief maps of physical geography at school.

Once over the Andes the plane descended so rapidly that for a moment I suspected something was wrong. We landed on a plateau—eighteen hundred feet high, the pilot said. This was Santiago.

We got into the world's most wonderful taxi, the one at Montevideo was nothing compared to this. Both the back windows were cracked, the boot could not be closed, and one of the doors would not open. Forty years ago it was probably grey, but now it is the colour of dung. The chauffeur drove like a madman. Like any South American with a car.

The road to the city illustrated Latin America's social and political problems. After six or seven miles of nomad hovels, wooden shanties, crowded hutments and sordid filth, we suddenly, without any transition, found ourselves among a host of cars all very much younger than my cab,

in a world of luxury, skyscrapers, opulent shopwindows, well-dressed people and modern buildings. Not that much of the latter could be seen, for they were pasted, hung and daubed all over with election slogans, posters and banners. By the time I reached the hotel I had learnt—willy-nilly, unless I was to keep my eyes shut—that there were four candidates: Allende, Frei, Durán and Prat. The friend who fetched me and the taxi driver agreed that Durán and Prat did not count and that the real contest would take place between Allende and Frei.

The odd thing was that the posters of both candidages carried *mas o menos* the same slogans and demands: land reform, a halt to inflation, the elimination of illiterary, the construction of schools, and hospitals, the control of foreign capital, and so forth. "Where's the difference?" I asked. The driver and my friend put in some elaborate Chilean-Hungarian teamwork together to explain that Allende was backed by the Left wing and therefore sincerely desired the reforms, while Frei was supported by the Right, so that though Frei himself might genuinely want his social and economic reforms, his backers didn't. We had come to a halt in front of the hotel but my two companions were still involved in a heated exchange of opinions. "When are the elections? Next Sunday?" I asked. They stared at me. "In four months' time, on September 4th. Don't you even know that?"

Since then—and I have been in Chile one day now—I have found out that the Frei-Allende formula with which I was furnished is very simple, but not quite correct. Frei is himself a member of the opposition—he is a Christian Democrat, while at present a Radical-Conservative-Liberal coalition government is in power. Or rather I should say, in office. For the real wielders of power, whom I shall call the oligarchs for short, have recognized that the present coalition is bankrupt, and that if they back it Allende is certain to be elected. This is why they have united to back Frei. (These pages of my diary—the precursors to a very voluminous book that will need the Lord knows how much study before I can write it—were of course, written several months ago, long before their publication in the present number of the Quarterly. Now the Chilean presidential elections are over. Although I was in favour of Allende, I am watching the news from Chile attentively to see whether Frei does in fact carry out one or two of his plans for reform.)

The Hotel Crillon is exactly like the one in the film "*L'année dernière à Marienbad.*" There are vast corridors, delicate French etchings on the walls, double doors and a bad lift. When I arrived it turned out that the President of the Chilean Writers' Association and a three-man delegation had been waiting for me at the airport, but we had missed each other. They soon arriv-

ed, and the President, the novelist Guilermo Atias, told me that the dates of two of my lectures had already been fixed. On Tuesday there was to be "Eastern and Western trends", etc., and on Thursday a *mesa rotonda*, questions and answers with impromptu discussion, both at the Writers' Association. And now we were to stop talking and get going to the Cuban Embassy, where there was a cocktail party and I had also been invited. I could hardly induce them to let me change and have a shave. At last they allowed themselves to be persuaded and then I waited for them for forty minutes in the street, because cars may only stop for a moment outside the hotel. On the other hand they did telephone in the meanwhile to Pablo Neruda at the Isla Negra, and he invited me to lunch on Wednesday.

A Day on the Isla Negra

April 23rd

It is past midnight, and I have just come home from Neruda. The Pacific is not really so very far away. Once you have got to Chile, it is only as far from Santiago as Lake Balaton is from Budapest. I was in fact taken down there one morning in much the same way as we usually take our own guests —to see the Balaton and a poet at one go. The poet by Lake Balaton is of course Gyula Illyés, while by the Pacific it is Pablo Neruda.

Isla Negra means Black Island. I had expected that at the end of our journey we would board a ship or drive the car on to a ferry, and then land on the poet's Black Island. When we had motored for a couple of hours. I began stretching my neck to see where the ocean was. I imagined something so vast as to exhaust the eye—so awesome as to make the heart beat faster. I somehow thought that one quarter of our globe's surface would now appear before me. I also wondered how many Hungarian travellers there had been before me, who had come from our oceanless land, all the way to these great waters. Not even the Ocean of which Ady had dreamt, but the Sea of Seas, the largest and most majestic of them all. Now, all of a sudden I felt, for the first time on my journey, how very far I was from home.

I was not only travelling to a poet, but with poets. Thiago de Melho, a Brazilian poet, now living in Chile, seemed to realize why I was so silent. "Don't expect too much. You'll be disillusioned at first. I also was, when. . ." I was never to know what he wanted to tell me—about his first glimpse of the ocean or his first disillusionment, for his wife, who was driving the car, suddenly jammed on the brakes and stopped. "Here she is", she remarked familiarly. "*La Pacifique.*" I jumped out of the car. A huge poster

of the Chilean version of the French Citroen car, the "Citroneta" the "lemonette" obscured the view. Thiago promptly stationed his wife in front of my camera. "She'll make the ocean look better."

Anamaria, a stage director and herself also a poet, is a pleasant travelling companion and a lovely woman, but even with her as the foreground I did not feel what I had expected to feel at the sight of the largest ocean in the world—the breath of power, the howling wind of grandeur, the inspiration of majesty. I had still to wait for these, I found them in the vicinity of the poet, for Neruda has selected a point on the Pacific Coast which is both dramatic and idyllic, wild and caressing at the same time. Just like Pablo Neruda's poetry.

The Isla Negra is not a real island, but merely an angry, barren cluster of black cliffs on the ocean shore. A herd of petrified buffaloes. It was after their blackness that the little bay was named, where the poet built his house after returning from exile.

The great surge of the ocean is checked by the bay, and it is there, at the moment of impact, that it can be seen in all its savage power. One of the poet's windows opens on infinity. I cannot recapture the image, of which he has written a hundred and a thousand times in his verse, recalling the "green rustle" of Chile's "ocean robes". But from his other window the view opens out on to the far side of the broad bay, and it was in this finite space, where sky and sea meet, that I really sensed the grandeur of the Pacific Ocean.

Pablo Neruda himself calls his seaside home his "finest poem." There is a measure of mock-modesty about this, but also a deal of truth. Part of the building rests on wooden piles like the Polynesian islanders' homes. In front there is a belfry so that Neruda's wife Matilda can call a multitude of guests to dinner, for the house is always full of people. Matilda asked me to excuse them, her husband was inside, he must finish his translation of Romeo and Juliet, would we care to look over the house first, he would be with us immediately. Romeo and Juliet? This was rather a surprise, for only yesterday I had attended a Romeo rehearsal at a Santiago theatre. The translator? Neruda. What they had failed to tell me was that he had not yet completed Act V. But he would, they were certain, for the theatre planned to stage the *première* in July, on the poet's sixtieth birthday.

The fact is that though Neruda is not merely the "poet laureate," *the* national poet of Chile, but undoubtedly a national hero as well, poetry there does not, as I learned to my great astonishment, consist of Neruda alone. He does not rise unexpectedly from a kind of flat literary pampas, but rather from a dense literary forest. As Matilda rang the bell to summon

the other guests, I had to admit to myself that my previous image of Neruda, and indeed his image in the eyes of his Hungarian readership generally, I believe, was incorrect. And this is by no means the fault of György Somlyó, Neruda's inspired and worthy Hungarian translator, but of the first poems of his to be translated into Hungarian, which presented only the poet-agitator and hid from our view the poet-poet.

But here he was, coming out of his house. He received me with a broad smile. I had not seen him for four years, but he was not a bit older. He fetched me in and poured some wine. We had brought him luck, for just two minutes earlier he had finished the last lines of Act V—the Prince's words. And he went on to declaim them in English and Spanish:

> Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished:
> For never was a story of more woe
> Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

Cheers, cheers, and we drank the wine. It is a wonderful home. It contains all Chile and the Pacific Ocean. Neruda collects nautical souvenirs. On the table there are old navigating instruments, and on the wall the figurehead of two hundred year-old sailing ship. The weather outside had turned cloudy and the sea angry, while inside the two-hundred-year-old carved image of a woman from a long sunk frigate glowed white and triumphant.

In the middle of the long, narrow table lay a small book bound in red silk. I knew it, it was the Hungarian version of Neruda's "Hundred Love Sonnets," also, of course, translated by György Somlyó, with drawings by Endre Szász, published by the Hungarian Helikon Publishers. I thanked Neruda for his attentiveness in honouring a Hungarian guest by putting a Hungarian volume in the most conspicuous place in his home. Both Pablo and Matilda protested together. That was the permanent place of the volume. This was the favourite among all Neruda's books, and of all the editions of his works it was this Hungarian one that he liked best.

I took it from its place and turned over the pages. Thiago de Melho, half in joke, wondered how Neruda's sonnets sounded in Hungarian, and began reading one of them. Neruda took the book from him and handed it back to me. Would I read him from it, he had not yet heard his sonnets read in Hungarian. I agreed, because it is these that I like best of all Neruda's poems. Particularly the forty-fourth. So I began reading it:

> *Tudd meg, hogy nem szeretlek és szeretlek,*
> *mivelhogy ilyen kettős az élet,*

a szó csupán egyik szárnya a csendnek,
a tűzben mindig ott egy rész hidegség.

After the first stanze I looked up for a moment. The poet and his wife had drawn closer to each other. The glance of my fellow-guests asked which sonnet this could be. Everyone knew—by now I also did—that Pablo had written the hundred love sonnets to Matilda, well past the Romeo age, some ten or twelve years ago. I went on:

Szeretlek, hogy kezdhesselek szeretni,
hogy a végtelent mindig újrakezdjem,
s hogy soha meg ne szünjelek szeretni,
azért van az, hogy néha nem szeretlek.

"The forty-fourth", whispered Neruda. The word *szeretlek* ("I love you"), occurs often here, and the poet knew the Hungarian word. He put his arm round Matilda. I continued reading:

Szeretlek, s nem szeretlek, mintha mindig
a boldogság kulcsát s egy ismeretlen
balsors esélyét tartanám kezemben.

Szeretlek hát kétéltű szerelemmel.
Ezért szeretlek, mikor nem szeretlek,
*s ezért szeretlek, amikor szeretlek.**

It is a very beautiful poem and Somlyó's translation is a masterpiece. I looked up from the book and saw that Matilda's eyes were moist, and the poet also turned away, then rested his head on his wife's shoulder, lost in reflection. The memories aroused in Hungarian of the hour when the poem was born had moved both of them.

As I said, the Pacific Ocean is not really so far from us.

Neruda linked his arm in mine and took me out in the garden. The sun was shining again. He looked round. What was he looking for? We went

* SABRAS que no te amo y que te amo
puesto que de dos modos es la vida,
la palabra es un ala del silencio,
el fuego tiene una mitad de frío.

Te amo y no te amo como si tuviera
en mis manos las llaves de la dicha
y un incierto destino desdichado.

Yo te amo para comenzar a amarte,
para recomenzar el infinito
y para no dejar de amarte nunca:
por eso no te amo todavía.

Mi amor tiene dos vidas para amarte.
Por eso te amo cuando no te amo
y por eso te amo cuando te amo.

in again. He gave me a jasper pebble that Matilda had found on the beach as a souvenir for Somlyó—it would make a fine tag for the ignition key of his car. I was given two small agates for cuff-links. Then he seemed to have found what he had really been looking for. He pointed up at the lintel of the door to the drawing-room. I had fallen in love at first sight with this wonderful unicorn's horn. It was just like the horn of the mythical creature in the best-known painting of the Christian Museum at Esztergom—the one that the golden-haired girl clad in red velvet sadly and lovingly embraces. The fifteenth century picture is—for reasons that only Freud could explain—called the "Allegory of Virginity", and is by the Master of the Paris Legend which is in Baltimore.

My astonishment knew no bounds, for I had never believed that unicorns really existed or that they had such delicate, twisted, four-foot long horns as the one in the painting, or this one here over the lintel. Neruda laughed. "No, there never has been such a creature on earth, but there are still some in the water!" One of these "fish-unicorn," had been caught at Copenhagen, and he had bought its horn. Now this too, was to be a present to Somlyó and me. I thanked him for it and asked for permission to leave it in his care for the next ninety-nine years, all the more so as I was to travel over half the world before I went home, and really, how could a unicorn's horn be transported by jet airliner?

We talked of the Ocean, of its wonders, its stones and its beasts. The most Chilean of all, said Guilermo Atias, is the Trauco. Had I not heard of it? Interrupting one another, they hastened to explain. The Trauco is the son of the Pacific Ocean and he emerges from the sea on moonlit nights, complete with spurs, but with no head. In place of his head he carries the mysterious plants of the sea. The Trauco makes the rounds of the fishermen, rewards the poor, sets fire to the houses of the wicked rich, leads the girls a dance, then returns to the sea. If a girl becomes pregnant and no one knows who the father is, they say it was the Trauco.

Could it be that the Trauco is not confined to the shores of the Pacific?

Santiapest

April 27th

This is my last day in Chile. I have become very fond of this city, of the people, the atmosphere, the integrity and loyal friendship of the men, the charm and wit of the women, the variety and light power of the wines. I have last night's to thank for the mood in which I coined a new word:

Santiapest. The beginning is Chilean, the end Hungarian. Santiago is terribly reminiscent of Budapest. Not the city itself, nor its buildings, though some of these also were a surprise. There are many Baroque churches in Chile, just as everywhere in Latin America, and also in Hungary. In Latin America because there could have been no other churches prior to the sixteenth century; in Hungary there were others, but they had mostly been destroyed by the Turks and by the time new ones were built, the Baroque was the prevailing style. The highly ornate Spanish-American Baroque is however, very different from the Hungarian, which is akin to the Austrian school, but still more sober and austere. Nevertheless I did discover the first cousin of the Budapest University Church in Santiago.

Both Santiago and Budapest have two million inhabitants, yet both have preserved much of the small-town atmosphere. Everyone knows everyone else. In London or São Paulo, in the great metropolitan cities, I would have to explain what I meant, but in Budapest and Santiago everyone knows that this does not mean that the one million knows the other million, but that within one trade, one line of work or profession everyone knows about all the rest. I always think it is this that makes life bearable in big cities, it is the one means of escape from complete alienation. Without close human links, intimacy, friendship, mutual concern and trust, the soul dries up. We love Budapest because despite the constant—and often exaggerated—talk of intrigue and cabals, we know about each other, we know that there are people who can count on us whatever happens, and that we too will always find a hand outstretched to help.

This close-knit texture has its drawbacks as in Budapest. If everyone knows everyone else, then everybody also knows everything about everyone else. Not only what they are writing if they are authors, or what part they are to play if they are actors, how popular they are among their patients if they are doctors, or how they like the new machines if they are workers, or how they like their bosses if they are white-collar employees, but also whether they are happy or miserable in their married lives, whether their marriage looks like lasting or not, whether there is a third person on the horizon, and so forth. I am, of course, talking of Santiago. Naturally.

The most pleasant thing about Santiapest is the atmosphere. The Chileans love a joke, or a piece of friendly leg-pulling. They are even quicker to adopt the familiar second person than the Hungarians. They drink wine. They visit each other of an evening. And for lunch. And coffee. And tea. Often for the whole lot together. I was invited for lunch to Julio Alegria's. After drinking my coffee I rose to take my leave. Surely I could'nt mean it? There was the nursery, they had prepared the divan, I was to lie down

for a bit. No excuses, the host would be doing the same. I lay down and had a nap. It was grand. "But now I really must. . ." "Oh, but you mustn't." We drank some tea to wake us up, then a little wine. We talked and they sang folksongs and I sang folksongs. After dinner the other guest, Francesco Coloane, told tales from the Tierra del Fuego. Coloane is a writer, somewhat like our Péter Veres and a little like Sándor Weöres. I particularly liked one of his Tierra del Fugan tales, which is also the appears on the frontispiece of one of his novels. Here is its skeleton.

One spring the whale married the ocean wind. They lived happily together. Their love begot the nightingale. I told you, didn't I, it was a mixture of Péter Veres and Sándor Weöres, as you can see.

That same evening, by way of a farewell from Chile, I met the Trauco. Having left Julio Alegria I still had an after-dinner invitation, to meet some young musicians and graphic artists. Arturo Gonzales played Bach wonderfully on a guitar, Santos Chavez showed me his harsh and strange wood-cuts, and a quite young artist called Guilermo Deisler presented me with some coloured lino-cuts and a wood-cut of the Trauco.

Having a Rarity Value in Peru

April 28th
Lima

In Chile the weather was delightful in the daytime with just a little autumnal edge on it in the evenings, rather like our mid-Septembers. When I set out for the Santiago airport at dawn today, I put on an overcoat for the first time during my South American journey. Four hours later the Air France liner landed at Lima in sultry summer heat. Here we are closer to the Equator and the Humboldt Stream.

What amounted to a deputation came to meet me at the airport. Beside the writers it was made up mainly of the professors of my host, the 425-year-old San Marco University of Lima. I was overwhelmed, it was really immensely kind of them. It is true they are certainly unbeatable in their hospitality, but some of my elation vanished when they told me later, during lunch, and after the third *pisco*—which is a brandy made from remains of the grape and lemon added, half joking and half ashamed, that they had come to the airport not merely for hospitality's sake, but also out of curiosity and concern. Curiosity, because in Peru I had a rarity value—I was the first Hungarian who had been permitted to enter. The concern stemmed from the same source—would I really be allowed to leave the airport for the city?

They themselves had obtained the visa for me, the professors, writers and deputies had signed a petition to the President of the Republic personally, and their interest had not been so much in me personally as in a lecturer from Hungary. And so they had come out to the airport lest after all this they should have to intervene again. It's did not prove necessary, the officials showed exemplary courtesy, merely passing my passport from hand to hand like butterfly collectors when they see a rare specimen which they have heard about but never actually seen.

At lunch I thought the concern of my friends had been a little exaggerated, and that they were only pulling my leg under the influence of their *piscos*. (It is a fearful drink. You toss it down like lemonade, even the third does not bowl you over like the more barbarian spirits, but all its potency goes to your head and sets every single cell of your grey matter a tingle.) But when later I saw the police patrolling the streets in pairs during the daytime and with Alsatians at night, wearing old Prussian-style uniforms to boot, when I sensed the suppressed but highly charged tension between the possessors of power and the population of this improbably beautiful country, I was no longer surprised. The tragic football match the week after my visit had nothing much to do with football; it was precipitated by mutual fear, suspicion and hate.

All that time I knew little of all this, for I had not seen much more of Lima than a provincial airfield like the one at Miskolc, and a restaurant like Gundel's in Budapest. After lunch the whole delegation escorted me to the hotel. There, from the entrance, I could not see anything unusual either. Here was a crowded little town, with the traffic of a large city.

"Oh no, this is not the real thing," said my hosts. "Let's go a couple of streets further. Now, what do you say to this?" Old Lima is full of these lovely carved, closed galleries; they are a Spanish heritage of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

I liked them very much. I wanted to see some more. "No," they said, "Not now. In three days time, when you come back here, yes. Now you'd better rest and get some sleep, for at dawn tomorrow you are off to Cuzco and Machu-Picchu." Of Cuzco I knew that this had been the capital of the Inca Empire, but as for Machu-Picchu, I had so far only managed to note the name of the place. My friends stared at me, exchanged surreptitious looks, and for a while said nothing. I know this kind of silence. We do the same when a foreign guest admits that yes, he has heard of Petőfi, but this Attila, was he a poet or a barbarian king? Then we too, take a deep breath and start explaining, just as my Peruvian friend did: "Cuzco is the Florence of South America, the finest town of the

Spanish renaissance, with a three hundred-year-old University where instruction is also in the language of the former Incas, now Quechua Indians. And Machu-Picchu! This was where the Incas retreated from Pissarro's predatory conquistadores, deep into the primeval forest, where they built a holy and intellectual city," he said. "Holy and intellectual?" I echoed in amazement.

My friend Ernesto, who was my number one host, cut the explanations short. "I've told you you'll be flying there at dawn tomorrow. You'll understand everything once you see it. It's the top of the world!"

"Five Million Beggars"

April 29th,
Cuzco

They organized everything. They had me called at five o'clock in the morning, a car came for me at half-past, and by six I was out on the Lima airfield, looking dubiously at a winged contraption of the sort I had last seen in Harold Lloyd's films. I think the wings were gummed together with adhesive tape. This was the thing that was to take me to Cuzco. Many other people boarded it. "The top of the world," I recalled, so I followed after them. We spent just under three hours pitching and tossing over sixteen thousand-foot mountain ranges, with oxygen inhalers in our mouths, for the cabin of this venerable craft had not been fitted with pressurizing equipment. Finally we landed at Cuzco and I staggered on to the ground. I was not yet at the top of the world, but almost—at an altitude of nearly twelve thousand feet. The air was diamond sharp and rare enough to burst one's lungs. When they handed us our keys at the hotel they asked everyone to lie down for an hour or two, because you have to rest at this height.

I felt an intense pressure on my brain, a tight hoop round my chest, but I was too impatient to wait longer than half an hour. I had already been struck by the scene in the square outside the hotel when I arrived—the proud and angry look of the young Indian girl under her old man's hat, the Italian familiarity of the street vendors, the church spires and street fountains all attracted me too much for me to stay in my room.

The porter handed me the hotel card. "If you happen to be taken ill on the street, sir, they'll know where to bring you home." Even hospitality can be overdone, I thought, but I did not throw the address away. Out in the street I really did feel as though I was walking under water.

The people here have become used to it, and the Indians walk about the

town with huge bundles on their backs and baskets on their arms. I photographed one family, a father, mother and child. The man stood to one side when I wanted to take another closer up, but the woman and child did not protest. Quite the contrary. Which applies not only to their friendly smiles, but also to the gesture that followed. They stretched out their hands and said "*Un sol.*" One Sun, for that is the beautiful name of the Peruvian currency which is worth about as much compared to the dollar as the Hungarian forint. I told the woman how I admired the man's hat she was wearing of snow-white Panama straw. They were glad I liked it. They had just bought it. The old hat would do for the man; he did not need this fine, expensive white straw.

The Indian women all wear men's hats, but not all the same kind. Some have flat tops, some narrow brims, others are broad-brimmed, and there are some that are tall, smooth and stiff like a top-hat.

Just then an old woman came walking past, in an ancient, shabby, greyish man's hat. I pointed at it. "And what about her?"

"She's a beggar," said Jorge, the young Cook's guide.

"In actual fact they're all beggars." This was no longer Jorge's peaking; it was a Cuzco University student later in the afternoon. "There are five million beggars in Peru." I gave a start at this. Had they never heard or read of the fact that before the Liberation and the land reform we in Hungary had talked of "three million beggars" when we wrote or spoke of the Hungarian agricultural proletariat? No, they had never heard it.

Then I knew why I felt so strangely and oppressively at home in Peru. As though I had returned to somewhere in my youth, to twentieth century Hungarian feudalism. In Chile I felt young and a little irresponsible. In Peru I felt young and very responsible. In Chile, in Santiapest, I had lived among the writers and artists, enjoying lots of hospitality, having grand chats, saving the world, and in the meanwhile sipping good wines and paying compliments to pretty women, just as I had done as a young gentleman in Budapest. In Peru, where I was always meeting peasants, seeing their misery, prying into their conditions of life, pondering over their future with my friends, feeling a responsibility for their lives and their children and wanting to let the world know about them, I lived as I had done long ago when I was studying village conditions in the Hungarian countryside.

What a parallel, at a distance of thirty years! The young people at Cuzco described how they also went out into the villages and the gendarmes watched them, drove them away, and occasionally beat them up, while those whose lives they wanted to describe in order to change their lot

received them with suspicion, for to them they were townspeople and "gentlefolk." They too, had worked out how much a Peruvian peasant can spend per day—20 centavos for each member of his family, and this figure again bears a haunting resemblance to the discovery we made in our time, that the three million landless or almost landless Hungarian agricultural proletarians had 14–16 fillér a day to spend. The reason why I had only seen women in the town had been because the men were working on the land—other people's land. Their day's wages were one sol. The exchange rate of the dollar is twenty sols. In Lima the cheapest dinner in a shanty cook-shop costs 12 sol. A piece of fish in the market is five sols. The fried *paprika* at the street stall in Cuzco cost one sol. A day's wages. And please do not write down our names, not even our initials, said the Cuzco students.

The tension in the country is even greater than it was in Hungary before the land reform, for the world has advanced by a generation since that time. Belaúnde, the President of the Republic is an enlightened man with democratic leanings, but the real power is in the hands of two hundred families. These live in an atmosphere of luxury compared to which Prince Festetich of Keszthely was no more than a drab petty-bourgeois.

In the main square of Cuzco I began to understand my friend Ernesto's enthusiasm for this ancient town. The construction of the Cathedral was begun in the year when the Turks occupied Buda. The arcades and galleries of the Town Hall are only a hundred years younger. Some of the monastery courtyards would indeed be perfectly in place in Florence. The town of a hundred thousand inhabitants has forty-two old churches. I admired the ornaments carved in marble. But these could never be found in Florence, or in any other part of the world, for elements of ancient Inca patterns have here been blended with motifs of the European renaissance. The iron fittings of the church doors indicate that God's house also served as a stronghold, as was the case with some of our churches, at Sajószentpéter for instance. I rattled the delicately wrought knockers, photographed the spires and walked the rounds of the cloisters, all masterpieces of the Spanish art that flourished after the conquest. My friends hurried me on, which was no easy task since I had to stop after every step to take a breather. Finally, exhausted, I asked them to have mercy on me. They put me to bed for an hour, then we set out to see the remains of Inca art, which is even more ancient and more interesting than the Spanish monuments.

The sanctuary of the Church of St. Dominic was built of huge, uniform, dark-grey granite blocks. This had also been the site of the temple of the Inca Sun-god. They showed me an Inca street that has been preserved intact, and the famous dodecagonal stones of which it is built. The Inca

architects used stone blocks carved not into the usual quadrilateral shapes, but with twelve sides, the better to resist the frequent earthquakes.

The enormous dodecagonal stones seemed all of a sudden to have become minute when I was taken to the outskirts of the town, to the Sacseihuamen fort. The last time I felt myself so small and mankind so big was in Egypt, under the Pyramids.

"Interesting," said my friend V., "to hear you mention the Pyramids. The quantity of stone which the Incas built into the Sacseihuamen is the same as that which the Pharaohs built into the Khufu Pyramid. And it was brought from just as far, on the same sort of roller platforms as the Egyptians used."

On the Top of the World

April 29th
Machu-Picchu

It was a strange and unusual day, full of excitement. I cannot describe in this travel diary even a hundredth part of what I have seen, nor the wonder evoked by the most sublime scenery in the world. The half-day's journey in itself, from early morning till late in the forenoon, was a great and thrilling experience. The station steps were packed with women as early as five a.m, Indians carrying packs were even sitting on top of the railway carriages. There was a Diesel train too, consisting of one carriage, including the engine. A policeman stood beside it and a conductor wearing white gloves. This car was for us-tourists bound for the Holy City.

As our train pulled out, the conductor pointed up the perpendicular side of a nearby mountain. "We're going up there", he said. We all laughed. These Peruvians have a sense of humour. Having arrived at the foot of the mountain, our single Diesel started to climb, to the knees of the huge mountain—and stopped. It had been no joke of the conductor's. We did climb that mountain—not along a curving track, but rather by a series of sharp zig-zag courses. The engine-driver was on the rear platform of the car. From there he backed her up the mountain wall, half vertically for about one mile. There was another stop. He ran to the front platform, and drove her straight up the next stretch of the way. And that's how the car reached the summit, zig-zagging all the way. For a time we watched him manoeuvre, then we looked at the view, but after an hour had passed we began to feel extraordinarily languid. The conductor encouraged us to relax. He told the ladies that they had better disappear and loosen whatever they had to loosen.

We followed his advice. Indeed, we had had some difficulty with our breathing even at Cuzco, for lack of oxygen. But the strenuously climbing little car worked her way up to a height of sixteen hundred feet. We were higher than the peak of Mont Blanc. All at once I longed for the primitive oxygen nipple which had been thrust into our mouths on board the ramshackle plane on our way here. But the railway was not equipped with things like that. I felt an urge to let my tongue hang out like my *puli* dog does when he is short of breath.

I gathered a little energy however, and managed to take snapshots from the window. The little train followed its meandering course among snow-capped peaks. Suddenly we felt its nose tilt downwards—we were about to descend. In a couple of minutes we were "down," at an altitude of thirteen hundred feet. The mountain sides were still barren, but fairly soon junipers, dwarf pines, then pines and beeches came into view. It was like travelling among the Mátra hills at home. In half an hour the vegetation became denser, strange red wild flowers reared their heads among the ferns, then a forest of blue gum-trees loomed up before us, marking the border-line of the tropical zone. Within one hour the whole flora of our globe, from the Arctic zone to the tropics, had passed before our compartment window. By the time the train arrived at the valley, the heat was 40 centigrade, more than 100 F. I guess, and we could see from the window the palms, lianas, shrubs and swinging orchids of an impenetrable jungle.

On the other side of the railway line we had been accompanied all the way by the Urubamba, a mountain torrent falling with the speed of a racing car. On the mountain slopes, at an altitude inconceivable to the mind, I saw ruins of castles, of watch-towers, and even scattered strip cultivation.

At last our Diesel car came to a stop between mountain walls more than ten thousand feet high, at the station of Machu Picchu. Indian children rushed towards us, selling Coca-Cola which—O horror of horrors—is called Inca-Cola here... It is a greenish, sourish liquid, but we gulped it down like nectar after the tiring journey.

Here they made us board a small bus which soon set off uphill. She ran up the mountain at an average speed of forty miles an hour, taking the hairpin bends at a speed and slide to be envied by any ski champion.

On a small *mesa*, at an altitude of five thousand five hundred feet, archaeologist guides received us. Each of them had a couple of thick sticks in his hand. I said no thank you to them, I could still do a little bit of climbing unaided. "These are not for climbing," they explained, "but against poisonous snakes."

That is how I climbed, leaning on a stick, up to the gate of Machu Picchu. There the most sublime sight in the world—it is the only expression I can use and I insist on it—unfolded itself to my wondering eyes. And I don't think I am exaggerating. As luck has it, during the last few years I have been able to feast my eyes on the Acropolis in Athens in all its white August glory. I have seen the ruins of the Roman Forum and the Colosseum. I have seen Baalbek in the Lebanon—so dear to us from the painting by Csontváry. But they cannot compare with Machu Picchu, the Holy City of the Incas. Architecturally it competes with them; where it surpasses them all is in the harmony of all three elements—man's creation, nature's creation, and the over-arching sky. The sun was shining with a thin but clear white light; all around us stood up sugar-loaf peaks eighteen thousand odd feet high, attracting our marvelling eyes and spellbound hearts.

And there, on the flattened plateau of a sugar-loaf peak, surrounded by giant mountains, we caught sight of the City before us. Its houses were carved from white limestone gleaming like marble, each one of them shining separately. In the encyclopaedias I had read that it was a ruined city—a South American Pompei. He who wrote that never saw it. Pompei is interesting, but it depressed me: there were only ruins there and the foundations of the houses. Here practically every house is intact; the Incas built with greater skill than the Romans.

On our way back the bus-driver began to sing. I listened to his songs—how familiar they sounded to me, as though I were hearing the melancholy melodies of Hungarian songs "At the foot of the Csitár mountains..." ..."I set out a long, long way." The songs of the *quechua* Indians are also pentatonic, like Hungarian folksongs. I spent the evening in the bus-driver's home. There I was, sitting in his "clean room", writing, writing, writing, by the light of a paraffin lamp, as I had done thirty years ago at Ostfyasszonyfalva.

A Morning in Mexico

Mexico, May 5

The plane was scheduled to start an hour after midnight and, to my great joy, more people saw me off at the airport than had received me. It was not curiosity that brought them here but hospitality. Friendship, in fact. In haste, we drank another round of whiskies to commemorate the evening when, after my lecture at the University, we had founded the Peruvian-Hungarian Cultural Institute. P. had written the minutes of the "constitut-

ing meeting" on the back of the bill of fare "with the purpose of establishing cultural relations between Peru and Hungary based on the appreciation of the universal character of all creative intellectual and artistic development".

From the Foot to the Head of the Feathered Serpent

May 9th
Mexico D. F.

I met the Feathered Serpent in two pieces. It was his foot I saw first, in the garden of the National Museum of Mexico City, and a formidable foot it was. I saw his head at a distance of thirty miles in Teotihuacán, the City of the Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon.

Huitzilipochtli was the favourite and most frequently represented God of the Aztecs, the God of the West, and as such he had brought them much evil. But towards me, his Western admirer, he behaved very graciously.

While I made my pilgrimage from his foot to his head, he showed me a bit of Mexico from the inside. Maybe he was helped a little in this task by Autolacoatl, the Moving Serpent, the God of the Automobiles, unknown to the happy Aztecs because we had invented him together, the professor from Mexico University who was taking me there and myself, half in irritation, half in fun. He is a very handsome God: he has three heads, those of a serpent, a hare and a jaguar.

God Autolacoatl was born in our minds when the engine of my friend's car began to sputter right at the outset of our journey. In the town of Acolmán it broke down and could not be started again. My friend, uttering Aztec curses, kept saying "Chalchiutlicue"—this incidentally being the name of a goddess, the Water goddess, meaning She of the Bejewelled Skirt —and proceeded to look for a *taller mecánico*, a repair garage, while his wife took me along to the localmuseum.

At the entrance she gave a laugh. We were standing before a statue. "Look at her," she said. "This is Chalchiutlicue, the Water Goddess." I greeted her with respect, and then we went on into the museum. "I will show you the oldest infant in the world" said my friend's wife. It was a queer, appalling head carved in white limestone and adorned with jade. Archaeologists call it the Baby Face of Mexico. It is 2,500 years old. Unknown people had left it here, buried deep in the bowels of the earth under the dust, the broken shards and stones of the cultures of five or six other peoples, as a last memory of themselves.

By the Baby Face the wife of my friend was greeted by an acquaintance. He was taller than any Mexican I had seen till then. I noticed a crowd of children squeezing their way behind him. He was the headmaster of the Acolmán school "*Señor,*" he said to me, "believe me. The Mexicans are the most wonderful people. They thirst for schooling." His enthusiasm appealed to me, so I did not want to discourage him by saying that all peoples are wonderful and all people thirst for education. But I could not have answered, anyway, because he went on to tell my friend's wife-who kept on nodding, for she must have heard the story many times over—that he hailed from the distant province of Tlaxola where he began his teacher's—I almost wrote tleacher's—career. A few years ago, at the election of the Governor, the candidate asked the Indian peasants what they wanted. "Schools!" they answered in unison. The governmental candidate was amazed, for here lived the poorest peasants of Mexico. Erosion practically carries the soil away under their feet.

"But you are starving!" the politician said. "Why don't you want timber, irrigation canals and agricultural machinery?"

Whereupon up walked a small, snag-toothed forty-year-old labourer and said:

"*Señor*, we are used to starvation; we want a school lest our sons starve too."

I only asked my friend later, when we were once again sitting in the resuscitated car: "And did they get their school?"

"They did". Thus and thus alone is the story beautiful and truly Mexican. For had they asked for timber, canals or machinery, they would not have got them, or if they had been promised, half of them would never have materialized on account of *mordida*, the oiling of government employees' palms, a compulsory custom throughout the administrative hierarchy. But they received the school all right for it is a pleasant contradiction in this strange country, so full of contradictions, that it spends a lot on schools. The basic contradiction can be detect in the name of the ruling and governing Party—Partido Revolucionario Institucional, i.e. Institutional Revolutionary Party. In Mexico nobody is shocked at the idea—that is, if it is revolutionary, how can it be institutional, and vice versa—because without the slogan of the often-begun but always bogged-down revolution no man can enter politics. This Party is more institutional than anything else today: it helps and serves the institutions of capitalism, though in the field of public education the people are used not simply as a slogan. It spends twenty-two per cent of the budget on education and the building of schools.

The sincerity of their revolutionary attitude is proved by their relations with Cuba. Despite U. S. pressure and the resolution extorted from the

Organisation of American States, Mexico has maintained diplomatic and other relations with Cuba. Cuban Airlines can only fly to and from Mexico D. F., the Mexican capital being their only point of entry by air to the American continent.

We could already see the pyramids of Teotihuacán in the distance when our car gave a squeak and stopped. My friend did not even seem to be annoyed. He was prepared for it. The mechanic at Acolmán had repaired her in such a way that the mechanic of San Juan should also be in a position to profit by it. For San Juan was the name of the next village. We went in search of a *taller mecánico*. We found it in the middle of a row of booths, fried meat stalls, Coca-Cola stands and buffets. The entrance to the garage was a pub; in the next room there was a small-scale barbecue grill; only in the third room did we find the repair-garage the outer door of which gave on to the courtyard. We pushed the car there in the heat, which was around thirty centigrade. Four people at once dived under the automobile, three other apprentices snapped open the bonnet and assaulted the engine, and an eighth chap began tooting. Were they all going to work on the car, every mother's son of them?

My friend waved a deprecating hand. "No, only one will be working. The others are *propinistas*, tip-hunters, kibitzers, half-beggars." They held out their hands, palms up, when the owner of the garage finally announced with pride that our car was now better than new. The festive scene drew four of five more loitering *propinistas* from the pub. My friend gave them a peso each. "Why so generous?" I asked. "Not generous, only cautious" he said. "If I don't give them anything they might puncture my rear tires."

Autolacoatl helped us and so we arrived without any further trouble in Teotihuacán, the ancient Holy City of the Toltecs who lived here before the Aztecs, in short in the Empire of the Feathered Serpent.

Bartók and Hungarian Lyrics

May 13th

Tonight S., one of the professors of Mexico State University, invited me to deliver a lecture to the third-year students. Of course, it was Professor Láng who had brought me along to the Club of Young Writers, in a private room of the Café Carmel in Genova Street.

So this evening I delivered a lecture entitled "Bartók and Hungarian Lyrics" at the usual fortnightly meeting of the young writers. I mentioned Bartók's name in the title not only as a "gauge" by which to measure Hun-

garian values, but also as a bait. I mean I was afraid that Hungarian poetry alone might not weigh with the audience, while Bartók's name is a magnet which attracts the admirers of the beautiful without further ado. Also, as I said, I used his name as a 'gauge' because the starting-point and basis of my lecture in Mexico and, before it, it many a South-American town, was that Hungary has another asset like Béla Bartók, and that is its lyrical poetry.

Hungarian lyrical poetry—I said, with reference to Bartók's Cantata Profana—also draws on two "clear springs" for its inspiration—Hungarian folk-tradition and the great movements, fears and hopes which inspired the age. His "Music for percussion instruments, stringed instruments and celesta", his "Piano Concerto No.3," appeal to everyone through their special colours and tastes; I had not to explain it neither in Lima, nor earlier in Rome, Oslo, or elsewhere. But when, drawing a comparison, I said that the magic of Petőfi, the last lyrics of Arany, Ady's 'star-storming angel trumpets' or Attila József's enchanting poems, speak as directly to the heart as Bartók's music, I saw a certain doubt on the faces of the students before me, I felt compunction for not having mentioned Vörösmarty's 'Preface', Babits' 'Jonah', Kosztolányi's modern odes, Radnóti's Eclogues as well, for passing over in silence our living poets.

The young writers seemed to be interested in the poets and the lyrics. I quoted some verse of Hungarian poems in English and French—translating certain lines word for word—I also quoted poems in Hungarian to show them how they sound in my mother tongue. It was like strumming Bartók on the piano with one finger.

After the lecture, till well past three in the morning—because the Mexicans are night birds—they plied me with questions as to what the country which gave Bartók and those poets to the world was like. In the end they seemed to have a keener interest in our modern lyricists' attitude towards life, in the subjects of today's Hungarian short stories and in the conflicts expressed in modern Hungarian plays than the parallel between Bartók's music and Hungarian lyrical poetry.

Having talked so long that I could hardly move my lips any more even describing and analysing the works of fellow-writers of mine for whom I felt no enthusiasm, the Professor proposed I should follow up this talk with one at the University. He would tell the students what he had heard this night about Hungarian literature and then I could charge straight into my subject. And since he was professor at the faculty of social science, why, the title of the lecture could be "Hungarian society since 1956."

I thanked for the invitation and accepted it. "Don't you mind that I have to take the 1 p.m. jet the same day?" He didn't worry, I will catch it.

Reflections On Board Plane—Are We Interesting?

May 16

The flight from Mexico to Montreal takes as much time as the air passage from Europe to South America. At least I have plenty of time to ponder over this morning's crowded programme and over my whole trip. This morning, waiting at the door of the lecture room, was Professor S.'s assistant. "More students have come than we thought", he said, taking me over to a bigger room. Of course, the interest did not centre on the lecturer but rather on the lecture and on his country.

The Professor was as good as his word; in his introductory speech he summed up all that he had learned about Hungarian literature—because, as he said to me later, rather proudly, he had well-read students. Then I spoke for forty minutes and answered questions put by the students for two hours. I was glad to see this great interest but I would be exaggerating if I said that it was a surprise to me at the end of the second month of my lecture trip. By then I had experienced, as in the other Latin-American countries, the same thing that struck me previously in the Scandinavian and Latin-European countries—that we interest people more than we think.

We interest them more and in a different way. It was only a few days ago that Mexico's leading cultural diplomat, Miguel Alvarez Acosta, took advantage of my presence there to discuss at length the possibilities of cultural relations between the two countries, and indeed we also exchanged letters on the main points of our plan. After these conversations I felt that Hungary bordered on Mexico, as it did three years ago, in 1961, at the Italian Centenary Exhibition in Torino, where the Mexican and Hungarian pavilions had stood side by side—to which I owed the acquaintance and friendship of Señor Miguel Alvarez Acosta. Yes, there is definitely some affinity between us, though not a geographical one. Let me ponder over it a little to the monotonous humming of the plane's engines.

The first kind of general interest shown in Hungary is due to lack of information. In the winter of 1956 and in the spring of 1957 we were the splash headlines on the front page of all Western newspapers and the number one news item of every broadcasting station. Then it was as if everything stopped dead. Film producers and cinema-goers are well acquainted with the film trick called—if I mistake not—'stop effect'. The film suddenly stops and fixes a face, a figure or a scene, motionless, before the spectators, thus imprinting it more decisively on the memory. Such a 'stop effect' happened to Western and to Latin American newspaper readers as well. For years they believed that in the spring of 1957 everything

in Hungary had stopped because from that time onwards nothing more appeared in their newspapers about us. For the last two or three years however, the attitude of the more important West European and of a few North American newspapers has changed. Not much has so far leaked through these articles to the reading masses, yet enough to arouse their interest and curiosity.

This first kind of interest is not profound; it springs from what one might call the topsoil of curiosity. In 1956 people all over the world, newspaper-readers and wireless audiences held their breath watching the tragical events in Hungary during those fateful months, and now they want to know what happened next. Since they firmly believed that all the violations of the rule of law, the imprisonments and the falling standard of living—whose rise everybody had been compelled to praise before 1956—had returned, together with the dissatisfaction and embitterment of the people, they now note, with curiosity and surprise, that there is what they call 'liberalization', but what I always referred to in my lectures as socialism, in Hungary.

Hungary is interesting to the great world because we help to rectify their erroneous ideas about socialist society, because we dare to utter openly what earlier could only have been said in whispers; because the West sees that the class enemy is not softened up here under the saddle, as the old Hungarians did with their meat. We are interesting because we translate the work of foreign authors who are supposed to be taboo in a socialist country; because Hungarian tourists can get passports and hard currency, and that hundreds of thousands of them avail themselves of the opportunity. And the country is interesting for a hundred other reasons, including some that give us no cause for pride, only they contradict the still-surviving memories of the cold war.

Hungary is in fact interesting because it does not resemble the society described by George Orwell in his "Nineteen-Eighty Four". Only after many debating evenings and conversations among European and South American intellectuals did I discover that what I was debating was not only cold-war memories and arguments, dating back to 1956, but in the main Orwell's novel applied for today's Hungary.

What? But I did not have to ask them, they both set to explain to me, unanimously, what they meant by a 'real Communist'. They did not even protest when I mentional Orwell.)

The first kind of interest taken in Hungary is of a negative character (I am now reverting to my notes made on board the plane) but I do not use the adjective negative as a value judgment in this context, for interest

and curiosity, when aroused, are both important and useful—not only to Hungary but to international understanding as well. Yet it can be called negative because Western public opinion is interested in what we do not have, or in things that are different in Hungary. That is why I called this interest a more superficial or "topsoil" kind of interest.

It was interesting for me to note that in Mexico and earlier, for two months, in all the South Amarican cities I visited, I was asked to what extent are human rights and freedom from fear—that is, the contrary of what they imagined—respected in Hungary? What in fact they were doing was looking for resemblances between Hungary and some liberal bourgeois country or textbooks. When they were given a satisfactory answer, they warmed up to the subject in the second, mostly longer part of the debate, and asked in what things and in what way did Hungarian society *differ* from capitalist society, meaning what exactly was its socialist content.

My lecture in the forenoon was followed by a marathon debate, while I kept glancing at my watch, so as not to miss my plane. At the start of the debate a student asked me whether he could attend a university in Budapest. Because, he said, his father was a landowner. I was expecting such a question: there was not a town in South America where someone did not put it to me. My interrogator had often made a wry face of my reply; they seemed to have lost a moral alibi by which they had before been able to barricade themselves from socialist ideas. This particular Mexican boy however, being himself a socialist, was glad to hear my answer. No sooner had he sat down than I was asked by others—but what about the sons of the worker and peasants? I had to explain to them in detail that the abolition of discrimination did not put them at a disadvantage.

After ten years at home, in the last three years I have travelled a great deal all over the world. The questions were nearly always the same. But now, after two months' stay in Latin America, I could sense a second, an additional interest which I can define in no other was than that it was personal to them. When they plied me with questions they were not so much interested in conditions in Hungary as in Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Peru or Mexico. My answers seemed to be vitally important to them. They asked me to expand on even minor details as to make me think that their interest was some thing more than merely literary, political or international.

Now, I think that this second, special South American interest comes from the fact that the structure of contemporary South American society shows an uncanny similarity to that of pre-liberation Hungarian society. I see the parallel in the lot of the poorest strata of South American society and the concern of the intellectuals in their fate. In Chile 12 per cent of

the landowners own three-quarters of the arable land—as was the case formerly in Hungary. In Brazil the dramatic content of the film made from the novel by Pál Szabó "The Soil Underfoot," repeats itself every year. In fact, certain scenes from *Vidas secas* could have been borrowed by the producer of that Hungarian film.

The formula is the same in every country: a landowning oligarchy in alliance with a small class of rapacious capitalists; a limited number of intellectuals, the majority of whom, and the best, are Democrats, leftists, fellow-travellers and communists, a handful of industrial workers, an insignificant number compared to what lies below them all, the village proletariat—the five million, or in Brazil, the fity million beggars.

In South American countries social reform stands in the very forefront of politics and literature. The phrase is also used in right-wing propagands just as it was in Hungary in the thirties. Among the reforms—to draw a further parallel—land reform comes first. Those who, in the Latin American countries, seek a way out of their present situation rejoice as if they had found long-lost brothers and sisters when they learn of a country which once faced the same difficult situation, but which has now forged ahead.

I had prepared literary lectures, but I talked as much about the Land Reform. What luck that on a bright May morning nineteen years ago, maybe on this very date, I had the energy to get up at four o'clock and ride on the platform of a side-car of a newspaper delivery motorbike—often lying flat on my belly and holding on for dear life—to return again to Ostfyasszonyfa, not this time as a rural sociologist but to help in the distribution of the land. So I could give them details which have never since failed to arouse the interest of anybody in any country. But the Latin Americans did not stop at 1945. What happened later? How did we finance the Land Reform? How did the State assist the new farm owners at the beginning? How did we start mechanization? How did we continue it? What did we do well, and what did we hungle? Right, they said. So that was the land reform. Then what happened? Why was collectivization unsuccessful at first? What are the things that should'nt have been done, they asked. And I had to list the mistakes we made, in detail, because they said they wanted to avoid them. And now, how are we solving the questions of collective farming? What is a household plot? Isn't it a contradiction of collective farming?

Here at the end of my notes are the questions they put me concerning land, village and city life, workers, writers, readers, literature, etc. I numbered the questions —up to 204. When I return home I shall show them to Ferenc Erdei. It was a stroke of luck that I had taken with me the text

of one of his important essays on agriculture, which he had written for The New Hungarian Quarterly. (It was then in the press, and appeared later in No. 15).

Two kinds of interest? Well, a man likes to systematize. But the two kinds of interest shown in Hungary are in practice interlinked. And how often I was surprised. In Peru the five million beggars are demanding land reform, but by this they mean not the distribution of the land but the restitution of the rights of the *ayllus*, the ancient communities of land of Inca origin. The Peruvian students and professors were interested both in Attila József's poetry and the Hajdúnánás example of the Hungarian cooperative movement. In Santiago, when the subject of literare had been exhausted, two items of news from Hungary impressed them most: the tourist passports issued to all Hungarians, accompanied by a state-authorized allocation of Western currency, and the social insurance and old-age pension of cooperative farm members.

It is inevitable that these two kinds of interests should be interlinked. To satisfy the second properly I had to satisfy the first on the questions on human rights and the civil liberties'. Had I not been in a position to make repeated statements on public conditions in Hungary without shame, not much credence would have been attached to my words on the Land Reform, collective farming, the workers, or their sons.

*

A Canadian gentleman about my own age is sitting beside me. I see him fidgeting, turning first one way, then another. He would like to read, it seems, but he has no mind to. I leave off writing for I see a question forming on his lips. Where am I going, where do I come from? "Oh, Hungary? Are you living there? Say, is it true that conditions are'nt any longer so awful there?"

He left the plane in Ottawa. We had only got as far as Question No. 173.

IMRE MADÁCH'S "THE TRAGEDY OF MAN"

by

ISTVÁN SŐTÉR

I

The sons of stress periods tend to speak indirectly about their personal or ideological discords. A disguised form of expression renders confession easier, and the mask they choose helps them over issues about which they may still feel uncertain. Indeed, sometimes the writer plays hide and seek, concealing his real emotions from the reader, who must be careful, lest the original meaning be misunderstood.

"The Tragedy of Man" is a dissembling, secretive, enigmatic work of Hungarian literature. The fruit of the critical decade following the suppression of the 1848 War of Independence, it was written in the months between February 1859 and March 1860. This period was marked by equally profound political and ideological crises. Almost ten years had gone by since the failure of the Hungarian revolution when Madách began to write "The Tragedy." The nation had not yet recovered; on the contrary, under the stress of Austrian oppression its moral reserves began to be depleted.

The revolutionary generation had grown up in an enthusiastic belief in ideas, in an absolute confidence in progress, in the cultivation of virtues and activities for the common weal developed by the enlightenment and nourished, even filled with dreams, by the romanticism and liberalism of the first half of the century. The downfall of the 1848 movements in itself forcibly belied the confidence and the day-dreams of this generation. Grand and inspiring ideas were not realized at a single stroke but, in reality, were seen to turn into their own contradiction; their brilliance was sullied by blood and mud, and man, claimed by romanticism to be a demi-god, was proved to be a feeble, fallen hero by history. History and revolutions are shaped by the will and spirit of the masses, but their motion is like that of the sea: the tide is always followed by ebb. "The Tragedy of Man" was produced at such a low water mark of time. Its poet stood on a deserted shore, feeling hopelessly lonely.

To the bitter historical experience another equally disillusioning experience was added. The generation reared on idealism was faced by a new trend in philosophy, the mechanical materialism triumphant in Germany. Buchner, Moleschott and their associates declared themselves for a crude and extreme materialism (of which Marx and Engels openly disapproved), and this materialism, enraptured by the achievements of the revolution in the natural sciences, had summary, apparently final answers to the most intricate philosophical problems. The soul was an illusion, ideas no more than smoke, morality an invention, and, what was still worse, man, the slave of circumstances, with his fate determined by blind material forces, figures, statistics and natural conditions, could do nothing to alter his lot. The generation of 1848 lost its bearings not only because of political developments; its ideological foundations had also been crushed. It was impossible to disregard the triumphant achievements of the revolution in the natural sciences; and, at first glance, these achievements seemed to confirm the theses of the mechanical materialists.

Hence the historical and philosophical crisis looming in the background of "The Tragedy of Man." In the eyes of the dramatist it was aggravated by his personal crisis, by the wreckage of his unhappy marriage; happy love was condemned to bitter destruction. Moreover, how many dead, how many victims in his own family: a brother, a sister with her husband and children, all had lost their lives amidst the terrible ordeals and vicissitudes of the War of Independence. "The Tragedy" presents the history of mankind in dramatic vignettes, from the Garden of Eden, the history of Egypt, Athens, and Rome, through the imagined future phalanstery, to the cooling of the earth; behind this series of pictures, however, one must inevitably sense the tension produced in Madách's mind by his ideological and personal crises. Without it the series of historical pictures constituting "The Tragedy" would wane into a mere scholastic spectacle, because this hidden tension released in the poet deep intellectual, moral forces and a desire to resolve the crises—a desire that imbues the work with a painful, concealed lyricism, a nostalgia for the lost Garden of Eden.

"The Tragedy of Man" consistently presents scenes of failure and downfall. It belongs to the most profoundly pessimistic works. However, its true meaning lies in the poet's refusal to accept this pessimism, for the more merciless historical facts become, the more desperately he seeks to refute them. Refutation grows almost arbitrary, even senseless, but this only serves to render the wish for refutation still more violent and urgent. The generation bred on idealism and romanticism had to recognize the bitter lessons of history, the annihilation of dreams, and the doubts assailing beliefs and

ideas. This recognition made the former enthusiasts adopt a contrary attitude: they became unbelievers and sceptics. Yet no more at home in their new scepticism than in their old enthusiasm, they came to wonder whether they should not return to their former happy beliefs, to their unsuspecting daydreams, to their old hopes attached to action. The world around them had changed, and so had they. In looking for something beyond enthusiasm and doubt, they were endeavouring to find something new, some reassuring explanation, some acceptable encouragement and an attainable harmony. This was the dialectical process of thoughts and emotions that took place in the minds of the quondam romanticists and idealists who had lived through the revolution. The same dialectical process animates "The Tragedy of Man" and turns it into a drama.

One hero of "The Tragedy" is Adam, who always believes unconditionally and is therefore invariably doomed to defeat, as were Madách and his generation. The other principal hero, Lucifer, has faith in nothing and doubts everything, therefore his spirit remains barren. Lucifer differs from Adam only in so far as he regards the repeated downfall and failure of Adam as a fixed law of life and its conditions. After suppressed revolutions the two extreme, polarized attitudes are not infrequently encountered: unconditional belief, on the one hand, and absolute scepticism and disillusionment, on the other. In the closing scene of "The Tragedy" the Lord pronounces the moral that mankind needs both views: an abstract creed leads to inertia, because it is immobile and mere conjecture, like a theory that cannot be put to practical test. Doubt and denial may become the motive power, the leaven of a new creed and new activities. All this may, of course, be applied in the reverse order. Human virtue is hampered by fallibility, but the latter is sometimes apt to bring rescue from the blind and destructive exaggerations of virtue. Man is often saved by his own character, or by Nature, from the abstract and speculative, hence negative and harmful, exaggerations of his own ideas.

This escape, this protection conferred by failure, this support offered by weakness, this realism opposed to abstraction, is embodied in Eve, the third figure of "The Tragedy." From the blind alleys of over-zealous belief and crude denial we can escape only along the path opened by the often underestimated reserves of human nature. In his disappointment and despair Adam wants to commit suicide, but Eve's motherhood makes suicide senseless and impossible. The personality of Eve thus intervenes in the sterile debate of belief and denial, rendering it fertile. Eden was lost through the frailty of Eve; however, only Eve is capable of recreating something from what has been forfeited. Here lies Eve's absolute superiority over Adam

and Lucifer, and this was Madách's final effort to refute history by factors lying outside history.

The dialectical process taking place in the minds of the generation that had lived through the revolution was thus revived in the dramatic dialectics of the three principal figures of "The Tragedy."

2

This work could have been written only by a poet who had been taught prolonged, continuous contemplation by his own suffering and solitude.

Imre Madách lived his life (1823–1864) among the picturesque hills in the north of Nógrád County stretching down to the Danube, in Sztregova Manor House on a fine estate inherited from his parents, or rather his money-making grandparents. The Madách family belonged to the foremost gentry of the district, with a traditional insistence on education. Their library still provides evidence of the wide orientation which, for over a century, had made the members of the family at all times receptive to new forms of law, history, philosophy, poetry and natural sciences. Stregova Manor House was surrounded by an English park, the dining room was hung with engravings of Hogarth (among whose figures some scholars have claimed to recognize various motives of the London scene of "The Tragedy"). The book-cases of the study held the works of Dante, Goethe and Gibbon; Humboldt's Cosmos and Feszler's Hungarian History were the most frequently read volumes.

In the Manor House life was simple and patriarchal. The real head of the family was the poet's widowed mother, who survived her son. Madách was educated in the spirit that filled the nobility in the period preceding 1848; without any luxury or waste, but in a social environment where the members knew themselves to be part of a great family. He went to school to the Piarists of Vác, a small baroque town on the Danube, which was to be connected with the capital by the first railway in 1842. During his university years he lived with and looked after his younger brothers, even doing the household accounts. In letters written to his mother as much attention was devoted to asking for money to cover the costs of balls and concerts and to describing his studies as to matters concerning supplies of cabbage from Sztregovar. At the time Pest University was the centre of liberal ideas, and in a valedictory address to a retiring professor, Madách expressed liberal ideas with the ardour that was to mark the character of Adam in "The Tragedy." Young Madách took an active part in the political life of the forties as an adherent

of the Centralist Party, which stubbornly fought for the development of a bourgeois Hungary by shaping home conditions after the pattern of French and British institutions and laws. For the time being his name was, however, unknown outside Nógrád County.

It was in this period that he first undertook the composition of poetry, but in the literary life of the country no notice was taken of him. At this stage Madách may be regarded as an amateur, a sort of literary gentleman; such eccentrics, trying their hands at literature, could at the time be found in large numbers in the remote Hungarian manor houses of the nobility. In that age poetry was regarded as a sort of patriotic duty, and those who endeavoured to spend their leisure time profitably composed poems or dramas, even in hope of ever seeing their works published.

In this period literature played the most important role in maintaining and preserving national existence. Industrialization and the development of bourgeois mentality were still to come, and it was in national education that public opinion saw the principal pledge of national existence. There was nothing to distinguish Madách from the secret lyricists and dramatists of the country; his literary efforts were written for the drawers of his writing-table, and they still attract only the attention of scholars. It is all the more astonishing that in "The Tragedy of Man" he created a mature masterpiece and, through this one work, came to be ranged among Hungarian classics as a single-work poet.

Madách's attempts as a dramatist display the features of the romantic school, most of them being historical plays. However, one deals with a contemporary problem, staging the usual Wertherism of the romantic generation, with a somewhat melodramatic theme of dissension and maladjustment. Another of his dramas treats the Heracles theme, with crude emphasis on a woman's failure to understand a man. Among the lyric poems there are a few that may be regarded as forerunners of the concept and lyric material of "The Tragedy." In 1845, at the age of twenty-two, he married Erzsébet Frater, with whom he had become acquainted at a traditional county ball. Such balls represented highlights in the social life of the county nobility. The occupants of distant estates and manors met on such occasions where the network of human and social connections was renewed. His mother was against the marriage, which may have been one of the reasons why it turned out badly. A delicate and high-strung boy, Madách had been very dependent on his energetic mother all through his childhood, which helps to explain why he felt a stranger in the world that surrounded him. The first years of his marriage were filled with undisturbed bliss. The lyrical poems of this period from the young husband's pen allude,

as an ever-recurring motif, to the Garden of Eden that may be recreated on earth in exceptional moments by love, by a child or by poetry. These rugged, clumsy poems of the youthful Madách expressed the memory of, and desire for, the undisturbed happiness of a golden age. The same desire was to well forth with both dramatic and lyric power in "The Tragedy." It was to be Eve who could recreate Eden for fleeting moments, she alone possessing the capacity to bring back some of its warmth and innocence.

1848 brought a grave trial to the Madách family; owing to illness Imre could not fight in the army but remained a staunch adherent of Kossuth to the end. His brother Paul acted as a courier during the worst of the winter campaign, and fell victim to pneumonia contracted while on active service. His sister Maria, her husband and children, fleeing after a lost battle, were murdered with brutal cruelty by bandits. After the suppression of the War of Independence Madách soon found himself in an Austrian military prison for having concealed one of Kossuth's secretaries. He is said to have been flogged, and after his release he was still interned by the Austrian authorities of Pest. It was during this time that his marriage broke up; on returning from prison Madách put his wife in a coach and sent her away. He remained alone in his empty garden of Eden, and several years later began to write "The Tragedy." Two years elapsed between his imprisonment (1852) and his divorce (1854), but it was only five years later (1859) that his sufferings and contemplation brought him the maturity that enabled him to write his masterpiece.

"The Tragedy" created a country-wide sensation; the greatest poet of the nation, János Arany, presented it to the first literary society of the country, and Madách soon became famous. Madách wrote another drama, Moses, intending to represent in his hero the figure of Kossuth, and in the history of the Jewish people that of the Hungarian people. At this time he was already severely ill, the physicians of his day having been unable to grapple with the disease they termed a tubercular affection of the heart. All the same, the poet took part in the parliament of 1860 which was fighting for the rights forfeited in 1848. He lived to see the publication of "The Tragedy of Man" in 1862, and in 1864, a hundred years ago, he died at the age of forty-two at the Manor House of Sztregova, where he lies buried in the family vault.

3

In all probability Madách did not intend "The Tragedy" for the theatre; his work was nevertheless staged, and it has been played over a thousand times at various theatres and in open-air performances throughout the country (it has become a traditional feature of the annual Szeged Summer Festival). It has also been played in other countries (at Prague, the Burg-theater of Vienna, Hamburg, Berlin, Munich, etc.).

Of the fifteen scenes of "The Tragedy," * the first three and the last constitute the framework, with the three principal characters (Adam, Eve and Lucifer) appearing in a Biblical background. The first scene, in "Heaven", opening with a debate between the Lord and Lucifer, is undoubtedly reminiscent of one of the prologues to Faust; superficial readers have therefore shown a tendency to regard the whole Tragedy as an imitation of Faust. As a matter of fact, "The Tragedy of Man" fundamentally differs from Goethe's great work in conception and characterization alike. In form it certainly belongs to the populous family of verse dramas which, evidently inspired by Faust, flourished in the romantic period of the 1830's and even earlier in the works of Byron, then Lamartine and de Vigny, Andersen and Mickiewicz, etc.; this series was continued by Ibsen's "Peer Gynt," written a few years after "The Tragedy of Man" (in 1867).

In the scenes constituting the framework of the drama, Lucifer steps on the stage as the personification of denial and doubt. Madách put into his mouth the ideas of mechanical materialism, so much so that in the London setting, the phalanstery and the Eskimo scenes, several ideas and passages of Ludwig Bücher's popular book on mechanical materialism entitled "Power and Substance" (1855) can be clearly discerned in the stage tirades. In the so-called historical sequences the dramatic nature of Lucifer's figure loses vigour; he appears only as the companion of Adam, volunteering malicious comment on the events, since the failures of history furnish sufficient confirmation to vindicate his attitude.

The simple action of "The Tragedy" consists of eleven dream pictures evoked by Lucifer to show Adam the whole fate and history of Humanity with the intention of making him turn away from God in despair. These historical scenes incorporate all the ideas that had thrilled the young and liberal Madách and his generation to enthusiasm, ideas that had failed one

* I. Heaven; II. Paradise; III. A rich Landscape outside Paradise; IV. Egypt, in Pharaonic Times; V. Athens, in Miltiades' Time; VI. Rome, in St. Peter's Time; VII. Constantinople, Age of the Crusades; VIII. Prague, Kepler's Time; IX. Paris, the Revolution; X. Prague, Kepler's Second Scene; XI. London, Time of the Industrial Revolution; XII. The Future: Phalanstery Scene; XIII. In Space; XIV. The Arctic; XV. The "Rich Landscape outside Paradise" (of Scene III) again.

after the other, either in earlier centuries or in the poet's own lifetime. Belief, disenchantment, disgust and flight, then again a new creed: successive dramatic situations, with Adam in the centre, reborn in every age, as historical periods follow one another.

In Egypt Adam appears as a Pharaoh who burns for freedom as did the Hungarian liberals, giving his slaves their release as did the latter their serfs. In the Athens scene he steps forward as Miltiades, who recoils both from the fickleness of the crowds and from demagogy, as Madách may have recoiled from the passions and excesses of the 1848 revolution. Adam, disappointed, reappears in imperial Rome as Sergiolus; disillusionment here seeks forgetfulness in hedonism, as did the generation beset by the *mal du siècle*, to which Madách belonged. Idealism is unable to do without illusions for any length of time and Adam pins his new hopes to christianity, again to be disappointed at Byzantium as Tancred. It is here that Eve, made unattainable to him by the grimly austere religiosity of the age, conjures up the memory of Eden with irresistible force. Their conversation is one of the most lyrical parts of "The Tragedy," tersely summing up the emotions that animated Madách's earlier poems.

> "Dost not thou fear to gaze into the night
> That like a mighty heart with love does beat,
> When we, we only, are forbidden to love?" *

The stakes at which heretics are burnt reflect a lurid light on the tragedy of love associated with historical tragedy, and these stakes still blaze in the next scene, Prague, where we see our disillusioned Adam as Kepler, at the court of the emperor Rudolf. In Rome disappointment had plunged him into a life of pleasure; here it leads him to the asceticism of science. However, the age has no need of science and yearns after superstition instead. The future is revealed to the embittered Kepler—a dream within a dream—with the promise of the French Revolution, and Adam appears as Danton. From here too Adam must flee, back to the dream picture of Prague; this is the only historical scene which Madách does not make his hero reject.

> "Though it be dimmed with foulness and with blood
> How mighty was the virtue and the sin"

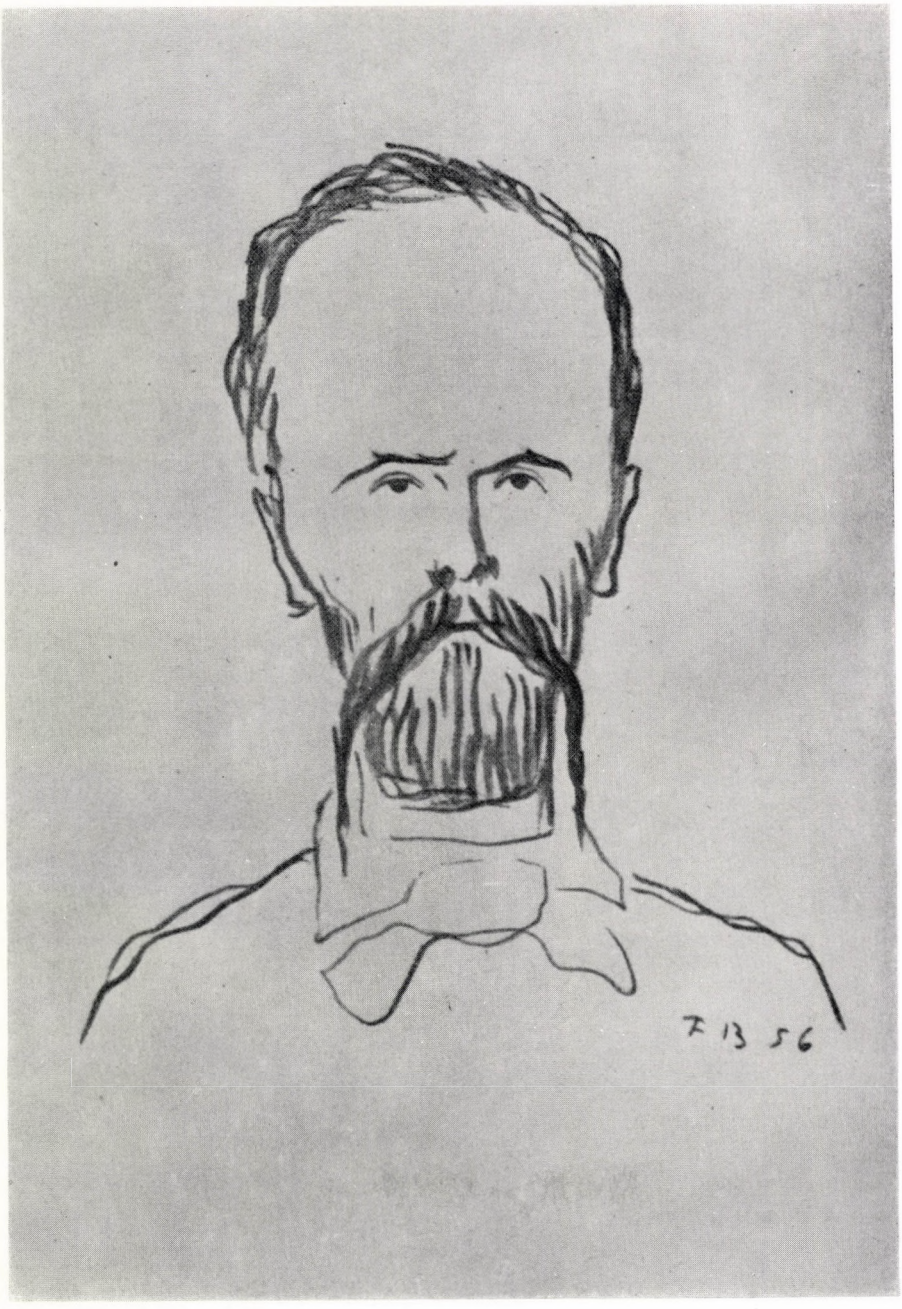
* This and the further quotations are taken from "The Tragedy of Man", published by Corvina Press, Budapest; translated by J. C. W. Horne

sighs Kepler, awakening from his dream. These words of Madách's may be applied as aptly to the French Revolution as to the Hungarian revolution of 1848.

From history "The Tragedy" now steps into the present of Madách. A bustling fair is seen outside the Tower of London, presented as a symbol of established capitalism. The heart that has known Eden cannot experience happiness here either, and the dance macabre episode round the grave closing the fair echoes some of Madách's most personal lyric poetry. Eve is the only one to pass unharmed over the grave, for the power of "Love, poetry and youth" is not vanquished by death. Now we come to the future: in Fourier's phalanstery Michelangelo carves legs for chairs, and the scientist leading the phalanstery professes the same views as does Mr. Gradgrind in Dickens' "Hard Times," published a few years before (1854). Adam flies into space to get away from earth, the scene of his torments and disappointments, but he is called back by the Spirit of the Earth, to face fresh torture and disappointment. In the next-to-last scene he sees the cooled globe with its last, remaining inhabitants who live the indigent lives of Eskimos. This is followed by the final scene of attempted suicide, the revelation of Eve's motherhood, and the enigmatic encouraging oration of the Lord, closing the depressing series of failure and disappointment by calling on Adam:

"O, Man, strive on, strive on, have faith; and trust!"

After such a uniform sequence of defeats this encouragement sounds almost like mockery. There have been critics who maintained that this last line was added by Madách to the words of the Lord as an afterthought, quite arbitrarily. However, it closely follows from the fundamental idea of "The Tragedy" and is actually prepared by the series of failures. Madách was unable to accept either natural or historical determinism. In "The Tragedy" the three principal figures represent three attitudes. Belief, denial and fallibility each separately may exercise useful as well as harmful functions: all that draws Adam away from the abstract quality of his ideas at the same time saves and preserves him. Belief both lends him strength and becomes his greatest weakness. However, in "created" reality, represented by the Lord, the three attitudes coincide, completing, balancing and aiding one another. The beginning of "The Tragedy" was dominated by monotonous celestial harmonies; this harmony, disrupted by Lucifer and mankind, is restored in the last scene: belief is as necessary as doubt, but the peculiar, "independent view" of Nature (Eve), serving its own ends, is still more important. This interdependence implies a modest encouragement,



IMRE MADÁCH

Drawing by Béni Ferenczy

a carefully concealed confidence, which, owing to its dim, latent nature, may be pronounced only in the last words of the Lord, as if he himself had been hesitating, but could finally not resist pouring into words that which he only permitted to be guessed at before.

4

By the time "The Tragedy of Man" was published Hungarian literature could look back on a long and continuous line of development. From the close of the 18th century, the period of enlightenment, Hungarian literature unfolded in several waves, and "The Tragedy of Man" may be conceived as the summit of one of these waves. As with the literatures of many other small peoples, the aim of Hungarian literature was to establish a national bourgeoisie. To become modern, to express the ideas pervading the educated world, as did the literatures of the literate peoples of Europe, to tell of mankind all that could be told only by a Europe with a conscious and refined civilization, such were also the objectives of Hungarian literature. It might have expressed all this by resorting to mere imitation, adoption and borrowing: the spread of bourgeois mentality was an international phenomenon, and the centres which fostered it were to be found in not a few capitals of Europe. These centres were built by the concentrated efforts, preserved traditions and conscious demands of a nation. The Hungarian people cherished similar aspirations. They wished to develop a national literature, which meant that it had to draw upon its own resources, to rely and concentrate on its own character and traditions. This implied choosing the more arduous path. Many achievements, forms, methods and views were borrowed from more advanced literatures, but all these were transformed to suit the Hungarian character and traditions. Such a transformation was made possible by ancient Hungarian poetry, a tradition beginning with the 16th century, but still more by folk song.

In the first half of the 19th century Hungarian lyric poetry was inspired by the great trends of European literature, classicism and romanticism, as well as by old Hungarian poetry and folk song. The lyric poetry of the early 19th century poets, Csokonai, Berzsenyi and Vörösmarty, arose from an exceptional fusion of these elements. However, the grim beauty of the first Hungarian tragedy, József Katona's "Bánk Bán," was also the fruit of this fusion.

By the middle of the 19th century, before the 1848 Revolution, the demand for a national character and a modern bourgeois message became

still more urgent. In this period literature exhibited a deeper desire to become national and popular than it had in earlier eras, together with the wish to appeal to humanity. A union of the nation and of mankind, a simultaneous treatment of these two elements, was the highest ambition of the poetry of this period. This ambitious effort was personified by the poetry of the two greatest Hungarian poets of the mid-century, Petőfi and Arany. Madách was their contemporary, and he profited from them as much as from their romantic predecessors, particularly Vörösmarty, who also endeavoured to be national while addressing himself to humanity. The starting point of "The Tragedy of Man" was the national crisis; but the horizon embraced by the work reaches out to the fate of mankind.

Madách's work is a great synthesis of the doubts, meditations and hopes of an epoch; it summarizes all the concepts and creeds that were alive in the writer's age. It also represents the achievements of over half a century's progress in Hungarian literature. The demand for a national character and the appeal to folk poetry sometimes resulted in isolation. To be national occasionally involved turning one's back on the wider world; indeed, there have been periods when Hungarian poetry and Hungarian culture showed a tendency to wrap themselves up in outworn jingoism. Such an isolation is fraught with deadly dangers: the smothering of forces, a sinking into indolence and self-satisfied, smug provincialism.

Madách cut through the isolating wall which a narrow populist and national cult might have raised around Hungarian poetry. He voiced the persevering and unselfish endeavours of Hungary's best writers in addressing himself to the whole of mankind.

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

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Péter Veres

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Péter Rényi

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BALZAC AND THE HUMAN COMEDY

by

BÉLA KÖPECZI

1.

Literature, if valued on its merits, can be regarded as one of the specific ways leading to the cognition of the world. Perhaps in no other life-work does this aspect manifest itself with such clarity, force and fullness as in Balzac's—not by mere chance, rather the consequence of his conscious literary activity. When, in 1842, Balzac announced the publication of the *La Comédie Humaine*, he made this unequivocal statement: "My plan of huge dimensions, which encompasses both the history and criticism of society, the analysis of its evils and the discussion of its basic principles, authorizes me, I think, to give it the title under which it now appears: *La Comédie Humaine*".

Not only the author, however, contends that in his great work he draws a true picture of the society of his period; his readers, holding widely divergent views, support this contention. Let me quote, in this context, the well-known statement of Engels for the sake of comparison with other opinions: "Balzac, whom I consider to be a far greater master than all the Zolas of the past, present and future put together, writes amazingly realistic history of French society when, like a chronicler, he describes, almost year by year between 1816—1848, the ever-increasing attacks launched by the bourgeoisie against the nobility . . . Around this central picture he builds up a full history of French society from which—as regards even economic details such as the post-revolutionary redistribution of real estate and personal property—I have learnt more than from all the professional historians, economists and statisticians of the age." Taine, the liberal bourgeois theoretician of the *milieu* theory, and the Catholic Brunetière held the same view of Balzac as a true reporter of his period. And even more surprisingly, writers themselves concur with the opinion of the theoreticians. Flaubert

said: "In the future no one will be able to write the history of Louis Philippe's reign without consulting Balzac." "I consider him," Anatole France adds, "the greatest historian of modern France." So the author and his various readers agree that the French society of the first half of the 19th century can be learned from The Human Comedy. The question that may arise is whether or not Balzac's popularity in modern life can be ascribed solely to this.

I think that in examining the cognitive capacity of literature its specific character should be taken into consideration. When I say cognitive capacity, I mean *artistic* cognition which is inseparably interlinked with the true reflection of reality—in this instance, the social reality of French society in the first half of the 19th century—though such cognition in itself is not enough, because a work should also afford an aesthetic pleasure for thus alone can it survive. From this point of view, Balzac's work has the subject of debate. There were those who—starting out from the Flaubertian literary ideal—called into question Balzac's artistic merits, objecting mainly to his style. Early in the 20th century, in bourgeois historiography, the reality of details were more and more often set against the inartistic character of the entire work. Let us quote at this juncture the opinion of Antal Szerb—conspicuous for his aesthetic sensibility—who was of the opinion that "Balzac oversimplifies reality, he is not at home with complicated human characters, they are not faced with disquieting dilemmas and insoluble problems which, authentic just for these reasons, render Stendhal's characters so much more true and interesting . . . The plots of his novels are the loosest form of second-rate romanticism, reminding one of the style and themes of blood-and-thunder stories. His style is redundant and packed with flowers of rhetoric." After this 'indictment', the Hungarian critic begins, with an unexpected turn, to praise the vividness and lifelike qualities of The Human Comedy. Now, the term 'lifelike qualities' suggests that the writer can create lifelike situations and characters—which can be done only by artistic means. One may debate the defects of Balzac's art but one cannot question his 'lifelike art'.

Taine held that Balzac, "together with Shakespeare and Saint-Simon, is the greatest museum containing documents on human nature." In my opinion, this definition is not exact. The truth, I believe, is best expressed by Rodin's statue of Balzac, the writer's work being just as monumental, robust and lifelike as the statue. It is not the beauty of the details that captivates but the grandeur, the palpable reality and animation of the entire work. That is why it attracts the 20th-century reader.

2.

How was The Human Comedy born? Balzac, who originally wanted to take up a legal career, was soon tired of being articled to a solicitor. He made up his mind to amass a fortune as a publisher but soon found himself bankrupt. He was twenty when he made his first attempts at novel-writing, which at the outset seemed to be influenced by Rousseau and the 18th-century French novelists, and later by Walter Scott and James Fenimore Cooper. He had his first great success, not with his novel *Les Chouans*, appearing in 1829, but with his work The Physiology of Marriage, a book which, published in the same year, created a scandal. He called this work 'an analytical study'. Several of his stories and novels had already been published (with *La Peau de Chagrin* and *Eugénie Grandet* among them) when, in 1833, he came upon the idea of systematizing his works according to the recurrence of the various characters in them. In 1841 he signed a contract for the publication of his complete works with the intention of giving the whole series the title of *Études Sociales* (Social Studies); later changing his mind and, as a counterpart of Dante's *Divina Commedia* he chose to write *La Comédie Humaine*. (The word 'comedy' does not refer to a comedy proper but to a play, a drama, in the medieval sense of the word.) When the series started in 1842, Balzac, in his preface, divided the descriptive part of the *Comédie* into six parts: Scenes from private, provincial, Parisian, political, military and village lives. (In a draft made in 1845, he epitomized *Les Scènes* under the title Studies in Morals.) *Les Scènes* was followed by the Philosophical, Moral and Analytical Studies. (In the above-mentioned draft of a later date the works arranged to appear in this series were attached to the Philosophical and Analytical Studies.) His final idea was to have the whole 'cycle' published in 137 volumes, but 'only' 91 of them appeared (85 volumes originally planned, and 6 new ones).

On February 6, 1844, Balzac disclosed this undertaking to Mme Hanska in the following words: "After all, what I am playing at is this: four men have an immense and fathomless life—Napoleon, Cuvier, O'Connell, and I who want to be the fourth. The first lived the life of Europe; he was identified with the army. The second chose the globe. The third personified an entire people (i.e. the Irish people). I myself have been carrying an entire society in my head." He wants to be the Napoleon of literature, who in his work builds up a monument like the Cathedral of Bourges. Great is his ambition and Balzac, instead of indulging in heroics, sets to work to carry out his plan.

In the preface to the 1842 edition,—which appeared at the end of Volume

I of our edition—Balzac, more like a theoretician than a writer, discloses the aims of The Human Comedy. Having compared the human world with the animal kingdom, and having found unity and a tendency to variety in both, he defines his task. As the natural scientists break the animal kingdom into categories, so he too presents the much more complicated human world. Following Walter Scott's method, he wants to describe the morals of French society; not satisfying himself with mere description but also seeking—as does every worthwhile writer—the reasons for a given situation. "Man is neither good nor evil but is born in this world with inherent instincts and propensities. Society does not warp him as Rousseau contends but, on the contrary, makes him better. At the same time, interest may also develop his bad inclinations." Early in the 19th century the evil trends got the upper hand in French society. The picture he draws of contemporary society may be devastating, yet he protests against its being immoral. "A novel ought to be a better edition of the world," but in all its details one should stick to reality. The details may be dark, yet The Human Comedy, as a whole, is optimistic, because it protests against evil and sets itself an aim, partly through its 'positive heroes', partly through its Catholic and monarchist views. Among the female characters Ursule Mirouet or Eugénie Grandet, among the men Benassis, the two Birotteaux, David Séchard and d'Arthez, are the writer's ideals. At the same time he does not ignore the fact that his heroes are very vague ones, and in vain does he try to prove that he has solved "the tricky literary problem of how to make virtuous characters interesting." As to his ideology, Balzac is convinced that Catholicism and monarchism were able in the past to check evil and, relying on these historical experiences, he wants to write by the light of two eternal truth, religion and monarchy." So he wishes to use literature for improving mankind, though in such a way that, essentially, the social ideals he proclaims are reactionary. "I do not believe in an endless social evolution, only in the intrinsic evolution of Man."

3.

To what extent, one might wonder, did Balzac's reactionary political views influence his literary work? This is how Engels answered the question in a letter he wrote to Margaret Harkness (April 1888): "It is true that Balzac was a legitimist in politics; his great work is a single elegy on the inescapable decay of high society; all his sympathy is for the class that is doomed to go under. Nevertheless, his satire was never more biting, his irony never more bitter than when he brought on to the stage the men and women

—the aristocracy—he so deeply sympathizes with. The only human beings of whom he speaks with undisguised enthusiasm are his fiercest antagonists—the Republican heroes of Cloître Sainte Marie, who at that time (1830—1836) in fact represented the masses of the people. The fact that Balzac thus had to act against his class-sympathy and political prejudice, that he *saw* the logical necessity for the fall of his cherished nobility, whose members he describes as people undeserving of a better lot, and that he saw the true man of the future where in his period they could alone be found—I consider to be one of the victories of realism and one of the aging Balzac's most magnificent traits of character." Marxist literary historians and aestheticians have ever since been frequently quoting this statement, from which some people infer a separation of ideology from art.

Engels contrast the social message of Balzac's novels with his views on politics but he does not analyse the writer's entire ideology. Ideology, in a class society, is the totality of the social views expressing the status and interests of some class. That means that it is not sufficient to analyse only political views when questions of ideology are discussed, but philosophical, religious, scientific, artistic and other ideas; in fact the possibility of their contradicting each other should be taken into consideration.

Balzac, in his youth, was acquainted with the French materialists of the 18th century, though he did not become their follower. In questions of natural science he made references, even in his later years, to Napoleon's opponents, the ideologists, particularly to Cabanis. At the University he attended the lectures of Victor Cousin who, though an adherent of spiritual philosophy, was considered as belonging to the opposition during the first phase of the Restoration and who popularized Hegel in France. Balzac became quite enthusiastic over the physiognomic and anthropometric experiments of Lavater and Gall. He read the works of Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, Cuvier, Lavoisier and other representatives of natural science. These heterogenous elements were classified in the idealistic philosophy of the contemporary bourgeoisie. The bourgeois outlook of the Restoration—which had turned against materialism already after the fall of the Jacobin dictatorship—made spiritual philosophy its official ideology. Already at the university Balzac was engrossed in questions such as the life of man, the spiritual nature of the mind, the immortality of the human soul. This idealistic orientation explains why he developed an interest in mysticism as represented by Swedenborg, Saint-Martin and Baader. This interest of his was reflected mainly in his Louis Lambert, Séraphita and Ursule Mirouet. It is interesting to note that, in mysticism, the writer seeks *clarté*—enlightenment—above all, and this not simply by means of occultism but with the instruments of

science. So Balzac strove to acquaint himself with all the new contributions of natural science, particularly its efforts to comprehend Man—and this is the materialistic trend in his way of thinking, while, at the same time, expecting the solution of the ultimate questions from idealistic philosophy, from mysticism.

Many identify this idealistic-mystical view of Balzac's, on the basis of his later statements, with Catholicism. This question was disclosed by Balzac himself in a letter he wrote to Mme Hanska on July 12, 1842: "You know what my religious beliefs are. I am not orthodox and I do not believe in the Roman Church. I think that if there is some plan that may be worthy of this Church, it is that of the human transformations which take terrestrial beings towards unknown regions; this is the law of beings inferior to us. What needed is a law of higher beings. Swedenborgism, which is the repetition of ancient ideas in the Christian sense, is my religion, supplemented by my conviction that God is incomprehensible. "I think we should adopt this statement, when talking about Balzac's religiosity, rather than the opinion of the Catholic, P. Bertault, a modern French Balzac-expert, who contends that "Balzac placed realism in the service of the Catholic idea." The Vatican—which put on the Index his complete works *(Omnes fabulae amatoriae)* in 1841, 1842 and finally in 1864—saw more clearly in this context than do certain neo-Catholics today.

The question can be regarded differently if examined from the political aspect. Balzac regarded Catholicism as the chief ideological guardian of the existing social order. "Catholicism," he wrote, "is a system of complete repression of man's corrupt tendencies." The highest degree of this 'corruption' is rebellion against a given society. The Catholic Church is in a position to prevent this. For this reason, and for its civilizing, cultural and economic activities, he thinks highly of Catholicism. In 1832 he poses the question thus: "Is not religion the mightiest of all tools of government? Indeed, it is able to make the people submit to sufferings and to the necessity of constant toil." Balzac borrowed this concept from the political ideologists of the Restoration, from Bonald, J. de Maistre and Chateaubriand, who, as representatives of the restored nobility, sought support for the monarchy in the Catholic Church. It was not feudalism that these ideologists wanted to restore—which would have been impossible, anyway—but they intended to mediate between feudalism and capitalism, assuring the leading role of the nobility.

Of course, young Balzac was not influenced by the above-mentioned trends alone; there were times when he showed an interest in the ideas of Utopian socialism as well. When writing The Physiology of Marriage, he

adopts the views of the Saint-Simonists on the equality of women. Later on, also under their influence, he begins to occupy himself with social inequalities; he does not want to change them but would like to improve the lot of the poor, even if in a philanthropic way. He follows the Saint-Simonists in his criticism of money-making (The Elixir of Long Life, Larrasine, The Red Inn), without, however, adopting their more radical views. Certain signs of Saint-Simonism are apparent also in the view expounded by Balzac in 1830 on the social position of the artist. An artist (including the scientist) should in his opinion belong to the first class of society so that, to a certain extent, he might fulfil his function as a priest. On October 10, 1830 he published an article entitled *Lettre sur Paris* in which he condemns the Saint-Simonists because they want to draw religion into politics, to put an end to thrift and inheritance, thus attacking private property.

After the contradictory manifestations of bourgeois liberalism, the revolution of 1830 crystallized Balzac's political views. He wrote, five years before the July Revolution, in his book *Code des Gens Honnêtes;* "Life can be regarded as a continuous struggle between the rich and the poor." He saw a manifestation of class-warfare also in the July Revolution, revealing to him the true face of the proletariat. Balzac is afraid of the proletariat because it threatens to overthrow the established social order. He stands for this order but does not think the bourgeoisie fit to defend it; that is why he has recourse to the political ideals of the past. This view of his is underscored by his snobbery; the personal contacts between him and the aristocrats, his admiration of their way of life, and the assuring of his own social position—all contribute to his courting the favours of the aristocratic opposition. Indeed, in 1832, he joined the Legimitist Party. In his essay on the position of the Royalist Party *(Essai sur la situation du parti royaliste,* May-June 1832), he draws a picture of the ideal society as follows: "The best society is that which gives bread to the proletarians and affords them an opportunity to learn and to acquire ownership but which at the same time is able to check the possible excesses of the nation's suffering strata against the well-to-do or opulent classes." In his work on modern government *(Du governement moderne,* October 1832), he distinguishes three social classes: the poor, the middleclass, and the aristocratic 'mass' (Balzac uses the word *masse* in the sense of "class"). Aristocracy, in his own wording, is not a feudal class or stratum but the aristocracy of money, power and intelligence. The task is for the middle and aristocratic 'mass' to ally against the poor in such a way as to seduce their leaders and so enable the rest to require a little private property. For "if you make an owner out of a proletarian, it means that he will be a conservative." Economic advantages should be extended to

the 'middle masses', satisfying them, politically, with limited parliamentary rights. The aristocracy, the leader of society, should wield power, relying on its two pillars—monarchy and religion. Balzac returns again and again to the imperative need for a strong power that maintains social order and 'harmony'. Even if he disagreed with the Legitimist party on many points, he adhered to its program to his dying day.

One of the Fourierists, Alexandre Weill, recounted that Balzac met with Eugène Sue and Heine in 1847. In the course of their conversation he categorically defended his monarchist views, emphasizing that socialism is an old murderer who "murdered his mother, the Republic, and his daughter, Freedom." "Gentlemen," he said solemnly, but without looking seriously, but not pompously, "I have thoroughly studied Saint-Simonism, Fourierism and Communism. The latter is the logical and imperative consequence of the other 'isms'. The people does not speculate on minor questions, they head for the extreme. What, then, is Communism? It is a return to savagery, in which all men and all women eat at the same table and do not have a penny, for should they possess anything, the one would begin to save, the other to spend, so that inequality and war would again appear." At the end of this conversation Heine remarked that Balzac wanted a Republic governed by royalists. There is some irony in this remark, and annoyance, too, for the Utopian socialists would have liked to win over the great writer. When they did not succeed, Weill launched a sharp attack against Balzac's reactionary views, calling him the "wittiest superficial man of the age," from whose works nothing would be left to posterity.

In the last years of his life Balzac's politically reactionary views became even more conspicuous. When, at the time of the revolution of 1848, the divergencies between the bourgeoisie and the working-class became apparent, Balzac thought the time opportune to run for election to Parliament—against the working-class. It was then that he wrote his Letter on Labour in which he argued against the organization of work introduced by Louis Blanc in these words: "The worker shares in the profits of the business *(opération)* with his employer *(patron)* exactly as a capitalist who prefers a quota of profits to the gains derived from speculation, because the worker is paid at once and *in a privileged way* for his time, strength and cooperation." The *naïveté* and hypocrisy of this argumentation is surprising. One month later, instead of making his policy-speech on April 19, he addressed to two Conservative papers a letter in which he wrote, among other things: "Between 1789 and 1848 France or, if you like, Paris, changed the constitution of her government every fifteenth year. Honestly, has not the time come for us to find and create

a lasting form, a lasting empire and rule, and to see to it that our property, our trade, credit and glory, in fact the honour of France, are not periodically put in jeopardy?" That is how he puts the question, and though he speaks of a "République ... puissante et sage" it cannot be doubted that he is far from being a Republican or a Democrat. He gained only 20 votes at the elections, and he showed no surprise at this in a letter he wrote to Mme Hanska: "My views on power, which I want to be strong to the limit of absolutism, have spoilt all my chances of getting into the National Assembly, and my letter could gain me only a few votes among the clumsy, bustling bourgeoisie. Thus I knew beforehand that I could never be a member of the National Assembly in which a *chansonnier*, Béranger, and five workers found seats. Honestly, it makes one want to weep." In the June days he behaved like an obstinate enemy of the working class: he was glad to see the bloody reprisals and placed his trust in the restoration of the Bourbons. In the following February he was weighing the chances of Little Napoleon: "Louis-Napoleon is a ladder for us; through him we can drag ourselves from the sewer of the Republic." J. H. Donnard is right in saying, in his recently published interesting work entitled *Les Réalités Economiques et Sociales dans la Comédie Humaine* that "At the time of the Revolution of 1848 the writer followed a political trend from which all originality was missing." This 'trend' coincided with the views of the most reactionary bourgeoisie and the press of the period.

Perhaps this analysis of Balzac's political views has succeeded in clarifying that the writer did not long for a feudalist restoration and that this is not where one must look for the reactionary feature of his views. As a romantic protester, Balzac condemns the bourgeoisie for its 'petty' views and ways of life, and he does not consider it to be politically 'reliable'. As for the main issue, the class-struggle, he behaves just like the bourgeoisie—he is afraid of the proletariat. And as he sees that the bourgeois class is unable to protect the prevailing social order, he seeks a strong power. This conservative-bourgeois concept is as full of contradictions as are Balzac's philosophic and religious views, in which we can find many a progressive scientific element. It is primarily these contradictions of a 'conscious' ideology that afford the possibility for the 'victory of realism'.

4.

So far, we have dealt with Balzac's outlook on the basis of his theoretical thinking. Let us now examine how these ideas are reflected in his literary works.

Balzac, despite his idealistic philosophical view, clearly saw the connections between things and events and attached major importance to the principle of causality. "Our globe is full of things and beings, and everything is correlated with everything," he said and, in his novels, he presented these interrelations in their true complexity. His aim of representing processes and interrelations in their complexity played an important part in establishing the cyclical structure of The Human Comedy. Such assessment of causal connections enabled Balzac not to detach the characters of his novels from society, but to seek links between the two and to examine the laws of motion in individual and social life. This feature of his world-view —substantiated by empirical facts—encourage him to recognize and describe objective reality and saved him from the victory of subjective irrationalism in his novels.

Balzac constantly compares the animal kingdom with the world of man and studies the results of physiognomic and phrenologic examinations as initiated by Gall, Lavater and others. This interest inspires him to scrutinize the world with the thoroughness of a natural scientist. There has been much debate in literary history as to whether an observant mind or intuition was characteristic of the author of *La Comédie Humaine*. Félix Davin, a friend, was of the opinion that "Balzac is a clever and keen observer," who "always watched Nature" and "examined details and minor facts". New workers in the Balzac field lay stress rather on the role played by intuition. I do not deny this role, but I think that it would be wrong to underestimate Balzac's keenly observant mind. The manner of description, so important in The Human Comedy, is linked with the writer's observations and his interest in natural science. It is arresting in this context to compare the descriptive technique of the new novel, highly fashionable in these latter days, with that of Balzac's novels. The 'new novel' seeks to prove its own 'objectivism' by meticulous description. Nor can it be said of Balzac that his descriptions are superficial, but there is an essential difference between the two. The bourgeois writer of the 19th century builds on reason; the bourgeois writer of the 20th century, on the other hand, attaches importance to instinct. The descriptive parts in Balzac's novels do not replace psychography and plot, and do not exist for themselves alone but are closely connected with the story itself. Let us only recall how, and in what vivid details, Séchard's old printing-office is described in *Les Illusions Perdus* and the revealing light it throws on portrayal of the owner. Or let me take the description of apartments and shops in *La Peau de Chagrin* conjuring up milieu, mood and characters so vividly that we see them before our eyes. Again we may refer to the description of Vauquer's boarding-

house in *Le Père Goriot*, with its contrasts illuminating Goriot, the martyr of fatherhood, and the ambitious Rastignac and the cynical Vautrin. These links prove that Balzac set great store by the interrelations between man and his environment and that with his descriptions of the milieu he wanted to approach nearer to man. At the same time, following the same principle, he also minutely described the appearance of his characters, in an endeavour to correlate their physical aspects with their moral traits. It follows from the materialistic and scientific elements of his outlook that he conceived man and his environment as a unity.

One of the most important elements of Balzac's world-view and ideology is the scientific interest he had in economic and social problems. His works entitled *Histoire de la Grandeur et de la Décadence de César Birotteau*, *Illusions Perdues*, *La Maison Nucingen* or *Les Paysans* show how thoroughly he was acquainted with the characteristics of 19th-century capitalism. He sees which branches of industry are forging ahead as a result of new technical equipment; he knows how agricultural production undergoes change and how trade evolves in the new social system. No illusions are cherished as to the methods used by the bourgeoisie. Literary historians have pointed to concrete cases which served as a basis for the presentation of the activities of the big and small sharks, these rapacious beasts of capitalism. Balzac not only observed economic facts but recognized their influence on the entire social, political and cultural life. The very fact that he consciously seeks such connections makes him an exposer of capitalism in all its variety. His versatility is best shown in *Illusions Perdues*, where he analyses how literature and intellectual products generally become mere commercial goods. In order to be able to comprehend all this, he not only gained experience, striving to see life as it was, but he also studied bourgeois economic theories and the writings of the Utopian socialists, the works of Bentham, J. S. Day, Malthus, Saint-Simon, Bouchez, Fourier and others. This consciousness is remarkably underscored by his 'aristocratic' views, inducing him to examine the bourgeoisie from the outside and critically. Personal lack of sympathy—saturated with reactionary elements as it was—none the less only strengthens his critical outlook.

We have quoted from Balzac's analytical writings to prove that he realized the role played by the class-struggle in history. This comprehension is almost entirely responsible for the fact that, despite his monarchistic tendencies, the Republican citizens are the victors in *Les Chuans*, and that he depicts in such dark colours the behaviour of the nobility during the Restoration in his novels *La Duchesse de Langeais*, *Lys dans la Vallée*, and *Le Curé de Tours*. In the last analysis, Balzac's works proclaim the victory of capitalism, even

if he sympathizes with the people of the past. In addition to his recognition of objective laws, his fear of the proletariat gave him a subjective basis for continually scourging the nobility and the bourgeoisie, as well as for preaching Catholic legitimism which, to him, meant a strong central power.

It would be wrong to deny that the reactionary elements of his world-outlook influenced The Human Comedy. In vain did he endeavour to present contemporary society in its entirety, the urban proletariat in the making had no place in his novels. His contemporaries, Stendhal, Sue and George Sand, dealt with it at some length. Balzac is more interested in the village poor but after 1840, as a result of his political development, his peasant characters become unsympathetic. *In Le Médecin de Campagne* and *Le Curé de Village* the provincial poor are still unhappy, wretched people whom the religious philanthropists want to help, but in *Les Paysans*—which he himself could not finish—the peasants are the antipathetic enemies of the big landowners, partly stupid victims, partly rebels out to overthrow the established social order, depicted by the author with realism but not without anger. "The vanguard of the barbarians"—that is how Balzac calls the proletariat. This reactionary bias limits his work and decreases the artistic value of some of his novels, with among them *Les Paysans.*

In the preface to *La Comédie Humaine* Balzac recalls his 'positive heroes'. One of them, the principal character of *Le Médecin de Campagne* (1833), is Benassis, who tries to put into practice the author's social and political ideas. He settles down in a small mountain village where he serves and supports the poor as a physician and mayor. However, he remains an isolated character whom the author's sense of reality soon eliminates from the world of the *Comédie.* The other is David Séchard, the ruined inventor of *Illusions Perdues,* who escapes from society, which refuses to appreciate him. And what about the Republican Michel Chrestien, one of the victims of the uprising of July 14, 1831, who figured in *Illusions Perdues?* Is he attracted by Balzac's revolutionary republicanism? Michel Chrestien, in the novel, believes in the immortality of the soul; he holds that the French Revolution has realized Christ's teachings on equality, and he wants to create a European federation, not necessarily on a republican basis. This view corresponds to the theory of Ph. L. B. Buchez, who was close to the Saint-Simonists; in fact, according to J. H. Donnard, he was the living prototype of Chrestien. With this character—also soon disappearing from his gallery—Balzac expresses his sympathy for the Saint-Simonists, yet even so he does not borrow the most progressive ideas from this variety of Utopian socialism though he is quite enthusiastic about its idealistic features.

So the figures found to be sympathetic by Balzac withdraw from society or perish as do the heroes of the romantics.

It is the positive heroes who expound Balzac's philosophical, social and political views. The exposition of these ideas in *Louis Lambert*, *Séraphita*, *Le Médecin de Campagne*, *Le Curé de Village* and *Lys Dans la Vallée* seems to be uninteresting to the present-day reader, who sees it as a confused Utopia of which he can make neither head nor tail. The novels themselves reveal that his views are opposed to social reality and may prove at best that Balzac is a committed writer who, besides exposing bad things, wants to blaze a new trail, as far as his own potential allows.

György Lukács writes in one of his essays "No man more than Balzac experienced so keenly the torments that the transition to the capitalist system meant to all strata of the population, the profound mental and moral degradation necessarily concomitant with this development in all social strata. Simultaneously, however, Balzac also experienced, just as keenly, the realization that this transformation was not only a historical necessity but, ultimately, of a progressive character. Balzac endeavoured to incorporate these contrasts in his world of ideas and experiences into a system adorned with Tory Utopias based on a Catholic legitimism. This system was always refuted by the social realities of his period and by his vision reflecting it. However, this refutation expressed the real truth—Balzac's profound insight into the contradictorily progressive character of capitalist development." Lukács's statement is quite correct that Balzac, having condemned the torments that go with the development of capitalist production, was nevertheless compelled to admit the progressive character of this process. However, philological analysis does not justify the proposition that there was such a contrast between Balzac's "system adorned with Tory Utopias based on Catholic legitimism" and his vision reflecting social realities, as put forward by Lukács—starting out from Engels: it does not justify setting his *entire* world-view against his work, nor does it justify an interpretation of the victory of realism that examines *only* the differences between his world-view and his work, neglecting to stress the resemblances and parallels between them. In my opinion his world-view and his work cannot be rigidly contrasted: Balzac's antithetical world-view is reflected also in The Human Comedy. The positive features of this 'ideology' are: interest in natural science, a dialectical insight into relationship and interdependence, a study and comprehension of the economic laws of capitalism, a recognition of class warfare, all of which help the author to paint reality, so that reality is reflected in *La Comédie Humaine* not only through intuition or some sort of vision. Sometimes the reactionary aspects (glorification of monarchy, aristo-

cracy and religion) serve—indirectly, and based on a subjective hatred of the bourgeoisie—the purpose of revealing the truth at other times, but predominantly, they detract from the artistic value of his works.

The works cannot lead an "independent" life in the sense as of being detached from the author's outlook. Had Balzac been only a "normally intelligent legitimist" he actually could not have written *La Comédie Humaine*, but as we have seen he was more than that. Emphasis on the interrelations between the *Comédie* and the author's world-view does not mean that we want to deny the importance of a writer's 'vision'; Balzac is not primarily a politican or historian but a writer who, mentally and emotionally, lives the lives of his characters. At the same time he is not just any writer but one of the greatest writers of the world, combining a keen sense of observation, the characteristics of a scientist, with an exuberant artistic gift and an active will ready to take responsibility for others. The writer's vision restored to life the French world of the first half of the 19th century; this vision was not only instinctive, it also built upon conscious elements.

5.

How does a writer present life? What artistic means does he use?

Even a fledgling reader is carried away by the exciting plot of most novels, the best example being Walter Scott. Scott went back to the past, Balzac drew on the present for themes, and this obliged him to pay major attention to lifelikeness and reality. Usually, he prepares the action by first depicting the environment and the characters in detail. Indeed, when the story is already well under way, he continues his explanations, with allusions to the past. He unravels the plot with animation, like a trueborn dramatist; he is fond of unexpected turns, sharp contrasts and clashes, and a clear finale to the story. Everything is heavily interlaced with dialogue, interrupted here and there by descriptions or reflections. Balzac's stories are romantic in the sense that chance plays a major role, but these chance occurrences fit into the general development of events, situations and characters, and thus become necessary. The story of Colonel Chabert is by no means a hackneyed one: the hero who was wounded and buried at Eylaun, rises from the dead and appears in Paris to get back part of his fortune from his wife. Many more accidental things happen in this extraordinary story, only proving what a decadent the society the Countess Ferraud belonged to and that true grandeur was guarded only by the soldiers of the Napoleonic age.

It is one of Balzac's major assets that he is a great hand at creating situations which enhance the dramatic atmosphere and assure a head-on clash between the characters. Recall the first opera scene of *Illusions Perdues* in the Paris Opera-House, where Lucien de Rubempré encounters élite society for the first time. Balzac here parades the whole pageantry of his heroes and with a few pen strokes splendidly brings out the isolation and gaucherie of the country gentleman. To set up a contrast, such as in this case, is one of the characteristic methods of Balzac. Or let us quote, as an extreme example, the death scene of César Birotteau when the bankrupt —but acquitted—perfumer revisits again the scene of his one-time glory and dies of amazement.

But Balzac seeks contradictions not only in situations but primarily in characters which strictly speaking, often personify entirely opposing principles. This 'parading' of antagonistic characters does not imply simplification. The basic compositional principle of *La Comédie Humaine* is the recurrence of the figures, assuring their presentation from many facets, as well as a wide-ranging description of society. Balzac, in animating his heroes had two possibilities: a life-sketch that enables him to portray a few characters, or the creation of many protagonists presented to us not in one work alone but within a cycle of works. The writer chose the second solution. Sainte-Beuve condemned this choice as "a false concept which contradicts the mysteriousness attached to the novel". In this debate the writer was right, because the thousands of characters in The Human Comedy—partly real, partly fictitious—crop up in many environments and at different times and thus succeed in showing us the social classes of the early 19th century, its social and individual types of behaviour and its main social trends. This method is introduced by Balzac in *Le Père Goriot*, but he leads the figures back to his earlier novels and interchanges the individual characters in *Les Chouans*, *Eugénie Grandet*, and in *Madame Firmiani*.

Balzac's portrayal of characters is considered by bourgeois aesthetics and literary historians to have a simplifying tendency, in that that he takes casual relations seriously, and that his predilection for describing extreme passions supposedly results in oversimplification. Many see an attitude of fatalism in his ideas about the development of human character. There is little truth in this criticism. Let us examine, for example, the character of Eugène de Rastignac. We become acquainted in *Le Père Goriot* with this scion of an impoverished genteel family who wants to conquer Paris, though in the beginning he is inspired only by decent emotions, honest intentions and means. Clever, he soon finds out—seeing Goriot's fate and hearing Vautrin's teachings—that one can assert himself in bourgeois society only by base

means. After Père Goriot's burial, he "gazed for a long time at the zigg-zagging outlines of Paris on both banks of the Seine, where the lights had already gone up. Eagerly he riveted his eyes on the part of the city that stretches from the column of Place Vendôme to the Dôme des Invalides. That was the residential quarter of the upper ten, the élite society where he wanted to gain admittance at all cost. He looked at this bustling beehive as though he were tasting the honey on his lips, and he uttered this great sentence: "It's our turn now'—." Indeed, this decision sets the course of Rastignac's career. In *Illusions Perdues* he is already afloat on this society as a 'paper kite' and makes a career as the lover of Delphine Nucingen. In *La Maison Nucingen* we see him again as the banker's partner, getting rich through various speculations. In *Député d'Arcy* he marries his mistress' daughter and makes a political career. *Les Comédiens Sans le Savoir* reveals that in 1845 he is Minister of Justice, a Count, and member of the Upper House with an income of 300,000 *livres*. Is his a simplified character? Stendhal's Julien Sorel, often quoted as Rastignac's antithesis, lives in a narrower circle and is more of a monomaniac than Rastignac. At best one might say that Julien, more romantic and feeling more of a stranger in bourgeois society, is more sympathetic than his contemporary.

Of course, I do not want to deny that certain of his central figures like Grandet, Vautrin, Gobseck, Père Goriot, Tante Betty and others are 'monsters' of some passion. Even his contemporaries objected to these exceptional characters, whom the author defended by saying that he knew most of them from life and that our society is typified by "exceptional" persons. "A generation," he wrote, "is the drama of four or five thousand exceptional persons." So he did not regard the average as a type but those persons who, as representatives of a certain social class or stratum, display the human behaviour appropriate to it. To Hyppolite Castille he puts this question in 1846: "Do you believe in the existence of Lovelace? There are five hundred dandies in every generation who rolled into one are like this modern Satan." Balzac reduces variety to its essence. He does not refuse to contract or exaggerate, nor does he want to limit his characters, for there are many varieties within one type. How many varieties of the careerist may we not find in The Human Comedy, in addition to Rastignac! Let it suffice to quote the example of 'the great gentleman of the province', Lucien de Rubempré who gets into 'refined society' with the Church's support. Though he attains many a good thing in life, his destiny is different from Rastignac's for he ends with suicide. Or let us examine the difference between financiers, such as Gobseck, a played-out usurer, Baron Frédéric Nucingen, a banker engaged in large-scale specula-

tions, and Rigou, a village Shylock. Marx, when discussing the question of reproduction in his Capital, remarks that "Exclusion of money from circulation would also exclude absolutely its self expansion as capital, while accumulation of a hoard in the shape of commodities would be sheer folly." He quotes the example of Gobseck for this folly: "Thus for instance, Balzac, who so thoroughly studied every shade of avarice, represents the old usurer Gobbeck as in his second childhood when he begins to heap up a hoard of commodities." But Nucingen is by no means so childish; his economic and political role coincides with general developments. His dirty speculations make him a financier, and as such, after 1830, he becomes a *pair* of France. Rigoux's wits cannot be compared with those of Gobseck, nor can he be, of course, set against Nucingen, yet he is a contemporary prototype of the village usurer who makes the peasants do unpaid work for him. "He saves the cash outlay for wages," Marx writes, "and enmeshes the peasant, who is gradually ruined by being denied time to labour his own field, deeper and deeper in the spider-web of usury." Marx who, according to Lafargue, admired Balzac so much that he wanted to write a monograph on him—emphasizes that it is "generally characteristic of Balzac that he fully understood realistic conditions," and this comprehension is proved also by his figures who, despite their dominating passions, are complex characters and living men. Balzac himself felt them as such, no wonder he sent for Bianchon, the 'typical doctor' of The Human Comedy, before his death. *(Allez chercher Bianchon!)*

Since Sainte-Beuve many have reproached Balzac with lacking taste, having no sense of moderation, and following the classical ideal of style. Others again accused him of negligence, which, in general, is not true, for he revised and corrected his manuscripts often and with care. Indeed, he corrected his story *Pierrette* so many times that the twenty-seventh proof-sheet did not contain anything of the original. Sometimes this scrupulous care and his effort to correct marred his style. Stendhal was right in saying: "I suppose he writes his novels in two phases; first logically, then endowing them with a neologistic style and using fine expressions such as 'the passions of the soul', 'it is snowing in my heart', and the like." These 'fine expressions' are the consequence of the adoption of the romantic ideal of style. It must be admitted that Balzac, in his style, makes concessions to this ideal, sometimes by cheap means, but it cannot be denied that at the same time his style is lively, colourful and adaptable to the various situations. He makes bold use of everyday idiom, thus enhancing reality. In point of fact, he becomes stilted where he wants to be literary and imitates Chateaubriand or Maistre. His working method is excep-

tional: he writes, corrects or re-writes several manuscripts at a time. In addition to the literary distortions, this method is also responsible for his slovenly style. Saint-Beuve is right in saying that "Balzac writes not only with a clear mind but also with his blood and his muscles."

One could list many more of Balzac's artistic deficiencies, for his life-work is far from being even. He has some poor novels and stories, over-romantic as to plot, situations, characters, or mystical ideas. But why linger over this subject? It is not what Balzac has handed down to posterity. "Grandeur, joie de vivre and romanticism—maybe these three elements make up the alloy of Balzac's genius," Albert Gyergyai, former professor of French at Eötvös University, writes. "If we think of Balzac, we see him as a Titan at work, and if we think of his novels, many types, characters, scenes or fleeting observations flash back to our minds in such contrasting light, with such extreme tensions, such tremendous, yet interrelated amassing of details and with such magnificent preparation of the direct effect that we are at a loss to know whether we are reading a novel or seeing reality. To such an extent does appearance sometimes mingle with reality and art with truth in Balzac's works."

6.

Balzac's work became the epitome of critical realism. It was from his novels that Engels drew the conclusions for his statement on realism: "Realism, according to his idea, includes, besides of close and exact details, the true description of typical characters under typical circumstances." There can be no doubt—and this is what we have attempted to prove—that The Human Comedy displays the typical circumstances and characters of early 19th century French society with great fidelity of description and accuracy of detail. Balzac's critical views on bourgeois society are one of the great gifts of bourgeois literature and they left their imprint on several great writers of the 20th century; Romain Rolland, Roger Martin du Gard or Thomas Mann. Balzac's and Tolstoy's art has also influenced socialist literature and socialist realism. The trend followed by Gorky and his adherents owes a great deal to their predecessors, the critical realists. Balzac's continuing popularity reminds us that the reading public has not turned against this realism, in fact—mainly in the socialist countries—it is beginning to discover Balzac's great merits.

Doing justice to all this, we should, nevertheless, avoid making a sort of standard out of Balzac's realism, lest the development of literature be ham-

pered. Balzac himself never claimed exclusiveness for his trend. In the literature of his age he discovered three currents: the literature of ideals, represented, according to him, by Stendhal and Mérimée; 'pictorial' literature, represented by Hugo and the romantics; and the literary eclecticism which Walter Scott, James Fenimore Cooper and Balzac himself endeavoured to create, synthesising certain elements of the two other trends. Balzac, Stendhal and Hugo were representatives of the same class, lived in the same age, yet their outlook and their art often differ. Balzac is a realist, but his outlook is in many respects reactionary; at any rate more so than that of the similarly realist Stendhal, an adherent of 18th-century enlightenment. As to his world-view, Victor Hugo, in certain phases of his life, stood nearer to Balzac, yet with all his romanticism, he is more progressive than Balzac, in fact—in certain respects—than Stendhal himself.

Engels, when he wrote his already quoted letter to Miss Harkness, was not acquainted with Stendhal's works. Had he read *Le Rouge et Le Noir* or *La Chartreuse de Parme*, he would surely have worded his ideal of realism with more nuances. In his essay entitled The Debate Between Balzac and Stendhal, György Lukács alleges that "Balzac is the more profound realist of the two, and less romantic, despite his world-view and the romantic features of his style." Without a doubt, Balzac's lifework encompasses much more of contemporary society but the depth of his works is certainly debatable. The truth is that Stendhal's realism differs from that of Balzac, but this difference does not make it less valuable; it means only that there were several trends even within critical realism. If we are thoroughly acquainted with Stendhal's works, even the question of the 'victory of realism' looks different: the contradiction between political views and the final message the work wants to convey is not inescapable, and works of critical realism can be written with an unequivocally progressive outlook as well.

Romanticism should, however, also be mentioned in this context. Certain elements of romanticism are manifest not only in the works of Balzac but also in those of Stendhal, who protested against capitalism even more sharply—because he did so from a progressive point of view. But we know also of the reverse—the best works of Victor Hugo endure because their basically romantic character is closely interlinked with realistic features. And their presence can be ascribed to Hugo's democratic outlook, enabling him, though a romantic, to acquaint himself with and to reflect concrete historical and social reality.

All this is not intended to refute the difference between realism and

romanticism as, in this case, two historically defined trends; specifically I want to point out the complexity of the literary process and a certain relativity affecting the criteria of these trends. From the French literature of the first half of the 19th century, realistic and romantic works have survived if they succeeded, at least partially, in giving an artistically true picture of the essential features of reality, and thus exercise an influence. For both romanticism and realism wanted to influence people, in fact, the wide masses of the people—even if Stendhal, in his embitterment, wished to write only for the happy few.

In *Illusions Perdues* Balzac says: "...And a voice spoke in Lucien: 'Reason is the lever whose aid can unhinge the world; but another voice said: 'Reason hinges on money'." Balzac described a society in which money was omnipotent. He himself rebelled against it, though not from the future but rather from a retrospective point of view. And yet, the efforts of the monarchist, Maurras, early in the century, to use Balzac to substantiate his reactionary policy were of no avail. The bourgeoisie, in the end, turned against him and rejected his criticism by saying that his novels were 'immoral'. Such an opinion was represented in this country by Pál Gyulai, who wrote in 1854: "Balzac always makes sin triumph, and his characters are people tortured by evil passions." Balzac, by exposing the rule of money, unwillingly supported the struggle of the proletariat he so much feared. That is how the Utopian socialists saw him, that is how Marx and Engels assessed his works, and that is the view of present-day Marxists. An 800-page monograph entitled *La Comédie Inhumaine* by André Wurmser has recently been published by Gallimard in Paris. In it the author proves, with a wealth of material, that Balzac was an excellent observer, portrayer and critic of capitalist society; so the Marxists justly acknowledge him as their own. Is this inference a restrictive one? Hardly. There is no greater tribute to a writer than to say that his works have influenced the evolution of mankind.

AN ENGLISH WRITER'S EXPERIENCE OF THE 1930'S*

by

STEPHEN SPENDER

I have chosen to talk to you about the 1930's because to some extent this period forms a meeting place, common ground for us. A good many of those in this room must have shared the intensely political feelings of that decade. I want to discuss literature more than politics, but all the same this was a time in which for many writers and intellectuals politics seemed unavoidable. Undoubtedly what caused writers and artists of different countries to work together in the thirties was not literature but politics, or literature identified with politics.

It was, though, a period of contradictions: nationalism which found its expression in the international anti-Fascist movement of the Front Populaire; liberal individualism strongly pulled in the direction of communism; and a kind of aggressive pacifism. The English Labour Party idea of "collective security," demonstrates the contradictions of the time. Collective security meant that resistance to Fascism could be combined with the pacifist policy of disarmament.

For English writers, I think that the 1930's was above everything else a decade of individual protest. Anti-Fascism was the response of individuals to an appeal to their conscience—often a liberal or a puritan conscience—to resist evil. It was ofren seen as a struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness, a moral struggle seeking political expression.

The International Brigade, which may be taken as the most dynamic expression of the spirit of the anti-Fascist Thirties, appeared to us in England to consist of individuals, voluntarily and freely uniting in a cause. In this respect one must compare the 1930's with 1848 and 1870, moments of illumination in a historical struggle in which people take sides without doubts, and as it were under spotlights. If one reads Baudelaire's reflections

* An address to members of the Hungarian Writers' Association and the Hungarian P.E.N. Center

in his Journal describing his own astonishment at his own extraordinary enthusiasm for the Paris Commune, one understands how in the England of the thirties the unpolitical suddenly immersed themselves in politics.

Most of the English writers whose names are associated with the Thirties are middle class. Today, after our mild Welfare State Revolution, writers of a younger generation, sometimes express astonishment at the very bourgeois look of the English anti-Fascists. They regard Auden, Day Lewis, MacNeice, Orwell, Cornford and others as English public school boys trying to join the working class. Yet I think it was not just the chance that the Thirties took place at a period when the public schools and Oxford and Cambridge were still the voice of England, which made middle class intellectuals anti-Fascists. It is important to understand that anti-Fascism was the expression of a crisis of middle class liberal conscience, arising as it did from a political and economic crisis in capitalist society.

If we look on the Thirties simply as Hitler, we do not realize this. But in fact the shock to the middle class conscience which produced anti-Fascism occurred before the time of Hitler, with what seemed the breakdown of the capitalist system. Hitler was the worst form of a disease which began with the Wall Street crisis of 1929, producing the slump with millions of unemployed in Europe. It was during the slump that the more sensitive and intelligent bourgeois intellectuals began to feel that the very system which gave them their privileged position in society also undermined the lives of their fellow human beings, by producing mass unemployment. There was a connection between the forces which gave them their advantages and which took away the very reason for existing of their fellow beings, the workers. This made their own advantages in some sense intolerable to them.

Ever since the 1920's, the young writers had felt that they were living through the "Death of Society" (as a novel of the late twenties was entitled). The values in which they had been brought up belonged to a system that was collapsing. If they did not read Marx they knew about Spengler's *Decline of the West.*

At this point I must glance back further even than the twenties, into the nineteenth century. The idea of the modern world of industrial society being envisaged as "the collapse of values," has a long history. It is closely linked up with the whole concept of modern poetry, modern art. Nineteenth century writers like Ruskin and Matthew Arnold saw modern civilization as fragmented, themselves as divided between a world which was dead and another "unwilling to be born." Ruskin thought of socialism as the reintegration within modern technology of mediaeval crafts, aesthetic values, and wholeness of living.

The identification of the concept of fragmentation in modern society with industrialism often takes a form in which it is dissociated from politics. Readers of I. A. Richards, F. R. Leavis and the American new critics, will realize that phrases like the "breakdown of the organic community," "the collapse of values," "disintegration" etc., express a dogma of modern literary criticism. And one can state as a generalization with few exceptions that "modern art hates modern life." A symboliste, imagist, or vers libre poem justifies the fragmentation of its form, its difficulties, by the implied assertion that its complexity reflects the shattered unity of life in industrial society, just as modern psycho-analysis is the reflection of modern neurosis.

One thing that happened in the Thirties was that politics, desperate as it then was, at least offered an escape, or a diversion away from, the pessimistic social outlook of modern literary theory, and poetic practise. The Thirties arose out of the despair of *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses*, the frenetic appeals to love of D. H. Lawrence, the hopeless nostalgia of Ezra Pound. Ever since Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark*, the idea of a 'boojum' responsible for all the ills of the modern world has haunted English literature. In the Thirties it appeared that the 'boojum' was capitalism. Sherlock Holmes turns out to be Karl Marx.

The 1930's was a horrific, tragic period. One might perhaps say that it was too serious for anything except farce. The great merit of Auden in his early socially conscious work, *The Dance of Death*, *The Dog Beneath the Skin*, and *The Orators* was that he applied to this situation the cartoon technique of farce: farce that did not forget the tragedy.

These early works of Auden expressed the rebelliousness of the young, the feeling that there was something wrong with "England this country of ours where noone is well." It was as much a battle against inhibiting manners, stuffiness, fussiness—governesses, nannies, retired generals, civil servants, stuffed shirt politicians, invalids, bishops, school masters, scout masters—as against the Baldwin government. In the early Auden there is the feeling that an Empire is coming to an end, and a good thing too.

With Hitlers' persecutions and burning of books, and with the Spanish Civil War, the situation of the Thirties became tragic. But it did not, for the English poets, cease to be primarily the concern of individual conscience, in circumstances where there seemed to be little public and no governmental conscience. To express it metaphorically what the young English poets heard was the scream of a political prisoner behind a wall, a scream which officialdom and the whole ruling class did not hear, a scream which the Fascists tried to prove was of an *untermensch*—someone whose voice the future would never heed, whose fate would go unrecorded. The poets at

least wrote elegies for those whose agony—and sometimes whose very existence—could only be deduced. The scream also was the nucleus of other things than poems—committees, meetings, finally the Front Populaire. One joined these because one supported action which was directed by humanity and compassion.

But it was not political theories, it was the situation in which Nazism had become a threat to the present and future of liberty, a factory for mass torture and killing, a propaganda promoting racial hatred, which made us turn to a politics which we identified both with our own poetry and the simplest rights of human beings. We saw that not only for German and Jewish writers whom Hitler considered his enemies, but in the whole of Western civilization freedom of speech was threatened. In fighting Fascism we felt that in the last analysis we were struggling for our own freedom to write non-political poetry.

So I want to emphasize the extent to which anti-Fascism in England was the politics of the unpolitical. It was the politics of a generation whose literary gods were Eliot, Joyce, Lawrence and Yeats, a generation of writers who hated public life but who felt forced for the reasons that I have given to support the forced opposed to Hitler.

It is forgotten today that anti-Fascism was a less unified movement in the 1930's than may appear today. On the surface what was apparent was the International Brigade, meetings of the Front Populaire, Artists for Spain, etc. But underneath there were disagreements, recriminations and accusations, some of which can still be heard. A topic of debate is suggested by the title of Aldous Huxley's book *Ends and Means*. Huxley argued that war was never justified, because the ends can never justify the means: indeed if violent means are used they will convert the ends into a system perpetuating violence. In the first edition of his poem *Spain* published after he had gone to the Spanish Civil war, one sees Auden trying to convince himself that the ends do justify the means, that today we must accept the 'ephemeral pamphlet', the 'boring meeting', the 'necessary murder.' Spain was violently attacked by Orwell, who said that noone who wrote it could ever have seen a murder. But in fact Auden was more occupied with trying to convince himself by his own poetic logic, than trying to support political murder.

In 1937 André Gide went on a famous visit to the Soviet Union. On his return he published his journal, *Retour de l'URSS*. In this he criticized various features of Stalinist Russia, including what is now called 'the cult of personality' apparent to him when he was asked to send an adulatory telegram addressed to the glorious Stalin.

I happened to be attending the Congress of Intellectuals held in Madrid, shortly after the publication of Gide's journal. This Congress was attended by many famous people: André Malraux, Julien Benda, André Chamson, Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, Pablo Neruda, Nicolas Guillén, José Bergamin, La Pasionara, among them. Many of the writers present were divided on the question of Gide's *Retour de l'URSS*. I remember one famous speaker saying that he was against it because it would give comfort to those Fascists who, during his speech were firing shells (at any rate, one shell), at us. I remember my total lack of sympathy for this argument (I remember incidentally, asking Malraux what he thought of the Gide journal and his saying: "Russia and Gide is a love affair, and I never have views about people's love affairs.")

I remember also that as soon as I returned from the meeting in Madrid I left in Paris a note on Gide to say that I supported ihm in the publication of his journal. After this I saw Auden, who remarked that political exigence could never justify the suppression of the truth.

All this is rather simple-minded, and perhaps sounds as if it were meant to appear noble. One has to set against it, the fact that some of the best young English writers of their generation—Julian Bell, John Cornford, Ralph Fox, Cristopher Caldwell, died in Spain.

Perhaps one should also bear their deaths in mind when one thinks about George Orwell, who was a solitary dissenter, anti-Fascist but still more-anti-anti-Fascist in an anti-Fascist during the 1930's. Although a man of the left, at the time of the Spanish Civil War Orwell conceived a bitter hatred of the Left, particularly of the left wing intellectuals. Long before many others he saw the evil of Stalinism. He held that the sin of the left wing intelligentsia was supporting one kind of totalitarianism—accepting its lies and propaganda and injustices—against another totalitarianism. Fundamentally his criticism was that they adopted theoretical attitudes about matters involving murders, injustices, and a terrible propaganda of lies, without having experienced the realities of the public events about which they theorized. He was justified in attacking people like myself, less justified if his criticism was meant to apply to people who fought in the International Brigade. His position really was that you had to practise what you preach. He himself joined not the communist dominated International Brigade, but a Catalan anarchist division. He fought on the Catalan front, where he was wounded.

Orwell's position is important, because it implies that one should not separate opinion about issues like the Spanish Civil War from action. It also leads one to reflect on the even more remarkable case of Simone Weill.

who throughout the thirties and forties adjusted her own standard of living to that of the victims of the period—almost starving herself, in order that she might share the life of those in concentration camps. Flor at the back of one's mind in the Thirties was an awareness that many people have enlightened views and are ready to take sides about public issues, but few are saints.

Today in England, the young sometimes have a curious attitude towards us of the 1930's. They say "We envy you. Even if deceived you had something to believe in." My own belief is that we were not altogether wrong. The war could have been stopped if the democracies had been awakened by the anti-Fascists to the real aims of Hitlerism. But I cannot see that we are to be envied in having been diverted from exploring fundamental truths which have nothing to do with the politics of that time—those politics that have already become past history.

COEXISTENCE AND THE WORLD TRADE CONFERENCE

by

JÓZSEF BOGNÁR

People are becoming increasingly aware that coexistence means, presupposes and requires much more than the mere warding off of a nuclear war. Only by eliminating the causes and factors responsible for war or at least by substantially limiting their influence can war or wars be avoided. Therefore peace needs vigilance, confidence and security. Confidence and security, in turn, depend on the productive co-operation and joint undertakings of the peoples. Hence constructive economic and cultural co-operation and exchange between States constitute a positive contribution to peace. In our days, however, when interdependence of peoples and States has assumed unprecedented proportions and when the achievements of the scientific and technical revolution result in the internationalization of widening spiritual and economic spheres, bilateral or multilateral co-operation of States is no longer sufficient. The functions, tasks and jurisdiction of international organizations must be expanded.

I

The convocation, proceedings and resolutions of the World Trade and Development Conference demonstrate that the governments of the various countries—and, through them, the overwhelming majority of mankind—are becoming increasingly aware of the significance, requirements and purposes of international economic co-operation.

Obviously, the governments of countries of different social systems essentially differ in the interpretation of this recognition, in the sincerity of its assessment and in facing the consequences. Progress is, nevertheless, extremely important.

The history of the convocation and proceedings of international confer-

ences can be written in many different ways. Since we do not intend to write a history of diplomacy, we shall not examine which countries have suggested and which have opposed the convocation of this Conference for the past ten years. From a historical and economic angle the decisive question is why this Conference *had* to come into being and take place after many a detour, difficulty and nonsense. Many may contend that no inevitable necessity can be detected in the circumstances leading to the Conference and determining its proceedings. Nor do we, of course, believe in some necessity or fatality acting independently of human will, conviction and endeavour, and of conditions created by us. Yet we contend that the requirements deriving from socio-economic conditions, novel technical development and new international circumstances are recognized—sooner or later, possibly after grave errors—by the vast majority of mankind. The depth and consciousness of this recognition, naturally, vary within a wide range. Some are only capable of seeing immediate consequences, whereas others recognize a considerable part of the derivative and subsidiary consequences of a new situation.

The convocation of the World Trade and Development Conference can be traced back to such a *collective recognition*, which—very briefly—can be summed up as follows: the contradiction between the conditions created by the technical and scientific revolution, on the one hand, and the trade policy (foreign-trade conception) evolved in the period of the cold war, on the other, in present-day world economy must be liquidated. We do not mean to say that this basic contradiction has been recognized by the majority of the contracting parties, public personages, civil servants or even scientists (economists in this case) as the decisive factor responsible for the difficulties in world economy and in the national economy of the various countries. Yet a general feeling that something is wrong exists, and there is a trend to try to find the way out.

The preconditions and the necessity of a wider international division of labour have been created by the technical and scientific revolution, but the trade policies developed during the cold war prevent its implementation.

2

Let us examine the trade-policy conception developed during the cold war. Its criteria can be summed up as follows:

1. Advanced capitalist countries, the United States in particular, decided not to deliver goods to socialist countries that would further their "prepara-

tions for war," i.e., foster their economic development. Such an interpretation of trade essentially means trade war; peaceful trade has never been and can never be governed by any other principle than that of mutual benefits.

2. Advanced capitalist countries endeavoured to maintain their unilateral commercial advantages over the developing countries, advantages acquired during the colonial period.

3. A trend toward autarky developed in the economic management of the socialist countries owing to the import-saving character of their industrialization and to the trade war (embargo, etc.) launched by the United States.

Let us briefly survey the effect of the cold war trade-policy conception upon the economic life, growth and development of the three major participants in world economy (the advanced capitalist countries, the socialist countries and the developing countries).

The *embargo*, i.e., *trade war* (we use the latter term because only war can simplify human mentality to the point of considering advantageous anything that is disadvantageous to the opponent), was declared under specific economic conditions. (The explicitly political aspects of the problem will not be examined in this paper.) Following World War II, the reconstruction of the West-European economies that had sustained great material losses was undertaken, the share of the United States in world trade grew by leaps and bounds, and what is referred to as "retarded consumption" promised a long-range boom in the American economy. In those days world economy was short of goods, since the demand of the reconstruction period for goods considerably exceeded the available supply. The essence of the Marshall Plan—disregarding now its political aspects—was a purposeful distribution of the meagre resources available. Reconstruction was carried out, for obvious reasons, in an industrial structure based on traditional raw materials, thus increasing the demand for them and resulting, especially in the days of growing international tension, in a rapid rise of their prices. This led to a transitory boom in the countries producing raw materials, although the basic contradictions and inequalities survived. The specific aspect and weakness of this boom was that it failed to start a process of growth and to swing over the raw-material-producing economies from a static state into a dynamic one.

In the socialist countries, too, reconstruction was started first; then, under the given conditions, an industrialization of import-saving character was undertaken, resulting in rapid economic growth.

Later, however, owing to the technical and scientific revolution, industrial production in the advanced capitalist countries rapidly increased, and a trans-

formation of the industrial structure also got under way. *Surplus goods* increased, their marketing met with growing difficulties, because these countries *did not want* to sell them to socialist countries and *could not* sell them to the developing countries. This was no wonder, since the production of finished goods and the demand for them grew much more rapidly than did the demand for raw materials, especially in view of the rapid growth in the production of synthetic materials. On the other hand, while the needs of an underdeveloped economy are unlimited in theory, they are much more limited than those of an advanced economy in practice.

Advanced capitalist countries reacted in different ways to the difficulties of realization and to the economic recessions in their wake. The United States government tried to give a new impetus to economic growth by intensifying arms production and thus seeking to reduce unemployment; West-European countries, in turn, endeavoured to enliven the boom by fostering economic integration and by laying new foundations for the international division of labour.

It was soon discovered, however, that armaments today are no remedy against unemployment and for ensuring lasting prosperity. This view is supported by several investigations and reports resulting from the joint efforts of both western and eastern economists. (The scope of the present paper does not permit me to prove this in detail.)

3

It is incontestable that for the past fifteen or so years since the beginning of the cold war the share of the United States in world trade has substantially dropped. This is usually explained in two ways: according to the one, the material and natural resources of the United States are so large that there is hardly any need for foreign trade; according to the other, specific conditions prevailed after World War II (which led to a development of the economy of the United States, while inflicting grave damage on the West-European economies), as a result of which the United States' share in world trade was disproportionately large.

There is some truth in both statements, yet they are basically misleading. It is true that the United States is not very dependent on world trade for its imports. Yet, who could maintain that the world-trade relations of so highly developed and many-sided an economy should and could be examined and approached exclusively from the angle of imports, particularly at a time when the sale of finished goods is of growing importance in world trade,

while the sale of raw materials shows a downward tendency? Although the economy of the United States is not import-sensitive, it would be erroneous—in spite of its highly developed internal market—to say that it is not becoming an export-oriented economy.

Nor can it be contested that after World War II specific world-trade conditions prevailed, yet it should be realized that the share of exports in the national income of the USA is small. This was bound to make itself felt in the slowing down of the rate of economic growth compared with that in the West-European countries. Measures limiting imports were first taken as a "time-honoured" method of counterbalancing the slow growth of exports. This, however, is not a rational method; obviously, the reaction of a strong and advanced economy, when the balance of payments changes for the worse, cannot be the same as in countries at the initial stage of industrialization. The economy of the latter is unable to increase its exports and must therefore restrict its imports. The healthy reaction of an advanced economy to a deterioration of the balance of payments is an intensification of exports.

It follows that in the industrial-technical development of our days, even the strongest economy must increase its exports, and this makes it gradually export-oriented.

The new position of the United States in world economy was partly recognized by the late President Kennedy, who tried to evolve new principles in trade policy. Yet he failed to draw all the inevitable conclusions from his observations. History will reveal to what extent these inconsistencies reflected his own views or prevailing power relations.

On the other hand, the West-European States, as has been mentioned before, tried to expand markets by developing integration. No doubt, they have achieved significant results in this field: their production has grown rapidly, their share in world trade has substantially increased, and their standard of living has materially risen. The development of trade even within the area of integration has, however, met with certain obstacles. It is probable that the imposition of imports on the integrating countries reduces export possibilities to territories beyond the area of integration. If it is true that trade in finished goods plays a growing part in world trade, then the economic difficulties of the export-oriented economies within the integration area will probably increase.

This is why these export-oriented countries realized the danger of embargo and similar prohibitive lists before the United States did. And this, again, explains why, e.g., the German Federal Republic is economically more elastic than the United States or many West-Europan countries.

Even more specific in this field was the position of the United Kingdom,

which was left out of the West-European integration but—owing partly to the low purchasing power of its partners, partly to the slower rate of its economic development—was unable to achieve an adequate increase in its exports to the Commonwealth countries. Owing to these circumstances, British enterprises have done their best to break through the embargo and other prohibitive commercial measures.

The cold war trade-policy conception has thus proved to be untenable—at different times and in varying degrees—in the whole western world.

4

After the period of reconstruction (1948–1949), the other large group in world economy and international trade, the socialist countries, carried out a programme of intensive industrialization. Since the achievements are well known, there is no need of describing them in detail. Industrialization at its initial stage invariably has, in a certain sense, an import-saving character. This is obvious since, on the one hand, increased imports of the means of production cannot be balanced by exports, and the products of the new industry need a certain protection (protectionism), on the other. An increase of exports becomes possible only if and when industrial development is hampered by the limitations of the internal market. At the time of the cold war, however, as a logical consequence of the western embargo, all industrialization had an import-saving character. In this period the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance concentrated its forces mainly in counterbalancing the shortage of raw materials and semifinished goods resulting from the prohibitive measures. Yet, in spite of the difficulties created by the embargo and of the errors committed in internal economic policy, socialist industrialization advanced at a rapid rate, creating a new situation in the socialist economies as well.

The economies of such smaller socialist countries as Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, etc., are *import-sensitive*, i.e., imports grow more rapidly than national income. In Hungary, for instance, there is a 1.5 per cent increase in imports to every per cent of growth in the national income. At the same time, the advance in industrialization makes these economies *export-oriented*, i.e., the expansion of export markets is the chief precondition of the quantitative and qualitative development of production. The position of the Soviet Union is, in many respects, reminiscent of that of the United States; from the import angle the Soviet Union is not much dependent on world trade, yet it is obvious that even so strong and powerful an economy cannot

dispense with the impulses coming from world economy and becoming increasingly intense on account of technical developments.

A growing responsibility devolves on the Soviet economy in helping to solve the decisive problems of world economy; among other things, through affording economic assistance to the developing countries by adequately influencing the prices of raw materials.

These facts clearly show that the socialist countries, having entered a new stage of economic development, cannot dispense with some of the beneficial impulses coming from world trade. Moreover, the rate and efficiency of their future development depend, in more than one respect, upon their active participation in world economy.

Co-operation between the socialist countries, which has vast and still unexploited possibilities, does not preclude but presupposes a rapid and intensive development of economic relations with other parts of the world.

5

It has generally been admitted that the economic growth of the *developing countries* requires wide international co-operation, trade and assistance. Obviously, international assistance cannot replace but only promote the total mobilization of internal spiritual and material resources.

No doubt, the politico-economic problems connected with the growth of the developing countries cannot be understood and solved in a purely "business spirit." That is why the advanced capitalist countries have to face new problems. The prices of raw materials and tropical foodstuffs can be kept low through the influence of the monopolies established in the colonial period. This, however, involves a decrease in the purchasing power of the developing countries and the commodities produced in western countries (by the exporting capitalists) cannot be sold on these markets. As a result it is precisely the dynamic branches of industry most strongly influencing the rate of technical development that are prevented from adequately evolving their capacity. In other words, the higher profits of raw-material monopolies concentrated in the traditional branches of industry forestalls or hampers a market expansion of the dynamic branches of industry.

Trade with the developing countries requires a new, broader and more complex approach on the part of the advanced capitalist countries and, let us add, also of the socialist countries, although it is easier for the latter to take into account the national-economic levels and the long-range interests of the developing countries.

It should be remembered—and this was stressed also at the Conference—that the interests of trade and of development are closely interlinked. A slowly developing or stagnant country is always a worse trade partner than a rapidly developing one. It follows that the effect of trade upon the internal economic processes and through them upon the process of growth should always be taken into account.

Another thing to be remembered is that the credits and aid connected with armaments do not promote economic development, since the weapons, ammunition and spare parts are almost invariably imported; what is more, the experts themselves mostly come from abroad.

It must also be realized that 59 per cent of the population of the world, 80 per cent of children under the age of ten, live in the developing countries (provided the Chinese People's Republic is included among these countries). If the rest of the world refuses to trade with them under adequate conditions and to help them in their economic growth, these countries lose every perspective of development.

To promote the rapid economic growth of these countries is not only our human and international duty, it also serves our own interests. The contradictions and the deepening gap between the so-called rich and poor peoples may lead to countless conflicts that might jeopardize world peace. Rapid economic growth may prevent such conflicts. This, however, requires a radical revision of earlier concepts of world trade and world economy. Everybody must understand that the world—speaking figuratively—has become smaller, peoples' interdependence has grown, and world-economic impulses influencing the development of national economies have become more intensive—a process that is far from having come to an end!

No lasting well-being, prosperity and development can be secured for 40 per cent of the world's population as long as the other 60 per cent live in misery, poverty and stagnation!

With these considerations we have tried to substantiate our statement that the convocation of the World Trade and Development Conference is not the result of incidental factors, of the initiative of this or that State or group of States. It is the product and outcome of the recognition that the scientific and technical revolution requires a new mentality in world trade; the liquidation of the cold war, the victorious spreading of the idea of co-existence, in turn, promote the self-assertion of this new mentality.

6

This new mentality—which, naturally, has not yet been adopted by every State, with all the consequences implied, since the economic interests developed in the past decades still act and mobilize against it—can be summed up in three principles:

1. We live in different socio-economic systems and in three groups, each comprising a large number of States (the advanced capitalist countries, the socialist countries and the developing countries), but in our present world none of these groups are capable of developing, prospering and advancing without an intensive growth of trade and economic co-operation with the States belonging to the other two groups. This means that while each of us should compete in the rapid development of our own socio-economic system, the economic stagnation, relapse or collapse of our rivals (opponents) is not in our interest.

2. The various socio-economic systems represent different economic methods and mechanisms. Naturally, these change and are improved from time to time to serve the given socio-economic system more effectively.

From the existence of different economic mechanisms it follows that what world economy and trade require today is not universal and general principles in the first place. Certain general principles demonstrating our intentions and goodwill without prescribing a sequence of action can, of course, be formulated. (Most of these can be summed up in a negative form, stating what to refrain from.) However, it is impossible to adopt universal rules determining the order and mode of economic action, because the introduction of one and the same impulse into different economic mechanisms will lead to different results. The abolition of customs duties on foreign goods may be advantageous to an industrially advanced country, but might prove disastrous for a developing country.

It follows that world economy and trade must not be "left to themselves," but concrete objectives and tasks must be determined for each group of States, and the interested parties must be allowed to achieve them with means and methods deriving from their own economic mechanism. *Common aims* should be attained *by different but co-ordinated methods.*

3. Compared with past millennia, a basic change has taken place in world economy and trade. For many centuries, foreign trade was based on the advantages inherent in climatic and natural resources. Chiefly raw materials and foodstuffs, produced thanks to these advantages, were exchanged in world trade. History convincingly proves that the comparative advantages inherent in climatic and natural resources can be acquired by war, conquest

or other forms of military force. Hence, the countries having great natural riches but no adequate military forces to defend them have often changed conqueror for conqueror.

Economists with up-to-date minds, however, agree that today relative advantages derive not from climatic and natural conditions but from the technical standard achieved. This is borne out by the structural shifts in postwar foreign trade towards finished goods, by the increasing weight of the foreign trade of industrially advanced countries and by changes in the terms of trade. Besides, a similar shift can be detected also in the internal economy of the countries concerned.

The change in the character of the comparative advantages will strongly affect international policy too. Unlike the advantages inherent in climatic and other natural conditions, those inherent in technical-scientific standards cannot be conquered; they are, on the contrary, liable to destruction in the course of a war.

On the strength of these considerations we venture to hope that economy, responsible for so many wars in the past, will be an effective means of co-operation, exchange of experience and knowledge in the future.

(We know, of course, that as regards such raw materials as oil, as well as certain States, this is not yet the case. Obviously, situations and attitudes developed for many centuries will not change overnight.)

Some may argue that these questions were not raised and emphasized in this manner at the Conference. But as already stated, our purpose was not to describe the proceedings of the Conference, the discussion of the agenda, the claims put forth or the compromises made. Our aim was to discuss the tendencies resulting from the present situation and possibilities in world economy and trade.

There is no doubt that the convocation, the proceedings and recommendations of the Conference should be looked upon as a significant achievement. They convincingly prove that the vast majority of mankind has begun to learn how to coexist. Successful international conferences, however, not only prove but also promote development. They help to shape the mentality of those responsible for international policy. This is a very important element, serving to bring about the concrete actions by which the recognized factors can be turned to the benefit of mankind.

7

In conclusion, I should like to stress some resolutions and decisions proving that the Conference, though at the cost of considerable difficulties and some failures, promotes the atmosphere and practice of coexistence in the economic field.

The resolutions and recommendations adopted declare;

a) "There shall be *no discrimination* on the basis of differences in socio-economic systems."

b) "Economic development and social progress should be the common concern of the whole international community and should, by increasing economic prosperity and well-being, help strengthen peaceful relations and co-operation among nations."

c) "All countries should co-operate in creating conditions of international trade conducive to the export earnings of developing countries and in general to the promotion of an expansion and diversification of trade between all countries, whether at similar levels of development, at different levels of development, or having different economic and social systems."

d) "The Conference has also adopted recommendations for active measures to promote market opportunities for primary commodity exports and for increase in consumption and imports in both developed and developing countries."

e) "Each economically advanced country should endeavour to supply financial resources to the developing countries of a minimum amount approaching as nearly as possible to 1 per cent of its national income."

In the subsequent text the recommendations refer to the importance of middle- and long-range bilateral agreements, stressing the significance of countries with planned economies in the development and expansion of the trade relations of developing countries.

An important recommendation of the Conference suggests the establishment of a universal and authoritative organization which would permanently deal with the problems of international trade. The World Trade and Development Conference will elect a permanent Executive Committee the staff of which will truly reflect the present power relations in the world. The Executive Committee will appoint permanent Subcommittees for the chief groups of commodities and trade functions. The task of the Executive Committee and of the Subcommittees is to plan concrete actions and take measures effectively promoting the development of international trade.

The principles, resolutions and recommendations show that the World

Trade and Development Conference has opened a new chapter in the history of international economic relations. The achievements of the Conference have—beside the many unproductive debates and other difficulties arising at such conferences—given convincing proof that the various States wish to liquidate the cold war heritage in trade policy and that a wide economic co-operation can be achieved in the spirit of co-existence.

The new era of international economic co-operation must rely on new principles evolved from the political and economic potentialities of our age:

a) countries with divergent social systems develop more rapidly if they establish wide economic relations with countries having a different social system;

b) world trade needs few general principles and many concrete common aims attainable by means of co-ordinated action;

c) in an up-to-date world economy the comparative advantages now inherent in the technical-scientific level of the individual countries are not subject to military conquest;

d) the stormy growth of industrial productivity and the change in the structure of world trade require that the economically advanced countries should promote the development of the economically weaker countries.

By embracing and complying with these principles economy can and will become the most effective means of co-operation and progress of the peoples.

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

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George Mikes

(See also pp. 66 and 119)

DIFFERENTIAL WORK AND LEISURE TIME-BUDGETS

AS A BASIS FOR INTER-CULTURAL COMPARISONS

by

SÁNDOR SZALAI

1. *Time as a measure of social activities.*

A day has 24, a week 168, a year about 8,800 hours. From day to day, week to week, year to year this amount of time falls to the share of the poor and the rich, the young and the old, men and women—in short to everybody on this globe of ours, irrespective of nationality, mother-tongue, colour, political or religious conviction and of his position in society. But we can hardly help adding the melancholy statement that it is most probably time alone that is fairly distributed among people and of which everybody can spend the same amount: 24 hours a day, neither more nor less.

The question *how* he spends these 24 hours, how he must and how he may spend it is not so simple and not so equitably solved. Here, there are differences between the poor and the rich, the young and the old, men and women. The individual differences are great, but even greater are those between different societies and between the various classes, strata and groups of people within them.

Naturally, it holds true only for physical time that everybody has an equal share, and then only, if we interpret the conception of time in the above playful manner as a "physical matter", as some commodity that man can take into possession and consume. Actually, physical time is not matter but a measure of movement and change — *αριθμοσ χινηδεωσ* — as Aristotle put it. Man has learned to use physical time in this quality for the measuring of human activity. It is primarily his own and his fellow men's social activity that man quantifies and coordinates by means of time. He even carries a special measuring instrument for this purpose —a watch. The wearing of a watch has become almost as indispensable as that of clothes and, what is more, it is the only mechanical device that man suffers constantly in the close vicinity of or even on his body in this highly mechanized age of ours. Yet, we hardly ever cast a glance at this

physical measuring instrument in order to fix the time and duration of our private activities. We seldom find it necessary to find out how long we have been reading, having breakfast, playing with our children or to know the exact time when we kissed our lover. When engaged in such private activities, we only "look at the watch" if we have some other business to do, not in our private life, but in the "great society" that sets the exact time and duration of our occupations by the hour and by the minute.

That human activity is measured by the equally shared hours and minutes of uniformly passing time is not obvious at all. The custom is not even of long standing. It has become widespread on a large scale as a consequence of manufactural and industrial jobwork, and of the industrial workday or shift of fixed duration, which have definitively separated workplace and home. In our age of time tables and schedules it sounds almost funny if we learn, when reading Herodotos, that this great traveler and well-informed man never met the concept of hour in his world and could not even find the right word for it. At his time, and even much later, it was human activity that served as a measure of time and not the other way round. The "parasang" so often read in Xenophon's *Anabasis* did certainly mean an hour's walk, but its measure was the distance covered, i.e., the fatigue the soldier felt in his legs—somehow as if light measured its own lifetime by the distance of the light-years covered. In Athens and Rome the period between sunrise and sunset, i.e., the main period of human activitiy varying in length with the changing seasons, was always divided into 12 parts. The sixth hour of this period, the "sexta hora", was the time of *siesta.* Much complaint was heard about the water clocks of antiquity, of "clepsydrae," that they did not keep time, i.e., they showed the time uniformly in summer and winter alike, whereas the length of day and night, consequently that of hours, is constantly changing. Ctesibius, the great engineer of Alexandria, found a remedy for this. He designed dials with shortening and lengthening spaces for the hours and, exchanging them with the changing of the days of the year, he succeeded, at last, in adjusting the physical time of water clocks to the daily routine of social activity. Caesar too found it quite natural to determine time by the order of camp life and not the other way round. He speaks of events at the time of the third changing of the night guards and the like, although, even then there were long-known possibilities of fixing physical time.

We mention these seemingly farfetched examples of antiquity partly because this type of "flexible" handling of time, measured not in its physical context but only in its relation to human activity, is valid, with certain restrictions, also today in our modern way of handling free time

or leisure and in the evaluation of our time spans, and partly because the concept of free or leisure time goes back to these very Greco-Roman times.

Today, school is the place where all of us are first acquainted with the duties of a life divided into hours and so disciplined. Practically, it is here that we are first told about the idea of worktime. Those not familiar with the historical literature on "leisure" may be surprised to hear that the word from which our "school" has been derived, originally had no other meaning in Greek than true free time, "leisure", to be spent to one's liking. The theory of "scholé" (*σχολη*) was elaborated with far-reaching effect and in all of its details by Aristotle in his *Politics* and to some extent also in his *Ethics* and *Metaphysics*. Scholé, with him, is the time spent on something for its own sake, as time spent in the company of friends, in the enjoyment of poetry, in listening to music and, above all, in being engaged in worthy thought, in contemplation. The opposite of this is, of course, "ascholia", the state of being occupied with any kind of business and work, for which Aristotle found the best term in the negation of the word "scholé" as shown by "ascholia". The Latin language too says "negotium" (nec-otium) to express by the negation of the word "otium", i.e., "leisure", what today we would call business.

We should not take the easy way of interpreting the word "scholé" simply as an ideological expression of the contempt the slave-holder felt for any kind of work and business. No doubt, in part, it does betray such contempt. Yet Aristotle is quite clear in saying that mere amusement and recreation serving only to restore working power is not part of the concept "scholé". It is just because of this that, in his opinion, to work only for the sake of amusement and recreation is childish and silly. These are needed to restore the working power of man, who, after all, cannot go on working forever. If, however, he is engaged in any kind of occupation its true object can only be to attain "scholé" in the above sense, that is, "leisure", which secures higher culture and the unfolding of the personality. It was by its relation to education and culture and, of course, through the educational and cultural monopoly of the leading stratum of the classical slave-estate that the Greek word "scholé" changed its original meaning of leisure to that of school in our language.

We cannot follow here the course of this dialectical evolution of time spent in work and spent free of work, which has led to the result that today quite a number of states have constitutionally approved the right of their citizens to work and to leisure. We must, however, point out one particularly significant landmark on this long and winding path.

In the early forties of the 19th century, young Karl Marx, before engaging in his studies on working conditions, happened to write his dissertation for the doctor's degree on Epicurus. In the course of his work he gave close attention to the classic concepts of "leisure". In the best part of the appendix to his dissertation, he elucidates the epicurean ideal of pleasure. It is perhaps this antecedent, completing a most thorough study of Aristotle's *Politics*, that made him analyse the question of the length and function of the workday from quite a novel approach when investigating the economic and social characteristics of the contemporary industrial workday in the course of his increasingly exhaustive studies of the relations between worktime, wages and the value of production. The new trait in his conception was the functional unity of the entire time of the worker's day, even of his entire life-time. He emphasized that, under the given conditions, the daily time spent by a worker outside his job was not only too short to permit his personality to unfold or his culture to rise, but it was insufficient even for the necessary recreation needed to restore his working power. At the same time, young Marx in one of his manuscripts, unpublished until 1939, sketched out his conception about an age to come, when, with the abolishment of oppression and exploitation and as a consequence of a large-scale development of the productive forces, social welfare "will be measured, instead of work time, by the yardstick of free time." And this means the free time that can be spent by every member of society in bringing to fruition all of his abilities, in developing his talent, and in covering his demands for intellectual activity. Marx thought that the growth of human knowledge and science resulting from the free time at the disposal of all working people (far in excess of the time needed for restoration of their working power) would raise the scientific and technical standard of productive work to a level not yet attained. This level—as he foresaw—depends not only on the perfection of machines but to a decisive extent on the culture and knowledge of the workers operating them. And growing productivity will put more and more free time at man's disposal, to be spent in high-class occupation with results in knowledge and science that will in turn be of increasing productive use. Thus, as envisioned by young Marx, leisure becomes productive and productive work becomes leisure.

We have not described this conception in order to claim that such a favorable relation between work and leisure has not been realized anywhere in contemporary industry. We do, however, find it most essential that Marx spotlighted something often neglected in the evaluation of work-data and leisure-time studies widespread in sociological investigation. We refer to

the fact that there are not only transitional stages between work and leisure —like the "demi-loisir" mentioned by Joffre Dumazedier—but that "work" and "leisure" form socio-historical categories themselves. In other words, that which is considered work under given social and historical conditions may become leisure under changed conditions, and vice-versa. It is by no means a natural law that productive work or work for one's living cannot offer as much inner and external freedom, as many possibilities for self-expression and relaxation as are usually looked for and found only in leisure spent outside the working place. Yet, only exceptionally lucky or important men have succeeded in turning their productive work into leisure and in making their leisure productive. One can imagine degrees and forms in social and cultural development in which the number of such exceptions will grow or where the exceptional of today will become more or less a matter of course. It is essential, however, even today—especially in the comparison of the work- and free-time balance of groups living under greatly differing social and cultural conditions—that we should not compare, without second thought, the physical amounts of time covering widely divergent duties and liberties. This does not mean that any kind of methodical quantitative comparison is impossible. Unfortunately, even today, we often see that "free" activities, exercised beyond work time, are turned by economic obligations into a heavy burden or actual work, without being regarded as such by those who do it. (It is, of course, not moonlighting or hobbies bringing in extra money that we have in mind, but some of the so-called leisure of housewives or manifestations of the "do-it-yourself-kit", etc.)

The difficulties and methodological problems involved in the preparation of work and leisure time-budgets are greatly increased when attempting to compare data collected under differing social and cultural conditions. These can, however, largely be overcome by the application of a proper method, and it is the aim of this study to show the possibility of a balanced evaluation of certain work and leisure time-budgets, thus providing a basis for inter-cultural comparisons.

2. *Time-budget types.* Time budgets used in social research give quantitative information about the amount of time used by a definite group of people in various activities, and about the division of their time among these activities during the recurrent time period serving as a temporal frame of reference for the budget. Depending upon the object of the report, the frame of reference may cover the 24 hours of a day, the daily time spent outside the jobsite, a weekend, a full week, etc. It is essential, however, that the time budget should have the character of an account:

surveying the distribution of different types of activity throughout the duration of the chosen amount of time. Since human activity has a great variety of forms difficult to distinguish, time budgets can generally estimate only the time consumed by arbitrarily defined major classes of activity; earning a living, communication, housework, family meals, recreation in and outside one's home, studies, sleep, etc. The possibility of evaluating a time budget depends, besides the choice of the temporal frame of reference, primarily on the structure of its system of categories.

Since time-budget research in the past was confined mostly to the working population of industrial societies and usually with the aim of disclosing in full detail the structure of activities either at the jobsite or, on the contrary, in cultural activities, and since the investigations were often restricted to the respective part of the day, an incorrect terminology dividing the day into two parts, namely work time and free time (or leisure), has found general application. Naturally, everybody knows that many hours spent outside the jobsite are taken up with activities that could never be termed "leisure" and that one disposes only of a fraction of the day's time "freely" (if one has free time at all). Finally, there are many who do not restrict their work to "worktime".

In order to avoid misunderstanding, in the following we shall omit the use of the concepts "work time" and "free" or "leisure time." Instead we shall speak about time spent at the jobsite and the share of it devoted to work, and of time spent outside the jobsite and divided among various activities. A work and leisure time-budget covering a whole day's activity will be called simply a "general time budget."

Such time budgets serve to typify social and cultural conditions. Small wonder, since the way in which people's daily lifetime is divided between various activities is an important characteristic of their social existence and situation as well as of their culture. Yet, although the number of time-budget studies published in international literature is quite significant, comparatively few experiments have been made to evaluate their data as a basis for international or more widespread inter-cultural comparisons.

Lack of uniformity in the principles underlying the various time budgets at our disposal is not the only difficulty. There is also a divergence in the classification of various activities and the handling of data. In most cases such differences could be partly surmounted by reducing the categories of data, by estimates and similar means.

As regards an international or "wider" inter-cultural comparison of the general time budgets at our disposal we find even greater obstacles in the following:

a) the temporal frames of reference of most of the general time budgets are narrow, covering only the 24 hours of a day or the 1 or 2 days of the weekend;

b) it is very difficult to draw relevant social or cultural conclusions merely from the absolute or relative amount of time spent in various kinds of activities within the given frame of reference.

As will be seen, the two problems are closely connected. Let us turn our attention to the first.

The intrinsic proportions of time consumption—the ratios of time durations devoted by members of society to various kinds of activity—differ according to the temporal frame of reference in which they are presented: a day, a week or a year.

It goes without saying that of those who spend 8 hours at their jobsites on five days of the week, time spent at work will figure as 1/3 of a 24-hour time budget. Reflected in the frame of reference of the 168 hours of a week, the same amount of time will work out at only 1/4. And what about the yearly time budget? Can it be constructed by mathematical methods only in the separate knowledge of the time budgets of workdays and weekends or in that of their summary in weekly time budgets? Not at all. The data of the yearly time budget must necessarily include a considerable number of days spent on leave, national holidays other than Sundays, etc. There is no need to prove that it is just in making intercultural comparisons that characteristic differences may be expected from the length of yearly vacations, from the number and nature of special rest days, on the one hand, and from the way in which people spend their holidays and their rest days other than weekends, on the other. What is more, in a yearly time budget, days consumed by disability and many other things may become statistically relevant.

Since, however, yearly time budgets, unlike daily or weekly ones, generally cannot be based exclusively on direct observation and questioning, adequate statistical computations and "special purpose" investigations into important seasonal activities, etc., are needed for their construction. Unfortunately time budgets readily adaptable for inter-cultural comparison are still rare, however great their value in the comparative research of the stages of social and cultural progress would be.

Even if availing ourselves of all possibilities offered for the collection of data by direct observation, a lifelong time budget (covering the entire lifetime of a population or of a section thereof) can be constructed today only with the help of special computations and statistical sources. These, however, are affected by such important factors as time spent in school or

on adult education, date of retirement, etc. In this case, the temporal frame of reference can be of demographic character (e.g., average lifetime). The multiple "length cut" that daily, weekly, yearly and lifelong time budgets can give of the "time husbandry" of society as a whole or of that of any of its groups is essential also because the periodicity of one day or of a week comprising working week and weekend affects the rhythm of the social and cultural life of one part of the population only; there are other social groups (also entire societies) whose time husbandry cannot be truly analysed within daily or weekly frames of reference. Think of farmers, or workers employed in certain types of shiftwork, for instance. In the case of inter-cultural comparisons it is also only the yearly time budget that can reveal differences remaining inconspicuous in the daily or weekly time budget. This is even more true as regards lifelong time budgets.

It goes without saying that it is not possible or reasonable to construct time budgets for every purpose. All time budgets of the types discussed here and serving as a basis for social or culturel comparisons can be usetul only if based for the most part on the gathering of factual time data and only to a very small extent on extrapolated or deduced ones. The most dangerous thing is to rely on "prescribed" data, like weekly worktime fixed for a particular type of jobsite in this or that branch of production, or the maximum number of hours permitted for overtime work.

As regards lifelong time budgets, the problems involved can best be illustrated by the widespread scientific dispute as to whether in advanced industrial countries (e.g., the United States or France) the average duration of work has decreased or not since 1900. Daily and weekly worktime has decreased of course, though to a far lesser degree than supposed by public opinion and "prescription." But what does the time spent in earning one's living show in the relation to a whole lifetime?

Since 1900 the average span of life and average life expectancy have grown by decades in every advanced industrial country. This means that there are incomparably more people who reach the average upper age-limit of participation in economic activity. In France, for instances, Pierre Naville demonstrated in 1954 that, as life expectancy had risen since 1900 from 35 to 62 years, the time spent by one person in productive work throughout his lifetime had grown in spite of shorter "workdays" and "working weeks". In making comparative time-budget surveys in order to judge the social and cultural progress of underdeveloped countries and of former colonies the data of lifelong time budgets will be indispensable.

3. *The differential evaluation of time-budget data.* In recent years time-budget investigations have been made in Hungary among the workers of several plants covering both time spent at the worksite and time spent outside it. The investigations were part of a complex sociological survey aimed at revealing the productive, social, cultural and other influences of shiftwork.

The data necessary for the construction of time budgets were collected by means of numerous "yesterday" interviews. We interviewed the workers about their activities during the previous 24 hours in the sequence of their daily routine and about the time consumption (duration) of these activities.

For ecological purposes not to be expounded here, we classified a comparatively large number of blanks (about 1,000), filled out in a factory on the outskirts of Budapest and employing many living at a considerable distance from the worksite, according to time spent in commuting. The time thus consumed varied between a minimum of half an hour and a maximum of about five hours and a half. (The factory itself has no settlement and there are no suitable dwelling houses in the vicinity.) According to the time spent in commuting the data were roughly grouped in five categories, a classification which was subsequently refined. Then, all data obtained were arranged in categories and subcategories according to various group criteria (men—women; married—unmarried; employees—skilled workers—unskilled workers, etc.), and the average daily time consumption falling to the various activity categories was calculated.

After having classified our data sheets into groups in accordance with increasing time for commuting, we became aware of a very interesting phenomenon, which later seemed virtually self-evident. Most of the workers, on the day surveyed, spent 8.5 to 9 hours in the factory, and to this had to be added the time for commuting, varying from 30 minutes to 5 hours. On adding together these two periods we arrived at fixed quantities of time covering from 9 to 14 hours a day (fixed in the sense that the workers could not have changed either their magnitude or the way of using them without radically modifying their living conditions). Our workers—depending on the distance of their homes, commuting time—thus had at their disposal from 10 to 15 hours for all other daily activities (including sleep) independent of occupation at their place of work. In other words, depending upon the number of working hours in the factory and of accessory time (changing clothes at work site, washing, commuting, etc.), a certain "pressure of time" was exerted on the remaining part of the worker's day; he may have had to compress by as much as five

hours (10 instead of 15) the time left out of the day's 24 hours for all other activities.

It was then that we became aware that the actual time spent on vital activities during the remaining part of the day did not contract to an equal extent under the influence of this increasing "pressure of time" but revealed a widely varying degree of "compressibility."

Time for sleep resisted most to the pressure. The workers' data sheets were divided into the five following groups according to the time fixed by their working conditions.

I. 10-11 hours
II. 11-12 hours
III. 12-13 hours
IV. 13-14 hours
V. 14 hours or more.

We found that the average daily sleeping time of 7 hours and 37 minutes of Group I was reduced somewhat group by group, but even in Group V it did not drop below 6 hours and 48 minutes. Thus, if time fixed by working conditions increased by five hours, and time available for all other activities was consequently reduced by five hours so that it did not add up to more than 10 hours, then the worker still only abandoned about 50 minutes (hardly more than 10%) of the sleeping time enjoyed by those of his workmates who disposed of the largest amount of time not fixed by working conditions. He vigorously resisted a shortening of his sleeping time. This he could obviously only do by making great concessions and sacrifices in other regards. Yet time spent on walking, sports, pictures, theatre and similar recreations was also reduced in the average workdays of Group V only to an infinitesimal extent (the weekends were of course treated separately).

Some types of domestic activities (cleaning, shopping, personal hygiene) proved to be more compressible than sleep, but still quite resistent; others, however, including time spent on cooking, washing and ironing started to contract quickly from Group III on. As our separate week-end time-budgets proved these activities were transferred to the week-ends already under relatively small pressure of time or they were discarded more or less through the utilization of various outside services, in which case they did not burden the time budget but rather household expenditures (in the shape of ready-cooked meals, laundry bills, etc.).

Now we began to investigate, using correspondingly grouped data sheets, the divergencies evident among workers of differing personal, family and social status, with respect to the shortening of time for various activities

imposed by increasing time pressure. Compressibility (resistance to pressure of time) appeared to change most characteristically according to the social and cultural characteristics of the group concerned.

We have mentioned that in the total average it was sleep that became least shortened by pressure of time among the workers surveyed, and that this was followed at a certain distance by time spent on certain kinds of household activities. However, this did not apply to younger women and to women having large families (i.e., those who had several children requiring care). Those of this group living under the most favourable time conditions, i.e., those with less than 11 hours fixed by their working conditions, spent 7 hours and 32 minutes of their remaining time on sleep (which closely corresponded to the 7 hours and 37 minutes of Group I), but younger women with large families whose time fixed by working conditions exceeded 14 hours had only an average of 6 hours and 12 minutes for sleep as against an average of 6 hours and 48 minutes for the equivalent Group V. This meant a very great sacrifice, because on approaching the physiological minimum of sleep, it becomes more and more difficult to renounce sleep. In the case of these working women, the compressibility of sleeping time increased. However, numerous kinds of household activities became almost completely incompressible—obviously because mothers will give up anything for the sake of being able to care for their infants. The time spent on caring for children and other related work (cleaning, cooking, washing, etc.) was reduced, in the course of increasing time pressure from Group I to Group V—involving a difference of 5 hours a day—by less than 20 minutes!

This seemed so unbelievable that we started to doubt the correctness of our data and suspected a chance effect due to the relatively small sampling. By way of control we checked how our conclusions tallied with the results of the wider survey reported by the Central Office of Statistics. In groups of working women with 2, 3, 4 or more children, where there was a substantial difference as far as working and accessory time was concerned—a difference of almost one hour, i.e., one degree of time pressure according to our classification—the difference in time allotted to child care was shown to be one tenth of an hour, i.e., 6 minutes. This certainly supports the conclusions of our own survey.

Naturally, we do not presume that all these observations could be generalized. Data collected on a much larger scale and covering more than one country would be necessary for this purpose.

We think, however, that our research experiences, supported by later more comprehensive experimental material, may serve as a basis for some general methodological considerations.

To all appearances, within a given temporal frame of reference and related to a group living under given conditions, a certain portion of a person's lifetime may be considered as fixed in the sense that it can be spent by a member of the given group only in activities defined by physiological or social compulsions. (E.g., he must sleep a minimum of six hours a day, he must remain for 8 $^1/_2$ hours at his jobsite, and must spend two hours in commuting, etc.) Naturally, the "given conditions" are not unalterable; neither are physiological and social compulsions. The necessary minimum of sleep changes with age; it is not impossible to look for another job or jobsite, etc. This, however, will shift the person to another research category.

Man cannot freely dispose of all the time left beyond the portion defined as fixed in the above meaning. He has various family, social and moral obligations, which force him to a lesser or greater extent to spend time in activities difficult or impossible to include in his fixed time. Only what remains can be spent in activities chosen according to his own inclinations or forced on him by social conventions.

The general time budget thus reflects the quantitative proportions of time consumption resulting from physiological or social compulsion, on the one hand, and (without any sharp line of demarcation), from activities taken up under the influence of individual inclination and social conventions.

The difficulty lies in the fact that time consumed in the various activity categories often permits only uncertain conclusions concerning the factors that have played a decisive part in fixing this time, or concerning the effectiveness of these factors. For example, a time budget shows that the members of a given group spend 17 minutes a day on self-education. Is this much or little? Is it because they have nothing better to do or because they are driven by a strong passion? The "17 minutes" in themselves are but a descriptive statistical figure whose evaluation can be based only on our own practical experience, our inner scale of values, etc.; that is, on a subjective criterion.

In our investigation of the "time husbandry" of workers at a Budapest factory we noted that skilled workers spent much more time on study than unskilled workers. Moreover, an increase of one or two hours spent at the jobsite or in commuting did not reduce the time devoted by skilled workers to study to the same extent as in the case of unskilled workers. How are we to explain this phenomenon. This is the issue involved in the "17 minutes". Can the answer be based only on our general knowledge about society and man or on intuition? Or are there perhaps other means of enabling us to control the accuracy of such obvious suppositions as the one claiming that skilled workers have a stronger desire for culture, that they

attach greater importance to study promising higher professional standing, etc.?

From the data on the subgroup of skilled workers increasing fixed time (workers with homes farther from the factory and consequently needing more commuting time), we may see whether the time devoted to other cultural activities tends to shrink at the same rate as that spent on study; whether there is any positive correlation between these items of the budget. If there is none, or very little, then the reference to a stronger desire for culture loses much of its probability. Or is study so important for skilled workers that they give less time to other activities? Assuming that skilled workers are urged to study by some special interest, instinct or passion and that this is the origin of the divergencies in the time budget compared to the unskilled, then, if the "pressure" caused by time spent at the jobsite and in commuting ceases to exist, their time devoted to study will increase and the divergence become even larger. The soundness of this assumption would be proved if, for example, on days when they have no time fixed by jobsite and commuting, the time ratio of studying would expand in a significant manner: if they turned part of the time "gained" to learning and did it to a greater degree than the unskilled workers. Whether that happens can be (and has been) determined by a *differential* study of the daily and weekly (or yearly) time budgets of skilled and unskilled workers, since the temporal frames of reference include Sundays and rest days as well. (Even more useful for this purpose are weekend time budgets to the extent that they are available.)

Research to date shows that quantitative analysis and differential comparison of time budgets of different temporal frames of reference may contribute to elucidating more intricate questions than the above very simple, paradigmatic example.

To sum up the results of our research: First of all, within a certain given period of activity (daily or weekly) of the population or of a social group, the share of different activity categories in the total time available can be smaller or greater. In other words, the duration of the various activities can shrink or expand. It has also been demonstrated that compressibility and expandability are limited by certain conditions: the minimum duration of some activities may be fixed for physiological or social reasons (as, in general, the time spent daily at the jobsite or required for sleeping); also an expansion of one kind of activity or another has its physiological and social limitations (here again worktime and sleep offer the best examples). The most essential point is that the compressibility and expandability of different activities within a given temporal frame of reference may show

greatly differing values. These are in many cases typical of the social group whose time budget is being studied, and they serve to demonstrate the importance its members attach to these activities, in short, its members' demand for a particular way of making use of their time. This in turn characterizes the given group in several social and cultural respects.

The ratio of compressibility and expandability of various activities can be quantitatively expressed by comparing the daily and weekly time budgets of the given group or by dividing them into component time budgets (time budgets of subcategories), in which the relative volume of fixed time and consequently the limitation of available non-fixed time (the "pressure" exercised) can be smaller or greater.

We have spoken here about compressibility and expandability—i.e., "elasticity"—and have mentioned demand as shown in the consumption of time for various purposes. The concept of a "time budget," moreover, calls forth economic associations. Many a reader many thus wonder if the process of analysing the distribution of a time fund consisting of the 24 hours of the day, the 168 hours of the week, the approximately 8,800 hours of the year, and finally of a whole life-time, in a budget-like manner does not recall those types of economic research that deal with the elasticity of demand or consumption.

It does, indeed, recall them and their formal models; together with it its mathematical technique, not mentioned here in detail, it closely resembles the methods employed in economic research. No wonder that the difficulties and problems of this subject focus partly around similar questions. As with consumer demand, here too we are faced with the question of what effect the possibility of substituting or replacing one kind of goods by another—in our case, one type of activity—can have on the budget and its evaluation. The sphere of the various goods or activity categories, their demarcation, the definition of luxury goods and leisure activities present serious problems. The task of the mathematician is rendered difficult by the fact that the compressibility and expandability of time consumption often prove to be far from linear, and often do not even lend themselves to easy approximation by some fairly well-known analytic function. Since, however, concrete research into the elasticity of demand (or consumption) has, in spite of all difficulties and problems, revealed very significant dynamic factors, and since the quantitative distribution of the demand for different categories of goods can well be used as an important—though not the only—factor of economic and living standards, we may hope that time-budget research into the dynamics of social and cultural time consumption will give increasing insight into unknown or hardly known relations and that adequately evaluat-

ed daily, weekly, yearly and lifetime time budgets of the population will supply suitable criteria for inter-cultural comparisons and for other serious tasks facing social research.

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The author of this essay had the privilege of propounding the ideas here set forth at a meeting of the International Conference on the Use of Quantitative Political, Social and Cultural Data in Cross-National Comparisons, which took place at Yale University, U.S.A., from September 10 to 21, 1963. Since then an interesting development has taken place. A European Coordination Centre for Research and Documentation in Social Sciences has been established in Vienna under the auspices of the UNESCO's Social Science Council in Paris. The aim of this Centre is to promote comparative social research projects, with the cooperation of research groups in Western and Eastern Europe. One of the first projects it has undertaken to promote and coordinate is the type of comparative time-budget research advocated in the present essay. This project, which the author has the honour to direct, is probably the first instance of international cooperative research in the field of sociology to embrace such institutions as the sociological research groups of the Academies in Novosibirsk, Warsaw and Budapest, of the Université Catholique de Louvain, the Université Libre in Brussels, the Centre d'études sociologiques in Paris, the Sozialforschungsstelle in Dortmund and the Cologne University.

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THE SQUIRREL

(A short story)

by

BARNA SIPKAY

The forest seemed to be aflame as the morning sun shone through it. On a clearing, at the edge of a pinewood grove, a giant acacia-tree appeared to be all ablaze, like a torch. Some gaunt oaks were shedding their red-tinged leaves in the morning breeze. The strange cold glow of the forest was light as the dawn mists.

Three men—local peasants—trudged across the clearing, their high boots muddy and faded, their game-bags and shotguns slung over their shoulders. Blood-stained hares dangled from their bags. A huge white shepherd's dog scampered up and down before them, a small mongrel bringing up the rear. A clever dog he was, the large one, for as he ran he lapped up the blood that kept dripping from the hare hanging out of the last peasant's bag.

They were heading for home but decided to call at the forester's on their way. The village was nearer like that, and they also had some official business to attend to.

The president of the cooperative farm was walking in front, plying the others with words. When they arrived at the forester's lodge, the president opened the small gate of the blossoming garden separating the few flower-beds from the farmyard. But nothing separated the farmyard from the forest into which it melted as oil melts into water. The firewood neatly stacked up at the end of the courtyard faded into the hazel bushes.

The forester was waiting for them at the door. His dog gave a yap or two, though aware that acquaintances were approaching. The forester had fair hair, cornflower-blue eyes and a deliberate bearing. He seemed a part torn from the fair autumn woods on which the sky smiled with eyes that were also cornflower blue.

The president was a tall lanky man with hands as big as a grain shovel. A thin leathery neck, a pale-brown face and a paste-white forehead became visible as he raised his head. Grinning he held out his hand:

"Hullo, there!" he said affably.

"Good morning!" said the forester, shaking the president's hand. The two other men also reached out their hands. "Good morning... Good morning..." the forester repeated.

The other two men looked like twins. Somewhat older than the president they both were stocky of build and wore a moustache.

"I see this was your lucky day," the forester said, pointing at the hares.

"The early bird catches the worm," replied the president as he entered the house.

The dogs were shooed off.

It was a sort of anteroom they entered, bigger than the usual porches. It had a clear, spacious window. There was a table in the middle, with a few chairs, and a bench at the window. Half office, half anteroom, half living-room where forest workers could be received without disturbing the children, doing their lessons or sleeping in the other room.

They sat around the table.

They were rare guests in this neck of the woods, so they just sat and stared around a while. The forester, appreciating this, got up and brought in a bottle of apricot-brandy and glasses.

There were stuffed birds on the wall; an eagle with open beak and spread wings frightened the three for a second. On the yellow cupboard they saw more birds, song-birds with dusty feathers and beady glass eyes. Beside the cupboard stood a wooden case, with a cage placed on its top and something moving about briskly in it. The guests riveted their eyes on it.

"Now, what's that?" the president asked, because their side of the cage was covered with a blanket. Yet they could hear very well that something was jumping about inside.

"It's a squirrel," said the forester, as he poured the brandy. "I picked him up in the summer in the Owl Woods—something had plucked and torn at his side. I didn't think he could survive."

The guests crowded nearer, whereupon the forester removed the blanket.

"I cover him up in the evening to keep him quiet at dawn. For he can scratch and gnaw at the wood so noisily that it wakes us up."

The little animal stared at the men, paralysed, for about a minute. His beady button eyes from his dense reddish hair. Only his little snout was moving continually. Then he gave a jump and dashed around the inside of the cage.

"Golly!" one of the hunters excaimed with a laugh. "I never saw a squirrel from so near. He certainly can hold on to things!"

"Can he live like that?" asked the president, never taking his eyes from the little beast.

"Can't he, though! But sometimes I let him out in the room."

"And what does he do then?"

"Jumps about. Upon the cupboard, down on the table..."

"Doesn't he bite? A squirrel bites, you know."

"Not me. He knows me... But he can bite all right."

"Sneaky little beast."

"Not in the least. When he's free he climbs up my coat on to my shoulder. And he clings to me with his tiny claws."

"That's right. He's got claws like a cat."

"Cat's claws are nothing compared to his. In the beginning he scratched me all over; my hands were quite boody. But I like him. Especially when he takes a big jump, spreads his bushy tail and seems to sail down from the wardrobe."

The president was quite absorbed in admiration.

"There are many hares this year," the forester changed the subject after they had had a drink. "You know how they gnaw the bark. This winter you must watch out for them."

The president looked at his companions.

"Isn't he a cute little beast?" he said. "Look at his tail!"

"Lovely," said the forester.

With a slow motion the president slapped the forester's knee.

"Listen to me, Mr. Forester, I'd like to buy this squirrel if you sell him cheap."

The forester was surprised. Peasants, as a rule, do not spend money on such animals.

"Why do you want him?"

"Oh, just..."

"But what for, tell me?"

"As an orderly."

The forester shut up like a clam. He looked before him in a brown study. When, a while ago, he had gone out for the brandy, his wife had asked him who the guests were. "Not that wretched Coop chief by any chance?" She had not even tried to subdue her voice: "He set his dog on you four years ago and now you give him drink..." "That was a long time ago." "Was! Is there no pride in you, man?" The forester had waved a deprecating hand. "Why fan up old hatreds? Now he is the president of the 'Unity' Cooperative Farm, and that's what counts."

But not quite, he thought as he poured out more brandy. My wife is

right. Four years ago this peasant was down at heel and wouldn't for the life of him join the Co-op. And now he wants to buy a squirrel and won't even say why. He's full of pride! Well, then, I too must keep my dignity. Panni's right.

"Drink, men!" he said impassively.

The president observed the forester peevishly as he looked through the white apricot-brandy in his glass. He understood his opponent could hardly swallow what he had heard. So he added something more.

"Many people come to us from the County, from the Ministries in Budapest and from the Agricultural Centre. They bring with them foreign delegates as well. And they all pop their heads in through the door of my newly built house."

"And they can well do so," said one of the mustachioed. "There's no house like yours in the whole County. What do you say, Józsi? Such a glass-walled porch. It looks like a ball-room, it does. Three rooms, and a bathroom, and TV too!"

"What I had in mind," the president said with gay pride, "is that this little squirrel could spend his time jumping about on my porch and entertain my guests."

The forester's mouth was tightly closed. He stared into his glass, and now they could see that he was angry. The president slapped his other knee, to cheer him up.

"Mr. Forester! Give me that squirrel. I know we won't disagree about the price. If you won't sell him for cash, I'll give you something in kind. You leave it to me."

"He's not for sale."

The guests looked at one another. What had happened to the man? The president rubbed his underlip with the back of his thumb, mulling it over. Then he gave an irritated laugh.

"Everything is for sale in this world. Don't stick so much to that squirrel, Mr. Forester. You won't regret it if you sell him to me."

"So it's I who stick to him?" the fair man snapped impatiently. "You do." He even pushed his glass a few inches farther.

"Sure, sure..." the president nodded. "I stick to him too. But you can catch as many squirrels here as you want. That's your job isn't it? I too rear as many pigs as I choose. That's my job. Now, look here, Mr. Forester..." The president was also peeved, and he let it be felt. "I'm the sort of man who always sees a thing through on which I've set my mind. And I would give anything for what I want. I don't want this squirrel for show, but the porch would look quite different if this little creature would be

jumping about in his cage there. If you see what I mean. The top-ranking comrades that come to see me might talk different if they could feast their eyes on such a funny sight before they enter. 'Look at that!' they'd say. 'What might that be? Heavens, it's a squirrel.' What an impression it would make! Don't you see? Even a Minister would be all agape. Well, I'm a man of deeds, not of words. I'll buy him, whatever the price."

The forester looked out at the forest. He crossed his legs and clasped his fingers over his knees. He did not look at the president, for even so he could sense from his voice the moneyed peasant's pride and self-worship.

"The squirrel is not for sale," he said simply and decisively.

"Isn't he?"

The president waited for an answer. Then he repeated:

"And why not?"

"Because..."

The president drew his hand back from the tabletop.

"Any special reasons? You know, I might give a piglet for it. That's fair, eh?"

"The squirrel is not for sale. I told you clearly, Fazekas, didn't I? Why waste more words on it?"

The president's pale face flushed like the forest outside. "Fazekas!" It was a long time people since had called him simply by his family name. And all this bickering before two members of his Cooperative farm. The president was not used to being contradicted. Just on account of such a worm! What's a squirrel? You can crush it under the sole of your boot. A forester's a forester—but the president of a big cooperative farm isn't just anybody! The Deputy Minister comes to see him, the president, and not the forester. Well, well, this blonde brute hasn't changed a bit. He still thinks he's talking to the Fazekas of olden days who owned only two yokes of land. And he recalled the picture when, a few years ago, the forester came to see him, a shotgun slung over his shoulder, strutting along his courtyard with knitted eyebrows, and when he spoke he put on the mien he used when talking to poachers.

"Well, Fazekas? How long are you going to fritter away my time?"

The president stared at the fair hair and the stubborn chin of the forester, and anger and shame mixed in his heart.

"Seems like not only trees but pigs too grow in this forest of yours," he said with intent to hurt.

"My two are enough for me."

Fazekas glanced at his two companions. They kept mum. The forester's cold voice could again be heard.

"But the Cooperative seems to have plenty—and to spare."

"That's a fact."

"Four years ago you would not have swapped a pig even for a horse, Fazekas!"

"No, because I didn't have one," said the president, and now he knew which way the wind was blowing. "But I did have a dog."

The forester's mouth twitched. They looked daggers at each other, across the table. He knew what the president meant. They both did.

The memory ran across their minds at the same time. A nasty day in early winter. The forester, assisting in a house-to-house campaign to persuade peasants to join the the cooperative farm, had kicked open Fazekas's weak gate for the sixth or seventh time. The peasant watched from the window, as the small street lamp shed a weak light on the fence. The old fence-gate tumbled into the mud. In the kitchen, Fazekas grabbed the neck of his huge sheepdog, who gave a vicious growl. "Catch him!" And he let the dog into the courtyard. This time the forester had no gun. The dog gave three bounds and leaped at the man. Fazekas became frightened; the huge dog could have dragged down even a steer. But the forester could deal with him. None the less, his boots were left in such a state that he could throw them away.

"A dog?" said the forester, keeping cool. "I don't remember."

"Yes. A harrier. Good at catching hares."

"If he catches hares, why do you need a gun?" You should manage without, as you did before."

Fazekas's fingers were twitching from anger. Who didn't go poaching in the olden times when the count lorded it here? He couldn't remember one older man from the village who did not. The younger ones sometimes too. This fair-haired brute wanted to make a fool of him. But times had changed. How this forester could play the boss some years ago! Yes, four years ago he could still talk like Godalmighty wearing a gun—but the tide had turned...

"Well," he said, "my dog once caught not only hares."

"What, for instance?"

They again looked daggers at each other. The other two peasants lay doggo. You never could tell what angry words might develop into. Or just what lay behind them.

"For instance, a man," the forester wound up with a challenging grin. "Yes, he even caught a man when his master wanted him to."

"And the master wanted it, didn't he!"

"There were cases, I won't deny. Yes, there was a time when he wanted it."

The forester felt like spitting. But he changed his mind.

"And the master of the dog was caught by other people."

"So what? Was that your headache?" the president retorted. "Maybe the forest grew smaller? Or are there fewer squirrels in it?" He reached down for his game-bag. "We shot these hares on Cooperative ground. But if you want, I can leave you two for lunch. There are many more on the Cooperative land."

"You talk as if you were the Cooperative's father and mother in one."

"That's what I am."

"And yet you were quite prepared to cling to your poverty four years ago."

"I never begged bread from you, did I?"

"Now you talk big. You should have done so with the same great socialist consciousness then."

"Well, one lives and learns."

Their words flashed like blades, though they drew no blood yet. The president again reached for his bag.

"I can leave two hares. I don't need so many."

The forester stood up and pushed the chair under the table.

"There are enough hares in the forest."

The three peasants also stood up. They flung their game-bags over their shoulders.

"So you won't sell the squirrel?"

"No, I won't."

"I see. But what I say, goes. And I said I want that squirrel. I wouldn't mind giving two piglets for it, even a hog. We have hogs too, and that's what counts. Surely you'd accept a hog in payment, wouldn't you? You could slaughter it for New Year. A hog for a squirrel!" He stood there waiting gloomily, haughtily. The forester opened the door.

"I don't need your hog. I have a decent salary. I have everything. Please, understand, Fazekas, you wouldn't have money enough to pay for this squirrel even if you brought me all the money of the National Bank."

"And why not!"

"Because there are other things than money. Do you think you can buy everything for money?"

The president looked at him a long time. The other two peasants marked time nervously. They were afraid of an explosion.

"You say that money can't buy everything? Is that what you're tellin' me, Mr. Forester?... Was it not you who wanted to teach me that money buys everything?

"I?"

Yes, you. You said that money can buy my honour, my land, my quiet courtyard, my integrity, my wife's two hard-working arms, my all, even my bliss. That's what you wanted to teach me. There'll be the Cooperative, I should have everything galore, no reason to worry. If you have money, you have all. So sell yourself, you rotten peasant, sell your heart, your blood, you'll get money for it!"

"I didn't say that."

"Didn't you?" The president waved his hand. "All right, you didn't."

"And have you sold your heart, your soul, Fazekas?"

"I haven't. They are not for sale."

"But it's good to be president, isn't it?"

"I didn't sell my soul and my heart for money. I gave them up freely. That's the difference. And I'd give myself heart and soul into the 'Unity' even if I didn't get a penny. That's the difference."

"Well, everyone is out for his own good."

"Good-bye, Forester."

He did not give his hand. They stepped out into the bright courtyard. The dogs had disappeared. Maybe they had scampered home. The forester remained in the doorway. All at once the president turned back.

"You wouldn't give wood either, would you?"

"Not a single branch!"

"We'll come for wood all the same."

"You won't carry off one branch. If anyone dares break off a twig in this forest, I'll have him arrested! There's such a thing as law in this world."

The forester hurried after the three peasants as if he wanted to see them as far as the wicker gate. The president turned about, very slowly.

"We'll carry away our firewood just the same, Mr. Forester. There are bigger shots than you in this country. Those who give you orders. In whose eyes I'm no nincompoop, Mr. Forester. And you know—they listen to my word. That's how the world changes."

"I'd like to see you carry off even one branch from this forest! You need an assignment."

"That's just it. I'll get the assignment. Of course, I first thought, why the paper-work? We'd agree nicely, the two of us. You could have done with a small gift. Say a hog."

"Only against assignment!" the forester roared. "Not one branch otherwise!"

"Or say a cow," the president went on. "Worth three hundred forints,

to call a spade a spade. But let me tell you, it would be cheaper for the Cooperative if I got an assignment for wood."

The forester stood there with arms akimbo. They were now on the trail, the quiet forest around them. Far off, a jaybird was chattering.

"Let me see the assignment first," the forester said, trembling with rage. "But I won't believe a word of it. Who do you think you are? You think you're Godalmighty and can do anything? Just because you're from the cooperative, you think you can bribe people? What do you represent in this country? First you set your dog on a man and want to send the co-operative to hell, and now you think the earth moves round you? You imagine you can buy my wife for a rotten pig? This forest is not yours. It belongs to the State. To the people, do you understand, Fazekas? And for the time being, it is I who watch over this forest, and I cannot be bribed or drawn into fifty-fifty deals. You hear me, Fazekas?"

The president seemed to be taking off his shotgun, but all he did was to adjust it on his shoulder.

"Do you remember, Mr. Forester, when you came to my place for the fifth time to talk me into joining the cooperative? You've always been a stand-offish man. You rode the high horse when you caught me once lugging wood from your forest, and I was fined. But never mind. Let bygones be bygones. I respect you still... On that fifth evening, when you came again, you banged the table with the butt of your shotgun, aiming the barrels at me, quite by chance. 'Listen to me, Fazekas', you said to me spitefully, 'how much time do you think I have to fritter away in your cottage? Do you think I'm a no-good son of a gun, like you?' Do you remember, Mr. Forester? But I shoved your gun aside and put my last two remaining bottles of wine on the table. I drank with you and said not a bad word. And then my wife cut the neck of her last hen though it was full of eggs; but you didn't touch it, Mr. Forester. 'This hen is still bristling with feathers, Fazekas; I can't stand when a hen still has feathers on the plate'!"

"So what? Who on earth had a mind to eat and drink with you when his nerves were already frayed from so much futile effort to get you into the cooperative?... And what about the dog you set on me on the following day? I still have the scars from his teeth on my skin. Three teeth above, three below. That's the price I paid for your presidency. 'Drink, you fathead,' that's what you thought, 'and then leave me alone, or fall into the ditch, dead drunk. I'll outsmart you, you blockhead, you forester'. And you had the cheek to appear next day at the headquarters of the propaganda brigade to complain about their having neglected to send any

propagandist to your place and that it was high time to do so. You are a sly one, Fazekas. You used that trick to keep them from assigning me to your place again."

"You knew about that?" the president said with a start.

"Of course I did. And then, that very night, you set your dog on me. Well, you shan't carry off one bally branch from this forest! To me you are not a cooperative president, to me you are only Fazekas. So don't you show off to me. I know you inside out, let me tell you."

The president made one step towards him.

"Now, you listen to me, Schimek." This was the first time he called the forester by his last name. "We don't owe each other a thing. What happened, happened a long time ago. Since then, I've passed through a great school, and I didn't get a bad mark either. And I can say that you were right at the time. Now you have chased me out, so we're quits. As to the wood we'll come for it, you can take it for granted. Even a wagon-load wouldn't be enough for the building operations on our big farm. And I shall get that assignment for wood even if I have to cool my heels in the waiting-rooms of a Government Minister. We won't let our pigs winter in that big ramshackle sty where, last year, eightyfive piglets froze to death. And you'll have to hand out the wood because not I but the co-operative will ask for it. And when you eat your bread, Schimek, just remember that it is the peasants, the cooperative, who harvest the wheat it is baked of."

"You can go to the Minister himself, for all I care!"

"I shall have that assignment," said the president and again adjusted the strap of his shotgun. "This forest may not belong to me, but it doesn't belong to you either."

"But it is I who give orders in it!"

"And as far as I know, not even the squirrel belongs to you."

The forester turned on his heels and made for the lodge. The pill was too bitter in his mouth to swallow. What luck that he carried no gun. He was so angry he could not even swear.

"About that squirrel—think it over!" the president called after him winking at the two peasants standing by his side. "Don't forget that I mean what I say. I'll give you a hog for that ugly red rat!"

"Get the hell out of here!" cried the forester, shaking his fists, and his fair head was flushed with congested blood.

"What's the matter with you?" asked his wife when she saw Schimek leaning his elbows on the table and breathing hard.

"There's no justice!" he shouted, banging the table with both fists.

"Instead of thanking me for all I've done for him!... But his thanks be damned! I don't want his thanks, but at least he shouldn't puff himself up before me of all people..." His eyes fell on the squirrel. He jumped up and hooked his fingers in the wires of the cage. "A squirrel he wanted! What next?"

"What are you doing?" asked his wife.

The forester hastened to the courtyard. There he forced open the wiring with one wrench.

"Beat it!"

The squirrel stared at the open space—at freedom—full of dismay. Then with a long leap he flung himself out of the cage and down to the grass. You could hardly follow the quick bounds of the little red ball as it made for the nearest tree and disappeared into the foliage.

The forester was sick at heart. He closed his mouth tight. It was as if he still could see the squirrel, but maybe it was only the wind shaking the reddish leaves.

"You don't know what gratitude is, either," he said, somewhat calmer now.

And sadly he stared at the gaping breach in the cage.

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PAINTER ON THE DEFENSIVE: LAJOS VAJDA

by

ÉVA KÖRNER

The typical fate of Hungarian artists has assumed perhaps its most peculiar form in the case of Lajos Vajda: he alone may be said to have represented a whole epoch in Hungarian art.

Those who know Vajda form a very narrow circle. Its members are far from indifferent; a part of them are aware of his extraordinary power, his concept of art is still held to be viable and is followed by several artists, whereas others are in violent opposition and pronounce: Vajda lies outside the organic development of Hungarian art, therefore he is an alien, negligible phenomenon. This view is erroneous, since it was his isolation which prevented him from exerting an influence.

Vajda was born in 1908, and died in 1941, at the age of thirty-three. His last year was eaten up by labour-camp service and lethal consumption. In his life he could only arrange small private shows; in 1943 there was a posthumous exhibition; after the war, in 1948, his works were exhibited by what is known as the "European School."

It would be difficult to define the trend of Vajda's art by a single word, a description will do it more justice. The usual definitions, post impressionism. constructivism, surrealism, being categories formed in Western Europe are as inapplicable to him as to the great majority of Hungarian artists. In a letter from the year 1936 he himself referred to what he was doing as "constructive-surrealist schematism." This term can also be accepted only with reservations and only in connection with one period of his activities.

Vajda belonged to the artists who reach maturity young; his delicate constitution would seem to have stimulated him to be quick in conveying his message. His drawings from the age of 9 and 10 years are by no means those of a child. From the age of 15 he studied in Budapest; his studies in the nude from the next year bear witness to expert knowledge. At the

Budapest Academy of Fine Arts where he studied from 1927 to 1930 he was a pupil of István Csók. Large-size charcoal drawings, still-lifes, views of Szentendre, and landscapes have remained from that period. He endeavoured to select a motive which permitted a reduction to the elements of construction this manner of composition had its antecedents in the Hungarian constructivism which developed under the influence of Cézanne in the 1910s. The view drawn from the church hill is interesting as comparison: the forms disrupted later into elements and then shaped into a new kind of synthesis are still in their original spatial unity, corresponding to the perceptual image.

In the next stage of development the subject, which up to that point served only as indication, disappeared altogether and non-figurative, constructivist composition remained; the large-size charcoal drawings are mainly works of this kind.

Vajda joined the socialist movement, and the influence of Kassák* as well as the so-called "Work Community" is discernible in these works. At this time he was already familiar with the constructivists of Eastern and Western Europe: Malevich, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy. He was attracted by the problems of this trend which appeared to be the logical continuation of his own programme which, though interpreted by every one of its followers differently for himself, in the last analysis arose from a desire to purify.

At this time Vajda produced plain forms; while in some compositions he still retained indications of the subject, in others he became completely geometrical. His composition entirely lacked the static quality resulting from settled calm and a conclusive picture of the world.

In 1930 he went for three years to Paris. This period was a remarkable interval in his life and his art. Vajda walked about with open eyes and an open mind. He was unable to paint in those years; he made studies in the nude and photomontage. It was at this time that he learnt to know in the original the cubists. Osenfant and Jameret, the "purists"; Klee and Mirò, as well as the surrealists, without committing himself in any direction for some time. Compared to his Budapest works he entered on a new phase which, while showing that he had profited from the lesson Paris had taught him, remained remote from the *École de Paris* and the whole of Western-European art. Their forms of expression did not appeal to him. He was engrossed by the world drama, the course of the fate of mankind, including political events. The solutions of Eisenstein, a man of congenial

* On Kassák See Edit Erki's interview on p. 192 of the present issue.

spirit, attracted his attention. He made montages in which the technical opportunities offered by western surrealism were united with an eastern, Russian realistic view.

Surrealists favoured montage because the various subjects, foreign to one another yet brought into relationship, elicited unexpected associations, bewilderment, and dismay. Vajda adopted this method as the best vehicle for expressing his notions, but filled it with an individual content.

He collected topical material of news and pictures coming from every part of the world which was a point of difference from the work of Max Ernst. The latter preferred to apply engravings and an older technique of reproduction by whose delicacy he evoked an atmosphere removed from day-time brutality. Vajda cut out his motives from magazines, and their every-day reality acted not only through the crudity of a photograph, but also by the roughness of the paper material. A further difference was that however bizarre and, in their combination however remote their motives may have been, the montages of Ernst took place on a uniform scene, in a landscape or interior space; Vajda's configurations appeared in a neutral, physically undefinable place without any bonds of time and space; he began to shape a form of composition universal in character.

Compared to his abstract, constructivist period, at the first glance the montages of Paris appear to amount to a complete break, a full contradiction; in reality they represent a step towards a more perfect solution of the problem. In his abstract compositions Vajda strove to achieve universality, but in these abstractions the essential point was that the facts of the world were not worked up and assimilated.

In Paris Vajda wanted to face the facts of life; he heaped up and at the same time discarded and selected the documents from which a tragic, comprehensive picture emerged.

His return to Hungary was followed by a period of transition lasting about a year. A small-size tempera and a major pastel still-life indicate the new direction he had taken. In these pictures objects appeared only as planes. The reduced contours of objects and their design grew very important; the surfaces were often transparent (indicated by dotted lines.)

The possibilities offered by this technique however failed to satisfy Vajda. He set out to discover a source which would nourish his art, but found no inspiration in either contemporary or recent, either in Hungarian or western, art. The artistic notions which filled his mind ever more consciously directed his attention towards something that was ancient. It was in this period that the little ancient town of the Danube, Szentendre, inhabited by orthodox Greeks and Serbs, played an increasing role in his life.

Together with his friend Dezső Korniss he started to collect motifs at Szentendre and at the Danube islands. The results of these tours of collection appeared in numerous drawings of windows, façades of houses, a peasant statue of the Virgin, a rural Christ in tin, gate-posts of death-heads on Serbian graves. These he selected for their characteristic features not as relics of art.

The designs which he thus collected are evidence that he did not interpret folk art as did Bartók and Kodály in music, or ethnography in the sphere of objective civilization, all the less so as the originality of a motif was not always of primary importance for him.

At the beginning he drew various objects on the spot, then copied them one on the other in a later phase. Sometimes he cut drawings into parts and pieced them together to form a whole montage. He worked with drawings of pure contour, made the surfaces appear to be transparent, and indicated those covering one another occasionally by the use of dotted lines. Most of these pictures and drawings were composed within a circle, and all of them—from the Paris montages all through his oeuvre—without any concrete background.

In these works Vajda has created symbols, but at the same time pursued the search for the traditional symbolical meaning of forms.

In these years, 1935—1937, portraits were added to the montages. The same idea prevailed in the former. Vajda prepared a series of double portraits of himself and of his friend, the painter Endre Bálint. (See plate.) The individual features were simplified and the drawing became more of a spiritual portrait, the human face was worked in to the generalized house motif, representing the scene of life resolved into abstractions of windows, masts, and rhombuses.

Vajda's "icons" were the fruits of the same years. The intention underlying their terse, comprehensive conception inspired him to accentuate the primal form, while their sacral character induced him to create his self-portrait in this thousand-year-old form. His face is oval—this form, symbolizing spiritual activity, has been connected with the figure of the Virgin as the symbol of the birth of life; in the complete circle of a halo it carries the perfect intellectual universe. In another large-size pastel, the finest piece of the years from 1935 to 1937, particularly among the works on icon themes, these problems appear in full force. In essence this is also a double portrait, but only one of the faces has features; it is encircled by another head, representing the counterpoint of chaotic spiritual conditions. The dot technique of the pastel affords possibilities for intricate variations of transparency and merging, separation and union.

In the year 1938 this clear sense of construction, imbued with extraordinary spiritual energy, with the consciousness of an artistic and national or rather international mission, collapsed. It was swept away by the cruel storms of history and individual life; resistance demanded a superhuman struggle from the artist defenceless in body and mind.

In all probability one of the first signs of this period was an oil painting; it represents a female figure with no face. The latter used to be highly important in Vajda's above-mentioned pictures as the centre of the intellect and the soul. The trunk, on the other hand, widens like a face; it does not carry any human features but creates the impressions of a conglomerate gathered from some celestial body and cosmic forms. The stage known as the mask period followed this picture.

The mask pictures contain closed formations moving in space; in this respect they are related to the montages of Szentendre. But the former crystalline, cut forms and their clear transparency have been replaced by shapeless cotton-wool-like, sinking softness. Many years earlier in Paris and also later Vajda was attracted by the products of primitive art, by negro, Australian, Indian masks, by drawings cut into rocks and also by mummies. These appeared in his works chiefly from the beginning of this period as forms the content of which he felt to be akin to his own message.

Only one picture of this period, a coloured pastel, represents a more definite vision of a landscape, and flood water threatening to submerge it. On this water drifts the fragile boat of consciousness, unfinitesimal compared to the depth; before it there are tidal waves, in the distance there appears the encouraging arch of a rainbow promising escape.

In his last year, in 1940, the multitude of motifs vanished, melting into a single but perpetually changing shape, recalling the wing of an enormous bird.

The pictures of the last three years display instinctive, inarticulate, subconscious impulses, with premonitions and visions breaking through to the surface. The sensitive structure of human conduct, supported by the constructive system of symbols which marked the montage period, was not and could not be strong enough to resist the onslaught of the forces of darkness. Vajda did not bow to these forces.

He wanted to overcome the crude and brutal realities, rolling menacingly. The technique he was approaching in ink and charcoal drawings after the pastels was not only of formal importance, it was at the same time an instrument for making his ideas prevail. The hatching did not constitute compact surfaces; his drawing technique in that period gave expression to movement

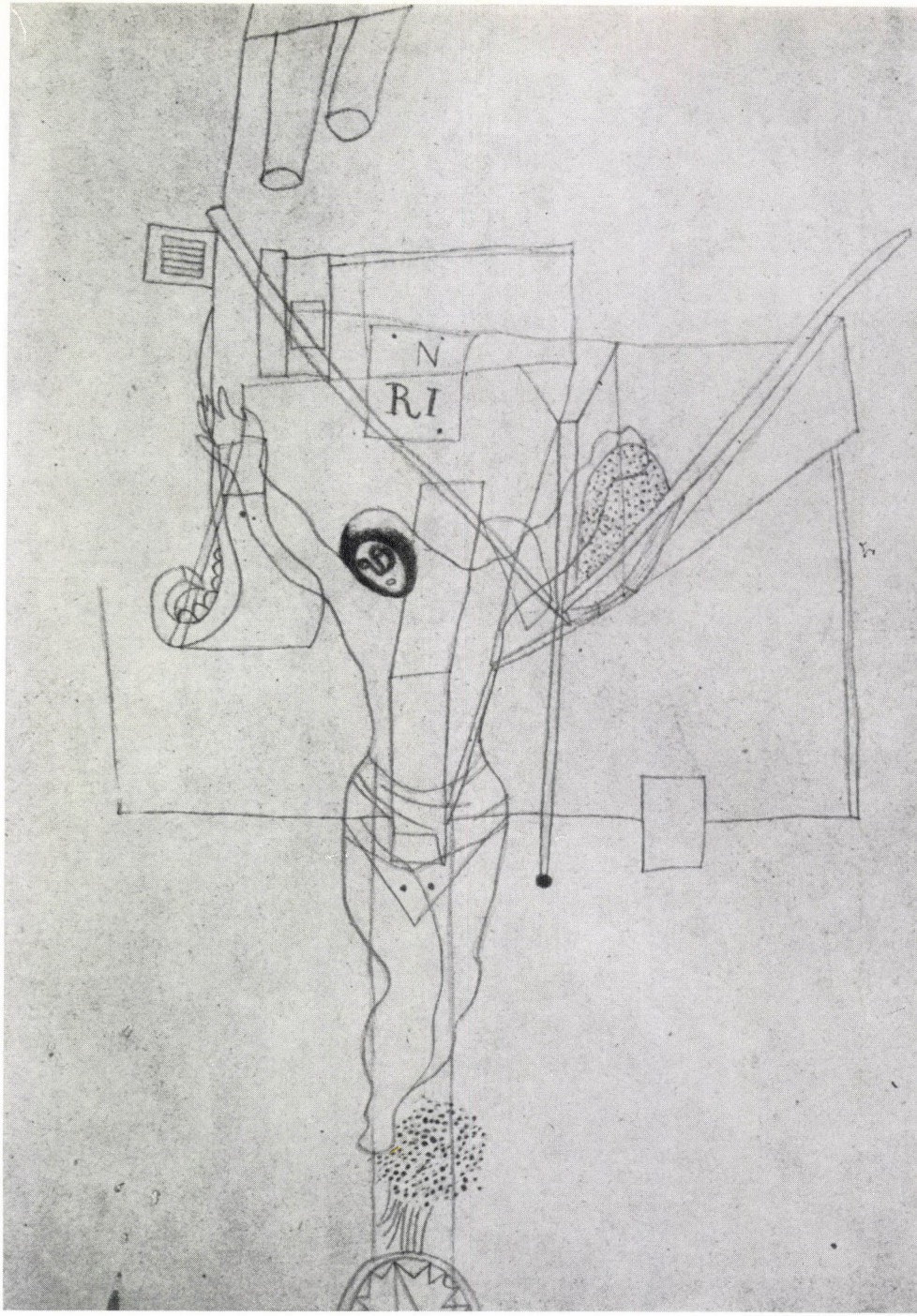
and energy embodying principles of mental activity. The forms that were moving in limitless space, were co-ordinates of the struggle fought by the human spirit.

In seeking to define Vajda's art in the pattern of stylistic categories a basic difference has to be pointed out between the programmatic surrealism formulated by André Breton, Max Ernst and Salvator Dali—and the surrealism of Vajda. Their surrealistic montage generally is an unorganized, essentially naturalistic expression (by whatever complicated tricks of virtuosity) of a dreamlike, unconscious state of mind not aiming at generalization or construction but, on the contrary, rejecting it deliberately. Instead of this, Vajda tried to overcome the experience resulting from the incoherence of reality but accepted accident and chance as inevitable components of life, as elements of a superior, mentally constructed system.

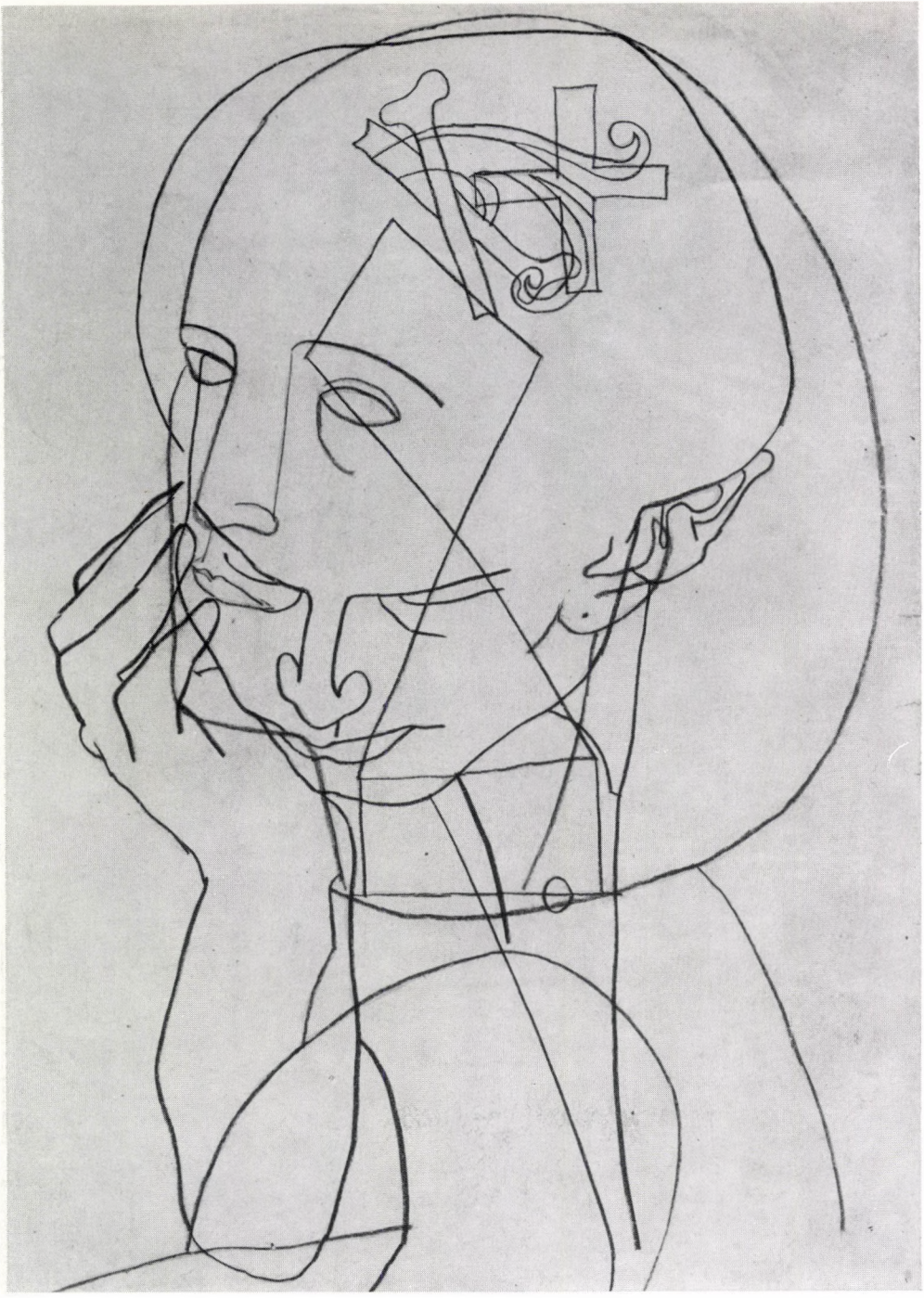
His art was constructive also from the social aspect. In the last years of his life, while social and individual tragedy steadily grew more acute, in the period of masks, charcoal and ink drawings, Vajda often sank into dark, subconscious visions; yet he did not stop at the automatic representation of a confused and formless experience. His conduct was marked by the will to resistance and by the endeavour to conquer, the more fragile his tools were against those immensely superior forces, the more staggering became the fight reflected by these drawings.

In Vajda's last works intellectual and constructivist traits were submerged. The tragic cry of passion which broke forth from these pictures had also an alien and alarming sound in the din of the much more tranquil tones of Hungarian art. However, there is hardly any document which exposes more nakedly the ravages of fascism or provides a more moving example of human defencelessness and resistance to the last breath than do these pictures of Vajda.

LAJOS VAJDA: IKON SELF-PORTRAIT I.



LAJOS VAJDA: CRUCIFIX



LAJOS VAJDA: DOUBLE PORTRAIT

LAJOS VAJDA: IKON SELF-PORTRAIT II.

A VISIT TO CHAGALL

by

MIKLÓS HUBAY

How many times have I attempted to escape autumn before?

Last night the cold November wind almost blew me out from under the roof of the Gare de Lyon; here, on the Mediterranean seaboard, I even find the rain, which keeps driving in at the window, a pleasure. For the windows have been lowered, all of them, to admit the pleasant, mild morning air—a rain-washed fresh smell of the sea, enriched by the breath of steaming vegetation.

It is a warm rain. Not rain, really, just spray.

Perhaps it will wash my Paris cold from my head.

Far away loom the snow-capped peaks of the Alps. They beckon after us without menace, more like beaten pursuers giving up the chase. Until now we've had fog, snow, winter, dogging our footsteps. Here, they can't overtake us any more.

Antibes

I wanted to visit the Picasso Museum, but found it had closed on November 1st. The keeper had just taken his vacation. This is the month when the flow of tourists slackens. Summer has ended, but by October's end the last sea-bathers are gone, although visitors seeking refuge from winter only begin arriving here in December.

All Souls' Day: Dead season.

Flower gay in the market-place in this little Mediterranean town. Here we found my Parisian friend's house: they've had it converted into a dwelling-place from an ancient Roman tower. Or was it built by the Saracens?

It used to protect the flaw of trade in that market-place, which ended by the wall, this old Tower. We drove on by car.

Cagnes

The name looked familiar—where had I come across it before?

Why, this was the same Cagnes sur Mer from where Attila József had sent home that unforgettable poem, that poem full of play and hobgoblin freshness—and of bitter prophecy and anxiety—

> O Europe, what myriads of folds you are
> and in every fold hide murderers,
> O let me not have to mourn for the girls
> who will bear children two years hence.

What sort of ballad was that? Europe's impending tragedy told in a song—

> There's fear in the murderers
> and death is there in that fear.

Reproduced in Hungarian on the dust-jacket of Albini's Italian version of József are the opening lines of this poem, written in the poet's own hand—addressed to Europe.

With what an apprehensive, anxiety-filled heart did József live here among us. As, twenty years before, had Endre Ady!

One prophesied an earthquake here; the other saw a vision of a sea-quake. Ady wrote of the nearby Alps coming down in a thunderous land-slide to the sea, sweeping away this evergreen, idle coast, this idyll of well-being. In József's vision

> the sea has risen to engulf the promontory
> and a well-laid table is afloat
> upon the sated billows.

What doomsday visions this most serene of the world's sceneries had suggested to those Hungarian poets!

(Or was it, perhaps, that this part of the world seemed to the poor Hungarian poets so hopelessly, so unattainably lovely that they were seized with something like Jonah's fury—the envy gripping the locust-eating desert man at the sight of Semiramis's hanging gardens? I was trying to pinpoint the reaction of one merely passing through this Eden of everlasting happiness. It was not difficult to ascertain.)

A little way farther up north, tucked in among the hills, lies

Vence

From here you can hardly see the sea any more: only here and there you catch its blue eyes peering through slits between the coastal hills.

Fine old building on the perimeter of what appeared to be a ravine. A country house in the southern French style.

"Mihály Károlyi's wife lives at that place," one of my companions pointed out. Obviously one of the many sights of Vence.

Soon afterwards, of a half-hidden building:

"And that's Gordon Craig's place."

"Whose? Edward Gordon Craig's? Ellen Terry's son'?

"Yes. Old Gordon Craig'."

That sounded so improbable as if I had been told that Oscar Wilde was living there.

"Oh, no! Gordon Craig's younger than Wilde. He's not ninety yet, whereas Wilde would be on the wrong side of a hundred."

Even so it seemed to me incredible that Craig, one of the pioneers of modern theatre, was still living in that small house, when his stage *décors*, his review and his Florence art school had long been a closed chapter in manuals on theatrical history. (A chapter succeeded by so many new ones!)

I shot a grateful glance towards his villa.

He was the man who disposed of naturalism in the theatre—in the name of lyricism, of the idiom of symbols and of ecstasy.

A plate on his door begs unannounced visitors not to disturb him.

Not coming here to see him, I had not the slightest intention of disturbing his peace. Only in my mind did I salute him, "Long life, good health, old Master. We may need you yet."

Later, in Vence's main square, in the small fairy-tale inn, where the girder beams and carved chairs and shutters came so close to evoking the memory of some inn back home—("evoking the memory"—no, rather exciting hopes of an inn such as we *might* have in our country)—at that little inn out of a folk-tale where we lunched, I saw a photograph of Gordon Craig on a wall. At the bottom of the picture were written a few lines politely expressing gratitude—his thanks to the cook.

Who knows, might the secret of longevity not lie in the cuisine of that small hostel?

Meantime it had begun to rain. Presently it was coming down in torrents. A cloudburst.

And well it might, now that the visitors had left.

This was the dead season.

Thus we set out, in a deluge, amid loud thunderclaps, illuminated by lightning flashes and headlamps, to find Marc Chagall's villa.

I had made this detour to Vence in order to see him.

In the pelting rain our car climbed higher and higher on the narrow mountain roads. Several times we had to turn back, as the roads ended in unknown gardens; and once we found ourselves among the piles of planks of a sawmill.

It was rotten weather.

Was anyone around who, in weather like that, among the vineyards, along the hollow roads, and at the foot of stonewall-propped terraces, might show us the right road? We climbed higher and higher still. Now we were meandering along roads flanked on one side—now this, now that—by a precipice. Over on the hillslope stood giant agaves and aloes, all flowers and thorns, with the successive bursts of raindrops on their thick green skins.

They looked as if exploded by the dazzle of the headlights turned on them.

At last, when we were already coming back from the increasingly desolate ridge of the hill, we found the gate. This one did look like the description Mme Chagall had given us on the phone. There was the sign, across from the opening, which read, "Private. No Entry."

That was the place!

The road wound upwards along high, rugged supporting walls. The crushed and wet gravel crunched pleasantly under the tyres. On the point of thirking we had again gone astray, we suddenly emerged from the winding road and found ourselves facing the building. Or, rather, the buildings.

Familiar flowers—climbing geraniums—covered the main buiding's side wall.

My thoughts turned to Catherine Pozzi, the young poetess, who had died in the early thirties. She used to own this building. I had seen her portrait—by Paul Valéry—at my Parisian host's. Catherine Pozzi, my host's mother, was the wife of Edouard Bourdet, the famed dramatist of the "crazy years." Occasionally I had the impression that in their son's mind the parents were in secret rivalry, and I am not sure to which he would hand the wreath of glory today: to the playwright-father, whose works each had runs of several hundred performances and which at present are enjoying a successful revival? Or to the poetess-mother, translator of Stefan George, whose own poetry is filled with the intimately mingled life-blood of her wide knowledge of music and mathematics?

I thought of her with gratitude—after all, it was thanks to her and her family that I now was able to ring the bell of this house.

Even as I pressed the button, the house was plunged into darkness.

Lightning had struck on the electric installation somewhere.

The Chagalls might well believe, it occurred to me, that we were a bunch of clever canvas-pinchers who'd got themselves invited through false phone-calls and letters of recommendation—our accomplices had even cut the electric wires while we waited for the door to be opened!

I was almost astonished to see Mme Chagall open the door to us.

"We are just having the doctor examine my husband," she said. "You see, his health is rather delicate."

Between the car and the house my neck had been doused with cold rain; the resultant sneeze, promising to be of tremendous force, was already beginning to irritate my nose. My Paris cold was back! Just what was wanted in the home of the venerable old man of delicate health!

If now I had an attack of flu I might as well turn back. Who knew what uniquely powerful Hungarian virus strain was preparing to swarm out of me? I had no wish to have my name go down in art history as the man who communicated the fatal flu to Chagall. Who would do the frescoes of the cupola of the Opera in Paris?

A single sneeze was apt to lead to far-reaching complications. The infant sneeze had to be killed in the cradle.

I managed it: I swallowed the sneeze.

The house was pitch-dark.

Doors were opened here and there. Voices. A match struck. People looking for candles.

Meanwhile, in the darkness, polite introductions to the mistress of the house. Of course, we saw nothing of each other, as I bravely struggled to strangle the sneezes surging in my head with increasing tempestuousness.

There was something burlesquely sinister about the scene, a funny aspect befitting Sheridan's comedies. Hogarth too might have captured it: Admirers—red-eyed, noses dripping—making a call, while in the background the Great Man is being examined by a doctor in candlelight.

Obligingly, my motorist friend produced a splendid electric torch, a pocket beacon, and played its dazzling shaft of light on us. I had known him to be a man prepared to meet any contingency!

This topped everything: we looked like the title-page of an old-time thriller; only the black masks were missing. Thus we walked, by the light of a bull's eye lantern, from the vestibule into a small *salon*, where we sat enwrapped in complete darkness.

It would have been most indiscreet to play a beam of light around the walls and to admire the pictures. Besides, I believe, turning a spotlight on

a picture is just as potentially brutal an action—as gross an offence against *pictorial dignity*—as throwing a light directly in one's eyes during a police examination.

And so we sat in darkness.

Mme Chagall had gone out, as she had been called by the doctor.

We tried to joke as best we could. Sitting in darkness at a strange place is an embarrassing thing to do, akin to sitting naked in some awkward dream. What should we do? Try tipping a seance table, perhaps?

Old Csontváry might have some important message for our host.

Then the lights went on.

Only now could I look around.

On the table lay the large album of the Jerusalem stained-glass windows. Next to me, by the wall, a small bookshelf.

At once I felt more at home, as one by one I recognized familiar books. There were many which I also possessed. The catalogue of the Bern Museum... a familiar edition of Pirandello's plays... Bernini's journey in France... the volumes of *Comprendre*... Cocteau's reminiscences... Now what could that one be? A German edition of a book by an author with a very Hungarian name. Then: Russian folklore... Jewish problems...

I didn't notice that Chagall had entered the room.

What a handsome man!

That was my first impression of him.

Later on, how quickly his moods changed and how clearly his face registered these changes! His blue eyes mirrored a cool April sky with flying clouds.

His patriarchal smile hiding King Lear's nervous moods.

How many times—how many hundreds of times—had this same thing happened to him: the reception of visiting admirers? The whole event must be following a long-established procedure. The courteous (almost excessively courteous) behaviour of the host obviously served to hold admirers like myself on the doorstep. That serene majesty; that gracious smile—they were bits of cunning, designed to shelter the artist, rendered defenceless, from an intruding world.

This was how monks might smile when called out of their enclosures during visiting time: this nodding attentiveness... this utter strangeness.

Such humility... Such reserve.

The way he would evade every question. No, no, he would never talk about what he was working on or what he was planning to do.

Suddenly one of my companions began to talk about Vilna.

"I come from the place where you were born," he told Chagall.

What followed I didn't understand, for he had changed into Russian.

I could see from Chagall's face that what he had been afraid might happen had actually come to pass: we had now invaded his enclosure—perhaps, his very sanctum.

He replied in French.

He was most glad to meet a compatriot of his, he said. However, it had been such a very long time since he had left his native land.

And he began to speak about himself with astonishing fire. What a wonderful country France was! Here, he had achieved everything an artist could hope for. There was no earthly reason why he should wish to leave this country.

The compatriot would not leave it at that. Did Monsieur Chagall not contemplate a visit to the old country? After all, Stravinsky, too...

"I have attained all I wanted in this country. I came here, to this beatiful France. What was I at that time? And now? They are issuing a stamp—a postage stamp—with my portrait. And de Gaulle inquires after my health and my ambitions. You see, he would like me—you asked me about my plans just now—he would like me to do the cupola of the Opera..."

It must have been superstition with him, the earlier reluctance to discuss his plans; for now, having spoken so proudly, with such triumphant gratification, his voice suddenly assumed a plaintive tone. He had proclaimed his victories and his plans. Oh, who knew whether he hadn't tempted Fate by these declarations?

"...Ah, but I am a poor old man. Just had the doctor looking in on me. Not that I am ill; but he says, well, let me see your state of health!"

His eyes flashed roguishly. Of course, the doctor hadn't found anything wrong with him.

By complaining, he had paid his fee to Fate. He couldn't resist the urge to go on, once started.

"They want me to do some other things too. They want me to do the frescoes of the Parliament in Israel... I don't know. They want me to do so many things."

Then unexpectedly:

"Is it possible that I am not invited home because people regard me as a religious painter? Those glass windows at Jerusalem treat of the history of the Jewish people. That's not religious painting. It's historical painting."

The explanations were broken off abruptly. Not worth one's while. From behind the fleeting clouds, there pealed forth the thunder of faith:

"I've done them because the Bible is the most magnificent book in the world."

This prophet-like austerity was at once toned down by the rainbow-play of a polite smile—meant for mankind. There was something which, even from here below, was on a par with divine revelation!

"Along with Shakespeare!"

Yes, to be sure, Shakespeare. Some like this in him, others that. Shakespeare is like the weather—a subject for talk any time. Also, a subject one can change any time.

There is no help, once the thorn in the heart begins to give pain... suddenly, as if laying an offering at our feet, he said:

"I would be delighted to do some Pushkin drawings too. Oh, how I love Pushkin!"

I felt genuinely sorry that I did not happen to be a publisher in Vilna. I would have known what to do.

It was no longer possible to talk about such personal matters: the memories of home made any other topic look colourless.

"Did you ever do any work there?"

"Yes, I used to work for some theatres."

And he began enumerating the names of famous Russian stage-managers of the twenties.

Then again mechanically, as before:

"Now, I have the whole world before me—France, Israel, Japan..."

We remained silent. What could you possibly reply to that?

"But that village... That town... You can't forget those places."

The lady from Vilna sighed. *She* knew what a heavy load that was. What a heavy load—and powerful wings... Those memories of home.

An ironical voice cut her short: it was the voice of the very person she had expected to respond sighing to her sigh.

"You are a poetess, madame!"

Perhaps fearful that he had laid himself open to us, he was again being over-polite, as at the beginning of our interview?

My other companion thought the moment opportune to bring up the name of a gifted artist whose talent had not been recognized.

"Something might be done for him, perhaps."

The moment was not opportune.

The sidestepping was somewhat grandiloquent.

"You are speaking of a gifted artist? Why, if he is gifted, his talent is bound to show. Talent always manages to make itself recognized... Van Gogh, poor fellow, well, yes, he failed in his lifetime. That was an exception. My message to your friend is: in this beautiful France everyone will get the recognition he deserves."

I was scanning his face. Only his words had dynamism; his face remained uncommunicative. More than that: it became buttoned-up. Bankers might have that kind of look when being touched for trifling sums to pay for a taxi fare.

Rapidly I tried to change the subject... the latest Chagall books...

He inquired whether new French art books were on sale in Hungary.

"Yes, of course, they are."

New editions gave Chagall another opportunity of praising France.

I was at a loss how to voice my agreement. To keep silent at such statements would have the effect of an expression of compassion.

I told him that in his library I had noticed the diary about Bernini's French journey, and asked if he remembered the passage where Colbert visited him and Bernini didn't even bother to rise from bed. He could afford not to. He had been given a truly regal reception in France, just as he, Chagall, was given now.

He protested.

I said (and I was being quite sincere) that France had every reason to be grateful to him. Bernini had made no impression, even though he had brought them his baroque: the rationalism of the French had resisted him, although they felt that they did need a touch of transcendency, perhaps. They had invited him to France for that reason. But the enrichment hadn't come off, and Bernini had gone back home. By contrast, Chagall had managed to introduce dream into French art. This was Chagall's accomplishment, just as, in literature, it had been Freud's.

We were taking leave when, to tell him something familiar concerning the country about which he had been inquiring with such courteous ignorance, I mentioned Czóbel's name.

Chagall shook his head. He didn't know the man.

"Béla Czóbel," I repeated, articulating.

"I'm sorry," he said after a short silence.

Suddenly he uttered a cry—or, more precisely, a trill:

"Zobe-el!"

And he enthused that he was a genuine, a great painter, that man Zobe-el.

Then, spontaneously:

"Tell me. Is he rated highly in your country?"

"He is, yes. There's a little town near Budapest, a little larger than Vence. He spends his summers there."

Silence, while you take a deep breath.

"Happy man."

Back in Budapest, about the same time I was putting my memories and impressions into order, Imre Ámos's diary, with some of his ink drawings, appeared in *Magvető* publishers' Year-Book.

I am sorry I hadn't known this diary three months earlier. I would have gone to see Chagall, carrying it with me. He would surely have recognized that he had met these drawings before. According to the diary, 1.30 p.m. on Monday, October 4, 1937, Imre Ámos and his wife, Margit Anna, paid him a visit in Paris.

"*Sie müssen in Paris leben und arbeiten,*" Chagall told them. He spoke about many other things, including their pictures.

Despite the encouragement, Ámos and his wife, showing considerable inaptitude as "unsophisticated" people, did not stay in Paris. They returned to Hungary. In the growing darkness of the following years, their memories of that visit illuminated their lives. Again and again, Chagall's name keeps cropping up in sighs and lamentations of those brief diary entries, in recollections of what and how he had counselled them.

His reception of that poor, vagabond Hungarian painter-couple compares well with the most wonderful Chagall pictures in beauty and value. ("He would stare round-eyed, click his tongue and utter many a 'ts-ts'; and it was evident that he genuinely liked our things.")

For the quality of that welcome, Chagall has received more than for his best-paid-for paintings. More than he will receive for the cupola of the Paris Opera or for his frescoes in the Israel Parliament.

One of Imre Ámos's last entries in his diary before being taken off to his death in the Ukraine, reads as follows:

"*Where may Chagall be now? Who may be kicking in the mahogany door of his beautiful studio and home? The artists with unfettered minds who abhor all restrictive circumstances, where are they now?*

Ámos had fears for Chagall, not for himself.

Imre Ámos is said to have died tumbling from a railway embankment while carrying loads.

Amidst the universal indifference, in the ditch beside the embankment, his last thougth expressed Concern and Compassion for humanity.

Where may Chagall be now?

DEATH OF A PAINTER

FROM THE DIARY OF IMRE ÁMOS

December 10, 1936

Almost a year has passed since I began to jot down things. During this time I've gained a great deal of experience. We must resign ourselves that today the artist is a social outcast, an object of pity. We ought to be happy if our work is looked at, if we are spoken to. The public knows that in this terrible scramble for subsistence, we depend on its pennies. Art has lost all its authority. The ordinary citizen has no wish to rise to an understanding of the artist, hoping instead to pull him down to his own level.

Now I work fairly hard. This is not to say that I'm satisfied with myself; lately I have been growing more and more aware of the need to free myself of the dross overlying the nobler potential. I am becoming increasingly convinced that in its present form painting has come to a dead end. Perhaps in the visual expression of the soul's innermost life we can look for the new way. I believe in that commonplace—inspiration. Its rare moments bring to the surface the most sincere emotions; one works almost in a trance, hypnotized, and on "waking" hardly knows what one has been doing. Perhaps a period in human history will come when only those will be considered true artists who express human feelings in such a self-imposed trance and in a form connected with the cosmic forces of the subconscious, with a dream world. I can feel that I am not giving what I should like to give as a painter, but I cannot leap, only advance, step by step, and perhaps draw some consolation from the knowledge that I am not a conceited prig, but a well-intentioned artist, capable of enthusiasm, an artist who knows his limitations and is patient with others.

We had a postcard from Vajda yesterday. He's visiting his fiancée in Pozsony. I wonder whether they can ever afford to live together, to marry. Poor boy. For the last few months he has known that someone loves and understands him, and this gives him new strength to go on. I think he is very gifted, except I can see that he cannot free himself completely; he is too much bound by the things he knows: Byzantine and ancient Christian influences along with primitive and modern French strivings are mixed up in him. Fundamentally he is a romantic, but he suppresses feeling and his forms come out dry and harsh. Strangely, both of us like the same painters—Chagall, Csontváry, Gulácsy, Pissarro, and yet he assumes this hardness—perhaps because only a few of us young men at home express lyrical feelings. He deliberately tries to do something else and torments himself searching, as if afraid of going along with the others. And I think all this is because he would like to be much too

individualistic and nobody will accept what he is doing. I hope that he will shake off these shackles of rigidity and loosen up, for he is really very talented.

Today, I got into conversation with a musician. We've both been eating at the same university canteen for some ten years. Finally there will be someone to teach me the theory of music and similar things. I don't know where it comes from, but I have the definite feeling that I would have been as good a musician as painter if I had started out in that field. Sometimes strangely powerful sounds and images mingle in my mind, but, as I've never studied music, I transpose it all to painting. Of course, a great deal of the beauty is lost. I'd very much like to learn enough to write down at least brief moods and musical feelings. I know very well, however, that it's difficult to serve two masters, and I am trying to do my best in what I have begun.

July 30, 1937

We are greatly delighted by the possibility of our journey to Paris. Gachot wrote that he saw many fine exhibitions. We're trying to do everything possible to get the money together and, at long last, see something from which we can learn. We're not afraid that what we shall see will be disturbing, because we have kept abreast of great French art. Only through reproductions of course, but even so we were able to see what they were doing. Anyway, both I and Margit know pretty definitely how we want to develop. We're more interested in the endeavours of the young people (in Paris), in comparing our strivings with theirs. There is a frozen rigidity here. Some of the older painters are going backwards. We have a great struggle ahead if we really want to achieve our objectives, for we (especially I) rely mainly on visionary paintings, drawing nourishment from completely subjective memory images. I would like to carry this trend further, letting my paintings suggest the emotions felt by human beings even in the most ancient times—emotions that the children of the future will also feel—human responses connected with psychological life and projected through my subjective being, but which are nevertheless universal. I want to use motifs taken from nature merely to convey the vision. The future belongs to paintings which awaken not only a lyrical mood and quiet reflection, but—due to the pictorial elements assembled in a visionary manner—also have a suggestive effect on the viewer, perhaps stimulating in him the same tension and inspirational excitement. I can't state or express exactly what I mean, and perhaps I can't even do it yet, but this is what I want.

Paris, October 4, 1937

We have been here since September 18. With superhuman effort we were able to sell a few pictures and collect a few hundred pengős, and, taking advantage of the reductions connected with the World Fair, we came here. With the help of Uncle Poldi's rent-money we can stretch our pennies to last a few months. We found accommodations in a small boy scout home, a tiny room in Passy. It is a fairly quiet place. Margit cooks for us, making things a little easier, as restaurant food is very expensive. One's first impression of Paris is that here one was born and here one wants to die. People are very charming, though perhaps they give this appearance only from a distance, before one has anything to do with them. The sights are fabulous. Everything shows up in its grandeur and every step brings delightful experiences. And now for the Fair: the greatest French paintings have been collected from the whole world. I want to make a lot of notes about them.

Margit and I have just come home from seeing Chagall. When we arrived in Paris and the head of the boy scout's home found

out that we were painters, he immediately rang up Chagall asking whether we might go to see him with our work, for he knows that Chagall is fond of Jewish things and is glad to meet young people. We were almost speechless with joy that we would see him face to face and could actually talk to him—the master whom we learned to admire so greatly through his paintings. Mme Simon arranged that we would call on him Monday, that is, this afternoon, at one-thirty. Fortunately he lives just a few steps from us. With rolls of paintings and drawings under our arms, we set out. After a short search we found the house and took the lift upstairs. Of course, I with my poor French misunderstood the floor, and we kept ringing the doorbell on the sixth floor instead of the fifth for some five minutes, when I finally realized my mistake and we rang at Chagall's.

A few minutes of nervous waiting followed, and then a servant opened the door. After I gave her my card, the master himself appeared. He was a delightful figure, wearing a yellow-and-black striped shirt, grey woollen trousers; with rumpled hair and strangely flashing, slanting eyes, he received us smiling and showed us into a room filled with pictures, one more beautiful than the other. I could barely stammer a few words in German. He put his questions and answered ours partly in German, partly in an artist's jargon and in French. He was very glad that we brought so much to show him, and he settled down immediately to the drawings and paintings. Beginning with Margit's things, he took the drawings, then the prints. Upon seeing the first ones he eagerly asked her name and whether she had studied long, and if her work had been done from memory? His eyes almost popped out; he uttered several "ts"-s; all in all, you could see that he was really impressed. Then, leafing back, he said that she should definitely be working in Paris, her inner maturity was splendid, but she needed to give more attention to construction. The colours were perfect; however, she had to improve her knowledge of materials to express her wonderful potential. He then began to go through my things. Again I saw that he was genuinely delighted. (*"Ts-ts-ts, Sie müssen in Paris leben und arbeiten."*) Many works he found perfect, and some he criticized on grounds of colour and construction. He very much liked the "Man with Fish," the "Vigil," "Hassid," "Dreamer I" and "Dreamer II", "The Old Man at Prayer," the "Angel of Death," etc. We were still very young, he told us. Our inner feeling and insight were wonderful. Nor was anything wrong with its expression. Should we work in Paris for a longer time, we would see clearly what was still missing. Try to make ourselves financially independent, and whatever we do we must not listen to the buyer, that would spell tragedy to the painter. He had gone through the same difficulties himself, and we too would make out somehow. He was very sweet with his smiling eyes, and the way he seemed to go into deep thought at the more profound pictures. *"Ja, ja, fein,"* he would say after these meditations. His kindness did us good. Until now we had only been able to admire him from afar but at last we could shake his hands and he even liked our things.

Upon showing us to the door, he asked that we bring him our work when we began painting again. Finally he said goodbye, adding that he was glad Hungary could produce such fine young people.

February 3, 1938

We have been back home in Budapest for the last few months. We could not stay longer abroad, as all our money was gone. We had to rush home. Everybody encouraged us to stay, but beyond the praise and backslapping no one thought of actually helping. Paris is a beautiful city but it is equally cruel. Whoever hasn't the money and wants to live for art alone must—unless

he has ingratiated himself with some dealer (serving, of course, only the profit of the businessman)—either give up art and do something else, or perish. Then come the jackals and hyenas who have been watching the painter's agony from a distance and now buy everything down to the last rag. They provide everything with a stamp, and now begins the making of a genius. Nothing is left undone to push up the price of the works of the deceased—and the dealers pocket the profit.

The only profit we had out of the paintings taken with us was that after Chagall's praise we were for a while given free room at the boy scout's home and free lunches at a Russian canteen in 5, Rue Variz. But we couldn't afford either breakfast or supper, nor the metro, and you really can't live on nothing even in Paris.

February 26, 1938

I am working hard. Luckily what I saw in Paris did not undermine me, it only shook me up. I was able to summarize my ambitions, and now I am working very seriously. I use far more colour and more construction. As to approach, essentially I paint as I did previously. It is very difficult to find the proper solution for those vision-like paintings, where my thoughts are reflected as in a dream. I like to apply the motifs softly to the canvas, without their covering each other, not like Chagall who, in rendering similar concepts, paints harshly, realistically, in harmony with the thought he wants to project.

November 9, 1938

Not a single drawing changes owners at the exhibitions, and even in the studio one is visited only by sad, long-faced colleagues. Bokros Birman often comes to see us now. This splendid sculptor, no longer young, just vegetating from day to day, with overstrained nerves and without a studio. At his last visit he brought a plaster hand to dry, cast from the body of an old woman in the mortuary. On his feet he flaunted a new pair of shoes—payment for this unpleasant piece of work. It is a sad thought that with great gifts and excellent qualifications one does not even have a quiet home to work in at the age of fifty. These are the circumstances sapping the vitality of all serious artists: criticism prohibitive of individual creativity is gaining ground in this country too; a few reviewers, regarding themselves as very competent, would like to throw all objects not pleasing them on a bonfire. We are very unhappy to see many of the foremost artists changing midstream to boats which take them from the island of pure art to a twentieth-rate area of dictated work, only to get closer to the fleshpots. Instead of legitimate criticism, one reads with increasing frequency "reviews" that analyse only who is Jewish, who has a Jewish wife, etc. As if the artist's faith and religion were other than the art through which he shows his respect for and gives his devoted service to mankind.

November 22, 1938

I am in bed with a cold, listening to the radio. Some kind of serious recorded music. Last night we heard wonderful Beethoven symphonies from Sofia. I know very little about music, still I can see that painting will never quite reach the same gigantic summits. Pure music guided by the emotions is free of all earthly-bound musical or natural sounds and can captivate even the soul of an untrained person with such suggestivity that he waits for the forthcoming bars with bated breath. How far from all this is painting with its small, material-bound possibilities! I put my heart and soul into painting, but it often occurs to me that if I were young enough to begin my life over again I would certainly choose to be a musician, for a musician is able to project even the slightest tremors of his soul.

December 21, 1938

I haven't worked for weeks. We live in a vacuum of uncertainty. No one with the slightest intent of buying has visited us for months. The paintings sent to exhibitions have not found owners. For the time being, to earn the minimal cost of subsistence (some bacon for breakfast and supper) we are painting designs on keys for a greengrocer—for a mere song. But we can't even consider refusing this job, because there is nothing else and one must live. A few days ago I wrote to my relatives in America, perhaps they could do something to get us there. At this point it would be still possible to give up painting for a few years to earn enough with any kind of work enabling me to paint in freedom later. At home this is impossible.

January 14, 1939

I am going through spiritual agony. When I wake up in the morning I always tell myself: "You must get away from here, you are not needed here. And you amount to more than to live merely on your poorest work—if one can live at all from painting in this country." In vain I mull over various plans, I always knock my head against lack of money—a rigid, unyielding wall. And, my God, how much surplus money people waste on nothing, squandering it on ridiculous whims. I read somewhere that Rudolf Valentino's alleged tub was found in a run-down Hollywood studio and the stars started outbidding each other for the cracked old tin tub (which except in the astute imagination of a resourceful American businessman probably had nothing to do with Valentino), and the happy winner (Loretta Young) paid 10,000 dollars for that piece of junk.

I looked over the entries I made in Paris, and couldn't help thinking how stupid we had been not to have stayed there and taken advantage of the opportunities offered. Lhote could probably have helped a great deal, he is a serious critic and a cubist painter of long standing, with a good name and splendid connections.

But we did not accept the invitation, we were so exhausted and so tired of Paris—why, it is hard to understand now. At the opening of his exhibition, he invited us again, but we did not go because by that time, sick and tired of privations, we had run away from Paris. And yet if we had only held out then, we might have created some kind of basis by now.

July 24, 1939

This is our third week at Szentendre. It is a beautiful little town, full of ready-made themes. Ancient winding streets, old gates, a splendid, neglected church, all fill this place with an extraordinary atmosphere. At dusk the mountains loom in an improbable purplish-blue, and the moon is blindingly phosphorescent on the peeling church walls. All the work I do here is imbued with a kind of mystic fulness. Not that I'm doing as much as I would like to, I can't because I'm not working alone. (Béla B. and I rented rooms together. His artistic approach is basically different from mine, and this has a somewhat disturbing effect on both of us.) A few pictures made here I gave myself to completely; yet my drawings reflecting this little town's atmosphere are generally better than the paintings. In them I abstracted myself more successfully from the visible objects and was able, I can almost say, to express my moods in a surrealistic manner. I don't think they fully coincide with my mental image of really good and absolutely artistic things, but such images we forever pursue without hoping to capture them.

September 20, 1939

We are back in Budapest again. I stayed for a few days at home in my village. The time was spent in a terrible mood; the German-Polish war and the European explosion in the offing have completely upset everyone. When I got home I found Uncle

Poldi's postcard announcing they are to discontinue their aid of 20 pengős. Just at the "best" moment! No chance of selling pictures or any other type of work now. My relatives ignore our desperate plight. Deep silence on all sides, or at best sympathetic sighs. And yet it would only be a matter of temporary aid in the form of a loan. But then who knows if a painter can ever repay a loan, so they refuse to give it. We have no studio, and for the last few days I couldn't even make myself look at my wrapped-up things lying here crammed together in a corner, because I was afraid I might break out crying. I, a man always busy, now sit idle in a ground-floor room so dark that when I leave it I have to blink. And there are practically no perspectives, because everywhere they ask for some sort of collateral, something I cannot provide.

October 7, 1939

I am shivering with a head-cold in an icy room; after four years in a well-heated flat I'm no longer used to being cold. Now I will learn again; still that's not what matters most, for one can wrap himself in his warmest rags to protect himself from the frost outside, but one cannot shut out the benumbing cold freezing the soul into stagnation—the general atmosphere, the lack of culture, and the persecution. I haven't done any work for six weeks, we don't have a separate room, and I cannot make myself take out the rolls hidden behind the stove and the cupboards. What could I paint now even if there were a place to work? I cannot shut out the meanness of life around me. I would only be projecting subjective motifs on the paper or the canvas again, things hardly of interest to others.

October 11, 1939

Weeks ago I submitted an application for relief to the National Federation of Artists. Despite the fact that I'm a member of several affiliated organizations, I was requested to show a few pictures to the jury to see whether I deserve the aid (20 pengős). I just received the answer that on the basis of the pictures I sent in they cannot put me on the relief list. I am deeply ashamed that I bared my poverty to a Gallery jury which naturally would not find my works acceptable. I am ashamed of my naiveté that I allowed myself to be tricked again into a situation I should have been able to foresee.

October 25, 1939

I have become private tutor to a dirty, runny-nosed fifth-grade girl. I have to spend an hour a day in an unaired little den, without a window, next to a grocery shop, supervising the child to see if she does her homework correctly. In her notebook I carefully show her how to draw the furniture in the room, the environment where she lives, etc. It is terribly difficult to do this badly—childishly, I mean—but I have no choice if I want to earn a few pennies. I can see now how right my older relatives were when they tried to persuade me to become a drawing teacher. I would have a job now; but I wonder, would I have progressed so far in my artistic conceptions? Well, it can't be helped now, but I still think in *that* case I would have yearned for *this* independence.

June 10, 1940

We are getting ready to go to Szentendre and all the tension of this horrible year is breaking forth. This blindingly dark room weighs on my head like hundreds of stones. I am stricken with the knowledge that I must sit about sentenced to idleness in the darkest nook of the building, while the studios here house tailor's shops turning out uniforms, or, with blinds drawn during the daytime, serve as sleeping quarters for gigolos who come to life when darkness descends.

Imre Ámos: Portrait of the Painter's Wife

Imre Ámos:
Portrait
of a Painter

The wireless is blasting forth the events of the Franco-German war, speaking of the death of thousands, and I am whimpering about petty housing problems.

July 10, 1940

In front of our gate sharp commands are uttered and boots knock harshly against the ground. Anni tells us that the old soldiers have their drill here. Not exactly the quiet, inspiring atmosphere needed for work. I happen to be working on a picture depicting an artist absorbed in his work, painting absent-mindedly while the house above his head is in flames. In the whole picture only the angel lying on the roof and immune to the fire is soothing. The things going on in front of the gate seem to have inspired it.

January 12, 1941

I returned home from forced labour camp on December 13, 1940, after almost three months of hard physical labour. My fingers still ache in the mornings. I'm not sure that I don't have rheumatism from pushing cold wagons and lifting iron rails and sleepers. I am rather amused at myself for having become quite skilled as a railway worker. We repaired tracks at Balatonaliga and the work consisted of so many different operations that it was surprising. The worst was to empty the small stones from the wagons, because we were driven very hard. I am not really spoiled; I was a village child and used to handling spades and shovels, though not at the speed we were forced to do it there. So I did not think the work was terribly hard; but it made me sad that we were usurping the livelihood of the labourers, while simultaneously I had to surrender my paints and brushes, though I don't believe that I can do more for my country through physical labour (yet I never shirked it) than through painting. There are so many other incomprehensible phenomena in this dark world today that there is no reason to wonder at this particular thing. Now I am home again. I was greedy to start work, fearing it would be difficult after so much time away, but, amazingly, I find myself working with much spirit and I think fairly successfully, as if I hoped to make up for lost time.

We are oppressed by the war, the never-ending uncertainty and the privations. There are all kinds of restrictions, and no good bread, sugar or fuel; the streets are dark and hostile for anyone who likes a gay and peaceful world.

February 10, 1941

We managed to obtain some money. I'm busy trying to have a suit made. This is a great event in my life, as I've been longing for a tailor-made suit for years. Usually I wear hand-me-downs from richer relatives, and I must admit that by the time I get them they are fairly worn. How many shop windows I've stared into and how many new suits I have worn in my imagination!

Even now I wouldn't have done this except that my wife urged it, almost forcing me to have a new suit made at last.

February 20, 1941

We have just held the second exhibition of Jewish painters. In connection with it I have become much the wiser for experience. My God, how very few decent people there are! What I mean is people who are really human, have guts, stick to their artistic beliefs, are consistent and good and noble. I got to know L. H. from a very bad side, for now that he is *primus inter pares* among the handful of artists in charge of arranging the exhibition, he most rudely rejects all well-meaning opinions different from his own. In a reprimanding tone he instructs me, the representative of progressive art on the committee, to speak only on my own behalf and let the others all turn to him

directly with their requests. He looks down on us and says that he would not waste a penny on the younger artists' work, and acts as if the money came from his own pocket for the paintings which he designates for lottery, although the funds were raised from afternoon teas. He clings jealously to his prestige and calls you "my boy" if you risk voicing an independent opinion...

September 8, 1941

Lajos Vajda passed away last night. He had spent his sad vegetative life struggling as a misunderstood artist to the end. The few who really know the field considered him a most significant man. I think that he left a great gap behind him among modern artists. He lay sick in bed for eight months. When I last saw him he was eating with obvious pleasure and had faith in his recovery. Two days later he was dead. As two of his closest friends, Bandi Bálint and I made the arrangements for his funeral. His family do not know that an autopsy was performed. One of the doctors present said that there was not a square centimetre of sound tissue in his lungs. Tuberculosis had done its work on him. In his death he looked as if he were sleeping and smiling. There was no rigidity in his body, and while he was being washed his hands moved as naturally as if still alive. Over the black stitches, the traces of the post-mortem, looked shocking. On his funeral garb, above the heart, we placed a slip of paper on which we had written a few words of farewell. We made several drawings of him, but none seemed to come out right. His hair had turned completely dark. After the service we met at their house and in reverential silence played Beethoven's Concerto in D-Major on the record-player, with Vajda in our thoughts.

We have just come home from Mrs. Vajda's, after going through Lajos's work. I was overpowered, especially by his most recent creations, for they seemed projections of a never-seen, strange and complex life from another world or planet. A suggestive spinning of lines and forms, cosmic whirlpools; the patched-up pieces of dream-like figures dance on the white paper, apparently without design; and yet, if you respond to transcendent things, you cannot help but feel that every line (despite the eruptive force) is in premeditated, planned balance—as if, when doing his last things, he had a premonition that only a few days were left. He apparently put all his strength and feeling, without inhibition, into the large, dark-toned drawings. I don't think that he could have improved on these works. His lifework is a finished whole. Perhaps if he had continued, he might have regressed or changed direction completely. As far as his work is concerned he passed away at the best time, leaving behind a fully mature body of work.

December 8, 1941

Yesterday was my thirty-fourth birthday. I'm a little tired of the struggle that is part of my trade, having to maintain contact with people—especially painters—in order to live. There was a strange occurence at the latest exhibition of the New Society of Artists. B. wanted to throw out one of my pictures when the jury made its decisions, at which Egry, who's been watching my work for years, scolded him: "Shut up! You only talk like this because you are green with envy. These are wonderful things and we're going to show them."

I was very surprised and felt myself rehabilitated. I am too "French" for B.'s taste, and they blame me for attempting new forms of expression instead of stopping, as they have, at some safe and convenient station. I told them this. Of course, there's no doubt I'll lose this argument simply because, for the time being, they direct the more narrow circle of collectors. Certainly, long ago they cut off my path in that direction. Well, it doesn't matter; from the people who really count I hear many fa-

vourable opinions about my pictures. Apparently I'm beginning to become a serious rival to those already established, for I come up against more and more opposition. Unfortunately I don't feel much like working. My God, if we only had peace and tranquility again; I am content with so very little.

December 19, 1941

From Rezső Bálint I bought his little book devoted to Modigliani's memory. I have just finished reading it. It was a strange feeling to share their Parisian experiences. Nostalgia for the narrow streets and the bistros overcame me, and I felt genuine regret that I hadn't spent more time there when it would have been possible. Though it may come again. After all, the war won't last forever, and perhaps we can go back to Paris, which is the acme of everything, unless what they have recently endured there has completely destroyed the sensitive atmosphere so important for artistic life. Where may Chagall be now? Who may be kicking in the mahogany door of his beautiful studio and home? The artists with unfettered minds who abhor all restrictive circumstances, where are they now?

April 9, 1943

If something dreadful happens to him, please help me not to survive! (Entry by Margit Anna, the painter's wife.)

August 8, 1943

The sad note by my wife has reminded me of service at the front in Russia (14 months). The strangest part is that she somehow sensed I was then between life and death, critically ill with typhus in a Russian peasant's home.

August 16, 1943

I haven't recorded anything in my diary for a long time. Meanwhile, sad days of my life have trickled away. On March 18, 1942, I was called up to forced labour service. We were marched out to the Russian front and were demobilized on June 24th, 1943. Memories of those desperate days still ferment within me: through blizzards, the temperature about 40° F below zero, a winter retreat over pathless terrain. It was a miracle of God that I was able to return. At Korosten I fell ill with typhus and lay sick on a few straws scattered on the earth floor of a Ukrainian peasant hut. The high fever and lying on my back brought on double pneumonia and, later, dysentery; of course, absolutely no treatment was available. I think that only the infinite desire to get home to my wife, aside from the help of God, brought me recovery. It is horrible how those at home suffered from nerve-racking anxiety and sense of impotence. Their cards reaching me caused at least as much sorrow as joy. Now I'm home again, but the war is ravaging the world more ruthlessly than ever, and only God knows when there will be peace again. This has meant almost two years away from my work. Out there at the front I drew and did a few water-colours, but unfortunately the gendarme on duty at the border tore up all my innocent sketches—which I had done with permission from my company commander—and threw them all away. My God, what was I to do, I could not have convinced a primitive man without the slightest artistic education about the innocence of my sketches. I just made a desparing gesture and left witho t them.

August 20, 1943

The city is all decked out and looking very festive, for it is St. Stephen's day. We don't feel like going out, there are such crowds milling about the streets that it is impossible to look around quietly as on a week day. Anyway it may be safer to stay in because it is rumoured that the English radio threatened Budapest with an air raid,

which would be very sad indeed. My God, I hope they will spare this beautiful city from such horrors.

*

It is difficult to find myself again. I regard my own works as a stranger who was once a painter. These one and a half years of forced break have had the result that I can look objectively at my own paintings and those of others. During my days of horror many things became clear to me; some which I had regarded as important shrank into insignificance, and many others not deemed worthy of attention in the past, assumed importance. Right now I am doing drawings; laconic black-and-white completely expresses my present emotions... I went through Margit's and my drawings. A great many have piled up during the years. I would be glad if people occasionally asked me for drawings. I'd love to give them to people I like. It would be so nice to see people pleased by some of the better pieces. After all, money is very difficult to get for artistic work, and somehow God's bidding alway produces the minimum absolutely necessary.

I had my last collective exhibition in 1936. It did not bring great results, being somewhat premature. The first, just a year earlier, had meant a great deal to me, winning many friends and financially raising me from absolutely nil. I held the second exhibition chiefly at the request of Lázár and poor Lajos Ernst. Since that time seven years have passed and I have very definitely changed, apart from natural development, so many things have happened to me since (Paris, being called up to forced labour four times, Jewish Laws, etc.), only the roots of my former attitude are left. In other ways I have completely changed. In the past I would never have applied an orange or deep cobalt to the canvas, now I regard the purest colours as the most beautiful. True, I want to see them in their proper context as composition demands. Very often I feel the need to do abstract and surrealistic work, and, frankly, I wonder whether it is compatible with my general artistic views to do hese simultaneously with things representing different trends. I think it would be wrong violently to sever such tendrils from my being, for I watch myself with sufficient objectivity, and if this seeks to come out of me, I must not destroy it. Time, clarifying all, has a selective effect, and within a few years I shall certainly know whether or not I must let this tendency exist.

The present times have swept a whole host of poorly qualified artists to the surface, and the official regime, certainly not influenced in its judgements by higher considerations, has lifted them like a whirlwind lifts refuse. Art books are published that maintain silence about works of real worth, instead, praising pseudo-talent to the skies. It's impossible and not even worth the effort to protest. Perhaps an age with purer views will come, when everybody will be appreciated according to his merit. (How far we have to go before Csontváry, Czóbel, Gulácsy, Vajda, Derkovits and the others will receive their just due!)

By chance I happened to look over my notes, the entries I made in Paris. To my great astonishment I didn't record anything at the time aside from our visit to Chagall, although there were a multitude of experiences. We saw so many splendid things, from the tiny galleries to the museums, everywhere, that we hardly had the energy to look at them properly; that's probably why I didn't write about them in my diary, for all my time was taken up by seeing. Now, as I recollect what we saw, I think perhaps Picasso impressed me most deeply, so overpowering was his big black-and-white canvas in the Spanish pavilion. This genius radiates such suggestive force that one is completely overcome. At first, when I had seen just a few of his abstracts, I did not trust his sincerity, but later, when I got to know his work better and saw his natural and impressionist drawings and pictures, I

could look at his later works, distant from my own endeavours, only with the greatest respect and admiration. I sensed the internal dissatisfaction, leading him to burst apart old barriers and give birth to today's splendid Picasso. Next to him Braque and the other cubists seem to be dry, unemotional painters, relying entirely on technique. He is not afraid to work in a chronologically eclectic style, always ready to let his momentary mood rule. That's why his paintings are always so dynamic and have so much suggestive power. One thing, however, I am aware of in his work (and in this century of ours I regard his path as the one to follow), namely, that he was not able to stick to completely non-representational abstractions but returned to motifs which can be seen in nature, though he transformed and expressed them in a Picassoesque manner. Of course, I liked Braque, Chagall, Matisse and Rouault almost as much, but in none of them did I feel the same degree of greatness.

November 7, 1943

This is the second Sunday that the New Society of Artist's exhibition is open. I'm glad to see the rooms filled with spectators and the public looking at the objects on display with great interest. Apparently something—perhaps the exhausting years of war—has made them more responsive to art. And yet there are almost no reviews. The reason: there are hardly any serious periodicals that pay attention to art. The dailies are full of war and political news now more important to the public. In a way it's quite good that not all the newspapers carry reviews; some of them assigned the coverage to journalists, qualified to note the interesting features and events of daily life and able to write good reports, but who have absolutely no understanding of art. Such reviews show a frightening lack of knowledge and can influence interested laymen only in the wrong direction.

The Lajos Vajda Memorial Exhibition has just closed. Ernő Kállai wrote very nicely on it in the *Pester Lloyd* and in the exhibition catalogue. The exhibition was splendid. It was very well arranged, with the material assembled so that all those interested could get a clear picture of Vajda's ability. Naturally there were also many attacks, but only by the artistic failures. Vajda reached an absolutely pure and high level of abstract portrayal. In his earlier work the presence of natural objects can be discerned, in his later work, however, an intangible force, at once attractive and repellent, captivates the spectator. In these Vajda no longer drew and painted but wrote signs which were hieroglyphs projected by a life approaching its end. His works of that last summer are visible graphs of a strange soul moving on different planets or in some transcendent plane; the whirling of confused and yet incredibly systematic lines, fibrous sheaves reflecting the arrangement of an inner constructive force.

These are generally incomprehensible to those who seek the conventional language of painting; but Vajda's last pictures will be admired by those who react to the last vibrations of a splendid mind, those who without too much undue speculation permit the quiverings of a departing force—transposed into drawing—to affect them.

February 6, 1944

Jenő Barcsay's Budapest exhibition opened today. He is a splendid artist consistently following his own road. He has already achieved a completely mature style of expression. His formerly dark pictures now absorb more colour, and the well-composed forms radiate force, with whites, reds, greens and ochres flashing from sooty blacks.

March 21, 1944

Grave times and terrible ordeals await us. War has come to Hungarian soil. We

cannot know what the future will bring. We trust in God and face what is to come with a strong spirit and clear conscience. So far too, we have done what we could for our country and for our humanity. I have faith that the ordeal will purify our souls, and, whatever is to happen to us, I can say without reservation that we have lived honestly and with integrity—both as artists and as human beings. May God permit me to continue my entries in peace after tranquility has returned to the soul.

April 5, 1944

We have lived through the second bombing of Budapest. It is a terrible, ruthless and inhuman thing, hundreds of men and women, chiefly civilians, are among the victims. When will man grow up to live side by side with other men, without violence and murder, with genuine love for others? Without hatred, honouring the peace-loving, and leading back to the right path those who have strayed under evil influence.

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

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HUNGARIAN NOTEBOOK

by

JOAN RODKER

The man at the Television Centre on Szabadság tér said "I hope you're not going to call this film 'Hungary—Seven Years After'. Because if you are, the idea is not too original—we've had them all, features and documentaries, articles and photos: Hungary—four years after, five years, six... it can't go on forever."

It was only my first day in Budapest but I had already heard the same basic thought expressed three times by visitors. An Australian of Hungarian origin, on his first visit to Hungary since before the war, found Budapest drab and down-at-heel. But he was surprisingly brusque with a Frenchman who complained that the people were ill-mannered and unwashed. "What right," he demanded, "had the Frenchman to judge? You cannot possibly imagine the poverty of the old days. Of course people are better off today".

The representative of an English engineering firm making his eighth or ninth trip since 1955, preferred Budapest above all foreign cities and extolled Hungarians as the most cosmopolitan, warm-hearted people in the world though exasperating when it came to contracts and negotiations. He considered the Communist bloc countries, with Hungary his special province, and China next on the list, to be the best expanding market. Whatever I, a newcomer, might find to criticise, he hoped I was not going to jeopardise promising developments by being nasty in print.

A Czech couple, both doctors, both plump and elderly, could hardly believe the good fortune that had brought them to Budapest for their first journey abroad since returning home from England 18 years before. The richness of the shops (apart from food stores not very impressive to a Western eye), the food itself and the general atmosphere, especially the way people spoke their minds in broad daylight—everything enchanted them. Weary shrugs and a wait-and-see attitude greeted suggestions of a

thaw in their own country. They and tourists from East Germany as well as others from neighbouring lands like to stress that Hungary is reaping the well-earned rewards of its "humanization of socialism" of the last years. Changing Soviet policy and the East-West détente are only secondary considerations.

Sores of the past

The Hungarians themselves rarely mention the "Seven Years Before" (I was there in late Summer 1963) though when they do, one can gauge where they stand on this and almost everything else by whether they call it "the revolution", the "counter-revolution" or "the events". But whatever term is used the episode now belongs firmly to history and persistent Western interest is seen as macabre, obsessive or motivated by ill-will.

It needed a guided tour with some of my compatriots before I could convince one man, an official from the tourist bureau, that the average Englishman honestly knows little else of Hungary than that date, the drama of the Stalin statue and a few uncertain facts about Cardinal Mindszenty.

So we toured the scenes of the main fighting of 1956, saw the rosy marble base where Lenin is expected soon to replace the ex-hero so spectacularly dislodged, and drove past the grey pile of a building in Szabadság tér where Cardinal Mindszenty has lived for seven years under United States protection. There he has his private chapel, learns English, so they say, and reads. Every so often there are rumours that he has accepted the Pope's invitation to move to Rome, and occasionally irreverent souls wonder whose responsibility he becomes if he dies before he leaves. The majority is Catholic, and fervent or not one gathers that the fate of the lonely Cardinal is no longer a burning issue. As for the streets damaged in the fighting, these apparently were quickly repaired but there are enough pock-marked houses and blasted walls to feed the foreign imagination. One forgets, or never knew, how much of the capital was devastated in the war, especially during the 6-week winter siege of 1944—45 when the Germans fought street by street in the final debacle.

A reaching-out

Until recently rebuilding was slow and sporadic. Now it gets top priority and so much is happening at once that some areas in the capital look like a busy shipyard with wooden weavings of scaffolding towering into the sky. Shop and café life continue briskly in the darkened caverns underneath.

During the glowing days of Indian summer *(our* "old wives' summer" chorus the guides as if the seasonal belssing were unknown to the rest of the universe) streets were crowded all day and late into the night. The easy atmosphere and the combination of sauntering and bustle are reminiscent of a South European city somewhere in the West. To one who expected to find heaven knows what aura of Eastern despotism, the pervading mood of ease was bound to come as a surprise. There is a feeling of recovery after convalescence, a gaiety both tentative and open, something in the air I can only describe as a reaching-out. For the first time since the war, some of the older people said, the debilitating sense of impermanence is giving way to relaxation and security. Prime Minister Kádár's much quoted reversal of the grim maxim "Who is not with us is against us" to "Who is not against us is with us" is accepted as sufficient guarantee that the trend will continue.

Three recent steps were cited as proof.

The last of the political prisoners has been freed and, with the beginning of the 1963 university year, merit again became the criterion of entry or grant and not a student's social background. Previous discriminatory measures against children of bourgeois and intellectual families had deprived the country of many a potential specialist and this despite shortages in almost all fields of labour. Finally there was the new ruling on travel. Passports were issued to everyone, or nearly everyone, wishing to visit not only countries of the Communist bloc but also of the West. This right was one of the main demands of the revolutionary students of Szeged university on October 20th, 1956.

For months legations and embassies were inundated with applicants for visas. France, Italy and Austria headed the lists and I met several grannies who had benefitted from the new source of income by taking a working applicant's place in the dawn-to-dusk queues. Of its precious hard currency stocks, the Government had allocated around 70 dollars per person and 5 dollars to those going to stay with friends. A tourist leaving London recently after a six weeks' stay said emigré hosts are calling the new dispensation "Kádár's Revenge".

János Kádár has gradually become that rare phenomenon, a popular leader. Seven years ago few Hungarians indeed, much less a Westerner, would have believed such a thing possible. His main achievements have been to bring reality into the fanatically unrealistic industrialisation schemes of the previous regime, to put through a more rational policy vis à vis the Soviet Union and to give long overdue attention to production in agriculture and consumer goods.

Living conditions

People work hard, or at any rate long hours, and still for relatively low wages. The national average is around 1700 forints a month (approx. £ 30) with the vast majority of married women working too, mostly from necessity. Unlike many other Communist countries, intellectuals in Hungary such as writers, artists and film people are not paid the fabulous fees that make them a financially pampered elite. This privilege seems to belong to doctors and dentists with scientists following not far behind. By our standards, transport, general amenities and housing are extremely cheap with a lot of people owning their own homes or building co-operatively with Government loans. Budapest's population has doubled to two million since the war and the housing shortage remains acute which may be one reason why most families, despite good kindergarten facilities, are small. One child is the average, three exceptional. Abortion is legal. In the countryside, roughly one home in three is new and most are privately owned.

Everywhere you see the labels and marks of Comecon exchange. Cars from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and East Germany (also West), food from Bulgaria and Poland, textiles, manufactured goods, machinery from all of them. Reasonably priced on the whole and in far greater supply than even two years ago, consumer goods often fail to keep pace with demand and tend to lack variety. Housewives complain of the time wasted trying to get to the right shop at the right moment to get the goods they want. A woman I knew lugged a plastic wash basin all the way from Vienna only to find that during her absence an identical model had been produced by the home market.

Recently there has been a run on the big items; cars, refrigerators and TV sets and for most of these there is a waiting list. Radios are an exception—every family appears to own one already. Food absorbs most of the family budget but then Hungarians take their gastronomic needs very seriously. As consumers of coffee and cream cakes, they're world beaters.

Gradually—and less gradually over the past three years—the worst abuses of the Rákosi regime are being abolished. The kind of day to day examples cited range from major issues such as political pressure and persecution to small aggravations like the "voluntary" loans and "voluntary" attendance at political courses. The loans, destined for construction works or "peace promotion" used often to amount to 10% of a wage packet. Today the Government gets as much, if not more, with Lotto and Toto, one a sort of State lottery and the other football pools. In the past jobs went to the reliable Party man regardless of suitability. Now the

situation is more normal: the job goes to the best man and if he wants to go on and up, he is expected to learn Party manners on the way. It is also possible to go to church without a Party zealot fixing you with an accusing eye or jotting down your name. The curate at St. Emeric's Church in Buda said he can now supplement his State wage, paid as token compensation for confiscated Church property, by collecting from the faithful without either side having to worry about the consequence.

The two worlds

The way the two worlds mix and are seen to mix was neatly illustrated by one of those jokes Budapesters are so proud of, freshly minted by a newspaper humorist for August 20th. That day is the traditional holiday of St. Stephen who was the 11th century Magyar ruler under whom Hungary achieved greatness and who allied himself to the Church of Rome, an event often quoted to substantiate Hungary's claim to long-standing links with the West. Nowadays, August 20th is also celebrated as Constitution Day. The old holiday involves bringing the relic of St. Stephen's right hand (at any rate this is what I gathered) in procession around Mathias Church of Buda Castle for veneration. The joke goes roughly: "The Holy Day of the Right Hand has now been allied to the holiday of the Left hand." Not an entirely new approach: Imperial Spain had the same idea when she tried to make Catholicism palatable by grafting her own pageantry on to that of pagan Indian ritual in the Americas.

Whether it is the result of being an isolated linguistic enclave surrounded by Slavs and Germans, a predominantly Catholic country amid Orthodox and Protestants, articulate Hungarians, both in town and country, have a way of harping on certain themes as if they must forever be justifying themselves. They seem to suffer, or enjoy, feelings of superiority and inferiority to an extreme degree at one and the same time. The recurring topics range the whole gamut of national experience.

There is the poverty of the country and its smallness, the treaty of Trianon, the chapters of rebellions and occupations, noble freedom fighters and nobler poets. And always the language. Perhaps because so few people can, or want to, speak it, Hungarians have almost come to regard Hungarian as akin to Holy Writ. Coming from somewhere beyond the Urals with the first Magyar settlers to Europe in the 9th Century, the uniqueness of the tongue is basic to the Hungarians' belief in their own uniqueness. It cut them off, kept them different from their neighbours but helped them

preserve their individuality and contributed to their survival as a nation. Their strength had to come from within themselves and that is one reason, they tell you, why Hungarians no matter where they go usually land smartly on their feet. Case histories abound to prove the point as also the thesis that considering the size of the country. Hungary has enriched the world with a disproportionately large number of great names. Bartók and Kodály are primarily invoked, Szigeti and footballers, table tennis players and atomic scientists Szilárd and Teller (though both live in the USA), innumerable writers, journalists and designers, Korda of course, the Gábor girls...

Ups and downs

No discussion is considered worthy of the term without a reference to, or one quotation from, the great poets and there is commiseration that untranslated, or untranslatable, one is excluded from appreciating the beauty of the syntax. I became familiar with the meaning of Petőfi, Ady, Attila József and Vörösmarty before I could say "please" or "thank you". The poets are cherished as if newly dead or still alive and not only on anniversaries. The love and prestige they enjoy derives as much from what they did for the language as from the fact that, in the tradition of most leading intellectuals, they fought—often physically—for social and political ideals.

It is hardly more than a century since Hungarian was accepted as the official language of administration and parliament, for until the beginning of the 19th century it had been not German as one would believe, but Latin. Thus recognition of the Hungarian language would at times be regarded as synonymous with nationhood. Today the total of Hungarian-speaking people is around 14 million, with ten million in the motherland and four million divided between immigrant countries like the United States and Australia and a somewhat bigger proportion in those areas of Rumania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia which Hungary lost by the Treaty of Trianon imposed by the Czechs, Rumanians and French when they crushed the short-lived Red Revolution of 1919. The loss of more than half her territory ("including some of our richest lands of course") and the only stretch of sea-coast still rankles.

The nadir in national humiliation seems to have been reached during the 150 years of Turkish rule. When the infidel was at last ousted in the 17th century, the country was virtually in ruins and the population gruesomely decimated. After the Turkish Empire, the Austro-Hapsburgs held

sway and for another long period, to the mid 19th Century, Hungary was relegated to little more than colonial status. That phase too was brought to an end in blood and violence. There never seems to have been a settled period long enough to tackle problems like agrarian or industrial reform at a serious level, assuming there had been more than a sporadic will to do so. Between the two world wars (in both of which Hungary fought on the losing side) poverty drove nearly two million of the population into emigration. And there were always the intermittent flare-ups of revolt and rebellion. Dózsa led the 16th century peasant revolt and was roasted alive; Rákóczi battled in the 18th century against the Hapsburgs and died in exile; Kossuth was the hero of the 1848 independence uprising and Béla Kun of the brief 1919 Soviet Republic. The former died in exile and the latter disappeared in the Soviet Union.

"A national park for feudalism in the middle of Europe" is how one liberal politician described his country not long before the holocaust burst that ended the old forever. Change was bound to come. In the event it took a war to do it; win or lose. For a brief spell, after 1945, it looked as if a peaceful transition was assured by way of a pro-Socialist form of government with agrarian reform the focus and nationalisation accepted as inevitable. Came the developing tyranny of the now universally reviled Rákosi, the cold war, Russification, silencing of opposition, economic decline, and the rest.

"A reasonable balance"

Talking to people in cafés and parks, or wandering among the holiday crowds by the shores of Lake Balaton, it was hard to believe the troubled times had been so recent and even harder to understand why so few, even among those who had suffered most, seemed to feel any bitterness. Politics in Hungary, they might explain, have always been oppressive; or, Kádár is a good leader and life goes on improving. So why bother about the past? More interesting was the suggestion that though misery was of course personal, it had also been a shared misery; the tragedy, a people's tragedy. Because of this and what it ultimately led to, they were firmly convinced the same thing could never happen again. They talked from experience. It was not for me to question such faith. Anyway, one's responses become inhibited as if it were necessary to have lived in another time when our own history was in turmoil, the 17th century say, and not within the sheltered cosy present Britain, before one could even try to talk to today's Hungarians on an equal footing.

Not that the Western democratic belief in a free press and freedom of expression is not accepted as desirable in Hungary too. It is, but not now. And maybe later it won't be necessary. It's simply that for the moment like any country working for a common cause, Hungary is united, more or less dedicated and busy enjoying the immediate rewards of achievement and the mood of optimism. In the meantime, one comes across people perfectly willing to speak openly about their hopes for a better deal in this or that particular: more job flexibility, less bureaucracy, greater opportunities for personal initiative, better homes, more money, but I never heard anyone—and that includes the taxi driver who was once a high-up in politics, the shabby ex-banker hawking tracts and the ex-aristocrat turned (perforce) riding master—either bemoan or wish back the old days of before the war. Perhaps the cases cited wished they had fled when the going was still good. If so, they were not talking.

Living conditions and the acquisition of creature comforts dominating virtually all energies and conversations, I put forward the intriguing proposition that a time may well come when the materialistically-minded Socialist Hungarians will find their attitudes and way of life hardly distinguishable from the materialistically-minded capitalist French or British. "Perish the thought" was the quick reaction from an amazingly self-assured bunch of students so confident in the righteousness and promise of their destiny, that I did.

What then? By virtue of shifting relationships in world politics, the West's tacit acceptance that Hungary has worked her passage nearly home after 1956, it becomes feasible for her to strike a reasonable balance between renewing old ties, cultural, temperamental and, to some extent, economic with the West and maintaining the new loyalties and allegiance to the Eastern bloc, bonds based on the very real factors of economic, geographic, military and political necessity.

SURVEYS

THIRTEEN PER MILL

Debates on the Birth-rate in Hungary

According to demographic assessment, the rate of live births remained at approximately the same level in Europe from the early Middle Ages to the close of the 18th century: 40 births per 1,000 inhabitants. This birth-rate of 40 per mill was a response to the extremely high rate of infant and child mortality, and as soon as the development of capitalist civilization was followed by a lowering of these death-rates, families began to reduce the number of children. The population picture of Europe consequently underwent a change so sudden as to induce experts to refer to it as a "demographic revolution." In Great Britain, the classical home of capitalism, the number of births per thousand inhabitants was reduced from 37 to 33 by the first half of the 19th century. The "demographic revolution" still goes on, notwithstanding occasional stagnations; compared to the 40 per mill of a century and a half ago, the birth-rate is at present around 19 per mill in Europe.

The "Demographic Revolution" in Hungary

Capitalist civilization having spread later in Hungary, the Hungarian "demographic revolution" also set in much later than in Western European countries; however, since the beginning of the present century it has followed the same pattern. Whereas in France and Belgium the birth-rate was around 3 per mill in the 'fifties of the last century, in Hungary it was still 40 per mill in its closing decades. A noticeable reduction began at the turn of the century; in twenty years—from 1885 to 1905—the birth-rate was reduced from 46 to 37 per mille. At the beginning of the second decade of the century it was only 32 per mill, in the third decade it fell to 20 per mill, sinking almost to the present European average. As in every country of Europe in the years following the end of the Second World War, compared to the 19 per mill of wartime the birth-rate rose to 21 per mill during 1947–1949. However, from 1950 a diminishing tendency became dominant and the birth-rate again fell to 19 per mill in 1952. The Government then intervened by issuing a decree (No. 1004/1953) which strictly limited the possibilities of birth control; abortion was made liable to much more severe punishment than previously. Thereupon the birth-rate began to increase, and by the end of 1954 it reached 23 per mill. This ministerial decree was, however, not accompanied by adequate social measures. Numerous undesired children were born to become grave burdens to their families and to society; the law on birth control was therefore revised in 1956 by a new decree (No. 1047/1956). It was left to the pregnant woman herself to decide whether or not she wanted to have a child.*

* For further data on this decree see page 220, Short Encyclopaedia.

At once the birth-rate began to sink again. In 1957 it was only 17 per mill, in 1959, 15 per mill, and in 1962, 13 per mill.

It was then that scholars and writers first began to voice their opinions, and an oral and written debate was launched which has continued through the last two years.

In the Last Place

A glance at the birth-rates registered for all countries in world-wide statistics reveals that Hungary, with 13 per mill for 1962, stood in the last place, Incidentally the death-rate was also low, altogether 9 per mill, but the difference between the two figures was so small and the natural increase of 4 per mille so slight that, as remarked by a Hungarian author... "an early spring epidemic of influenza is enough to send the death-rate well above the average among the age-groups of the population over fifty; then the natural increase will suddenly turn into a natural decrease."

The figure of 13 per mill constituted a warning that this phenomenon was not ascribable to the natural processes of the "demographic revolution," but furnished evidence of a reluctance to bear children which could not be overlooked either by the Government or by other responsible quarters.

Economic Reasons?

The non-professional participants in the debates approached the problem from a one-sided and biased angle, endeavouring to explain the lowered birth-rate by attributing responsibility to a single principal factor.

Those who believed exclusively in an economic cause were fully justified in pointing out that, in Hungary, children's allowances were low, young couples could rarely get a flat of their own, the living standard was generally lower than, e.g., in Holland boasting of a 21 per mill birth-rate. There can be no doubt that all these circumstances played a role in the birth-rate's drop to 13 per mill. There are, however, at least two arguments against accepting the economic situation as the *sole* responsible factor. First, it is common knowledge that it is not the countries with the highest living standard that show the highest birth-rates. For instance, in 1960 the birth-rate was 13.7 per mill in Sweden, and 42 per mill in Albania. (The same phenomenon may be traced in one country among the social strata with different living standards.) Secondly, the sudden fall of the birth-rate in Hungary took place at a time when living standards began to improve considerably compared to conditions in preceding years.

Political Reasons?

Those who ascribed responsibility to political reasons alone were justified in pointing to the war psychosis produced by the international political situation, on the one hand, and to the transient precariousness of existence, due to inner socio-political disturbances, on the other. It can easily be demonstrated by how many thousands the Cuban crisis increased the number of abortions. And, obviously, the transformation of village life through co-operative farming, and the consequent shift to a new economic and social way of life, also diminished the wish to have children. These factors in themselves can nevertheless hardly be cited as the causes of such a striking reduction of the birth-rate. Fear of war has swept through every country. Rumania, for instance, has passed through similar social upheavals, yet has been able to maintain a birth-rate of 19 per mill. And, notwithstanding the change over to co-operative farming, in Hungary these years were beyond doubt a period of political consolidation and relaxation. (Some prejudiced observers abroad, commenting on the debate, maliciously ascribed responsibility for the lowering of the birth-rate to Hungary's political

system, regardless of the fact that in Sweden, with a widely different political organization, the birth-rate is only 13 to 14 per mill, while in Poland and the Soviet Union, with systems similar to the Hungarian, the birth-rate is 22 to 23 and 25 to 26 per mill, respectively.

Masses of Women Taking Jobs?

Those who saw the principal cause in the circumstance that masses of women have taken up regular work made no secret of their wish to see women return to the hearth. However, women are taking up jobs the world over, and this development cannot be stopped; this certainly does conduce to lowering birth-rates, but—as shown by statistical evidence from countries—not to the extent reflected by the Hungarian figures.

Moral Grounds?

Those who explain the decline primarily on moral grounds declare that the economic-political consolidation of socialism, a greater abundance in the appurtenances of welfare and civilization, and a revolution in requirements such as cannot be met by the increase in incomes have transiently led to "fridge-socialist morals," which certainly speaks against having babies. People save to get a car, a refrigerator, a week-end house or for a trip abroad, and a child would frustrate the satisfaction of their desires. This should explain the alarming increase in the number of abortions: in 1961 there were 121 abortions for every 100 viable born as against 43 in 1956.

Here the debaters' passion understandably reached the highest pitch (moral debates being invariably marked by particularly violent emotions): the most contrary views clashed in the weekly *Élet és Irodalom* ("Life and Literature") which had become the leading forum of the debate. Widely opposed "leftist" and "rightist" attitudes exhibited grotesque agreement in chastising "fridge-socialist morals" and in condemning free abortion: "proletarian Marxist" asceticism on the one side and religious-moral puritanism and nationalism evoking visions of "extinction of the race" on the other. These were opposed not only by the advocates of sober-minded objectivity, but also by the adherents of untrammelled social freedom and of pseudo-internationalism who regarded the nationalist argument as altogether obsolete. Apart from the question of population increase, which was argued with bias the debate was valuable in that it served to bring to the surface highly topical but still unresolved moral-political ideas, and contributed to better knowledge of the mentality of the Hungarian intellectual strata concerned with public life.

Objective participants in the debate naturally rejected exaggerating "fridge-socialist morality" into a phantom. The attitude denigrated by prejudice as "fridge-socialism" may be in contradiction to an ascetic pseudo-socialism, but not to true socialism of which the claim to the benefits of civilization and greater welfare is a logical concomitant. Otherwise it would not be worthwhile to fight for it. It is beyond doubt, however, that to exalt civilized welfare as the exclusive aim results in a distorted moral outlook and exerts an unfavourable influence on the birth-rate. Nevertheless, what becomes the sole target for some people is reasonably reconciled among the majority of the population with a sense of social and family duty (taking advantage of authorized abortion in a responsible spirit). Hence "fridge-socialist morality" alone cannot be the sole cause of the birth-rate's having sunk to 13 per mille. This brings us back to our point of departure: civilized welfare does lead to a lowering of the birth-rate, since it is known to have started the "demographic revolution" of Europe in the past century; but the present fall of the birth rate in Hungary is so excessive that it cannot be explained merely by the "demographic revolution."

Mutual Effect of Possible Causes

Of course, "biological exhaustion" may be ruled out. The argument was raised in the debate, but it must be dismissed, not merely because it applies only to single families or endogamous groups and never to whole nations, but also because the large number of abortions provides a clear refutation.

The main problem after all is not the large number of abortions (though it is important enough and ought to be solved by the more general use of reliable contraceptives); the chief question remains: why is the birth-rate so low?

Experts on demography have offered less impassioned but more valid replies to the question that did the lay polemists.

The rapid lowering of the birth-rate is of transitory character. It is due to the peculiarly complex mutual effect of causes relating to economics, politics, emancipation of women, and ethics, combined with violent revulsion against the strict prohibition of abortions from 1950 to 1956.

The Demographic Symposium held at the end of 1962*, after carefully analysing the fecundity trends of various age-groups among married couples, came to the following conclusions, which were unfortunately disregarded by the lay debaters. In the years from 1945 to 1956, the wish to have children after the war and the subsequent severe prohibition of abortions produced an extraordinarily high birth-rate among the most fertile age-groups. After the lifting of this prohibition in 1956, these age-groups, who still constituted the most fertile section of the population, suddenly and widely availed themselves of the possibility of ceasing to increase their offspring. Hence the rapid fall in the birth-rate. Yet, for the same reason, the Symposium could declare already in 1962 that "this lowering of the birth-rate will stop in the near future; indeed, the next decade may be expected to show a slight increase in the birth-rate without any demographic-political interference." The age-groups that were most fertile from 1945 to the present time will be gradually replaced by new ones, unencumbered by the large number of children resulting from the post-war desire for progeny and the subsequent prohibition of abortions; nor have they any reason to feel revulsion against a prohibition that never affected them.

* For details see the article by Egon Szabady in Vol. IV, No. 11, of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

Practical Suggestions and Measures

The debate has produced many practical suggestions. Bearing in mind the material capacities of the State the suggestions referred mostly to ways and means of social aid to families with children. Some proposed the introduction of a tax on bachelors; others the introduction of obligatory life insurance for childless couples; there were even people who advocated the voluntary contribution of sums gained through the redemption of State loans made in the early fifties. (These sums total several hundred millions forints.) Many suggested that young married couples should be given a priority in the allotment of flats, that young mothers should have to work shorter hours, that families and children should be given extra facilities for holidays and recreation, etc.

The debate's most tangible result has been the Government decision to plan and initiate a new demographic policy. As a first step the paid childbirth leave of working mothers was raised from twelve to twenty weeks. The next is to be a considerable increase in the family allowance. The conclusions of the Demographic Symposium of 1962 would seem to be confirmed by recent developments; the past year has shown no further decrease in the birth-rate. In 1963 the birth-rate was 13.1 per mill; and in the first five months of 1964 it rose to 13.7 per mill, which may be the first sign of a changed trend.

VILMOS FARAGÓ

AFTER-THOUGHTS ON THE HAPSBURG MONARCHY

International Congress of Historians in Budapest

From May 4 to 8, 1964, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences arranged an international congress of historians in Budapest, and at the five-day conference eleven countries, were represented by 40 to 45 delegates. The meeting's theme was extremely interesting, although its importance may, at first glance, have escaped the notice of people not students of history.

Discussion of various problems concerning Austria and Hungary were on the agenda, particularly those of the 1900 to 1918 period, concentrated on the last two decades of the Dual Monarchy.

Topics included the international position of Austria-Hungary, standards and problems of farming in the monarchy, development of financial capital, national problems of the multinational empire, and problems of the labour movements in Hungary, Austria and Bohemia.

The various points were considered for some preceding weeks in preparatory reports, as well as many studies of specialists on the era under discussion. Opportunities to complete such reports through verbal explanations were provided. An outsider would find it difficult to believe that these talks were continued through five consecutive days for six to seven hours daily before a deeply interested audience. The debate, always in German, did not lose intensity or seriousness for a moment—as if implicit to everyone that the conference's importance could not be exhausted by a simple discussion of the problems under review. Such untrammeled consideration on the part of more than forty scholars meant something more serious and if seen from another perspective, something more encouraging.

One central issue was behind the conference questions; those who have followed historical works of the last few decades, particularly the activities of Anglo-Saxon scholars, cannot fail to recognize that the issue holding their interest corresponded in essence to the final problem of the Budapest conference: the lessons that could be drawn from aspects of integration in the history of the multinational Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Or, as formulated by Anglo-Saxon scholars, whether the victorious western powers did not make a fatal mistake in 1918 when they promoted, even demanded, the disintegration of the monarchy.

It is obvious that the question would be approached differently by socialist or progressive historians such as the Milan professor Leo Valiani, and by scholars of bourgeois outlook.

Turok-Popov, the Soviet historian, detailed this disparity, pointing out that the western capitalist world would like to regard the Austro-Hungarian monarchy (already an "impossibility"), as a pattern for its own plans of integration, although the monarchy failed as a multinational state, i.e., the integration of several races. They (the western states), Turok-Popov pointed out, of course avoid taking as their model the policy towards the national minorities followed by Lenin in the Soviet Union after 1917.

This far from implied, however, that Professor Turok-Popov was inclined to simplify the question. In a lively debate with the Rumanian representative, he noted a number of significant and typical phenomena.

Turok-Popov first emphasized that it was precisely the problem of national minorities for which the Paris peace treaties of 1919–1920 were unable to find a satisfactory solution, for instead of one multinational empire,

several minor equally multinational states were called into existence where new-found independence was accompanied by a rather intolerant nationalistic spirit. Consequently, disintegration failed to eliminate problems caused by national grievances, and hostility arose against the formerly dominant nationalities.

In general the May conference came to the conclusion that the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in 1918 was not due mainly to the parsimonious policy and chauvinistic prejudices of the dominant German-Austrian and Hungarian nationalities toward minorities, or to the revolutionary revolt of these national minorities, but to the lost war which weakened the internal structure of the crumbling empire so badly that it had no power to resist or curb its peoples.

As stated in the study of the Soviet historians, K. B. Vinogradov and J. A. Pisarev, traceable signs of this inner weakness have also been revealed by the fact that around the turn of the century the Austro-Hungarian monarchy absented itself from the debate and fight over major international (or rather intercontinental) problems. In every instance African, Asian, Oceanian, and South American issues were decided without the appearance or active participation of the monarchy.

Not until 1908 did the monarchy pursue a new active foreign policy, declaring the plans and policy it wished to follow in the Balkans through annexation of Bosnia-Hercegovina. These plans, cherished by narrow-minded semi-feudal Austro-Hungarian bureaucratic-militarist circles as their own, were in fact complementary-preparatory parts of the middle-eastern projects of expansion of Kaiser William's Germany.

From the documents it neverheless emerges that the problems raised by the imminent disintegration of the monarchy occupied the centreof interest; the event, as disclosed by French diplomatic records, was expected to take place in the near future when the old emperor-king would close his eyes, and a new system would demand the prompt solution of internal and external problems.

The most characteristic data discussed by the Budapest congress were presented by two Soviet historians in their report on the research carried on in the archives of the former St. Petersburg Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The documents submitted furnished evidence that Wilhelm's German empire, while driving its... "most faithful ally," Austria-Hungary, into a Balkan conflict, during 1905–1907, carried on negotiations with the Russian government, the monarchy's most implacable enemy, to sound out the Czarist cabinet's attitude should the monarchy be faced with a crisis. The negotiations were initiated by Chancellor Bulow, and informative talks were continued in 1908 and 1909.

This exposure is even more striking considering the debate aroused in West-Germany by the work of Franz Fischer, a Hamburg university professor, regarding primary responsibility for the outbreak of the First World War. In the opinion of Professor Fischer, Germany was largely to blame: this attitude elicited such strong resentment from the Government of the German Federal Republic that efforts were made to prevent a North-American reading tour recently planned by the professor. A revealing light has thereby been thrown on the vivid interest still shown in the question and its impact on European countries and peoples even after the passage of fifty years.

Professor Valiani gave a highly instructive account of the efforts made in 1912 and even in October 1913 by Pasich, the Serbian prime minister, allegedly a most savage nationalist, to bring about peaceful and friendly relations with the monarchy; these endeavours were frustrated by resistance from the Austro-Hungarian landed aristocracy and militarist-bureaucratic power-structures.

All available evidence considered, it was found that despite the weakness of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the count-

less inner factors promoting its destruction, in reality none of the major European powers desired its disintegration. Traditional British policy, which invariably concentrated on maintaining a multilingual Hapsburg empire at the south-eastern margins of Europe, actually suited the interests of all the major continental powers, as shown around 1900. As a matter of fact, it was the safest pledge of European peace in the prevailing international situation, as long as it could be preserved. The question is thus important as to whether it was the cementing forces of the monarchy which were exhausted or whether its fate was sealed by external power factors. The Budapest congress of historians reached the almost unanimous view that, although the monarchy could not have been longer maintained, it is certain that security ceased simultaneously with its collapse and disintegration, (though, of course, without an exclusive causal relation to it), that the guarantee of peace vanished from this part of Europe, meaning virtually Europe itself.

No better results can obtain from such a congress than to compell attention to problems awaiting solutions. In this respect the meeting in Budapest was a success.

In conjunction with debate on the international position of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, another problem current today automatically presented itself, one likely to grow dangerous (world-wide, but most among the lately-liberated Afro-Asian peoples), a problem which may be described as intolerant nationalism,

It was not accidental that the first to voice views on this issue were two Hungarian historians, Domokos Kosáry and Péter Hanák, who took up the question of Hungarian nationalism. Kosáry made a deep impression on his audience by emphasizing that it devolved on the progressive forces of every nation to confront nationalist-chauvinist phenomena among their own people, because such exposure is the only effective criticism that does not provoke the resistance of other peoples. (It must be admitted, however, that this readiness of the Hungarians to engage in self-criticism found little support.) In any event, these discussions demonstrated clearly that the problem of nationalism remained for years after World War I and continues today, almost two decades following the Second World War, to be a most disquieting and poisonous factor. This recognition provides an additional reason why investigation of the truth concerning issues arising in the territory of the former monarchy should be pursued as a scientific quest, in a spirit devoid of politics.

The last item on the agenda of the congress was an inquiry into social-democratic organization within the monarchy, and of the role played by the social-democratic parties.

A remarkable clash took place between representatives of the "dogmatic," prejudiced, often rancorous view dating from the period between the two wars, and those with today's freer, more liberated attitude.

Professor Contantinescu went so far as to condemn Otto Bauer himself, and to refer to Austrian social democracy as *k. und k. Sozialdemokraten*, which provoked strong protest, primarily from the Soviet delegation. It was stressed that Austrian social democracy (whose conduct frequently influenced the activities of Hungarian and Czech social democrats), though not free of the opportunism common to legal and parliamentary parties, produced enormous results in organizing the working classes, in fighting for democratic rights and in enforcing social achievements. The contemptuous epithet *k. und k. Sozialdemokraten* was applied to the Austrian labour movement by the "rightists," the Austrian Christian Socialists, and not by the "leftists", i.e., the communists and the consistent Marxists.

An evaluation of the Hungarian social democrats was given by Tibor Erényi; along with criticism, the merits of the Hungarian social democracy functioning under extraordinarily adverse conditions were described by him in specific terms.

The Austrian historian Herbert Steiner

emphatically declared that the Austrian labour movement very soon turned its attention to dualism, takint note of the dangers involved in the *Großraumtheorie* partly within Austrian social democracy itself. He quoted Leopold Wienarsky when at an Austrian party meeting in 1903 he stated that he was decidedly against dualism, because the abolition of dualism implied the end of Austria. This would mean that the road was open to self-government and to the liberation of the proletariat. Wienarsky declared that it was the international duty of Austrian social democrats to fight for the complete political emancipation of all the peoples of the monarchy, first and foremost for Hungarian enfranchisement.

The Heidelberg professor Hans Hommsen discussed the policy of the Austrian social democrats concerning national minorities (the subject of his major work, published by the Vienna Europa Verlag in 1963). Zwitter, the Yugoslav historian, handled the same topic. Jules Droz reported on his studies dealing with relations between the monarchy and France.

Many other scholars, Czechslovak, Austrian, and Yugoslav, took part in the debate, which became so animated that the congress was prolonged one day.

Apparently western and eastern, Marxist and non-Marxist historians alike departed from the congress with satisfaction and in the conviction that the continuing, increasingly clarified, impartial discussion of these extremely significant problems was of profound interest for the scientific progress of all Europe.

ZOLTÁN HORVÁTH

FRENCH FOLK-BALLADS IN HUNGARY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

by

LAJOS VARGYAS

Studies for over a century and a half devoted to the subject of European folk-ballads have revealed that it connects the different peoples through numberless analogies and similarities in theme and style. For a long time researchers have been interested in these similarities, their origin, the direction of their spreading, and though they might have controversial opinions concerning origin, depending on their nationalities, most authorities have agreed that the borrowed material must have passed on from neighbour to neighbour. For instance, it has been generally accepted that the French-Spanish and the French-Italian analogies are due to the contiguity of language and that the Western elements in the folk-poetry of the Eastern-European nations must have come to the latter through German sources. On the same grounds Hungarian researchers concur in the view that some of our ballads, containing elements well known elsewhere on the Continent too, must have reached us from the common repository, either through the Germans or our Southern-Slav neighbours.

However, puzzling issues still remained unsolved. A few Polish ballads, for instance, contained indisputable French elements, the intermediaries of which—since Francis James Child—have been discovered neither in the neighbourhood nor by means of some other supposition.

Recent studies of Hungarian ballad literature have for the first time led to the discovery of similarities existing between two non-neighbouring peoples. In the light of detailed analysis and by comparing our ballads with their analogues, the previous assumption concerning German and Slav origin has proved erroneous, and it has been established that many Hungarian ballads have reached us directly from French sources. French origin without the intermediary of some other people has been ascertained for a continuous and substantial layer of our ballad literature containing so far twenty-three ballads or ballad fragments, while it can be reasonably assumed for some eight or ten other examples. These results, however, do not involve a new theory as to the diffusion of the ballads, but rather point to a historical lesson, for underlying these analogies there yet exists some form of contact. During the Middle Ages a number of significant French-Walloon settlements—among them sizable villages—had been established in Hungary, scattered all over the country. The largest of these settlements was formed close to the Hungarian-Polish border, also allowing a direct French-Polish contact and the infiltration of French motifs into Polish territory. In most cases, however, the French elements were handed on both to the Poles and to the other Eastern-European nations from Hungary, as owing to their close contact with the French settlers, the Hungarians were first to acquaint themselves with ballad style along with a good many French ballads. Until quite recently all this was still unknown not only to international ballad research, but even to Hungarian investigators. It may therefore be of interest to outline a few of the parallels that have been established.

In front of her house Biró Szép Anna ("Bonny Ann Biró") catches sight of three young hajduks* who know her lover and undertake to escort her to him. In spite of ill omens and disregarding her mother's expostulations she sets off with the three youths after having dressed in her finest clothes and taking along her rings and money. On their way they stop for a rest under a briar. Here the tragedy begins.

The older hajduk lad he spoke and said these words:
"Let's kill and gar her die, aye, Bonny Ann Biró."
The other hajduk lad he spoke and said these words:
"Let's do and gar her die, well worth it is think I."
The younger hajduk lad he spoke and said these words:
"Don't kill the maid, poor thing, but let her come with us."
"If you don't kill we'll kill you too, without more ado."

The girl then pleads for her life and she offers her money and jewels in exchange.

The other hajduk lad he spoke and said these words:
"We have your money all, we have your body too."

They kill her, taking possession of her clothes and belongings, and according to one version of the ballad:

They buried her in straw and covered her with leaves.

In the majority of versions the three robbers then meet the girl's lover, who recognizes the robbed belongings. Only a single version mentions that they enter an inn.

"Look sharp about that wine, fair mistress of the bar!
If need we'll give you gowns, if need we'll give you gold."
The mistress of the bar she spoke and said these words:

* Hungarian foot-soldiers in the army of Bocskai (17th century). (Also spelled "heyducks").

"Where hae ye taen my good lads, this comely clothing all?"
The older hajduk lad he spoke and said these words:
"I have a sister dead and she had clothing fine."
The younger heyduck lad he spoke and said these words:
"They killed and gar her die, aye, Bonny Ann Biró,
And these her garments were."

Hearing of the death of his beloved the lover asks the youngest heyduck to lead him to her dead body, and there he falls on his sword.

There is also a fragmentary version in which the story is continued in prose after the murder. "He buried her and returned home to the other youths. One of them recognized from the ring that she was his lover..." Only one version concludes the meeting with the lover bringing the robbers to justice before committing suicide.

The French versions are all identical in their stories. Three youths (sometimes three officers, or three robbers) are on their way home from Spain, where they have fought in the war. From afar they catch sight of a young brown-haired maid out for a walk. "Where are you going so late, young maiden brown? You cannot pass through the woods by yourself."—"Do not touch my body, you three young men, and you shall have my ring of gold." —"Your ring too and your artful heart. Here you'll die in the dark woods." The youngest of the three then says: "We mustn't do that, vengeance follows! Her blood will bring God's punishment on us. We shall suffer every torture." After killing her they discuss where to bury the corpse. "Let's bury her here in the shade, under the sweet-smelling gillyflowers." Then they take counsel where to dine. They go to an inn where the innkeeper happens to be the murdered girl's father. "Say, ye landlord, will you give rooms ro us three brave youths?" "By God, why shouldn't I, seeing that I take in everyone else?" When the youths want to pay for their dinner, the girl's golden ring drops from the purse of the youngest and rolls away. The innkeeper is quick to pick it up, recognizes it and wants to know how the youths have come by it. The eldest replies that they found it near the church. But the innkeeper insists on their producing his daughter, alive or dead. The youngest then confesses: "In the green woods, not far off, lies your daughter, her body strewn with lovely leaves." The youths are thrown into prison and tortured to death.

The Hungarian version differs from the above text only in the opening and conclusion of the story; the girl's meeting the murderers is not an accidental happening, but she deliberately takes the risk for the sake of her lover. This gives the tragedy psychological depth. Accordingly the end of the story had to be altered too. Her clothes are identified not by her father but by her lover, who true to the ballad pattern, dies over the corpse of his beloved. Otherwise the two versions are identical in every point.

The motif of the youngest murderer—who in both cases has mercy on the victim and finally confesses the deed—enables us to determine the place of the Hungarian text with respect to the French and Italian (Piedmontese) conceptions (our ballad is only known in these two places in Europe). Both in the Hungarian and in the French versions the youngest murderer's more lenient role is strongly stressed, while in the Italian version it is he who walks up to the girl and kills her (in more than half of the variants he does not figure at all). Otherwise the Italian variants closely correspond to the French versions; Italian researchers regard them as reflections of the French. The Hungarian ballad—according to the evidence of this essential motif—does not originate from the secondary Italian, but from the French only.

The honour of being the original version naturally belongs to the French ballad, as each of its variants is identical as regards

recognition of the ring, while only one of our versions contains this motif. A further uniformity of the French versions is that the crime is always detected by the innkeeper, the murdered girl's father, whereas we in Hungary know only one inn-episode, in which the innkeeper's wife appears together with the girl's lover as the discoverer of the murder. In all other variants the three murderers simply meet the lover, but no inn is mentioned. This shows that the transformation must have taken place in Hungary. The uniform and rational French version could hardly have evolved from the rare, corrupted element. The reverse case, on the other hand, is fairly frequent: the recipient party alters the ready material borrowed, but is unable to cut completely free from the original, and the adopted element remains there meaningless even after the transformation.

It is more difficult to detect links in cases where they become evident only by juxtaposition of the various French and Hungarian variants, since the related elements survived only sporadically in the different texts, and we can contrast French and Hungarian variants suggesting no similarities at all.

The ballad of Lord Thomas and Fair Annet is known to the English reader (Child's collection No. 73), yet he will find few familiar elements in the following ballad. But if we assemble certain of its incidents from the different variants and place them side by side with the respective elements selected from the French version, *Les Tristes Noces*, the latter will assist him in recognizing the connection between the three.

"Good evening, evening ma'am, good Mistress Justice Csáti!
"Oh, Mistress Justice Csáti, good evening to you now,
My little love, my turtle dove, is fast asleep, I trow,
Ay, ay, she's gone to bed, back in her chamber there,
Wrapt up from top to toe in bedclothes crimson fair."

"Sleeps she, then wake her up and send her to the ball,
And tell my love to wear her silk blue dress and all!
A pair of crimson boots should fit her tender feet.
And twice two rings of gold adorn her fingers sweet."
"Good evening, evening, love, why did you call me here?"
"Sit down by me awhile and I will tell you, dear."
"I never came to sit, nor never idle be
But with my lover true to dance in revelry."

"Play on, ye gipsy band, from eve till dead of night,
From dead of night till dawn and then till broad daylight!"
"O, let me rest a little, I pray you, let me go,
To clean my crimson boots wherin the blood doth flow."
"You ne'er must go from here, you cannot go away,
The band must go on playing, and play till break of day."

Let every mother, ay, and father cursed be
Who let their only girl go out in revelry.
They let her go at night, see her no more till morn,
And when the clock strikes eight, her corpse to them is borne.

The bells are rung for noon, they ring their mournful sound,
Judge Csáti's daughter now they're putting in the ground.
She wears a silken dress, she has a milk-white veil,
Her strings of pearls are drawn across her shoulders pale.

1) The Hungarian texts always begin with the invitation to a dance; the girl is invited either by the lover or by young men

entrusted by him. The request to appear in all her finery is ever present, or—at least—a detailed account of her clothes is presented. Sometimes it is the mother who speaks, and the occasion is a *wedding:*

"The lads are calling you, my daughter Kate, come down,
They have a wedding feast, not far in Sári town."
"Mother, I will not go because I full well know
It's János Árvádi will have his wedding now.
"My daughter Kate, put on your comely skirt of silk."

2) Arriving at the dance the girl wants to know why she has been asked to come. Her lover bids her sit down and *offers her to drink.*

"Good evening, lover false! Why did you call me here?"
"Sit down by me and drink, and I will tell you, dear."

3) The girl's answer has survived in a few variants:

"I never came to drink... I only came to dance."

4) In the Hungarian versions the lad generally orders the musicians to play on without stopping.

5) The girl generally asks a break in the dance. Usually this request is made only once as in the given text, but several texts present it three times.

6) Then as a moral the blame is cast upon the parents.

7) The funeral bell is tolled for the dead girl.

8) Sometimes the young man's death follows the girl's: he goes to his beloved's home and at the sight of her corpse flings himself on it and dies broken-heartedly.

It should be mentioned that our ballad motivates the young lover's conduct in different ways. Either he is very poor and acts out of revenge for having been slighted by the rich girl or having been refused. Another explanation goes thus, "Seven times I wooed you... if you are not to be mine, let nobody have you." A frequent explanation is that the girl had two lovers and they punish her for it. Sometimes it is the devil who, in the disguise of her lover, makes her dance until she dies. A good many variants suggest no particular justification at all, and so the young lover is blamed and atones for it in prison.

Such a variety of interpretations shows that something faded away and that later a variety of sometimes obscure reasons for the tragic events were indicated in the texts.

The story will, however, become clearer if we take the French parallel and follow its episodes in the order of the respective incidents of the Hungarian counterpart.

1) In the French ballad the lovers had been carrying on their clandestine love affair for seven years when the youth is compelled by his father to marry another girl. (Maybe our "Seven times I wooed you..." corresponds with this.) The youth then tells his beloved that he has to marry another girl. "Is her beauty greater than mine?" "Not her beauty, but her wealth," and he invites her to his wedding. "Not to the wedding, but *to the dance* I will go." (This is why in our texts the invitation is usually to a *ball* and only in few instances to a wedding.) Then the lover bids her dress up attractively and even tells her what to wear. "Dans tous les cas que vous venez, Mettez la plus bell' de vos robes. Mettez la cell' de satin gris, Votr' beau chapeau de rose!" and the like. Some of the texts hint that the aim is to emphasize her noble birth. Sometimes it is not the lover who enumerates the clothes, but we learn about them from the girl's giving orders to the dressmaker.

2) When she appears at the ball she is taken for the bride. In some versions—though rarely—she is offered food and drink by her

lover, but she answers that she has not come for this but to have a dance with him: "De tout loin qu'on la voit, On lui présente a boire. J'n' veux boir' ni manger, Mais faire un tour de danse."—"De loin la voit venir, Lui fait rincer un verre: Buvez, belle, mangez! Je n' veux manger ni boire..."—"Galant, moi j'y viendrai pour manger ni pour boire, Galant moi j'y viendrai pour faire un tour de danse."

4) Only a few of the French variants preserve the youth's words to the musicians: "Beau musicien français, toi qui joues bien les danses, Oh! joue moi-z-en donc une, que ma mie puisse la comprendre!"—"Jouez violons, jouez! Ah! Jouez une danse!"

5) Quite a number of variants mention the girl's changing her clothes after every round of their dance: "Tout en dansant un premier tour, elle change de robe. Tout en dansant au second tour, en met encore un autre. Tout en dansant au troisième tour, la belle tomba morte." — "A tout' dans' qu'ell' dansait, La bell' changeait de robe. N'eût pas changé trois fois, La belle est tombée morte." Usually, however, the clothes-changing episode has disintegrated, and the girl dies after the first round, followed in most cases immediately by the youth—one falling to the right, the other to the left. Sometimes the youth stabs a knife through his heart over the dead body of his beloved, uttering the formula (well known in our ballads too: "Since you died for me, I will die for thee"): "Puisqu' elle est morte pour moi, je veux mourir pour elle." (This tallies with Incident No. 8 in the Hungarian ballad.) On the whole, the French ballads thus correspond to their Hungarian counterparts in structure: The French version of death after the first round parallels the Hungarian version of death after having asked once for a break in the dance.

6) The wedding-guests grieve over the death of the lovers: "Quelle tristes noces." Sometimes they blame the father: "Le père a eu grand tort de n'pas l'avoir donnée," or a general lesson is drawn: "Voilà le sort des amoureux qui en épousent d'autres." In the Hungarian variants this is pointed out more explicitly.

7) Occasionally the tolling of bells for the dead also figures: "Marguillier, beau marguillier, Toi, qui sonn' bien les cloches, Sonn' les pitieusement!"

At the end two entwined flowers grow from the lovers' grave. In Hungarian versions of the present ballad this never occurs, though it is frequent in other types.

There is thus hardly any incident in the French ballad without some counterpart in the Hungarian one. The girl's request, repeated three times successively, for a break in their dance because her clothes are sticking to her body and her feet are bleeding in her boots, originates from the French girl's changing clothes thrice. But there it serves to stress the girl's pride, while in our versions it illustrates her growing agony. It is at this stage that the moving story of the separated lovers in the French ballad has been transformed into a staggering drama by our peasants. Though in a poetical sense the Hungarian composition is more powerful, its construction at one point is uncertain, and here the plot too lacks unity in its motivation, while the French story forms a logical unit from beginning to end, and must therefore represent the original. The Hungarian texts almost invariably omit the opening according to which the youth jilts the girl, thus removing any justification for his compelling her to dance to death. This also was the reason for reversing the rich-poor relationship: in the Hungarian versions the rich girl slights her poor lover, who revenges himself on her at the dance. Here too, the French text provided a stimulus by describing in detail the girl's rich garments.

In Piedmont the ballad—apart from a few insignificant omissions and alterations—corresponds nearly word for word with the French one. The only difference is that the reason for the girl's describing the clothes she is going to wear is to enable her lover to pick her out at once; this is manifestly a

secondary feature and deprives the story of its essential point. Further on, the youth's offering her a drink, the girl's reply, the changing of her clothes, the words of the wedding-guests and the message to the bell-ringer are all omitted. Obviously the Hungarian ballad does not stem from this version.

The English story is even more remote. Here too the youth invites his sweetheart to his wedding with another girl; in some variants she is asked to dress up in her finest clothes, while in others she does it on her own. The bride becomes jealous on account of the former sweetheart's beauty, picks a quarrel with her and stabs her to death. Then she herself is killed by the bridegroom, who commits suicide afterwards. This framework of the story is taken over by the Scandinavians.

The French ballad makes it clear that the Hungarian text is related to the Western story, and it is equally obvious that the Hungarian ballad is directly linked only with the French one. At the same time, the story recited in Gottschee (a German enclave within a Slovene-language territory in Austria near the Hungarian border) and corresponding in some parts word for word to the Hungarian text, must evidently originate from the Hungarian ballad, the more so if we bear in mind that the inhabitants from this region frequently came over for seasonal work to the Hungarian Trans-Danubian counties, particularly at harvest time.

For a third parallel let us choose another type, again well known to English readers: "Willy's Lyke-Wake" (Child, No. 25). Child was already well acquainted with the "pretty Hungarian ballad" *Pálbeli szép Antal* ("Fair Anthony from Pál"), and the ballad of *Görög Ilona* ("Helen Görög") has since become known to English audiences from Kodály's opera "An Evening in the Spinning-Room."

"Aye die I must, I wiss, my mother,
mother dear,
For Görög Ilona, her small and slender
waist,
Her small and slender waist, her full
round sweet lips' taste,
Her full round sweet lips' taste, her ruddy
cheeks and face."

"Don't die, don't die, my son, Bertalaki
László,
For I a wondrous mill will order for you
made,
And of this mill one stone will turn out
milk-white pearls,
The other stone unceasing silver farthings
hurls.
This wonder for to see will come fair
maids and girls,
And with them yours will come: fair
Görög Ilona."
"Let me go, let me go, my mother,
mother dear,
That wondrous mill to see, that wondrous
mill to see!"

"Don't go, don't go, my daughter, for the
net is cast,
The fishing net is cast, they catch a barbel
fast.
"Aye die I must, I wiss, . . ."

And then they try to lure her with a magic tower so broad that its edge reaches down to the river Tisza and skims with its top the very skies. But again they fail.

"O die, o die, my son, Bertalaki László,
They will come they will, I know, this
wondrous dead to see,
And with them yours will come: fair
Görög Ilona."

"Let me go, let me go, my mother,
mother dear,
That wondrous dead to see, that
wondrous dead to see,
Who did die for my sake and gave himself
to death."
"I will not let you go, my daughter,
daughter dear,

The fishing net is cast, they catch a
barbel fast."
At that she ran by stealth into her room
to dress
And slipped into her kirtle that never was
home-made,

An apron tied in front, as it becomes a
maid,
And on her feet she put new boots of
crimson suede.

"Rise up, rise up, my son, Bertalaki
László,
For there I see her come, fair Görög Ilona,
For whom you died, for whom you gave
yourself to death.
Rise up, rise up, my son, Bertalaki László
For right in front of you stands she for
whom you died."
"I've seen the dead before, but never one
like this,
Whose legs do seem as if they were
ajumping like,
Whose arms do seem as if they were
ahugging like,
Whose lips do seem as if they were
akissing like."

Bertalaki László thereon sprang to his
feet.

However, neither the Child collection, nor the *Gesamtausgabe* prepared under the direction of John Meier elucidate the reason for the peculiar duality in the diffusion of this ballad. In the northern, i.e., Saxon-Scotch and Danish versions, the young lover shams death for the purpose of enticing his beloved to come to him, and he succeeds in winning her. In the South-Eastern, i.e., the Italian, Serb-Croatian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Slovakian and Ukrainian ballads, we find a three- or fourfold gradation: the magic tower (or garden of stones or iron-bridge, etc.), then the magic mill, and only in the third instance does the lover resort to shamming death and the ballad end with the lovers' merry union. There is no explanation for the difference in composition between the two versions, and there is no territorial connection either.

There are Danish variants, known from 16th-century records, in which the youth lures his beloved from a nunnery. Sometimes this incident is incomprehensibly blended with another solution: the girl departs from her mother attractively dressed to see her dead lover, but later appears to live in a convent. Evidently, an earlier uniform Scotch-Danish version had become incongruously blended with a subsequent form.

The "missing link" is provided by the convent motif. For there is a widely spread French ballad, which must have escaped the notice of students of ballad-lore and in which the youth shams death to entice his beloved to leave the convent. But this cannot be regarded as the earliest form of the ballad in French either. In Provence and among the Canadian—i.e., Northern—French emigrants, there is a very rare ballad, where the convent is not mentioned and the youth shams illness to lure the girl to him in spite of the father's prohibition, thus making the girl his sweetheart. This story was used among various other epic elements in a Dutch drama written in 1385–1400. And the same version also travelled to Greece, where a lot of French songs had become popular during the 14th and 15th centuries, in the days of the Cypriot kings. It should therefore be regarded as the primary form of this theme, which after several transformations approached the French-Danish conception of enticement by shammed death and elopement from a convent.

The presence of French settlers in Hungary throughout the Middle Ages would be an explanation for the link between the two non-contiguous territories. However, what conclusive evidence is there to prove the French origin of this Hungarian ballad?

The French ballad contains another common feature with the Hungarian one which does not appear in the north-western group:

it is the magic mill. There is a merry French ballad about *Le Petit Tambour* ("The Drummer Boy") who woos a princess and being refused by the king, he vaunts his great riches, boasting of his three mills, of which the first grinds gold, the second grinds silver, and the third the love of his beloved. Now let us contrast this with a Transylvanian-Székely variant: one stone of the mill grinds pearls, the second grinds silver coins and the third grinds kisses. The similarity is obvious, the more so, since the same image appears only in a somewhat blurred form in the neighbourhood of France, where the mill grinds only some exotic condiments. The development of our ballad is thus clear: the elements of two French ballads were merged, and to make up the obligatory triplex form of folk-poetry another enticement was added to the shammed death and the magic mill. This additional third element seems to support our conclusion: it takes a variety of forms, e.g., a tower reaching up to the skies, an iron bridge, a stone garden and the like. Sometimes these can be missing and the gradation is achieved only through the golden, silver, etc., mill. But the two features borrowed from the French, the mill and the shammed death, are always present.

Afterwards the transformed ballad became very popular among our neighbours. The modifications during transmission indicate the direction of its spread: the farther it travelled from Hungary the more indistinct the framework and genre characteristics became. The Gottschee Germans still adopt the mill, but in a realistic form already: the village girls have the corn ground there. Similarly, the magic tower is given a realistic meaning: it appears as a church, where the village young go to worship. In the Slovenian and particularly in the Italian variants the mill is omitted, the enticements increase in number—often there are four of them—and become more realistic—e.g., a grape gathering, a well, a church, a ball—in colourful variety. Thus a French-Hungarian concept, stylized according to the requirements of ballad poetry, becomes gradually less stylized and ballad-like with the growth of distance from Hungary. The reverse case would be hardly conceivable: the mill accidentally crops up at our borders, the Hungarian stylize it into a magic mill, which incongruously becomes exactly like the one in a French ballad.

Northwards, particularly in the Slovakian and Ukrainian ballads, the church and the pub are the enticement, in the latter ballads the two lovers even die. In the Yugoslav and Bulgarian ballads, there appears, on the one hand, a structural disintegration, for example, that of a characteristic feature of the European ballad form—the "incremental repetition"—which has remained constant in all the Hungarian texts; some parts are omitted, continued as a prose narrative, or curtailed, and the whole story turns into an epic. On the other hand, the frame-work of the plot itself is considerably changed by stories merged into one another, especially among the Serbs. The further south we go in retracing our story, the fewer the ballad features and the more predominant the epic strain.

It is in the Hungary of the Middle Ages that the French-Walloon settlers close the gap between the Scotch-Danish and the Eastern-European variants. The peasants wandering from the Rhine districts towards the Danube transfer to us elements of Western culture that but for them might not have reached our country; or if they had, it would have taken much longer to pass through the intervening territories. In this way the Hungarian people came in direct and more intensive contact with the culture flourishing on the further side of the Rhine than the peoples living further westwards. Thus it is not only eastwards that we have spread the motifs from beyond the Rhine, but also in a return direction, westwards. So far we know of four Hungarian ballads of French origin that have, entirely or partly, found their way also into German territories. Sometimes they entered from two directions at the same time: from the French to the

Western provinces and from the East to regions along the Hungarian and Czech borders. This is the case with the beautiful ballad of The Three Orphans whose laments are answered by the dead mother in the grave. In Eastern Europe, there are themes that have spread over vast territories because they had a strange fascination for the popular imagination, like the story of the "Porcheronne," the young wife who is degraded by her cruel mother-in-law to tend pigs. In the Hungarian version she is eventually killed by her mother-in-law, and the story has been traced in this form as far as Archangel.

In fact we are now in a position to pay off our debt to the French for what we once received: the material, preserved by us, but entirely lost in its original home, can now be returned. The Hungarian ballads, placed in European perspective, can prove the existence and even the French origin of many themes of which no trace remains in France, such as "The Revenant" here analysed, and of which a late transformation and remnants of an earlier conception have survived.

There is a still rather popular Hungarian ballad that has preserved both the original story and style, the story of *Angoli Borbála* ("Barbara, the English Maid") whose skirt is getting shorter and shorter in front and longer and longer in back. And when she is called by her mother to account for it, her excuse is that

"The tailor cut it wrong, the seamstress sewed it wrong,
This chambermaid of mine, she put it on me wrong."

Eventually she confesses that she has been pregnant for seven months. She is thrown into prison and condemned to death. She is visited by her brother, or by the cruel mother herself. The girl asks permission to write a letter. Sometimes she writes it with her finger and for ink she uses her blood or her tears. She asks a bird to carry her letter to her lover.

"If you get there at noon, do put it by his plate,
If you get there at night, do put it on his bed.
He'll read it, that I know, and drench it in his tears
He'll weep so thick and fast, won't see the letters clear."

"My coachman, my coachman, o swiftest coachman mine,
Six horses for the guest, and every one the best,
As quick as lightning's flash along with you I'll dash
Angoli Borbála still living for to find."

But the girl is executed before he arrives. The mother dares not tell him where she is. She sends him to the brooklet and then to the meadow but at last tells him that his beloved is on the bier. The bridegroom commits suicide over her dead body.

Actually it was the name of the heroine that first suggested to me the French origin of this ballad and of several others in which the heroine is called *Angoli* Borbála (Barbara Angoli; Angoli in old Hungarian idiom means English or of England) or in some versions *Londonvár* Ilonka (Helen Londonvár = of London Castle), also *Londonvári* Dorka (Dorit of London Castle) and like names, more or less deformed. According to the general experience concerning names appearing in ballads the "outlandish" heroes, as a rule, bear the names of *neighbouring* peoples. In Hungarian ballads (in keeping with conditions in the late Middle Ages) the outlandish bridegroom is either German or Turk, while in Transylvania he is Moldavian and in Moldavia, Polish. In French ballads the foreign hero or heroine is usually either Spanish or English. (For instance, the French princess who is married to an Englishman and apostrophizes her fiancé as "abominable Englishman" right up to the bridal night, when he is accepted as her "darling Englishman".) Occasionally the "son of the English

king" is mentioned in West-German variants and here and there also in Italian ballads borrowed from the French. But never once does "English" or "French" appear as a name in an English or French ballad, respectively. So the name *Angoli* in the Hungarian ballad suggests French-Dutch origin.

What are the conclusions that may be drawn from the distribution of this ballad?

Among the Germans the epic and formal elements of our ballad appear distributed between three types. One of these, *Der König aus Mailand* ("The Milanese King"), has been found—in three variants—only along the French border and along the Rhine and its tributaries, between Zweibrücken and Zurich. The second, known as *Ritter und Magd* ("The Knight and the Maid"), has spread all over Germany; the third, *Schwabentöchterlein* ("The Swabian Maid"), represents a South-German type.

From the point of view of content the first type is more important for us. There is a feast at a king's court. One of the guests becomes the lover of the princess and then returns to his country. The princess secretly gives birth to a child. Her brother would be willing to keep the secret, but somehow the queen learns about it. She persuades her husband to execute their daughter. The girl writes a letter to her lover—according to one of the versions, with the blood of her finger. Her brother takes the letter to her lover. At the sight of her message he bursts into tears and is hardly able to read through the letter. He summons his knights and rides with them to rescue his beloved. The girl asks the hangman to delay the execution as she hears the clatter of her lover's horse. The hangman takes pity on her; they await the bridegroom, who saves his beloved and kills the cruel mother. Later the king visits his son-in-law, and they are reconciled.

It is hardly credible that this story should have reached us from the far Rhine region skipping all the other German regions. Moreover, in spite of all the analogies, there are a number of decisive differences. The characteristic shortened skirt is missing, the child is born before the execution, and instead of the tragic conclusion the story ends in reconciliation. Slighter differences are that the opening part is more extensive, the ballad does not begin *in medias res* as in our version, and the letter is not sent with a bird.

The second German type has travelled all the way up to our borders, so that the transmission could have taken place without hindrance, yet the story is quite different, except the single incident of the shortened skirt. In this ballad a knight makes love to a peasant girl, and in the morning he offers her money or one of his servants. She refuses his offer and sadly starts for home. Her mother meets her outside the town and from afar calls to her girl: "How did you fare, daughter? I see your skirt is getting too long at the back and too short in front." The girl dies during her confinement. The knight sees his beloved in a dream. He sets off to visit her but only meets the funeral procession. He kisses the corpse and stabs himself to death. As we see, this ballad, widely accepted by the German and Latin peoples, represents a very different type, and the mentioning of the shortened skirt is a foreign element. The theme of the shortened skirt also crops up in the midst of another story, the ballad of the *Bauerntöchterlein* ("The Young Peasant Girl").

In English ballad literature we come closer to the Hungarian version. Lady Maisry (Child, No. 65) has many suitors but refuses them all. At last, it turns out that she has become pregnant through a knight. Her father examines her and wants to execute her. "O whare will I get a bonny boy, To help me in my need!" she cries. "To rin wi hast to Lord William, And bid him come wi speed?" Her page is willing to go. The knight gets into his saddle at once. The girl at the stake hears the approaching clatter of the horse's hoofs, but she appeals in vain to her cruel brother to subdue the flames. The lover having arrived too late, takes revenge on his beloved's family.

In a single variant the girl's brother observes her condition in the following terms: "What's come o' a your green claithing, Was ance for your too side? And what's become o' your lang stays, Was ance for you too wide?" And in the girl's defence we can observe some vague reminiscences of the Hungarian girl's excuse, laying the blame on the ill-fitted clothes: "O he that made my claithing short, I hope he'll make them side; And he that made my stays narrow, I hope he'll make them wide." This incident, similarly to the German texts, has also passed into other ballads. But here we are closer to the Hungarian ballad to the extent that at least one variant contains this formula in the original story too; furthermore, the girl does not give birth to her child before her execution, and the story ends tragically with the lover arriving after her death.

An even closer resemblance can be detected—in certain features—in the Portuguese and Spanish ballad. It has a varied, long introduction, telling of the night the lovers spent together, ever of the earlier scene in which the young lover made a bet to seduce the girl. In several variants the heroine's pregnancy is attributed to the water of a certain spring (but in these too, it is her lover who comes to rescue her). Sometimes these preliminaries are omitted. This shows that the introductions were secondarily affixed to the original story. In their absence the events immediately begin with the shortened skirt, just as with us. But here not only is the ill-fitting skirt mentioned, but also the girl's excuse, laying the blame upon the tailors. The girl—to give an instance—is sitting at a table with her father, who keeps gazing at her: "Dona Areira, I see you're with child." "The tailors are guilty, my skirt is not well-cut!" He summons the tailors into a closed room. They look at each other and say: "There's nothing wrong with the skirt, in nine months it will sweep the ground again." The father has the girl taken prisoner and the stake is prepared. The girl sends a page with a letter to her lover: "If he sleeps, wake him; if he's awake, give him my letter," or: "If he's dining, call him from the table; if he's strolling, at once hand it to him," etc., in variations similar to the Hungarian ones. On reading the letter, the youth bursts into tears. He gives orders to have his horses shoed and saddled. At that point the Iberian version takes a different turn: the lover dresses up as a friar and appears at the execution. Under the pretext of hearing the sinner's confession he helps her to escape. These events are enlivened with elaborate descriptions and here too the tragic end is replaced by a happy one.

In a few Catalonian versions the motif of the letter written in blood crops up again. The German *Gesamtausgabe* regards it as an unconnected "Wandermotiv" on account of the remoteness of the German analogy. In general it denies any relationship between the ballads cited and admits of no distant, indirect links because they diverge so greatly and because territorial contact is hardly imaginable.

This link is, however, established by the existence of *Angoli Borbála*, which contains all the elements that appear singly or dispersedly in the Portuguese-Spanish, French and English versions, and in the three divergent German ballads. Even the motif of sending a message through a bird is comprehensible, considering that this has been a generally applied cliché in French lyrical songs and ballads. The only possible assumption is that there once was a French ballad—now lost—which must have contained all the elements figuring in the Hungarian ballad, with a construction nearly the same as ours. Thus it must have started with the shortened skirt, as the French ballads have a masterful knack of restricting the story to its essential elements and of increasing its effect by beginning it *in medias res*. From France the ballad passed to the neighbouring peoples with more or less transformation, omission or expansion; and from France it arrived directly in Hungary, where it has

survived to this day with little modification and certainly without any omission.

A Hungarian variant combining all the elements could not have emerged without a French intermediary. The various elements could not have been picked from so many sources! Take the opening scene, for instance: textually the German skirt motif, embedded in another story, is closest to the Hungarian: "Your skirt is long in back and very short in front." But an excuse such as: "The tailor cut it badly," exists only in the Portuguese-Spanish version. It should be noted here that in a considerably obscured form the same motif appears in a French ballad-like song. Here the parents have a gown made for the girl, "short in back and long in front." Of course, it makes no sense here, but it undoubtedly proves the former existence of the motif on French-language territory, a fact corroborated by its appearance among the Greeks. Now, if we disregard the possible existence of a corresponding French ballad, we Hungarians would have been faced with making the following selections in taking over the various versions: we would have had to borrow the framework of the German variant existing only along the Franco-German border or rather that of the English versions, which on the whole, appear to be closest to our texts; omit from these the introductory part and begin the story, in imitation of certain Iberian variants, with the discovery; continue it, however, with the formula of the mother's inquiry, coming from an entirely different German ballad; then add a reference to the tailors and a message—both taken from the Iberian variants—by means of a bird that plays no part in any of the versions; conclude with the tragic end of the English variant, but previously interpolating the attempt to send the lover away. Obviously, this is impossible. But with the intermediate French ballad everything can be satisfactorily explained. The great variety of elements to be found around the French territory in itself should have called attention to the one-time existence of such a central variant. The Hungarian ballad requires this even more, since its adaptation can only be supposed through French intermediary by way of the settlers. That the original French ballad should have completely disintegrated, while it was preserved by us and by several other peoples, is not surprising in view of the great corruption and the 18th-century transformation of the French ballads.

It stands to reason, then, to assume—and the names derived from English names in in the various Hungarian versions are also indicative of this—that this story must also have been borrowed from a French ballad, like a number of others the originals of which still survive in French.

From parallels like those cited above, as well as from a large number of analogies in other genres of folk poetry, there emerges in a convincing measure a substantial and coherent group of ballads of French origin, which have become an integral part of the treasure chest of Hungarian ballads. It is only natural that this vast influence should have left its imprint on the compositional features of the genre as well. One of them is line iteration. Some authorities assert that we have borrowed this feature, typical of neo-Latin peoples, from the Rumanians, because it has been found mainly in regions with a mixed Hungarian and Rumanian population. To some extent this is true, since a consistent duplication of lines appears in the lyrical texts in certain parts of Transylvania and Moldavia. But this is a general feature of ballads in parts of Hungary where there is no trace of it in lyrical or other texts and where Rumanian influence is out of the question. It is, moreover, remarkable that a similar iteration is to be found in a good many Slovakian and Russian ballads that must have originated with us.

Apart from the simple form of the iterated line, the Hungarian ballad manifests a special form in which the last line of a stanza forms the opening line of the subsequent verse, e.g.,

Angoli Borbála
Had a kirtle cut her,
Afore it got shorter,
Behind it got longer.

Afore it got shorter,
Behind it got longer,
Her willowy waist
ever got broader.

In the case of a long verse the text is split up into 12-syllable lines in which the second half of the last line of a stanza becomes the opening of the next line. The ballad of *Görög Ilona* cited above is an example. This ballad exists also in Denmark, where it is known as the "linked stanza." Yet in spite of its many French characteristics its French origin has not been identified there. Nevertheless all these features are typical of French ballads. Most frequently it takes three forms: the simplest one is when a stanza consists of two pairs of reiterated lines, as in the "complainte"-type, usually consisting of eight syllables and sung to a slow tune; the second form is when the iteration consists of various opening, interior or closing refrains; the third form is when two lines constitute a verse with or without refrain, the second line forming the opening line of the next verse, e.g.,

Derrière chez nous y a-t-un petit bois.
Nous y allions cueillir des noix.
Nous y allions cueillir des noix.
J'en cueillis deux, j'en mangis trois...
etc.

In this respect Hungarian investigations provide confirmation of the fact that English and German folk-poetry—particularly the ballads—has been strongly influenced by French forms.

Concordance in tune and wording has been proved in few cases only, as very few authentic French folk-song scores are known in Hungary. If a substantial body of the manuscripts collected could be studied, further links between the folklore of the two peoples would most likely be revealed.

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In conclusion we shall dwell briefly on the historical background of the aforementioned French influences. There were large French settlements in Hungary from the 12th to 16th centuries. The most important and largest of these were to be found in the northern parts of the country; a smaller number existed in the south-east region of the Great Plain, while minor settlements were scattered nearly everywhere. We possess data on the use of the French (Walloon) language as late as from the beginning of the 16th century.

Of even greater significance is the fact that for a time, owing to the intercourse of our French-Walloon settlers with their Western relatives, lively contacts developed between Hungary, on the one hand, and France and Belgium, on the other, traces of which may be found also in the West. Based on records of Liège Province, one of our investigators has proved that during the 14th century there used to be localities, streets and individuals, some of them in high positions as town councillors and burgomasters, carrying the name "Magyar" (Hungarian). This shows that rather close contacts must have existed between the Hungarians and the citizens of Liège. There are still expressions in the Walloon vernacular hinting at such connections, for instance, "hanke" or "hongre," which once meant something like "to speak Hungarian," while in today's use it signifies "to speak in a foreign, queer language, to falter." Those who interpreted this term in such a way must have heard spoken Hungarian.

This link can also be revealed in Hungary, e.g., in the 13th-century life of the town of Esztergom. Students of medieval life in Hungary have brought to light data from 1272 telling of a merchant of Ghent—referred to as "podgy Jean"—who agreed to accept a vineyard in settlement of his claims from a

Hungarian citizen of Esztergom (Strigonium); about the same time, a new kind of broadcloth was popularly called "ganti"—i.e., from Gant (Ghent)—and the name found its way even into our Latin records as a Hungarian word. At the beginning of the century in the social life of the town one of the various religious social movements of Flandres that of the "Beguines," appeared in its most typical national form.

The chapel of Louis Anjou (1342–1382), King of Hungary, built in Aachen, for the Hungarian pilgrims, is another proof of this close contact.

These contacts remained close until the end of the 14th century, but considerably slackened during the 15th, so much so that in 1447 a group of pilgrims of Walloon origin from the Hungarian town of Eger caused a sensation in Liège through their perfect knowledge of the local French vernacular; a hunt for their origins was made in old records. In principle, however, the French influences continued up to the beginning of the 16th century. Only the chaotic state of affairs of the ensuing epochs, the demographic changes brought about by the Turkish conquest and the absorption of the French language enclaves put an end to further borrowings.

It is important, therefore, to keep in mind these considerations in attempting to determine the time-limits for the adoption of the French ballads. Theoretically, ballads from our French settlers could have passed on to the Hungarians by the end of the 15th century, but, from France itself, they must have come to Hungary not later than the end of the 14th century. Occasional, rare contacts during the 15th century would not have provided sufficient opportunity for the transmission of so vast a material.

The correctness of the upper limit can be proved by the fact that ballads appearing in French manuscripts at the end of the 15th century, which must have been the most popular pieces of the time and remained among the most popular of French ballads, e.g., "Roi Renaud," "Pernette," "La Fille du Roi Louis," cannot be found among the borrowed ones. It is quite inconceivable, moreover, that in the case of such large-scale borrowing as is to be found among our ballads, the most popular ballads should not have been passed on to us by our French countrymen, if their repertory had already included them. On the one hand, this proves that those 15th-century scripts did not include texts already extant for one or more centuries, but, at most, only originating and popular in the 15th century, and on the other hand, that the texts we borrowed, must have existed already in the 14th century. This verifies the opinion of French authorities that "Porcheronne," a ballad also familiar in Hungary, is an earlier version of the same story that was later elaborated in "Germine" and in this later form was not passed on to our peasants. Very early origin of the borrowed material is suggested by the fact that a large number of these ballads, both in French and Hungarian folk-literature, have survived only in one or two corrupted versions; in some cases their existence in France can only be inferred.

On the basis of what has been said, French researchers too may place the formation of their ballad literature nearly two centuries earlier than has been the case on the part of some of their authorities, who have considered it as dating from the end of the 15th century, i.e., from the appearance of the first records. Hungarian research stands to gain even more, since our previous dating, which connected our ballads to the 17th century, restricted our experts' imagination to such an extent that they hardly dared to attribute a text to the 16th century. Nor have they been stimulated by the general opinion of European ballad researchers that the ballad is a genre of the late Middle Ages and that it flourished all over the Continent between the 13th and 15th centuries. We now have a solid basis for tracing back the majority of our ballads to the Hungary of the Anjou kings in the 14th century.

Following the international links of our ballads we can sense the great unity that existed in the Europe of the late Middle Ages. Trade connections, pilgrimages, interchanging dynasties, settlements, migrations —all these closely connected the peoples. Their intercommunication, including the exchange of cultural values, was astonishingly rapid—even in the lowest social strata, considering the technical facilities of those days. No sooner had some novelty been born in an advanced society, than those from the farthest regions sought to have a share in it. Hungary, owing to her specific situation and connections, was an advance post of this cultural exchange. Thus many cultural products reached us from the West skipping considerable areas, and the new fashions spread from our country, backwards and forwards, in every direction.

This advance post was crushed by the Turkish conquest, when all borrowing and further diffusion suffered a long interruption. May these few results help to bring about a belated resumption of our interrupted co-operation in this sphere. They could be obtained only through acquaintance with our traditions and history, and without them the path of the European ballad would have remained obscure at some points.

PROBLEMS OF ADULT EDUCATION

During the winter of 1963 a three-day conference attended by three hundred experts discussed adult education at one of the largest cultural centres of Budapest. At present adults are taught at various organized institutions in Hungary; they may attend schools and acquire primary, secondary and higher education, at evening classes or in correspondence courses. Factories, offices, farmers' co-operatives and state-owned farms provide for technical classes. Finally, various academies for workers and for members of agricultural co-operatives are also noteworthy institutions. In the year 1963 approximately 300,000 adults received a scholastic education and the number of those who went in for technical training amounted to another 100,000.

Of course, these figures are relatively insignificant to the foreign reader who has no precise knowledge about the economic and intellectual backwardness of Hungary under Horthy's regime, until the liberation in 1945. One should understand that the country inherited 700,000 unlettered inhabitants from the previous system. The lively and avid interest evinced by adults for the sciences, for art, and culture is graphically illustrated by an extremely instructive fact: in Hungary there is a type of economic secondary school, whose evening classes were attended in 1960–1961 by 20,000 adults, while regular classes numbered no more than 17,000 students of school age. And this is not the only type of institution where the population of adult evening classes heavily outnumbers that of the ordinary morning school.

Those aware of the difficulties, cares, and family responsibilities, as well as other problems raised by study pursued after daily working hours, can understand the heroic efforts of these three-hundred-thousand adults, mostly of peasant and labourer stock, when they came to the great decision and threw themselves into study to get through the curriculum of eight-grade primary school, secondary school, or a university. György

Berényi's book entitled *The Third Shift** deals with this desire for knowledge, the education of adults and evening schools.

The title would seem to call for an explanation. With workers the first shift alludes to their regular daily work. The second shift refers chiefly to working women who have a family; after working hours they have to keep the home in order, clean, cook, tend, provide for, and bring up thir children. Study constitutes the third shift which, while less fatiguing than daily work at the workshop or office, certainly demands as full attention as does the day-time job.

Thus György Berényi has written his book about the people who after daily six to eight hours' work, instead of going home to their families, or of sitting down to a game of chess or cards while sipping a glass of wine, go to evening classes. The book of 180 pages is a peculiar blend of report, study, and political writing. Of the 300,000 adults in question the author has selected a few who attend primary school at Budapest and has interrogated them concerning the reasons why they go to school. It will not be uninteresting to quote three of the replies.

A greyish man over fifty, an inspector at a mill, said: "Mine was a family of eight children. When I finished four forms of primary school my father placed me on a farm as shepherd's boy. I never went anywhere near a school again. I am fifty-one. My son is going to a grammar school. In one year I finished the fifth and sixth grades' material. In the first term I got high marks for every subject except biology..."

Another reply: "I am a joiner of 37. At one time my parents sent me to upper primary school but I failed. I had enough of school and went to work. I never thought that I should turn to books again. Twenty-two years have gone by since and now I have made up my mind. It is not the pleasure of getting educated which has brought me here, nor have I been told to finish primary school. But I have to, because there is no other way. All the members of the team of which I am the head have finished or are finishing the eighth form. If I am to instruct them I cannot be more ignorant than they are..."

Finally, a waitress gave a journalist the following explanation why she was attending primary school:

"I am thirty-three, my daughter is eight, my son is twelve, and he is to go to a grammar school. I went to upper primary school for two years. That was thought to be enough—in those days—for the children of the working classes, particularly for girls. I hardly dare to open my mouth in company. My son keeps asking ever more questions which I cannot answer. I could also get on better at my job if I finished primary school... For a mother with two children getting educated is no simple matter. My average is not above mediocre. No matter how difficult it may be, I am not going to give up, because without education things are still harder."

These replies have been cited to illustrate the diversity of impulses which may induce people to make up their minds to attend evening classes at primary or secondary schools. There are men and women who want to check their children's daily schoolwork on an equal footing, others want to rise to the intellectual level of their husbands or wives. The following situation is not uncommon: the wife is afraid that her husband, untrammelled by house-work, cooking, and child care, will get ahead of her in education and in time, come to despise her; therefore the woman voluntarily prefers the burden of going to school. There are cases where a boy wishes to matriculate at a grammar school, because the girl of his choice has also been to grammar school. In other instances suppressed desires of years or decades are finally given satisfaction.

The book entitled *The Third Shift* is not simply a collection of reports about interest-

* György Berényi: *Harmadik műszakban*, "The Third Shift", Kossuth Publishers, Budapest, 1964.

ing human types but also an accurate picture of the situation in education. For instance, it throws light on the numerous, hitherto unmentioned incentives and factors which may actuate the desire for education. One of them, the author states, is the State itself, by providing opportunities for schooling. The Government, which set up evening schools for workers through one of its first decrees issued in 1945 after the liberation, spent 11 million forints on the maintenance of evening classes in the years 1947–1948. This amount increased year by year: in 1959 it was 17, in 1950 nearly 50, in 1963 it rose to 60 million forints.

As emphasized by the author, among the incentives stimulating the wish for education an important role should be ascribed to the social order which makes up for the omissions of several centuries by many relevant decrees and financial aid. To give an idea of the immense negligence to be made good in this field it is enough to point out that the children of labourers, peasants and small tradesmen were almost entirely excluded from higher education under Horthy's régime. Of the children who started primary school in the 1930–1931 term fewer than one half, i.e. 43.3 per cent, got as far as six forms, and only 16.5 per cent finished the eighth form. So every other child left school before reaching the sixth form, and every sixth child left school under the age of fourteen.

The third, no less essential, incentive of education has been summed up by György Berényi in the following terms: "In general, knowledge is appreciated, respected, and practically available. Education has become an indispensable requirement not only in public life, but also in everybody's private life. Its lack is embarrassing, like threadbare clothing..." And, as a matter of fact, when study after working hours, evening schools and classes are provided by institutions, decrees and laws, when it is among the most important tasks of mass organizations, including trade unions and youth organizations, to ensure opportunities for the education of workers, particularly for youthful age-groups, people are apt to feel an inner urge to cross the threshold of a school.

The book gives a sincere and faithful picture of schools for adults. It is part of this candid picture that the author does not conceal the difficulties which arise in conjunction with adult education. It is, for instance, common knowledge that the will to learn is not favoured by unanimous approval from every quarter. The rights of workers to education are laid down in the labour statutes, and those who enroll in evening schools and correspondence courses are entitled to a leave of a certain length for study as well as to other advantages. In some factories it sometimes causes difficulty when a worker absents himself from production by taking his study leave in the busiest season. Sometimes it also happens that in a factory, lower-level management looks with envy on subordinates who acquire a degree with tireless energy by studying after working hours and who may, in time, become their superiors.

The hundreds of thousands of adult sattending various primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities constitute a considerable educational problem to the teachers and tutors who have to cope with their instruction. A decade or so ago and for several years after, any visitor who glanced into an evening class saw only grey-haired men, and women over thirty, people who, owing to the faults of the former social order, had been deprived of a decent education and were doing their best to make up for the loss. This picture has undergone a radical change in the last ten years. There are always more young people who have left day-school for various reasons, who have taken a job and go to evening classes. The evening school pupils who have already founded a family, who have definite aims in life and know very well why they are learning raise pedagogical problems differing widely from those presented by young people who have left school

quite recently, usually live with their parents but are, at the same time, wage-earners. With the former type, formation of character is an almost entirely negligible factor, while young age-groups certainly need education of this kind. They have to be given almost the same attention as other children of similar age. All this calls for extensive methodological investigations and theoretical activity. Elaboration of the recorded experiences is in full progress at the Department of Adult Education in the National Pedagogical Institute, but as yet there are no outstanding results. Indeed, a long line of educational problems closely connected with adult education awaits satisfactory solutions.

István Gábor

INTERVIEW WITH LAJOS KASSÁK

He wanted to become a worker, not a gentleman: for this reason he quit school when he was ten years old. Becoming a metal worker and tramp, he studied and struggled with himself and the world until his new style and new themes earned him a place in Hungarian poetry next to Ady and Babits.

Half-way through the First World War, he became leader of a group of revolutionary-minded artists, and his new ideas, new poetic attitude and new mode of expression made him a trailblazer of Hungarian socialist lyric poetry. During his exile in the twenties, he maintained a friendship and fostered a poetic kinship with Europe's most original experimentalists in style. Dezső Kosztolányi, the youthful Attila József and the beginner Gyula Illyés were attracted to his personality like a magnet, as were Lőrinc Szabó, Miklós Radnóti and István Vas.

Controversy raged about him at the end of the First World War and continued to do so at the turn of the thirties and, for that matter, today.

In 1916, Kassák attacked Babits's conservatism, declaring: "Art begins where you are capable of doing something in a way no one else has done." In 1919, in an open letter to Béla Kun,* he expounded his artistic creed about the supra-class position of art. While regarding himself as a poet of the working-class, he has, at various stages of his life, engaged in considerable controversy with the Communists.

All his life a fighter, a disputant and storm-raiser, Kassák has championed truths as well as erroneous views and has been attacked by both just opponents and uncomprehending enemies.

Albert Gyergyai, one of Kassák's most loyal appreciators, warns us in one of his essays that "here in our midst lives a great poet, kindred in spirit to and a comrade-in-arms of the foremost poets of our time... one could hardly find a more talented poet of this era, the very man who could present to the outside world the most comprehensive and most universal aspect of Hungarian poetry." Another critic, on the contrary, thinks that "his lustre, his poise, his healthiness are no present-day lustre, no present-day healthiness, no present-day harmony. It is humanism, but of an old kind... Kassák has failed to evolve a harmony such as might be looked upon as a synthesis worthy of the poet's era."

Literary historians last year started a debate about Kassák's proper place in ideological matters and how he should be assessed from the aesthetic point of view. According to some Marxist literary historians, for all

* Leader of the Hungarian Republic of Councils, 1919.

his record of revolutionary initiative, Kassák cannot be considered a socialist poet; others, on the other hand, see in him the founder of a new kind of socialist poetry to the extent that his poetry expresses universal humanism.

In the light of these facts, the poet's views regarding the world in general and his art in particular are of unusual interest.

A few years ago, you conducted an inquiry among noted European artists. We would now appreciate an answer to your own question: "Do you see any progress in art; if so, in what sense?"

Obviously, as in all spheres of life, there has been some progress in that of art, though I would call it change rather than progress. Such progress, however, is confined to a very small section of art. What I mean is that there are great artists, but they tower above a surrounding sea of mediocrity. In my view, the vast majority of today's works are anything but modern. Most poets of our time live off the leavings of the poetry of bygone days. They do not derive the substance of their poetry from present-day life, but work out variations on the content and forms of the poetry of times past. For this reason they fall away behind the science and technology of our era. What, when you come to think of it, is going on in science today? Scientists are discovering new phenomena in the world and interpreting them for us. I would call a poet modern who rediscovers the world for himself. The new poet will furnish a new content expressed in a new form. He will weed out some words from his vocabulary and rehabilitate others that may have seemed archaic. In my view, today's poetry ought to be anti-poetry. Its content and form should widen our spiritual horizon, enable us to comprehend and experience wider areas of the universe, to sense more of the world; it should stimulate our reasoning to probe into the essence of things. Today, the mere fact that somebody is a good poet means nothing. I often receive poems submitted by students. They are definitely good poems—what a pity they weren't written by Árpád Tóth! They are fine flawless compositions, but light as a feather. What we need is not to polish up old styles but supply fresh material for poetry. And that you can do only by acquiring a wider and more profound knowledge of the world we live in.

Is that your poetical faith too?

Yes, I too am plagued by these thoughts. In the collection scheduled to appear next, I feel I have reached a new phase in my poetry. Its principal element is no longer music but the objective quality; not melody undulating in time, but an objective, graphic representation of the theme in space. Perhaps there will be critics who will have noticed that in conception and purpose these poems approach so-called concrete music, whose characteristic feature is not continuity but the position of sounds in space. When listening to Bartók's *The Night's Music*, I feel I am actually in the night, sensing the sounds from various distances—that is to say, all that happens musically is happening in space. This kind of music is intricate, agonizing, provocative. In my new poetry I am aiming at such intricacy or, to put it more precisely, architectonic construction. The words appear not as musical but as quasi-material elements, I conceive of them and use them much as an architect uses building elements. I would call my poetry today architectonically constructivist.

How do you interpret the notion of modernism?

The question of modernism is raised very frequently nowadays, but often, I am afraid, without being properly thought through. Art today is divided into two parts. The one creates under the influence of the confusion reigning in the world. He is in the majority. The other seeks to create a synthesis, a state of equilibrium, in place of

chaos. In my opinion, the latter is the art of our time. Its adherents are not simply influenced by the age; they set their faces against the defects of our time by mirroring or advancing the consolidation of our individual lives and of the life of our society. It is no mere chance that architecture now leads the arts; for it has freed itself from all tradition. A building is no longer a cave or castle; it is intended to be the home of Modern Man, spacious and with plenty of light.

Of course, this conception calls for a new style in furniture too. One who lives amid plenty of space and light, surrounded by furniture unencumbered by trinkets, demands a lucid, exact art.

The artist of our time must be constructive and resistant to the confusion of the age. There is at present no middle course for the artist. I may be speaking too categorically; but I am convinced any concession in this respect can only result in mediocrity.

You have said the modern artist rediscovers the world for himself. Do you think modern philosophy, social science and psychology can aid him in this effort?

No genuine artist can fail to be influenced by philosophy and social science. The artist is not independent of the outside world, of community life; in his works he reveals not only his own inner world, his ego, but also the condition of his environment. However, the poet speaks in a modulated, individual voice. He must make us see the world as viewed from a new angle that is all his own. Part of Thomas Mann's work is, in my opinion, more an illustration of Freudism than original creation. Dostoevsky, for instance, could and did teach Freud; but it was from Freud that Thomas Mann learned. The artist must contribute something new. Cocteau, for instance, was a magnificent artist, but, coming after Apollinaire, he created little that is new. He was the graceful, mellifluous poet. He wrote some very fine words to *chansons* for Edith Piaff. Camus was more of an innovator, because he saw things from a new angle and successfully attempted to express what he saw objectively.

Is Camus a follower of existentialism?

No. Camus is one of the founders of that philosophy; consequently, his existentialism isn't a borrowed tool but his medium of expression. Unlike Thomas Mann, Hemingway, for instance, enriched literature through fresh material. This, of course, has resulted in a change of style. He has numerous disciples also in Hungary. Though I speak of him in terms of praise, I have reservations about those of our young fiction writers who are his followers. I often get the feeling that they are turning Hemingway's world view into a mannerism. I have read short stories about hooligans, espresso bar *habitués*. They were written with indisputable technique, but I failed to detect in them the same distance between the author and his characters I see in Hemingway. Hemingway places his characters in moral categories, whereas our young writers identify themselves with theirs. How many of them will be able to discard such identification only the future can tell. Undoubtedly, we have a good many young and gifted authors, but they have not yet learned how to husband their talent properly. They are living in a current and have not the strength to resist it; yet such resistance will some day give birth to their real artistry. The artists of our time, as I have said, must rediscover the world for themselves: they have to see and hear from a new angle phenomena and all things apprehensible by the senses. This new angle will be the yardstick by which the modernity of their works will be gauged. Don't get me wrong—I am not demanding that young writers produce something extraordinary, something startling, something that has never been seen or heard of yet. What I expect of

them is a striving after lucidity, exactitude and simplicity. Simplicity, but not mediocrity. I want to see harmony, but a harmony of our time, composed of many layers. Poets should not simply put themes into verse, but make their poetry the new theme, the new discovery, of one's memory, one's emotions.

So that's what you consider the purport, the ultimate object, of your experiments in style. How do you view your relationship to the various isms?

Unlike many contemporary art critics, I regard the isms, for all their confusions and contradictions, as very useful.

The various isms have raised certain art problems and sought to solve them, thereby preparing the emergence of a new harmony, a new synthesis.

Reflecting upon my own art, I may safely repeat what I have said on several occasions: I have benefited from each ism, but have not joined any school, as I think the purpose of every school has been to answer only this or that problem of detail. In my work you can find the dynamism of futurism, the lyricism of expressionism, the objectivity of cubism and, last of all, the comprehensive structural aims of constructivism. In contrast to all schools, I insist on synthesis. It is my belief that in poetry as in painting I have achieved an austerity of structure, a basic use of colours and an unequivocal use of words. I regret very much that I've had no opportunity so far to appear before the public with my paintings. I feel sure that in Hungary, as in other countries, truly modern visual arts will come to the forefront; but I greatly regret that so far we have had no opportunity to admire the best creations of these trends, only imitations, and ill-assorted, immature works. If this continues, it will cause confusion. I think it is absurd that, while paying homage to the farthest-seeing science and marvellously precise technology, we should foster backwardness in art, which so deeply affects our spiritual and emotional life. Art is no luxury article; it meets an important need. If this demand is not met at the proper time and in the proper manner, then the individual's spiritual and intellectual world as well as that of the broad masses will become mechanized and their striving after better things decrease.

No doubt you are aware of the debate literary historians have conducted concerning the valuation of your art and as to whether or not it is to be considered socialist. How would you describe the nature, the essence, of your socialism, your relationship to the labour movement?

I know that some critics and literary historians question my being a socialist. But the same critics will tell you that I am a constructive moral person, an anti-fascist, anti-militarist and anti-chauvinist. And yet they do not consider me a socialist. What else am I expected to do? That such doubt was entertained in my regard at the time of the so-called personality cult is not surprising, for then it was not facts but dogmatic myopia that determined a man's character and fate. It is true that I am no party politician, but I think it is no less true that for more than half a century I have been portraying the life of the proletariat and that I have been fighting with the purest art forms to change its plight. True, in our political system today, I speak not so much of proletarians as of men, because this country's policy and economic organization have made men of proletarians; my mission as an artist is therefore to keep human curiosity alive, to help pave the road of development emotionally and intellectually, to preserve truth and freedom—that is to say, all that can be expected of an artist without indulging in romantic effusion and hollow grandiloquence. Do I consider myself a socialist, then? I do. In the purest and most sober human sense of the word.

Are you aware of a contact with your readers? Does your art get through to those for whom it is intended?

In recent years, the door has been opened to most of my work. Books of mine are published again, and editors seem to like my writings. What is more, I have been finding a response among the reading public. It makes me happy to see that, despite my advanced age, I am not addressed in tones of reverence and that I am appreciated for the active creative force in me. The forthrightness of my message and the purity of my form of expression are recognized.

*

At 77, Kassák continues to search for the new law, for the new order hidden beneath the surface. He is looking for this new order and new law in ultimate human values.

"It is not on the whim of the moment that I live, but in infinite continuity," he wrote in a diary entry 20 years ago. "The past and the present and—so I believe—the future too mingle in me. Such is Fate, and it would be no use my rebelling against it. In my youth, I was by and large the same as I am today."

That, I believe, is still true. His consistency, his loyalty to himself, and the unequivocal quality of his writings command respect even if we sometimes disagree with his views.

EDIT ERKI

KÁLMÁN PATAKY IN 1944

From the autobiographical notes of Oszkár Beregi

"In the adjoining room of our tiny Hollywood house sits Kálmán Pataky, whose angelic patience toward adversity and whose unbroken love for us has been only surpassed by his modesty. Thus he would undoubtedly protest against my writing a eulogy on his humanity, courage and goodness, for he always treated all this as natural."

These words may be read in the memoirs of Oszkár Beregi, the renowned Hungarian actor, member emeritus of the Budapest National Theatre living in the United States. Quite recently the 88-year-old artist sent the manuscript to Budapest. It has much to say about the eminent singer, Kálmán Pataky, who was not only his son-in-law, but also his best friend to the end, and who had saved him from the fascists. We should like to present a few passages from these memoirs.

Beregi records that at the time of the persecutions Pataky assumed full solidarity with the persecuted. After the occupation of Austria he broke off every connection with the Opera House of Vienna. His Budapest villa was full of refugees in hiding. His father-in-law he placed in a hospital, visiting him regularly. "The visit of my son-in-law, Kálmán Pataky, naturally created a sensation. He was the most popular artist of the Opera House, held in high esteem by everybody, with high connections abroad, and he demonstratively stood by his father-in-law of Jewish descent, which aroused particularly lively enthusiasm among the inmates of the hospital."

Beregi was fully aware of the dangers in-

volved. "I was afraid," he goes on his memoirs, "that our brave and honest Kálmán Pataky would get into trouble on our account. On one of my only daughter's afternoon visits I suggested to her that we should finish our virtually intolerable lives together; there seemed to be no escape, our persecutors had cornered us. We agreed... Next day my daughter came to see me again. 'I have told Kálmán everything. He wept and said, "How can you think of leaving me? What should I do without you? Take me with you!" '

"But then a chance of escape was found. A few days later my daughter told me about having sold the Buick car they had brought back with them from Buenos Aires. They were now looking for a cottage in the country where we could conceal ourselves. My beard and moustache had grown considerably, and I trimmed them carefully; I was preparing myself for my new role.

"One morning my daughter appeared at the hospital with a lady unknown to me, and carrying a rather bulky parcel; they asked the physician in charge to let us have the doctor's room for a short time. It was a sunny room and we were going to need adequate light. I wondered what was coming. We went to the doctor's room and my daughter promptly locked the door from inside. The medicines and poisons stood inside the glass cabinets in neat rows, offering themselves, but my daughter, to whom I pointed out the highly promising poisons, turned away from them with a wave of the hand. She introduced the lady as Mrs. M. and said in a voice that brooked no contradiction: 'Now take off your clothes at once.'

"In the meantime they opened the paper parcel and took out the tunic and flat cap of an air-wing commander.

" 'Put on these things and feel like a stern flight officer,' said my daughter. 'That is how you will leave Budapest. Oh, don't be astonished, not now. At present you will only be photographed, for your official identity card.'

"From the windows of the house opposite marked by a yellow star, anybody could see into the room where all this took place. Something had to be done to prevent people from noticing the strange thing that was happening in a room of the Jewish hospital. The two women stood covering the window with their backs and quickly made six photographs of the newborn air-wing commander. The performance was over, and the two photographers quickly left the hospital with the commander's togs and the six photographs. For a few minutes I remained, waiting for the car to move away from before the street door.

"A week later my daughter and Mrs. M. arrived during afternoon visiting hours.

"'Put on your overcoat and hat, leave everything else behind, and come along. Come to the corridor, there we can speak... You will pass through the street door with Mrs. M. first. I shall follow a few minutes later. It will be less conspicuous that way. Carry your overcoat over your arm and hide your hat under it. When you are outside the door, turn to the left at the first corner into Hársfa Street. A motorcar is waiting at the corner of Hársfa Street and Dohány Street. When you turn into Wesselényi Street put on your overcoat quickly to cover your yellow star by the time you get to the motorcar. Both of you get in. Mrs. M. knows the rest.'

"My daughter spoke rapidly in the bay of the open window of the staircase. Every word she uttered was inculcated in my brain while I stood staring at the raw planks that formed the walls of the too-narrow morgue lately built in the courtyard. It was the only thing to which I said a mute farewell.

"Slowly we went down the stairs from the second floor as if nothing peculiar were happening. A doctor went up to my daughter to speak to her. She stood facing the staircase forcing the doctor to stand with his back to it and remain ignorant of what was happening behind him. I had never known how high two such storeys could be.

Mrs. M. made conversation about the weather. I had never gone out through the door before. Now we reached it. The porter looked, came up to me, and whispered 'Good luck!' I was outside the hospital, which like a safe, had guarded me, and from where I was now stealing my life with a smile on my face.

"The rest was easy. As soon as we turned the corner I hastily tumbled into my overcoat, buttoned it up, drew my hat over my forehead and put on a pair of spectacles. Then, leaning on the arm of Mrs. M., I began to walk towards the motorcar with the shuffling steps of an old man, whereas I should have liked to fly. I felt as if I had no weight, as if I were walking not on the pavement but on clouds. At the time I was almost 75, had to look 90, but felt like 25. The car started and stopped before the house where the M.'s lived in Veres Pálné Street. We passed through the door, the staircase was empty, and we flew up the steps. The flat opened on the corridor, and while Mrs. M. was opening the door I suddenly had to grow old and hang my head again, because a neighbour was just passing along. Finally we were inside the flat.

"After a few minutes my daughter arrived, soon followed by M., flight captain. At the time the Hungarian gendarmes, together with the German SS and SA, had formed an impenetrable line around Budapest and no one could leave the capital without a permit from the arrow-cross* authorities. M. was stationed at the aerodrome. From the office he had stolen an empty identity card for an officer of the air force, borrowed an official car and come to fetch me. At the writing-table in his home with admirable composure he filled in the identity card of an air-wing commander, stuck on it my lately-taken photograph, and I signed my new identity card with my new name as a flight commander. We waited for the writing and glue to dry, while M. taught me my new role and how an air-wing commander behaves when he is asked by a German SS man to identify himself. One should never be embarrassed, take identification lightly and remark that the big documents were at home in another tunic, but an identity card with a photograph would certainly do, wouldn't it? Captain M., my aide-de-camp, who drove the car, had all his papers with him.

"After several rehearsals of such a scene of identification, the two women having embraced us and given us their blessing, we started on the strange expedition which might have ended in disaster, with arrest for illegal use of a uniform, forgery of documents, abduction, illicit concealment and many other similar crimes. M. was in still greater danger than I, but he showed wonderful composure. I drew myself up: we were going down to the official aerodrome motorcar. Captain M. respectfully opened the door of the car for me, then he too got in and we started.

"The streets were crowded with people, sentinels were cruising the town in twos and threes, Hungarians and Germans. Many military cars, in the streets more soldiers, as well as SS and SA men with gendarmes; they glanced into our car and saluted wherever we passed. M. strove to avoid busy thoroughfares, so we soon drove along less lively streets; finally we reached the Popular Gardens. We carefully kept clear of the aerodrome region, giving it a wide berth, lest some air force officer who knew M. stop us and ask for a lift. By this time we were on the Monor road, and the danger was diminishing. The village of Vasad! We had arrived! My son-in-law, Kálmán Pataky, the new owner of the cottage, came out to greet the visitor with a loud 'Welcome, Sir, did you have a nice drive? Hello, captain! Come into our modest home,' and he took every opportunity of mentioning my rank as an air-wing commander, so that the only neighbour and also the passing field guard should hear it clearly.

* The Hungarian fascist party. *(The Editor).*

"We went into the house—and I was at home. My daughter and dear Mrs. M. arrived soon after; then it became dark and the official car started on its way back to its station, the aerodrome.

"'Have a good journey, Sir, and let us enjoy the pleasure of seeing you again very soon. Captain, take care of the Commander! Good-bye.'

"The car 'with the commander' rolled away amidst loud hooting, while the Commander, deprived of his rank and medals, sat in the darkest room in civilian clothes, thinking of the excellent M. with a grateful heart and waiting silently to see what would be the next move.

"'Of course, nobody must know that you are here. We have only one neighbour, with whom we are getting on friendly terms over the fence. They seem to be decent. You must remain inside the house. Tonight there is no moon; when the neighbours are already asleep you can come out in the dark and look about so that you can get an idea of where you are.'

"I remembered the story of a villager who had stolen a cap but was afraid to wear it lest people should recognize it. At night, when there was no moon, he got up, put on the cap, and went out for a walk. He wore the cap. My predicament appeared to be similar. The exercise that convicts take in the prison courtyard I was to take inside our cottage of two rooms and a pantry. That wasn't so bad. The smaller room was not much larger than a prison cell, but the two together were big enough to allow six steps in a straight line. In the day-time I was not to go near the windows. Some of the villagers who passed that way were curious and might have looked in and caught sight of me. When an unexpected guest arrived I hid in the pantry where a small deck-chair was concealed behind intentional disorder. Lying flat on the mud floor between the deck-chair and the wall I waited until the unexpected guest left.

"The four of us lived in the two rooms. My daughter, her husband and myself in the large room, Grete in the small one. The small room opened from the courtyard and was, in fact, the so-called winter kitchen. The summer kitchen was in a separate little building in the courtyard, where there was also an open shed which had only a roof (a horse could be kept there) and a quite decent brick stable for two cows.

"In the evening the arrow-cross village guards sometimes passed by to see whether some English or Russian parachutist had not landed in the vicinity of our garden, because the two of them were going to capture any such intruders. They even had some old-fashioned guns. And they pretended to be very brave. But they carefully avoided joining the army.

"The radio had put Pataky's name on the black list. He was not asked to appear in person, nor did he receive any income, though the radio arranged a great Pataky concert from his records misleading audiences into believing that it was Pataky himself who sang. After this concert Pataky wrote a letter to the radio protesting against such cheating of the public. He did not go into Budapest until after the libaration. Zoltán Sámi, the new arrow-cross director of the Opera House, informed Pataky that he counted on his artistic co-operation and sent him new parts on condition that he should divorce his wife. But Pataky made no reply.

"That was how we remained isolated from Budapest. About the outer world we knew only from our wireless but by listening in we learnt about everything. We heard London as well as Moscow, or New York and Berlin as clearly as Vienna or Budapest.

"In the dead of night I went out before the entrance door to stand guard and warn my family if anybody approached while they were listening in to London or Moscow. When we wanted to hear Berlin we could do so openly. Moreover, if we thought that a passer-by looked suspicious, we suddenly tuned in Berlin or Budapest, until the danger was over. When gleaming silvery aero-

planes appeared and flew overhead in the brilliant sunshine, we admired the wonderful spectacle. However, when once a bomb fell not far from us in a meadow and exploded, we suddenly realized that we were not entirely safe even in such a tiny village.

"The more we heard about the victorious advance of the 'hostile' forces and the retreat of 'our own' troops the more serene we became, the more confidently we believed that delivery was coming. I even put out my head for a moment in the day-time to look at the machine birds flying in formation.

"The relieving, liberating 'enemy' at last, at last arrived. It was November 1, 1944—according to the calendar, All Souls' Day. For me it was the day of resurrection from death; that November 1, when my daughter who had been working in the courtyard called for me to come out quick, quick, was the day of life. She called for me, for her husband, for everybody to come outside.

"We could see them marching along the narrow strip of a meadow lane, some 300 metres from where we were standing, in single file, one after the other, at a distance of two paces, in coat and cap, their guns in their right hands, advancing cautiously, attentively—the first Russian soldiers!

"When the long-awaited Russians had vanished behind the hill our group, concentrated into a knot, began to widen. I shook hands with the members of the neighbouring farmer's family, and we drank a glass of wine with them to celebrate our liberation. Then my daughter told them that it was Oszkár Beregi who had been in hiding in the house.

"The neighbours smiled: 'We have known for some time that the old gentleman is here. In the great heat we have been watering the flowers around the house twice as copiously as usual that the poor old gentleman should suffer less in the room.'"

MUSICAL LIFE

THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF MUSICAL EDUCATION IN BUDAPEST

The International Society of Musical Educators (ISME) held its sixth conference this summer in Budapest, taking as its central theme 20th century music and musical education.

This topic simultaneously raised the most important and grave problems in the general musical culture of our time, those presented by relationships between music and musical audiences. Obviously the distance between the two has often changed during the course of history, and it was only in the golden ages of music that they really met, at those times when the composer and the audiences for whom they composed occupied common ground and spoke the same musical language.

In contemporary music this feature can hardly be traced; its realization may only be hoped for through the development of musical education and instruction, which may build a bridge between the two. Since Hungarian musical education at school, and outside, as the fruit of Béla Bartók's and Zoltán Kodály's activities, has produced results sufficiently significant to attract the attention of the musical world, the problems of 20th century music and musical education were discussed by the ISME conference in such a way as to provide opportunities for increased knowledge about Hungarian methods of musical education and popularization.

The eight-day conference opened with an inaugural address by Zoltán Kodály, the Nestor of musical education. From the many lectures which followed, those below merit special mention:

Professor Siegfried Borris (German Federal Republic) in his address on "the lines of development in modern music" definitely rejected the idea that 20th century music is confined to avantgardist trends.

Composer Eugen Suchon (Czechoslovakia) spoke about the harmonic structure of modern music; András Mihály, Hungarian professor, discussed problems involved in the study of modern music; Professor Yuri Nikolaevich Tulin (USSR) dealt with the musical-aesthetic education of youth.

Bernhard Binkowski, Stuttgart professor, presented a few pieces of choral music for West-German schools, and Thomas Hilbish, American chorus conductor, offered similar material for schools of the USA.

Dr. Vaclav Holzknecht, director of the Prague Academy of Music, in a short lecture handled relations between school and modern music. Finally Professor Dr. Egon Kraus (German Federal Republic), secretary-general of ISME, gave a lecture at the closing session on "20th Century Music and Musical Education," describing the future tasks of the

International Society of Musical Educators, and, at the same time, summing up the results and experiences derived from the Budapest conference.

The conference participants were divided into various small working groups, allowing the more direct discussion of specific fields. Dr. József Ujfalussy's lecture on "Emotional Education through Music; the Teaching of Aesthetics in the Training of Professional Musicians," as well as the address of professor Dr. Paul Michel (German Democratic Republic) on the results of modern musico-psychological research, etc., were delivered before such groups.

The working groups of the congress studied the following issues:

1. Music at school;
2. Music in community life;
3. Music in the training of teachers;
4. Training of professional musicians;
5. Scientific research and musical education;
6. Technical means in musical education.

In addition to addresses and the debates of working groups, the "model" teaching arranged for each morning at some class of the Hungarian musical primary schools in various parts of the country had an outstanding success. At these lessons the conference members assembled from twenty-five countries could estimate the advance made by Hungarian musical education and, taking note of these experiences, came to the conclusion that the system of Hungarian special general schools for singing and music could be extended on a world-wide basis.

The conference also provided opportunities for making music: young soloists, juvenile choirs and orchestras proved their skill before the most expert audiences at matinées and evening concerts.

Over a thousand musicians performed at these concerts, including soloists from the Paris and Lille academies of music; the pioneer chorus of Brno; the chamber choir of the Vienna Academy of Music; the pupils of three Danish schools (whose presentation of Per Norgard's scenic oratorio, "The Judgment," was one of the greatest successes); the chorus of Princeton College; the young chamber orchestra of Vilnius; the choir of the Thomas Church of Leipzig; the mixed chorus and chamber orchestra of the Budapest Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music; the central artistic ensemble of the KISZ (Young Communists' League); in addition, the pupils of Budapest and various provincial primary and music schools also took part in concerts, arousing deep interest among the members of the conference.

FERENC ACZÉL

THE EXPANDING ROLE OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC IN AMERICAN EDUCATION*

by

NORMAN DELLO JOIO

Before discussing the salient features of the MENC Contemporary Music Project for Creativity in Music Education, may I express my personal gratification at having been invited to address the International Society of Music Educators. I believe that this is the first time that a practising composer from the United States has been given the opportunity to do so. That this honour should have fallen to me calls attention to the welcome fact that events which are transpiring in my country are of interest in other parts of the world.

Since music and the varied procedures of its dissemination to the young is our common concern, it is comforting to know that we are bound together here in these informative sessions to discuss matters that happily transcend national boundaries. May I add that it is significant to me that the main theme of this conference deals with the music of today. All of us, be he composer, educator, performer or informed layman, cannot help but conclude that what we project in our thinking has a meaningful relationship to our respective societies. Despite the differences in our languages and customs, we are fortunate that in the very nature of our art we can reach out to one another and that we share together a civilizing common source—the world's music. In the light of this I presume that we are in agreement that no education is worthy of its name that ignores or minimizes contemporary happenings in music, no matter how seemingly irreverent to established order. To go a step further, I believe that among our problems is that of facing up to our responsibility of keeping abreast of the times, and even more important that we also keep the student body at every grade and level alert to the shifts and developments that have taken place during this century. We would be remiss in any of the stated goals we may have if recognition is not given to the constant neccessity to sharpen and challenge the younger generations' ever questioning mind. There can be no alternative to this intensification, if contemporary music is to play the integral role we want it to in an informed and literate society.

At the last meeting of this organization, Miss Vanett Lawler outlined the aims and purposes of our project. Since the meeting in Tokyo, we have been in full operation as of July 1963. We have been functioning for the relatively short span of one year, therefore one is not as yet in a position to give as full a report as one would wish; but pertinent factors have started to emerge out of those projects so far initiated. For those of you who were not in attendance when Miss Lawler spoke in Tokyo, I will take a moment to restate the essence of what our project is about.

It has three major points of focus:

1. Composers under the age of 35 to be assigned in residence to a public school system for a period of one year, subject to renewal for a second year. Latitude is given to each composer as to his involvement in the curriculum, but no specific teaching is required. His one required duty is to compose for all types of ensembles that are available to him. Costs for the preparation of material are also provided for by the project.

2. The second aspect of the project

* Address delivered to the International Society of Music Educators on June 28, 1964, in Budapest.

is the establishment of seminars and workshops for the purpose of bringing composers and music educators into a closer relationship to one another. This opportunity for acquiring knowledge in depth to be set up in colleges, universities and music centers over wide areas on a national scale. Both already employed teachers and music education students to be sought for the purpose of gaining insights into contemporary techniques. The objective to create an intellectual climate for the greatest possible use of creative thinking and imaginative teaching on the part of all concerned.

3. The third point of focus of the project are pilot projects concerned with identifying and nurturing creative talent among the student body in the elementary and secondary schools.

The use of newer music to be included in these experimental projects in order to emphasize the natural imagination latent in those children with the capacity for creative thinking abilities. Active participation in more complex rhythmic exercise and the development of a higher degree of listening activity to be made a meaningful part of the programs of elementary music instruction.

The financial support for what I have outlined has come from the Ford Foundation. The directors of the arts and humanities program of the Foundation have given us encouragement to prove the ethical validity of our thinking. This private philanthropy leaves all matters of artistic decisions to the MENC. I might add that the Foundation applies the same policy to the various other arts programs it supports throughout the country. It is significant to report at this time that for the short period we have been in existence, increasing support and enthusiasm for what we do is being manifested by administrators—both the superintendents and principals—of schools on a national scale. Policy is made on the project by a committee made up of 7 educators and 7 composers. I serve as chairman. Many shades of aesthetic persuasion exist on this committee, and it is after careful evaluation that programs are finally adopted. We do conform in one respect only and that is in the common acceptance of the premise that the music of today, if it is to have any meaning, must be made to play as important a part of a student's experience as does the music of the past. I should add that our efforts are also aimed at changing certain overly conservative attitudes of a number in the teaching profession who cling with an intransigent nostalgia to outworn methodology and tired repertory. In our deliberations, the joint committee at times may have differences of opinion on specific proposals but time and again we find that our common articles of faith resolve these differences in free and open discussion.

If the future belongs to the young, we constantly remind ourselves, it is an inescapable duty for us to assist them into that future with the added tools of contemporary knowledge and with a sense of the vitality and energy that they themselves possess and that exists around them. Also, it is not enough to be conscious of a national heritage alone, important as this may be. It is in our opinion doubly important to know that each present-day event becomes in time the musical heritage for us all.

Two projects at the university level have been in effect this year. After careful scrutiny, two seminars of a similar nature were set up in Ithaca College in New York State and the University of Wichita in the State of Kansas. Our decision was dictated by the following factors. In each of these institutions two gifted composers were on the faculty, and both of these men were vitally concerned with the need for enlarging the theoretical curriculum of their respective institutions. In addition to this both locations possessed a student body of highly proficient performing groups. This must be taken into consideration, since we feel that much of the music under examination needs a level of performance that can present un-

familiar sounds in a clear manner. Also taken into account was the healthy and eager atmosphere encountered on campus. The reports from experts we sent out to observe progress have bolstered us in the rightness of our choice. What has become apparent too is that not all the music reviewed has unanimous approval from the students. We are aware of the fact that certain schools of contemporary thought have not as yet entered into the main stream of music and conceivably never will, but what is important to us is that conclusions are arrived at on the basis of knowledge, not blind prejudice or the fear of exploring those areas in music that still remain unfamiliar. We do not encourage promiscuity of taste in new music but we do maintain that it is important to have valid reasons for rejecting what we don't like.

The students in the universities I have mentioned are predominantly music education majors and their minds have remained open. We have a strong suspicion that they will make good teachers. It was revealing to me on one of my visits to Ithaca to hear at first hand reports that some of the cadet students gave on their experiences in practice teaching. To a man they confirmed our belief that children at the primary level took easily to contemporary music but that in too many instances they encountered a passive smugness on the part of the already established teacher. What did not escape their attention, however, was that the retreat into the safety of a status quo cannot hide a teacher's inadequate musical background. This summer at Tanglewood in the state of Massachusetts a seminar will run concurrently with the summer concert season of the Boston Symphony under the leadership of Erich Leinsdorf. This project will have as its main purpose inducing the already practising teachers to spend a period of intense involvement with both theoretic investigations and the practical aspects of how to achieve in rehearsal the results of a fuller understanding of the music studied. A leading composer and educator will simultaneously undertake this project with assistance from a graduate level student body of performers. Reflected in this seminar is also the concern felt about bridging the gap that too often exists between the professional musician and the music educator. A mutual interchange of their individual experience cannot help but bring a clearer understanding of the nature of each one's activity, for those of us who teach know too well that the problems that exist in a general classroom are far removed from those that apply to purely executant competence. This is not always understood.

Since it is in the nature of music for theory to follow practice, we have noted that a theoretical gap exists between what is taught and what is heard in contemporary music. In the profusion of the many stylistic tendencies that engulf us, it is apparent that what holds in the musical analysis of Beethoven cannot apply to Webern. I am not suggesting that, when one deals with children at a very young age, a total intellectual grasp can be expected in a good deal of the music of the 20th century. But I do observe a strong emotional response to a great deal of today's music. It is in this visceral area that I believe that we have not pioneered sufficiently. It is out of a child's emotional responses that I believe the groundwork can be laid that has relevance to what goes on around him. For too long in education there has existed the tendency to underrate a young child's ability to handle complex problems that have been presented to him heretofore. With the speed-up in mathematical studies in this scientific age we are witnessing how new techniques are demonstrating the capacity for the very young to grasp and deal with concepts that in our youth would have been inconceivable. The composer on the whole tends to be the first one to be aware of the evolutionary process in art, and a development of signal importance is taking place in America in that composers of differing aesthetic leanings are joining this

project. There is a return in a sense to the age-old conception that a creator's work is education. For if what he does serves and is meaningful to others, despite himself he has assumed the role of educator. The Pope himself has recently reminded us of the need for the artist to assume once again his ethical role in society while at the same time placing no small blame on the Church itself for having too often refused to allow the artist to be a modern man.

Reaching children at the elementary level is most important and our concern is immediate for we must recognize the fact that too often the high school student is inadequately prepared to come to grips with the newer music he is often called on to perform. In education there always lurks the danger of losing connection with the events of our time. My own three children are no doubt fortunate in that they are growing up in a musical household. But in our home I pointedly do not stress contemporary music as being something special but as simply the manifestation of what takes place in any art if it is to remain dynamic. I would hope that this condition would apply to the schoolrooms everywhere. There are under way at this moment three projects at the elementary level. One in San Diego, California, one in Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, and a third in a small village on Long Island. The three are being approached differently and we have given each co-ordinator of his own project a wide latitude in experimenting with new music. Another proposal that is under consideration at the moment is a joint effort on the part of children to create a musico-dramatic work for themselves. It is early yet to report any definitive results but it is our intention to fully document our findings. Having spoken of our concern I would add that no matter where we come from or under what form of political system we function, we all subscribe to the fact that the real treasures in this world are our children.

I cannot resist at this moment interrupting this discourse to convey to Mr. Kabalevsky an urgent message. My 9-year-old son is practising much of Mr. Kabalevsky's piano music. Knowing that I would meet him here in Budapest he sends greetings and hopes that if Mr. Kabalevsky returns to our shores he would like the privilege of demonstrating in person what he considers a masterful performance.

I come now to what may be for you the most interesting aspect of this talk. I will play some music written by our young composers in residence. This music is performed by high school students in many cases with the ink still wet on paper. The acoustical quality leaves something to be desired but I know you appreciate the hazards of non-professional sound engineering. The four composers I shall play out of the 50 so far assigned to work in the project have been chosen as such more for the quality of the tapes than for necessarily superior talent. We wished also to give a sampling of different media. You will detect various stylistic influences in these young composers for they are left free to follow their own aesthetic bent. We firmly hold to the belief that each individual be allowed to explore the means of his own artistic expression. Writing for children or the adolescent is no mean task. If on occasion some particularly avant-garde young individual insists on an impractical disregard of the facts of educational life and produces in a vacuum, we prefer that he evaluate himself if there is a failure on his part to communicate to others.

Since no one can function well for long if his work is persistently rejected, we prefer to believe that gifted men on the whole eventually do mature into their social environment as responsible individuals. We prefer also not to enter into these private areas of a man's conduct, for any arbitrary superimposition of one's will on others stifles creativity and ends up with a kind of official music that bores everyone. A person may be a 12-tone or electronic composer,

a folklorist or jazz man, a church composer or tonal conservative, for we maintain in our project that if one's imagination overrides one's style, that in essence is the prime factor that we are after.

In conclusion, I would like to suggest to the International Society that some thought might be given the idea that it might be feasible to think of exchanging the young composers of one country with another. It could be worthwhile I believe if some of our young men were to work for a period of time in the schools of another country and we in turn accepted composers from outside our shores. Since many misconceptions exist between countries, I suggest that an exchange of this kind would allow music to do what it does best—create harmony. It could also develop the good will that I know exists between those of us privileged to serve what I believe the most persuasive of the arts—music.

ECONOMIC LIFE

INDUSTRIAL REORGANIZATION

The deliberations of last May's Third Conference of Hungarian Economists centred mainly on problems relating to large-scale industrial organization and management, a most timely subject both in western and in socialist countries. In Hungary, the thorough reorganization of industry which took place in 1964 has resulted in the merging of numerous firms into large concerns and the increased independence of the individual concern. The number of concerns under the direct control of the industrial ministries was reduced from 840 to 430, a measure that will greatly facilitate the ministries' work of supervision, at the same time enabling the industrial units concerned to benefit from the advantages of large-scale organization. The reorganization of industry thus constitutes an outstanding event in the country's economic life. It goes a long way towards the realization of what Rezső Nyers, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, in his inaugural address called the shifting of emphasis to "intensive" development of the national economy. This implies, among other things, that both our methods of planning and the economic mechanism as a whole must be adjusted to fit the given conditions and tasks. Furthermore, both management and organization in the concerns and works must be raised to a high level. Nation-wide reorganization of this kind necessarily involves a great number of difficulties. At the Conference, industrial economists discussed all aspects of the problems which the ministries and firms involved now face as a consequence of industrial reorganization.

Both those delivering lectures at the Conference and those who contributed to the debate concerned themselves in part with the theoretical problems of organization, the role to be assigned to the merged concerns, the division of tasks between the ministries and the individual enterprises, the effects of reorganization on the macro-economic mechanism; another consideration was the special organizational problems of the newly established big concerns themselves.

The tone and entire course of the Conference showed that both Government and economists have done away with the strongly centralistic attitudes of the 1950's. In accordance with the political atmosphere of the period, the centrally issued instructions bore the marks of schematism and dogmatism. This manifested itself primarily in the fact that the instructions regarding matters of organization and management were indiscriminately binding on all industrial concerns. Nobody cared whether the concerns were able to cope with the tasks of organization and management set them. Nobody took it into account that the preparation and execution of work connected with organizational and managerial questions as well as

with reorganization required a good deal of special knowledge and competence. Organizational departments in the individual firms were abolished, and the independence of the latter in matters of management was severely curtailed. At present, as far as questions of organization and management are concerned the ministries issue only general directives and leave it to the individual firm to work out its own forms of management.

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As pointed out above, it was the establishment of large industrial concerns that constituted the cornerstone of the process of reorganization. These large concerns are entirely different in character from the former smaller units; their existence and activities affect the country's whole economic mechanism. They are generally responsible for the major part of the production of an industrial sector—as a matter of fact, a single big concern may represent an entire branch of industry. This enables the individual units to get a better insight into trends of development within their respective industries and thus makes them better suited to determine development policies in the branch in questions than were the smaller concerns or the industrial directorates of the ministries. The latter, with their limited outside knowledge of the firms under their control, could only direct their development policies in a mechanical way. It was stressed in the debate that the newly established big concerns can only become masters in their respective domains if they not only know the future of the industry in question but are also able to shape it themselves. Accordingly, the concerns will have to carry out a determined and economically well-founded technical policy in order to keep the lines of production for which they are responsible at an up-to-date level, to bring about effective specialization and concentration, and to exploit to the fullest degree the possibilities afforded by their direct control of a wider sector of the forces of production. All this, however, calls for a reform of the planning methods employed up to the present.

Several contributors to the debate pointed out that the processes of economic activity were independent of the calendar year, calling attention to the fact that many of the difficulties arising in the pace of production were due in fact to the rigid observance of the calendar year. The development plans for the enterprises will, therefore, make it compulsory to change over to long-term planning.

In this connection it was also suggested that the plans should be considered as concepts only, worked out in full detail for two years and in outline for three. The outlines for the third year would then be given concrete form at the end of the first year. This would make for elastic and continuous planning and make it possible to change the plans whenever new ideas came forward. It would then devolve on the ministries to co-ordinate the long-term plans of the concerns with the national economic plans. Planning of this type would, however, entail considerable changes in the traditional methods of management. It would make it necessary for the concerns to gauge demand for their products much more precisely than in the past. It would mean the introduction of the marketing principle, the establishment of living contacts with markets both at home and abroad. This should lead to a change in the technocratic attitudes prevailing up to the present, which should be replaced by sound commercialism. What is meant by the latter is that the production program should be determined not by administrative measures but by actual consumer demand.

Whereas in the past, with emphasis on volume of production, mechanical development constituted the principal factor in industrial technical development, now, with demand as the starting point, the development of the end product must become the basic

target, determining advances both in technology and in engineering. This has emerged as the consensus of opinion at the Conference. Such production policies on the part of the big enterprises will also affect and further the development of the economic mechanism.

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One of the basic problems of the economic mechanism is that of securing adequate material incentives, which in turn is connected with that of setting up a workable price system. This is a domain where shortcomings can undeniably still be observed. The establishment of big industrial units will also help to remove these shortcomings.

The opinion was also voiced that to raise the level of work in the new firms as against that in the former ones, more carefully thought-out and more appropriate decisions are needed. The application and comparison of physical indices may be admissible in certain types of decision, but fundamental decisions must be based on price relations. A new price system is therefore needed, which affords not only a form of incentive but also a basis for appropriate decisions on the part of the firms.

In connection with the establishment of new big industrial concerns much has been said about the relationship between the ministries and the firms as well as about the responsibilities and the independence of the latter. Attention was called to the difficulties arising from the fact that the ministries had reserved themselves the right of decisions on many matters of detail. This frequently means the assumption of responsibilities and work which ought actually to devolve on the industrial firms themselves. A case in point are the hundreds of prototypes which must be approved by the ministries. A more adequate allocation of tasks has thus become necessary and, with that, the regulation of spheres of authority and activity in accordance with the principle of unit independence.

There is no denying that the new big concerns have a broader view of the relevant field and can thus grasp the interests of the national economy much better than former units of lesser size. It was emphasized by several speakers in the debate that the ministry should confine itself to guidance, i.e., should direct its activities only on the level of the concern as a whole and on questions of principle. The authority of the ministry should cease within the enterprise, where all authority should uniformly lie with the management. Thus all operative activities should be carried out on the unit level. Finally, the question of independence will be basically determined by the methods of transmitting the macro-economic targets to the micro-economic units, i.e., by the type of indices which, at unit level, determine the tasks deriving from the targets set for the national economy as a whole.

This method will also determine the allocation of tasks between the ministry, on the one hand, and the individual firms on the other.

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The increased independence of the firms also poses the question of responsibility. As a precondition to the shouldering and establishing of responsibilities, those expected to carry them must be invested with adequate authority, and solutions regarding questions of detail must not be imposed on them from outside. Experience has proved that it is easier to find those responsible for minor problems than those responsible for major questions of economic policy. The establishment of big concerns calls for changes in the economic mechanism that will enable the realization of the principle of responsibility. The task facing the big concerns is the efficient management of the wealth of society. This is the essence of assuming responsibility. A related problem is that of the identity and conflict of macro-economic and micro-economic interests. It was found that there is no mechanism ca-

pable of ensuring complete identity; the contributions showed that the two interests are actually often in conflict with one another. The problem of responsibility thus urgently calls for an economic mechanism that will ensure the identity of the two interests in as many fields as possible.

Appropriate changes in the economic mechanism may thus contribute to the solution of the problem of responsibility, but in themselves will not go the whole way. In fact—as pointed out by Professor Imre Vajda in summing up the debate—responsibility here means long-term thinking. Changes in the mechanism can do no more than provide free scope for the consciousness of responsibility to assert itself, remove the barriers in its way, and invest active man with a liberty that will nourish his sense of responsibility.

It was also pointed out in this connection that the existing system of supervision does not provide an adequate incentive to risk-taking on the part of the firms. Yet the big concerns that are generally responsible for marketing the products of a whole industrial sector and for its technical development must, in the course of these activities, take a number of risks. They should, accordingly, be guaranteed the possibility of doing so.

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The Conference gave a great deal of attention to the concrete problems of organization in big industrial concerns. The most controversial issues in this field were those relating to functionalism and to one-man management. The subject is one widely discussed also in international literature and it is thus hardly surprising that most of our organizational experts should deal with it in great detail. The big concerns are composed of several plants and units. Differences of opinion may arise between one of the plants and the central leadership as well as between the different plants themselves. It is therefore vitally important to determine to what extent central leadership can assert itself through the functional organs, and one-man management through the work of the plant managers. In the course of the debate the antithesis of one-man management and functional management, proved to be outdated. The complex character of the new type of industrial concern does not admit of such simplified antitheses—it calls for a synthesis of one-man management and functional management in a form that makes the role of the latter more explicit and prominent.

Actually, modern functional management consists essentially in expert advice, and this can never come into conflict with concrete management of individual plants and subordinate units. The main thing is to ensure that functional management does not lead to de-concentration at the plant level, that plant managers should in each and every case be informed of the principal targets and of the means of accomplishing them, in order to be able to carry out the necessary organizational measures in the plant under their direction. The synthesis of the two methods is embodied in the board of management, where the tasks are allotted by the top management to the plant managers who will then rely on the advice of the functional organs. The Conference thus adopted the internationally approved practice according to which modern management is inconceivable without functional management, and the respective powers of plant managers and of functional organs must be sharply and unequivocally defined.

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The conclusion that emerged from the debate would concentrate the activity of the functional organs mainly on questions of methodology, while control of the means of production—whether machinery or financial means—would be outside their scope.

The debate on enterprise organization was dominated by the problem of improv-

ing and developing practical organizational work and increasing its efficiency. It was shown that the main shortcoming in this sphere up to the present must be sought in failure to think in terms of processes. Frequently the organs are established first and an occupation found for them only afterwards. On the basis of experience gained abroad, it was pointed out that whenever the organization of processes was given prominence, a division according to spheres of competence would result almost automatically in the wake of setting up prototypes for the processes. Organization on the basis of such process models would provide a safeguard against the adaptation of an organization to individuals, as has tended to happen in the past. The links between organizational work and the economic mechanism emerged also from the debate on problems of enterprise organization. This means that the relationships set up by the economic mechanism must be carefully studied. The incentive role of the economic mechanism must first be explored and only then will it be possible to complete corresponding proposals.

Nor were the human aspects of the problems of industrial organization neglected at the Conference. It was noted that the working man was strongly in favour of the reorganization, since its aim was to improve and facilitate his work. The efficiency of the human organism depends on working conditions. Several speakers dealt with the psychological aspects of labour, drawing attention to the importance of developing a working community within the firm. The newly established big concerns were brought into being by means of amalgamating several smaller firms, and the development of a new collective spirit will require both time and effort. Appropriate organizational methods may contribute to the development of such a spirit, one of the preconditions to efficient work.

All these problems are closely related to those of management, which in the estimation of the Conference involves more than mere organization although the two overlap; managerial and organizational activities are closely intertwined. At present, the problem of management is a vital one all over the world. The emergence of mammoth concerns has steadily increased the demands on top executives. The problem is of particular importance in Hungary, where with the nationalization of industry in 1948 a great number of employees of a widely varying degree of training—mostly workers—were promoted to executive posts. The majority lacked previous experience and had to become first acquainted with the science of management which others had had the opportunity of learning at school or mastering in the course of practice. The standards of management at the time were consequently rather low. At the beginning the new executives devoted themselves mainly to minor questions of detail of which they had a better understanding. The tasks of top management, the interrelations of planning figures, the problems of technical development being alien to them, they set out in a direction where they would encounter only problems of detail. This only served to relieve the lower ranks of management of their responsibilities and deprive them of all initiative. Over the past 10 to 15 years these executives have made an immense advance and reached a stage in the science of management where all phenomena had to be weighed against the background of economic interactions. To do this, the top management must relegate all matters not directly connected with its activities to the lower managerial ranks, simultaneously assigning the latter the necessary powers and responsibilities. The consensus of the Conference's opinion was that the ideal of the "operative executive" whose door was open to all and who would go through the works making his decisions on the spot has come to be replaced by that of the top executive who secures the independence and co-operation of his subordinate organs by adequate organization of his own work.

According to the experience of those participating in the debate the working capacity of top executives has been released to the degree that individual operative decisions are gradually no longer needed as a consequence of methodical organization. They will thus be able to deal with the few remaining questions that await their decision individually and in an operative manner.

The problems relating to the preparation of decisions were also widely discussed. According to the speakers, prevailing views on the subject are still rather static, as issues tend to be handled on the basis of immediate considerations. This question is particularly significant in big industrial concerns, where the problems that arise are extraordinarily complex. New methods become necessary as executives are unable to grasp every question of detail. In this connection, the use of business machines, especially of electronic computers, was extensively discussed. The changes that may be expected through the application of such machines are twofold—quantitative, by enabling the processing of more data, and qualitative, by providing a foundation for the better preparation of future decisions.

Improved training of executives will also tend to raise standards of management. This too constitutes a world problem. It was stated at the Conference that no organized training of executives was actually carried out in Hungary, despite the great need for it. The opinion was generally voiced that the training of executives should not be made the task of day schools but methods of extension training should instead be worked out for those with some experience in industry. Lecture series, exchange of technical experience, study tours abroad and more intensive propagation of foreign technical literature were recommended. The scientific research institutes were also called upon to co-operate. At present there are only specialized research institutes in this country, but progress now makes it imperative to set up a national institute for general, co-ordinated organizational research. The speakers also emphasized the need for consultations with the research institutes in working out organizational tasks and methods.

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The Conference was remarkable for its frank and critical tone. Several participants stressed that increased size of staff alone would not make a big industrial concern, and that in the course of reorganization some unnecessary amalgamations had taken place. There had been instances of excessive vertical amalgamation, whereas co-operation had been neglected. In their view, it was high time for the results of co-operation among productive forces to manifest themselves, but this was still hampered by a high degree of parallelism, by providing for excessively large stocks and staff, and by manifestations of jealousy in the new concerns. It was also pointed out that the former heads of industrial enterprises and the ministry officials appointed to executive posts in the new concerns were sometimes inclined to introduce their previous working methods, in some cases making it hard to distinguish between the former industrial apparatus and the newly established big industrial concern.

The whole character and course of the deliberations pointed to the increased significance of economic research in Hungary. The participants furnished proof of the fact that our economists are now beginning to study each individual problem in its macro-economic context and to link almost every question with the economic mechanism. It is also a sign of progress that the latter was interpreted at the Conference in the broadest sense of the word and the time already seems remote when that mechanism was conceived as some form of automaton making for proportional changes. By applying scientific standards to the treatment of the various issues and by drawing attention to

the practical questions, the Conference rose above the level of a popular scientific gathering. It became a forum where top executives gave an economic evaluation of the problems arising from the reorganization of industry, in co-operation with economists working either as executives or as junior officials. The result was a many-sided survey both of achievements and of deficiencies, not only going a long way towards proper realization of the results of industrial reorganization but also making an important contribution to the advance of economic science in this country.

RÓBERT HARDI

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

BÓKA, László (1910—1964). The eminent literary historian, novelist and poet, who died this november, has contributed monographs about János Vajda, an important poet of the latter part of the 19th century, and Endre Ady, one of the most outstanding personalities of 20th century Hungarian poetry. Other publications include two volumes of essays entitled *Tegnaptól máig* ("From Yesterday to Today") and *Arcképvázlatok és tanulmányok* ("Sketches and Studies"); four volumes of poetry, *Magyar Agapé*, *Jégvilág*, *Szebb az új*, *Harag nélkül* ("Hungarian Agape," "Frost World," "The New is More Beautiful," "Without Anger"); and more recently the novels *Alázatosan jelentem* ("Have the Honour to Report"), *A Karoling trón* ("The Carolingian Throne"), *Karfiol Tamás* ("Tamás Karfiol"), and *Nandu*. He was a member of the editorial board of this review.

An obituary of László Bóka will appear in the forthcoming issue of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

SŐTÉR, István (b. 1913). Author, literary historian, rector of Eötvös University, Budapest. Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. President of the Hungarian P.E.N. In his short stories and novels published before 1945 he followed experimental trends. In 1946 he published a study on Franco-Hungarian cultural relations. Since 1945 devotes himself to literary history, his main fields of research being 19th century Hungarian literature and the period of romanticism and realism in world literature as well as modern French fiction. His most important work is a monograph on *József Eötvös* (1953); other volumes of studies include *Játék és valóság* ("Play and Reality"), 1946; *Romantika és realizmus* ("Romanticism and Realism"), 1951; *Nemzet és haladás* ("Nation and Progress"), 1964; fiction: *Bűnbeesés* ("The Fall"), 1947; *Hídszakadás* ("Collapsing Bridge"), 1948; *Édenkert* ("Garden of Eden"), 1960.

KÖPECZI, Béla (b. 1921). Historian, literary historian. Acquired his teacher's degree and Ph. D. in French and Rumanian at Pázmány University, Budapest. Also studied at the Sorbonne and the École Normale Supérieure and obtained a Ph. D. at the former. He headed the General Publishing Board of the Ministry of Culture. At present directs the Cultural Department of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. In 1952 he published (in collaboration with the historian, Tamás Esze) a monograph on one of the military and political leaders of that century's so called *kuruc* insurrection, Tamás Esze (ancestor of the present-day historian); in 1955 a monograph in collaboration with Ágnes Várkonyi on Ferenc Rákóczi II, prince of Transylvania and main figure of the *kuruc* movement; and in 1958 a selection of Rákóczi's correspondence. His Sorbonne Ph. D. thesis was about Hungarian revolutions in the light of French public opinion during the reign of Louis XIV. At present is working on a Hungarian Academy thesis, dealing with the links between Rákóczi's war of independence and France. Has published several studies on French and Rumanian literature (Balzac, Hugo, Stendhal, the French existentialists, the *nouveau roman*, Eminescu, Caragiale, contemporary Rumanian poetry, etc.) and edited several collections and anthologies (Babeuf, Victor Hugo, Anthology of Rumanian Poets). His article on Balzac, printed in this issue, appears as an appendix to a complete Hungarian edition of The Human Comedy at Magyar Helikon Publishers, Budapest.

SPENDER, Stephen, the poet and Editor of *Encounter*, spent a fortnight in Hungary in September, 1964, on a British-Hungarian

Cultural Exchange programme, giving several lectures.

BOGNÁR, József (b. 1917). Professor at Karl Marx University of Economics, Budapest; President of the Institute of Cultural Relations. An MP since 1945, he has held various posts in public life since 1946, including Mayor of Budapest and Cabinet Minister. In the field of economics he first concerned himself with the problems of theory and of demand analysis, later with general questions of planning. On these subjects he published a monograph as well as a number of books and essays. His work "Planned Economy in Hungary" has been published in English and four other languages. Lately he has been working on theoretical problems connected with the development of economically backward areas. He is a member of the editorial board of our periodical. See also his essays "Economic Planning in Ghana" in Vol. III, No. 7, "Science and its Application in Developing Countries" in Vol. IV, No. 11, "The Structure of Hungarian Economy," in Vol. V, No. 14, of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

SZALAI, Sándor (b. 1912). Philosopher and sociologist. Studied in Leipzig and Zurich, returned to Hungary in 1935. Worked for a time on the editorial staff of *Pester Lloyd*. After the war was professor of sociology at Eötvös University in Budapest. A corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences since 1948. As a leading social democrat he was arrested and sentenced to a long prison term. Left prison and was rehabilitated in 1955 and since then has been doing research in sociology, philosophy, psychology and mathematics. Beside his book *Társadalmi valóság és társadalomtudomány* ("Social Reality and Social Science") he has published articles and papers in the above fields. At present he teaches at the University of Chemical Engineering in Veszprém. Heads the Time-budget research group of the Vienna Centre for Social Sciences. His present essay is the abbreviated text of a lecture he gave at the Budapest meeting of the above group. This autumn he started on a lecture tour in the US and Canada.

SIPKAY, Barna (b. 1927). Writer and journalist. After having studied law, worked for a time as statistician; later joined the staff of the newspaper *Keletmagyarország* where he is presently employed. His first play, *A világ peremén*" ("On the Rim of the World"), was produced by the National Theatre, Miskolc, in 1963. Published two volumes of short stories: *Messzi harangszó* ("The Peal of Bells From Far Away"), 1963, and *Hajnali hinta* ("See-saw at Dawn"), 1964.

KÖRNER, Éva. Art historian. Graduated at Eötvös University, Budapest. Editor at the Art Fund Publishing House. Publications: *Picasso* (Art Fund Publishing House, 1960), and a number of essays.

HUBAY, Miklós (b. 1918). Playwright. His first play *Hősök nélkül* ("Without Heroes") was staged in 1942 in Budapest. After the war his drama entitled *Coq d'Esculape* appeared in Paris. Until 1949 he headed the Hungarian Library in Geneva and was a full-time delegate to the *Bureau International d'Éducation*. After returning home he specialized in writing film scripts and plays. His film *Bakaruhában* ("Sunday Romance)", written on the basis of a short story by Sándor Hunyady, had a successful run in a number of countries. Other plays: *Egy magyar nyár* ("A Hungarian Summer"); *István napja* ("Stephen's Day"); *Egyik Európa* ("One Kind of Europe"), *Csend az ajtó mögött* ("Silence Behind the Door"), *Késdobálók* ("Knife-throwers"); several one-act plays. Translated plays by Musset, Sartre, Marceau, Miller and Sheridan. For a few years he was dramatic adviser to the Budapest National Theatre and taught at the Academy of Dramatic Arts. Recently his film *Angyalok földje* ("Angels' Land"), written on the basis of a novel by Lajos

Kassák, has brought him international distinction. A collection of his plays was published in 1964 under the title *Hősökkel és hősök nélkül* ("With and Without Heroes"); *Einaudi* and *Lerici* have also published some plays of his in Italian. See his previous contributions in several issues of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

Ámos, Imre (1907–44). Painter. From 1936 worked at Szentendre, a small provincial town, an important place in Hungarian art history, north of the capital. Spent some time in Paris with his wife, also a painter, where they met Chagall. He was killed in a Nazi concentration camp.

Rodker, Joan (London), journalist, short story writer and director of several TV productions and films including a highly successful documentary on Mexico. Visited Hungary in August 1963, working on a similar documentary on Hungary.

Faragó, Vilmos (b. 1919). Journalist and teacher of literature, member of the editorial staff of the the literary weekly *Élet és Irodalom*. (See also his articles in Vol. I, No. 1, and Vol. II, No. 1, of The New Hungarian Quarterly.)

Horváth, Zoltán (b. 1900). Political writer and historian. Before 1945 was engaged mainly in book publishing and journalism. In 1934 published a biographical novel on László Teleki, leading diplomat during the War of Independence of 1848–49. In 1942 edited *Világtörténelmi Lexikon* ("Encyclopedia of World History"). Translated many English, French and German works, wrote essays on Tolstoi, Thackeray, Dickens, C. F. Meyer and Lajos Kossuth. A leading member of the Social Democratic Party, he was active after 1945 as a political writer and later as editor of the party's daily, *Népszava*. Arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment in 1949, he was set free and rehabilitated in 1955. In recent years he has devoted himself to historiography. In 1961 he published a comprehensive work on Hungarian political, economic and cultural life of the first decades of the twentieth century, entitled *Magyar századforduló* ("Turn of the Century in Hungary").

Vargyas, Lajos (b. 1914). Ethnographer. Studied art and church music, graduating in 1941 with a dissertation on village music. Scientific worker at Budapest University Library until 1952; director of the music department of the Ethnographic Museum, 1952–61; lecturer at the ethnographic department of Eötvös University in Budapest, 1952–1954; since 1961 member of the folk-music research team of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His books and essays deal mainly with problems of folk music and ballads, prosody, modern Hungarian music, and ethnography.

Gábor, István (b. 1928). Journalist on the staff of the daily *Magyar Nemzet*. For some time was schoolmaster in a secondary school. His experiences in the teaching profession form the subject of a series of articles, winning a prize at the Warsaw World Youth Festival in 1955. See also his essays "Musical Education for Children in Budapest" in Vol. II, No. 1, and "Kodály's Music Pedagogy" in Vol. III, No. 5, of our review.

Erki, Edit (b. 1933), journalist. Studied at Eötvös University, Budapest, as a historian and archivist. Worked for a time as a teacher. Since 1961 is a permanent staff member of *Élet és Irodalom*, a Budapest literary weekly. Published essays on various problems of the history of socialist literature.

Beregi, Oszkár (b. 1876). Actor. Until 1919 member of the Budapest National Theatre appearing mainly in important classical roles. Was for a time also a member of Reinhardt's company. At present he lives in the United States.

ACZÉL, Ferenc (b. 1934). Reader at Corvina Publishing House, Budapest. Translated several works on musicology into Hungarian.

JOIO, dello, Norman (b. 1913). Descendant of a long line of Italian organists. He has composed in virtually all forms of music—opera, ballet, choral, orchestral and chamber music, and songs. After attending the Juilliard School of Music, finished his composition studies with Paul Hindemith at Yale University. Honors include the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1957 for a string orchestra work entitled "Meditations on Ecclesiastes." Received two Guggenheim Fellowships, and was recently elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters. Honorary degrees from Lawrence College in Wisconsin and Colby College in Maine. Presently teaching composition at the Mannes College of Music in New York City.

HARDI, Róbert (b. 1914). Economist, lecturer in business administration at Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest. Deputy manager of KONSUMEX, Commodity Trading Enterprise. Since 1945 has organized and headed a number of home and foreign trade organs and enterprises. Published articles and papers on home and foreign trade, the Hungarian cooperative movement, etc. Previous contributions can be read in Vol. II, No. 3, and Vol. II, No. 4, of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

A SHORT ENCYCLOPEDIA

of some places, historical events, personalities and institutions mentioned in this number

BUDAPEST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY. What is now the most important institution of higher technical education in Hungary was originally the *Institutum Geometricum*, established in 1782 and raised to university rank in 1872. It has at present three faculties, those of mechanical, electrical and chemical engineering, and its 54 departments employ a teaching staff of over 600. In the school-year 1961/62 it was attended by 6,863 students of whom 4,152 took regular and 2,711 extension or correspondence courses. In addition, engineers in this country are also being trained at the Budapest University of Building and Communication Technics, the Miskolc Heavy Industries Polytechnic University, the Veszprém University of Chemical Engineering, the Budapest Department of Agricultural Engineering at the University for Agricultural Sciences, and the Sopron College of Forestry. In the school-year 1961/62 attendance at the institutions of higher technical education totalled 14,663.

CINEMA ATTENDANCE AND TV SUBSCRIPTIONS. In the 1950's cinema attendance increased more than threefold, from 42 million in 1949 to 140 million in 1960. The same period witnessed an increase in the number of cinemas from 862 to 4,478. With the spread of television the 1960 peak began to fall off. By 1963 cinema attendance had declined to 115 million. The number of television subscribers grew from 10 thousand in 1958 to 103 thousand in 1960, and by the spring of 1964 reached 500 thousand.

ERKEL, FERENC (1810–1893). One of the most eminent figures of Hungarian music; initiator of the Hungarian national opera. In his first creative period he applied the idioms and forms of Italian and French music; later he turned to Wagner's ideas, blending them with elements of Hungarian *verbunk* music and folk songs. His principal operas are *Mária Báthory* (1840), *László Hunyadi* (1844), *Bánk Bán* (1861), *Sarolta* (a comic opera—1862), *György Dózsa* (1867), *György Brankovics* (1874), *Nameless Heroes* (1880), *King István* (1885); he also composed the Hungarian National Anthem (to the words of Ferenc Kölcsey), 1845.

FINE ARTS FOUNDATION. The Fine Arts Foundation of the Hungarian People's Republic was established by government decision in 1952. The institution serves to promote the work of artists. It provides for the legal protection of artists, for rendering them the benefits of the social security system (free medical care, etc.), putting up scholarships, paying advances and pensions, and maintaining artists' homes for creative work. Since 1954 the Foundation co-operates in promoting the sale of works through state-owned art shops.

HAJDUK. Mercenary footsoldiers of the 16th century. Mostly descended from cattle drivers employed in the 15th century by the flourishing Central European trade in cattle, who lost their livelihood in the 16th century as a result of the Turkish wars. These have-nots, after having fled from the conquering Turks and gaining freedom from their former landlords, played an important role in various patriotic and antifeudal movements, as in the peasant revolt of György Dózsa (1514), and in István Bocskay's war of independence in Transylvania (1604–1606), etc. The latter reigning prince settled about 10,000 Hajduks on his estates, giving them freedom and land in return for military service. In the 17th century the liberty of the Hajduks appeared highly attractive to the serfs. However, in the 18th century they were gradually

deprived of their exceptional privileges and most Hajduks were compelled to sink back into serfdom.

HUNGARIAN FRONT. Antifascist league of the Hungarian democratic parties; founded in May 1944, with the participation of the Communist Party. In November 1944 the Hungarian Front set up the Hungarian National Revolutionary and Liberation Committee in order to create a framework for organizing armed resistance. In December 1944 the Hungarian National Independence Front was founded in liberated areas for the purpose of carrying on the activities of the Hungarian Front.

HUNGARIAN PIONEERS' ASSOCIATION. Founded in 1946, the Association recruits its members from among second to eighth-form students of the general schools, i.e., children between 7 and 14 years of age. Its basic organizations are the school pioneer groups. The task of the movement is to further extra-curricular moral education of children and to assist them in spending their free hours in healthy and sensible occupation. For this purpose, camps and excursions are organized and scientific, technical, artistic, sports, etc., clubs set up. There are at present over 5,000 pioneer groups in Hungary, with a total membership of nearly 800,000. The Association maintains several periodicals.

INTERRUPTION OF PREGNANCY. A decree issued by the Council of Ministers in the interest of wider protection for the health of women in Hungary deals with the interruption of pregnancy. Permission for abortions may be granted by what are known as "Ab" committees appointed for each district. The committee chairman is a physician, and membership comprises a delegate of the competent local council and a woman trade union representative. Application for permission to terminate pregnancy has to be submitted to the committee of the district where the applicant is resident. Previously the pregnant woman must report for expert consultation at a gynaecological clinic or a pre-natal clinic, where the necessary examinations and investigations are carried out. The applicant is given a record of these investigations, which she must then take with her in a personal appearance before the committee. The committee grants permission to interrupt pregnancy in case of illness; to save the life, to prevent deterioration of a pathological condition; if the child is likely to be born with some severe disability; finally, if there are justified personal or family circumstances and the applicant insists on an abortion after compulsory medical advice. In addition to the granting of permissions, it is the committee's duty to warn the applicants of the consequences harmful to health as a result of abortion, notably when repeated several times; furthermore, in cases where the request appears unjustified, to seek to dissuade the applicant. A week's delay is provided to allow for more thorough enlightenment. The committee may authorize the interruption of pregnancies of no longer than twelve weeks' duration (in the case of unmarried mothers under twenty years of age, pregnancies up to eighteen weeks' duration). Abortion may be performed only at the gynaecological-obstetric department of a hospital or a maternity home: outpatient abortions are prohibited. In the case of hospitalized patients, the committee attached to the hospital may authorize an abortion. Where abortion is authorized on grounds of health, the applicant, if entitled to social insurance, has a right to avail herself of every relevant service and aid free of cost. In all other cases of abortion, which are also legal, the applicant, or her responsible relative, has to pay the costs of three days' nursing at the hospital. She receives no sick pay for these three days, but from the fourth day of hospital nursing she is entitled to every benefit of social insurance. The decree also provides for the manufacture of contraceptives and their unlimited sale at

low prices. In the past few years about a million and a half booklets on birth control have been distributed free among women and families. Bookshops sell popular scientific books on modern methods of birth control, also explaining the harmful consequences of abortion on health. Approximately half a million copies have been sold.

KECSKEMÉT. Largest town of the area between the rivers Danube and Tisza, with 70,000 inhabitants. It is mainly a city of agricultural character, the most important products being grapes, apricots and apricot brandy. The principal Kecskemét industries are its canning factories, fruit-spirit distilleries, mills, and production of household machinery.

LENGYEL, MENYHÉRT (b. 1880). Dramatist, novelist, living in Italy. The plays he wrote in the first half of his career are remarkable for their delicate delineation of character and profound, sometimes satirical, social criticism *(Grateful Posterity; Typhoon; The Kingdom of Sancho Panza)*. His later works, though evidencing consummate stage technique, are often superficial.

It was to Lengyel's libretto that Béla Bartók composed his ballet-pantomime, "The Miraculous Mandarin."

LITTLE BALATON. Swampy marshland of 1,340 hectares, to the north of Lake Balaton. A bay of Lake Balaton several centuries ago. Since then it has been gradually separated from Lake Balaton by the alluvial deposits of the river Zala. Its avifauna is famous for its variety. Among its reeds there are nests of such extremely rare water fowls as the heron and the spoonbeak.

PENSIONS SYSTEM. In Hungary every male over sixty and every female over fifty-five years is entitled to a pension after a minimum of ten years' work. This pension consists of two parts: the pension itself, and additional payments. The pension amounts to 50 per cent of the monthly average of the salary received in the last three years preceding retirement. To this is added 0.5 per cent of the average monthly income for every year of service since 1929. Besides labourers and employees, the members of farmers' co-operatives are also entitled to a pension, as are widows, invalids and parents.

SCHOLARSHIPS. Day students of universities and colleges may receive two kinds of scholarships in Hungary: 1) a scholarship of progressive size depending exclusively on achievement in studies (during the school-year 1963/64, 66.3 per cent of the undergraduates received this type of scholarship); 2) a regular financial support depending upon the financial position of the undergraduate and his family (during the school-year 1963/64, 60.3 per cent of undergraduates were granted such aid; a large number thus benefited from both kinds of scholarship). Those who study at evening or correspondence courses of universities and colleges are entitled to 36 days extra holidays yearly from their employers for study.

SZABÓ, ERVIN (1877–1918). Sociologist, the first representative of scientific Marxism in Hungary and one of the founders of the left-wing opposition within the Social Democratic Party, of which he became the leader. It was under his editorship and with his introductory essay that the selected works of Marx and Engels were first published in Hungary in 1905. During the First World War he was the intellectual leader of the illegal anti-militarist movement. His most important scientific works include *Társadalmi és pártharcok az 1848–49-es magyar forradalomban* ("Social and Party Struggles in the 1848–49 Hungarian Revolution"), 1921; *A magyar jakobinusok* ("The Hungarian Jacobins"), 1902; *Imperializmus és tartós béke* ("Imperialism and Lasting Peace"), 1917. In 1911 he

was appointed director of the country's most important public library, the Budapest Municipal Library, which in 1945 was named after him.

SZEGED FESTIVAL. Open-air dramatic and opera performances have been held since 1931 in the centre of the lowland town of Szeged, situated on the river Tisza, in the square before the Votive Cathedral with its two towers. The Second World War interrupted the series of festive performances, and it was only in 1959 that the tradition was renewed. Since that time the performances of the Szeged Festival have been attended every year by audiences of several tens of thousands. There are permanent features on the program of the Szeged Festival: Imre Madách's drama, *The Tragedy of Man*, and Ferenc Erkel's opera, *László Hunyadi*. The programme of the festival arranged in the summer of 1964 included the following items: Verdi's *Aida;* Ferenc Erkel's historical opera, *László Hunyadi;* Ferenc Farkas's new popular opera, *Vidróczki;* the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble in the *Shepherd Boy*, a folk pantomime; the *Wooden Prince* by Béla Bartók; Honegger's scenic oratorio, *Joan of Arc at the Stake.*

SZENTENDRE. A small town north of Budapest, on the Danube. The tiny place of ten thousand inhabitants is built on the site of a former Roman settlement (Ulcisia Castra). Avar tombs from the period of the great migrations have been excavated in its vicinity. In the Turkish wars the region lost its population, but from the end of the 16th century Serbs fleeing from the Turks advancing from the Balkan Peninsula settled here. Szentendre has a rich museum as well as Greek Orthodox churches abounding in valuable icons. Owing to its lovely situation, Szentendre is one of the most popular spots with painters and tourists who visit the Danube Loop.

UNDERGRADUATES. In the 1963/64 school-year 82,280 undergraduates studied at the 89 universities and colleges of Hungary. With a population of 10.1 million, there are 8 undergraduates per 1,000 inhabitants.

YOUNG HUNGARIAN COMMUNISTS' LEAGUE (KISZ). Founded in March 1957 as the successor of the earlier youth organization (DISZ). Numbering about 800,000 members, it is the youth organization of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.

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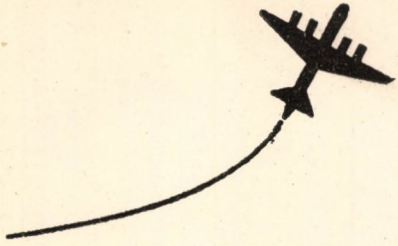

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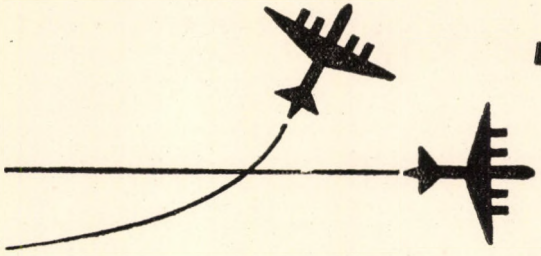

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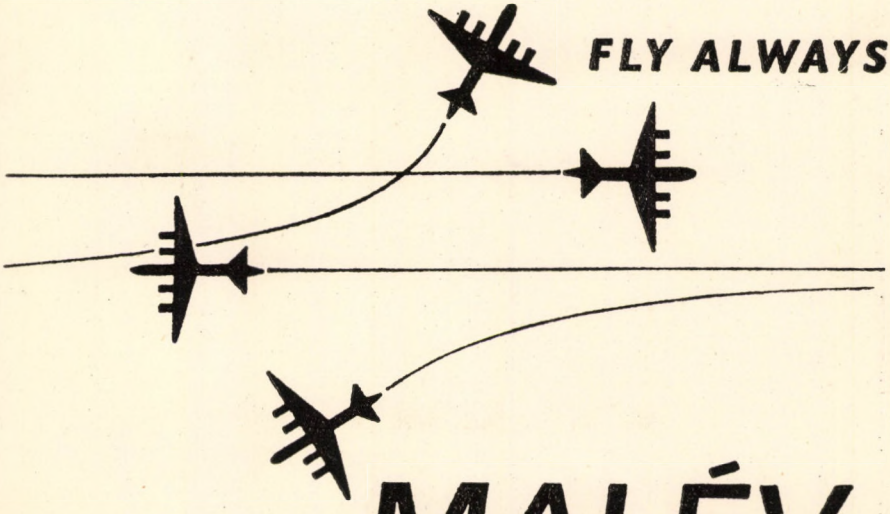

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