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Man's Biological Future in Hungarian Utopian Literature*

George Bisztray

A fairly recent, unofficial report of the National Academy of Sciences concludes the survey of the present state of biology with this judgment:

"When one day man accepts responsibility for his acknowledged power to control his own genetic destiny, the choice between plans must be based on value judgments. When he begins to use the power to control his own evolution, man must clearly understand the values towards whose realization he is to strive."[1]

In other words: For what purpose life, present or future? For what purpose a new breed of man?

Right now, these still are uncomfortable questions. None of the existing social models should dare claim that it could serve as ideal for the future generations. The Nazis tried to shape genetics so that it corresponded to their ideology. Western scientists preferred to stay on grounds which they could long defend as purely speculative and non-political. A certain "scientist" named H.J. Muller, for instance, recommended freezing the sperms of famous males to be used by lucky females in the future.[2] In less future-oriented psycho-medical practice, like the changing of human behavior and world outlook by methods ranging from lobotomy to brain washing, our scientific age has produced more outstanding results than in planning for the future.

Though man's natural existence is inseparable from the social formations and technological conditions in which he lives, his physical constitution seems to have attracted the attention of utopian writers all through the ages. The unchangeability of nature has been a traditional commonplace in Western culture, yet experience, and later Darwinism, pointed out how man-created culture significantly influenced man's very natural essence too.

*This paper is developed from a lecture given in July 1974 at the annual conference of the Science Fiction Research Association in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The critical debate on Darwinism, especially, had scores of utopian implications, and the self-assigned prophets like Sumner and Ward, Engels and Thomas Huxley, all had some biological program for the future. Opponents of scientific philosophies also adhered occasionally to utopian ideas, as in the case of Nietzsche. Biological utopias (sometimes also called "anthropological utopias") entered late into Western European literatures, the finest and bitterest being Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and *Ape and Essence.*

It is remarkable how much importance Eastern European writers have assigned to the bio-future of man. Technological utopias of the scope of Jules Verne are scarce, perhaps because of the relatively late industrialization of the East-Central European countries. It was rather the changeability of the organism that most concerned the 19th and 20th century writers from these countries. This interest was primarily not scientific, however: the integrity of the human constitution, the mental freedom of thought and action, were of equal concern for these writers.

In this paper, four fantastic-utopian works, or parts of works, from Hungary will be analyzed as models of East-Central European writers' reactions to the development of biology, and particularly anthropology, neurology, and behavioral science. The works cover the period from 1860 to the eve of World War II.

"Model" is a term well known from general communication theory, still relatively little used in literary scholarship. Yet it seems to serve our purpose effectively. If we investigate the causes and functions underlying the Hungarian utopian imagination, we find more than isolated, individual "examples" in the four books analyzed. Changing as the historical conditions were, the four works nevertheless represent a consistent and continuous preoccupation with man's future in the perspective of his own knowledge and his created "second nature." In the summary, we shall see how the considered Hungarian utopian works correspond to a generalized definition of the model.

—2—

Ten years after Austria and Russia defeated the Hungarian revolution of 1848-49, a patriot and playwright-nobleman, Imre Madách, sat down to summarize a dark decade in an allegorical work. The outcome was *The Tragedy of Man* (Az ember tragédiája), an extremely problematic cosmic drama which has since then been frequently and unjustly identified as a paraphrase of Goethe's *Faust.* Though much

less known abroad than is deserved or desirable, Madách's *"Tragedy"* still exists in over half a dozen different English translations.[3]

In the drama, Lucifer guides Adam through different periods of human history up to Madách's age and beyond. There are fifteen scenes in the tragedy, of which the twelfth is a utopian one. The age which the writer imagines will follow the 19th century knows no nations, the world is united under the rule of science and reason. Those species of organic nature which did not serve human needs have been extinguished, the rest tamed and exploited. Society is molded in phalanxes in which, similar to an ant-heap, individuals have no aspirations of their own, only socially assigned roles. Those who, like a new Luther, Plato, or Michelangelo, revolt against their slavery, must suffer humiliating punishment.

Madách's dramatic scene is clearly an early protest against the utopian socialist equalitarianism of Charles Fourier. Also, it has been customary to concentrate the attention on Madách's attitude toward the socio-political aspects of utopian or naive socialism. As early as 1862 the author of the "Tragedy" had to defend himself against the respected progressive critic János Erdélyi who reproached him for representing the socialist ideals unfairly. Since then, the political aspect of the phalanx-scene has been the focus of interest, and literary historians (including Georg Lukács in his Madách-essay of 1955)[4] speculate endlessly whether Madách was "reactionary" or "progressive" in his view of the future.

We suggest another approach to the utopian scene: an approach based on Madách's apparent view of the advance of biological sciences in the future. This critique of the advance and application of sciences appears mostly in a final and concentrated episode in which we witness the social interference with the spontaneous perpetuation of the human race and with the potential will of the individuals. Eve appears as young mother with her newborn baby. Scientists inspect this baby and another one, and decide that, judging from the shape of their skulls, one shall be raised to become a doctor, the other a shepherd. The babies are instantly separated from their mothers. Eve protests violently: however, she is pronounced ready for a new mate. Adam claims her, but the doctor of the phalanx is against the match: two unstable individuals like Adam and Eve would beget psychotic, hysterical descendants, who could not adjust themselves to a society of reason. When Adam hears that love is no longer a relevant factor, he becomes so outraged that only Lucifer's magic intervention can save him from bedlam.

What concerns us in Madách's utopian vision is not so much his view of socialization and mass-man (in which he shows some similarity to J.S. Mill's ideas), but rather, his critique of scientific marriage planning and professional counseling. He sees the real danger not in romantic love or natural child raising, but in a Lamarckian determinism which decides human fates by using comparative anthropological and genetic charts. Madách believes that man is to have the freedom to live in a certain way he chooses for himself because of, or even in spite of, his innate biological setup. Consequently, he cannot accept science as an antidote for the risks this freedom implies.

—3—

Madách's time was transitory, however, and later decades of the 19th century witnessed a more positive view of science and technology among writers. The Hungarian Mór Jókai was a product of the period after 1864, when the constitutionalist-liberal middle class and nobility made peace with each other and with Austria. It was no longer a post-revolutionary pessimism, but rather a conformistic wish for cooperation with Big Brother Austria, that motivated his writings.

Jókai has always been extremely popular in his country. Also, he has been widely translated, especially in his lifetime and in the earlier decades of our century, even into quite esoteric and improbable languages (such as Armenian, Chinese, Estonian and Ruthenian). The enormous success of this skillful storyteller has made something of an idol of him. Jókai had a vivid imagination which often created fantastic or utopian figures, situations, or whole works. Notable of these is *A Novel About The Next Century* (A jövő század regénye, 1872-74). In this work, Jókai described the "Home State" of the future which, possessing the secret of aviation, forces the world into disarmament. When the secret is broken and the arch-enemy (NB: Russia!) also builds airplanes, a challenge of air war shows the absurdity of the armed race, and the "Home State" develops into a "Union of States", based on eternal peace and global cooperation.

A Novel About The Next Century is about a political and technical utopia, yet it discusses little of the anthropological aspects of rapid historical changes. Another later novel of Jókai, however, opened future vistas for changing and controlling the individual, using a contemporary motif for the kernel of its plot.

In 1889, Jókai published the notably inferior novel, *The Soul Shaper* (A lélekidomár). Though unsuccessful by any aesthetic standard, this work concerns us because of the description of its central

hero, a certain Lándory. This mysterious person was supposedly modelled after one of the police officers who played a key part in rolling up the widespread net or robbers and fences covering the Hungarian Flatlands a hundred years ago.

The exact identity of Lándory is impossible to verify. It has been customary to find analogies between him and a count Gedeon Ráday, the royal commissionary who led the campaign against the outlaws. Because of Ráday's status and social position, however, it might be suspected that rather one of his officers, for instance an obscure investigator called Laucsik, might have served as a more concrete example for Jókai than did the count.

In Jókai's characterization, this Lándory had an almost supernatural influence on the captured outlaws. Instead of the traditional physical pressure, he used his psychological capacities to make the suspect speak.

Jókai dwells on Lándory's interrogating methods only in one chapter of the book, but with full admiration. His hero plays on the hidden emotions and aspirations of the criminals. In some cases, Lándory succeeds in making the suspect list his crimes in order to prove that he has deserved his dreadful reputation. At other times, he confronts the murderer with his victim in some macabre form, so that the criminal's fear and conscience are awakened. His green eyes put the suspects in a semi-hypnotic state, from which they awake sweating, trembling, and crying. He frequently interrogates at night, and the faces of those arrested for examination are covered with masks, so that they don't recognize each other.

Aside from the obvious influence of the pseudo-psychologism of Victor Hugo and Sue, relevant parts of Jókai's novel are historically true and convincing records of early occurrences of policy techniques which we now call collectively "brainwashing." It is not so much Jókai's dangerously naive approach to such techniques as it is the fact that the writer reflected these phenomena at such an early stage of their development, that makes *The Soul Shaper* important to discuss as a preface to the world of *The Gulag Archipelago* and *A Clockwork Orange*.

—4—

In the decadent-symbolistic atmosphere around the turn of the century, scientific fantasies and utopias were infrequent, both in Eastern and in Western European literatures. After the cataclysm of World War I, however, they re-appeared in ample numbers. Among

the Hungarian writers, it is Frigyes Karinthy's activity that is relevant to our topic.

Karinthy belongs to those not-yet-discovered geniuses of world literature whose fantasy products, unlike those of Verne and Jókai, were often too philosophical to be easily consumed. In two fantastic books, he continued Gulliver's travels in modern setting. In *Voyage to Faremido* (Utazás Faremidóba, 1916), Gulliver gets to the planet of intelligent and perfect self-programmed robots; in *Capillaria* (1921), he sinks to the bottom of the sea to find there a world of amazons who enslave, exploit and, indeed, devour the degenerate, dwarf-size males.[5] This latter novel, particularly, can be regarded as a congenial early literary contribution to Alister Hardy's hypothesis about the aquatic-feminine origin of mankind.[6]

Karinthy wrote a drama, *Tomorrow Morning* (Holnap reggel, 1916), and a documentary novel, *A Journey Around My Skull* (Utazás a koponyám körül, 1937) about the dimensions and perspectives of neurology. His drama is plainly bad by any standard; his novel, however, is a masterpiece, available also in English translation.[7]

The drama, *Tomorrow Morning*, centers around the private conflicts of a dangerous genius, an engineer who invented a winged remote-control rocket which can easily be used for military purposes. In order to prove to his estranged, eccentric, thrill-hunting wife that he has no fear, he must take the challenge of flying the rocket on its test-flight as a kind of kamikaze-pilot. His surviving the test-flight would mean, however, his failure as an engineer. Karinthy's attempt to make this nonsensical paradox believable is pathetically unconvincing. The point is, however, that the hero is afraid. For better or worse, he happens to run into a mysterious Finnish neurologist, a certain Irjö (=Yrjö?) Olson who has found the way to extinguish the fear of death in man through a simple operation. The engineer chooses to undergo this operation, flies the plane the next day only to discover that the explosive mechanism is faulty, and thus surviving the flight, he starts a new life free from his earlier obsessions with his wife and with fame.

Almost twenty years after the play was written, a much less mystical, indeed prosaic, still genuinely skillful Scandinavian medical wizard, Herbert Olivecrona carried out a long and complicated operation on Karinthy himself. He removed an egg-sized tumor from the writer's brain. The circumstances of this operation form the content of *A Journey Around My Skull.*

Karinthy as a writer deals with three possible levels of mental existence. One is the so-called "normal" state of the human mind. The

other is the short-circuited mind, implying the wide variety of mental illnesses. In-between the two is the physical deformation: brain tumor. Still comprehensible, visible, and operable, the tumor can nevertheless drive the individual to the verge of insanity. Karinthy does not go so far as to even mention the possibility of a *grand guignol* like a certain Danish playwright does, who describes how a man tortured by brain tumor kills and decapitates his wife.[8] Yet Karinthy too has pathological complaints, such as schizophrenic visual and hallucinative disorders, maddening headaches, giddiness and identity crises.

Both in the drama and in the documentary account, the medical scientist appears as a powerful manipulator of the physical organism of another individual. Doctor Olson compares the human body to a machine without instructions, and the history of medicine to thousands of years spent in trying to figure out how the machine works. In the novel, the author repeatedly looks at Olivecrona as one kind of a Wizard of Oz, in the process of detecting and fixing up a short-circuit in an endless system of wires (that is, neurons). In the dizziness of the operation, there is either an interaction between doctor and patient in the infrasensory sphere, or, alternately, a complete transposition of the consciousness of the writer to the doctor and vice versa. Karinthy has no doubts about Olivecrona; the doctor appears as healer. Yet the ethical responsibility of the manipulator is implicit: opening up the skull, connecting and disconnecting of nerves—for what purpose?

—5—

Three writers from a small East-Central European country have stated their opinion on the possibilities of shaping or influencing man. What is common and what is different in these writers?

At the first sight, dissimilarities seem to dominate. Considering the value judgment our writers pass on the future, we find that Madách is more pessimistic than either Jókai or Karinthy. Also, it is only Madách's single dramatic scene which is undisputably put in the future; the other works take place in the (fantastic) present, but indicate that the unique events they describe will be more universal and accepted in the future. This tendency to tear down the barriers between present and future is itself characteristic of Thomas More's *Utopia*. Naturally, current scientific influences give a distinct feature to each of the works discussed. Madách might have known Malthus' idea of family planning, with its naive genetic implications. Hypnosis always fascinated Jókai, and the 18th century Mesmer was one of his

awful idols. Karinthy lived on the eve of the 20th century revolution in surgery when taboo organs (like the brain or the heart) became operational objects, and when transplanting gradually became a reality.

At least as important as the differences are the similarities among the works, however. All three writers regard the dividing lines between organic non-conscious and organic conscious nature as extremely shaky. They remind us to take good care of man's greatest property: his ethic feeling. The responsibility of professionals is consistently spelled out.

The general understanding of the predominantly biological (or anthropological) character of the Hungarian utopias would be difficult, however, with the application of conventional analytical techniques only. In the introduction it has been suggested that the four works might be used as models in one way or another. Let us take a look at the essential characteristics of any model as we know these from information theory.

Quantitatively on the structural level, the model is a copy of a system in corresponding proportions. Qualitatively (functionally) defined, the model is a constructed system which reacts to certain inputs in the same way as does the original system. Furthermore, the model has an experimental character. It serves one research hypothesis or another. Consequently, there are no unique models; the individual interests and perception of their builders define their character.

Looking at the four Hungarian utopian works as possible models, we find a strongly authoritarian feature of leadership. The biological character of the utopias discussed results in leadership that is not assigned, but acquired, through specialized (as in Madách) or exceptional (as in Jókai or Karinthy) skills or knowledge. It is intellect, and not physical strength, that distinguishes the biological leadership of the future.

The consequence of biological planning and intellectual refinement appears as a new authoritarian trend, however. Knowledge is never represented as socially shared, but as a respected controlling force. Consequently, it becomes the privilege of a new aristocratic cast which is similar to the one we find in Hesse's *Magister Ludi* (Das Glasperlenspiel.) The methods and decisions of the new mandarins are surprisingly undisputed, by the other heroes or the masses (as in Madách), or by the author (as in Jókai). It is only Karinthy who hints significantly in *Tomorrow Morning* that the unstable geniuses of skill can be "used" by a cold-headed political super-elite.

The role and responsibility of the utopian scientist in the interpretation of the three Hungarian writers is, understandably, analogous with the historical conditions, too. The authoritarian, oppressive character of a functionalized, materialistic social structure is spelled out most prominently by Madách, who was writing in an age of absolutism. In Jókai, only criminals (who "deserve it") are forced to undergo a socially beneficial brainwashing process. Finally, in Karinthy, the paranoid genius accepts a similarly "corrective" and socially desirable process by free choice, yielding to the humane and logical arguments of Doctor Olson. (Also, Karinthy himself "chose" the risky operation by his own free will—though his freedom was considerably limited by the fact that his only alternative was a slow, painful death.) At any rate, the comparison of the three individual "models" shows a development from conditions in which individual freedom and responsibility appeared as hopelessly lost, to circumstances in which these became realistic to consider.

The "experiments" the three Hungarian writers were involved in depend precisely on these changes in the social structure. Madách seems to probe especially into science and its relevance for Hungary. The general relationship of this country to Austria was analogous with a well-known colonial pattern insofar as a larger nation, claiming a higher civilization, imposed its standards on a smaller one. Experience shows that the result of such relationship is often a nationalistic rejection of whatever progressive feature the colonizing nation may have. (This aspect of the utopian tradition, its connection with nationalism, has been regrettably neglected by researchers. Gandhi's plans for a future India, Swift's veiled reference to the Anglo-Irish relationship and Ibsen's parody, "Gynthiana," are just a few of the writings relevant to mention here.)

Madách focuses on science as a possible foundation for a better age, and condemns it. In order to understand his attitude, we must keep in mind that by condemning a Western ideal of some scientific-equalitarian "paradise," he also passes judgment on Austria and thereby performs a patriotic action.

Thirty years later, Jókai is no longer bothered by Austrification. Instead, he speculates on an ambitious cosmopolitan level. Hungary had been a downtrodden, semi-colonized country for centuries. Could she regain her ancient, respected status in Europe by coping with her own internal problems (*The Soul Shaper*)? If so, this country might fulfill a glorious world mission in the more distant future (*A Novel About The Next Century*). This truly ambitious speculation carries

Jókai to extremes, yet his utopian novels show a clearly sequential pattern in their hypotheses of Hungary's present and future. How a sudden awakening to a nation's potentials produces a missionary zeal which is reflected in utopian literature is a phenomenon clearly recognizable in the wave of American and Soviet Russian science fiction utopias of our century.

Again, 30-50 years pass, and Karinthy witnesses the emergence of international belligerence. Technology is slipping out of the control of unstable geniuses, and becomes a threat in the hands of power-hungry politicians. But science can help mankind, states Karinthy. Lobotomy can save man from his self-destructive frustration (*Tomorrow Morning.*) The same human knowledge which produces the means of universal destruction is capable of producing the remedy at the same time. Karinthy's *A Journey Around My Skull* is actually a corroboration of this thesis in the form of a personal documentation, seemingly without any utopian reference. As in Jókai, we find a consistent development pattern in Karinthy's utopian works. It is beyond our aspiration, however, to make Karinthy's numerous other utopias (about Faremido, Capillaria, etc.) correspond to this pattern. As in Jókai, in Karinthy too the contribution of small nations to the technological-scientific scene is spelled out—the engineering genius is Hungarian, his healer a Finn, Olivecrona a Swede.

The involvement of the discussion of concrete historical and geographical determinants in the observation of particular utopian works does not exclude the possibility of looking at these works as being universally interesting and relevant. Nor does such method dim the main preoccupation, the biological perspective. Rather, the building of models should further explain on a genetic level both the changing value of science in a set of literary works and the potential supranational appeal of these works.

The history of its utopian literature is an unwritten chapter of the culture of Hungary. (Nor have the utopian traditions of other East-Central European countries been ever studied—certainly not comparatively.) Consequently, the fairly well established classifications and terms generally used by Western critics of utopian literature are also missing in Hungary. To some, it might even seem ludicrous to think of this small, technologically long underdeveloped country in terms of the utopian tradition of world literature.

Yet, Hungarian literary history does not lack significant achievements in the utopias. György Bessenyei's satirical political utopia, *Tarimenes' Travel* (Tarimenes utazása, 1804) is an introduction to the

later 19th century production of Madách and Jókai. As for Karinthy, he was not alone in the 20th century with his utopian inclinations. Mihály Babits, one of the greatest modern Hungarian writers, himself wrote a utopian novel, *Pilot Elza, or The Perfect Society* (Elza pilóta vagy a tökéletes társadalom, 1933). The first volume of Sándor Szathmári's "Kazohiniatrilogy" came out in 1941, the last one in 1957. In the sixties, Tibor Déry's *Mr. G.A. in X.* (G.A. úr X-ben, 1964) raised eyebrows with its "controversial" contribution to the utopian tradition. (Incidentally, the astonishment at Déry's Kafkaesque-fantastic vision was understandable: Déry wrote the novel while serving a prison term for his activity in favor of the Nagy government during and after 1956.) Last but not least, the find of the seventies is the young Peter Lengyel whose novel *Ogg's Second Planet* (Ogg második bolygója, 1969) has become an international success.

Directing the attention of literary scholarship to yet undiscovered aspects of Hungarian literature seems to be a long needed effort. The Hungarian utopian tradition is just one of the hidden treasures in world literature. Besides establishing analogies between Western European and Hungarian literature, however, the specific situation of this latter, embedded in the motley East-Central European cultural context, should not be forgotten.

NOTES

1. *Biology and the Future of Man*, ed. Ph. Handler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 928.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 926.
3. The translations are by W.N. Loew (New York: Arcadia Press, 1908); Ch. H. Meltzer and P. Vajda (Budapest: Vajna and Co., 1933; New York: Macmillan, 1935); C.P. Sanger (London: Woolf, 1933; Sidney: Pannonia, 1953); J.C.W. Horne (Budapest: Corvina, 1963); J. Grosz (Portland, Ore., 1966); [adapted by] L.E. Roberts (n.p., n.d.).
4. "Madách tragédiája," in György Lukács, *Magyar irodalom—magyar kultúra: válogatott tanulmányok* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1970), pp. 560-73.
5. Trans. F. Karinthy, *Voyage to Faremido* [and] *Capillaria*, tr. P. Tabori (New York: Living Books, 1966).
6. Cf. A. Hardy, "Was Man More Aquatic in the Past?" *The New Scientist*, VII, 174 (March 17, 1960), pp. 642-45.
7. F. Karinthy, *A Journey Around My Skull*, tr. V.D. Barker (London: Faber and Faber, 1939).
8. C.E. Soya, "To Traade" (1943); in English: "Two Threads," tr. P.N. Furbank, in *Contemporary Danish Plays* (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1970), pp. 173-250.

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Praise the Lord! Albert Szenczi Molnár, 1574-1633

Andrew Harsanyi

Molnár means miller in English and, in fact, Albert Szenczi Molnár's father was a well-to-do miller in the market town of Szenc (Szencz according to contemporary spelling) in north-western Hungary; hence his full Hungarian name: Szenczi Molnár Albert. He was born in Szenc in 1574 and died in 1633 in Kolozsvár, Transylvania; his gravestone still stands in the cemetery of Házsongárd.

Molnár spent more than 30 of his 59 years abroad as student, writer and scholar, beloved and respected; yet, after his return to his homeland in 1625, he was ignored and died forsaken in poverty. Still, no one in the history of the Reformed Church of Hungary had such a lasting impact upon its theology, piety and congregational life as Albert Molnár. Moreover, Albert Molnár had a decisive influence upon the development of Hungarian poetical forms and the Hungarian language in general.

Molnár lived in the period of Hungarian history when the country was divided among three powers. Its middle part was occupied by the Turkish empire, the East and Southeast, Transylvania, was an independent principality, while the northern and western sector was under the rule of the Habsburg king. In his youth, Albert Molnár witnessed first the consolidation of the Reformation, then the rising Counter-Reformation and the struggle for religious freedom championed by the princes of Transylvania: Stephen Bocskay and Gabriel Bethlen; in his later years the Thirty Years War raged all over Europe.

Albert Molnár began his studies at the age of 10. We know the story of his life quite accurately, for he kept a diary together with a kind of scrap-book with greetings of teachers and friends—among them such personalities as Theodore Beza (Calvin's successor in Geneva), the astronomer Johannes Kepler and Prince Gabriel Bethlen. These, together with hundreds of his letters, have been preserved and published. Other valuable biographical data can be distilled from the

dedicatory prefaces to his printed books. These are written mostly in Latin. Latin was the international language of scientists, scholars and diplomats, even of merchants who engaged in international trade. The ten-year-old child had to learn to read, write and speak Latin at the same time he began to learn his Hungarian alphabet.

Incredible as it sounds, at the age of 12, Albert Molnár, together with some other youngsters and an adventurous tutor, wandered across the country in search for a new place to study. He landed at a place called Gönc. The fame of this place comes from its Reformed pastor, Gáspár Károlyi, the first translator of the full Bible into Hungarian (1590). At the time Molnár was in Gönc the work of translation, carried out by Károlyi and several co-workers, was in full swing. At a most sensitive age, Molnár lived in the atmosphere of scholarly excitement, in the world of books and dictionaries, and in the midst of great hopes that the Word of God would be made available to the people in their own language. Molnár later made a note in his diary that in Gönc he had listened to many heated discussions about theology and linguistics among Károlyi and his associates.

Having finished his primary education, Molnár entered the College of Debrecen to pursue courses in grammatics, poetics and rhetoric. The discipline of the school was very strict. Morning prayers were at 6 and there were classes until evening. Missing service in the chapel, skipping classes, galavanting in the city, excessive drinking, wearing too modern garments—all drew punishment: the stick or even incarceration. Spiritual food was aplenty, food for the body much less. The school was poor and the students even poorer: they ate when good-hearted citizens invited them to their table or gave pots of food and bread to the mendicants, the students going house to house begging for food.

Albert Molnár spent a year and a half in Debrecen and one record has it that he read every Hungarian book he was able to lay his hands on. The books had to be taken away from him to prevent him from neglecting his Latin. From Debrecen he returned to Gönc where he became the messenger who carried the manuscripts and the proofs of the first Hungarian edition of the Bible between Gönc and the printshop in Vizsoly. What an experience it was to see the printing press which, in a short time, produced 480 thousand sheets (the Bible was printed in 800 bulky copies)!

Soon the sixteen-year-old Molnár proceeded to the town of Kassa to become tutor to a burgher's son. Here he saw a Latin-German dictionary. Teaching his Hungarian pupil Latin, how he wished he had a

Latin-Hungarian dictionary! But Molnár wanted to study not to teach. So he decided to go to Wittenberg, Germany, to the cradle of the Reformation. Just like that. Students, in those times, travelled by the "apostles' horses", that is: on foot. There were no hotels, either. But that was no problem. When evening came he would knock at the door of the village pastor or teacher, who would gladly welcome him: the itinerant student was a source of news, a kind of "living newspaper." For the student such visits meant not only supper and bed but also the opportunity to make precious contacts, to secure sponsors to help him in his studies.

Albert Molnár was 16 when he left his native country. It took him five weeks to make it to Wittenberg. In his loneliness he was miraculously comforted: the first man who spoke to him in the foreign city greeted him in Hungarian; he was another student from the home country. But Wittenberg was Luther's city, while Albert Molnár wanted to hear the Reformed interpretations of God's Word. This set him out westward, to the center of Reformed theology, Heidelberg. He must have been an expert wanderer; just look at the map: he made it in 13 days from Wittenberg to Heidelberg. His next place of study was Strassburg where, at the age of 21, he received his bachelor's degree. (The wreath of laurel is still in his scrap-book.) In the time span of eleven years he attended eight different schools. Today we would call it school-hopping; then, it was the sure sign of financial hardship. Also, the desire to hear the best teachers.

Now Albert Molnár could have returned to Hungary to assume a pastorate. But he wanted to acquire still more knowledge and a master's degree. Not in Strassburg, however. First, he had no money. Even for his wreath of laurel he had to give a promissory note for two silver pieces. But the greater trouble was theology. In the continuous struggle between Lutherans and Reformed, the Lutherans gained power in Strassburg. To take holy communion in the Reformed way, Molnár used to go to a small neighboring community, Buschweiler. When he was found missing in chapel in Strassburg at Pentecost communion in 1596, he was asked where he had been. He promptly admitted the reason of his absence. Equally promptly he was forced to leave. It was done in a roundabout way: *he* had to ask permission to be dismissed. Molnár wrote that since he would rather follow the peace of his conscience than the faith of the city, he wanted to leave. The pious answer was that he would not be held back against his conscience. Before leaving the city he went to church where the pastor

was just attacking the Reformed teaching. To Molnár's great satisfaction—as he noted in his diary—lightning struck the church.

The direction now was southward and the goal Geneva, the city of Calvin. Well armed with letters of introduction, Molnár called on Theodore Beza, the saintly old successor of John Calvin. Molnár was graciously received and as the old man offered him white bread and wine he pointed to the picture of Calvin on the wall: "This is my father in Christ." Albert Molnár, the 22 year old wanderer from Hungary, was quite certain that Calvin was also his father in Christ.

The next project was Italy: all the great reformers had seen Rome, Albert Molnár could not miss it either. With all the suspicions of a Calvinist but with all the curiosity of a humanist he visited "papist" shrines; he zig-zagged through Italy like a modern American tourist (only he saw more of it). In Rome he was accorded brotherly hospitality by students of the Collegium Hungaricum, in an (as we would call it today) ecumenical spirit.

Back in Heidelberg (mostly on foot) he did not have a copper penny to his name. So he went around hunting for benefactors, collecting a gold coin here, a silver there. In Heidelberg the plague was raging which was a great help to Molnár: many of the professors and students fled the city so there was room for him in the college. But when they returned he was put out. On Easter Sunday of 1597 he spent the day in church; when the doors were locked he went to the local pastor for help and advice. He got 5 pennies to buy supper . . . All through these years it was a precarious existence: when he went to bed at night he did not know if he would have dinner the next day and as he ate his dinner he would not know if he would have a bed to sleep in that night. He rose at 4 in the morning and chanted hymns in Hungarian, German, Latin and Greek; and he prayed, in tears, because he would not give up. Amidst starvation and uncertainty he would pursue his studies and this in such a brilliant way that all his teachers would praise him and would give him emphatic letters of recommendation.

In 1599 Molnár decided to go home—but just for a visit to find new patrons and to see his dying father. For he had great plans and he followed them through to the last letter. After having secured two wealthy sponsors, burghers from Nagyszombat and Kassa, he returned to Germany.

His first dream to come true was a Latin-Hungarian dictionary. (We may recall how Molnár, as a young tutor in Kassa, wished there had been one.) In six months the work was ready for printing. Easy to

say it now, but we must think what enormous difficulties he had to cope with. Molnár's dictionary was the very first one of its kind. He could take a dictionary in Latin to pick the words but he had to find the Hungarian equivalents himself. It was not only the problem of finding them, many he had to create, describe, explain. The work, ready in 1604, had become the precursor of all Hungarian dictionaries written since. It was the private enterprise of a thirty-year-old wanderer-scholar whose only motivation was to raise the cultural level of his country and to link it to Western culture.

In those times there were no publishers, only printers. The authors had to pay for the printing of their works. How could one get money for this purpose? By dedicating the book to a wealthy sponsor, a king or a prince, a city or a college. The money thus obtained would cover the cost of printing and the livelihood of the author as well. There were no royalties, the author would receive about 25 copies he could sell. The rest of the copies would be sold by the printer as part of the cost of printing.

With his dictionary Molnár had a great idea: dedicate it to Emperor Rudolph! The dedicatory letter had to be printed in advance and bound in the book. Then the author would present it, taking the chance if the sponsor would accept it or not. There were many disappointed authors indeed!

Albert Molnár had to go to Prague to see the Emperor. So he made his way to Prague on foot, logging along copies of the dictionary. He was well armed with letters of introduction to both scholars and officials in the imperial court. The greatest of them came from Johannes Kepler, the famous scholar and the Emperor's astronomer. Through Kepler's mediation it was easy to get into the Emperor's presence: the dictionary was graciously accepted and Molnár was given 50 florins—quite a sum considering the state of the imperial treasury.

Kepler and other new friends in Prague made sure that the news of Molnár's acceptance by the Emperor travelled all over Europe's academic community, so that this sponsor of high standing should prompt others to follow suit. Still, the greatest gain for Molnár was Kepler's friendship. Kepler closed one of his letters with these words: "God provides for his people in such turbulent times; love me . . . your faithful friend, Johannes Kepler."[1] It is not hard to imagine what it meant to Molnár: there was the imperial mathematician, the Emperor's personal astronomer, the world-famous scholar, and here

was a young Hungarian scholar-to-be, without position or status—and the great man called him his friend!

His success with the dictionary prompted Molnár to pursue his second dream. The Reformation favored congregational singing and Hungarians loved to sing. Yet, the hymns available somehow could not gain popularity—neither the music, nor the words. Molnár's idea was to translate the biblical Psalms as they had been set into poetical form by the men from Geneva: Beza and Marot with the music of Bourgeois; in other words; the Geneva Psalter. Molnár did not know French but he had heard these Psalms sung in Geneva and he sung them himself in the German version. He wrote: "I want my Hungarian people to weep with these Psalms just as they weep in Basel." It took him 99 days to complete the job. He followed the German version but a French pastor helped him compare them with the French original. Molnár created a masterpiece. Since the first edition of 1607 there have been more than a hundred printings of these 150 Psalms in Hungarian and in the course of 360 years hardly any linguistic or poetic changes were made: they are being sung today exactly as then. Thus the best critic of his work has been the Hungarian Reformed congregation, and it is not hard to predict that as long as there will be Hungarian Reformed Psalm singing in the churches the people will "raise their hearts to God," "praise the Great Shepherd" and "proclaim His mercy" as interpreted by Albert Molnár.

At this time Molnár just left the city of Altorf, where he had studied for a while and had been tutoring at private homes. His favorite professor, Konrad Rittershausen, wrote these words in his letter of recommendation: "Albertus Molnár was an exile because of his love for knowledge, not to forget his homeland but to gather knowledge and experience in order to be capable to serve there later."[2]

In fact, Molnár had still other plans to serve his Hungarian nation from Germany. To realize them he found a new, mighty sponsor in the person of Maurice, the Elector of Hessen, himself a scholar, a patron of literature and higher learning. Molnár must have had a winsome personality and also the ability to present his projects very convincingly. When he was presented to the prince he was invited to join the prince's family on a boat trip at the end of which he was dismissed with a letter to the rector of the University of Marburg with the order to give Molnár free tuition, room and board as the prince's gift.

The new project was the Bible. The first full translation of the Hungarian Bible published in 1590 was bulky, very expensive and

unavailable on the book-market. Molnár wanted a Bible small in size, easily to be handled, cheap enough to be accessible to the public; he also wanted to correct the many typographical errors made by the non-Hungarian printer. And Molnár did it again: a greatly revised version, nicely printed. The first two editions yielded 3,000 copies. There was one more obstacle to overcome: it was the age of the Counter-Reformation and the Bibles had to be smuggled into Hungary. The Bibles were packed in barrels and marked as "other merchandise." The shipments got through because Molnár soon received letters telling him of the joy that the Word of God could now be read by the common people.

The Elector Maurice spoke many languages, even some Hungarian. The reason for this was that on the maternal line he was a descendant of the Árpáds, the royal house of Hungary, through—as we call her today—St. Elizabeth of Hungary (her grave is still visible in Marburg). Maurice wanted to learn the language well and so he commissioned Molnár to write a book of Hungarian grammar.[3] Again he produced a work usable up to this day; and again a first of its kind. It contained sections on phonetics, spelling, grammar, syntax, etc. It is acknowledged that these works, the dictionary, the psalms, the Bible, the book on grammar, had a codifying effect on the Hungarian literary language.

Now Molnár really could have returned to Hungary to take a regular teaching position there. As a matter of fact, he had an invitation to be a teacher at Sárospatak. His friends and benefactors in Hungary pleaded with him in many letters to come home and utilize his knowledge to the benefit of his "own poor people." But Molnár first wanted to get married. He was 35, after all. He did not have much experience with women ever since years earlier he fell in love with the daughter of a glass merchant's widow in Heidelberg—at first sight—but was rejected. Reason: how could an itinerant student support a family? Result: Molnár had a nervous breakdown complicated by some strange illness which left him unconscious for days; delirious, he thought his friends to be angels and devils fighting over him. It may have been a mild form of the plague.

Now, at last, he married the daughter of a professor in Marburg, Kunigunda Wildpetter, a young divorcée whose former husband, also a teacher, had run away and turned to Judaism. She was granted a divorce on the grounds of desertion. There was a big wedding in Oppenheim.

They returned to Hungary in 1612 where Molnár became the chaplain at the court of one of the country's richest aristocrats, the Count Ferenc Batthyányi. But he did not stay long. Maybe his family couldn't adjust to village life, maybe Molnár had no experience for the pastorate, or maybe it was his new dream: to establish a Hungarian print-shop where he could publish books for his people. After some delay, he made his way to the court of the great Prince of Transylvania, Gabriel Bethlen. He was presented to the Prince in Fogaras on February 14, 1615. Bethlen promptly offered him a professorship at the college in Gyulafejérvár. But this was not what Molnár wanted and he humbly rejected the offer by saying that his family was afraid of the possibility of Turkish attacks. Bethlen understood and dismissed him by writing these words in his scrap-book: "Stimulus dedit aemula virtus."

They returned to Germany, to Oppenheim. Here, he first became choirmaster, then headmaster of the city school. It wasn't a high position but it meant a secure livelihood. He knew the city, he had many friends, several of his books had been printed here. At the age of 43 he looked forward to a quiet life. Everything changed, however, when he received Prince Bethlen's great commission: translate into Hungarian the chief theological work of John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion.*

Molnár welcomed this beautiful opportunity. Hungarian Reformed theology was based on Calvin's interpretation but only through mediation, not through direct study. The knowledge of the *Institutes* was needed for both the theological consolidation of the Reformed church and the defense against the attacks of the Counter-Reformation. This is why a Hungarian translation was so necessary. In the course of his work, completed in 1624, Albert Molnár also laid the foundation and created the Hungarian theological language. Simultaneously with the work on the *Institutes*, Molnár translated and published a book of sermons by the famous German preacher Sculletus and a small prayer book for the use of pious women.

It was history's irony that while working on this translation, in Heidelberg, the city was besieged and finally taken by the mercenaries of Tilly (1622) and Molnár was not only robbed of all of his belongings (except his books) but also tortured for money. He did not want to stay in Transylvania for fear of the Turks and now, in the West, he suffered all the miseries of war.

Now he felt that he had completed all his plans: to Hungarian theologians he gave Calvin's *Institutes*, to those who wished to visit

Hungary a Hungarian grammar, to Hungarians who wanted to study Latin a dictionary, to the faithful people a handy Bible, sermons and a prayer-book, and to the congregation a book of Psalms fit to be sung at worship. At this time it was he who wanted to go home. Together with his family he arrived at the court of Prince Bethlen, now in Kassa, in 1625. With the exception of brief intervals, he had spent 34 years abroad—it was time to repatriate.

We know very little of his last years. His diary stopped and no letters are extant from this period. For a short while he was supported by Prince Bethlen; he was probably schoolmaster in Kassa. In 1629 he appears in Kolozsvár. This was after the death of the Prince and we can safely assume that Molnár was hoping to receive a gift from the Prince's legacy—not so much money but a position. There was nothing in the Prince's will for Molnár. From several contemporary remarks we know that from this time on he lived in poverty; abandoned and forsaken, he died in 1633. He was the victim of the plague.

Why was he forsaken? We can only guess. The best conjecture is that Molnár, the modern scholar, Western-oriented, who followed what today we would call a "liberal" interpretation of Calvin's theology, just did not find his place in his own church and country ruled and dominated by István Geleji Katona, the Reformed bishop, rigidly orthodox in theology, cruelly authoritarian in church government. Knowing Molnár, he would not compromise—so there was no job, no support, and there were no sponsors. A single sponsor happened to send him money in 1630, a rich nobleman, Ferenc Darholcz, for whom he translated a book about "The Supreme Good".

At the time of his death contemporary scholars wrote such epitaphs: "Germany gave him assistance, his homeland only exile;" "the only thing Transylvania gave him was his grave."[4]

We could well call the life of Albert Szenczi Molnár a tragic one. He himself, however, never complained, only prayed to God to help him in his endeavors. He chose this kind of life. Instead of returning home after the customary few years of study and getting settled, he continued his life as an itinerant scholar tiring his body and eyes, as he wrote it in his diary. Why? He gave the answer himself, a hundred times always the same: "Spending time at the famous academies among great teachers I am not after knowledge to bring worldly riches; I desire knowledge so I can help the most people in our suffering homeland."[5]

The life of Albert Szenczi Molnár did not end in 1633. He was consumed by the fire of the Spirit only to shine through the centuries

like a comet. He loved his Lord with heart and talent. No better words can be found to characterize his life than his own as he translated the 150th Psalm:

Az Úrnak nevét dicsérvén,
És minden lelkes állat
Dicsérje az nagy Urat,
Dicsőség Istennek, Ámen.

(Praising the name of the Lord,
Every being with a soul
Praise the great Lord.
Glory be to God, Amen.)

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The titles listed above are spelled as they appear in the originals. The titles are long according to contemporary custom.

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Some of Szenczi Molnár's works are not extant any more. We know only from his other works that they had existed. On the other hand, many of his works as well as some of the books and articles listed below can be found in North American libraries with a good collection of Hungarian material.

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II. Secondary Sources

The only comprehensive treatment of Szenczi Molnár's life and works is still the one written by Lajos Dézsi, *Szenczi Molnár Albert (1574-1633)*, Budapest: Hungarian Historical Society, 1897. This work was the main source of this study. Scores of articles and even a few minor books, have been written on Szenczi Molnár dealing with various periods in his life or analyzing one or more of his works. Also, every major work on Hungarian history, church history, or cultural history fits him into the life of the Reformed Church in Hungary and stresses his significance in the evolution of Hungarian language and literature. In the preparation of this study the following of these were used:

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The 400th anniversary of Szenczi Molnár's birth was marked by the appearance of commemorative articles on him in Hungarian periodicals all over the world. Significant of them, and used in the preparation of this study, were the following:

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Csomasz Tóth, Kálmán. "Négyszáz év halhatatlanság" [Four hundred years of immortality]. *Theológiai Szemle*, 1974, nos. 9-10, pp. 272-276.

The Hungarian literary monthly, *Kortárs*, dedicated its August, 1974 issue to the anniversary of Szenczi Molnár's birth. It contained essays and poems by Géza Feja, Sándor Weöres, András Sütő, György Somlyó, Jenő Kiss, Magda Szabó, László Király, András Fodor, Aladár Lászlóffy, Domonkos Szilágyi, Ferenc Szemler, Lajos Létay, Sándor Kányádi and Géza Páskándi. There is also an editorial in this issue concerning the anniversary.

The weekly of the Hungarian Reformed Church, *Reformátusok Lapja*, also dedicated an issue to the memory of Szenczi Molnár (XVIII/37, September 8, 1974). The issue contained articles by Kálmán Újszászy, Endre Zsindely, Béla Takács, György Szőnyi, Imre Telegdi and a poem by János Bódás. Telegdi's article "Szenctől Kolozsvárig" [From Szenc to Kolozsvár], was continued in nos. 38 and 41 of the weekly (September 15 and October 6).

NOTES

1. A passage from Kepler's letter, quoted by Hargita, "Magister harmonisticus," p. 246.
2. Rittershausen's letter of recommendation, dated November 1, 1606, in Dézsi (ed.) Szenczi Molnár's *Diary, Correspondence* . . . p. 441.
3. Concerning the Hungarian ancestry of the Elector Maurice, see Szenczi Molnár's dedicatory preface to his bible translation, in the appendix to the text-edition by Béla Stoll *op. cit.*, p. 470; concerning the Hungarian language study of Maurice, see Szenczi Molnár's dedicatory preface to his *New Hungarian Grammar, ibid.*, pp. 472-478.
4. The two epitaths, the first by John Henry Bisterfeld, the second by John Henry Alsted, both professors of German origin at the college of Gyulafejérvár, Transylvania, quoted by Gábor Tolnay, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
5. In Szenczi Molnár's dedicatory preface to the *Psalterium Hungaricum*, in Stoll's text edition, p. 14.

Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies, Vol. III, No. 1 (Spring 1976).

The Lyrical Poetry of Sándor Petőfi*

Joseph A. Bátori

The lyrics of Petőfi prove the rule of all great lyrical poetry: they encompass three worlds. The poet's personal inner life; the concrete exterior scene in which he lives; and the realm of ideas, the spirit of the age are the elements blended in all lyrical poetry. But, although the blending of these three elements forms the unity of a lyric, one or the other will receive greater emphasis. No matter which poet we consider in the vast spectrum of the Hungarian lyric of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these three factors strike us. Petőfi's great forerunner, Mihály Vörösmarty, as also his great follower, Endre Ady, wrote their poems under the impact of their inner world and the spirit of the age. Thus, their poetry became the powerful expression of the age in which they wrote but, at the same time, was a telling demonstration of the individual humanity, sensitivity and receptivity to the external truths of the great poetic figures. The lyric of Vörösmarty is philosophical; the lyric of Petőfi presents everyday episodes often crystalized into an experience that is deeply moving through its artistic quality and presentation of universal human truth; in Ady, the emotional impact of the external world, seen through the prism of a possibly overly-sensitive soul, becomes a wondrous, lasting experience.

In what does Petőfi's originality lie? Precisely in what numerous insignificant critics of his day objected to: that he sings of the simplicity of his parents' home, of every day cares, of his own honest and exemplary life. They objected to his practice of using scenes of family life, of the life of the village and the *puszta*—seemingly insignificant events—and especially, that his poetry was always based on specific images imprinted on his memory. But Petőfi's individuality, his varied images and metaphors, his love of humanity, his patriotism and love

*An address delivered at Trinity College, Washington, D.C., on the opening of the Petőfi Memorial Year (1973), by the late Rev. József Bátori. Translation © Enikő Molnár Basa.

of his native country made these poems lyrics. And they are personal lyrics, though his style must be called lyrical realism, for he presents himself as he is, truthfully, with his strengths and weaknesses, ideals and hates. His art lies in his ability to transform, through the magic of poetry, the harmony he creates between his personality and the realistic scenes of his environment.

Petőfi's entire life can be reconstructed from his poetry. We see him as a child, a student, wanderer, soldier, actor and lover. We see him later, a champion of the dominant ideas of the country, as he aligns his own life with the totality of Hungarian existence, proposes, suggests, judges, urges, creates new genres in poetry, writes prose, translates, criticizes, and conducts an extensive correspondence.

It is impossible not to like the personality that emerges from his lyrics, the reflection of a warm and loving person who firmly believes that God created man for happiness. Petőfi wrote, "Until a man has been happy, he cannot die." Who would not wax enthusiastic and be moved by Petőfi's nobility of soul when he cries to God in "Fate, Give me Space": "my every heartbeat is a prayer for the happiness of the world".[1] The more hypocritical the world in which one lives, the more one is struck by Petőfi's sincerity and steadfastness: "If you are a man, be a man; make your ideals your faith; / Profess this, even though your life is the price. / Rather deny your life a hundred times than deny yourself; / Let life itself be lost, if only honour remains."[2] The poet lived and died accordingly, as we now know, and we see also that "Freedom and Love" was not merely a poetic motto for him, but his creed: "Love and Liberty—These I need: / For Love I'd sacrifice my life, / but for Liberty I sacrifice my Love."[3] It is not accidental that Petőfi's translators, both the English and the Germans, saw this brief poem as the expression of his beliefs even before his death. And when he died, exactly as he had foretold it and as he had wished it, he stood before the world as a poet who had knowingly followed his destiny.

Another characteristic of Petőfi's poetry is dedication to the people. "The true poet", he wrote—and Petőfi strove to be a true poet —"is he who drops his heavenly manna on the lips of the folk."[4] Every line he wrote, he wrote so all could understand it, so even the simplest person could identify himself with the poet's fate. Therefore he idealized the family as every man's mode of life and goal, and to this end presented not only his own life, but also Hungarian domestic scenes in many of his poems. And when, after his marriage he could celebrate his own wife, his own child, his poetry soared.

But we find more than just the poetry of folk life and of the hearth, or his own personal reflections in Petőfi's lyrics. We see a rich and varied sensibility. He was not a good actor, but his instinct was right: he can assume roles masterfully in his poetry. Everyone is surprised when they learn from Petőfi's biographers that he could not tolerate wine and never drank it, since numerous drinking songs seem to suggest the exact opposite. Likewise, his personality was not suited to the flirtatious interchanges of society, although his witty, jesting, occasionally sharp poems suggest something else.

A method of expression that he brought to near perfection is the genre picture. The minor episodes of Hungarian life of the mid-nineteenth century, and its human types, gained lasting representatives on an eternally human plane: the village women, the men, the provincial noblemen, the outlaw, the young lovers, smaller and larger children are all framed in one memorable picture, as for example, the evocation of the peasant room in "Winter Evenings".

Literary histories list in detail the themes of his poems, pointing out their rich variety. But only seldom do they mention that this richness comes from his lyrical realism: the harmony and relationships of Petőfi's human and poetic personality created the poetry we know today as the characteristic Petőfi-lyric.

A prominent place among his works must be given to Petőfi's *patriotic lyrics*. Petőfi's insight into the Hungarian soul and the picture of Hungarians which emerges from his poetry, as well as the role he marked out for the nation, is unique and still valid. To fully understand this aspect of the poet we must know that Petőfi's family had been granted a patent of nobility by Leopold I in 1667, a full century and a half before his birth. Furthermore, Petőfi was aware of this, and when the Diet abolished quit-rents, and so in effect freed the peasantry, he criticized the earlier behaviour of the nobles, but that day wrote in his diary, "I did not say this by way of reproach to the nobility to which I myself belong."[5] Those who wish to transform Petőfi into a rootless individual do so because it seems to be perhaps more democratic or more romantic. But the facts prove otherwise. His youth was spent in a wholly Hungarian atmosphere. Where else could he have acquired the impressive and charming Hungarian idiom, that unsurpassedly melodic, rhythmic Hungarian language, if not in the domain of Hungarian speech, folk poetry and folk song.

This tremendous Hungarian-experience gained a newer, wider sphere when the poet moved to Pest. Let us not forget that his is the Era of Reform; the Turkish wars had been forgotten, but the Hun-

garian soul, too, was almost extinguished under centuries of foreign rule. In a cultured society still affected by the baroque interest in universality, the young man became acquainted with the great representatives of western literature, the genius of Shakespeare, the revolutionary histories of Lamartine, Michelet and Mignet. Following in the footsteps of István Széchenyi, Petőfi becomes a leader among the young intellectuals of the Pilvax Coffee House. Thus, he affirms the duty of the poet to the liberation and leadership of the people in "The Poet of the XIX-th Century" as early as January 1847. Petőfi had been born into a society in which the ideals of the Reform—"the happiness of the majority"—had become both a political and a human goal. Vörösmarty, free of any fear, aided and encouraged the younger poet, and he himself maintained that "a nation's fate appeals to" the poet, and "when we had rescued that from the depths and have raised it as high as possible through the pure gleams shed by ideological battles, then we can say as we meet our ancestors: 'Life, we are grateful for your blessings: this was worthwhile work, this was man's work'."[6] Naturally Petőfi, the strongest representative of the younger poetic generation, is no longer content to prepare for "ideological battles", for compromises as the decades slip by; he wants comprehensive changes—reforms which indeed the nation was able to achieve through the first responsible ministry of 1848.

We should not be surprised that Petőfi's patriotic, or rather political poetry becomes ever more radical. The Reform-generation only wished for improvements and at first even the young generation of Petőfi only sought that long-overdue reforms be implemented within the old forms, in conjunction with Austria. After all, even beyond the borders, in Austria, too, a new generation was urging progress. When, however, the poetic message was not enough, when the alarms sounded in the "National Ode" on March 15, 1848 were dismissed by the ruling forces of the imperial court, and when, within a few months, the court revoked the reforms that had been sanctioned by the king, the "young Hungary" of Petőfi learned the final lesson: progress and liberty can not be achieved in cooperation with Imperial Austria. Petőfi was a revolutionary from the beginning, yet it was only in the final months of the Hungarian mortal struggle, during the months of the war if independence, that he became, both as a poet and as a politician, uncompromising in demanding radical reforms.

Hungary was not yet ready for comprehensive reform. Thus Petőfi, who in March of 1848 was perhaps the most popular man in the country, had lost so much ground by June that he was defeated in

his bid for a seat in Parliament. The poet of the people was denied by the people. In this bitter mood he wrote the political-philosophical poem, *The Apostle*: the tragedy of the political reformer who comes before his time. New, grand ideas emerge in it, for it contains Petőfi's poetical testament and the program and beliefs of March 1848. Later, when the poet saw that the imperial government continued the policy of "divide et impera" and incited the nationalities against the Hungarians, he wrote "Life or Death", the poem in which he demonstrated convincingly to the nation that it is impossible to turn back on freedom, to undo reforms: one must always go forward because not only the liberty of Hungarians was at stake, but the liberty of all oppressed peoples.

The rest is history. Under Lajos Kossuth a Hungarian army, the national guard, was created. Hungarian officers and soldiers in the Austrian army, as well as the masses of Hungarian citizens, joined this new unit in such force that, augmented by the youth of other lands (Poles, Italians, Austrians), victory was well within its reach. Only with the intervention of the Russian tsar, according to the terms of the Holy Alliance, was the force defeated.

Then did Petőfi become the true tempest of the Revolution. He saw he must become a soldier, and that at his own request he joined the army of Transylvania, serving as adjutant to the Polish colonel Joseph Bem, first as a captain, later as a major. His poems immortalized Bem and inspired the Hungarian troops in the face of the overwhelming Russian army. It was here that death overtook him on July 31st, 1849 during the Battle of Segesvár; here that he was buried—as he himself had wished to be—unknown, in "a mass grave with those who died for thee, sacred Liberty".[7]

Is it possible to compare Petőfi to any other poet? Hardly. Certainly not to any foreign poet, but not even to other Hungarian poets, for his poetry is a mirror of his life and his life was an individual, unique human life. *Petőfi is a poet for all Hungarians.* And, further, in Hungarian terms, *Petőfi is the poet of youth,* the symbol of the regenerating Hungarian nation. For the non-Hungarian who appreciates literature however, *he is the Hungarian poet.* Some of his simplest poems have been translated into forty to fifty languages. If we recall that the poetic output of Petőfi, who died in his twenty-sixth year, is 850 poems, and that this is the product of five or six years, then we can see the power of his creative energy. As the literary historian Frigyes Riedl (who published the first English history of Hungarian literature early in this century) remarked, if Shakespeare or János

Arany had died at twenty-six, we would not even know they had lived. Petőfi's career was like a comet's: what he produced in his brief life is truly a marvel. If we should list the great men of Western Literature chronologically, we must start with Homer; Dante, then Shakespeare and Goethe follow. After that, Petőfi must come. Yet, even if one would include two or three other names, Petőfi must be listed among the ten greatest poets.

There are those who learn Greek in order to read Homer, or English, to enjoy Shakespeare in the original. On the traces of Petőfi's German and English translators, several men have set out to gain Petőfi's poems in the original. My wish, as a Hungarian educator, is that the second and third generation Hungarians should turn to Petőfi not only to learn the language in which he wrote but also that they might become participants in the impressive ethical and human values which give Petőfi's poetry its immortality and its universal value.

NOTES

1. Sándor Petőfi, "Sors, nyiss nekem tért", in *Petőfi Sándor összes költeményei* (Budapest, Magyar Helikon, 1967), p. 449.
2. Petőfi, "Ha férfi vagy, légy férfi", *op. cit.* p. 518.
3. Petőfi, "Szabadság, szerelem", *op. cit.* p. 517.
4. Petőfi, "Arany Jánoshoz", *op. cit.* p. 351.
5. Sándor Petőfi, "Lapok Petőfi Sándor Naplójából, Pest, március 24, 1848", in Petőfi Sándor összes prózai művei és levelezése (budapest, Magyar Helikon, 1967), p. 406.
6. Mihály Vörösmarty, "Bondolatok a könyvtárban", in *Vörösmarty Mihály összes versei* (Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1957) I, 482.
7. Petőfi, "Egy gondolat bánt engemet", *Összes költeményei*, p. 514.

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REVIEW ARTICLES

Hungarians in Transylvania

Andrew Ludányi

Erdély változása: Mitosz és valóság. By Elemér Illyés. Munich: Aurora Könyvek, 1975. Pp. 359. $12.50.

Elemér Illyés *Erdély változása: Mitosz és valóság* (Transylvania's Transformation: Myth and Reality) is a study that is "recommended reading" for anyone who is interested in contemporary Rumanian nationalism and ethnic minority policies in Eastern Europe. The study deals with post-World War II Transylvania and the fate of its Hungarian inhabitants, thereby filling a major gap in East European studies. However, for the present, it fills this gap only in the Hungarian language.

Perhaps the healthiest feature of *Erdély változása* is that it is a very dispassionate yet simultaneously a very compassionate treatment of a neglected subject which has generated too much passion and too little compassion in years gone by. It provides a balanced and humane perspective in an area where these qualities are generally lacking. Illyés is somehow able to transcend the bitterness and nationality hatreds of the past, to provide a balanced look at this potentially volatile subject. This is an extraordinary achievement in view of the tradition of conflict, the deteriorating nationality relations of recent years and the author's personal links with the scene of action. As a consequence of this clear-headedness and fair-mindedness, both the Hungarians and the Rumanians can obtain a more complete understanding of their respective destinies in Transylvania. Indeed, his study will be difficult to surpass as "the work," "the sourcebook," on Hungarian life in Transylvania from 1944 to 1974.

It should be interjected, at this point, that the Illyés analysis extends to areas beyond the territory of historic Transylvania. While his main focus is on the area detached from Hungary by the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, he also considers the fate of Hungarians in other

parts of present-day Rumania. True, most of his observations relate to the Hungarians in the Banat, Crişana, Maramureş and historic Transylvania (since these are the areas where most of them are concentrated), but he also considers the fate of their fellow nationals in Bucharest, Bacau and the coastal region of the Black Sea. Economic necessity, the quest for employment, has dispersed many Hungarians to areas outside the protective walls of the Carpathians and the Transylvanian Alps.

Erdély változása effectively documents the demographic, political, social, economic and cultural existence of Hungarians in contemporary Rumania. However, there are some weaknesses in the presentation. One relates to the author's time perspective, the other to the organization of his material. Illyés himself reflects on the former weakness in his "Conclusion," which he wrote in 1975. As he points out in this section, most of his study was written in the more optimistic "reform years" between 1968 and 1973. Consequently, the subsequent period of national discrimination was not given consideration and what is more serious, the judgements of previous years are colored by the hopefulness and the expanding opportunities of the "reform years."

The organizational, or structural weakness is, perhaps, less serious. It is due, probably, to the lack of one unifying thesis that could be traced from the first chapter to the conclusion. After all, Illyés' main concern is simply to document the transformation of Transylvania in the context of the past thirty years. To this end his presentation is acceptable. Still, it could have been done otherwise, reflecting more continuity. As it stands, it is broken roughly into five identifiable parts, each of which could stand alone without necessarily being part of the same book.

The lengthy but well-written and interesting first chapter is a combination of travelogue and historical background. Illyés cleverly intermingles his travels in Transylvania with historical "flashbacks" which provide the reader with a vivid picture of the richness and variety of the area's past. He describes each important city or region as it would look to a present-day visitor. Then in flashbacks he reflects on the inter-war experience and the events of the past thousand years that are linked to Transylvania's development.

The second chapter is an essay on the legal, *i.e.*, constitutional and political position of the Hungarians in present-day Rumania. It could stand as an independent essay. It is rather dry, but contains a wealth of useful information.

The third chapter (which deals with the population dynamics of Transylvania) and the fourth chapter (which describes the decline of the traditional Hungarian village) both deal with the circumstances and characteristics of Hungarian population changes in Transylvania. The two together are a separate section with a primarily demographic-sociological and economic orientation. They too contain a great wealth of useful information.

Chapters five to thirteen deal with the cultural and educational opportunities, or lack thereof, of the Transylvanian Hungarians. Each one of these chapters could be an independent essay on a special feature (e.g., schools, drama, painting, music, etc.) of Hungarian cultural existence. Each one is well-written and again a treasure-house of data. The author's thoroughness and the space he devotes to this analysis also indicates that this section deals with the issues and the problems which are most dear to him personally.

The last section, or chapters fourteen to seventeen, are really four separate essays which have been appended to the study to complete the overall analysis. Each chapter is in reality a book-review or series of book-reviews which deals with some aspect of Transylvanian life. Thus, chapter fourteen reviews the writings of contemporary poets while chapter fifteen reviews four essayists/novelists. Chapter sixteen is a critical review of a recent history of World War II Rumanian-Hungarian relations. Chapter seventeen is a review of the first history of Transylvania's Hungarian literature published in post-World War II Rumania. In this manner the last section of the book completes the picture, its four chapters being in a sense overviews. As such, they summarize and link together some of the information which was provided in the first thirteen chapters. However, this linkage could have been achieved more smoothly by integrating the observations of the last four essays in relevant parts of the preceding thirteen chapters.

Analytical method and the effective organization of data both contribute to the success or failure of a book's function *i.e.*, to convey information to the reader. The author's polished style and meticulous research make *Erdély változása* simultaneously interesting and highly informative reading. Only its structure leads to some duplication and awkwardness. However, the latter does not significantly detract from the book's message, which is a reviewer's main concern. In reference to the substance of his work, Illyés deserves only praise. In each of the sections, in every one of his chapters—and the work as a whole—he achieves his major objective: the provision of a documented portrait of the past thirty years in the existence of Transylvanian Hungarians.

Here the reviewer must answer only one question: Does Illyés' portrait coincide with, or accurately reflect, the actual state of affairs that he has set out to describe? His documentation in itself is thorough and presented in a systematic way. He has drawn extensively on both Rumanian and Hungarian sources. True, for recent events, the documentation is based on the "reform years" noted above. However, this provides the study with a more cautious posture relative to the entire question of restrictive minority policies. He does not fall into the trap of crying wolf when there is no wolf. Consequently, when he demonstrates that key areas of Hungarian life are under the pressure of Rumanization, we can be certain that this is the case. He points out a number of such pressure points where restrictiveness expanded even during the "reform years." The most obvious examples are the Rumanization of census results, the constantly diminishing educational opportunities for the Hungarians, the newly imposed restrictions in minority publications under the guise of a declared "paper shortage," and the continued dispersal of the Hungarian population by the restriction of job opportunities in Hungarian populated areas.

Illyés' cautiousness has other consequences as well, some positive, some negative, at times both positive and negative. An excellent example of this is his report of the destruction of the "Varjuvár," (a symbol of Hungarian cultural survival) by "some of the neighboring inhabitants of the region" (p. 13). He does not specify that it was the local Rumanians who were responsible for the destruction. While "leaning over backwards" in this way means not telling the whole truth, it is at the same time a way of avoiding accusations and finger pointing. Thus, he tries to avoid exacerbating the conflict whenever possible and to lay the foundations for a possible rapprochement in the future.

Illyés' cautiousness also keeps him from making predictions about the consequences of this state of affairs in Transylvania. He does not speculate about the prospects of Hungarian unrest in the future. His omission may be intentional. After all, Transylvania is not Cyprus, Northern Ireland or Lebanon—it is situated close to Soviet power! Yet, the experiences in the mentioned trouble spots, as well as experiences with other examples of "revolutionary circumstances," would at least lead to a guarded statement relative to Hungarian unrest. After all, the Hungarians are a large minority of two million[1] —more than the Turks in Cyprus, the Catholics in Northern Ireland or the Moslems or Christians in Lebanon—who have a well developed national consciousness. They have just undergone a process of decom-

pression in the cultural area. As Illyés points out, from 1968 to 1973 they enjoyed a renaissance in their cultural existence. This cultural revival is now being hemmed in by government restrictions. If deTocqueville's observations about social-economic discontent[2] has parallels in cultural discontent, as seems to be the case in areas torn by ethnic strife, then the prerequisites exist for a "revolutionary situation" in Transylvania today. While it is unlikely that a revolution will break out, the possibility is there at least for more pronounced ethnic conflict.

The rioting and unrest of 1968 in Yugoslavia's Autonomous Province of Kosovo should be a warning signal that Communist states are not immune to this type of malady. As an excellent recent study of communist minority policies has pointed out, the strife in Kosovo came after the Yugoslav leadership had already rejected Ranković (1966) and his high-handed methods regarding the minorities.[3] Thus, a process of decompression, followed by efforts to break Albanian desires for more self-government, led to the outbreaks of November-December, 1968.[4]

Responsible statesmen—whatever their ideological preconceptions—must take into account Transylvania's precarious ethnic relations. Illyés points out that in the case of Transylvania's fate responsible statesmen of late have rarely triumphed. Blood and anguish, and more blood and more anguish has been the price paid. We should ask: when will responsible statesmen interfere *before* bloodshed and suffering prevail? In the case of Transylvania a tolerant, farsighted . . . pluralist ethnic policy is needed now! If it is not forthcoming, the efforts of *dispassionate* and *compassionate* scholars like those of Illyés, will have been for nought. For the sake of both Rumanians and Hungarians in Transylvania, let's hope responsible statesmen are listening.

NOTES

1. G.D. Satmarescu, "The Changing Demographic Structure of the Population of Transylvania," *East European Quarterly* VIII (Jan., 1975), p. 438.
2. Melvin Richter, "Tocqueville's Contributions to the Theory of Revolution," in *Revolution* Ed. Carl J. Friedrich. (New York: Atherton Press, 1967), p. 78.
3. Robert R. King, *Minorities Under Communism: Nationalities as a Source of Tension Among Balkan Communist States.* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 140.
4. *Ibid.*

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France and the Fate of Hungary

Edward Chaszar

The Tragic Fate of Hungary: A Country Carved-Up Alive at Trianon. By Yves de Daruvar. Translated from the French by Victor Stankovich. Munich: Nemzetőr, 1974. (Co-publisher: American Hungarian Literary Guild, Astor Park, FL 32002.) Pp. 235, appendix, maps, illustr., $8.00 paper.

For the last fifty years Hungarians have been painfully aware of the tragic fate which befell their country in June 1920, when the Peace Treaty ending World War I was forced on them at Trianon near Paris. The great majority of Frenchmen, however, were utterly unaware of what was happening to that small but valiant country which had served as Western Europe's outpost for centuries, a first line of defence against the onslaught of invaders from the East. It was the ignorance of Frenchmen about the process of treaty-making, and the silence surrounding the event once it happened, which prompted Daruvar to publish his book in France on the fiftieth anniversary of the Paris Peace Treaties.

The son of a Hungarian army officer and a French mother, transplanted to and educated in France, Daruvar fought for his adopted country in World War II, receiving high military honors and some bad wounds. "A knight in shining armour of our days," according to the words of the preface to the French edition, "he is going to war once more . . . carrying no arms; it is this book with which he proposes to fight for the honor of "mutilated" Hungary."

He does so by resorting to military tactics learned from General Leclerc: attack. Daruvar attacks the treaty-makers, and he pulls no punches in the process. Feeling morally and emotionally qualified, he makes a clean breast of the "ugly act committed by the victors of the first world war." It is this moral and emotional commitment which lends his work an eloquence and persuasiveness rarely found. No wonder a Frenchman finds his book "deeply disturbing" and hard to put down.

While not a professional historian, and using almost exclusively secondary sources, Daruvar documents his book carefully, indeed with an overabundance of quotations, for which he begs the reader's indulgence in the Foreword. In translation his style is good, his words flow freely and easily, the quotations are well integrated into the text and do not interrupt the narration. Once the reader ploughs through the first chapter, containing historical and geographic information on Hungary, the origins and evolution of the Great War are told concisely and with surprising frankness. This is followed by the fast-paced story of the armistice and the Peace Conference itself.

Defending Hungary against accusations of "war guilt" Daruvar points out the historically well-known, but often distorted or simply not mentioned, fact of the Hungarian Prime Minister's opposition to war in the Austro-Hungarian Joint Ministerial Council in July 1914, and quotes the former Italian Prime Minister Nitti: "In all honesty no one can be singled out as being responsible for it." This does not, however, prevent Daruvar from emphasizing the guilt shared by France and Russia, the latter in particular, by adding that "the real aggressor is at all events he who is bent on changing an existing situation by means of war," a reference to Russia's order of mobilization issued with French knowledge. Not even a political scientist could wish for a better definition of aggression.

Drawing mostly on Allied, chiefly French, sources, the book documents the fateful turn of events which led to the corruption of the original war aims, the distortion of the idealistic Wilsonian principle of self-determination, the abandonment of the idea of ethnographic (linguistic) boundaries in favor of military, political, and economic considerations which ultimately resulted in a patchwork of "successor states" erected on the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Instead of transforming the Habsburg Empire into what was originally intended by President Wilson: a federation based on the equality of nationalities and a potential stronghold against both German and Russian expansionism in Central Europe, the area was "Balkanized".

One can imagine how shocking it must be for the French reader to learn that "for over half a century France has kept telling herself lies, not having the courage to face reality," and then be confronted immediately with that painful reality. For this Daruvar dug up all the available self-criticism French statesmen and politicians produced belatedly, often unknown to their countrymen, and then "lays it on thick"—to use a colloquialism. Thus, the incited leaders of Austria-Hungary's Slav and Rumanian minorities who persuaded France "to

endorse and legalize the occupations by conquest, achieved after the cessation of hostilities by the armed forces of the so-called successor states, in stark violation of the armistice agreements," become in Clemenceau's own words "the jackals of our victory." One also learns the opinion of Gabriel Gobron (misspelled as Goron on p. 112), according to whom "within 10 years [after the Peace Treaty] the successor states have sinned against their minorities more often than did the Hungarians in a thousand years." Edouard Benes is "fated to become twice during his long career the grave-digger of his own country as well as of Europe," and so on.

Marshalling the protestations of the French negotiators and Parliamentarians ("if they were not guilty, what sense would make the protestations of some of them?"), Daruvar reaches the height of indignation by exlaiming: "Trianon was a criminal act; there is no other term to describe adequately the most wicked of all wartime treaties, imposed amid the vapours of blood, the haze of gunpowder, the exaltation of victory and the 'Schadenfreude' derived from torturing the vanquished. There was the generosity of France for you! Torchbearer of civilization indeed!" (p. 164)

Commenting finally on more recent developments in Europe, such as the Soviet-caused tragedies of Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968), the author states once again that the origins of the present unfortunate situation in East-Central Europe go back to the disastrous treaties concluded in the wake of the First World War, and shortsightedly reaffirmed after the Second.

Nevertheless, the book ends on an optimistic note with the hope that eventually there will be peace in the area, based on a territorial solution freely agreed upon, bringing together all nationalities on a basis of sovereign equality in a Danubian Federation, itself part of a federated, supra-national, united Europe.

From a purely Hungarian point of view the shock value of Daruvar's book for Frenchmen is tremendous. France, after all, is a major power to be reckoned with in any future rearrangement of Europe. Whether the same is true for the English translation is a moot question. The translation itself is, on the whole, good. But, aside from certain technical shortcomings (such as typographical errors in the text, even in the Translator's Note; the employing of Anglicisms strange for the American reader; the French method of presenting notes and bibliography; the hiding of the Table of Contents in an obscure place), one may wonder whether all the French sources, and

the frequent lengthy quotations from the same, turn the English-language reader "on" or "off"? Likewise, whether the attack against the "guilty ones" will induce the enemies of Hungary to repent their sins, or merely to launch a counter-attack? The old wound Daruvar touched is not healed yet; and no matter how admirable were his intentions, his deed at first sight does not appear to have facilitated that healing. But, who can really know for sure?

Somehow, this reviewer feels, the whole affair should have remained strictly one between Daruvar and his French readers. For the latter, this book will no doubt be "brave, profoundly human, and deeply disturbing." As General Ingold, former Grand Chancellor of the French Order of Liberation, confesses in the Preface, the book "makes us think."

This, of course, may be sufficient to excuse Daruvar. To make Frenchmen think about the fate of Hungary may not be a bad thing after all.

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János Kádár: the Myths and the Realities

Barnabas A. Racz

Crime and Compromise: Janos Kadar and the Politics of Hungary since the Revolution. By William Shawcross. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1974. Pp. 311.

The communist system in Hungary went through various phases of change since the 1956 Revolution. From the Soviet armed intervention to the New Economic Mechanism (NEM) and the accompanying liberalization János Kádár stood at the helm of the Party and played a major role in the execution of Imre Nagy as well as in laying the foundations for a more relaxed political atmosphere since 1968. The subject of Mr. Shawcross' book is the analysis of this era and Kadar's personality as they are interrelated. Most students of the Hungarian scene agree that the political and economic system is beset with ambiguities and as Shawcross sees it, so is Kádár's personality. Because of these contradictions, the author's coherent and lucid analysis which sheds light upon the deeper aspects of the system is to be regarded as unusually incisive writing.

Kádár's political profile is tied to his personality development and this is an enlightening approach in the absence of other available evidence. He was born as an illegitimate child, a fatherless and deprived peasant boy, an unskilled laborer who came in contact with Marxism in the factory districts of Budapest, and this early experience with communism and the Party grew into his first permanent identification to which he—above all—remained attached to the present day. However, unlike other communist leaders, he was home-bred and remained forever alien to the Moscow trained party-functionaries. As leader of the underground party with Rajk during the Second World War he appeared to maintain a feeling of community with the worker-class. Kádár is a dedicated communist, not trained in the Soviet Union and this paradox may explain some of the contradictions in his political life.

The author chooses Kádár's personal life as a point of departure in each area of the Hungarian milieu examined in this volume. Kadar's early childhood took place in the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy and in Trianon Hungary. Unfortunately, the treatment of the Hungarian history before 1945 is perhaps the weakest part of Shawcross' work and is in sharp contrast with his analysis of post-war years. While he exhibits keen judgement in the latter, his understanding of the former is superficial and the reader is left in the dark regarding his sources. Not to include Bethlen and his consolidation is inaccurate and the view that all economic problems were caused by an insensitive government along with the fact that he disregards the impact of the Trianon Treaty is in serious error. To say that Hungarians in general felt "nothing but admiration and gratitude for Hitler" (p. 45) is untenable position in the light of historical data.

Shawcross puts the post-fifty-six trends into better perspective by tracing the analysis back to Stalinism and the Rákosi-regime. However, the real strength of the work lies in the discussion of the post-revolutionary and current events. There is no question that Kádár had a decisive role in shaping the political and economic institutions, yet he depended on Soviet approval which he could not and would not forsake.

In this reviewer's opinion the centrally significant reforms took place in the economic sphere. While not much is mentioned about the repressive agricultural collectivization, the permissive New Economic Mechanism receives perceptive treatment. The decentralization of planning and the expanded enterprize autonomy stand in the focus of the reform, which creates stronger individual incentives through premium distribution to increase productivity. In terms of overall economic activity and standard of living, the NEM was a considerable success. For a better understanding of the magnitude of these reforms, the author should have given more details regarding premium inequities, strengthening group conflicts and the functioning of economic regulators. It also appears that Shawcross overlooks the fact that not all economic indicators improved evenly and, more importantly, one of the key objectives of the reform, the increased productivity, remained unfulfilled.

While the NEM registered dramatic successes in some areas, it also triggered negative results in the socialist society. The spreading "petit bourgeoisie" tendencies, moon-lighting, profiteering, excessive preoccupation with material acquisitions became wide-spread

phenomena in the entire society including the Party. The "New Hungarian Man" is the "money grubber." These phenomena created even some restlessness and dissatisfaction among the worker-class and party leaders as well as sociologists who saw a growing threat to the socialist system. It was inevitable that together with economic decentralization, some political power had to be transferred from government to management, but some influence inadvertently slipped from the hands of the party leadership, thus an increasing erosion of party power was noticeable on the middle and lower levels of government and party hierarchy. As Shawcross ably points out, the Party's influence decreases in proportion to the increase in living standards and the Party eventually will have to face the dilemma (p. 198).

While the economic reforms were far-reaching, the political institutions remained more static; yet the atmosphere under Kádár's leadership changed markedly. The new alliance policy is far removed from the former terror and was expressed by Kádár in this formula: "Whoever is not against us, is with us" (p. 105). Both the "crime" and the "compromise" are Kádár's policies and express his seemingly paradoxical stance in the various crises of his life. Shawcross sheds light on this: Kádár will always adhere to Marxism-Leninism and the Soviet Union, but within these limits will search for a more human face for socialism in Hungary. Part of this new approach gained expression in the modified election laws which made the nomination of opposition candidates in the electoral districts possible. However, all candidates represent the Patriotic People's Front's platform and must be approved by the National Election Committee. Shawcross observes these limitations clearly (pp. 101-102) yet surprisingly he falls into the frequent error of Western observers and sees significant reform where there is only tokenism.

More importantly, the "socialist legality" improved and the power of the political police has been curbed. There are still political trials and detention camps on a reduced scale, but there is great improvement in comparison to the Rakosi era and the late fifties. As Shawcross stresses, the regime is based primarily not on suppression but on suasion and "society is ruled by a collective will, not by . . . a dictator or a group of self-appointed oligarchs" (p. 103). The first part of author's judgement is correct: suasion is more often used than terror but he stretches the point too far by stating that "collective will" is the ruling force and fails to define what he means.

The lighter atmosphere of the alliance policy filtered into numerous areas of the life in varying degrees. Preliminary censorship

was abolished and writers enjoy a latitude of expression unknown before but basic criticism is not tolerated by the informal yet effective party control and "much of the most important news is not reported in the Hungarian media" (p. 169). Kádár's friend George Aczél was in charge of the cultural affairs at the time of the writing and he followed a balanced "anti-revisionist and anti-dogmatist" policy. Within these limits, courting official tolerance, a "commercialization of cultural products" emerged under the NEM conditions. Shawcross brings the problem into sharp focus by stating that the new libertarianism generated serious concern by the left-wing "sectarians" and gave rise to a threat by petit bourgeois and anti-socialist tendencies. As George Lukács expressed it, NEM's emphasis on profit-making had drastically cheapened cultural life (p. 157). However the new Hungarian film-makers did not think so, and similarly to the progressive literary traditions of the past, some film-producers play an avante-guard role in social criticism, but their work became increasingly suspect and restrictive measures have been applied. The limits of the communication freedom are expressed by Pál Ipper, chief radio commentator, quoted by author: "the press should not be used against the general interest of the nation's development simply for the sake of informing the public" (p. 164).

Not much is written by author about the status of the academic disciplines and scholarship. This is regrettable because these questions are of paramount significance in any society. The official position stresses that Marxism-Leninism is the sole theoretical foundation of all sciences yet there is a healthy fermentation and wider intercourse with Western developments, but not freedom from restrictions. Shawcross gives an enlightening account of the story of Sociology and the demise of the "anti-party Hegedus group", expelled from the Party in 1973 because of criticism of the NEM.

One of the more serious problems for the Party is the change in social mobility. While there was a strong upward trend from peasant and worker-class members in the forties and fifties, this slowed down recently. Worker-class children have a declining enrollment and a high ratio of erosion at the universities. Shawcross attributes this to the commanding advantage of old and new middle-class students but fails to mention artificially the admission and retention of worker-class students on all levels.

Kádár's more human socialism began to attack the severe housing shortages yet not all problems are solved. The author makes excellent connections between tight housing, falling birthrate, desire for

material acquisitions and the spreading family problems. Since the time of the writing, a series of government measures, supporting larger families succeeded and the number of live births has increased significantly.

The Party faces a major problem of becoming older—the average age of membership increased to forty-four. Kádár recognized the problem and lowered the party admission age from twenty-one to eighteen but the youth shows lack of interest in joining the Party. Apathy and cynicism, noticeable everywhere in today's youth, is particularly strong in Hungary and the prevailing political emotion is indifference and skepticism toward ideology. This raises formidable questions to the political leadership in the long run—who is going to be the vanguard of socialist construction without dedicated party members? The Party tries to correct the situation through organized efforts by the KISZ and strengthening ideological indoctrination in the schools but according to author the results are meager. The question is particularly thorny in light of the fact that "tolerance of their own Communist party had led few Hungarians to tolerance of the Soviet Union: Russians are disliked more intensely in Hungary than they have ever been" (p. 230). Although this appears to be somewhat exaggerated, knowledgeable observers agree that there is deep resentment against the USSR and the youth is no exception.

Mr. Shawcross draws unusually accurate picture of the major trends and the prevailing mood in Hungary but occasionally he is in error. There is no reason to doubt the present improvements but too frequent comparisons to the darkest years of the Rákosi era distort the picture. However, the author perceives correctly the ambiguity of the situation in the '70's; while the attainment of socialism remained the theoretical aim of the Party, the economic and political evolution moved away from this objective. This is the Party's major dilemma as Shawcross posits it, will there be a crossroad where the Party either has to stop or reverse the direction of the reforms (p. 288)? Events since the writing proved that indeed the Party was aware of the crisis and undertook serious steps to stem the tide of change. The 1974 Central Committee decisions, the 11th Party Congress in 1975, and various government decrees subsequently abandoned part of the NEM and set into motion an economic recentralization and somewhat tighter political controls. The new measures probably do not represent decisive changes yet they are significant departures from the NEM era. As in the past since 1956, once again Kádár remained at the helm of political power, and reformed his reform. Who then is Kádár?

Shawcross portrays Kádár as a dedicated communist who has a genuine concern for the interests of the working people. This commitment to ideology is tempered with pragmatism yet he is above all faithful to the Party and regards dependency on Russia not only a matter of reality but also indispensable to the survival of communism in Hungary (pp. 248-49).

A more complete assessment of Kádár's moral views could be formulated through a fuller knowledge of his motives in the four major crises of his life: the Rajk-case, the 1956 Revolution, Imre Nagy's execution and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. In none of these situations is there a clear explanation as to his role according to Shawcross and any conclusions therefore are largely conjectural. There was certain complicity in the Rajk case, however Kádár's motives are uncertain and the Dubcek case seems to be less important because Kádár probably had no real input regarding the invasion decision. The two other incidents are more beclouded with mystery. Kádár's changing sides between the first and fourth of November 1956, could be explained in various ways. Whatever the reasons, it seems to be clear and this has been the predominant view in Western analyses that the Soviet invasion did not hinge upon Kádár's willingness to form a government but upon the vital political considerations of the Soviet leadership; had Kádár not been available, someone else would have played the role. Therefore, it could be reasonably argued—as Shawcross does—that Kádár's intentions under the circumstances were not all objectionable if he felt that in the long-run he could win the approval of both the Russians and at least to some extent that of the Hungarians. The same pragmatic considerations could apply in Nagy's execution, but author points out that none of these may exonerate Kádár from his ultimate moral responsibility.

Shawcross' central point is that Kádár, through his skillful reform policies became acceptable and commands confidence as he has an understanding of the national mind (p. 287) This reviewer feels that his view is somewhat unrealistic as there may be a difference between "confidence" and tolerance. My experience in Hungary convinced me that Kádár enjoys a modicum of support, a situation of quid pro quo; he is respected for his accomplishments and people fear a change. Nevertheless to many he is merely the "lesser evil" who can work out the best accommodation with the Russians. However realistic this sentiment may be, it emerges as the predominant feeling. Kádár's moral responsibility in his four crises is definitely not the focus of

concern in NEM's pragmatic atmosphere. His absolution would not be acceptable in the West and his culpability is rejected by many in Hungary and probably by all in the Party. The answer will be rendered only by History's future judgement if and when the necessary documentation will be released from the hitherto secret files of the Party and Kádár.

Mr. Shawcross' book makes exciting and interesting reading, and irrespective of some of its shortcomings it is certainly one of the best books which has been recently published about contemporary Hungary and its controversial leader, Kádár.

Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies, Vol. III, No. 1 (Spring, 1976).

Book Reviews

A History of Middle Europe: From the Earliest Times to the Age of the World Wars by Leslie Charles Tihany (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1976, pp. 280, $16.50).

Ktéma es—what Thucydides said about his history is also applicable to this book. It is a possession for all time. Especially for Hungarians, with St. László on the cover and a Hungaro-centered comparative history of the peoples inhabiting the Baltic-Adriatic-Black Sea triangle between the covers. There has never been such a book; the closest to it was Halecki's *Borderlands* (1952), which was lexico-graphic, Polish-centered, and used Henrik Marczali's book of the 1890's as the most recent German-language source for Hungarian history. Tihany's new book is based on the latest available research in twelve languages. It is the work of a great historian, Hungarian-born and *non-engagé*, trained in the best American universities, and employed for nearly 30 years by the diplomatic service of the United States. Tihany knows history not only from studying it but also from participating in its making. He writes that beautiful, clear, and enthralling English which—as G.B. Shaw said in *Pygmalion*—only Hungarians are capable of using as an idiom.

Tihany's thesis asserts that history ran different courses for the descendants of the Cro-Magnon man in the coastal and landlocked areas of Europe because (1) the peoples of the latter were prey to an unceasing succession of expansionist empires (Roman, Byzantine, Carolingian, Holy Roman, Ottoman, Habsburg, Hohenzollern, and Romanov); and (2) the states they formed were barred from participation in world trade for lack of maritime outlets, except for the 14th-century period of the "Monarchy of the Three Seas" constructed by the political genius of the Hungarian Anjous.

The book is full of unforgettable vignettes. The Hungarians riding as conquerors through the ghost town of Aquincum; and as conquered, a millennium later, losing most of their country to their neighbors. We see Koppány's quartered body nailed to four city gates; diver Kund sinking the German fleet at Pozsony; Andrew II

driving the scheming Teutonic Knights from the Barcaság; Vladislaw I leading his lethal cavalry charge at Varna into the Sultan's palisaded enclosure; Matthias, with imperial Luxembourg blood flowing in his veins, vainly pursuing the dream of the Holy Roman sceptre; vanguards of fugitive Gypsies (scouts, spies or refugees?) arriving in Brasso before Mohammed the Conqueror orders his ships dragged across the isthmus of the Golden Horn to capture Byzantium; Louis II sinking on his wounded mount into the Danube swamps; the Turks unwittingly safeguarding the vitality of Protestantism; the utter devastation of the land by liberators and fleeing occupiers after the recapture of Buda; Louis XIV keeping Rákóczi's insurgents under arms as a diversion to his Spanish war; Kossuth challenging the gates of hell to prevail over a Hungary embattled for freedom; the rise and fall of the compromise-based Dual Monarchy with its unfolding capitalism, socialism, zionism, and a multitude of centrifugal nationalisms pressing against its seams; carnage and party strife continuing parallel through the holocaust of the first World War.

Around this action-rich center of the stage swirls the turbulent history of Bulgarians, Serbs, Croatians, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Rumanians, Czechs, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Poles, Lithuanians, Letts; Bogomils and Hussites, rebellious serfs, *haiduks*, *kuruc*, cossacks, *uskoks*, *janissaries*, and *ichoglans*. Tihany's best chapters are: as social history, the transformation of heathens into heretics along basic fissures in the structure of society; as intellectual history, the evolution of utopian and agrarian socialism into trade unionism and Marxism (a delayed process owing to the pan-German and Pan-Slav idiosyncracies of the 19th-century German and Russian socialist founding fathers); as political history, the irresistible disintegration of the Polish state during the 18th century through inability to do away with unanimity-rule aristo-democracy; and as diplomatic history, the treatment of the Eastern Question in its relationship to the whole complex of Middle European problems. Here we are shown convincingly that the coastal Great Powers never treated as *grosse Politik* any internal issue of the middle zone except where their own interests in safeguarding the sealanes and the maintenance of the balance of power were at stake.

What emerges from this scholarly yet highly readable and fascinating book is the continuity, through the ebb and flow of historical impermanence, of the millennial state-forming genius of the Magyars,

a nation situated in the continental heartland for the performance of memorable deeds, past and future.

Northern Kentucky University — Alfonz Lengyel

Esterhazy and Early Hungarian Immigration to Canada. Canadian Plains Studies No. 2. By Martin Louis Kovacs. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, 1974. Pp. x + 170.

The study presents the most recent research of Professor Kovacs concerning the early history of Hungarians in Western Canada. Specifically, the author reconstructs the role of Paul Oscar Esterhazy, surveys the history of the Esterhaz colony to 1903 and assesses Esterhazy as immigrant leader in the late nineteenth century. In addition, he publishes the full text of an historically significant pamphlet on the colony, compiled in 1902, and provides critical commentary on its value as historical documentation.

An important contribution of the study is the clarification of the early history of the Esterhaz colony. First settled in 1886 by Hungarian and other East European settlers arriving from the United States, Esterhaz refers to a compact area of settlement in the eastern Qu'Appelle Valley of Saskatchewan. The author documents the decisive role of Esterhazy in selecting the site for settlement and relates his personal efforts leading to the establishment of the village of Esterhazy in 1902 as a railway junction and agricultural market serving the entire colony. As a result, the village of Esterhazy became subsequent to 1902 the major centre for Hungarian settlement in Western Canada. Professor Kovacs explains the origins of this significant process on the basis of original source materials, including the Paul Oscar Esterhazy Papers, documents from the Public Archives of Canada and the Saskatchewan Provincial Archives.

Also noteworthy is the author's assessment of Paul Oscar Esterhazy as founder of Hungarian settlements in Canada, as an advocate of Canadian immigration for East European peasants and as a particular type of ethnic leader to immigrants from Eastern Europe. Professor Kovacs sees Esterhazy as an effective and influential advocate of Hungarian settlers in Saskatchewan. He also suggests an explanation for Esterhazy's interest in Canadian immigration. Deeply affected by the exploitation of East European immigrants in United

States mines and factories, he thought that Canadian homestead settlement would provide a better haven of protection for them. This aspect of Esterhazy's activity is worthy of further exploration, since it would clarify the background of East European peasant migration from the United States to Western Canada.

In publishing the pamphlet compiled by Esterhazy in 1902, Professor Kovacs had made accessible an important historical record for all scholars of immigration relating to Western Canada. In addition to a brief historical survey of the colony, it includes 22 contemporary photographs of early homesteads and homesteaders, the personal statements of 31 original settlers on their Canadian life prior to 1902 and a map of the colony.

The present study offers, essentially, an indispensable foundation for a badly needed scholarly assessment of Canadian-Hungarian life. It is to be hoped that the author will continue his scholarly efforts by preparing such a comprehensive historical study relating the story of Hungarian immigrants in 20th century Canada.

Ohio State University Paul Bődy

The Hungarians in America 1583-1974: A Chronology & Fact Book. [Ethnic Chronology Series Number 18]. Edited and compiled by Joseph Széplaki. Dobbs Ferry, New York: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1975. Pp. vii + 152. $6.00.

Joseph Széplaki's *The Hungarians in America 1583-1974* is one of the volumes in "The Ethnic Chronology Series" initiated by Oceana Publications, Inc. in 1971. Currently the series contains close to two dozen volumes, with several others in various stages of preparation.

Oceana's Ethnic Chronology Series is one of several such serial publications that came into being in consequence of the so-called "ethnic revolution" of the past decade. Its editors claim that this series "seeks to reflect unpolemically and objectively the role of America's minorities in the development of a democratic, multi-ethnic society." This is indeed an ambitious and commendable goal, although one may perhaps question whether such basic "fact books," geared to the non-specialists, can really fulfil all that. The Oceana ethnic volumes are neither histories, nor synthetic assessments of the contributions of the individual ethnic groups to the general makeup of American civili-

zation. Rather, they are compilations of basic factual information. Thus, while they are useful as handy reference works, they can hardly hope to reflect their subjects' real contributions to the making of America.

Joseph Széplaki, the editor-compiler of the Hungarian volume in the series, is known to us from several similar publications, all of which contributed something to our knowledge about Hungarians in America. He again did his best to give us a factual summary of Hungarian-American history, and to compile many other useful and hardly easily accessible information about Hungarian contributions to American civilization. Thus, in addition to about 40 pages of chronology, stretching from Stephen Parmeneus' landing in 1583 to our own ways, he has compiled over 50 pages of useful documents. These include a wide selection, from Parmeneus's letter of 1583, to U.S. Governmental documents pertaining to the admission of over 30,000 Hungarian immigrants after the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. The documents are followed by a series of useful lists, containing the names of "famous Hungarian Americans," the titles of Hungarian American newspapers, journals and serial publications, the names and locations of Hungarian societies, churches and schools, statistics on Hungarian immigration and on Hungarian population in the United States, the names and location of American universities offering Hungarian language courses, as well as those that have courses in the history, politics and culture of East Central Europe. Moreover, Széplaki's work also contains a list of Hungarian book collections (both public and private), as well as a selected bibliography of Hungarian-American publications in English. All in all, Széplaki made an honest and commendable effort to be comprehensive in his coverage. If he did not fully succeed, this is due less to the lack of effort on his part, and more to the pioneering nature of his work—a fact that must not be overlooked.

Insofar as there are problems with Széplaki's *Hungarians in America*, these are twofold: there are a number of factual mistakes, and the inclusion or exclusion of facts, events, personalities, university programs, book collections, etc. in his list appears—at times—to be less than fully balanced. Some of the factual mistakes were undoubtedly unavoidable, for the facts of the Hungarian-American past are not always easy to ascertain. Others could perhaps have been eliminated had the editor-compiler consulted a number of other specialists in the area, before publishing his work. These specialists

could also have expanded and balanced his chronology and his list of notable events, institutions, publications and personalities; and the result would have been an even more useful work on Hungarians in America.

Széplaki's work is thus not without flaws. Even so, however, it is a useful pioneering work, and a good beginning in the right direction. We would still urge the author that—before preparing the second edition of his work—he should consult with several specialists in the area (e.g. Rev. Edmund Vasváry and others), even though we know that such efforts are not always successful. We are certain that by doing so, his work will improve considerably, and it will become an even more useful handbook in the rising field of Hungarian-American studies.

Duquesne University Steven Bela Vardy

Attila József, Selected Poems and Texts. Ed. by George Gömöri and James Atlas. Carcanet Press, Cheadle. 1973.

Proletarian by origin, representative of a special brand of Marxism and Freudism, Attila József (1905-37) is one of Hungary's outstanding poets. The present collection of his poetry is thus far the most extensive available in English. The translator's John Bátki's brief note is followed by George Gömöri's expert introduction, discussing the poet's "psychoanalytic Marxism," "humanistic socialism," and suicide. The extensive supplementary material includes the often cited Curriculum Vitae (1937), a list of the main events of the poet's life, three letters written by him, a note on an early attempt at suicide, and an English language bibliography.

The fifty poems selected are fairly representative of Attila József's poetry. They include the celebrated socialist pieces (A Breath of Air, Night in the Slum), samples of the Freudian poetry (Belated Lament, It hurts a lot) and his most famous love poem, the Ode. The editors may well be right in giving less share to the great political poems of socialist persuasion than to personal lyrics (Coral Beads, Summer Afternoon, Without Hope). Their translation would, the editors contend, involve enormous thematic and technical difficulties and no poet in the English language is up to the task at present.

When compared with the 1966 selection of twenty poems, this

volume more closely resembles poetry. There are fewer awkward expressions and concern for fidelity is less to the detriment of poetic effect. All in all, the English version only seldom matches the brilliance of the original. This may disappoint but need hardly surprise bilingual readers who are well aware of the tremendous difficulties in translating a major poet from one language and culture so vastly different into another. Yet, it has been done with better results into other languages. For example, the French adaptations by such eminent poets as Guillevic, Tzara and Rousselot, seem to lose less in translation.

Imagery comes through well in Bátki's version. Such lines as "A small breeze shakes silver laughter" or "silvery axe strokes play on poplar leaves" are not without some inspiration. Attempts at preserving rhyme and rhythm proved generally rewarding. Short of rhyme and rhythm, though, the English version can do little more than to convey the content. Moreover, rhyming is frequently employed arbitrarily and with irregularity resulting in unevenness, as in the well-known "With a pure Heart." More attention ought to have been given to final lines: when clumsy, they can ruin the musical organization of the entire stanza.

Some translations lose in intensity what they gain in faithfulness to the original (Belated Lament, It hurts a lot). This may be due to the wrong choice or arrangement of words, or, at times, to the differences in the verb systems; unlike the Hungarian "ülni, állni, ölni, halni" the English infinitives do not rhyme: "to sit, to stand, to kill, to die". As a combined effect of these and other causes, both the lightness or the graveness of a poem may suffer. Pasternak says in Doctor Zhivago that art is the commonplace touched by the hand of genius. A poet of the commonplace in many instances, Attila József never becomes pedestrian and would hardly approve of the expressions "nationwide rain," "not even a piece of bread," "time pretends to be nothing," "I kept thinking," "I have been working all day." They just sound too plain in English.

A work of literature loses much of its appeal when deprived of local colour. The omission of geographic names was wise as they would mean little to a foreign reader. But the line "Kis lábaskában hazahozta kegyelmeséktől vacsoráját" loses its flair when translated as "She brought home in a tiny skillet the food they gave her where she worked." Another expression "puli pillanat" with its alliteration is a lovely image in the original. Its transfer into "puli moment" makes no sense in English.

It is not very likely, that even in the best translation, Attila József could occupy the place in the English world that he rightly deserves. Foreign poets, in any case, seldom if ever have the same impact on the English culture that they have on the Hungarian. Shorcomings notwithstanding, Bátki's and the editors' joint effort should be congratulated as an important step in bridging gaps separating cultures.

It should be added that this book has been accepted into the Unesco collection of Representative works, European series.

Carleton University Paul Varnai

Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies, Vol. III, No. 1 (Spring, 1976).

Review of Reviews

A History of Hungary. Ervin Pamlenyi, editor. Translated by Laszlo Boros *et al.*, (Compiled under the auspices of the History Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.) London: Collet's, 1975. Pp. 676.

This is not the first history of Hungary in English but the earlier works are mostly dated and out of print, and even if they are available . . . they are too brief to be of real value to anyone but the casual reader. The present volume is of undoubted interest even to the specialist, enriched as it is with ninety-two plates, sixteen maps, brief biographies of outstanding Hungarians, a detailed chronology, and a good bibliography of works in Western languages. The text itself is a much improved, albeit abbreviated, version of the now standard two volume *Magyarország története* (History of Hungary), published in Budapest in 1964 . . .

With about two thousand years of tortured history to account for, and with a prospective readership that conceivably knows nothing of Hungary, the authors occasionally overwhelm us with data and names, while, as befits Marxist historians, they do not shun broad generalizations and hard conclusions. Their style is perfectly adequate, as is the English translation, accomplished by a team of Hungarian experts and a second team of Hungarian-speaking native Anglo-Saxons. The reader would look in vain for the dramatic historical accounts or colorful human portraits so dear to the preceding generations of Hungarian historians. What we get instead is a conscientious briefing in political and economic history, with occasional and often excellent excursions . . . into social and cultural history . . .

. . . It is with the events of the early 1940s that truth and what the authors tell us begin to part ways; by the time we reach the late 1940s, the parting is almost complete. It is comforting to have Lacko, author of the last chapter, denounce "the enormous political and economic errors" made between 1948 and 1956; but it is heartbreaking to have this fine historian accuse the leaders of the Smallholders' party of conspiring against the nation that gave them the absolute majority of

votes at the free parliamentary elections of 1945, to have him slander the Hungarian Independence party of the bourgeois-democrat Zoltan Pfeiffer as "openly extreme-right wing," to have him argue that, notwithstanding the election results, the Hungarians supported the Communist take-over almost to a man, to have him ignore the show trial of Cardinal Mindszenty and the execution of Imre Nagy, and to have him suggest that the armed Soviet intervention in Hungary dates from November 4, 1956, and not October 23. Were it not for the last chapter—and for some outrageous falsifications in the brief biographies—we could celebrate this volume as the very best and the most useful of all Hungarian histories.

Istvan Deak (Columbia University) in the *American Historical Review*, Vol. 81, No. 2 (April 1976).

Eötvös József olvasmányai. By Miklós Benyei. Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1972. Pp. 231.

The recent upsurge of interest in Baron József Eötvös (1813-71), Hungarian liberal statesman, political thinker and novelist, was undoubtedly intensified by the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of his death in 1971 . . . . Eötvös spent his life expiating the sins of his class, and particularly of his family, whose unbroken tradition of providing servile civil servants to the Habsburg crown brought its name into disrepute. For a long time Eötvös seemed to be largely the property of literary scholarship, and not without reason. His novels possess remarkable artistic qualities, and at least one of them, *The Village Notary*, a panoramic portrayal of Hungarian society in the 1840's, is a masterpiece . . .

His political ideas . . . never gained much support. He was criticised by contemporaries for relegating the cause of national independence to second place and by later critics for the comparative lack of influence his ideas had on Hungarian political thinking. On the other hand, Marxist scholars, until quite recently, have also found fault with Eötvös because, like Széchenyi, he never claimed to be a radical, let alone a revolutionary . . .

Miklós Benyei's painstaking examination of the literature that influenced Eötvös' intellectual development deserves high praise. Eötvös read in five languages and, fortunately, his library was pre-

served. Benyei divides Eötvös's library collection into five categories —fiction, philosophy, history, political science, and natural science —and discusses each category in detail. Evidence is offered by the author to support Eötvös's competence in philosophy (sometimes questioned) and his surprising proficiency in the natural sciences . . .

Lorant Czigany (London) in *Slavic Review*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Sept. 1975).

A Hungarian Count in the Revolution of 1848. By György Spira. Translated by Thomas Land and Richard E. Allen. Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1974. Pp. 345.

. . . historian György Spira quite successfully describes the thought process and politics of Count István Széchenyi. With great power of expression the author reconstructs— with the aid of his hero's voluminous diary and correspondence—six months in the life of a truly important historical figure . . . Spira also introduces a new thesis that satisfactorily proves the famous count's active participation in the revolution of 1848, his cooperation with Kossuth, and his struggle for Hungary's limited sovereignty.

Count István Széchenyi was an initiator and leader in the reform era that preceded the events of 1848 in Hungary. Not only did he advocate the economic, social, and political modernization of his country, but he dedicated most of his energy and wealth to such purpose. Reform was his vehicle for progress . . . In 1848 the count had not abandoned his ideals but now believed that the process of reform should simply accelerate. As his cabinet colleagues adopted more and more radical measures for the pursuance of a *de facto* independent Hungary, Széchenyi's doubts multiplied and culminated in the loss of his rational faculties . . .

Spira's work, a faithful translation of the 1964 Hungarian version of the same book, contributes to our understanding of 1848 and of Széchenyi's role in those turbulent times . . .

Peter I. Hidas (Dawson College, Montreal) in the *American Historical Review*, Vol. 81, No. 2 (April 1976).

A magyarországi Szocialdemokrata Párt és az agrárkérdés—1900-1914 között. By Dezső Farkas. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973.
A magyarországi Szocialdemokrata Párt ellenzéke és tevékenysége, 1906-1911. By Lajos Varga. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973.

Contemporary Marxist historians in Hungary have an avid interest in the period between the 1890s and 1914, a period that exhibited agrarian unrest in a countryside characterized by the extremes of landless millions and giant estates . . . This period also witnessed the birth and growth of the Hungarian Social Democratic Party which, however, was primarily concerned with socialist education and organization of industrial workers in the citites.

The books by Dezső Farkas and Lajos Varga deal respectively with the agrarian position of the party and with its overall political tactics. Both are critical of the Social Democratic leadership, which, torn between faithful adherence to orthodox Marxism and the realities of a primarily agrarian country, alternated between emphasis on revolutionary rhetoric, strikes and demonstrations and a policy of compromises and negotiated deals.

The critical approach is certainly warranted in the case of the party's agrarian policy, described by Farkas in a thorough, scholarly, and well documented, though somewhat dry manner . . .

Farkas's criticism is basically sound and valid in the theoretical sphere. It does not deal with the methods and tactics actually used by the party in the countryside. Such an omission, whether intentional or accidental, saves his book from the pitfall confronting Varga's treatment of tactical issues in the party's uphill struggle . . . Varga has written an interesting, lively, and dynamic book on this subject. He carefully avoids painting a one-sided picture by acknowledging the genuinely socialist credentials of the leadership and the human frailties of the opposition within the party . . . Yet he maintains the impossible assumption (pp. 114 and 186) that somehow a more radical socialist policy could have succeeded in pre-1914 Hungary. In fact, the socialist leadership could be faulted for doctrinaire rigidity, mistaken notions on many issues, misplaced trust in opponents, and occasional tactical errors, but their basic instinct toward caution was a critical choice of self-preservation over self-annihilation in the best interest of the Hungarian working class . . .

In conclusion, both books are important and valuable contributions to our knowledge of the period immediately preceding World War I. However, neither a purely theoretical nor a somewhat unhis-

torical approach can do full justice to the complex problem of Hungarian socialism at the turn of the century.

Gabor Vermes (Rutgers University, Newark) in *Slavic Review*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (September 1975).

The New Found Land of Stephen Parmenius: The Life and Writings of a Hungarian Poet, Drowned on a Voyage from Newfoundland, 1583. Edited by David B. Quinn and Neil M. Chesire. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972. Pp. XII, 250.

Given Hungary's geographical location, it is only natural that Hungarians have failed to distinguish themselves in the area of seafaring and maritime explorations. Thus, discounting a number of unsubstantiated claims about Hungarian travelers in pre-Columbian America, the first Hungarian to visit this continent was Stephen Parmenius of Buda (ca. 1555/60-83), who joined Sir Humphrey Gilber's second expedition in 1583 and then drowned along with Gilbert off Sable Island near Newfoundland.

But not even Parmenius was an "explorer" in the traditional sense of that term. He was a young Protestant scholar and poet, and an accomplished Latinist, who was drawn to Oxford in order to further his studies . . . Once in England, however, he became acquainted with Richard Hakluyt and, through Hakluyt, with Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who soon persuaded the young Hungarian to accompany him on his colonizing effort to North America as a "chronicler." . . .

Parmenius's claim to fame rests largely on two Latin poetic works in praise of the American expedition, and especially on his long and informative letter to Hakluyt about his experiences in America, which he penned about three weeks before his death . . . Parmenius's description is still valuable, and the two editors should be commended for making it available to modern scholars.

Both of the editors have excelled in scholarship. Their painstaking introductory chapters on Parmenius are the best in any language, as are their meticulously annotated translations of his writings . . .

Steven Bela Vardy (Duquesne University), in the *American Historical Review*, Vol. 81, No. 2 (April 1976).

Xántus János. By István Sándor. Budapest: Magvető könyvkiadó, 1970. Pp. 408.

. . . In this work, Sándor presents a substantial semi-popular biography, giving equal space to Xántus's life before he left America and to his travels in Asia and his museological work in Budapest until his death in 1894. This latter half of Xántus's life is here presented for the first time in book form. A list of Xántus's 243 writings and a number of bibliographical notes complete the volume, which is handsomely printed and bound.

It is curious to note that Sándor's short biography of 1953 gives some attention to a supposed interest of Xántus in the "international workers' movement," whereas his biography of 1970 does not mention this fantasy . . . Aside from revealing welcome ideological change in Hungary, Sándor's later work is a useful, if somewhat turgid, survey of the life of a man who deserves far more attention in the history of science in the United States than the mere bestowal of his name on a murrelet and a lizard.

Henry Miller Madden (California State University, Fresno), in *American Historical Review,* Vol. 81, No. 2 (April 1976).

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CONTRIBUTORS (continued from page 2)

iastical history. His major work is *A domonkosrend Magyarországon a reformácio elõtt* [The Dominican Order in Hungary before the Reformation] (Debrecen, 1938). Presently he is editing some unpublished works of his late father, the author and playwright Zsolt Harsányi.

The Very Reverend JOSEPH A. BÁTORI (1900-1975), Piarist Provincial (1960-67), received his doctorate in Hungarian and Latin in 1923. Assigned to the Piarist Gymnasium in Budapest, he continued his interest in Hungarian literature and the training of youth, especially in developing the unique Hungarian Scouts movement, becoming its national Vice-Scoutmaster in 1930. Later he became Headmaster of the Piarist Gymnasium in Debrecen. Sent in 1951 to Buffalo as Father General to the Piarists in the United States, he established the houses in Buffalo and Derby, N.Y., Devon, Pa., and Washington, D.C. Even after his retirement in 1967, Father Bátori continued his interest in the Hungarian Scout movement in America and often lectured on topics related to Hungarian literature and culture.

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Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies

special issue:

THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION
TWENTY YEARS AFTER

selected papers and perspectives

by:

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Tamás Aczél
Béla K. Király
Paul Pilisi and G. C. Kuun
Peter Gosztony
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Vol. III, No. 2 Fall, 1976

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The Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies

Special Issue

The Hungarian Revolution Twenty Years After

Selected Papers and Perspectives

CONTENTS

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ANDRÁS B. GÖLLNER received his university education at Loyola College in Montreal and at Carleton University in Ottawa. He has recently completed his studies for his doctorate at the London School of Economics. During 1974–75 he was a Research Associate in Carleton University's Norman Patterson School of International Affairs, and was Assistant Director of the School's East-West Project. Currently Professor Göllner is a member of the Department of Political Science at Concordia University (Loyola campus) in Montreal, and is the Director of an Interdisciplinary Project on Comparative Public Policy and Administration. He is the author of a forthcoming volume on *The Politics of Hungarian Economic Control.*

Before leaving Hungary Professor TAMÁS ACZÉL lectured at the Hungarian Academy of Dramatic Art (1950–55), edited the journals *Szikra* (1948–50) and *Csillag* (1950–53), acted as Secretary of the Hungarian Writers' Association (1954–55) and was a widely published novelist and poet. In London he edited the *Irodalmi Újság* (Literary Gazette) between 1957 and 1961. Afterwards he joined the faculty of the University of Massachusetts (Amherst, Mass.) where he is now Professor of English. His English language books include *The Revolt of the Mind* (with Tibor Mérey, Praeger, 1959), *Ten Years After* (a collection of essays published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), *Poetry from the Russian Underground* (a bilingual anthology, with Joseph Langland and László Tikos, Harper & Row, 1973) and *An*

(continued on page 208)

Editor's Foreword

This collection of essays celebrates the twentieth anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. It does so by bringing together a wide range of views on the origins, events and consequences of the uprising. While some of the contributors offer perspectives gained from personal involvement in the events, others try to grapple, from different vantage points and levels of analysis, with some of the historical questions surrounding the Revolution. The papers in the collection represent their authors' personal tribute to the memory of an event which made an indelible impact on the lives and beliefs of a great many people in Hungary and elsewhere in the world. But the volume does more than honour an anniversary: by offering an unrestricted discussion of Hungarian affairs, it carries on in the Revolution's spirit and strives to embody its demand for the free exchange of ideas.

The publication of this issue of the Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies *was made possible by the dedicated and patient collaboration of a great number of people, not all of whose names appear on the list of contributors. Professors Louis A. Fischer, András Göllner, Béla Király, Bennett Kovrig and László László (Concordia University) have all read one or two of the articles. Editorial assistance in French was rendered by Professor G. C. Kuun and Professor S. J. Kirschbaum (Glendon College, York University). All the manuscripts in English were patiently edited by Professor Thomas Spira; those in French, by Professor David Graham (Royal Military College of Canada). Mrs. Karen Brown typed the final manuscript versions in English with speed and efficiency.*

One half of the printing cost of this issue was defrayed by a grant from the Ontario Department of Culture and Recreation, for which we are indeed grateful. All other costs were met by the Hungarian Readers' Service, Inc., secured through the tireless efforts of HRS President and Review *manager Dr. Ferenc Harcsár.*

Kingston, 1976 November *N. F. Dreisziger*

Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies, Vol. III, No. 2 (Fall 1976)

Foundations of Soviet Domination and Communist Political Power in Hungary: 1945–1950

András B. Göllner

One fundamental question concerning the Hungarian uprising of 1956 revolves around the issue of causality. Twenty years have passed since those heroic days in Budapest but this question is far from resolved. Not only is there a basic disagreement between official Hungarian and Soviet historians on the one hand and Western or émigré scholars on the other, but there are also a number of contending schools of thought among Western liberal and Marxist academics. The aim of this paper is much more modest than to provide a comprehensive answer to this question. It merely proposes to explore a specific and interdependent group of hitherto neglected causes of the uprising focusing on the roots of Soviet domination and Communist power in Hungary under Mátyás Rákosi. The paper wishes to show that certain powerful pre-1945 demands for radical change, the effects of World War II and of postwar Soviet economic exploitation, coupled with the Hungarian Workers Party's (HWP) economic strategy between 1945 and 1950, created a very tight circle of constraints on Hungary's political decision-makers during 1950–1956, which greatly restricted the number of alternatives available for Hungary's modernization. Indeed, they provided a potent impulse for the political excesses of the Rákosi regime during the six or seven pre-Revolutionary years.[1] These factors stand at the gateway of the revolution.

The Need for Modernization and the Legacy of 1918–1945

The challenges facing Hungary's post-World War II leaders can only be understood in the context of the social, economic, and political situation inherited from the Horthy era. While this legacy has been fairly well documented, it often suffers from distortions, and is clouded by rhetoric. Official Communist historians tend to overemphasize the enormity of postwar Hungary's burden in order to diminish Soviet and Communist responsibility for the country's political and economic

crisis in the early and mid-1950's. At the same time, Hungarian émigré writers often minimize the fact that the social and political system of interwar Hungary had severely restricted the opportunities of most Hungarians and that, generally speaking, the country's interwar regimes retarded its advance into the twentieth century.

What were the pre-1945 grievances that could be rectified only by an immense national effort? They manifested themselves in many areas of Hungarian life: in politics, the economy, in society's structure and norms, as well as in the country's external relations. Politically, there was the need to establish the foundations of democratic practice. The 1930's witnessed a gradual shift towards fascism, so that by 1940, and certainly during the war years, participatory democracy in Hungary was but a façade. By the time World War II began, some of the fundamental civil and political rights taken for granted in many Western democracies were, in Hungary (as well as in the other East-Central European states), the privilege only of those who acquiesced in the dictates of the regime, or who could be trusted not to go beyond verbal protest. As a former director of the Hungarian National Bank pointed out:

> The interwar governments retained their power not so much by genuine popular support, but by exerting pressure to achieve safe majorities in the elections. . . Far reaching reforms could be advocated . . . but the opposition . . . was never allowed to show its prowess in taking over government, and the government could seldom be compelled to yield or offer redress.[2]

The economic state of affairs was equally depressing and in need of radical change. Agriculture, the mainstay of the Hungarian national economy up to 1945, suffered from structural distortions, the most visible of which stemmed from the uneven distribution of landownership. Over half of the arable land was owned by one per cent of the landowners. Beneath this thin veneer of wealth and privilege stood a large peasant class—numbering about three million—comprising the so-called "dwarf holders," seasonally employed farmhands, and estate servants, many of whom spent much of the year unemployed and in abject misery.[3] The Depression had a disastrous effect on the country's economy generally, but particularly on agriculture. Struggling with outdated farming methods, and unable to compete with American grain sellers in Europe, Hungarian agriculture served as an extremely shaky foundation for the economy.

The late 1930's witnessed a remarkable growth in industry. A thorough examination reveals, however, first, that industrialization was largely spawned by increased war preparation and primarily served Germany's

grand design; and second, that Hungarian manufacturing was over-concentrated, that it rested on a shallow raw material base (resulting from the dismemberment of Hungary by the Treaty of Trianon) and that it was structurally uneven—pockets of modernity in a sea of backwardness. By the end of the decade, Hungary was Nazi Germany's economic satellite and her economic development reflected Germany's needs.[4]

Economic dependence was followed by political subservience. Fear of Communism, a belief that Germany would assist in regaining lost Hungarian territories, a feeling that support for Germany would be far less costly than opposition and, finally, sheer economic necessity and geographical factors, all contributed to Hungary's involvement in World War II on Germany's side. It is true that one premier, Pál Teleki, committed suicide in 1941 rather than submit to German dictates. Another one, Miklós Kállay, during 1942 and 1943 strove in vain to unhitch the Hungarian state from the Nazi bandwagon. During the closing stages of the war the Regent, Admiral Miklós Horthy, himself made a last-ditch effort to extricate Hungary from the fate of unconditional surrender by ordering his troops to join the Allies;[5] but his attempt failed. Within minutes of his announcement, he was thrown out of office by the Nazis and their local supporters. A new government was formed by Arrow Cross Party leader Ferenc Szálasi, which immediately rescinded Horthy's order and thereby committed the nation to go under with the rapidly sinking German ship of state.

1945 was to be the beginning of a new era for Hungary. The country's progressive elements, with a few exceptions, were united in the conviction that the old ruling class had had its day and that the new, sovereign Hungary would live at peace with her neighbours and work arm-in-arm with the other Central European states for rapid modernization, for the betterment of her people, and of the region as a whole. They also believed that a fundamental modernization of Hungary's polity, economy and society simply could not be postponed any longer. Perhaps no one was more willing to participate in this task of building a new Hungary than the Hungarian working class and peasantry, which, during the first steps of economic reconstruction after 1945, were to display a superhuman effort. Often working on empty stomachs, frequently without pay or roof over their heads, they were to work 12–14 hours a day, sometimes seven days a week, hoping that, this time, the sacrifices demanded of them would be in their own interests.

The greatest obstacles to this postwar modernization were the ravages and the accumulated debts of a lost war. Economic damage sustained

during the early war years was slight, confined primarily to a mounting German financial debt column to Hungary. Only after March 1944, when German forces occupied the country in preparation for the coming battle with the advancing Red Army, did allied bombing of Hungary begin in earnest. And then, from September 1944 until April 1945, the country became the scene of some vicious ground fighting as well. As the German and Hungarian armies retreated westward under a constant barrage of bombs and artillery, they blew up most of the country's river and railroad bridges.[6] Tracks were ripped up, and most of the rolling stock taken to Germany. Some of the Danube merchant ships were sunk by the Nazis, while the rest, including all barges and tugs, were taken upriver to Germany, as were most automobiles and motor transport vehicles.

In order to prevent the Red Army from drawing on Hungarian economic resources the German High Command ordered a policy of systematic industrial dismantling and removals. As a consequence, about 500 important factories not severely damaged by Allied bombs were either wholly or partially dismantled, their equipment requisitioned or scattered around the countryside. Paralleling this action, a considerable quantity of immovable property was destroyed by Nazi demolition experts. The list of removals and destruction is very long indeed, consisting of vast amounts of industrial and agricultural goods. Even the country's entire gold and silver reserves were taken to Germany.

The removals did not involve merely equipment and articles. Approximately 500,000 people retreated with the Germans into Austria, including members of the government, the bureaucracy, large numbers of plant managers and owners, and thousands of ordinary citizens.

Statistical analyses published after the war claimed that financial losses from the war owing to material damage or removals equalled approximately 40% of Hungary's 1944 national income.[7] The severest damages, and the most significant for future development, were registered in heavy industry, primarily in iron, metallurgy and machine building,[8] and amounted to 33% of Hungary's total industrial losses. Within this sector, losses in machinery far outweighed those in buildings and stocks.

With the armistice agreement of 1945, Hungary was compelled to pay a very stiff economic penalty for her involvement in the war. The USSR was given rights to war booty, and all formerly German or Italian-owned assets were transferred to Soviet ownership. Moreover, the country was levied a very heavy reparations burden payable to the USSR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.[9] While most other states in

East Central Europe (*e.g.*, Poland and Czechoslovakia) received very sizeable financial and material support from the UNRRA, Hungary received scarcely anything.

Constraints of Soviet Economic Exploitation

1. Soviet Military Management of Hungarian Industry: 1944–1945

After 1945 the difficulties stemming from the economic havoc wreaked by the war were accentuated unexpectedly by another obstacle: Soviet economic exploitation. It came to equal, if in a different way, the intensity of those pre-1945 constraints which had for so long denied decent socio-economic standards for Hungary's people.

As the Red Army advanced westward through Hungary, all enterprises falling within its territory—some vacated only a few hours earlier by Nazi demolition experts—were assigned Soviet military commanders. These saw to it that factories still in working order began producing immediately for the war effort against the retreating Germans.[10] Soviet military personnel also supervised production in the coal mines, and deliveries to the army began forthwith.

An illuminating collection of documents, shedding a great deal of light, indirectly and perhaps unwittingly, on this period of Soviet military management, has been published recently by the Hungarian National Archives.[11] Intended to illustrate—and they do so admirably well—the self-sacrificing role of Hungary's working classes, factory committees and councils in the early reconstruction phase of the war-torn economy during 1944-45,[12] these documents also paint a vivid picture of Soviet military management, providing clear-cut evidence of the following (and hitherto officially denied) aspects of the Soviet military role in postwar Hungary between November 1944 and July–August 1945:

1. The complete depletion of economic stocks by the Red Army;
2. Wholesale removal of all liquid assets from Hungarian banks and enterprise safes by Soviet military personnel;
3. Widespread dismantling and removal of equipment from factories;
4. Breakneck production under difficult working conditions, heedless of the need for maintaining equipment;
5. Soviet requisitioning of industrial products without remuneration;
6. The difficulty of ensuring labour supply because of arbitrary street arrests by Soviet patrols and deportation of large numbers of skilled workers to the Soviet Union; and
7. The non-payment of workers' wages by Soviet military managers.

When Soviet military management ended in July–August 1945, the affected firms were in utter chaos. Thousands of valuable machines and tools were lost, stocks were used up, and machines left badly damaged. Most of the firms were also hopelessly in deficit.[13] The magnitude of direct Soviet military intervention in Hungary's economic revival during the critical first postwar months, and the immense strategic advantage enjoyed by the USSR in shaping that revival, can be seen even in the official Hungarian figures. According to Iván T. Berend, during the nine months of Soviet military management 75% of Hungary's industrial output was channelled directly by and for the Red Army.[14]

The situation in agriculture was similar. The Red Army requisitioned vast quantities of agricultural goods without payment, and drove away tens of thousands of cattle, horses, and other livestock. From the middle of 1945, requisitioning, in the main, was carried out by the Hungarian authorities who compensated the peasants. Consequently, instead of the peasants bearing the brunt of the occupation cost, the load was shifted onto the Hungarian treasury.

There should be no misunderstanding here. A victorious power has the right to exact certain payments from a defeated enemy. One should also not belittle the sacrifices, the suffering and hardship of millions of Soviet citizens, or the tremendous damage inflicted during the war on the Soviet economy. Hungary's belligerency against the USSR could certainly not be suddenly forgiven or forgotten by the Red Army. Nor could it be expected to ignore Hungary's factories and rely on supplies shipped over great distances. Our concern here stems from the fact that, since 1945, Communist economic historians have consistently claimed that the period in question was very brief, that it benefitted Hungary, that it laid the foundation for rapid economic recovery during the Three Year Plan, and that it showed great Soviet concern for the well-being of the Hungarian populace. The evidence does not bear this out. On the contrary, Soviet military management accelerated the collapse of Hungary's private sector, hastened the economic catastrophe of 1945–46, impoverished millions of Hungarian workers and peasants, and confounded the country's new and inexperienced public administrators. The effects of Soviet military management were so devastating that the most thorough and encompassing central planning and control were mandatory. In 1945, the Communist Party captured a commanding position in economic reconstruction—the Supreme Economic Council (SEC). This important instrument enabled it to sever the jugular vein of private capital and hasten the Stalinist type of command system.

2. The Retribution Payments

The reparations agreement with the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia was signed on June 15, 1945. It established the various reparations goods prices, designated the product mix of the reparations package, and stipulated deliveries in six equal yearly installments. At first glance the total sum of 300 million dollars does not seem excessive.[15] We must consider closely, however, the price structure, the total product mix, and the timing of the deliveries, in order to gauge the true impact of this agreement on Hungary's postwar economic development.

When the Soviet-managed firms were finally returned to civilian Hungarian control in July–August 1945, reparations payments began. No sooner had Hungarian industry finished supplying the bulk of her production gratis to the Soviet command than she had to begin all over again, only under a different pretext. There was, moreover, no possibility of deducting any of the earlier unpaid-for deliveries from the retribution bill. Under the terms of the Paris Peace agreements, the Soviet Union forced Hungary to waive all claims arising from the earlier Soviet management of Hungary's economy.[16]

a. Product mix:

War damages caused by bombing and Nazi sabotage were the most severe in Hungary's heavy industrial sector, especially in the engineering and machine building branches. This fact seriously handicapped the pace of economic reconstruction. The reparations agreement exacerbated this handicap by stipulating that the greatest share of reparations goods to the USSR be composed of heavy industrial manufactures. After the switch-over to civilian production during 1945 and 1946, almost 90% of Hungary's heavy industrial production was tied down by reparations orders. Even at the end of 1946 and 1947, when (thanks to staggering deliveries over eight years instead of the initial six years) the quantity of yearly deliveries was reduced, retribution production still claimed about 60% of heavy industry's total output.[17] The Hungarian General Creditbank also showed that at the end of August 1946, 76,000 out of 95,000 employees in heavy industry were engaged in retribution work, and in December of that year, 60,000.[18] According to the Creditbank, production for civilian consumption rose only marginally, owing to dismissals and a reduction in working time to forty hours per week.[19]

Although agricultural goods comprised only 15% of total reparations, these were also extremely difficult to procure and their delivery caused many difficulties to the economy and the civilian population.

From late 1944 until the beginning of 1947, when the Paris Peace Treaty was signed, Hungary was required, under the terms of the Armistice agreement, to supply all of the food requirements of the occupation army. A severe drought in 1945, the low acreage sown at the end of 1944, initial dislocations caused by the land reform in 1945, and the undermechanization of the new postwar land reform system, together with massive requisitioning by the occupying army, were responsible for a disastrous agricultural situation in the fall of 1945. Compulsory agricultural deliveries for retribution compounded the damage and hindered the development of the newly-formed farming system. The result was widespread starvation.

b. Pricing:

The June 15 agreement reiterated the terms of the Armistice agreement, namely, that the price of retribution goods be calculated at the level of 1938 U.S. dollars. For many reasons (*e.g.*, a 400% rise in transportation costs and a 700% increase in the import price index)[20] the costs of producing the goods stipulated in the June agreement were significantly higher in 1945 than they would have been in 1938. According to Hungary's premier, the Hungarian delegation protested in vain that the goods could not be produced at the rates indicated and that, because of undervaluation, the deliveries would in effect triple or quintuple the amount indicated in the retribution agreement.[21]

Underpricing was not the only factor substantially raising the nominal costs of the reparations package. At the time of signing, the Hungarian currency, the *pengő,* was overvalued with respect to the dollar. According to Berend, the real costs of the reparation package doubled as a result.[22] Nicholas Spulber has claimed that the new exchange rate between the forint (the new currency introduced in August 1946) and the dollar, quadrupled the value of the reparation package: ". . . the average Hungarian 'reparations dollar' appears to have been equal in 1946 to 43 forints or nearly 4 current dollars. That is, to obtain credit for one dollar of reparations, Hungary had to deliver goods worth almost 4 dollars at the current exchange rate." [23] It can be safely said that the combined effects of these factors pushed up the reparations bill's real value to about 1.5 billion 1946 U.S. dollars.[24]

c. Reparations as a share of exports:

The share of foreign trade (and the dependence on imports for raw materials) in Hungary's national income had been already very high in 1938. One of the greatest negative effects of the retribution payments on

Hungarian economic revival and modernization was that it kept exports to a minimum. For the first three postwar years, the value of retribution deliveries exceeded the entire export trade and even in subsequent years retributions consumed about 50–60% of exports. This posed serious problems for Hungary's balance of trade, monetary and import policy, and economic reconstruction in general.

d. Timing:

The June 1945 agreement, the terms of which were retroactive to January 1945, directed that deliveries be made in six *equal* yearly installments. This meant that reparations for 1945 had to be produced and delivered in six months instead of the normal twelve. Should deliveries lag, a penalty of 5% per month on the value of outstanding goods would be imposed.

The pressure on the treasury had already been severe prior to the signing of the agreement. There had been demands for government investment in reconstruction, for government subsidy of firms with large deficits under Soviet military management, for government financing of the maintenance costs of the Red Army, and for a host of other programmes. State revenues were virtually non-existent, the country's gold reserves had been lost, and no export revenues were available because of the collapse of foreign trade. In short, the six months target for the 1945 reparations payments meant that considerable financial outlays had to be made immediately, in the absence of appreciable increase in state revenues, and that an inordinately large proportion of current production would have to be exported gratis. Only a small fraction of production would remain for home consumption. Faced with the threat of stiff financial penalties and a stream of Soviet protest notes about the slowness of deliveries, the treasury responded by printing more and more money, in order to finance the companies producing for retribution. This action quickly snowballed into the most severe inflation ever experienced in world history.

It would be incorrect to assert that the Hungarian inflation started only with reparations payments, the Red Army's maintenance costs, or with its printing presses churning out Hungarian currency during 1944–45. The rate of inflation had increased steadily already during the war. It was with reparations, however, that the currency went out of control, so that, by the end of 1945, the cost of living (excluding rent) was mounting at a rate of 15% per hour. As will be seen in the discussion of the Communist-controlled Supreme Economic Council's practice, these Soviet claims and pressures were fully integrated with the SEC's

secret policy of bankrupting Hungary's private sector, thereby generating the need for ever greater state control over the economy, ostensibly to safeguard the national interest.

3. *Soviet Takeover of Formerly German and Italian-Owned Corporations and the Creation of Joint-Stock Companies*

According to the Potsdam Agreement, the Berlin Foreign Ministers' Conference, and the Paris Peace Treaty, all formerly German and Italian-owned assets and companies in Hungary were to become the property of the Soviet Union.[25] Moreover, the Order in Council of January 4, 1948 stated that "claims which arose before January 20, 1945, cannot be enforced against trading companies in which half or more of the share capital or of the shares were handed over to the Soviet Union as German property. The same applies to individual firms ceded to the Soviet Union." [26]

On March 8, 1947, the Hungarian government published a list of the fully German or Italian-owned companies which were transferred to the Soviet Union,[27] totalling 201 enterprises with over 3,500 plants and premises. The large number of concerns in Hungary with partial German-Italian shareholding were disposed of similarly. Through switching and amalgamation, the Soviet Union created five new Soviet-Hungarian joint-stock companies in 1946, each country having a 50% share. The extent of these assets was enormous. Berend and Ránki cite Premier Teleki, according to whom, "The German Empire in 1939 had such an extensive and widespread network of economic interest in our country, that through this she could check and indeed influence the whole of Hungarian economic life," [28]

> The share of German capital in Hungarian economic life increased during the war, first of all in the manufacturing industry. Studies by the Statistical Office have shown that between 1938 and 1942 the stock of industrial and commercial shares held by German interests in the Hungarian economy increased by 50%, and in credit concerns closely associated with industry, the ownership of German shares went up by 100%. During these years, when the country became increasingly subordinated to Germany, beyond those companies in which Germany had a total or majority shareholding, German capital also acquired shares in all important Hungarian concerns.[29]

In short, all of these assets, through which Germany had exercised economic control over Hungary, were transferred to the USSR after the war. This enabled the Soviets to exercise stringent control over Hungarian economic life.

The operative control of joint stock companies, like that of the fully Soviet-owned firms, was vested in the hands of the general manager, who, by law, had to be a Soviet citizen.[30] The joint stock companies were given preferential treatment by being placed in a much more profitable position than any other companies in Hungary. Indeed, their advantages and concessions surpassed even those which they had enjoyed under German domination.[31] For example, in monopolistic joint stock companies (*e.g.*, the Pécs and district coal mines, an affiliate of Mészhart), a radical upward price adjustment was ordered by the Soviet manager and approved unquestioningly by the Hungarian Price Office.[32]

It is well known that many of the formerly German-owned companies had floated substantial debts with the Hungarian treasury during the war. These were cancelled by the Soviet Union upon gaining control of the shares. However, in formerly German-owned firms that were owed payment by Hungary—in many cases incurred during Soviet military management—the Russians demanded full payment with a substantial mark-up to offset the effects of inflation. Initially, the Soviet Union pegged the amount owed by the Hungarian treasury to these firms and to Germany in general at 200 million dollars. Finally she settled for $45 million. Investments in the joint-stock companies were to be on a fifty-fifty basis, shared between the two countries. The source of the Soviet share was the above-mentioned $45 million. In effect, the Hungarian treasury defrayed the full Soviet investment.[33]

Two of the joint companies, Mészhart and Maszovlet, apart from controlling a number of diverse affiliates (such as Hungary's best and most productive coal-fields in Pécs), monopolized Danube shipping and civil aviation. The other three companies—Hungarian-Soviet Crude Oil Ltd. (Maszovol); Hungarian-Soviet Oil Works Ltd. (Molaj); and the Hungarian-Soviet Bauxite-Aluminum Co. Ltd. (which controlled two affiliates, the Hungarian Bauxite Mine Co. and the Danube Valley Alum Earth Industry Co.)—were also privileged companies. They virtually monopolized bauxite mining (Hungary's major mineral industry), aluminum processing, petroleum refining, and oil prospecting.

Respecting the concessions won by the joint-stock companies, Nicholas Spulber has written that the ". . . exemptions amounted to a virtual subsidy by the local governments to each of these companies. . . [Moreover they were given] complete latitude in the utilization of their foreign exchange. . . Enjoying complete extra-territoriality, they could cut across both the local frontiers and the local planning. Although in principle they were supposed to adjust themselves to local economic

plans, in practice the local economic planners had to adjust their plans to the objectives of the joint Soviet companies." [34]

It is a well-known fact that, as a consequence of the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary had lost all of her important mineral deposits, and that, after Denmark, she is the poorest European country in mineral resources.[35] In this bleak picture there are four bright spots: Hungary's bauxite reserves are considered to be the second largest in the world; after 1946, significant uranium deposits were found in western Hungary; the Komló region of Pécs boasted good deposits of high-grade black coal (Hungary's other coal fields all yield the low calorific, brown coal, or lignite variety); and she had limited oil deposits. After 1946, the USSR obtained control over all of these mineral resources for a decade. The uranium fields, by now largely depleted, are still under Soviet management.

After 1946, the Soviet Union became Hungary's major trading partner, absorbing about one third of that country's foreign trade. It is noteworthy that the servicing of this commerce was *not* carried out through the Hungarian-owned Foreign Trade Bank, which, under Hungarian law, must handle all foreign transactions. Until 1955, all business deals with the USSR were channelled through the Hungarian Commercial and Industrial Bank, which was under Soviet ownership and management from 1946 until 1955.[36] Having profited handsomely from these formerly German-owned companies for a period of 8–9 years, the Soviet Union began to *sell* her shares to Hungary not long after Stalin's death, in order to finance her investments in some of her other holdings in the country. One official source tells us that in 1952 the Soviet Union estimated the value of her *fully owned* assets in Hungary to be 3.6 billion rubles, or $900 million at the going rate of exchange.[38]

It is impossible to calculate the Soviet Union's net financial extraction during the first post-war decade. It might amount to approximately 2.5 billion dollars.[39] Currently, only two other "informed guesses" exist on the net financial cost of Soviet economic imperialism to the Hungarian economy between 1945 and 1955. Jan Wszelaki has suggested $1 billion, which he admits is a very conservative estimate, and which excludes amounts incurred after 1947. His calculations, which are unfortunately impossible to check, "point to an amount in excess of $1 billion. By 1954, when mixed companies were dissolved, they must have been much higher." [40] The other figure, $1.3 billion, suggested by Paul Marer is, undoubtedly, also a conservative estimate.[41] However, owing to the secrecy surrounding Soviet-Hungarian economic transactions, none of the figures is verifiable, at least not yet. Nonetheless, the USSR

had an unmistakeable and irrefutable tendency to exploit the Hungarian economy during the first and certainly most critical decade of socialist construction.

No country, poor in industrial raw materials and suffering from extensive war damages, can afford to lose such a vast amount of capital and to have such a large percentage of her industrial capacity tied down with reparations *precisely* when she needs to rebuild her economy and begin a long overdue process of rapid political, economic, and social modernization. This burden on the Hungarian national economy demanded great sacrifices from Hungary's long-oppressed working classes. The targets of modernization and the payment of external debts could only be exacted and maintained by ruthless police methods and strict political regimentation. Democratic practices and fair wages could simply not come into effect under such constraints. The roots of the Rákosiite police state, its political excesses, were deeply conditioned if not determined by Soviet demands and exploitation in the immediate postwar period. It was not accidental that the primary aim of the 1956 uprising was to terminate this Soviet exploitation of Hungary's economy. Yet even these two interrelated variables—the need for rapid modernization and reconstruction, and Soviet economic exploitation—do not sufficiently explain the impulse towards Hungarian communist totalitarianism. We must add a third set of variables, that of the HWP's own postwar economic strategy.

* * *

The Hungarian Workers Party's Postwar Economic Strategy

From December 23, 1944, Hungary's "liberated" territories and its affairs not directly related to the still raging war were to be administered by a coalition government appointed by the first National Assembly in Debrecen. It was instructed to follow the economic programme enunciated by the National Independence Front (NIF)—a loose coalition of various anti-fascist groups, including the Communists. The NIF's economic programme was in fact drafted and then publicly endorsed by the HWP[42] and by the other NIF parties as a reasonable and positive strategy for Hungary's postwar economic revival.

The NIF first of all instructed the government to introduce radical land reform.[43] Second, it stipulated that the country's future economic progress be based on respect for and guarantee of private property. The government was to promote private initiative in reconstructing the war-

torn economy. After reading these and other Communist-promoted programmes, Oszkár Jászi, a former prominent liberal politician and commentator on Hungarian affairs who had taken up residence in the United States after World War I, was moved to write:

> The old demagogy of the first Bolshevik revolution was completely absent: Communism has become respectable and gentlemanly . . . Generally speaking, there is not much talk about Communism in Hungary today. The leitmotif is democracy with intensely patriotic overtones.[44]

In a sense, Jászi *was* right—there was not very much *talk* of Communism during those years. But he was greatly mistaken in assuming that the absence of talk meant the Communists had given up their quest for power.

Between 1945 and 1947, during the premiership of Ferenc Nagy (head of the Smallholders' Party), strategically important economic posts in the administration were diverted to Communist control. The economic policies applied by the HWP from these commanding heights contradicted the NIF's economic programme. Rather than promote free enterprise, the HWP, through the Supreme Economic Council and with the tactical support of the USSR, secretly and deliberately worked to ruin the private sector of the Hungarian economy. The HWP's real aim was to engineer a national economic collapse in order to discredit the ruling Smallholders' Party, to eliminate the economic power base of the bourgeoisie, and to make the state's expropriation of private enterprises relatively easy. This is what was later referred to as "the dry road to Socialism."

Though immediate constraints did play an important role in the evolution of these economic *tactics,* the general *strategy* for the liquidation of all non-communist forces in Hungary, including the forces of democratic socialism, and the subsequent erection of the Stalinist type command system, had been carefully prepared in the USSR years before the war's end, during the halcyon days of Soviet-American relations. That such a plan existed was denied by the HWP until 1949. Only when the HWP had finally monopolized power did it admit that its strategy was not designed to respond to certain bellicose actions by the Allies—specifically the United States—after 1945, but was in fact part of an earlier and longstanding Soviet-inspired blueprint. As Rákosi was to state in 1951 — and those Western historians who argue that the Communists were forced into instituting proletarian dictatorships in Eastern Europe against their own earlier intentions because of certain aggressive postwar actions by President Truman and other Western leaders should pay particular attention:

> Stalin showed us . . . a new road to the building of socialism, and with his help we worked out its theoretical problems. Those comrades who did not know about our strategic plans, *which we worked out during the war,* were frequently surprised later, and on more than one occasion were hostile to our participation in the coalition government . . . We did not mention this to the Party members at the time, since to mention even theoretically that our goal was the dictatorship of the proletariat would have created great difficulties for our winning the support of the petty bourgeoisie, and even that of the majority of the workers. As we have said, the Hungarian Communist Party, already during the war, had worked out the strategy that it was to pursue during its fights with the fascist, imperialist and feudal elements . . . We formed the Supreme Economic Council with which we gradually won control over all of the key economic areas.[45]

Apart from the need for economic modernization, the rebuilding of the country's war ravaged economy, and meeting the exacting reparations schedules, there were four specific economic conditions necessitating vigorous state intervention in the economy after 1945:

1. Most of industry, and especially heavy industry, depended entirely on state credits to finance deficits and reparations production.[46] This dependence on the treasury required close central supervision of enterprise behaviour in order to ensure a judicious utilization of the state's scarce resources;

2. The transmission of state credits to enterprises through the country's banking houses also required that banking activity be closely regulated and supervised by the central authorities;

3. Economic collapse brought on by the inflation and the demands of maintaining financial stability necessitated strict state control over prices and wages, foreign trade, monetary and credit policy;

4. The widespread scarcity of industrial raw materials and energy resources required tight central supervision of the allocation of these resources to ensure the fulfilment of state priorities.

The Supreme Economic Council (SEC), a supra-ministerial committee, was established in 1945, ostensibly for the purpose of coordinating the above tasks. The powers granted to the SEC were formidable. It was empowered to supervise, control, and direct any economic activity in the country if it so wished, according to its own judgement, to ensure the successful completion of reparations schedules, uphold the interests of the national treasury, and maintain financial stability.[47] The chief executive and initiative powers of the SEC were vested in its Secretariat, headed by Zoltán Vas, one of the leading Muscovite members of the Hungarian Communist Party.

The SEC Secretariat, through its control of export-import licences,

tax, credit, price and wage policy, and the distribution of vital energy resources and raw materials, was in a position to prepare the way for a radical restructuring of industrial production well before January 1950, the date generally identified as the beginning of Stalinist type economic policies in Hungary. Although the SEC Secretariat frequently stated publicly that the stringent deflationary policies it pursued after the 1944–45 inflation were governed by the need to maintain financial stability and confidence, one of its confidential internal memoranda clearly points to the opposite objective: driving the private capitalist sector into bankruptcy:

> We must make the widest possible use of the situation which exists, whereby most private enterprises have taken state credits or will have to rely on state credits. We must force these enterprises, with the threat of bankruptcy, that in return for postponing payment, they should hand over to the state, or to the nationalized banks, a significant portion of their shares. *Until the time that we can rely on wholesale nationalization* we must increase state control so that private capital should be forced to convert into the state capitalist sector.[48]

Both the "situation," *i.e.,* the forcing of enterprises into a one-sided dependence on state credits, and the way out of this situation—free enterprise or state ownership—were under the firm control of Soviet and Hungarian Communists. And they were able to regulate these parameters easily to ensure that political-economic developments in Hungary progressed in conjunction with the strategy devised in Moscow during the war.

The overwhelming powers of the SEC and its true intentions can be illustrated by another example. During the stabilization period following massive inflation, the government created an Office of Prices and Materials (OPM) for the purpose of gaining more control over the allocation of scarce materials and to better regulate price formation. Because it was headed by a non-Communist, the OPM soon found itself on a collision course with the SEC. The executive powers vested in this body by an order-in-council in May 1946[49] were severely curtailed in practice by the SEC and later by the Ministry of Industry (headed after 1947 by a high-ranking officer of the Red Army, István Kossa). Throughout its existence, and under the chairmanship of the Smallholders' Party's economic adviser, István Varga, the Office of Prices and Materials was frequently condemned by the HWP and the SEC for "supporting capitalist speculators and profiteers," when it merely attempted to regulate prices in order to stave off widespread bankruptcies. On a number of occasions when the OPM had wanted to institute price changes to reflect shifting scarcity conditions, its decisions were vetoed

by the SEC. For example, in December 1946 the OPM decided to increase industrial wholesale prices in order to align them with the sharp price rises of raw materials from the USSR, and to counterbalance the huge wage increases engineered by the Communist-dominated trade unions.[50] This was vetoed by the SEC, and rather than increase the wholesale industrial price index it forced through a reduction. This action bankrupted a large number of firms, while the HWP and the union leadership blamed the collapse on speculation and financial embezzling. Iván T. Berend, after consulting Party archives, has pointed out correctly that this ". . . battle against increased prices was not at all simply a question of economics," but a consciously applied mechanism in the battle for political power.[51]

After the signing of the first postwar trade agreement with the Soviet Union, Hungary's foreign trade policy came under close Soviet and HWP supervision. The enormity of reparations had made state control imperative during the first three postwar years. Whereas granting of export and import licences to individual firms was the prerogative of the SEC Secretariat, that of foreign currency for all trade transactions came under the aegis of the National Bank, and its department for the allotment of foreign currency was headed by a high-ranking Muscovite member of the HWP, László Háy.[52] By 1948, all movements in the volume, destination, and structure of foreign trade were undertaken strictly in response to central Communist Party commands. But the greatest acceleration towards the Stalinist type command economy came with the introduction of the first Three Year Plan in August 1947.

The Plan was drafted jointly by the Social Democratic Party and the HWP. Both had evolved separate plans of reconstruction in late 1946 and early 1947.[53] The finally adopted Three Year Plan was an amalgam of the two variants. The visible differences between the two were not as marked as might have been expected. The Communists postulated a greater percentage of total investments accruing to the capital goods production sector, and less to consumption, and they also desired a higher share of investments for *agriculture*. The Social Democrats envisioned that some of the investments could be financed through loans in the West. The Communists opposed this idea, which resulted in a great deal of haggling in the coordinating committee. A compromise produced two versions. Variant "A" would feature foreign loans, Variant "B" would omit them. In the end, no Western loans were contracted owing to Communist pressure, and Variant "B" prevailed.[54]

The nature of the Three Year Plan is generally misunderstood in Western literature, as most analysts consider 1950 and the first Five

Year Plan to be the beginning of the policies and mechanisms of the Hungarian command economy. There are a number of reasons for this misunderstanding. First, the original Plan lacked the well-known Soviet type "steep ascent" industrialization policy, which had been first unveiled in the USSR in 1928. The Plan objectives accented equilibrium, agriculture, reconstruction, and increasing real wages—the antithesis of Stalinist developmental policy.[55]

Second, the HWP vigorously denied that the Plan augured the building of socialism. On the contrary, its purpose was to engender a planned and proportionate *reconstruction* of the war-torn economy, to guide economic development through the hurdles bequeathed by the war and reparations. Even in a speech to comrades at the HWP's Academy Ernő Gerő maintained:

> There are those who will say that what we really want to achieve with this Plan is nothing less than socialism. What we say to these people is: No! There is no question here of socialism, but only of laying the basis for the peaceful progress of our economy. Not only do we not want to interfere with the private property of the little people, but the Plan will even protect such property from the encroachment of the big capitalists. Even more, the implementation of the Three Year Plan cannot even be imagined without the enthusiastic cooperation of our 200,000 artisans and handicraftsmen. . . Their skill and ant-like diligence is greatly needed by the country. . . And there is no question whatsoever of the elimination of the big capitalists. . .[56]

Four years later Gerő admitted that his statement was a lie, necessitated by tactical political considerations. In fact the Party was already laying the economic basis for socialism during the Three Year Plan:

> Naturally, in 1946, when that speech was made, the Party couldn't show all of its cards . . . because it would have helped our class enemies. . . This is why it was necessary during the introduction of the Plan to mention merely that we were trying only to reconstruct our war-torn economy, and not to build socialism. . . But in actual fact we were, already during the course of the Three Year Plan, building socialism in Hungary.[57]

There are additional reasons for the existence of the mistaken view that the Three Year Plan ". . . did not contemplate any major structural change in the economy . . . [and that it] resembled more the plans of Western Laborite Governments immediately following World War II, than the Soviet Plans or the subsequent Hungarian Five Year Plan."[58] In 1948, Hungary introduced a moratorium on statistical information, and consequently there were no accurate data available on the nature of economic restructuring achieved by the end of the Plan period.[59] While the Planning Office had issued a 180-page statistical analysis of

achievements at the end of the first Plan year, at the end of the Three Year Plan only a very general and brief document was published. According to Timár, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office was not completely certain, even in 1968, about the situation at the end of 1949.[60]

The SEC carried the lion's share of the responsibility for these developments for, as George Kemény has pointed out, it had usurped for itself the strategic role in the application of the Plan:

> Clause III [of the Parliamentary Act on the Three Year Plan] authorized the government to establish a *Planning Board* and a *National Planning Department* for the elaboration of the Plan and for controlling the work of carrying it into effect. [But] the Planning Board never acquired a leading role. It was but an interdepartmental advisory body. The power of decision was vested in the *Supreme Economic Council.*[61]

The SEC also had a very good statistical "cover" in Zoltán Vas who was not only general secretary but also editor of the prestigious statistical journal, *Gazdaságstatisztikai Tájékoztató* (published by the Central Statistical Office), and hence could conceal statistical evidence about the SEC's deviations.[62] We also know that a later official eulogy of the Plan's accomplishments, again written by Vas, contains statistical falsifications exceeding 100% in some crucial areas.[63] For over twenty-five years Western commentators have been using this document as their primary source on the Plan's achievements, investment ratios, and industrial restructuring.

What was the actual extent of deviation from the Plan? As Timár has pointed out, we cannot be really precise since the statistics were scrambled by the Party. We do know, however, that the general strategy laid down in the Plan was *not* implemented. Agricultural investments, which were to constitute the largest overall share, actually came to less than 15%, and instead, military expenditures received the largest share—over 30%.[64] After August 1948, industrial investments were drastically increased—by 60%—of which over 90% was used for the development of heavy industry.[65]

In the handicraft and artisan industries, similar deviations had begun to emerge by 1948. Rather than relying on what Gerő had called the "ant-like diligence" of the little people, by the summer of 1948 we find the state busy cancelling about 1,500 permits per month[66] and instituting a series of discriminatory credit, tax, and price policies. As a consequence, the percentage of workers employed in this sector rapidly declined during the Three Year Plan.[67]

Radical transformations had also occurred in wholesale trade by the end of the Plan period in 1949. In a confidential memorandum, the SEC

stated that the prospective nationalization of the wholesale sector must be implemented with great circumspection lest the suspicions of the other political parties be aroused. "These decisions must be implemented in such a way that to outsiders and superficial observers they should appear as merely fragmentary decisions."[68] Through a combination of "dry road" policies (*i.e.*, driving wholesale dealers into bankruptcy through the denial of state credits, or by setting a very high interest rate on commercial credits, and discriminatory pricing) and outright nationalization, almost the entire wholesale trade sector was absorbed into the state sector by the end of 1948.

Paralleling the Three Year Plan, the HWP demanded that all of the banks be nationalized. Only thus could Plan targets be realized and financial control maintained. But since the SEC could already exercise extensive control over banking activities, it would seem that this motive for nationalization was not the true one. According to Ránki, the Party was in fact motivated by the political goal of delivering "another blow to the power of the bourgeoisie."[69]

After nationalization, a radical reorganization of the banking system was introduced in 1947, patterned on the USSR. All enterprises were instructed to convert to the single account system, through which the state could practice (via the National Bank) extensive financial control over the behaviour of *both* nationalized *and* private firms.[70]

Once the National Planning Office and the Planning Board had established themselves and had collected and compiled comprehensive statistical information on all enterprises, a widespread nationalization programme was introduced. With the slogan, "The Factory is Yours, You're Working for Yourselves," suddenly and without giving prior notice—even to Parliament—all firms employing more than 100 people were nationalized at the beginning of 1948, only six months after the introduction of the Three Year Plan. All these firms were assigned new managers on the eve of nationalization. Appointed by the Communist Party, they had no advance notice of their promotion, had not applied for the jobs in advance, and were not selected on the basis of their administrative skills. Indeed, they possessed no such skills. They were physical labourers at the enterprises concerned, and had been selected on the basis of their political reliability and their record of active cooperation with the Party during the preceding three years.

Within a matter of days, the new managers were made largely subservient to the central planning bureaucracy. Ostensibly because of their entrepreneurial inexperience, the authorities considerably expanded their own already extensive regulatory rights, arguing that the

new managers were to receive all of the "expert guidance" they needed to carry out the great national tasks ahead. In May 1948, without any prior debate or popular participation in the formulation of the new administrative structure, the government established 20 industrial directorates of the branch ministries to exert strict economic control over the units of production.[71]

And so, having been given "control" over their factories, and having had the private ownership of the means of production eliminated, the working classes still found themselves back where they had started in terms of their decision-making powers. Instead of dominating the process of production, the workers were overwhelmed by the forces and relations of production. The new working-class manager's sole privilege was to supply the central bureaucrats with requested information and fulfil to the letter all the detailed instructions from the industrial directorate's "experts." The Plan, which had not been formulated by the workers but was, rather, the product of the political preferences of their self-appointed vanguard, became sanctified. The new managers had thus been given a "new kind" of freedom: they had to place "all moral and material means at their command" in the service of the Plan. Those who failed to cooperate were either dismissed or, depending on the nature of their opposition, persecuted "with the full rigour of the law, as enemies of the Hungarian people, enemies that might seek to thwart the aims of the Three Year Plan." [72]

The HWP, which hitherto maintained that the proletariat had been working like slaves under capitalism, suddenly began to proclaim that the workers should work even harder now than before:

> We looked at the statistics . . . and it turns out that our workers are producing much less for our democracy than they did for Horthy. But we cannot progress this way comrades. . . Increasing productivity; this is the decisive question for our democracy. We must create order in this area.[73]

And "order" they did create. Upon his return to Hungary with Soviet troops in 1944, István Kossa was immediately appointed (under Soviet pressure from the Allied Control Commission and without a polling of the rank and file union membership) general secretary of the Hungarian Trade Unions. In 1948 he was appointed Minister of Industry. From being the "representative" of labour, he suddenly became the agent of management. By 1948, the trade unions were placed into that well-known "transmission belt" function which only the Stalinist type command economy has been able to reserve for them. Their primary function became to fulfil the central planning authorities' preferences speedily.

Wage levels were centrally determined and not negotiable. Act no. 34 of 1947 revoked the right to strike, and labour union opposition to centrally defined wage or norm levels and to any other plan directives was outlawed. This measure provoked hostile reaction from some members of the working class, especially when they had overfulfilled the centrally-designed piece rate norms, and instead of receiving the payment stipulated in their contracts, they were informed that the norms had been erroneously set too low by the "experts" and that no payments would be made as a consequence. The most celebrated case of this kind involved the series of wild-cat strikes in the Csepel industrial center during October 1947. Csepel had a long tradition of being the center of radical trade unionism in Hungary (a position that was reaffirmed in 1956 and holds true even today). The ring-leaders were arrested and shot, and once the situation was safe, Rákosi informed the Csepel workers in person why there should never be a repetition of strikes and other acts of opposition to the Party:

> The question had cropped up that if striking is a good thing in France, then why isn't it a good thing in Hungary. These comrades, *due to their poor theoretical knowledge,* didn't recognize the difference between the anti-people government of France and the people's democratic government of Hungary. And they didn't recognize that what is a necessary and correct defensive battle in France, is nothing but a reactionary manifestation in Hungary. . . One has to be blind not to see that those people who started this strike were members of that same general anti-people reactionary offensive . . . who wanted to weaken the basis of the Hungarian democracy. . .[74]

By the last year of the Three Year Plan period, the traditional Stalinist methods of boosting production by labour competitions, "voluntary" labour donations, holiday, overtime, lunch hour or extra shiftwork—all without remuneration—had become commonplace. These commitments were not spontaneous, they were exacted by centrally-directed commands. The planners had calculated this measure to be essential for achieving their plan indices.[75] Labour competitions and donations would be ordered by the party on virtually any pretext—Stalin's or Rákosi's birthday, the execution of the "Rajk Gang," to celebrate a victory by the national soccer team, or just to celebrate the celebration of another factory. Hundreds of thousands of workers were bullied by roving bands of Stakhanovites—elite "shockworkers"—whose feats were widely publicized and whose achievements—conducted under the most favourable possible conditions—all workers had to emulate. But even this was considered insufficient by Rákosi, who decided that even the Hungarian Stakhanovites were not productive enough. And so,

Soviet "heroes" who surpassed the Hungarian Stakhanovites by leaps and bounds were imported, and this then became the level for which everyone had to strive. As Rákosi pointed out:

> I know that some of our comrades are getting worried about this excessive drive, and had said "all right, all right, but there must be a limit to the increase in production." To this I simply reply: "The sky is the limit." [76]

There was no talking back to this totalitarian mobilization. "When we say Rákosi, we mean the Hungarian people. And when we say the Hungarian people, we mean Rákosi! On Rákosi, on the Communists, and on the words of the Hungarian Workers' Party, one can build as securely as on solid rock." [77]

The HWP's final act in this series of betrayed promises involved the collectivization of agriculture. During the first year of the Plan the collectivization of agriculture was never contemplated publicly. Anyone even daring to mention that the Party was thinking along these lines was condemned as a reactionary scaremonger. As Rákosi himself so clearly put it: "The reactionaries are trying to frighten the peasants with the 'kolkhoz story', but the peasantry can be certain that we communists will protect their land and private property with all our strength";[78] and, ". . . we do not want kolkhozes, but strong and prospering small farms." [79] Another member of the HWP's leading triumvirate, József Révai, also went on record as late as August 1947: "We declare: the system of private farming must be made even stronger." [80] And finally, Ernő Gerő, the Party's chief economic administrator and policy maker, also proclaimed that "the history and traditions of the Hungarian peasantry differ from the Russian peasants. We would be extremely foolish, indeed insane, if we did not realize that our peasants want to progress by way of private farming." [81] And to those who doubted the sincerity of such declarations, Gerő frequently asserted that such sceptics ". . . should realize, that in this country the time has ended once and for all, when decisions would be taken behind the scenes, and behind the people's backs, on questions of vital importance." [82]

These and similar statements, on which everyone should have been able to build "as securely as on solid rock," were merely designed to buy the votes of the peasantry—unsuccessfully, as it turned out—in the elections of 1945 and 1947. By the end of 1948, the collectivization of agriculture was in full progress. As Rákosi pointed out:

> Once our Party had secured for itself all strata of our working people, we brought up, during the fall of 1948, the question of large scale collective farming and the socialist transformation of the countryside.[83]

> The Kolkhozes show the true way to the socialist transformation of our economy . . . *this is the road which the Soviet peasants are following with great success, and this is the road that the masses of private farmers in the people's democracies must follow too.*[84]

External Accelerators

In this rapid progression towards the Stalinist type command system, three external political developments must be pointed out as having played an important role between 1947 and 1949: (1) The deteriorating relations between the USA and the USSR during 1947–49; (2) Stalin's veto of a proposed coordinated industrialization programme for Eastern Europe; and (3) The Soviet-Yugoslav dispute.

One of the important functions of the "dry road" strategy had been to give outsiders the impression that Communism could function within a parliamentary system. Until 1947, it seemed that some of the Western European Communist parties might prevail at the polls, and great efforts were made by the Eastern European Communists to give no pretext for alarmist stories. With a change of fortune for the Western Communist parties during mid-1947 and the growing Soviet-American tension, the "dry road" became increasingly unnecessary. It was above all this change in international politics that accelerated the transition to the command system in Hungary in early 1948—as is admitted in one of the Party's own confidential memoranda:

> As you know, our original plans were that socialization was to be carried out by way of the "dry" road. At that time we did not count on such a rapid transformation in the international situation . . . and did not calculate that in our plans. In my opinion we would be making a mistake if we stuck to our original schedule and [did] not utilize the favourable situation.[85]

Stalin's veto of a Bulgarian initiative to coordinate the economic plans and industrialization of the East European economies was the second external accelerator.[86] The effects of the imposition of industrial autarchy were extremely costly for Hungary, which lacked the raw materials needed for the Stalinist type industrial structure. Under these circumstances the process of system maintenance required increasing use of authoritarian measures in Hungary.

Third, Stalin's 1948 quarrel with Tito greatly escalated the negative effects of the other two external accelerators. By the beginning of 1948, good working relations with Yugoslavia had become of considerable economic importance for Hungary, since that country was rapidly becoming the most important supplier of the raw materials needed in

Hungary's expanding iron and steel production. During 1946–48 a series of bilateral economic agreements had been signed concerning trade and the joint development of resources and industries. After the circulation of the Cominform letter criticizing the behaviour of the Yugoslav Communists,[87] Hungary broke off all relations with Yugoslavia. At once, the Soviet Union consented to deliver the necessary raw materials and to purchase goods destined for the Yugoslav market. Thus Hungary not only became even more hopelessly entwined in the Soviet economic net, it was also cast in a considerably worse financial position. Soviet raw materials fetched a much higher price than the Yugoslav commodities, reflecting the cost of shipping over huge distances. Henceforth, Hungary's heavy industrial production became even more of a financial burden, even more uneconomical, and once more increased the sacrifices exacted from Hungarian workers.

The Soviet-Yugoslav break had another escalating effect on Hungary's postwar transformation into a Soviet-type command system. With Tito's expulsion from the socialist "peace camp" came an intensification of the drive to pattern all aspects of life in Hungary on the Soviet model. The single most serious crime that anyone could be accused of became "domesticism" or "deviation" from the so-called authentic and only true form of Marxism-Leninism, *i.e.,* Stalinist principles. Of all the East European leaders, perhaps Rákosi was most fanatic in demonstrating subservience to the Soviet Union. Quite apart from the tens of thousands of non-Communists who were imprisoned, tortured, and executed in Hungary on all sorts of trumped-up charges, 200,000 HWP members were purged, *i.e.,* 18% of the total.[88] The most celebrated case was that of the former Minister of the Interior, László Rajk, whose trial and "confessions" in 1949 served as the basis for hounding and persecuting "deviationists" and "imperialist saboteurs" throughout the socialist world.[89] After Rajk's execution, Rákosi publicly bragged about his own role in the affair:

> We read of the 1936–38 experiences of our model, the great Bolshevik Party . . . and yet here in Hungary we merely talked about vigilance in general terms. . . We had no practice in wrapping up these kinds of cases, but we knew that we could not proceed light-headedly. It was not easy to work out the way, and I must confess to you that it cost me many sleepless nights, until the plan of executing it finally crystallized. (Applause)
>
> By unmasking and rendering harmless the Rajk gang, our Party has earned great respect from our people. . . It is no exaggeration to say that the trial, which was broadcast on the radio, and whose transcripts were printed word for word in the newspapers, was followed with

> extreme interest by all of the people. 100,000 copies of the special book that we published on the trial were bought up in a couple of days. 250,000 copies of the lecture given at a meeting of the Great Budapest Party Activists were also sold out within a few days, and we were forced to print an additional 150,000 copies. All of this shows with what great attention the masses followed this case.[90]

And indeed the people did follow the development of the Rajk case with great interest. Scarcely two weeks after Rajk was officially declared innocent and his remains ceremoniously reburied in October 1956, the workers replied not with another series of labour donations, but by smashing the Rákosiite political system, and by demanding an end to Soviet imperialism, which had derailed the long overdue political-economic modernization of Hungary between 1945 and 1956.

Conclusions

In 1945 Hungary seemed to be on the threshold of a new era of modernization. With varying degrees of intensity most members of the country's intelligentsia and professional elites, as well as the leaders of all progressive parties, recognized the need to part with many of the outdated pre-1945 social, political, economic wisdoms and practices. We can certainly include in this group most of the country's landless peasants and industrial proletariat. The need for deep-going reforms and modernization did not express itself simply as a demand for a new political regime. A new regime was to be but one of the postwar era's many important elements. Additional and comprehensive reforms were also needed: an industrial revolution, an agricultural revolution, a social revolution as well as a revolution in Hungary's relations with Germany and the other Central and East European States.

It is important to realize that the success of this modernization depended on an immense national effort which in turn demanded the most optimal and judicious utilization of scarce human and material resources by the modernizing elites. The dynamics of modernization all over the world have demonstrated that the scarcer the resources, the greater the obstacles on the path to modernity, or the more that resources are squandered by national leaders, the more likely it is that this process will degenerate into totalitarianism and a new kind of backwardness. And this is precisely what happened in Hungary. The social, political, and economic costs of constructing this new era were sky-rocketed out of all humanly attainable proportions by the combination of the following factors: massive material and human losses

suffered during the war, vast Soviet extraction of resources and capital from Hungary, and the destructive economic policies of the HWP between 1945 and 1950. The neglect of Hungary's own developmental necessities, the imposition of Soviet fiat, the derailment of reconstruction and modernization, and the betrayal of the hopes of millions of working people during 1945–1950 opened the door to the large-scale utilization of terror and political ruthlessness during the 1950's. The Soviet-designed "model" of a new Hungary could not be sold to the populace by any other means than the force of machine-guns and tanks. Herein lie the roots of the political oppression which prompted Hungarians to revolt in 1956.

NOTES

1. This should not be construed to mean that the causes of the uprising were political rather than economic. In fact, the economic and political forms of administration prior to 1956 mutually reinforced each other. The causes of the uprising cannot be found only in political, or in economic variables, but rather in the interaction of the two.
2. L. D. Schweng, *Political, Social and Economic Developments in Postwar Hungary* (manuscript), National Planning Association, Washington, D.C., 1950, pp. 7-8.
3. See Imre Kovács, *A néma forradalom* [The Silent Revolution], Budapest, 1938; Mátyás Matolcsy, *Mezőgazdasági munkanélküliség Magyarországon* [Agricultural Unemployment in Hungary], Budapest, 1933; and Gyula Illyés, *A puszták népe* [The People of the Puszta], Budapest, 1936.
4. While in 1921 Germany's share of Hungary's imports and exports was 12.9% and 9.3% respectively, by 1939 her share had grown to 52.5% and 52.2% respectively.
5. On these attempts, as seen by the participants themselves, see Nicholas Kállay, *Hungarian Premier,* London, 1954; and Nicholas Horthy, *Memoirs,* London, 1956.
6. I have relied on a number of separate studies on the extent of war damages in Hungary, including *A magyar ipartelepek 1944 őszén elrendelt felrobbantása, illetőleg megbénítása ellen végrehajtott akció* [Acts against the Implementation of the Order to Blow Up and Paralyse Industrial Factories during the Fall of 1944], Vol. I (typescript), published by the Ministry of Industry, October 1945; *A magyar ipar és a békekötés* [Hungarian Industry and the Peace Treaty], Department of Industrial Policy, Ministry of Industry, Budapest, 1946; *Magyar ipar,* June 15, 1947; *Közgazdasági szemle,* No. 3, 1954; and *Magyar statisztikai zsebkönyv,* Budapest, 1947.
7. *Magyar ipar,* June 15, 1947; and *Magyar gazdaságkutató intézet helyzetjelentése,* No. 54, Part II, 1947.
8. See *A magyar ipar és a békekötés,* pp. 64-65.
9. For the text of the Armistice Agreement signed between Hungary and the Allies on January 20, 1945, see William Juhasz, ed., *Hungarian Social Science Reader: 1945-1963,* Aurora Editions, Munich, 1965, pp. 1-6.

10. For earlier statistical studies on Hungarian firms working under Red Army management, see *Közgazdasági évkönyv* [Statistical Yearbook], 1947, pp. 229, 239; and *Magyar ipar,* July 25, 1947 and July 10, 1947.
11. F. Gáspár, K. Jenei, and G. Szilágyi, eds., *A munkásság az üzemekért és termelésért: 1944–45. Dokumentgyűjtemény* [The Proletariat in the Struggle for Factories and Production: 1944–1945: Documents], A publication of the Hungarian National Archives, Táncsics, Budapest, 1970.
12. For additional studies, see Béla Balázs, *Népmozgalmak és nemzeti bizottságok: 1945–46* [Popular Movements and National Committees: 1945–1946], Kossuth Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1961; and Károly Jenei, *Az üzemi bizottságok a munkáshatalomért* [The Factory Councils in the Struggle for Workers' Power: 1944–1948], Táncsics, Budapest, 1966.
13. The conventional argument on Soviet dismantling and looting of Hungarian industrial plants, according to which the removal of machines and equipment to the Soviet Union was designed purely to strengthen Soviet industrial capacity and to replace Soviet losses, is not fully accurate. There were many confirmed reports about Hungarian industrial machines and products lying scattered and rusting in fields and in sealed boxcars under Soviet military guard. These reports suggest that Soviet economic tactics in Hungary during 1944–45 were geared not only towards utilizing Hungary's existing industrial capacity against Germany, but also to ensure that the Hungarian private industrial sector would be placed in a virtually hopeless position after the war and would require massive state intervention and takeovers to get back on its feet. This state controlled medication was to be strictly under the command of the Communist Party to ensure that the revival would strengthen not private enterprise but state capitalism.
14. This figure is cited by Iván T. Berend, *Ujjáépítés és a nagytőke elleni harc Magyarországon, 1945–1948* [Reconstruction and the Battle Against Capitalism in Hungary, 1945–1948], Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1962, p. 29.
15. USSR, $200 million; Yugoslavia, $70 million; Czechoslovakia, $30 million. In addition, Hungary had to pay the cost of transportation to the point of final destination. After 1948 Hungary was responsible for transportation costs only as far as her own borders.
16. *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* New Series, Third Year, Nos. 1–2, January–February 1947, p. 8.
17. Berend, *Ujjáépítés és a nagytőke. . . ,* p. 246. See also Schweng, p. 169.
18. *Economic Report,* Hungarian General Creditbank, Aug.–Dec. 1946, p. 13.
19. *Ibid.,* p. 13.
20. *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* New Series, Fourth Year, Nos. 11–12, Nov.–Dec. 1948, p. 278.
21. F. Nagy, *The Struggle Behind the Iron Curtain,* Macmillan, New York, 1948, p. 125.
22. Berend, *Ujjáépítés és a nagytőke. . . ,* p. 46.
23. N. Spulber, *The Economics of Communist Eastern Europe,* M.I.T. Press and John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1957, p. 170.
24. After 1948 the Soviet Union reduced the amount outstanding by 50%, and at the end of 1949 Hungary freed herself of the obligation to Yugoslavia as a consequence of the Stalin-Tito quarrel. Taking into account these reductions, the lowering of transportation costs, and certain favourable price adjustments agreed to by the Soviet Union, I would put the final bill of goods at approximately 800–900 million U.S. dollars.

25. The Hungarian Government's Order in Council No. 11,700/December 23, 1945.
26. No. 18,720/Korm. *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* New Series, Fourth Year, Nos. 1–2, Jan.–Feb. 1948, p. 23.
27. *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* New Series, Third Year, Nos. 3–4, March–April 1947, pp. 71–72.
28. Iván T. Berend and György Ránki, *A magyar gazdaság száz éve* [A Hundred Years of Hungary's Economy], Kossuth Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1972, pp. 211–212.
29. *Ibid.,* pp. 312–314.
30. For information on the terms of the association, share capital figures, and management structures of these companies, see *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* Nos. 1–6, Jan.–June, 1946, p. 12 and Nos. 7–9, July–Sept. 1946, p. 58.
31. By virtue of Orders in Council Nos. 7,160/M.E., 9,070/M.E., 9,470/M.E., 24,690/M.E., 4,200/M.E., 4,120/M.E., 4,210/M.E., 4,220/M.E., 4,230/M.E., 4,240/M.E., 4,250/M.E., 12,620/Korm., 12,920/Korm., Decree No. 26 and Decree No. 27. See *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* Nos. 7–9, July–Sept. 1946, pp. 58–59; Nos. 10–12, Oct.–Dec. 1946, p. 111; Nos. 3–4, March–April 1947, pp. 72–73; and Nos. 11–12, Nov.–Dec. 1948, pp. 266–67. See also *Economic Treaties and Agreements of the Soviet Bloc in Eastern Europe, 1945–1951,* 2nd edition, Mid-European Studies Center, New York, 1952, pp. 13–15.
32. Compare the price index of Pécs coal with that of the Hungarian-owned coal fields:

Coal	*Price Index in February 1948* (August 1946 = 100)
screened Pécs	148.1
cubed Tata	122.6
screened Dorog	138.5

Source: *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* Nos. 1–2, January–February, 1948, p. 23.

33. *Magyar ipar,* December 25, 1947, and *Economic Report of the Hungarian General Creditbank,* July–December 1947, Budapest, 1947, p. 17.
34. Spulber, *The Economics of Communist Eastern Europe,* pp. 199–201.
35. See V. H. Winston's chapter, "Mineral Resources," in *Resources and Planning in Eastern Europe,* ed. N. J. Pounds and N. Spulber, Indiana University Publications, Slavic and East European Studies, Vol. 4, 1957, pp. 36–86.
36. György Ránki, *Magyarország gazdasága az első Három-Éves Terv időszakában, 1947–1949* [Hungary's Economy during the Three Year Plan Period, 1947–1949], Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1963, p. 146.
37. *Izvestia,* November 10, 1954.
38. L. Kővári and Gy. Lázár, in *Közgazdasági szemle,* Vol. IV, No. 6, 1957, p. 600, say that in 1957, and earlier, the Soviet Union waived 2 billion rubles—55%—of the moneys owed to her by Hungary as a result of Hungary's repurchase of the Soviet-owned concerns. This would mean that when the concerns were initially re-sold to Hungary in 1953–54, the Soviet Union presented a bill for 3.6 billion rubles, or 900 million U.S. dollars. Taking the 55% reduction into consideration, the actual amount paid by Hungary to the USSR for these shares totalled 450 million U.S. dollars. This is the only place where an actual

figure was quoted by a Hungarian source. Berend, in a recently published volume, simply says, "the shares were bought up by the government in the mid-fifties." *A szocialista gazdaság fejlődése Magyarországon, 1945–1968* [The Development of the Socialist Economy in Hungary, 1945–1968], Kossuth Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1974, p. 15.

39. Mátyás Timár, recently demoted as deputy premier, offers the figure of $135 million as the final total of Hungarian payments to the Soviet Union. I think this is only about 4% of the actual amount. See *Gazdasági fejlődés és irányítási módszerek Magyarországon* [Economic Development and Methods of Economic Control in Hungary], Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1968, p. 25.
40. Jan Wszelaki, *Communist Economic Strategy,* National Planning Association, Washington, D.C., 1959, p. 69.
41. Paul Marer, "The Political Economy of Soviet Relations with Eastern Europe," *Testing Theories of Imperialism,* ed. S. J. Rosen and J. R. Kurth, Lexington Books, D. C. Heath, Lexington, Mass., 1974, p. 238. According to Marer, "Until after Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviet Union's political domination of Eastern Europe was accompanied by conventional kinds of economic extraction from the region, with the size of unrequited flow of resources from East Europe to the Soviet Union being approximately of the same order of magnitude as the flow of resources from the United States to Western Europe under the Marshall Plan." (231–232).
42. See *Felszabadulás 1944 szeptember 26 – 1945 április 4. Dokumentumok* [Liberation . . . Documents], published by the Institute of History, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Szikra, Budapest, 1955, especially pp. 172, 204 and 208.
43. On the 1945 Land Reform, see *A földreformra vonatkozó jogszabályok az Országos Földbirtokrendező Tanács elvi jelentőségű határozataival* [The Legal Provisions and Principles of the National Land Reform Committee], published by the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture, Budapest, 1945; *Földreform 1945: Tanulmány és dokumentgyűjtemény* [Land Reform 1945: A Collection of Studies and Documents] published by the National Archives Centre and the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, 1965; and Bálint Szabó, *Forradalmunk sajátosságai 1944–1948* [The Characteristics of Our Revolution, 1944–1948], Kossuth Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1962.
44. Oszkár Jászi, "The Choices in Hungary," *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. XXIV, No. 2, 1946, p. 462.
45. Mátyás Rákosi, *A békéért és a szocializmus építéséért* [For Peace and Socialism], Szikra, Budapest, 1951, p. 222; and his lecture at the Higher Party School on Feb. 29, 1952, in *A szocialista Magyarországért* [For a Socialist Hungary], Szikra, Budapest, 1953, pp. 135–137, 142 and 157–58.
46. Berend, *Ujjáépítés . . . ,* p. 101.
47. Orders in Council Nos. 12,900/M.E., 230/M.E., 3,650/M.E. and Decree No. 6/G.F. and Decree No. 10/G.F. In *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* No. 1–6, Jan.–June, 1946, pp. 26–27.
48. Cited by Berend, *Ujjáépítés . . . ,* p. 41.
49. *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* Nos. 1–6, Jan.–June 1946, p. 27.
50. Industrial wholesale prices were already artificially set too low at the time of the introduction of the new currency in June 1946, and did not reflect relative scarcities, but the political priorities of the Communist Party's financial team that was in charge of prescribing the new price levels. The team was headed by István Friss, and was actively assisted by Jenő Varga from the Soviet Union.

51. Berend, *Ujjáépítés . . .*, pp. 220–224. Berend mentions that Varga was also severely condemned by the SEC on another occasion, when he advocated a more permissive credit policy than the one utilized by the SEC, as a means of increasing production and cutting down unemployment (p. 208).
52. *Ibid.*, p. 293.
53. For the original versions worked out independently by each party, see *A Magyar Kommunista Párt és Szociáldemokrata Párt határozatai, 1944–1948* [Resolutions of the Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party, 1944–48], published by the Party History Institute of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, Kossuth Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1967: "A Magyar Kommunista Párt Hároméves Tervjavaslata, Januar 11–12, 1947" [The Three Year Plan Proposal of the Hungarian Communist Party, Jan. 11–12, 1947], pp. 312–397; and "A Szociáldemokrata Párt XXXV Kongresszusán elfogadott gazdasági Terv. Februar 1–5, 1947" [The Economic Plan Passed at the XXXV Congress of the Social Democratic Party, Feb. 1–5, 1947], pp. 405–445.
54. One source of foreign capital could have been the Marshall Plan, but this was vetoed outright by the Communist Party, and the Smallholders, who had just suffered a radical thinning of their ranks during the spring of 1947, could not press the point. The official line of the Communist Party on the rejection of the Marshall Plan even today is that the terms of the loan required a specific production pattern from Hungary, concessions to the U.S.A. in trade matters, and in Hungarian domestic policies. In general it is argued that the Marshall Plan was to be nothing but a form of "buying off" Hungary (see Rákosi's speech to the Greater Budapest Party Activists on July 30, 1947, in *A fordulat éve* [The Year of Change], Szikra, Budapest, 1950, p. 151). This reason for the Party's veto is fictitious, since what the Party vetoed was not the acceptance of the *terms* offered, but the sending of a delegation to the preliminary conference in Paris to *find out* about the terms of a loan. In other words, Hungary could not have rejected the Marshall Plan because of its terms, since terms were never in fact put to her.

    Another source of foreign financial aid could have been the International Monetary Fund. Since this was an international body, it was difficult to argue that moneys given by it were a form of political payoff to win Hungary's support for the U.S. Still, the Communist Party vetoed the idea of going to the IMF on the grounds that it would endanger Hungary's sovereignty and stifle her economic independence. Ultimately, both decisions were Soviet-inspired, and undertaken to ensure that Hungary would remain firmly entrenched under Soviet hegemony.
55. *The Hungarian Three Year Plan,* published by Hungarian Bulletin, 1947, Budapest, pp. 1, 2, 3, 22, and 41.
56. Ernő Gerő, "Lecture at the Political Academy of the Hungarian Communist Party on December 20, 1946," in *Harcban a szocialista népgazdaságért* [Fighting for a Socialist People's Economy], Szikra, Budapest, 1950, pp. 204–205.
57. Gerő, in the introduction to his book, *ibid.*, pp. 1–5.
58. Béla Balassa, *The Hungarian Experience with Economic Planning,* Yale University Press, New Haven, 1959, pp. 27–28.
59. Alexander Eckstein, "Postwar Planning in Hungary," *Economic Development and Cultural Change,* No. 2, 1954, p. 382.
60. Timár, *Gazdasági fejlődés . . .*, p. 30.
61. G. Kemény, *Economic Planning in Hungary, 1947–49,* Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1952.
62. There were protracted battles between the political parties about which Party

members would be in charge of the various departments of the National Planning Board. The department of information was, right from the beginning, run by a member of the Communist Party, as were the departments of industry and economics.

63. Zoltán Vas, *The Success of the Three Year Plan—A Victory of the Hungarian People,* published by the Information Department of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Budapest, April 1950. By this time, Vas was Director of the Planning Office.
64. Ránki, *Magyarország gazdasága . . . ,* p. 33.
65. *Ibid.,* pp. 162–177.
66. Timár, *Gazdasági fejlődés . . . ,* p. 33.
67. *A magyar ipar, statisztikai adatgyüjtemény* [Hungarian Industry, Statistical Data], MSH, Budapest, 1961, p. 34.
68. Ránki, *Magyarország gazdasága . . . ,* p. 99.
69. *Ibid.,* p. 48.
70. On the new system, see *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* New Series, Fourth Year, Nos. 5–6, May–June, 1948, p. 144.
71. On the forms of this control, see *Monthly Bulletin of the National Bank of Hungary,* New Series, Fourth Year, Nos. 5–6, May–June, 1948, p. 144.
72. For example, the new worker-managers of the Péti Chemical Works were tried and sentenced to a long jail-term for sabotage in 1948 because they invested money into the creation of a new lubricant plant without asking the permission of the central authorities. Reference to this is made in Ránki, *Magyarország gazdasága . . . ,* p. 114.
73. Rákosi, Csepel speech, February 4, 1948, *A fordulat éve,* p. 411.
74. *Ibid.,* pp. 390, 427–429.
75. For example, Iván T. Berend cites from a confidential internal memorandum of the Planning Office, dated 1950, with regard to the increased production in the mining industry. "We must point out that this achievement was made possible only because our coal miners have been putting in Sunday and holiday shifts." *Gazdaságpolitika az első ötéves terv megindításakor, 1948–1950* [Economic Policy at the Beginning of the First Five Year Plan, 1948–1950], Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1964, p. 112.
76. Rákosi, speech to the First National Conference of Stakhanovites, February 17, 1950, in *A békéért és a szocializmus építéséért,* pp. 301–321.
77. Gerő, speech in Jászberény at the electoral meeting of the People's Front, April 24, 1949, in *Harcban a szocialista népgazdaságért,* p. 82.
78. Rákosi, speech to the Central Committee, September 11, 1947, and speech to the Greater Budapest Congress of the Hungarian Communist Party, September 6, 1947, *A fordulat éve,* pp. 240 and 281–82; also in *Népszava,* April 27, 1948.
79. *Szabad Nép,* October 17, 1945.
80. *Szabad Nép,* August 18, 1947.
81. *Szabad Nép,* January 19, 1947.
82. Gerő, speech in Kispest, April 17, 1945, *Harcban a szocialista népgazdaságért,* p. 31.
83. Rákosi, *A szocialista Magyarországért,* p. 195.
84. Rákosi, *A békéért és a szocializmus építéséért,* pp. 507–10.
85. Gerő, in a speech to the Hungarian Communist Party's Politburo on the eve of nationalization in 1948. Gy. Ránki quotes Gerő from confidential Party archives in *Magyarország gazdasága . . . ,* p. 105.
86. Editorial in *Pravda,* January 28, 1948. See also V. Dedijer's *Tito,* Simon and

Schuster, New York, 1961; and M. Kaiser and J. G. Zielinski, *Planning in East Europe,* The Bodley Head, London, 1970, pp. 24–25.

87. For the exchange of notes between the Soviet and Yugoslav leadership, see *The Soviet-Yugoslav Dispute,* Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1948. There is also a good analysis to be found in E. Halperin, *The Triumphant Heretic: Tito's Struggle Against Stalin,* British Book Service, New York, 1958; and Adam Ulam, *Titoism and the Cominform,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1952.
88. This is the figure given by Rákosi himself, in his speech in Prague, when he led a Hungarian government delegation, June 23, 1949: *A békéért és a szocializmus építéséért,* p. 100.
89. See *The Indictment in the Criminal Affair of László Rajk and His Accomplices,* published by the Hungarian News and Information Service, London, September 1949.
90. Rákosi, *A békéért és a szocializmus építéséért,* pp. 157, 166–68, 170, 172, and 212–213.

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Between the Awakening and the Explosion: Yogis and Commissars Reconsidered, 1953–1956*

Tamás Aczél

I hope you will forgive me if I begin on a personal note, with a confession that may sound like an elegy: it is strangely mystifying and difficult to believe that twenty years have already elapsed since I last saw the landscapes of my native country, the streets of the city where I was born and grew up. But I have no intention of writing an elegy, simply because I do not feel elegiac: my participation in the Hungarian Revolution and in the intellectual movement that preceded it created the basis of an intellectual and spiritual development which, in turn, led me toward an experience and understanding I could not have reached without the initial impetus of the years 1953–1956.

The role and function of intellectuals, mainly writers, in the Hungarian revolt—in the revolt of the mind, if I may borrow a phrase from myself—has been extensively and meaningfully analyzed during the past two decades by numerous authors in many books, essays, articles, and memoirs. The nature of the revolt has become, in a sense, common knowledge, public property. So much so that, when the Prague Spring arrived in 1968, the world simply assumed that it was initiated, led, supported, developed, and spurred on by intellectuals, mainly Communist ones, whose disillusionment became the spiritual axis of that historical event. Far from taking the 1956 Revolution for granted, Western observers viewed our steps—tentative as they may have been, and uncertain as they surely were—toward some kind of understanding of ourselves and our historical situation, with suspicion and distrust. Their attitude was understandable for reasons that have been sufficiently analyzed, hence I do not propose to discuss them here. I wish, however, to propose a brief inquiry into the nature and meaning of Hungary's intellectual condition between 1953 and 1956, between the awakening and the explosion.

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The scope of various analyses, dealing with the role and function of writers in Hungary, (and, of course, in Poland and later in Czechoslovakia) has been wide-ranging; their works, their attitudes, their successes and failures as political or ideological leaders; their intellectual and theoretical contribution—or the lack of it—have been considered through different lenses of the political, historical, sociological, psychological, and moral cameras of the analysts. As a result, it is now generally agreed, that in their specific political situation the intellectuals behaved almost predictably, true to historical form. They were linked to traditions and expectations; they acted as social catalysts; they underwent deep psychological conversions; but most importantly, they created or, rather, re-created a morality that had been buried under the ruins of totalitarian dictatorships. According to a virtual consensus among observers, it was on the plane of morality, of moral rebirth, that Eastern Europe's intellectuals rendered their most significant contribution to human affairs: this seems to be their lasting achievement. By attempting to create a humane and moral society, a socialist society, if you like; by borrowing a great deal from the liberal and socialist conceptions of the 18th and 19th centuries, they succeeded in setting valuable historical precedents and guidelines for the continuing conflict between democracy and totalitarianism. In other words, their major achievement was their *return* to a traditional morality of self-imposed limits, responsibilities, and understandings away from the unbridled immorality of totalitarian violence; or—to use Michael Polanyi's expressive phrase—from the inverted morality of modern nihilistic fanaticism.

All this is true, of course. It is noteworthy, however, that no, or hardly any attempt has been made to analyze the writers' achievements from the purely literary point of view, as embodied so clearly and vividly in the poems, short stories, novels, and plays they had written during the period; that no, or hardly any attempt has been made to follow and understand their development, their evolution from an ontological-existential point of view as an effort to restore the long-lost balance and perception of the transcendental, the universal, the cosmic, and the archetypal.

In the widest sense, two major groups of writers can be distinguished during the years between war's end and the outbreak of the Revolution: the Communist writers and the non-Communists. In retrospect, however, it becomes evident that these groups were neither unified nor stable; that they carried within themselves the seeds of decay; and that their lines of loyalties, allegiances, ideological and intellectual commit-

ments were constantly shifting, changing, meandering, so to speak, as a narrow path in an endless desert. But apart from their instability and disunity, they also had another factor in common. Both had to live under a Communist dictatorship, which attacked their traditional standards of morality and spirituality. One has only to quote Gyula Illyés's poem, *One Sentence on Tyranny,* to understand the fundamentally common predicament shared by the two different groups:

> Where there's tyranny
> everyone is a link in the chain
> it stinks and pours out of you
> you are tyranny yourself.

(Paul Tábori's translation.)

They were—to use Koestler's apt definition—the yogis and commissars living in the same cell, under the same skies, having to deal with the same power in almost identical straight-jackets. The results are well known. The commissars, having turned away from the mystery, lost their sense of the infinite; the yogis, having turned toward the mystery, lost their sense of the finite; the transcendent reality of the cosmos on one hand, and the everyday-reality of the world, on the other. For some, the equation may seem to be much too symmetrical and, of course, in historical reality it never worked that smoothly. Yet the evidence of those distortions in sense and perception can be seen in the fact that no Hungarian writer, be he yogi or commissar, or—for that matter—anybody *in between*—had succeeded in producing any piece of literature artistically, intellectually, or spiritually profound or significant during the years of Stalinist dictatorship.

But no man can live and no artist can create meaningfully without a sense of balance between Freud's *oceanic feeling* and ordinary reality, between the sense of wonder man feels at the sight of the mystery or, as Eliade would put it, the sacred, and the sense of absurdity and comedy man feels at the sight of himself and his fellow men. The sense of mystery guides the artist toward what Jung called the *numinous,* the spiritual, the divine; the sense of reality, of this-worldliness permits him to deal with human beings and human relationships as they appear, act and interact against the background of transcendental, universal and archetypal images. "Geometry," wrote Kepler, "existed before the Creation, is co-eternal with the mind of God, *is* God;" and Kepler, as we know, was a religious man, a believer in the existence, goodness, and omnipotence of God. "I must, before I die," wrote Bertrand Russell, "find some means of saying the essential thing which is in me, which I

have not yet said, a thing which is neither love nor hatred nor pity nor scorn but the very breath of life, shining and coming from afar, which will link into human life the immensity, the frightening, wondrous and implacable forces of the non-human;" and Bertrand Russell, of course, was an atheist.

It is obvious that the body of literature created by Hungarian writers between 1953 and 1956 is primarily and eminently political in its concepts, substances, themes, metaphors, and symbols. But it is equally obvious—a glimpse convinces us—that from the very first moment of release from under the heavy clouds of Stalinist violence, Hungary's poets had tried to find, and then express, Russell's "essential thing," Kepler's "geometry," Freud's "oceanic feeling," or Jung's evasive "numinosity." It was not an easy task. What they were trying to find and assert was not a political report, a historical metaphor, or an ideological symbol. Nor was their quest simply a search for moral principle, an ethical concept, or a conscious definition of the Categorical Imperative, though it included all that. It was much more.

As early as October 1953, the poet Lajos Kónya posited a conflict between "the mind and the heart" in an article about the existence—or non-existence—of literary freedom in Hungary, and he indicated that whereas his conscious mind was in error, his subconscious, emotional affinities were correct. This, of course, is no great wisdom, no revealing insight. If, however, one is willing to understand that in that world of allusions, metaphors, secret literary and political codes, "mind" represents the pure and unadulterated *reason* of the Party, of history, of history's quintessence, and that "heart" represents all the dark, irrational forces of society and human beings that the Party considered philosophically "idealist" and politically "counter-revolutionary," one can easily understand his thrust.

About the same time, another poet published a poem that became, almost overnight, one of the most significant symbolic expressions of unrest, confusion, disillusionment, and longing for something—some hidden order, perhaps—as yet not quite perceived. His name was Péter Kuczka and the poem was *Nyirség Diary*. *Nyirség Diary* may not be the greatest poetic achievement in the Magyar language, but it is certainly an interesting political signpost on the road toward the rediscovery of the "essential thing" in Hungarian literary life. It is a thoroughly political piece, more journalistic than poetic, a little clumsy perhaps in its metaphors and metrics, yet its depiction of an old peasant woman, lost amidst the raging storms of her age, social condition and historical situation, gray, abandoned, exploited, misled, deprived of her social

heritage and religious tradition, is certainly one of the earliest attempts to create an archetypal image against the background of a system which denies the existence of such images politically and philosophically. But it is Kuczka's main attitude that interests us: he holds the system responsible for the condition of the old woman not merely *politically* but also *existentially:* the "comrades" in those "northern villages" are the ones who denied her "the kind words and deeds" that are more important than material reality: what she needs is *"human light in place of electricity."*

Political uncertainty coupled with metaphorical darkness was creeping in slowly where once there was light and almost absolute certainty. It may have been difficult to comprehend, but there it was:

> I'd trusted, hoped and now I look around
> hesitantly—something's utterly wrong.
> Amidst my gathering anxieties I walk in circles
> like an innocent hostage in a blind, closed cell.

István Simon wrote these lines expressing a common puzzlement, a general sense of loss, of unease, about the disappearance of perspectives and hopes, about a climate of "defeated armies and bold hopes," as Vörösmarty had put it more than a century earlier.

Among the writers of the left—radical or moderate—this was the first phase in an important evolutionary process which, in tragic literature, is known as the first step of the tragic hero on his way to victory *and* defeat: *Poiema, Pathema, Mathema — Purpose, Passion, Perception.* In the *Purpose* phase the recognition that *"something's utterly wrong"* is coupled with a commitment to assume its challenge, to understand it and—perhaps—even to fight it. The commitment may come late or early—with Prometheus and Antigone early, with Hamlet late—but it involves the hero in social action. The underlying element in this phase of his evolution is the *feeling of guilt,* its dynamic is *suffering.* The case histories of Kónya, Kuczka, and Simon are indeed textbook cases. Overlapping, the second phase set in almost simultaneously with the first.

In January 1954, Gyula Illyés published an essay in *Irodalmi Újság* about "doubt and pessimism" in poetry, and what was even more important, in contemporary Hungarian poetry, from whence doubt and pessimism had long been banished by various Party decrees and pronouncements. What should a poet do if he feels "sad," has "doubts" about "certain things," or feels "pessimistic" about the future that has been officially designated as rosy, indeed, paradisiac? Illyés' advice is both dubious and ironic: "Perhaps it is best if the poet does not even

write down a poem like this," he intones, no doubt, tongue-in-cheek, "or if he cannot resist his creative urges, let him write the poem, but not publish it." This is amusingly sarcastic, almost comic. But then, he changes his tone. "Either way, he mutilates himself, makes literary life colorless. This has already happened. It is the reason why the eternal rhythm of life sounds so empty in our volumes of poetry." The implications are clear. The attack is two-pronged: one is directed against literature, or rather, against a system of ideological, political, and police methods that excludes human suffering from the pages of books or magazines; the other is an attempt to re-establish the connection between life's "eternal rhythm" and literature, restore the role and function of rite and ritual—the perception of the sacred—in social and individual life. In his poem, *Doleo, ergo sum,* Illyés asserts the significance of suffering in human life and consciousness by translating Dostoyevsky's injunction that "suffering is the whole origin of consciousness" into the interestingly political-ontological language of a new poetry.

> Sacred is the advice I can give you now and forever
> Leaders of peoples be always living nerve-ends!

This is the second phase of our development, the *Passion.* The commitment, which may have been vague or tentative in the first phase, is now fully understood, accepted and seen, moreover, as an inevitable head-on collision with the forces of oppression, political or metaphysical.

> Easy or difficult . . . and I may even die
> no matter now, I shall bargain no more,

writes Lajos Tamási. Even if one is "frightened, frightened," as Zelk writes, it is not the *political situation* but the *existential condition* that determines one's fundamental response:

> I am but human, live like humans do
> How could I be brave?
> I fear, I fear only more
> that I could be worthless
> more than from death.

The moral conflict between escape and compromise is resolved, but on an ontological plane, and the result of accepted suffering and commitment is a new, yet old perception of existence, of suffering, love, and hope; an awareness, as in Jankovich's poem, that *"where there's pain, there is hope,"* or a desire to present the resolved conflict in quasi-religious, universal, transcendental images, as in the direct words of István Vas, an otherwise irreligious poet, to his Creator:

Thank you for having created me
Oh Love, and having put me here
to be a man amidst
stars, mists, mountains.

The desire to break through the narrow confines of political or ideological boundaries becomes apparent in Illyés's beautifully evocative archetypal imagery in *"Oceans,"* where *"limitless space and limitless courage"* open and merge in an *"infinity of blue-tinged distances of green forests,"* leaving behind *"our small fatherland's narrow borders of dust, wires and stone,"* in the cosmic journey. A political allusion, easily understood in contemporary Hungary, it becomes the stepping stone to the stars.

We are now in the third phase of development, *perception,* when *"the re-acceptance of an ancient order"* (János Pilinszky) becomes imperative, and *"the hope to stand in our winter without sin"* (Zelk) is both the punishment and reward of the poet. It is the "readiness" of Hamlet, the final moment of King Lear's translucence.

For I have caught success's butterfly
and became not happier but more cowardly
its scale turned into dirt on my fingertips
all that wasn't born of torment turns into torment.

This is Benjamin at his best and most moving: I can only apologize for the inadequacy of the translation:

Mert fogtam én a siker pilleszárnyát
s nem boldogabb, de lettem tőle gyávább
maszattá rondúlt ujjamon a himpor
mind kínná torzul, ami nem lett kínból.

This is also the moment of change, together with the discovery of a new vision, of an order behind the immediate disorder of the world, an ontological identification with *"the early morning light"* in Lajos Kassák's poem:

I don't have to be loud since the smallest leaf of grass
would understand my joys, my sorrows
just as I can understand everything and identify with everything
. . . walking down on the other side of the hill
so that I'll see new and unknown landscapes on this beautiful day
enchanted by all those millions of little miracles
of reality.

The central theme of freedom regained, resides precisely in Kassák's simple metaphor.

In a celebrated passage, inspired by Edgar Allan Poe, Baudelaire reveals the importance of "an immortal instinct [in man] for the beautiful which makes us consider the earth and its various spectacles as a sketch of, as a *correspondence* with, heaven," and which enables us to experience that "insatiable thirst for all that is beyond" which is no more or less than "the most living proof of our immortality." Even such a demonstrably programmatic "anti-metaphysical" poem as Illyés' *Mors Bona Nihil Aliud,* which sets out to prove that *"there's no other-world, no Damnation, no Grace,"* ends with an elevated ode to *"beauty, justice, goodness and freedom,"* and with a suspiciously religious warning about *"fear and cowardice"* being the *"roots of sin."*

The commissars and their friends, and very often their enemies, have all apparently undergone a transformation which is not simply a moral change. They have reached a conclusion which is not simply an ethical concept. Yet they did not turn into yogis on the "ultra-violet" end of Koestler's spectrum; they have continued—and still continue—their actions for social justice and the betterment of man. But the new perception which completed their developments both on the social and ontological-existential planes, was not—could not be—their individual affair. Their changes, their new insights, the balance they have managed to restore, however tentatively and temporarily, between the sacred and the profane, between the oceanic feeling and the ordinary reality that surrounded them, had a profound impact on society, on the leaders of society and Party, on the social fabric, as well as on the individual's consciousness. In their quest for meaning, the poets suffered symbolically for man and society; man and society accepted them as their *prophets,* and, quite naturally, used them as *scapegoats.* The wheel which had come full circle, began turning again.

One final word. My description of the evolution of some of Hungary's poets and writers, my comparison between the development of tragic man and that of my friends, should not be construed as an attempt to elevate them (or, by some mischief, myself) to the tragic magnificence and translucence of an Oedipus or a Hamlet, though their road approached, and often paralleled, the road travelled by tragic heroes. But they were also close to the comic, especially in their innocence, naiveté, gullibility, and it may be—just may be—that their profoundly human oscillations between tragic grandeur and comic absurdity was—and will remain—their most memorable achievement.

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The First War Between Socialist States: Military Aspects of the Hungarian Revolution*

Béla K. Király

Academic journals usually publish research papers or new interpretations based on fresh evidence that challenge established concepts. Such articles are the result of painstaking scholarly endeavors. This essay is not one of these, but on certain occasions it seems fitting for an eyewitness to an historical event to relate his experiences and views. In the present case the occasion is a twentieth anniversary and the author was an eyewitness.

As the title indicates, the author's contention is that the Hungarian events of 1956 constituted a revolution as well as a war waged by one socialist state against another. "Socialist" is used here in the Soviet sense; "Bolshevik" or "Soviet" would have done as well. Furthermore, using "socialist" in this sense by no means implies any sort of endorsement. Who, after all, could endorse a system that was introduced into East Central Europe almost without exception by force, and to which the genuine popular responses have included the Hungarian revolution of 1956 and the ill-starred Czechoslovak attempt of 1968 to create communism with a human countenance? The socialism that could be successfully implemented with the consent of the governed in East Central Europe or anywhere else in Western civilization would have to be pluralistic, humane, participatory, and democratic. Soviet socialism has none of these ingredients.

The Hungarian struggle in the fall of 1956 has been called a revolution, a revolt, and an uprising. In East Central Europe itself, if mentioning it cannot be avoided, they either say "the events of 1956" or they use the derogatory term, "counterrevolution."[1] It was in fact a revolution in the proper sense of the word: force was unintentionally used by those demanding change, and quite intentionally, the old regime was replaced

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with a new one. After October 28, following the declaration of an armistice,[2] Imre Nagy's government held undisputed power in Hungary, and no other force could offer any meaningful challenge to its authority. Revolutions are domestic affairs; as such, the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was a success. What crushed it was not a domestic force but an international one; the revolutionary regime was destroyed by international war.

International war is the massive application of armed might between states, prosecuted systematically in order to destroy an opponent's will or means to fight. The purpose of war is the achievement of certain objectives, such as the acquisition of territory, the imposition of a religion or ideology, or the securing of economic and/or other advantages. When Soviet forces invaded Budapest at dawn on October 24, 1956, and began their indiscriminate destruction, they were interfering directly in Hungary's internal affairs. It is possible that Ernő Gerő, the First Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, had consented to the intervention; it is likewise possible that it was he who advocated intervention, and he might even have begged for immediate armed protection. Whichever was the case, the Soviet invasion still need not have amounted to war. As in Berlin in 1953 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the intention and hope might have been to use a show of force to intimidate the Hungarians into reestablishing the Soviet type of socialism and a regime loyal to the Soviet Union. However, when the Soviet invasion was put back in motion on November 1, 1956, when the airports were gradually occupied, and massive armored columns were marching on Budapest, when an iron ring of armor had been forged around the capital by November 3, and when the Soviet artillery opened fire on the night of November 3–4, first on Kiskunhalas and then all over the country, it was obvious that the Soviet socialist great power had premeditatedly launched a major offensive of arms against socialist Hungary. This military operation was executed systematically in order to smash Hungary's armed forces and to shatter the nation's will to resist. The Soviet government evidently intended to reimpose its own brand of socialism through the regime it installed in Hungary—and it did so. Soviet political and military actions exactly met the preconditions of war. There is no shadow of doubt in the author's mind that after November 1, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was at war with socialist Hungary. November 1 is the date of the invasion and the start of the war; but the shooting did not commence till November 4. The Soviet Union has the dubious distinction of being

the first socialist state in history to make war on another socialist country.

General Sergey M. Shtemenko, the late chief of staff of the Warsaw Pact forces, wrote in the weekly *Za Rubezhom* in May, 1976, on the twenty-first anniversary of the conclusion of the pact: ". . . measures are taken for the suppression of counter-revolutionary and aggressive action against Socialist countries. Thus, for example, in 1968 the states of the Socialist community provided fraternal assistance to the Czechoslovak people in defense of the Socialist achievement against encroachments by internal counter-revolution and international reaction."[3] General Shtemenko thus made the Warsaw Pact's real mission quite clear: to maintain socialism of the Soviet type and to quash dissidence. To those in the know, it was a statement of the obvious. Two facets of the statement are particularly interesting: that it seemed necessary at that moment to give the policy publicity in the Soviet Union, and that, while it was possible to mention the bloodless intervention in Czechoslovakia, the sanguinary suppression of the Hungarian revolution was still a nonevent.

It is also a nonevent even in the West, as was recently shown by a controversial statement by Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's chief political adviser. His widely criticized comment that the nations of East Central Europe should look for organic links with the Soviet Union was strange enough, but far more repellent was Sonnenfeldt's conclusion: "We should especially disabuse them [the East Central European nations] of any notion that our interest in their relative independence is greater than their own and therefore they have a free ride."[4] It is very odd that after the Hungarian revolution, Poland's "spring in October" of 1956, and the Czechoslovak attempt at "communism with a human countenance" in 1968, it should be assumed that these nations are looking for a "free ride."

The Hungarian revolution may be a nonevent in the West but in the East it is far more so. There it is neither spoken of nor written about, but it is not really forgotten. It lives on in the subconscious and the conscience. In time of crisis, when realities have to be faced, the specter of it reemerges, as it recently happened in Peking. After Chou En-lai's funeral, the people of Peking demonstrated against the totalitarian regime and precipitated a serious crisis. The image of the Hungarian revolution flashed immediately into the Chinese leaders' minds. A resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, published on April 7, 1976, noted: "In the past few days these elements . . . have lauded Teng Hsiao-ping and attempted to nominate him for

the role of [Imre] Nagy, the chieftain [*sic*] of the counterrevolutionary incident in Hungary." [5] The ghost of the Hungarian revolution had appeared once again.

* * *

The Hungarian People's Army was a thoroughly socialist force by 1956.[6] It was the last of Hungary's central institutions to have been transformed. The legislative, executive and judicial branches of government had been "socialized" by 1948, but not the military. Until then there had been no need for a Hungarian army, which might even have posed a threat to the country's totalitarian transformation. Accordingly, as in other countries under Soviet control, the army was reduced to its bare bones. Its traditional role in the "defence" of the country was filled by Soviet occupation forces. But in September of 1948 the socialization of the Hungarian army was started and was pushed forward rapidly, more rapidly indeed than had been the case with the civilian branches of government. By the time Lieutenant General György Pálffy, the inspector general of the army, was executed in September 1949, the process was complete.

The socialist transformation of the army and its concomitant and equally speedy reorganization, rearmament, and expansion, were prompted by the eruption of the crisis in Yugoslav-Soviet relations. On March 18, 1948, the Soviet military and technical advisers departed Belgrade and on June 28 Yugoslavia was expelled from the Cominform. Hungary, which was already the Soviet Union's obedient ally under Mátyás Rákosi, was now in the forefront of the ideological, political, and military confrontation between the U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia. As a result, the neglected Hungarian armed forces suddenly became a key factor. What happened between September 1948 and the summer of 1949 to some extent resembled the socialization of the civilian government, and to some extent had a character of its own related to the specific nature of the military. The socialist transformation of the military included the replacement of the supreme command with party leaders (Politburo member Mihály Farkas became Minister of Defense and Central Committee member Sándor Nógrády, his first deputy), reorganization of political control in the Soviet style, including introduction of the *politruk* system through which political officers became co-commanders of troops, gradual substitution of party officials for professional middle-ranking and junior commanders, training many party cadres in Hungary and the U.S.S.R. for professional military

posts, massive anti-Yugoslav propaganda, introduction of Soviet military doctrine and regulations, rearmament with Soviet weapons and equipment, retooling Hungarian industry to manufacture Soviet types of arms and weapons, and the integration of Hungary into Soviet war plans. All this was carried out under the watchful gaze of an ever-expanding network of Soviet advisers.

While the army was being refashioned, its integration into Soviet plans for a war against Yugoslavia was also started. The first such strategic plans had been completed before the Rajk trials of 1949. They were revised and adjusted annually to keep pace with the army's increase in strength. The Hungarian army's role in these Soviet strategic plans was simple: it was to provide the first wave in a Soviet offensive against Yugoslavia. The Hungarian army was to attack between the Danube and Tisza rivers, break through the Yugoslav frontier defenses, advance to Novi Sad, cross the Danube, and occupy the Fruska Gora hills to create a bridgehead south of the Danube. From this bridgehead Soviet forces were to overrun Belgrade itself. Rumanian, Bulgarian, and Albanian forces were assigned similar missions in their respective sectors. Where the Polish and Czechoslovak forces were to be thrown in, the Hungarian general staff did not receive information.

The last two major events in the socialist transformation and rapid expansion of the Hungarian army were the replacement of the supreme war command of the field forces, and the purge of the strategic leadership, both of which took place in 1950. The supreme war command of the Hungarian field forces was tendered to the commander of the infantry (land forces), a post that I filled. In March, however, the position of commander of the infantry was abolished and the minister of defense, Colonel General Farkas, took over. I was transferred to command the War (General Staff) Academy. The transfer was actually a blessing in disguise because in June all the generals who started their career in the old army and were still in strategic positions were purged (Generals László Sólyom, chief of the general staff; Gusztáv Illy, chief of personnel; István Beleznay, commander of the First Army Corps; Kálmán Révay, commander of the Armored Troops; György Pórffy, commander of the Artillery; Surgeon General Gusztav Merényi-Scholtz; and Colonel Sándor Lőrinc, the general staff's chief finance officer). All of them were supplanted by party cadres with inadequate professional training. By that time the Soviet advisers were completely familiar with the Hungarian environment and would have provided the professional leadership. The new Hungarian "commanders" would simply have signed the advisers' orders. All that was needed to start the war was the signal.

When the Korean war broke out, the East Central European armies were poised to strike against Yugoslavia. Had the United States and the United Nations not resisted in the Far East preventing the conquest of South Korea, war would have broken out in the Balkans. The United Nations resistance in Korea made it seem likely that an attack on Yugoslavia would also have been resisted and Stalin was not ready to run that risk. Western action in the Far East averted an offensive against Yugoslavia by its socialist fellow states.

The preparedness of the armies of East Central Europe was at its peak during the years 1950 and 1951, and after then it gradually declined. Once war with Yugoslavia was no longer a feasibility, large armed forces in the satellite countries lost their raison d'être. The strength of the Hungarian army, like that of its East Central European peers, was substantially reduced between 1951 and 1956. Further troops cuts were planned for 1956 and some were carried out. A disproportionately large number of trained professional officers faced transfer to civilian jobs. Because many of them lacked civilian skills, they were confronted with the prospect of becoming handymen, mechanics, or collective farmworkers. As a result, morale sagged. The officer corps was also afflicted by widespread discontent with Soviet control and domestic despotism. Highly demoralized, many of them turned toward the reformers under Imre Nagy who had already begun to criticize the regime openly, at first hesitantly, then with increasing boldness.

Looking back from a distance of twenty years, I can perceive four noteworthy basic military factors in the Revolution: the loyalty of the troops, the revolutionary government's power and control over the armed forces, the military strategy, and Imre Nagy's last command.

In a conventional war, the fighting man's loyalty to the government is crucial; in a revolutionary upheaval, it is the decisive factor. In a revolution the old regime has a good chance to survive if it retains the standing army's support. If the army is neutral, the chance of success is more slender. Without the army's support, the old regime will collapse almost as a rule, provided the revolution remains a domestic affair. In 1956 the Hungarian armed forces, except the Secret Police, stayed neutral for only the first few hours. At the start of Soviet intervention, however, they began to throw in their lot with the revolutionaries. The Secret Police was neutralized fairly quickly, and within a few days the Stalinist regime found itself with no support other than the armed backing of Soviet troops. The massive desertion of the armed forces, that is, of young people under arms to whom the regime had promised a glittering future, was proof of the dramatic failure of Soviet-style socialism in Hungary.

A regime under attack by the masses can be saved by a substantial group of key officers even if the rank and file of the army are ready to join the revolutionaries. In the Hungary of 1956 numerous upper-echelon officers remained loyal to the Stalinist regime and acted cohesively enough to cause the Imre Nagy government considerable difficulties. A new military leadership devoted to the new government was badly needed—not only new men but a new structure too. The new organization that was established was the Revolutionary Council for National Defence (*Forradalmi Karhatalmi Bizottság*). I happened to draft the decree creating the council, which Imre Nagy promulgated on the government's behalf.[7] I was elected its chairman, jointly with General Paul Maléter.[8] A screening committee was formed, charged with bringing back into the armed forces officers unjustly purged since 1948. Its first meeting was slated for November 4, 1956.

Meanwhile, freedom fighters, workers' guards and other paramilitary groups were being consolidated into a National Guard, into which were also absorbed those army units that joined them during the fighting. The National Guard was thus becoming a genuine armed force of the revolutionary government. The main purpose of these revolutionary forces and commands was to preserve public peace and order and to forestall any armed disturbance—a tall order in view of the number of weapons in the hands of young people. Internal order was the key to survival, for any lengthy anarchy would have been seized upon by the Soviet government as a pretext for intervention. Domestic tranquility was in fact secured. On the night of October 28–29, for instance, there had been 28 armed affrays in Budapest; there was not one during the night of November 2–3. By the day before the Soviet incursion flared into armed hostilities, the country was ready to consolidate its gains and pursue its peaceful evolution toward a democratic socialist state and society.

The question of revolutionary strategy was fairly straightforward, for the Imre Nagy government had no plan for war with the Soviet Union, not even a defensive one. Only a shallow defense perimeter was established around Budapest, more for observation purposes than as a lasting shield. In the event of an attack, this line would have secured a few hours' or at most a few days' delay to give the government time for political decisions. This was the context of Nagy's last command.

During the night of November 3–4, the advancing Soviet columns opened fire on the garrison at Kiskunhalas. I at once relayed this information to Imre Nagy, with whom I had a direct telephone line. My reports became more and more frequent as the Soviet onslaught en-

gulfed us. When the outer defense line of Budapest came under attack in several sectors, I suggested to Imre Nagy that either he or I should go on the air to inform the troops that a state of war existed. This seemed essential, since for days they had been instructed very explicitly not to fire on the Soviet troops except as a very last resort in order not to afford them any excuse to interfere in our domestic affairs. Now our troops needed a dramatic order that everything had changed: they must open fire. Wire communications with our troops were inadequate, so that the radio was the only means to inform them that the Soviet Union was openly at war with us.

Imre Nagy reminded me that such a decision was a political rather than a military one and forbade me to make any radio announcement. I replied that I was aware of the political nature of the announcement and that was why I had not gone straight on the air but had asked him to make the decision. Nagy told me that Soviet Ambassador Andropov was at his elbow and had assured him that the Soviet government did not want war and that all that was happening was the result of a misunderstanding. The telephone was not picked up in Moscow, of course, when Nagy had tried to contact the Soviet government. It is an open question whether Nagy really believed Andropov. Clearly, however, Nagy wanted no war, not even a defensive one.

In the early morning hours the Soviet armored columns reached my headquarters but, instead of attacking, they turned toward the Parliament building where Nagy had his office. I reported this to him and he responded: "Thank you. I don't need any more reports." It was a strange order for the commander-in-chief of the freedom-fighters at the height of the Soviet attack. A few minutes later Imre Nagy's voice came over Budapest radio. The prime minister declared that the Soviet troops were attacking Hungary with the obvious intention of overthrowing the legal government. He concluded: "Our troops are in combat." [9]

An apparently irreconcilable contradiction existed between Nagy telling me he wanted no more reports and his telling the nation that our troops were at war. Why did Nagy hedge? Apparently, he wanted no further reports from me because he would have been expected to issue commands in response, and he did not wish to give the order to fight. The memory of Budapest in ruins after the Soviet siege at the end of World War II was still too vivid. A fight against Soviet power would have been futile. "Our troops are in combat," he had said. That was neither an encouragement to fight nor advice to surrender. In Hungary's history there had been surrenders when troops had laid down their arms in good faith only to be cruelly brutalized later. He could not urge the

freedom fighters to accept such a fate. I had advised him that we could still fly him abroad a few hours before the Soviet troops reached the heart of Budapest; he did not want to flee. He wanted to stay among his people. At the height of the war waged by the socialist Soviet Union against socialist Hungary, he made no decisions. He left the decisions to the individual freedom fighter and the judgment to history. He would not denounce the revolution. Instead he remained true to its ideas and goals and to those who participated in it and settled for martyrdom.

NOTES

1. See the title of the "White Books" of the Kádár regime: *Ellenforradalmi erők a magyar októberi eseményekben* [Counterrevolutionary Forces in the Hungarian October Events] Budapest, no date [1957].
2. The armistice was announced by Prime Minister Imre Nagy on Radio Budapest at 1:20 p.m., October 28. *A Magyar Forradalom és Szabadságharc a Hazai Rádióadások Tükrében* [The Hungarian Revolution and Freedom-fight Reflected in Domestic Broadcasts]. New York, no date [1957], p. 98.
3. *New York Times,* May 8, 1976.
4. *Ibid.,* April 6, 1976.
5. *Ibid.,* April 8, 1976.
6. The most recent account is Peter Gosztony, *Zur Geschichte der europäischen Volksarmeen.* Bonn-Bad Godesberg, 1976, p. 125-188.
7. A facsimile of the document is in *Ellenforradalmi erők. . . ,* p. 7.
8. *A Magyar Forradalom. . . ,* p. 212.
9. *Ibid.,* p. 362.

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La Révolution Hongroise de 1956 et l'Idée de la Confédération Danubienne

Paul Pilisi

> Oui, la Hongrie, à partir de maintenant, s'efforce d'établir l'héritage de Kossuth: réaliser la confédération des peuples danubiens. La réalisation de ce projet historique doit être l'exigence la plus importante de notre politique extérieure, parce que seule cette voie est susceptible de sauvegarder, aux petites nations, leur indépendance et leur liberté.
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> Programme fédéraliste de la révolution hongroise de 1956. (*Magyar Szabadság,* le 1er novembre)

Introduction

Il y a vingt ans que la révolution hongroise de 1956 a remis en question le système stalinien, réclamant le droit d'auto-détermination du peuple hongrois. La contestation armée, sous les yeux bienveillants du monde occidental, n'avait pas comme seul objectif la liberté hongroise, mais aussi le retour à l'idée danubienne, héritage historique du fédéralisme central européen. Certes, les circonstances historiques n'étaient pas favorables à la réalisation des objectifs, mais la signification historique de la révolution reste valable.

Pendant et après la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, les partis politiques et les mouvements de résistance envisageaient la création d'une confédération en Europe de l'Est avec la participation des pays suivants: la Pologne, la Hongrie, la Tchécoslovaquie, la Roumanie, la Bulgarie et la Yougoslavie. Parmi les partisans fédéralistes, nous retrouvons les leaders les plus illustres du mouvement communiste notamment Tito, Dimitrov, Patrascanu, Rajk et Imre Nagy.[1] En 1947, Nagy, en tant que ministre de l'agriculture, s'efforce de contribuer à la réalisation du "rêve de Kossuth," c'est-à-dire, mettre sur pied la "Confédération Danubienne" adaptée aux circonstances nouvelles. László Rajk se prononce plusieurs fois en faveur de cette confédération et, à l'occasion de son procès en 1949, son engagement fédéraliste fut considéré par le tribunal

du peuple comme "haute trahison" envers l'Etat et envers les Démocraties populaires.[2]*

Le programme de "déstalinisation" lancé par Khrouchtchev encourage les leaders communistes hongrois favorables aux réformes. Pour certains d'entre eux, la "déstalinisation" signifie aussi le retour à leurs idées d'après-guerre. En particulier, le rétablissement des liens rompus avec les Démocraties populaires voisines redevient l'objectif majeur. De plus, la réhabilitation de Rajk à l'été 1956 indique un tournant décisif dans le processus de déstalinisation en Hongrie. De toute évidence, la réhabilitation de Rajk ne signifie pas seulement la réhabilitation du leader communiste mais aussi celle de l'idée danubienne.

1. *Le fédéralisme révolutionnaire d'Imre Nagy*

Précurseur du courant réformiste, Nagy élabore son programme entre juin et septembre 1955 dans un "mémorandum" adressé au Comité Central du Parti. Son mémorandum fait référence aux problèmes concrets d'actualité. Au début de 1956, il rédige quatre chapitres complétant ce mémorandum qui reste négligé par le Comité Central.[3] Le programme d'Imre Nagy préconise en premier lieu une "coopération étroite" entre les pays socialistes de l'Europe centrale et orientale. Cette coopération égalitaire et régionale vise ensuite la coopération entre pays danubiens. La philosophie de ce programme, faisant allusion à l'idée de la Confédération danubienne de Kossuth, souligne la nécessité de retourner aux traditions progressistes des peuples danubiens:

> Lajos Kossuth** nous a indiqué la voie à suivre: la coopération étroite avec les peuples voisins dans le cadre d'une confédération égalitaire entre peuples libres. Il nous faut retourner à ces principes.[4]

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* Suite à l'opposition de Staline aux fédérations balkanique et danubienne, dont Milovan Djilas, dans son livre intitulé *Conversations avec Staline* donne des détails, Rajk et Nagy ont été écartés du pouvoir. Ce dernier est devenu professeur d'Université.

**KOSSUTH, Lajos (1802–1894) homme d'état hongrois, chef de la révolution hongrois de 1848. Il dirigea la guerre d'indépendance de 1848–1849 contre l'Autriche et l'armée interventionniste tsariste. Dans l'exil, il préconisa la formation d'un confédération pour défendre les petites nations contre l'Autriche et la Russie. Ce projet initial, conçu en 1850 en Asie-Mineure, connaîtra une version définitive en 1862 sous le titre: *Confédération danubienne*. Le projet de Kossuth prévoyait la participation des "Etats danubiens" notamment la Hongrie, la Serbie, la Croatie et la Roumanie (Moldo-Valachie à l'époque). Kossuth

Pour réaliser une "coopération étroite" au niveau régional, Nagy souligne la nécessité de garantir la condition suivante: l'égalité des Etats concernés. Il propose en même temps la "réconsidération" démocratique des relations soviéto-hongroises dans un esprit d'amitié et d'égalité. D'après sa conclusion, les conditions générales des pays danubiens sont différentes de celles de l'U.R.S.S. mais similaires entre elles. Nagy s'emploie à rétablir des "relations amicales" avec les pays danubiens, y compris la Yougoslavie:

> Personnellement, je fais la première démarche pour rétablir les relations amicales que nous avions avec la République Démocratique de Roumanie car elles offrent des avantages mutuels. Dans cette région, il faut aussi rétablir des relations avec la Yougoslavie et effacer les graves erreurs du passé au profit de nouvelles relations amicales. J'ai également fait des efforts à cet égard à travers des contacts avec les cercles yougoslaves.[5]

La popularité d'Imre Nagy et de son programme grandit sans cesse. Le 30 juin 1956, le Comité Central du Parti se prépare à éliminer le mouvement "d'opposition" et le programme d'Imre Nagy. La société hongroise—à l'exception d'une mince minorité privilégiée—soutient Nagy et son programme. Ce soutien prend une forme spectaculaire à l'occasion de la réhabilitation et de l'exhumation de László Rajk, leader communiste exécuté en 1949. Pour Nagy et aux yeux de la grande majorité, aussi bien que pour un grand nombre de communistes, la réhabilitation de Rajk signifie en même temps la légitimation du projet

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considérait également qu'une telle confédération serait la meilleure forme étatique pour résoudre les problèmes nationaux.

Influencé par la structure politique et par la constitution américaine, le projet de la Confédération danubienne de Kossuth reste l'idéal démocratique pour les courants politiques des XIX^{e} et XX^{e} siècles favorables à la coopération "fraternelle" des Etats danubiens. Le projet de confédération parut la première fois le 1er mai 1862 dans le journal italien *ALLEANZA* à Turin.

Au début du XX^{e} siècle, les radicaux-bourgeois de Hongrie considéraient ce projet de Kossuth, en tant que principe fondamental dans la réorganisation confédérale de la Monarchie austro-hongroise. Cfr. O. JÁSZI, *Magyarország jövője és a Dunai Egyesült Államok* [L'avenir de Hongrie et les Etats-Unis Danubiens], Budapest, 1918 (2^{e} édition), pp. 5-10. Quelques références au sujet de la Confédération danubienne de Kossuth: dans historiographie occidentale J. KÜHL, *Föderationspläne in Donauraum und in Ostmitteleuropa,* München, Südost-Institut, 1958, pp. 16-20 et R. WIERER, *Der Föderalismus im Donauraum,* Graz-Köln, 1960, pp. 60-62. Dans l'historiographie marxiste, Gy. MÉREI, *Föderációs tervek Délkelet-Európában és a Habsburg Monarchia 1840-1918* [Projets de fédération en Europe de Sud-Est et la Monarchie des Habsburg 1840-1918], Budapest, 1966, pp. 84-86.

de la coopération danubienne telle que défini dans la période d'après-guerre. Imre Nagy affirme ouvertement qu'il faut "retourner à ces principes." Ainsi, la révolution d'octobre 1956 apparaît comme l'héritière de ce programme: "Le but de la révolution n'a pas été seulement la lutte pour l'indépendance, illusoire en soi, mais surtout l'établissement d'une confédération de peuples libres, celle des peuples de l'Europe centrale et orientale." [6]

Le gouvernement révolutionnaire sous la présidence d'Imre Nagy mène une politique visant à obtenir la neutralité de la Hongrie.

Au sujet des relations hongro-soviétiques, la révolution hongroise conteste l'écart existant entre la théorie marxiste de l'internationalisme et le système établi autoritairement par l'Union Soviétique à son profit. Or la déstalinisation n'apporte aucun changement considérable dans le système: "Pour la première fois, avec la Hongrie, la progression du socialisme calqué sur le modèle soviétique était remise en question." [7]

La révolution hongroise conteste avant tout le sommet du système de centralisme est-européen, c'est-à-dire la suprématie de la puissance soviétique en Hongrie et dans les pays est-européens ainsi que dans la coopération des pays du COMECON.[8]

2. *Le gouvernement et l'opinion publique face au fédéralisme danubien*

Le programme de Nagy trouve un appui solide au sein du parti comme dans l'opinion publique. György Lukács, philosophe marxiste, ministre du gouvernement révolutionnaire, appuie entièrement le programme de Nagy. Dans sa déclaration officielle faite à la radio le 27 octobre 1956, il affirme que la Hongrie désire bâtir le socialisme conformément aux conditions et particularités du pays: "Nous autres, nous ne voulons pas bâtir un socialisme en l'air, nous ne voulons pas l'instaurer en Hongrie comme une marchandise importée." [9]

Lukács évoque la tradition propre et l'esprit international de la "République des Soviets de Hongrie" ainsi que la capacité des communistes-socialistes de Hongrie, d'avoir une idée claire du socialisme. Dans cette perspective, la Hongrie révolutionnaire s'efforce de réaliser deux exigences de la révolution: la déstalinisation et la désatellisation. La renaissance de l'idée de la Confédération danubienne apparaît donc comme la continuité d'un programme collectif des pays de l'Europe centrale et orientale. Imre Nagy, président du gouvernement révolutionnaire, reprend alors ses idées concernant ce programme. Il se ligue avant tout contre la politique de "divide et impera" de l'Union Soviétique, politique pratiquée à l'égard des Démocraties populaires de l'Europe

de l'Est par des traités bilatéraux. Il préconise non seulement le rapprochement et la coopération entre les pays socialistes, mais aussi entre Est et l'Ouest:

> Un provincialisme particulier des Démocraties populaires, une aliénation intensive dans ces efforts ont dressé une véritable muraille de Chine, non seulement entre notre patrie et les pays capitalistes occidentaux, mais aussi entre la démocratie populaire hongroise et d'autres pays du camp socialiste.[10]

Le communiste Imre Nagy déclare que la volonté ferme de la révolution est de retirer la Hongrie du COMECON et du Pacte de Varsovie, instruments institutionnels d'intégration économique et politique des pays socialistes de l'Europe de l'Est, dirigés par l'Union Soviétique. En 1956, pour quelques semaines seulement, la Hongrie possède la liberté d'expression. Elle affirme que l'intégration de l'Europe de l'Est revient à l'initiative et au droit de ces peuples:

> La confédération des peuples de l'Europe Centrale et Orientale, les manifestations marquantes et observables, les possibilités du fédéralisme en 1956, comme la tendance fédéraliste de la révolution, ont rendu actuel le problème du fédéralisme.[11]

Le "Conseil Ouvrier" du centre industriel de Miskolc fait introduire l'idée de la "Confédération Danubienne." L'assemblée générale des ouvriers et étudiants de Miskolc exige du gouvernement d'Imre Nagy d'entrer immédiatement en contact avec les gouvernements des pays danubiens, en vue d'exposer clairement la politique fédéraliste du gouvernement révolutionnaire hongrois:

> Nous désirerions aussi faire connaître notre opinion face à la Confédération Danubienne. Si nous examinons la question du point de vue de l'avenir, une union entre les pays du bassin danubien devrait être réalisée. La spontanéité et les intérêts tant économiques que culturels d'une telle union devraient être pris en considération. Notre pays veut ainsi devenir membre de la "Confédération Danubienne" projetée par Kossuth,[12]

affirme le mémorandum de l'assemblée de Miskolc.

Le même programme fédéraliste est adopté par le "Conseil Révolutionnaire de la Province de Veszprém." Dans son mémorandum adressé au Comité des affaires étrangères du Parlement, il exige la "reconsidération" des institutions du processus d'intégration des pays socialistes de l'Europe de l'Est, la prise d'initiatives dans l'établissement d'une "Confédération Danubienne." [13]

Dès les premiers jours de la révolution, des "Conseils Ouvriers" se constituent à l'échelle provinciale et nationale. Au sein des "Conseils Ouvriers" et des organes révolutionnaires, les ouvriers industriels, les étudiants et les intellectuels comme les membres de l'armée, communistes

ou sans parti, jouent le rôle le plus important. Les "écrivains populistes," partisans de l'unité culturelle des peuples danubiens, influencent sensiblement la renaissance de l'idée de la "Confédération Danubienne": "Qui, en Hongrie, à partir de maintenant, s'efforce d'établir l'héritage de Kossuth, de réaliser la confédération des peuples danubiens. La réalisation de ce projet historique doit être l'exigence la plus importante de notre politique extérieure, parce que seule cette voie est susceptible de garantir aux petites nations leur indépendance." [14]

La radio du "Conseil Ouvrier" et du "Parlement Estudiantin" de Miskolc poursuit ses émissions en hongrois, en roumain, en serbe et en slovaque faisant campagne en faveur de la confédération danubienne: "Frères roumains, slaves. Nous faisons couler notre sang et vous êtes silencieux. Nous avons conscience que vous vivez sous le même despotisme duquel nous tentons de nous évader. Les intérêts étrangers essayent par des propos mensongers de vous détourner de nous. Quand nous parlons de la confédération, nous la voulons sous le signe de l'unité démocratique. Nous vous proposons le développement des peuples libres au sein d'une confédération égalitaire." [15]

Le gouvernement d'Imre Nagy adopte officiellement le programme fédéraliste. Imre Nagy, président du gouvernement révolutionnaire, poursuit une politique sans équivoque à cet égard. Il déclare que l'expérience historique des petits peuples danubiens prouve que leurs libertés ne peuvent pas être garanties en les rattachant à l'une ou à l'autre puissance. La seule voie pour ces petits pays est de s'unir au sein d'une "Confédération égalitaire." "A la suite de l'oppression de notre révolution de 1848–1849, Lajos Kossuth interprète la grande leçon historique pour notre pays et indique la voie à suivre. Aux yeux de Kossuth, la garantie de l'indépendance, de la souveraineté et de l'existence nationale libre du peuple hongrois ne réside pas dans le rattachement du peuple à une grande puissance ou à un groupe de puissances, mais bien dans la coopération serrée avec les peuples voisins en une confédération égalitaire de peuples libres." [16]

Il est certain que la tendance fédéraliste de la révolution hongroise représente un aspect européen inconnu de l'événement. En relevant les circonstances politico-historiques, il est aussi évident que toute condition préalable à la réalisation d'une "Confédération Danubienne" égalitaire des "peuples libres" est absente. Malgré cela, la révolution hongroise constitue une partie des efforts fédéralistes des peuples de l'Europe Centrale et Orientale du XX^{ieme} siècle.

L'Union Soviétique considère le programme fédéraliste des années 1948 et 1956 comme une tentative de sortie du bloc socialiste vers le "camp

capitaliste." Ainsi, l'Union Soviétique, après la "déstalinisation," intervient militairement en Hongrie en 1956, et met fin non seulement à la révolution nationale mais aussi à la renaissance et à toute manifestation de l'idée de la "Confédération Danubienne." En fin de compte, l'Union Soviétique, contrairement à l'idée de la déstalinisation, s'efforce de rétablir le système politique établi en Europe Orientale par Staline.

Dans son mémorandum adressé aux pays occidentaux, lors des derniers jours de la révolution, le ministre d'Etat, István Bibó, leur demande de pratiquer une politique active et non agressive à l'égard des pays de l'Europe de l'Est. Il serait souhaitable, selon le ministre, que le monde occidental constitue pour eux une force "d'attraction" sans toutefois contester leur système politique et social:

> La révolution hongroise et en général les mouvements des pays de l'Europe de l'Est signifient que le monde occidental ne doit pas adopter une politique agressive basée sur la force mais doit pratiquer une politique active et prendre une initiative positive afin que, sans avoir la volonté de s'imposer, leur système économique et social, puisse gagner pas à pas les pays de l'Est et finalement l'Union Soviétique au profit d'une politique morale basée sur la liberté et la technique occidentale.[17]

Ainsi, le monde occidental, par sa force d'attraction, devrait orienter les pays socialistes de l'Europe de l'Est et l'Union Soviétique vers une "politique nouvelle." Après Budapest, Prague et au lendemain de la Conférence sur la sécurité européenne, le monde occidental répondra-t-il à ce message?

Conclusion

La révolution hongroise de 1956 réaffirme la continuité de l'idée danubienne relative à une solution fédérale des problèmes historiques de la vallée danubienne. Le gouvernement révolutionnaire et les organisations ouvrières et estudiantines, pendant si peu de temps, avaient des idées claires et nettes sur la politique à suivre à l'égard de pays voisins comme face à l'URSS et à l'Occident. Au lieu d'adhérer par la force à une puissance étrangère, la révolution désigna la voie à suivre pour la Hongrie aussi bien que pour les autres pays du Bloc soviétique.

La révolution de 1956, sous la conduite du leader communiste Imre Nagy, s'engage dans cette voie malgré l'absence des conditions nécessaires pour la réalisation des objectifs. Malgré sa défaite, la révolution hongroise de 1956 reste un témoignage, une victoire morale des principes démocratiques.

NOTES

1. Voir W. LIPGENS, *Europa-Föderationspläne der Widerstandsbewegungen 1940–1945,* München, 1968, pp. 311–315, et K. DERECSKEY, Konföderációs tervek a második világháború alatt [Projets confédéraux pendant la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale], *Új Magyar Út,* München, novembre-décembre 1951, p. 30.
2. I. NAGY, Dunavölgyi agrárproblémák [Problèmes agraires de la vallée danubienne], *Közgazdaság,* le 30 mars 1947, Budapest. Au sujet du fédéralisme de Rajk, *Szabad Nép,* le 3 décembre 1946 et *Magyar Szemle,* le 12 janvier 1947, Budapest. Concernant les aspects fédéralistes du procès de Rajk; "László Rajk et ses complices devant le tribunal du peuple," Budapest (s.d.) pp. 10–16 et 65.
3. Voir I. NAGY, *Un communisme qui n'oublie pas l'homme,* Paris, Plon, 1957, p. 272.
4. I. NAGY, *A magyar nép védelmében* [Pour la défense du peuple hongrois], (s.d.) 1957, p. 40.
5. *Ibid.,* pp. 67–68.
6. B. NAGY, Forradalmunk és a közép-keleteurópai föderáció [La révolution hongroise et le fédéralisme en Europe centrale et orientale], *Szemle,* Institut des Sciences Politiques et Sociales Imre Nagy, Bruxelles, octobre 1960, p. 2.
7. C. H. D'ENCAUSSE, Les conflits internationaux. La fin du mythe unitaire, *Revue Française de Science Politique,* décembre 1968, p. 1179.
8. Cf. P. HASSNER,L'Europe de l'Est entre l'Est et l'Europe, *Revue Française de Science Politique,* février 1969, p. 112.
9. *A magyar forradalom és a szabadságharc a hazai rádióállomások tükrében 1956 október 23–november 9* [La révolution hongroise et la lutte d'indépendance dans le miroir des émissions de la Radio de Hongrie libre entre le 23 octobre et le 9 novembre 1956], New York, 1957, pp. 22–23.
10. Cf. NAGY, *A magyar nép védelmében,* p. 67.
11. *Ibidem,* p. 8.
12. *A magyar forradalom és a szabadságharc,* p. 240.
13. *Veszprém Megyei Népújság,* le 30 octobre 1956.
14. *Magyar Szabadság,* 1er novembre 1956.
15. *A magyar forradalom és a szabadságharc,* pp. 13–14.
16. NAGY, *A magyar nép védelmében,* p. 139.
17. I. BIBÓ, *Harmadik út* [Troisième voie], London, Magyar Könyves Céh, 1960, p. 311.

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Commentaire

G. C. Kuun

L'incroyable est arrivé. Une petite nation se dresse contre le colosse russe et pendant quelques jours recouvre sa liberté. Les Russes, sans ignorer les conséquences d'une intervention brutale, décident de réprimer la révolte hongroise dans le sang. Le monde occidental surpris et compatissant n'ose intervenir. L'exode d'environ 200,000 Hongrois représente une lourde perte pour la nation hongroise, mais ceux qui restent doivent continuer à vivre sous le régime communiste. Ce régime toutefois tirera une leçon de ce soulèvement. La révolution hongroise de 1956 n'est pas une victoire, mais elle n'a pas eu lieu en vain.

Aujourd'hui on ne peut parler du communisme sans mentionner les événements de Budapest de 1956 et ceux de Prague de 1968. Ces deux mouvements de résistance populaire et l'intervention russe qui les a suivis prouvent qu'en Europe Orientale les régimes communistes sont maintenus uniquement par la présence de l'Armée Rouge.

Il y aurait beaucoup à dire de ces deux soulèvements; les deux événements sont cependant bien différents. La différence provient en grande partie des deux pays intéréssés et de leur attitude réciproque face à l'intervention soviétique. Ce qui ne peut être mis en doute, c'est que les petits peuples de l'Europe Orientale sont à la merci des grandes puissances qui profitent de leurs rivalités. Le monde serait probablement aujourd'hui beaucoup plus heureux si précisément dans l'Europe de l'Est les nations s'étaient mieux comprises et mieux respectées. C'est cette collaboration souhaitable des peuples de l'Europe de l'Est dont traite Paul Pilisi dans son article. Il ajoute à notre connaissance des événements de 1956 un aspect fort intéressant et jusqu'ici peu connu: celui de l'idée du fédéralisme danubien ressuscitée.

L'idée du fédéralisme danubien est assez ancienne et assez bien connue des experts en histoire est-européenne. Ceux qui furent les partisans de cette idée sont d'origines diverses. Le Français Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, le Tchèque Palacký, le Slovaque Hodža, le Roumain Popovici, le Croate Pilar et enfin le Hongrois Kossuth sont le plus

souvent mentionnés comme défenseurs de l'idée d'un fédéralisme danubien. La question qui se pose est de savoir pourquoi cette idée n'a pas rencontré plus de succès et emporté l'adhésion des peuples danubiens. La réponse à cette question pourrait bien être que les partisans de la fédération danubienne manifestèrent leur enthousiasme à des périodes différentes. L'intérêt pour le fédéralisme s'est révélé parmi les Slaves et les Roumains d'une part, les Hongrois d'autre part dans des circonstances différentes. Nous avons l'impression que les Hongrois ont manqué "l'express danubien." Il nous semble que le moment propice pour la réorganisation de la région danubienne s'est situé vers la fin du XIX^{e} siècle ou au début du XX^{e} siècle, moment où la Hongrie fut une des nations dominantes du bassin danubien.

A cette époque-là cependant, ceux qui furent les maîtres de la région danubienne ne voulurent pas renoncer à certains de leurs privilèges pour faire place aux Slaves et aux Roumains. Les deux races dominantes de la monarchie Austro-Hongroise, les Autrichiens et les Magyars, appuyés par les Allemands, refusèrent de consentir à la division de la double monarchie en état fédéral.

Parmi les hommes d'Etat qui reconnurent le danger menaçant la monarchie il y eut l'archiduc François-Ferdinand lui-même. Un de ses plus proches collaborateurs fut le Roumain Aurèle Popovici qui s'attira la fureur des circles dominants hongrois en publiant le livre *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Grossösterreich* (Les Etats-Unis de la Grande Autriche) en 1906. Dans ce livre l'auteur roumain préconise la formation d'un état fédéral de quinze états "semi-souverains." La langue officielle serait l'allemand, les employés fédéraux seraient tenus à parler la langue officielle de leur état et l'allemand. L'empereur représenterait l'empire au niveau international.[1]

Les Magyars, comme c'est le cas de toutes les élites gouvernantes du monde entier, ne voulaient pas abandonner leur position privilégiée. Ils savaient que numériquement, comparés aux Slaves, ils étaient en minorité. Il leur aurait fallu la sagesse d'un Aristote et l'abnégation d'un saint pour faire ce qu'on leur reproche de ne pas avoir fait. La Première Guerre Mondiale vint mettre fin à la vieille monarchie bicéphale, mais l'idée du fédéralisme danubien ne mourut pas avec elle.

Il serait trop long d'énumérer tous ceux qui ont essayé de ressusciter l'idée du fédéralisme danubien après avoir constaté le vide laissé par la destruction de la monarchie habsbourgeoise. Les circonstances ayant changé, les Hongrois sont devenus les plus fervents partisans du fédéralisme danubien. Assurer une vie libre aux millions de Hongrois répartis parmi les états successeurs tel était le but des Magyars qui

propagèrent le fédéralisme danubien pour remplacer les petits états hostiles, prêts à se lier avec n'importe quelle grande puissance pour obtenir des avantages politiques, par un état fédéral où toutes les nations seraient égales et libres.

Cependant il y eut aussi des Français, comme l'historien Jacques Bainville[2] et le premier ministre André Tardieu, qui virent le danger que présentait l'Europe de l'Est divisée. Tardieu voulut unir la Petite Entente avec l'Autriche et la Hongrie[3] dans un cadre fédéral, mais son plan ne fut pas couronné de succès. La Tchécoslovaquie, la Roumanie et la Yougoslavie, ayant reçu des territoires de l'ancienne monarchie austro-hongroise, défendirent le statu quo et ainsi l'Europe danubienne devint la proie d'Adolphe Hitler.

Pendant la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, c'est un ancien ministre de la Tchécoslovaquie, Milan Hodža, un Slovaque, qui est revenu à l'idée de la fédération en Europe Centrale. Son livre *Federation in Central Europe, Reflections and Reminiscences* fut publié en 1942 à Londres. Le plan de Hodža—comme tous les autres plans—n'a pas pu être réalisé, mais l'historien autrichien Rudolf Wierer, auteur du livre *Der Föderalismus im Donauraum* (Le Fédéralisme dans l'Espace Danubien) le considère "quand même une grande idée." Après beaucoup de souffrances et de pertes humaines, en 1945 le statu quo de 1938 fut rétabli dans les pays danubiens. Cette fois-ci sous l'hégémonie de l'Union Soviétique. La révolution hongroise de 1956 fut un essai de se libérer de cette domination.

En général les événements de Budapest de 1956 sont assez bien connus. Il s'agit d'une révolution spontanée du peuple hongrois qui ne pouvait plus supporter les rigueurs d'un régime ayant perdu le contact avec le peuple. Les Russes furent surpris par la révolte des Magyars, ils hésitèrent, mais finalement ils se jetèrent sur les Hongrois. Cette lutte inégale ne pouvait pas durer très longtemps, mais les Hongrois ont montré au monde que l'Union Soviétique est vulnérable. Jusqu'à quel point les Russes pourront compter sur les pays de l'Europe de l'Est en cas d'un conflit armé entre les Etats Unis et l'U.R.S.S. voilà qui est difficile à dire. Une chose est certaine: les Russes ne sont pas en faveur de l'idée d'un fédéralisme danubien.

Paul Pilisi écrit très justement que l'idée d'un fédéralisme danubien fut avancée sous des aspects différents par des personnalités communistes comme Tito, Dimitrov, Rajk et Nagy. Ce qui est intéressant, et c'est là l'argument principal de Pilisi, c'est de constater que même pendant cette brève révolution de 1956 le fédéralisme danubien fit une courte réapparition, mais assez typique.

Imre Nagy, le leader populaire de la révolution, était fédéraliste depuis assez longtemps. Devenu chef du gouvernement révolutionnaire, il essaya de mener l'idée fédéraliste aussi loin que possible. Il voulut coopérer avec tous les pays voisins, y compris la Yougoslavie. Pour lui la révolution d'octobre fut la continuation logique de tout ce qu'il avait écrit et dit sur le fédéralisme danubien et si l'on veut remonter encore plus loin dans l'histoire, ce fut la suite des idées de Kossuth. Kossuth, le révolutionnaire de 1848–1849 devenu fédéraliste en exile, inspira Nagy, le communiste, qui ne put résister à l'appel de la patrie.

Du point de vue intellectuel, il est de la plus grande importance que Georges Lukács, le "grand old man" de la philosophie marxiste ait donné aussi son appui au fédéralisme danubien. Tout à fait dans la tradition titiste le penseur devenu ministre déclara que la révolution ne voulait pas "un socialisme en l'air."

Nous croyons cependant que plusieurs des déclarations préconisant le fédéralisme danubien furent plutôt le produit du coeur que de la tête. Pilisi cite le mémorandum de l'assemblée des ouvriers et étudiants de Miskolc qui parle de la "spontanéité" du mouvement fédéraliste et du désir de devenir membre de la "confédération danubienne." Eh bien, cette spontanéité n'exista que du côté hongrois. On peut également dire la même chose de l'idée de la confédération danubienne.

Nagy, lui aussi, se laissa emporter par un rêve. Il parle des "possibilités du fédéralisme en 1956." Mais quelle autre nation exprima des vues fédéralistes? Du côté Tchèque ou Roumain on ne fut pas prêt à venir en aide à la confédération danubienne. Tito non plus ne se déclara pas pour la causè fédéraliste.

La phrase du professeur Pilisi: "malgré celą le caractère fédéraliste de la révolution hongroise constitue une partie *organique* des efforts fédéralistes des *peuples* de l'Europe Centrale et Orientale du XX^{e} siècle" nous paraît un peu grandiloquente. Parler de "partie organique des efforts fédéralistes des peuples de l'Europe Centrale et Orientale. . ." ne nous semble pas correspondre à la vérité. Malheureusement en effet il n'y a jamais eu de réalité à laquelle on ait pu donner le nom du "fédéralisme danubien." Et quant aux "peuples," cela nous semble également un peu exagéré. C'est un fait regrettable, mais le fédéralisme n'est devenu un mouvement populaire dans aucun des pays danubiens. Même en Hongrie ce mouvement n'atteignit, à notre avis, que les intellectuels. Ce qui ne veut pas dire que le fédéralisme ne soit pas la solution pour le bassin danubien.

Nous aimerions terminer cette discussion en mentionnant deux allusions faites au sujet du fédéralisme danubien. Sans être très récentes, elles datent cependant d'après 1956.

La première de ces allusions a paru dans le journal "Esti Hirlap"[4] en 1965 qui publia un article relatif au voyage d'un groupe de journalistes hongrois en Autriche. Le journal de Budapest écrit ceci: "Quoique récemment la nouvelle de l'Union Danubienne, à laquelle participeraient l'Autriche, la Hongrie, la Tchécoslovaquie et la Yougoslavie, fit la ronde, en réalité il ne peut s'agir que du fait que des relations amicales, politiques, économiques, culturelles et humaines se développent. Il s'agit un peu du développement de relations familiales."

Qu'il y ait eu ou non des "relations familiales" parmi les peuples danubiens en 1965 nous l'ignorons, mais toujours est-il que même s'il y avait de telles relations l'invasion de la Tchécoslovaquie en 1968 par les troupes du Pacte de Varsovie, y compris les Hongrois, les a probablement ébranlées quelque peu.

La deuxième allusion que nous aimerions citer est celle de M. Kádár lui-même.[5] Le 12 décembre 1964 il souligna l'importance d'une entente entre les peuples de la vallée danubienne. Voici les paroles de l'homme qui, avec l'aide des Russes, étouffa la révolution hongroise de 1956: "Les peuples du bassin danubien vivent dans une communauté de sort. Ou ils prospèrent ensemble ou ils périssent ensemble. Il n'y a pas d'autre solution pour ces peuples du bassin danubien."

Le grand mérite de Paul Pilisi est de nous rappeler que l'idée du fédéralisme danubien n'est pas complètement morte. Chaque essai de ranimer la discussion ne peut que servir l'intérêt commun des peuples danubiens.

NOTES

1. Hodža, Milan, *Federation in Central Europe,* Yarrolds, London, 1942.
2. Bainville, Jacques, *Les Conséquences Politiques de la Paix,* Librairie Artheme Fayard, Paris, 1920, p. 49.
3. Wierer, Rudolf, *Der Föderalismus im Donauraum,* Verlag Böhlau, Graz-Köln, 1960, p. 177.
4. Free Europe Committee Inc. XI. Year Nr. 4 (January 29, 1965) p. 1.
5. *Ibid.,* p. 2.

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The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 Viewed from Two Decades' Distance

Peter Gosztony

When the next generation writes the history of the Hungarian 1956 Revolution many will note the strange phenomena which, like comets, are said to announce the coming of wars, to forewarn the country and its people of the cataclysmic event: floods on the Tisza River and in Transdanubia, earthquake in Pest County, and a strange accident on Margit Bridge in Budapest, where a speeding bus (fortunately not packed with passengers) plunged straight into the Danube. But those aware of the situation in Hungary needed no special warnings about the coming storm.

For seven years the country had been ruled by the Hungarian Workers' Party (the Communist Party of Hungary) under the direction of Mátyás Rákosi. The results of his leadership were disastrous in almost every respect. A regime of economic planning, designed to serve the political purposes of a foreign power, had led Hungary to the brink of economic collapse by the fall of 1956. As one Hungarian party official put it in 1969, "grave economic problems" contributed to the deterioration of the general political situation before October 1956 and increased the people's discontent. The author of this study, Dr. János Berecz, Director of the External Division of the Hungarian Communist Party's Central Committee, is worth quoting at length:

> At the end of September it was announced that all long-distance bus service will be suspended temporarily, that because of the lack of coal some 600 passenger trains will be idle for three weeks, and that the fuel supply of state farms will also be decreased. Work was stopped on many large construction projects. It was characteristic of economic management at the time that the head of the country's Statistical Bureau confessed in his letter to the President of the State Planning Bureau: because of the several thousand modifications in the country's economic plan, the Statistical Bureau no longer knows which plan is in effect.[1]

In agriculture the Party's elite had used the methods of forced, "bureaucratic" leadership. Year after year, and often even several times

annually, they increased the farmers' obligations to the state. Compulsory deliveries and heavy taxation had taken away the peasants' incentive. Disinterest in expanding production had grown to the extent that, just to give one example, by 1953 more than 10 per cent of the country's arable land lay fallow![2]

By the mid-1950's, deficits had become a regular phenomenon in industrial operations. Contrary to repeated Party promises, workers', peasants', and most wage earners' living standards declined steadily. By the early 1950's they had sunk well below pre-World War II levels.[3] But the situation was much worse in the realm of the citizenry's legal rights.

The Communist Party of Hungary exercised complete power not only over the army and police, it also controlled the special internal security force, the *Államvédelmi Hatóság,* the Secret Police or AVH. This agency answered directly to Rákosi and was exempt from all other supervision or control. During Rákosi's seven years in power, the prisons were packed, forced-labour camps were established following the Soviet pattern, and the hangman was kept busy. The watchful eye of the AVH was not reserved for the Party's enemies alone. The ordinary citizen, even the common workingman could also become a "potential enemy" if the Party's interest so demanded. Sándor Nógrády, one of the top political officers of the Armed Forces before 1956, writes the following in his memoirs about the Rákosi era:

> It did not take much to imprison someone. It took virtually nothing to expel someone from Budapest, apart from pronouncing him an "undesirable element" there. This could happen even to someone who was born there and had no criminal record![4]

When, in the 1960's, this same Sándor Nógrády paid an official visit to the by then disgraced Rákosi in Russia, the ex-dictator still defended his policies. This was the natural process of the revolution—he said. "They [the people] must feel—God'amn it—the dictatorship of the proletariat!" He didn't want to hear about the principle of "revolutionary legality" : that was "something out of nothing."[5] Nógrády himself admitted that there had been no legal bases for the thousands of arrests and imprisonments. Between 1949 and 1956 trial followed trial in Hungary. These were "show trials" with forged evidence, forced testimonials, and conducted before audiences ordered to attend. Civic leaders, communist functionaries, high-ranking churchmen alike were dragged before these courts. Sentences were imposed on "kulaks" (well-to-do peasants), "economic saboteurs," "spies," and "anti-socialist elements," in total mockery of traditional court procedures. The terror

which accompanied the day-to-day activities of the Party was virtually unparallelled in the history of Hungary. Again it is worthwhile to quote some shocking facts from contemporary Hungarian sources. These are from Dr. Berecz's book:

> It is characteristic of the campaign to class-enemies and of the excesses in the administration [of justice] that between 1952 and 1955, that is, in the course of four years, investigative proceedings were started in 1,136,434 cases. Charges were brought against 516,708 people, 45 per cent of those investigated. . . All this seriously affected many law-abiding and peaceloving working people; and it produced a crisis in citizenship. . .[6]

Just as the citizen was deprived of his basic rights and was forced to keep silent, so Hungary's cultural life was subjected to the principle of socialist realism, an idea imported from the Soviet Union. The Union of Artists, the Union of Journalists, and the Union of Writers were subordinated to the almighty Party. All the members of these associations were obliged to toe the party line. Whoever refused to accept this state of affairs and objected to it, could consider himself fortunate if he only lost his job and status as writer or artist, and was not handed over to the AVH as a "class enemy." Following is an excerpt from a little-known document dating from 1955:

> The degree of the individual's material dependence on the state, which forces him to abandon his convictions and individuality, is incompatible with healthy national life. With us this state of affairs is a wide-ranging sickness affecting the whole of society. The over-centralized economy and political mechanism of a people's democracy is the necessary byproduct of a personal dictatorship. What political morality can prevail in public life in a state where critical thought is not only silenced but is severely punished, where critics are ostracised with utter disregard of the civil rights granted by the constitution, where those who oppose the prevailing political line are barred from their professions (journalists from publishing and writers from writing), where I was deprived not only of public office but of my teaching post and membership in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences as well, making it impossible for me to carry out any activity that would enable me to make a living. What is all this if not the shameful degeneration of political morality? Can one talk of a bill-of-rights, rule-of-law, legality and clean civic life where the conflict of opinions is resolved with such despicable methods. . . ? This is not socialist morality but Machiavellian politics in a modern form. The all-pervasive material dependence [of the individual on the state], this constant concern about day-to-day survival, is the killer of the noblest of human traits which, in a socialist society, should be encouraged: steadfastness, courage and strength of convictions. In place of these they foster self-abasement, cowardice, spinelessness and dishonesty.

> The corruption and degeneration of national life and the consequent destruction of society's morals is one of the gravest manifestations of that moral and ethical crisis which is taking place before our very eyes.[7]

These sentences issued from the pen of a Communist Imre Nagy's December 1955 memorandum to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Hungary. His words were not heeded. The country's masters were so far out of touch with reality and were so vain and full of self-delusions that they did not for a moment doubt the correctness of their policies.

At this juncture the unexpected happened: in February 1956 the 20th Communist Party Congress of the Soviet Union (CPSU) met in Moscow. Nikolai Sergeievich Khrushchev broke the silence on Stalin and condemned stalinist leadership in its many horrible aspects before an audience stunned by the brave words. Although his speech was not meant for public consumption, it soon became widely known through unofficial channels, and not only in the Soviet Union. The first tremours of the destalinization campaign associated with Khrushchev's name were soon felt in Eastern Europe. In June 1956 the earth began to shake under the feet of the Communists in the Polish industrial city of Poznań. By October the situation had become stormy in Warsaw as well. Polish armed forces surrounded the city to prevent intervention by Soviet troops. Khrushchev had to fly to Warsaw so that, with Premier Gomułka's aid he might avert the outbreak of a new Polish-Soviet conflict.

In Hungary the situation was in many respects different from Poland's. In the wake of the 20th CPSU Congress, the country's intellectuals began to stir. Under the aegis of the Union of Communist Youth, the Petőfi Circle was established gathering into its ranks those who, although favouring the continuing struggle for socialism, demanded that the existing leadership be forced to account for its deeds. Although not stated at the time, they also favoured a free Hungary, independent from the Soviet Union. Moscow, which was ultimately responsible for decision-making in Hungary, at first made a few concessions in response to popular demand. On Soviet orders, Rákosi resigned as Chief Secretary of the Communist Party of Hungary and left the country, citing "ill-health" as the reason for his departure. The Russians chose another "Rákosi," Ernő Gerő, in his place. Gerő was not as well known to the masses, but he had been equally responsible for the reign of terror between 1948 and 1956. Such changes could only slow the course of events but could not arrest it. Certain victims of the stalinist leadership were "rehabilitated," some in their graves, as László Rajk and General

Pálffy. A rapprochement was effected with Tito's Yugoslavia, and 474 political prisoners, mainly Communists and Social-Democrats, were released from Hungarian prisons.[8] As it became known later, some 3,000 others remained behind bars. Even though Gerő and his former secretary and the new Premier of Hungary, András Hegedüs, were reluctant to permit formally the re-burying of Rajk's remains, public pressure was so great that they had to yield. Funeral services for Rajk and three others who had been executed with him took place on 6 October in Kerepes cemetery. Gábor Péter, the dreaded AVH chief during the terror, had to be brought out from prison to show where Rajk and his associates had been buried. Now the bones of four men, disinterred from a shallow grave in a winecellar on the outskirts of Budapest, were pronounced to be those of Rajk and company. The funeral turned out to be a gigantic, silent demonstration against the regime. Those who gathered in Kerepes cemetery (their number is estimated at 100,000), were not paying their respects to Rajk: by their presence they voiced, as yet silently, their disapproval of the existing government.

During mid-October, associations of university students on the pattern of the Petőfi Circle were formed in Budapest and elsewhere. On the 16th, the students of Szeged University established the Federation of Hungarian University and College Students, an organization independent of the Communist youth movement and the Party. The very same day, in another part of the country, in the city of Győr the demand for the withdrawal of Soviet occupation forces from Hungary was voiced publicly for the first time at a meeting of the local intelligentsia. After the 23rd demand, "Russians go home!" became a national slogan.

Out of touch with realities, the country's leaders were losing the ground from under their feet. Early in October they had Mihály Farkas, the ex-Minister of Defence, arrested, together with his son, the dreaded AVH colonel. The government figured that by sacrificing these men and a few other AVH agents they would satisfy the masses. On the 14th Gerő, hoping that a treaty of friendship with Yugoslavia would take the wind from the sails of those demanding a new orientation in the country's politics, left for Belgrade at the head of a large delegation. A complete split now occurred within the Communist Party of Hungary—the Central Committee, the leaders, on the one hand, and the members-at-large on the other. Most members identified with the demands of the people: to square accounts with the regime of terror, and to attain a socialist but independent and even neutral Hungary. The minority within the Party, the stalinists, viewed the ever faster pace of developments with consternation.

By the middle of October a situation developed in Hungary which a professional revolutionary, V. I. Lenin, defined in 1905:

> For a revolution to happen it is not enough for the exploited masses to realize that they cannot live as they did before and demand a change. For the revolution it is also necessary that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the established fashion. Only when the oppressed reject the old order and the rulers cannot live and rule in the old way, only then can the revolution succeed. We can express this truism with other words thus: the revolution is not possible without a nationwide crisis affecting equally the exploited and the exploiters.[9]

Today, even Hungarian Communist historians admit that in October 1956 the country's leaders and the central Party organs were out of touch with the realities of the situation. Blind self-confidence, arrogance, and complacency characterized their behaviour, according to Dr. Berecz. In his book he points out that "certain security agencies" (*i.e.,* the AVH) had twice reported that "opposition elements were up to something in Budapest." Moreover, in their second warning they predicted that 22 October would be the day when disturbances would start. The Party leaders replied: "Nightmares!" When, in the industrial centre of Csepel, one party functionary warned the stalinist Károly Kis, a member of the Party's Political Bureau, about the excited mood of the workers, Kis responded: "Comrade: if some action is started against us we can deal with such outbreak in 30 minutes!"[10] The leaders' directives to the Armed Forces also proved that they were unable to assess the situation correctly. On 20 October the Forces were put on internal security alert, but 24 hours later, in the evening of the 21st, the orders were cancelled.

The students of the Budapest Polytechnical Institute held their general meeting on the 22nd. They announced that they supported the programme of the University of Szeged students, that they would quit the Communist youth movement, and that they would address their demands to the government point by point. It was at this meeting, lasting into the night, that the famous 16-point programme was born, rendering students' views on issues of national concern. The document mentioned not only the extension of democracy and reforms, but also free elections, participation of several democratic parties in the electoral process, and the removal of Soviet troops from Hungary. During this evening the students also decided to stage a peaceful demonstration the next day, *i.e.,* on the 23rd, in order to lend emphasis to their demands.

During the evening and night of the 22nd, the executive of the Petőfi

Circle also met. The participants decided to communicate with Imre Nagy at once, and inform him of the planned demonstration and its purpose. Although Nagy belonged to the group of Communists who returned to Hungary from Moscow in 1945, during the past eleven years he had managed to gain popularity with the masses. The peasants knew him as the minister who redistributed the land, intellectuals recalled his university lectures which were free of stalinist dogmatism; and during the change of government following Stalin's death, Nagy had tried to implement a new party line. In Imre Nagy, the masses saw a Communist who was both Hungarian and a democrat.

The story of the student demonstration of the 23rd is known to all. The capital's populace accepted the students' programme as its own in a matter of hours. Within one day the whole country joined to support the people of Budapest. The tumultuous events at the statue of Józef Bem (the Polish hero of the 1848–49 Hungarian Revolution), in Lajos Kossuth Square, at the Radio Centre on Sándor Bródy Street, and the toppling of Stalin's statue in Városliget, were the highlights of the day. The government's complete inability to deal with developments soon became apparent. Enraged, Gerő demanded from the Minister of Defence that his troops open fire on the masses. By this time blood flowed in front of the Radio building in Sándor Bródy Street. In the evening, the AVH men in charge of security there opened fire on the yet unarmed crowds. Seeing this, the Armed Forces Units arriving on the scene either surrendered their weapons to the demonstrators or joined them. Some commandeered cars and drove to the factories in Csepel and the other industrial suburbs to arouse the workers against the AVH—and they succeeded!

During the night of October 23/24 the Party leaders made a decision which, from their point of view, was the only realistic one: to quell the revolt, they would solicit the aid of Soviet troops. Their request was granted. The first Soviet contingents reached the capital in the morning of the 24th. They were units comprised mainly of tank detachments and had orders not to fire. Their commanders believed that, as in Berlin in June 1953, the "insurrectionists" would be "brought to their senses" by the mere sight of Russian tanks patrolling the city's thoroughfares. But it was not to be so. The freedom fighters, at first sporadically, but later with great determination, opened fire with their primitive weapons on the Soviet tanks moving into the heart of the city. The revolution now entered a new stage: it became a freedom fight, a war of liberation against the interventionist forces of an alien power.

* * *

Viewed from a distance, it seems clear that the period between 23 and 29 October constituted the first general phase of the revolution and the struggle for liberation. These days were characterized not only by the manning of the barricades and by street-fighting in Budapest. Insurgent political organizations were materializing everywhere. The various workers' councils, national and revolutionary committees wished to work for a free, independent, and socialist Hungary. The students were in the vanguard of these activities: they published newspapers, organized political rallies, conducted agitation in the countryside, and participated in the negotiations with members of the government. It should be pointed out that during these days three centers of authority evolved in Hungary: the insurgents; the government comprising the party elite (by now completely out of touch with developments); and the general staff of the Soviet occupation forces in Hungary, taking orders directly from Moscow.

In vain did the existing government try to gain control over the situation by granting concessions to the people. In vain did they dismiss Hegedüs as Premier and Gerő as Party Chief, placing in their stead Imre Nagy and János Kádár. Neither of these men could influence the course of events or exercise a moderating influence on the demands pouring forth from every section of society. In Hungary, the type of compromise that had been implemented in Poland with the coming of Gomułka into office, was doomed to failure. After the 23rd, the Communists' authority disintegrated within a few short days. The Party, with its 900,000 members, simply dissolved into thin air.[11] The Units of the AVH had to fight for their lives, while the police and armed forces joined the insurgents. The Soviet occupation troops were completely isolated and had to quit Budapest on the 28th. This same day György Lukács addressed the country's insurgent youth on radio and expressed his sympathies with their demands. He was followed by Imre Nagy, who announced that in a reorganized government several non-Communists had been included and that negotiations had been initiated with the Soviet military command for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Hungary. On the 30th, Nagy made still another announcement: the one-party system of government would end, and elections would be held with the participation of several democratic parties. This was the day when it seemed that the demands and aims of the Revolution had been achieved.

By this time, Imre Nagy had resolved a certain conflict which manifested itself during these days in the leadership of the Communist Party. The fact is that on the 28th the stalinists, led by Ferenc Münnich (who later turned out to be Beria's follower and Hungary's top NKVD agent) attempted a coup d'état aimed at the establishment of a military dictatorship. It is noteworthy what Dr. Berecz writes about this hitherto obscure plan.

> During the night of October 27th/28th, the members of the Military Committee of the central organs of the Party worked out a plan for the safe-guarding of the people's power (*i.e.*, the rule of the Communists) through military means. For the time being the armed forces would assume power, with the political officers taking command within the individual divisions. After order had been restored in the country and the insurgents had been scattered, a new government was to be formed. But this plan was not to be carried out. . . .[12]

It could not be implemented because the Military Command could not find the men needed to execute the plan. By the end of October the Ministry of Defence, the Chiefs-of-Staff, and the commanders of the various branches of the Armed Forces had all endorsed the cause of the Revolution. The National Command of the Air Force even admonished Soviet troops through leaflets to leave the country by a certain date, otherwise the Hungarian Air Force would become actively involved in the fight against the Soviet Army.

* * *

The events in Hungary confronted Soviet government leaders and the CPSU with a grave situation. Two types of opinions crystallized in Moscow. One group (today we know that at first Khrushchev belonged to this one) viewed Hungarian developments as a process of reckoning with the stalinist past, and would have accepted a neutral Hungary that would not join NATO nor restore capitalism. The other group, led by Molotov and Marshal Zhukov, demanded the immediate crushing of what they called a "capitalist and imperialist mutiny." During the second half of October Mikoyan and Suslov were dispatched twice to Budapest for discussions with Imre Nagy and to pass on instructions to him. But by the time the two Russian emissaries returned to the Kremlin on the 30th, the fate of the Hungarian Revolution had been sealed. The fact is that on the 29th Peking got into the act. Mao Tse-tung and his associates emphatically demanded that the "Hungarian counter-revolution" be crushed. It must be noted that in these historic days China itself was in crisis. It had just experienced its "hundred flowers" move-

ment, the mixing of a bit of liberalization with dogmatism, and the events in Hungary demonstrated that such experiments in freedom could endanger the whole system. This is why the "destalinization" process came to a premature end in China. Mao Tse-tung and associates realized that exposing the "mistakes of the past" could only hurt the Communist system.[13]

But let us return to Hungary. In the early morning of 30 October preparations began in Moscow to crush the Hungarian Revolution. While Soviet troops poured into the country from the east, Khrushchev went on a whirlwind tour of the capitals of Hungary's Communist neighbours. Everywhere sympathy was expressed for the idea of quelling the revolt by military means. Czechoslovakia's Communist leaders had been viewing developments in Budapest with concern: they were worried lest the half-million Magyars living in Slovakia be spurred to action by events in Hungary. We now know that on the 27th the Czechoslovak Armed Forces were put on the alert, and sizable forces were dispatched to the Hungarian border. At the same time, Communist organs in Slovakia were instructed to help the stalinists in northern Hungary by all means. Accordingly, propaganda leaflets printed in three Slovak cities were smuggled into Hungary. Refuge was offered to high-ranking Hungarian party officials and AVH officers who fled to Slovakia to escape the vengeful wrath of the people.

In Romania the situation was different. At first, the leaders in Bucharest looked upon developments in Hungary with a certain degree of sympathy. But when Transylvania's Hungarian population began stirring and, what is more important, enlisted the support of a good portion of the Romanian university youth, they got scared in Bucharest. *Siguranca,* the Romanian secret police, hit upon a brilliant countermove. With the idea of divide and rule in mind, it had leaflets printed in Magyar, reproducing the Hungarian youth's 16-point programme. The points were the same as the original ones issued in Budapest, except for the one dealing with university bursary system reform. Instead of this provision they substituted a demand never and nowhere voiced during the revolution: Transylvania's restitution to Hungary. This Machiavellian tactic isolated the Hungarians of Transylvania. During the next few weeks, Romania's leaders suppressed the budding Hungarian movement by so-called "executive methods" (unrestricted police action). More important, Khrushchev's proposed programme for Hungary found complete support in Bucharest as well. Romanian officials favoured immediate Soviet intervention, but when the Russian leader asked for the co-operation of Romanian troops in Hungary's "pacifica-

tion," he received an evasive reply. Politically, the Romanian army was not strong enough to undertake action abroad without incurring internal damage.

On 2 November Khrushchev met Tito in Belgrade.[14] Soviet-Yugoslav relations were once more strained these days. The Russians knew very well that the idea of following the "Yugoslav example" had no small role in the evolution of events in Hungary. Emulating a socialist Yugoslavia, independent of the Soviet bloc and trusted by East and West alike, held a strong (though in the light of later developments, unrealistic) attraction for Hungarian Communists with nationalist leanings. For several reasons Tito enjoyed a degree of popularity in Hungary, and those who wanted to pursue a policy of "away from Moscow," saw in him the potential leader of a new alignment centered on the Danube Basin. But socialist Yugoslavia, which had welcomed events in Hungary on the 23rd, 24th and 25th (after all, these were anti-stalinist manifestations), viewed the unfolding of developments thereafter with increasing concern. It considered the recognition of the Kossuth insignia as a Hungarian national emblem a sign of reawakening Magyar imperialism. At the same time, the revival of the Social Democratic Party and the other progressive parties, and the increasing isolation of the Communists, aroused in Tito the fear that a general revolutionary movement might spread after its victory in Hungary. This would endanger the future of one-party dictatorship in the already conflict-ridden Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. That is why Tito, who had condemned Soviet intervention in Hungarian affairs on the 24th, changed his mind by early November. He assured Khrushchev that he sympathized with Soviet plans regarding Hungary, and even showed him a telegram just received from the State Department in Washington. The United States was not sympathetic toward governments of countries bordering the Soviet Union which adopted an unfriendly position against the USSR.[15] For Khrushchev, this telegram, couched in impeccable diplomatic language, was a stroke of fortune. It plainly showed that the United States had no interest in the establishment of anti-Soviet governments or systems within the Iron Curtain. Khrushchev could relax on his return flight to Moscow. Revolutionary Hungary's diplomatic isolation was complete, and all that remained was to initiate a military operation to restore order.

Very little was known in Hungary about these developments at the time. The only alarming news came from the East. Following 31 October, more and more Soviet troops poured into the country. From centers in Eastern Hungary, such as Záhony and Nyiregyháza came hourly re-

ports of the Soviet build-up. "It seems," began a message from the Hungarian railway officials in Záhony, "that the Soviet Army wants to bring the whole of Hungary under socialist protection." In vain did Imre Nagy call on the Soviet Minister in Budapest. The answer from the Russian Embassy was that no one there knew what was happening and that a clarification of the situation would be sought from Moscow.

In the shadow of Soviet intervention, Imre Nagy—seeing no feasible alternatives—decided on taking a historic step. In the afternoon of 1 November he announced to a crowd gathered in Lajos Kossuth Square that Hungary would quit the Warsaw Pact and become a neutral nation on the Austrian pattern. It must be emphasized that this announcement met with the approval of the vast majority of Hungary's population and in no way did it constitute an *ad hoc* decision. After all, ever since the outbreak of the revolution on the 23rd, this wish had been voiced most often and most emphatically by the masses. After two world wars and three revolutions, Hungary's people wished to build their future independent of East and West, free of military entanglements, and in sincere cooperation with the other peoples of the Danube Basin. Naturally, such a solution did not suit the Kremlin's scheme of things. As far as the Western Great Powers were concerned, they—just as a century earlier during the 1848-49 Revolution—were not at all concerned with the affairs of the middle Danube Valley.

There are those who fault Nagy for provoking Moscow to premature action, contending that he should have restrained not hastened the course of developments. Those who argue thus are unfamiliar with the sequence of events: the first steps toward a military showdown were taken by Moscow, Nagy only reacted defensively when he cancelled Hungary's membership in the Warsaw alliance; he hoped to deprive the Soviets of any legal pretext for sending troops into Hungary. By pledging the country's neutrality, he meant to convince Moscow that the Hungarian government had no desire to enter NATO or any alignment of capitalist powers. It must be said that Nagy's announcements had no influence whatever on the course of developments during the next few days. Moscow had decided on military intervention and the Hungarians, with their own resources, were powerless to alter the course of events.

For the next few days the Soviet leaders played a two-faced game. They tried to convince Nagy that they still wished to negotiate with him. Indeed, on 3 November, a delegation of high-ranking Soviet generals came to the Parliament buildings to discuss the details of Soviet troop withdrawals from Hungary. Meanwhile, for three whole days, more and more Soviet units crossed the border into Hungary. Later it was

learned that, by the time of the completion of the troop build-up on the 3rd, fifteen Russian divisions, including eight tank divisions, with more than 200,000 Red soldiers were awaiting orders to attack. Moscow also adopted political measures to assure the satisfactory outcome of events. On the 2nd the Russians virtually abducted János Kádár from his Buda residence. They wanted to make him head of the Soviet-backed government that was to replace Nagy's. Today we know that at first his role was meant for Münnich; but it was soon realized that Münnich being unknown in the country, Kádár was more suited for the post: he had languished in Rákosi's prisons and been tortured by the Farkases. Moreover, he was of working-class origin and had not received his political training in Moscow. Thus it happened that, on 3 November, Nagy looked in vain for his comrade, the Party Chief and Secretary of State: Kádár was not to be found in the Hungarian capital. Only weeks later did it become known that, along with a few of his associates (Münnich, Marosán, Dögei, Kossa and Kiss), he was in Uzhorod (Ungvár), in Soviet Subcarpathia, negotiating with the Russians on the setting up of a post-revolutionary regime in Hungary.

What happened thereafter is well known to all. On 4 November the Soviets unleashed their troops on Budapest once more. In the capital fighting endured for four days—elsewhere even longer. Significantly, Sztálinváros (Stalin City), Hungary's foremost socialist centre, was the last to capitulate (November 15th). Nagy and his colleagues sought refuge in the Yugoslav embassy. When Tito announced his support of the newly formed puppet Kádár regime, Nagy left his place of refuge. His pride would not permit him to enjoy the hospitality and protection of a regime which had betrayed him. Nagy had trusted the Russians and Kádár as well; his disappointment in them must have been very deep: in the end, he paid for his trust with his life. Pál Maléter, his Minister of Defence, also became the victim of a trap. He was arrested in the early hours of the 4th by NKVD men at Soviet headquarters, where he had been invited for official discussions under the white flag of truce.

Even though by 8 November Budapest was "pacified" and, under the protection of Russian tanks, Kádár and his government occupied the Parliament Buildings, the Hungarian Revolution could not be quelled so easily. Partisan warfare against the new regime continued well into January 1957, and the slogan MUK (Márciusban Újra Kezdjük – We will start again in March), current in Budapest during the winter, was not an unfounded rumour. The various workers' councils and other organizations, born at the time of the uprising, continued to struggle in the face of mounting persecution. All this must be kept in mind lest

the impression be created that the Revolution was a transitory, passing event lasting only fourteen days.

One more matter must be mentioned. No detailed figures have ever been released by the Budapest government about casualties and damages incurred during the revolution. But we do know that, on the Hungarian side, more than 3,000 persons lost their lives. The number of wounded was around 15,000. More than 200,000 people fled to the West. Some 53,000 returned in the decade following 1956. Western observers estimate Soviet Army losses to be about 100 tanks and armoured vehicles and approximately 2,000 casualties. The lives of an additional 12,000 citizens were affected by the various post-revolutionary terror campaigns and purges. Persons closely affiliated with the United Nations estimate that in the five-year period following 1956, the Kádár regime pronounced death sentences on, and executed 453 individuals, among them Imre Nagy, Pál Maléter, and a host of military and civilian leaders.

In deeming the revolution a human tragedy, no distinction exists between Hungarians abroad or in Hungary. Albeit Hungary's present leaders persist in labelling the event a "counter-revolution," even Kádár, in a speech delivered on the occasion of his 60th birthday in 1971, looking back on 1956, called it a national tragedy.[16] And it is not pure chance that in the two decades since the event, not one of the country's reputable writers, musicians, or poets has used the official terminology "counter-revolution" to describe 1956. Is this the judgement of Clio?

The October Revolution failed to attain its intended goal. To this day, Hungary is under Soviet occupation. Instead of democracy and neutrality, there is Party rule and Warsaw Pact alignment. But we would do violence to reality if we failed to recognize the positive aspects of the present Hungarian situation, in contrast to what had prevailed before 1956. When we consider this carefully, it is not an inconsiderable achievement. And, as far as Hungary's national history is concerned, let me cite Kossuth's 1850 assessment of the significance of his generation's struggle for Hungarian freedom:

> We did not triumph, but we had fought.
> We did not end the rule of the Tyrant, but we had halted his march.
> We did not save the country, but we had defended it.
> If they will write about us in the history books, they will be able to say that we had resisted.

NOTES

The author wishes to thank Professor N. F. Dreisziger for translating this study from Hungarian into English.

1. János Berecz, *Ellenforradalom tollal és fegyverrel* [Counter-revolution with pen and weapons] (Budapest: Kossuth kiadó, 1969), p. 78.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Sándor Nógrády, *Új történet kezdődött* [New history began] (Budapest: Kossuth kiadó, 1966), p. 174.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
6. Berecz, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
7. Imre Nagy, *A magyar nép védelmében* [In defence of the Hungarian people] (Published by the Revolutionary Council, n.p. 1958), p. 25.
8. The *Szabad Nép*, as summarized by the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 23 July 1956.
9. V. I. Lenin, *Lenin válogatott művei* [The selected works of Lenin] (Budapest: Szikra kiadó, 1954), Vol. II, p. 730.
10. Berecz, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
11. "No matter how sad it is to say but the truth is that in the fall of 1956 the Party disintegrated into its atoms, the regime was imperiled, and anarchy ruled in the country!" János Kádár, in *Társadalmi Szemle*, no. 12, 1972.
12. Berecz, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
13. The best among the books dealing with the external apects of the Hungarian Revolution is János Radványi's *Hungary and the Superpowers: The 1956 Revolution and Realpolitics* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1972).
14. *Magyar Szó* (Novi Sad/Újvidék), 18 July 1976.
15. *The Congressional Record* (31 August 1960, p. 17, 407) cited in John Stormer, *None Dare Call it Treason* (Florissant, Miss.: Liberty Bell Press, 1964), p. 48.
16. János Kádár, "Válasz a születésnapi üdvözlésre" [Reply to a birthday greeting], *Társadalmi Szemle*, No. 6, 1972, p. 9.

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Twenty Years After: Kádár and His Rule Assessed, 1956–1976

Ferenc A. Váli

Twenty years ago a regime arose from the ruins of a Revolution suppressed by the Soviet army. Whoever wishes to discuss the nature, achievements, or failures of János Kádár and his group since November 1956 cannot avoid looking back to this time.

In a way, it was a genuine Leninist beginning: this regime was born by means of a conspiratorial act. A group headed by Kádár and the old Moscow-hand Ferenc Münnich assembled on Soviet soil in the Carpatho-Ukrainian town of Uzhgorod. On November 4, 1956, at the moment when the Red Army opened its operation to wipe out the uprising and to oust the government of Imre Nagy, Kádár's team declared itself to be the "Hungarian Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Government." The orthodoxy of the action was assured by the presence of Nikita S. Khrushchev who also ruled that Kádár, already First Secretary of the Communist Party since October 25, and not Münnich, should head the new government.[1]

Under the protection of Soviet tanks, the Kádár team entered Budapest on November 7. Sporadic fighting still continued, production was at a standstill; the administration had collapsed and had been replaced by workers' councils or local national councils. The Communist Party had, since the early days of the Revolution, disintegrated; only the Party Headquarters continued to operate.

To rebuild the Party and to restore the order and authority of the government was a risky and arduous task. The Soviet military protected the new Hungarian central authority, but this certainly failed to enhance its prestige among the masses.

It seems fairly well established that Kádár first attempted to restore what he considered order and to reestablish Party authority by persuasion. He may have prided himself on maintaining or implementing the revolutionary achievements of 1956 without abandoning socialism and Party control. He presumably flirted with the idea of a "purified socialism" and a "rejuvenated" Party.[2] In November and December

1956, however, the infamy of Soviet aggression was so much in the mind of everybody that the principal popular demand was directed at the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungary. Even if Kádár had wanted to comply with this demand (which would have meant the eviction of his regime), it was beyond his powers to do so. As Major General Grebennik, the Soviet commander of Budapest, told the workers' councils: "Soviet troops will leave Hungary only when crayfish whistle and fishes sing."[3] So they have not left since.

By the end of 1956 the Kádár regime had made little progress either in consolidating its government or in resolving the confused situation of Party and state. Towards these ends the leaders of five Communist Parties (Soviet, Bulgarian, Czechoslovak, Rumanian, and Hungarian) assembled on January 1, 1957, in a rubble-strewn Budapest to instruct Kádár in these circumstances.

Thereafter, on January 5, the Hungarian leader announced his program, and this time he insisted that the dictatorship of the proletariat was to be secured. Political activity was again to be the monopoly of the Communist Party, all other political parties were forbidden, workers' councils were to be deprived of all power; the Revolution was declared to have been a "counter-revolution" and Imre Nagy, for the first time, was reproached for "treachery" and for having supported the "counter-revolution." The period of repression was to begin.

The Period of Repression

The repressive measures were first aimed at the total liquidation of the remnants of the Revolution. The workers' councils were instructed to desist from all political activity; in November 1957 they were formally dissolved. The Writers' Association which on December 28, 1956, was still able to vote a resolution condemning the Kádár regime, was suspended on January 17 and finally dissolved on April 21, 1957.

Next came punitive measures against the "counter-revolutionaries." On January 15 an "accelerated criminal trial procedure" was decreed, under which special courts could summarily pass sentences ranging from five-year imprisonments to death. The death penalty could now be imposed also on juveniles (many of the freedom fighters were below 18 years). Initial restraints on prosecuting participants in the Revolution were now abandoned.[4] Also various other measures "to intensify the class struggle" were introduced: for example, reluctant judges were enjoined to pass sentences in the spirit of class struggle, and institutions of learning were cleansed of class enemies.

To implement all these coercive measures and to practice terror, the notorious Security Police (AVH), broken up during the Revolution, was reorganized under the name of "Political Investigation Division" of the Central Office of the Police. It showed itself to be as ruthless as its precursor in the Stalinist period. Totalitarian measures of torture and intimidation were practiced to extort confessions. Thousands suspected or accused of "counter-revolutionary" acts were arrested, many thousands interned (internment camps dissolved during the Thaw were again set up). At least 2,000 persons were executed and more than 20,000 imprisoned, among them prominent writers and other intellectuals. Members of the Bar were purged; of 1,600 attorneys in Budapest, 720 were disbarred.

The most conspicuous judicial murder was that of the revolutionary Prime Minister, Imre Nagy, and his three associates. Nagy, an old-time Communist, had sought refuge at the Yugoslav Embassy after the entry of Soviet troops into Budapest. He was promised safe conduct by Kádár but was promptly kidnapped by a Soviet security unit upon leaving the Embassy, and interned in Rumania. Kádár had given assurances to Tito that he would not be tried. However, the renewed conflict between Moscow and Belgrade in early 1958 seemed to have sealed Nagy's fate. Brought back to Hungary he was secretly tried. On June 16, 1958, a governmental announcement revealed that the former Prime Minister, General Pál Maléter, and two of Nagy's advisers had been sentenced to death and that the sentences had already been carried out.

There was no valid legal excuse for these condemnations: the adoption of the multiparty system during the Revolution, the withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact—the chief points of accusation against Nagy—were no violations of Hungarian law and certainly not "high treason." Kádár himself as a member of the cabinet participated in and approved of these decisions. The Hungarian public and the non-Communist world considered these executions to be expressions of base revenge by Moscow; and Kádár was viewed as an accomplice. This event was correctly characterized by the United Nations Special Committee on Hungary as one "in which these men, symbols of the hope of a nation for freedom from foreign domination, were secretly sent to death in circumstances which call for full exposure, in violation of solemn undertakings that their persons would not be harmed." [5]

The last act of this period of terror was the forceful collectivization of Hungarian agriculture. During the Revolution more than half of the existing kolkhozes were disbanded. By late 1958 the regime decided to

renew and fully implement the program of collectivization which even Rákosi's terrorism in the fifties had not achieved.

The campaign to herd farmers into agricultural collectives began in February 1959. By January 1960 about 60 percent of the arable land was incorporated into the socialist sector. After a pause of several months, the drive was taken up again in the winter of 1960–61, and in February 1961 the Communist Party announced the great victory: 90 percent of all cultivated land had been turned into collectives or had become state farmland.

The methods to achieve this "victory" included various pressures, intimidation, and even physical coercion. Peasants eventually consented because they considered resistance to be hopeless. Now they also became a deeply frustrated and discontented segment of the population.

By the middle of 1961 such a yawning gap existed between the people and their rulers, such as had not been seen since the imposition of Kádár on Hungary in 1956. But Party control had then been firmly reestablished, the Party itself reorganized; and the last independent element, the land-owning peasantry, safely brought under control. This also must have been the view held in the Kremlin, where the fear of a recurrence of the 1956 events was never absent.[6]

Goulash-Communism

It can be safely accepted that, just as the period of repression was a carefully planned and methodically executed performance, so too the period of relaxation and liberalization—which extends to the present time—was also a systematically conceived and gradually introduced accomplishment. It must also be assumed that both policies were, if not initiated by Moscow, at least discussed with the leaders of the Kremlin and their approval obtained. While Khrushchev was in power, he personally supervised the various phases of these developments.

Hungarian ideologues have subsequently revealed the main train of ideas which guided Kádár's repressive as well as liberal performances. In the past, Stalin and Rákosi had committed the same grave mistakes: they used excessive force when not required. In Hungary, grave distortions in the political and economic system then ensued which, in turn, helped the counter-revolution to erupt. Thereafter, repression was necessary, even if it meant a temporary absence of "democratic forms." But as soon as these methods were no longer needed, they had to be discontinued.[7]

The change first became perceptible when in late 1961 Kádár pronounced his since famous dictum before a meeting of the People's

Patriotic Front: "Who is not against us is with us." This was an intended reversal of what Mátyás Rákosi had said in his time: "Who is not with us is against us."

In March 1962 Kádár addressed workers of the Icarus truck plant and told them:

> We must bear in mind that different people, with different pasts and views live together with us in our people's system. . . . They don't rise against us—and we only want to fight those who try to overthrow the people's power. . . . The people of this category—and they are the majority—are on our side. . . . But they are not Marxists. We must never forget that the trained Marxists are not in the majority.[8]

And the directives for the Eighth Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party contained the following sentence:

> The Party invites those sectors of society which previously did not sympathize with it and even opposed its objectives to join in helping to build socialism.

All these pronouncements heralded a new policy: an attempt at "peaceful coexistence" between the regime and "the silent majority" which it had to face. The terms were clear: the regime would desist from using undue coercion, indeed, it would use it only to defend its existence; in turn, the regime would expect its opponents to cooperate in helping to improve living conditions, to strengthen the economy of the country. Through these measures Kádár and his associates also hoped to popularize themselves, at least to the measure of the possible.

Evidently these developments have taken place with the express consent of the Soviet leadership. When Khrushchev visited Hungary for the last time before his ouster, he assured his worker audience it was erroneous to believe that revolution was the only matter of significance. Instead, "the important thing is that we should have more to eat—good goulash—schools, housing and ballet. . . ."[9] The de-emphasis of Marxism-Leninism, which is noticeable in these words, and the emphasis upon what has been nicknamed "goulash-communism" was turned into practice by Kádár's Hungarian regime.

Implicitly it was now admitted that the class struggle had ended. As a sign of this, educational institutions were instructed not to discriminate against applicants on the basis of their class origin.[10] This change was also recommended because academic standards had become diluted; many otherwise well-qualified students had been rejected due to their "defective" class origin or the stain of "counter-revolutionary" parentage.

Kádár was also ready to make his peace with the intellectuals. In 1959 the Writers' Association was allowed to function again, and slowly

hitherto "silent" writers were induced to publish. Imprisoned writers were freed under a partial amnesty granted in March 1960. Censorship was also relaxed, the requirement for "party-mindedness" in literature, theatre, and art was reduced or often eliminated.

With much fanfare and as a culmination of the trend toward appeasement, an amnesty decree of March 22, 1963, claimed to have freed all political prisoners. But the decree contained many reservations: those condemned for murder or arson—and many freedom fighters were condemned for such alleged crimes—and those sentenced for treason were exempted from the scope of the amnesty. Thus Cardinal Mindszenty could not just walk out of the American Embassy where he had been living since the entry of Soviet forces into Budapest in November 1956.

Relations between the Catholic Church and the Party remained strained until 1964, when an agreement between the Hungarian government and the Vatican was reached concerning many vacant bishoprics. Vatican appointees to high church offices were recognized only when approved by the Hungarian state. Bishops were to take the oath of allegiance to the Constitution. In 1968, another agreement, besides settling further vacancies, granted greater liberty to the bishops in appointing parish priests. Thus, while the Church probably will always remain unhappy under this atheist regime, a limited *modus vivendi* may have been achieved. In September 1971, Cardinal Mindszenty, with Hungarian and papal consent, left Hungary, though still refusing to abdicate as Archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of Hungary.[11]

Since the early 1960's the regime's concern has been directed toward the improvement of living conditions and the increase of production and stabilization of Hungary's international trade position. However, the planned economy, with its bureaucratic impediments, hemmed in any such development. It was of prime importance for the regime to create some modicum of material prosperity. Since no genuine freedom and free political expression could be provided, at least material benefits might serve to satisfy the people.

NEM and Democratization

The New Economic Mechanism (NEM), introduced on January 1, 1968, was to place the Hungarian economy on solid and rational footing. As experts have pointed out since the early 1960's, a planned economy, as applied to Hungary, compressed the productive forces into a rigid and bureaucratic Procrustean bed—instead of allowing them to pursue the life of living organisms. Economic targets were

unrealistic, price levels artificial, and in no relation to the cost of production, and productivity, for lack of incentives, was declining.

Economic development was vital in order to comply with the promise of building socialism. The regime at last discovered that empty promises, self-praise, prospects of a remote prosperity, as well as ideological phraseology would never convince the masses. Frank exposure of problems and action in the right direction was expected.

The NEM was to decentralize the economy by introducing the market-principle in relations between state enterprises and by encouraging "cost-consciousness." Enterprises were required to act autonomously, a method which should be pleasing to the individualistic Hungarians.

It seems well substantiated that the reform was a success, but so far only a partial success. To become really operative the NEM needed a slow and gradual transition. The public had been warned that the full implementation of the program would require several five-year plans. And the NEM already has created some new problems of its own. However, no return to the command-economy was envisaged.

The economic and social problems created by NEM were partly due to the deficient human element, unaccustomed to operating independently under the demand and supply method. The relative liberty caused managers to expand their investments excessively; the level of imports rose considerably, while exports stagnated. The incentive system—the differential in wages between various categories of workers—caused strained relations and discontent. Opponents of the reform—mostly old-time *apparatchiki*—accused it of fostering irresponsibility, adventurism, and a petit-bourgeois atmosphere.[12] These accusations were also repeated across the Soviet press, giving rise to the suspicion that Moscow now looked upon this latest development of liberalization with a jaundiced eye.[13]

It is true that many in Hungary hoped that the liberalization of the economy would be followed by a democratization in the area of politics. The few concessions the government was willing to offer (a limited choice of candidates at elections, insistence that democratization be restricted to the "local" level) were considered entirely insignificant. On the other hand, it is recognized that with the NEM certain interest groups have emerged (competition between enterprises is now considered legitimate) and thus a modicum of pluralism has been initiated.

However, it is being realized that all these improvements are concessions by the leadership and not irremovable elements of the social or economic structure. Moreover, the Kádár regime could not eliminate

the malaise felt in respect to the lack of national independence, the tutelage exercised by the Soviet Union, which remains a *noli me tangere* of the government. The Hungarian public appeared to be little impressed by the achievements of its government in the international field, the ending of the country's isolation after the Revolution. Since 1956, with the help of some insignificant concessions, Kádár managed to restore Hungary's status in the United Nations and to reestablish full diplomatic relations with the United States. The international reputation of the country has also gained because of the well-advertised liberalization as well as the apparent stability of the leadership.

Kádár and His Fellow Leaders

Since Ulbricht's departure from top leadership, Kádár has been the senior leader in the Soviet camp (Zhivkov, although First Secretary of the Bulgarian Party since 1954, became national leader only after Chervenkov's ouster in 1962). Not unlike other countries of the Soviet sphere, prior to November 1956, Hungary was led by Muscovites—leaders who had spent many years in the USSR before returning to their country of origin in the wake of the Red Army. In contrast, Kádár and his fellow top leaders, except Antal Apro, are "home" Communists who never spent any considerable time in the Soviet Union.

Only two of the present Politburo members participated in the conspiratorial act of Uzhgorod: Kádár and Apro. Others who were there have either died or been discarded for reasons of incompatibility or incompetence. But six others joined the Kádár clique immediately after the suppression of the Revolution, when the situation was still highly critical: Biszku, Fehér, Fock, Kállai, Nyers, and Nemes. The remainder of the twelve Politburo members were later co-opted. The majority of its members consist of the earliest acolytes of Kádár, a group held together by the memory of their bold decision to serve as a regime tainted with the stigma of being Soviet stooges. It is this past trial-and-adventure period which has created a cohesiveness among the members of the leadership group, a spirit which helped to assimilate the later comers to comradeship. The cement of the original risk-taking also kept the group loyal to its erstwhile leader. This is the reason why the leadership in Hungary more closely approximates the ideal of collective leadership than in any other Communist country. Apprehension of yet another collapse, unsavory memories of past dissensions, the odious example of Rákosi's rule, and also a never-admitted bad conscience at obviously having been installed by a foreign military power—are all factors stimulating leadership coherence.

Kádár determinedly has pursued a centrist policy, waging a two-front struggle both against dogmatists on the one hand and revisionists on the other. This has also served the purpose of persuading the public that there will be no return to Stalinism, but also to warn them that no repetition of 1956 will be tolerated.

Kádár is not a tyrannic leader, neither is he really charismatic or a spellbinder. He is a strange mixture of mediocrity and astute realism. But first and foremost, he is an opportunist. Evidently he attempted to whitewash his sullied past, which includes the treachery he committed against his friend and collaborator, László Rajk, and the slaughter of Imre Nagy. The rehabilitation of his image before the masses and abroad has been systematically pursued. Many of the non-Party elite who were placed in secure and comfortable positions under his regime are among his best advertisers. Thus, it is emphasized that he was one of the victims of the "cult of personality," that he saved the country from Horthyist reactionaries in 1956, that he was absent when Imre Nagy was executed. It is also said that he was anxious to mediate between Dubček and Moscow and suffered a nervous breakdown when Czechoslovakia was invaded in 1968.

The surprising metamorphoses of his career developed his chameleon-like qualities. He can speak in one fashion and act in another. He pretends to oppose something while he is really in favor of it. He is, of course, pro-Soviet, but lets it be hinted that he disfavors excessive Soviet control. He is a Marxist but he also supports the market principle. There is no need—he declares—for an opposition because he also represents the opposition.

Kádár, unlike Rákosi, is no sadist; he is more a skillful operator than a supreme politician—shrewd in tactics but weak on principles. But he does pretend to know the limits of Soviet permissiveness. Since the departure of his mentor, Khrushchev, he has apparently become acceptable to Brezhnev. Moscow considers him firmly established and reliable.

The Hungarian leader has managed to surround himself with persons who were neither outstanding as politicians nor overly ambitious. No one who could have been his rival has survived in office. His fellow leaders are mostly good bureaucrats or specialists in their fields. But he is also assisted by a non-Party managerial-technocratic elite. The former and the latter are to a great measure apolitical in the sense that they could not care less about Marxist-Leninist ideology, while possibly paying some lip-service to its tenets. Among these non-Party experts are also publicists and journalists, whose job includes travel abroad and meeting foreign visitors. They also contribute to create a halo of

high-mindedness and brilliant statesmanship around the head of Kádár. Prisoners of their opportunism, their career is inescapably linked with the success or failure of the regime.

Balance Sheet and Prospects

Those who have witnessed the few successful days of the Revolution of 1956 must have been amazed by the spirit of unity which swept over non-Communists and Communists alike, except for a tiny minority of compromised individuals. When Kádár took over, the prime obstacle was this very same national unity which confronted him. On June 29, 1957, at the constituent Party Conference, he admitted that:

> . . . we had to make serious efforts to destroy the national unity. . . . Why did we have to destroy this national unity? Because it was born on a reactionary platform. . . . We do not want this kind of unity.[14]

Evidently his goal was to create another kind of national unity, one that would support him, the Communist cause, and accept Soviet paramountcy. Has he succeeded?

No doubt he has travelled a long way from 1956. Although he was not able to destroy the resistance he faced, he at least neutralized it, thereby fragmenting the national unity and creating different segments of attitudes toward his administration.

Naturally, it is impossible reliably to assess present political attitudes in Hungary, based on opinion polls or voting patterns. Empirical evaluation must rely on diverse and often highly imprecise symptoms: interviews with Hungarians abroad, impressions of visitors to Hungary, pronouncements in the Hungarian press or by public figures—often to be read between the lines.

Thus, it would be hazardous to guess percentage-wise the number of those politically articulate adults who wholeheartedly support the regime. Wholeheartedly would mean in this context that the persons in question would do so without qualification and would be ready to make meaningful sacrifices in its defense. Surely, only a fraction of Party members would be willing to do so. On the other hand, a great many people would be afraid of *any* change and therefore favor the status quo. Historic experience suggests that in autocratically-ruled countries most people would be willing to take sides against the regime only if they saw a reasonable opportunity for action of this sort. And then there is the great number of opportunists who would change color and join any bandwagon moving toward apparent success. Since there is now no prospect for any successful political change, such potential attitudes cannot be tested. Seemingly, those supporting the regime are more visible, appear more numerous than they really are.

It is certainly due to the skillful operations of the Kádár regime and its doubtless achievements in many sectors that the average man-in-the-street will conclude that this is the best Communist regime which can be expected. Many of these individuals would base their judgment on their experience with the odious Stalinist period under Rákosi. Resignation to what cannot be altered, fatalism to the inevitable, and a striving "to be realistic" also play a role here. Many console themselves with the thought that the Revolution has not been in vain, that the improvements under Kádár are due to the developments of 1956. Others again would consider the uprising a tragic, hopeless mistake, a manifestation of a lack of realistic thinking which has to be avoided in the future.

It is the view of this writer that the largest segment of the politically conscious public would be found in the above, neither white nor black, but gray majority. This segment neither favors the regime nor is it ready to oppose it. They cooperate where it is inevitable to cooperate and where it is in their personal interest to do so. But ideologically they are indifferent or rather opposed to Marxism-Leninism. They may yearn for some ideal form of Socialism and be cognizant of its absence in Hungary, and they may therefore even call themselves socialists. So they have an excuse for participating in the building of Socialism while it is not *their* Socialism.

The number of determined and *all-out* opponents of the regime (speaking of sentiment only because open opposition is hardly perceptible) is certainly reduced to relatively small numbers, but represented not only by the segment of older people. This is certainly an achievement of the regime. On the other hand, Kádár did not succeed in converting the overwhelming masses of Hungarians into a body committed to building Soviet Socialism. There are complaints—and not only in Moscow—that these masses display *petit-bourgeois* attitudes, that a "considerable stratum" of the population is politically apathetic.

The weakest point of Kádár's political structure is the evident lack of national independence. In vain does the regime try to explain that it just happens that "the country's policy corresponds to that of the USSR," and that it is therefore unjustifiable to call Hungary a satellite of the Soviet Union.[15] No sensible person would pretend that it was Hungary's national interest to sever diplomatic ties with Israel in 1967, or that Hungary has an interest in condemning Communist China, or that Budapest had a stake in the victory of the Vietcong. The average Hungarian feels attracted to the West and therefore is disappointed

and envious to observe that President Nixon visited Yugoslavia, Poland, and—of all countries—neighboring Rumania, while carefully avoiding Hungary, as did General de Gaulle. While Kádár is trying and succeeds in satisfying at least some of the material needs of the people, in the field of foreign policy he cannot but obey Moscow's commands.

Thus, nationalist feeling—and in many respects the younger generation is more nationalist than their elders—cannot endorse Kádár's policies. While the legitimacy of his rule is thus questioned, so long as the regime pursues a reasonable domestic policy, no violent upsurge may be expected.[16] And Kádár is very careful not to commit any major mistakes. As Hungarian officials have remarked, Budapest is unlikely to make the blunder of raising food prices before Christmas, as Gomulka did in 1970, in an act which led to his dismissal.

Kádár is now 64 years old and may be in office for a long time. Rumors about his health are not substantiated; he may suffer the fatigue of office and may leave more and more matters to his business-like, pragmatic associates, who will also do their best to avoid making mistakes. Should he for any reason depart from his leadership post, the most likely successor is Béla Biszku. In such event, the collective character of the leadership will become even more prominent. Biszku does not possess even the factitious charisma which Kádár contrived to assemble over the years. He is nine years younger than Kádár and may extend the years of the Kádár regime for another decade.

Over the past twenty years Hungary, the *enfant terrible* of the Soviet bloc in 1956, has grown into an orderly member of the Soviet-led group of East European countries, especially from the point of view of the Kremlin. Both severe repression and, in turn, gradual relaxation and liberalization have worked to keep her "orderly." Save for major blunders by her leaders, enticing precedents in other Communist countries of the area, a possible but still unlikely change in Mother Russia, or a radical upheaval in the global balance of power, the present type of regime, with or without Kádár, is likely to continue. But the above-mentioned "ifs" are numerous and not merely hypothetical. As some precedents have shown, the "character of unexpectedness" is unquestionably not alien to that part of the world.

NOTES

1. For details, see Ferenc A. Váli, *Rift and Revolt in Hungary* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), pp. 358-380.
2. On November 15, 1956, Kádár told representatives of the workers' councils: "We surrender the Party's monopoly: we want a multiparty system and clean and honest elections. . . ." United Nations, *Report of the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary*, General Assembly, Eleventh Session, Suppl. No. 18 (A/3592), New York, p. 109.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.
4. For details of these repressive measures, see International Commission of Jurists, *The Hungarian Situation and the Rule of Law*, The Hague, 1957.
5. From the communiqué issued by the United Nations Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary, June 21, 1958.
6. There is evidence that the causes and circumstances of the Revolution were carefully investigated by the Soviet Union. See United Nations, *Report*, pp. 125-126.
7. See, for instance, the article by I. Pozsgai, "Some Problems of the Development of Socialist Democracy," *Társadalmi Szemle*, No. 10, October 1968.
8. *Népszabadság*, March 4, 1962.
9. *New York Times*, April 2, 1964.
10. Ministerial Decree No. 2/1963 of May 19, 1963.
11. *New York Times*, September 28, 1971. In December 1973 the Vatican decided to consider the See of Esztergom vacant and next year, with the approval of the Hungarian government a new archbishop (who is also Primate of Hungary) was appointed by Rome. See József Cardinal Mindszenty, *Memoirs* (New York, 1974), pp. 244-247.
12. This criticism was repeated, quoting Hungarian sources, by *Rude Pravo* of March 25, 1972, in an article subtitled "Criticism of *Petit-Bourgeois* Attitudes in Hungary." See also *New York Times*, April 9, 1972.
13. See *Pravda*, February 3, 1972; the article is hinting that in Hungary attitudes and activities are tinged with excessively liberal or anti-Marxist sentiments.
14. Radio Free Europe, *Hungary 1957-61: Background and Current Situation*, Special Report (mimeographed), May 16, 1961.
15. See the article "Hungary and the USSR" in *Nemzetközi Szemle*, November, 1971.
16. However, after many years of absence of demonstrations, on March 15, 1972, Hungary's national day, youthful demonstrators shouted down Communist Party speakers and the police had to intervene; *New York Times*, April 12, 1972.

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The Policy of Re-centralization in Hungary 1974–76

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The Soviet intervention in the 1956 revolution led to a repressive political era under the Kádár regime. However, following the consolidation of the country and the collectivization of agriculture, a political thaw began in the late sixties leading to far-reaching economic reforms in 1968.[1] In conjunction with the new economic policy, a series of governmental measures lessened political tensions without introducing basic institutional changes. Despite the impressive achievements of the reforms, negative political and social consequences surfaced on a large scale in the early seventies. Decentralized planning and the increasingly profit-oriented economy resulted in intensified group conflicts and in a weakening of the Hungarian Socialist Worker Party's (MSZMP) power.[2]

The erosion of the party's position was noted by Western observers,[3] and also became the concern of the party leadership. After long hesitation, the party's Central Committee revised the reforms in March 1974. Broad objectives became gradually specified and propagandized, culminating at the Eleventh Party Congress in 1975.[4] This was followed by a series of party and government measures implementing the new policy.

This study will assess the scope and meaning of the changing political trend and its impact upon Hungarian society. Particular emphasis will be given to the economic institutions which are in the focus of re-centralization. The research is partly based upon personal observations and interviews conducted by the author in Budapest in 1975.

The New Centralization and the Party

The NEM had reduced the range of central planning and transferred power to the enterprise directors and administrators of local councils. Decentralization resulted in a loss of power for the higher political organs, which had not been anticipated at the inception of the reforms.[5]

The party and government had growing difficulties in effectively transferring decisions to the lower administrative levels, and the party responded but slowly to the cross-pressures for economic modernization coupled with political liberalization and the need to preserve its political power.

The manifest thrust of the new orientation centered around four major points: 1) strengthening the party's position throughout the entire society; 2) intensifying the ideological pressure against anti-Marxist views; 3) reasserting the political status of the worker-class; and 4) preserving the essence of the NEM, coupled with adjustment to the changing economic climate.[6] Both the strengthening of the party and economic policy revision were to be effected through the paradoxical formula of "increased centralization combined with decentralization." However, the party proceeded cautiously: the theoretical framework of the revision would be "change within the continuum." First Secretary János Kádár offered assurances repeatedly that the main line of past policy had been successful and would be retained with some modification.[7]

At the Eleventh Congress ideological questions were stressed with renewed fervor. The concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat was upheld by the party, which planned to reinforce its own position and improve central decision-making in the government. It was acknowledged that an erosion in the interest toward socialist principles existed and that considerable inroads had been made by "small bourgeoisie" and "bourgeois" ideas in society at large as well as in the party. Although similar observations had been made repeatedly since 1968, it appeared now that the party intended to take this problem more seriously. The various regulatory measures undertaken since 1974 and the proceedings of the Congress indicate that the Political Bureau feared lest "anti-social' views become too deeply entrenched and the pursuit of private interests become a permanent behavior-pattern. Therefore, while denying foreign allegations regarding the hardening of its policy, the MSZMP vowed to combat these deficiencies and champion strict adherence to Marxism-Leninism.[8] Through the balanced policy of continuing the reforms with adjustments, the political leadership hoped that the negative effects of the NEM era would be subdued and socialist democracy improved.

To carry out the new program the principle of democratic centralism was stressed anew and the party undertook some reorganization.[9] The regrouping of the leading functionaries had begun in 1974 and continued throughout the Eleventh Congress, culminating in the replace-

ment of Jenő Fock with György Lázár as premier.[10] The removal of Rezső Nyers and Lajos Fehér, chief architects of the NEM, from the Politbureau and the cabinet heralded serious changes in economic policy. They and other replaced functionaries were for the most part educated experts with a slightly cosmopolitan flavor, whereas the new leaders had stronger worker-class and party ties, and were more conservative but not hard-line politicians. Fock himself was committed to the NEM and thus had growing conflicts with the Soviet leaders over COMECON[11] policies. His successor, Lázár, an economic expert, is a political moderate who is in good standing with the Russians.[12] The appointment of György Aczél as deputy premier secured the continuation of cultural policy, but Valéria Benke, editor-in-chief of *Társadalmi Szemle,* the party's theoretical journal, represents a more rigid line in the Politbureau.[13] The post of first secretary remained firmly lodged with the central authority in the party, Kádár, who retains good relations with the Soviet Union and also enjoys moderate popularity in the country.[14] These changes represented a shift from the right-of-center to the center and left-of-center in the Hungarian political spectrum and have strengthened the influence of the group which has been increasingly critical of the party's direction in the early seventies.

In the party apparatus, bureaucratic tendencies, sluggishness, and the passivity of the rank and file membership were hindering the party organizations' effectiveness. These phenomena were not new in party history but they became more serious under the NEM. In its report to the Eleventh Congress the Central Control Committee stressed that nepotism, lack of interest in defending party policy, violations of socialist property, and greediness occurred relatively frequently in the membership, including among the higher functionaries.[15] To improve the situation, the Central Committee ordered a membership review in 1976 to increase the activism of the organizations and "to carry out the new tasks of centralization."

In preparation for the new political objectives the party's entire leadership was forced to stand for re-elections. Political dedication and worker-class origin became the two most important criteria of qualification.[16] About one-half of the leaders were newly elected and worker representation increased from 28 percent to 37.5 percent.[17] It should be noted, however, that the political impact of these elections was not very significant. Though the party undertook a moderate reorganization, the success of its efforts is uncertain. There are indications that despite the party's more vigorous self-assertion there is still no enthusiastic rank and file participation and the atmosphere remains sullen.

Effective central direction and coordination between party and government agencies received high priority in Eleventh Congress deliberations. These objectives were promoted by changing the Central Committee Secretariat infrastructure which now includes new departments for economic policy, and for industrial, agricultural, and transportation affairs.[18]

In 1975, the National Assembly passed a constitutional amendment that synchronized some party and government functions. The gist of the reform was that the term of parliamentary and council representatives would be five years (replacing the four-year cycles), and future elections would coincide with five-year plan and party congress schedules. The new arrangement aimed at more convenient coordination of party policies, economic planning, and administrative functions. However, the change was more formal than substantial.

The 1975 National Assembly elections did not depart significantly from the 1971 procedures. No change occurred in the election laws and all candidates represented the MSZMP platform. The social and political composition of the representatives does show, however, that the relative weight of the party increased, because the percentage of higher party officials rose in comparison with 1971.[19] Given the Assembly's limited role in the legislative process, the change was more symbolic than real.

One of the disturbing bureaucratic symptoms in the government machinery under the NEM was "double distortion." Frequently, high-level directives became distorted in the process of transmission to the middle and lower administration levels and additional mutations occurred in their implementation. This is a chronic problem of most East European Bloc administrations, but the problem became even more unmanageable under the NEM in Hungary. To cope with this problem, the enlarged role of central authority was now being stressed, coupled with promises to preserve local autonomy.

The leading role of the party was aggressively proclaimed at the Eleventh Congress, which resolved to exercise it more vigorously on the lower administration levels for better coordination between central and local organs. A projected increase of worker-cadre participation in higher administrative and managerial posts also would serve this purpose. It is noteworthy that the concept of "worker-cadre" now incorporated the educated offspring of industrial and agricultural workers; since 1974 there has been a slow trend toward their more intensive

employment in higher positions. The more demanding political requirements for such appointments are anticipated to tighten the party's grip upon the government agencies. This is a reversal of the dominant trend under the NEM, when expertise became a competitive requirement along with political reliability, but it should be noted that most technocrats today are also products of the party.

Recently, the key function of the Council of Ministers has become the focus of political attention, together with the problems of the local councils,[20] in which the party's supervisory authority has been reemphasized and local organs urged to correct erroneous administrative decisions. Much has been written and spoken about these questions and the constant preoccupation of the press with the same phenomena corroborates the direct observation that these problems still persist.

Centralization Tendencies in the Economy

Concern with the harmful impact of the NEM upon society was not the party's sole reason for revising economic policy. The turbulent international economic climate also contributed to the pressures for change. The effects of the Arab oil embargo in 1972 and the repeated oil price increases by the OPEC countries imposed a severe strain upon the industrial democracies, and the Soviet Bloc could not completely avoid its consequences. Inflationary pressures affected foreign trade between the COMECON countries and the West adversely, and heavy government import subsidies as well as the increased energy prices demanded by the Soviet Union[21] created economic dislocations in Hungary which made a revision of the NEM mandatory.

The revision of the NEM has affected primarily four areas: planning, premiums, prices, and productivity. These aspects of the economy had been significantly changed by the NEM and were also influenced by the recentralization trend. Party and govenment officials frequently claimed that the "main line of the NEM" would remain intact and only necessary adjustments were to be introduced; yet there was a noticeable lack of reinforcement of the NEM. The "dogmatic interpretations" of economic policy were criticized and it was suggested that Hungary should capitalize upon the experiences of other socialist countries whose economic organization was different but whose achievements equalled or surpassed Hungary's.[22]

The need for centralization was stressed, but it seemed to be a Janus-faced policy also favoring decentralized decision-making; however, the Eleventh Congress assumed an unequivocal position in favor of more

controlled planning. This became necessary because in recent years domestic reasons, combined with foreign market conditions, had resulted in an increasing budget deficit. The strengthened central planning also aimed at curbing consumer interests, which no longer could be satisfied on a scale known after 1968.[23] The primacy of political over economic considerations and the priority of socialist property were focused upon, while private interests and profits were brought under tighter control, including the use of administrative methods. Numerous measures were introduced to secure these principles, *e.g.*, a revision of the premium-distribution system, greater control of land-sales and property, and increasing taxation in the private sector.

As the pendulum swings toward higher-level decision-making, the party tries to maintain a balance between advocates of extreme centralization of the Rákosi-model and revisionists favoring extensive decentralization. The new system of regulators distinguishes between economic sectors which need centralized (macro) planning and those which need autonomous decision-making (micro-planning).[24] The impact of the new control mechanism and the primacy of social over individual and group interests reaches beyond the governmental administration and reinforces the party's position in economic operations, including the enterprise-level. More stringent political requirements for managerial positions represent an important phase of this trend.[25]

The creation of the State Planning Committee and the strengthened ministerial control of production units contribute to the expanded role of the government. Enlarged authority is wielded by the system of branch-direction which entails the coordination of different enterprises related to each other through production profiles. It is exercised on the ministerial level as a broad power to control enterprises at the expense of their own authority.[26] New rules prescribe the preparation of operational plans which the enterprises must submit for approval to the supervisory ministry. This is a detailed blueprint regarding plan-implementation and it is one more bureaucratic control over enterprise autonomy.

Some aspects of the new policy antedated 1974. A special status for forty-nine large industrial enterprises had been established by government decrees in 1973. These exempted units operated under a more controlled regime and in many respects were not subject to the general economic regulators. Statistical data indicate the key position of these enterprises: they contributed 49.2 percent to Hungary's gross industrial production with only 38.9 percent of the labor force and represented 47.4 percent of the nation's total industrial profit.[27] Under the revised economic regulators their control was to be extended.[28]

Centralizing measures were introduced recently in other areas also; *e.g.*, in the coal mining and electrical energy industry, in construction, and in various other sectors where measures were introduced against excessive profits. The new policy pledged no return to the exclusive administrative direction of the economy, but there was to be a departure from the "pure" (*i.e.*, automatic) economic regulators and enterprise autonomy without completely abandoning the latter. The success of the new blend remains to be seen; however, if past experiences with Soviet Bloc economies are any indication, increasing bureaucratization will yield only limited results in some sectors, and the overall performance of the economy will suffer.[29]

The Revision of the Economic Regulators

While the economic mechanism, the system of the direction of production, has been retained formally, its content has been substantially altered for the New Five-Year Plan,[30] which is based on a more retarded economic growth. In the past twenty-five years, the average national income growth rate had been 5.7 percent; between 1966–70, 6.8 percent; and in 1971–73, 6.1 percent, which is a relatively high yield. In the 1960–73 period Hungarian growth exceeded the GDR's and Czechoslovakia's by one percent but fell by one percent below the USSR's and Poland's.[31] However, because of the contraction of Hungary's labor force and external economic conditions, this trend cannot be continued in the long run. Future improvement in national income must be achieved through better economic organization, more automation, increased productivity, and stable conditions in both the socialist and Western economies. For the new plan period the projected minimum growth rate is to be 5.5 percent, which is considerably below the past trend, and the maximum is to be 6 percent, depending on the success of corrective measures in the economy.

A. *The Regulation of Enterprise Income*

Changing domestic and international circumstances have made it imperative that the allocation of national income between consumption and capital accumulation be altered more. Stricter conditions have been set for the enterprises by the central planning organs to increase the income ratio flowing directly into the national treasury. The accelerated income concentration was also made necessary because in comparison with the early seventies, the proportion of centralized income

had declined (in 1971 it was 75 percent, in 1975 only 64 percent), while the ratio of decentralized (enterprise-level) income had grown. This trend could not be continued without endangering national long-term plans, and the modifications were expected to raise centralized income by 4–5 percent to about 70 percent again. The rechannelling of income was arranged through various new regulations: enterprises would have to pay 35 percent instead of 25 percent social insurance contributions and wage-taxes.[32] This measure was to stimulate productivity through automation and to discourage the use of manpower in a labor-short economy. The new system, combined with new prices, was expected to reduce enterprise-income by 20 percent and an additional production-tax would further lower it by 15 percent. Thus, the income-level reduction on the average would be around 35 percent, with certain fluctuations permitted in different sectors of the economy.[33] Up to this point, the system of regulators has remained constant, but its changing content will have a significant influence on the price-structure and the cost-factors as well as on the ratio of centralized income.

B. *The New System of Profit Taxation and Enterprise Funds*

Generally the new income regulators have favored the large enterprises which are under stronger control. The most important innovation for the new Five Year Plan commencing in 1976 was that the mandatory distribution of the profit prior to taxation, introduced under the NEM, was terminated. The enterprises, after fulfilling their fiscal obligations according to strict priorities, might autonomously decide the disposition of their profit between development and premium funds.[34] It should be noted here that as the additional regulation clearly shows, high-level discretionary decisions have increased dramatically and party claims that enterprise autonomy is unchanged are unrealistic.

After the payment of the unchanged 6 percent contribution to the administration of local councils, the remaining profit was to be subjected to a 36 percent general profit tax, and 15 percent of the taxed profits would have to be deposited into the *reserve fund.* The fund must be increased until it reached the combined sum of 8 percent of all wages plus 2 percent of the gross value of fixed assets, and the repayment of "borrowed" funds must be completed within five years. This was a more flexible principle than the past one.[35]

After formulating the reserve fund, the next important step was to earmark the *development fund* for financing investment loans and debts obtained from banks and enterprises, and direct financing of new

capital investments. The size of this fund would depend upon the needs and discretionary decisions of the enterprise; therefore it could be regarded as an unknown factor in the distribution of enterprise income.[36] There was bound to emerge a more diversified pattern depending on the competitiveness and efficiency of various enterprises, and the fund was expected to be a stimulant in raising productivity.

The remaining enterprise profit might be used for creating the *participation fund,* to be used for supplementing personal income and distributing premiums and bonuses. However, steep progressive tax was imposed on this allocation; therefore a close relationship would exist between the development and participation funds. No tax would be levied if the fund remained below 2 percent of the wages disbursed in the enterprise; between 2 and 4 percent of the wages the tax would be 200 percent, and above that it would increase by 100 percent per each 2 percent. If the participation fund exceeded 14 percent, the tax would jump to 800 percent, a severe punitive measure for supplementary wage increase.[37] The majority of enterprises were expected to utilize a participation fund equal to a minimum of 4–6 percent of the total wages basis; only a few would employ 14 percent or more. Generally, the typical participation fund would fluctuate between 7–10 percent, lower than the 11 percent under the NEM.[38]

Determining the correct proportion of the participation fund is of major importance and hence the director would have to rely upon the advice of the unions; yet he would be solely responsible for making the decisions. This arrangement underscored the extremely weak position of the unions in the Hungarian socialist economy. It is true that the new regulation expanded the autonomy of the enterprises in this area somewhat but the operation transpired in a tightly constricted financial frame. In general, profit distribution for premiums would be reduced and differences between enterprises cushioned. This contrasted sharply with the situation under the NEM and was bound to result in a socially more defensible, even income pattern, but it might also reduce incentives for profits and productivity.

The financing of larger capital investments became subject to special rules, which supplemented the regulation of development funds. Under the new system the individual investment projects and larger reinvestments financed from government loans would have to be repaid by the enterprise, whereas previously repayment depended on its financial capacity.[39] The volume of centrally determined investments would increase from 46 percent to 53 percent, and investment funds under enterprise autonomy would be reduced. Enterprises, on the average,

would have to repay treasury loans within a maximum of ten years of the start of their new operations; the repayment with interest would have to be made from gross income prior to the payment of the general profit tax. These strict rules for loan repayment might stimulate heavier reliance on the development funds for at least the partial financing of these projects.[40]

In order to permit limited flexibility in the more rigid income regulation, the new measures allowed some deviation from the generally applied principles. It would be impossible to survey these detailed regulations in this study, but due to their importance it should be noted that in the agricultural cooperatives individual income taxes were replaced by taxes based on the unit's gross income. Other aspects of the taxation and the system of investment-support in the agriculture have remained unchanged.[41]

These special regimes reflected the principle that differentiation under the new system would occur on the branch and not the enterprise level, an important aspect of the new centralization. The directive organs would have more power to apply the regulators flexibly according to need. The party and government claimed that a better combination would exist between central direction and enterprise autonomy, but it appears that the former continues to dominate the latter, and information from Hungary corroborates this viewpoint.

C. *The Regulation of the Wage System*

The MSZMP has always recognized that in this historical phase differences in wages under socialism are necessary. However, the party has reversed its position in one important aspect: whereas under the NEM substantial personal income differences were defended against egalitarian aspirations, today it is admitted that income differences had reached an undesirable level, and Marxism-Leninism dictates that these inequalities should not be socially antagonistic. Therefore, the party now presses for the softening of differences in general, but in some sectors continuing wage differentiation is held to be desirable. The balance between wage levels in industry and agriculture remains unchanged, but excessive incomes are being trimmed down among members of the intelligentsia, managers, and the private sector. In these groups unacceptable incomes must be reduced even by administrative methods if need be, thus bringing about a socially more equitable income distribution.[42]

The ratio between the highest and lowest incomes under the NEM was nine to one, and the new policy aims at reducing this ratio in order to conform with Marxist-Leninist principles.[43] The new regulation is also geared toward improved productivity but it is uncertain whether it will succeed. The former wage system was nearly uniform and it was primarily based on enterprise profits (in 90 percent of enterprises); however, it was applied under varied conditions and this created unacceptable distortions. The new modified rules have introduced four modes of wage regulation: the *relative* wage level and wage volume (depending on production), and the *centrally* determined wage level and wage volume (regardless of production). The classification of enterprises is determined by the Ministry of Labor in accord with the branch ministries and the National Planning Office.

The relative forms are applicable in those enterprises (in about two-thirds) in which incentives may boost production; the centrally determined forms are found in enterprises where labor saving can be achieved through reduction of personnel (in about one-third). The wage volume categories (both relative and central) have been substantially broadened compared with the past. Generally, centralized decisions have replaced, to a large extent, the automatic wage regulation system. In 1976, a portion of the wage increases (1.5 percent) does not hinge upon efficiency, but increases in wage funds above 6 percent are subject to progressive taxation and/or requirements for reserve-formulation. In the relative wage categories the tax rate is 150 percent if the wage fund exceeds 4 percent. These measures are designed to reduce "economically and socially unjust" differences between enterprises, and the steeply graduated taxation will restrain the use of participation funds for increased wages. In the *centrally* determined categories the wage increases (in wage levels and/or wage volumes) are decided by the Plan (in 1976 it is 4.5 percent), and the enterprise management can utilize the funds irrespective of the productivity indicators. It has authority to introduce some increases if profits permit, but they are also subject to progressive taxes.[44] These categories are expected to stimulate personnel reduction and to bolster productivity; both objectives are targets of the economic revision.

For the new Five-Year Plan period, 14–16 percent real wage increases and 18–20 percent "real income" increases have been slated—a slower growth than under the NEM.[45] With the 4.5 percent consumer price increase for 1976 and the combined nation-wide real wage (1.5 percent) real income (3 percent) increases of equally 4.5 percent, if the average wage increases on the enterprise level would be about 6 percent, the

result will be a projected 1.5 percent rise in living standards. This is below the average 2–3.5 percent rise of the NEM years, a considerable decline of the recent growth rate.[46] The smaller income increase also justifies the wage policy aimed at leveling off the income differences, thus departing from the NEM principles.

D. *Prices*

The NEM had introduced a three-pronged price mechanism: government-regulated prices (45 percent of total); prices limited by guidelines (30 percent); and free prices (25 percent).[47] This system has not been changed but it has been tightened recently. In 1974, the price index rose by 17 percent in the Western world, which set in motion a steep price increase in the COMECON countries as well. In Hungary, there was an average increase of 25 percent in heating materials (coal, wood, butane gas, etc.) and a 40–50 percent rise in oil and gasoline in September, 1974. A series of other price increases followed in 1974 and 1975, reaching 50 percent in some categories, *e.g.,* in certain construction materials and sugar.[48] A minor wage adjustment averaging 50 forints accompanied these measures, which was far from upsetting the inflationary impact on real wages despite official claims to the contrary.

The world inflation impelled the government to support export-import prices. The raising of prices removed the need for price supports, and the projected increases for 1976 reflected this objective. The planned producer price increase was to be 6.4 percent and the consumer price increase 4.5 percent. Forestalling a possible chain reaction of regulated upon free prices, a temporary freeze has been imposed upon the latter, effective in the first part of 1976.

E. *Productivity and Enterprise Democracy*

The revision of economic regulators also aimed at increasing productivity. Although living standards and total output had improved under the NEM, productivity did not fare as well. Recent statistics indicate improvement, but their reliability is somewhat questionable. In the January–August 1975 period, employment in industry had decreased by 0.2 percent, while production has grown by 5.5 percent, "due exclusively to the 5.7 percent increase in per capita production." However, the gain looks modest in a long-range perspective; the total number of workers employed in the socialist sector had grown by 10 percent between 1967 and 1972, while all other employee categories had ex-

panded by 26 percent.[49] Since the population growth has been very low since 1956, leading to labor shortages, higher productivity could be achieved only through progress in technology and efficiency. This is not easily accomplished because 25 percent of the total industrial labor force consists of unskilled workers (segédmunkás), who are still moving material manually, an outstanding example of labor waste.[50] The new system of regulators discourages reliance upon manpower and stimulates efficiency through taxation and wage-fund restrictions instead. Additional aggressive measures were taken in 1976 by imposing a complete freeze on the hiring of administrative personnel and by new restrictions on second jobs.[51]

To cushion the anticipated unpopularity of the new measures, the party has propagated the concept of "enterprise democracy," purportedly to invite more worker input in management decisions. The Eleventh Congress observed that previous experience with enterprise democracy had not been satisfactory and improvements were necessary to mobilize the workers' participation. However, this would be permitted only through "the strengthening of the party organs" and by the workers' presence in the managerial committees and would remain—as it has always been—purely consultative. Hungary therefore is not considering participation by worker councils on the Yugoslav model.[52] There is essentially nothing new in the recent proposals other than the involvement of worker-representatives in extra meetings through union channels.

F. *Foreign Trade Relations*

A review of new trends would not be complete without a brief glance at the external aspects of the Hungarian economy. Direct and indirect links exist between re-centralization and foreign trade and, apparently, no major shifts are planned in this area at the present time. The COMECON is expanding its activities, including long-range plan coordination and production specialization assigned to member states. In the 1976–1980 period of the various five-year plans, the COMECON integration will expand especially in the machine building and energy industry, including atomic energy production, and Hungary will fully participate in these efforts.[53] The total trade volume among member states is projected to increase by 50 percent between 1976 and 1980; yet Hungary also plans to expand its economic ties with the West. Total Hungarian foreign trade is expected to grow by 45–50 percent during the plan period. COMECON trade will be increased by 40 percent, and trade with the non-socialist countries by about 50 percent (socialist

foreign trade is 60 percent of the total at the present time), indicating that Hungary does not lean overwhelmingly toward the COMECON in long-range planning, although the importance of the latter is disproportionately stressed in political statements.[54]

Comparative COMECON statistics illustrate the need for some centralization in the Hungarian economy. While the Hungarian gross national product in 1974 (128 percent compared to the 1970 base) surpassed all bloc countries except Bulgaria, Poland, and Rumania, the volume of investments compared with 1970 noticeably declined to the lowest level (118 percent) with the exception of East Germany. These facts explain the MSZMP's concern with rechanneling the national income from the enterprises for overall national distribution. This is vital, considering that Hungary's industrial production volume in 1974, compared with 1970, was the lowest (130 percent), with the exception of East Germany and Czechoslovakia.[55] Whereas the Hungarian recentralization scheme is more significant economically, some other COMECON countries also took efforts to improve their economic organization. The USSR introduced a two-to-three level industrial administration, and Poland took steps to centralize production through the formation of larger economic units.[56]

Developments in Cultural Affairs

Stronger central controls are also observable in cultural affairs, although the changes are not as visible as in the economy. The party has always claimed primacy in this area but it has suffered some setbacks.[57] During the NEM's profit-oriented atmosphere opportunist and materialist behavior spread throughout the society, and the youth in particular exhibited cynicism and scepticism toward ideology.[58]

The 1974 Central Committee resolutions stressed that Marxism-Leninism was the exclusive foundation of cultural affairs and called for more consistent application of this principle. Kádár, following the Soviet position, made it clear at the Eleventh Congress that "there is no peaceful coexistence on the ideological front" and acknowledged the existence of simultaneous trends towards the growth of socialist principles and "bourgeois values." He demanded the gradual elimination of the latter, but also rejected the impatient views of "dogmatists." Accordingly, the party adopted a more determined position in cultural problems by emphasizing the significance of fundamental socialist principles in the future.[59] The need for ideological commitment by party members and organizations is being stressed anew in congressional

resolutions but their efficacy is questionable, since the same problems have received attention at past years' party proceedings.

The MSZMP has called repeatedly for a more vigorous ideological training in the educational process. The reorganization of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs into a separate Ministry of Education and Ministry of Culture was decided in this spirit. Political pressure through communist indoctrination has increased in the primary and secondary school system and is expected to counter religious influences still present in significant proportions. Recognizing that the educators' ideological expertise had declined in the early seventies, the party has introduced intensified political courses in the institutions of higher learning in addition to the usual party programs.[60]

The changing status of school principals reflects stronger central authority. The new government regulation makes them more dependent; their appointment is limited to a five-year period and political considerations dominate their selection; but this regulation is counteracted somewhat by their expanded power in personnel questions and in the political control of their staff. The principals, together with the faculty, also hold direct responsibility for the privileged treatment of worker-class pupils.[61]

In the area of academic disciplines, the social sciences are again the focus of attention.[62] Kádár has criticized some recent theoretical approaches and the party has called for an unequivocal reliance on Marxism-Leninism. The dual role of social sciences is being stressed; they are to fulfill important scholarly tasks but they are also expected to support the socialist society and its political super-structure.[63]

Departure from these principles was sharply criticized at the Eleventh Congress. Valéria Benke, member of the Politbureau, acknowledged that "both progressive and regressive" views influence the social scientists who have frequently shown one-sidedness in research and have become influenced by ultra-leftist or revisionist tendencies by leaning toward the "most dangerous bourgeois deviation, nationalism." [64] These statements pertain to the Hegedüs sociology group which was expelled from the party in 1973, and to the social scientists concerned with the suppression of Hungarians in Rumania.[65] Official overreaction notwithstanding, Hungarian observers agree that no significant new trends have appeared in these areas, and that the anti-nationalist cultural policy firmly remains under Aczél's leadership.

In order to secure party-mindedness in scientific institutions, the party might correct "benevolent" errors, and project results are to be evaluated at the collective meeting of researchers and party members.

To bolster working-class participation in the new intelligentsia, a new government program has been established, enabling students of worker-peasant origin to enter universities after preliminary studies, without a formal high school diploma or admission tests, both of which are standard criteria for applicants of different social backgrounds.[66]

The MSZMP rationalizes its apparently tightened control on the basis that détente has created a favorable climate for "anti-marxist views," which aim at the "erosion of the socialist system," and appear under the guise of "scientific objectivism." Consequently, there is pressure to improve the ideological orientation of scientists and to maintain closer ties with research in the Soviet Union and the other COMECON countries.[67] Whether this policy will lead to additional restrictions compared with the early seventies is uncertain, but a trend toward a more liberalized research program is unlikely.[68]

Kádár has also stressed that literary authors have disregarded ideological considerations in selecting the style and theme of their works.[69] The Eleventh Congress heeded Kádár's exposé and declared that Marxist criticism must henceforth be applied more rigidly and must enjoy higher priority. The freedom of the arts was formally recognized, but the party would maintain the privilege to take decisions on extending support and on rejecting both dogmatism and negativism. In fact this principle means absolute control, for there is no other available source of support than the state.

György Aczél, who is in charge of cultural policy, reiterated recently that artistic contributions must serve the formulation of socialist conscience and life-style. Even though such statements are not a novelty on the Hungarian cultural scene, it appears that the party is determined to press its view with more vigor. However, at present there are no indications of major shifts in implementation. Severe new restrictions are unlikely, but any further penetration of non-socialist trends might be prevented. This view seems to concur with the official expectation expressed in the interviews given by Aczél to *Le Monde*. "The right of expression which has no practical consequence is meaningless," and "we do not give publicity to inhuman views as exemplified by Solzhenitsyn, who urges a new war."[70] It is noteworthy that Aczél quickly added that many non-communist Western works are being published in Hungary, including ones by Charles de Gaulle and Albert Camus. Though these publications are limited in quantity and are mostly critical of the Western world, especially the United States, Aczél's assurance should not be underestimated for it seems to foredoom a return to harsher censorship and cultural isolation.

The departure from the NEM began in 1974 and continued steadily through the Eleventh Congress, climaxing in the new economic regulations and the guidelines for the fifth Five Year Plan to commence in 1976. Essentially, the new policy is a partial retreat to a more centralized and/or controlled system politically, culturally, and economically.

As the party is the sole source of political power, some internal reorganization was necessary. However, the effects have remained limited and the screening of membership and party congress have served mostly propaganda purposes. The reshuffling of high-level leadership, and the modification of the infrastructure of the Central Committee have constituted the apogee of the changes. The profile of the Political Bureau and the Secretariat indicates a shift in the direction of policy: the MSZMP has moved somewhat from right-of-center toward the center and left-of-center without restoring extreme conservatism. Kádár's firm position as first secretary assures the moderate stance of the Hungarian party, but strenuous efforts are being made to reassert the party's power and curb the erosion of its influence in society.

In the governmental machinery, the trend is toward more centralized decision-making, implemented by the Council of Ministers, the State Planning Committee, and through the politicization of managerial positions. Other recent changes are merely formal, and the constitutional amendment altering election terms has only limited meaning.

Serious efforts are being undertaken in cultural policy to uphold the dominance of Marxist-Leninist theory. In this sphere, too, the party has reasserted its control on a limited scale without leaning back to earlier suppressive tactics. It is acknowledged that the "liberalized" aura of the NEM had contributed to the spread of bourgeois values, which has induced an intensive ideological training program both within and without the educational system. The social sciences had been sharply criticized in recent years, and special steps were taken to protect the prominence of Marxism and to prevent unacceptable research orientation. The party pledged, however, that resurgent concern with ideology would not result in a return to rigid dogmatism and direct censorship.

Re-centralization has assumed more significant dimensions in the economy, and this may have a negative influence upon political institutions in the future. The revision of the NEM is essentially a retreat toward a more centralized economy. National planning has been expanded at the expense of enterprise autonomy, and the modified system of regulators has depleted enterprise profits by returning a higher ratio

of income to the treasury. The strengthened central planning and the system of branch direction have limited enterprise independence and decreased the directors' discretionary power. Therefore, it can be expected that managerial decisions would be influenced more frequently by political rather than economic considerations. The successful rechanneling of enterprise income to the government will reduce enterprise profits and premiums during the fifth Five Year Plan, and the new steep taxes on participation funds will have the same effect. The stricter conditions imposed upon loans will result in heavier reliance on the development funds in financing investments, which in turn will reduce the financial capacity of the enterprises for income supplements. The new wage regulations have been based on a more uniform distribution system which will trim some of the extreme differences and bring about a "socially more just" wage pattern. These measures, combined with the weakened independence of the enterprises, may boost productivity through improved technology. However, they may have negative social effects, and could impair human incentives for productivity.

The fifth Five Year Plan, based on a reduced growth rate, will taper off improvements in living standards. According to the government, this course is inevitable because of uncontrollable factors, especially in the area of energy imports.[71] The Hungarian economy is tied to the COMECON countries and particularly to the Soviet Union. Re-centralization has moved the Hungarian system closer to the Soviet economic model, which shies away from decentralization and will also operate on a scaled-down plan for the next five-year period.[72] A levelling-off and possible stagnation in Hungary, therefore, is anticipated, but grim prognoses by some Western observers forecasting a serious decline, are unrealistic. It is also expected that controversial social phenomena, especially group conflicts, will be tamed and socialist behavior patterns bolstered under the re-centralized economy. Although this expectation may be partly realistic, the present Hungarian milieu justifies some scepticism.

The Kádár era, embracing twenty years, has included a phase of suppression and forced collectivization, merging into a milder policy of reconciliation; this trend has climaxed in a measured liberalization and in considerable economic and humanitarian accomplishments. The pendulum has not stopped there; it continues to move toward a moderate centralization. Nevertheless, the new policy does not mean a return to the tight controls prior to the NEM. Speculations that re-centralization will lead to a sharp reversal are unfounded; rather it aims at conservation and stabilization. Kádár's record in the long pull is

moderate, and he has gained a modicum of popular support; as long as he remains in good standing with the Russians, a major political shift is unlikely. Though he has apparently accepted the principle of independence of the communist parties at the Twenty-First Soviet Party Congress, this was counterbalanced by Kádár's affirmation of loyalty to proletarian internationalism and the Soviet Union.[73] The preponderance of Soviet economic and military power inHungary renders Kádár's claim for independence sterile, and it would be unrealistic to expect him to forfeit the Soviet protection.

The twentieth anniversary of the tragic uprising of 1956 shows material improvement, a partial return to more central power, a lack of overt terror, and a lighter atmosphere, but there is no evidence of basic political freedom. Considering Hungarian trends, the latter cannot be expected without a major transformation in the European balance of power, which is highly unlikely under the present world political conditions.

NOTES

1. Officially named the "New Economic Mechanism," abbreviated in this study as NEM.
2. "Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt," abbreviated in this study as MSZMP [and/or also referred to as "party."]
3. See William Shawcross, *Crime and Compromise* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1974), pp. 286–289.
4. *The Resolution of the Eleventh Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Worker Party,* published as a Supplement to *Népszabadság,* March 23, 1975. It will be referred to in this study as Eleventh Congress.
5. Bennett Kovrig, *The Hungarian People's Republic* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), pp. 154–56, and p. 184.
6. See MSZMP Central Committee Resolutions, passed at the March 19–20, 1974, sessions, published in *Népszabadság,* March 22, 1974, pp. 1–2.
7. See for example Kádár's speech at Nyiregyháza, *Magyar Nemzet,* March 30, 1974, p. 1.
8. See *Népszabadság,* November 7, 1974, p. 5. References to the Western press are made by István Katona, quoting the *Süddeutsche Zeitung, Die Weltwoche, Daily Telegraph, Relazioni Internazionale,* and other sources.
9. For detailed data regarding the organization of the party, see Iván Szenes, *The Organizational Development of the Hungarian Socialist Worker Party* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1972), especially pp. 68–75.
10. See *Pártélet,* Vol. XIX, April, 1974, pp. 3–4, and *Népszabadság,* May 16, 1975, p. 3.
11. The abbreviated designation of the Council of Mutual Economic Cooperation of the socialist countries; in Hungarian: Kölcsönös Gazdasági Segítség Tanácsa, abbreviated as KGST.
12. *New York Times,* May 16, 1975, p. 4.

13. Of the thirteen members of the Politbureau, nine were retained. The four new members represent economic changes (Lázár), increased concern with youth problems (László Maróthy, KISZ secretary), and mass organizations (Miklós Óvári, promoted from the Central Committee Secretariat), as well as popular appeal to the masses (István Sarlós, Secretary General of the People's Patriotic Front). See report of the meeting of the Central Committee, *Népszabadság,* March 23, 1975, p. 4.
14. His successor designate appears to be Károly Németh, an influential member of the Central Committee Secretariat and the Political Bureau.
15. Report of the Central Control Committee of the MSZMP to the Eleventh Congress, *Népszabadság,* March 18, 1975, pp. 10–11.
16. For aspects of worker class participation in the party, see Szenes, *op. cit.,* pp. 74–75.
17. *Magyar Nemzet,* February 15, 1975, p. 5.
18. Announcement by the Central Committee, *Népszabadság,* May 16, 1975, p. 1.
19. *Népszabadság,* June 1, 1975, p. 3, and July 5, 1975, pp. 1–4. For tabulated data see APPENDIX I.
20. Éva Terényi, "In the Course of Work," *Népszabadság,* November 23, 1975, p. 3.
21. *Observer,* June 27, 1976, p. 1.
22. See Zoltán Komócsin, former secretary of the Central Committee, "With Unchanged Policy," *Népszabadság,* March 23, 1974, p. 3.
23. See Béla Biszku, member of the Politbureau, "Timely Questions of the Policy of our Party," *Társadalmi Szemle,* March, 1974, pp. 3–11.
24. For analysis, see József Drecin, vice-president of the National Planning Office, "The Fifth Five Year Plan in Preparation," *Társadalmi Szemle,* June, 1974, pp. 18–31, especially pp. 29–31.
25. Managerial training is undertaken in the National Management Center established in 1975 where political instruction has been largely expanded.
26. For a detailed discussion see Éva Apró's interview with Mrs. János Keserű, Minister of Light Industry, "The Role of the Ministries in Branch Direction," *Társadalmi Szemle,* November, 1974, pp. 22–34.
27. *Népszabadság,* August 9, 1975, p. 3.
28. The 49 key enterprises are frequently neglected in Western reports, thus giving a distorted picture; their impact upon the entire economy is substantial.
29. See Alan Abouchar, "The Soviet Economy: Reform or Evolution," *Problems of Communism,* July–August, 1974, pp. 84–86, and the literature cited therein.
30. *The Fifth Five Year Plan of the Hungarian Economy (1976–80),* Act of the National Assembly, passed on December 18, 1975. For full text see *Népszabadság,* December 21, 1975, Supplement, pp. 1–16.
31. Drecin, *loc. cit.* See also Michael Keren, "The GDR's Economic Miracle," *Problems of Communism,* January–February, 1976, especially pp. 85–86.
32. Social insurance (SZTK) payments were raised from 17 to 22 percent and wage taxes from 8 to 13 percent.
33. László Antal and Sándor Ferge, consultants in the Ministry of Finance, "The Regulatory System of the Fifth Five Year Plan," Part I, *Népszabadság,* November 12, 1975, p. 10.
34. According to the NEM model, total enterprise profits had to be divided into a development and participation fund, also called "investment" and "profit-sharing" accounts. The division of profits was carried out according to the ratio of the annual wage fund to the capital assets. However, since this ratio showed divergences, an equalization factor was introduced through a mathematical formula. The taxation of the two funds was different and promoted invest-

ments and material incentives to management and workers as well. For detailed analysis see Barnabas Racs, "Hungary's New Economic Mechanism," *Michigan Academician,* Winter, 1969, pp. 175–183.

35. See István Földes, "The Development of the Economic Regulators," *Népszabadság,* July 30, 1975, p. 10. There must be further payment into the reserve fund above the 15 percent if it has been depleted.
36. Source: László Antal and Sándor Ferge, "The Regulatory System of the Fifth Five Year Plan," Part II, *Népszabadság,* November 19, 1975, p. 10.
37. If the priority obligations are high, the participation fund will be small or zero. Profitable enterprises, however, may set aside a minimum fund before paying other obligations, but this is restricted to the value of six days wages; see *ibid.* For the best short study regarding the theoretical aspects of economic changes, see Attila Madarasi, "The Immediate Tasks of the Modifications of Economic Regulators," *Társadalmi Szemle,* December, 1975, pp. 42–52.
38. However, the future ratio will be actually somewhat higher because, contrary to past practice, the funds are not burdened with welfare expenses; these are paid prior to taxation, which again has an equalizing effect.
39. For a full analysis of investment policy see István Friss, ed., *The Main Questions of the Economic Policy of the MSZMP in the Period of the Building of Socialism* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1976).
40. Investments determined by the enterprise autonomously are financed from the development fund and/or by bank loans, and are subject to somewhat different regulations; see Antal and Ferge, *loc. cit.;* see also Madarasi, *op. cit.,* p. 49.
41. For a comprehensive study of agricultural affairs see Lewis A. Fischer and Philip E. Uren, *The New Hungarian Agriculture* (Montreal and London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1973), especially Ch. V., pp. 65-91.
42. See János Hoós, Candidate, "The Relationships of Distribution Under Socialism," *Társadalmi Szemle,* August, 1975, pp. 17–29.
43. For a sociological study dealing with income differences in the socialist society, see Zsuzsa Ferge, *The Layers in Our Society* (Budapest: Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, 1973), especially pp. 164–199.
44. See Ferenc Kölgyesi, Department Head, Ministry of Labor, "Wage Regulation in the Enterprise," *Népszabadság,* November 26, 1975, p. 10.
45. Speech by István Huszár in the National Assembly discussing the fifth Five Year Plan, *Magyar Nemzet,* December 18, 1975, p. 3.
46. Béla Csikós-Nagy, President of the National Office for Materials and Prices, "Price Policy for 1976," *Népszabadság,* December 3, 1975, p. 3.
47. István Friss, ed., *Reform of the Economic Mechanism in Hungary* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1969), Ch. VI, pp. 163–191. For analysis consult Barnabas Racz, "Assessing Hungary's New Economic Mechanism," *East Europe* (New York), December, 1968, pp. 2-9.
48. See price tables in *Népszabadság,* September 1, 1974, p. 5. Oil and gasoline prices increased by an additional 20 percent in August, 1974, construction materials by 20–50 percent; many basic commodities rose again in 1975, *e.g.,* further items in construction materials by 22 percent, and meat products by 32–33 percent; see *Népszabadság,* November 30, 1975, p. 3.
49. See economic indicators by the Central Statistical Office, *Népszabadság,* October 1, 1975, p. 10.
50. In spite of gains in productivity in agriculture, it is low on a European scale. For the serious problems in this area see István Szlameniczky, "The Possibilities for the Increase in Productivity in Agriculture," *Társadalmi Szemle,* December, 1975, pp. 53–65.

51. János Kádár, "Harmony Between Objectives and Action," *Társadalmi Szemle,* March, 1976, pp. 7–19.
52. Stephen R. Sacks, "Yugoslav Market Socialism," *Problems of Communism,* May-June, 1975, pp. 51–54.
53. For example: Hungary will reduce production of heavy machinery, tractors, airplanes, trucks and cars. These needs will be supplied by other countries, especially the Soviet Union. In turn, exports will increase in buses, telephone equipment, motor trains, medical and laboratory technical products, etc. Hungary imports 40 percent of the basic raw materials and energy carriers from Russia and exports 50 percent of the light industry and 75 percent of the pharmaceutical products to the same country. See "Report on the Proceedings of the XXIX Session of the COMECON," *Népszabadság,* June 26, 1975, p. 3.
54. See for comprehensive discussion of the Hungarian relationships with COMECON, György Lázár, "Our Economic Situation and Our Goals," *Társadalmi Szemle,* May, 1975, pp. 23–31.
55. The information is based on the "Report by the Statistical Department of the COMECON," 1975. For complete comparative data see APPENDIX II.
56. *Ibid.*
57. For further discussion see Ferenc Kovács, *The Political-Ideological Knowledge and Activities of the Worker Class* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1976).
58. Consult Kovrig, *op. cit.,* pp. 152–154.
59. See the comprehensive speech by György Aczél before the Central Committee, "Socialist Community-Socialist Culture," *Társadalmi Szemle,* April, 1974, pp. 3–15.
60. See György Strasser, Docent, "The Ideological Training of Teachers," *Népszabadság,* September 17, 1975, p. 7, and the interviews conducted by András Domány, "Ideological Instruction in the Secondary Schools," *Társadalmi Szemle,* May, 1974, pp. 89–97.
61. For the relationship between social status and education see Ferge, *op. cit.,* pp. 199–236.
62. For the organization and operation of institutes of higher learning, see Dr. Tamás Klement, *The Legal Rules Regarding Universities, Instructors and Students* (Budapest: Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, 1969).
63. See Dr. Mihály Kornidesz, Department Head of the Central Committee, "Science, Politics, and Politics of Science," *Népszabadság,* December 22, 1974, p. 5.
64. "Bourgeois attempts to manipulate nationalism" is also said to be a by-product of coexistence and detente; see Kádár's statement to the Eleventh Congress, Part IV, *Népszabadság,* March 18, 1975, pp. 6–7.
65. For a detailed document regarding nationalism, see "The Socialist Patriotism and Questions of Proletar Internationalism," prepared by the Cultural Policy Commission of the Central Committee of the MSZMP, *Társadalmi Szemle,* October, 1974, pp. 32–47.
66. *Pártélet,* Vol. XIX, April, 1974, pp. 95–96. According to information obtained in Hungary, several hundred worker-peasant students were selected in 1975 on this basis.
67. András Knopp, "The Status of Research in the Social Sciences," *Társadalmi Szemle,* May, 1974, pp. 24–34.
68. For questions of organization and the politics of scientific research and academic institutions, see Maria Csöndes, *et al., Politics and Organization of Sciences in Hungary* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1971).
69. Kádár before the Eleventh Congress, *Népszabadság,* March 18, 1975, p. 7.
70. Interview conducted by M. Bernard Feron, "La liberté est le présent et l'avenir du socialisme," see *Le Monde,* October 31, 1975, p. 4.

71. According to a U.N. report, Soviet economic problems and drastic hikes in oil prices affected the East European economies. In Hungary, foreign trade deficits coupled with energy prices put a severe strain on the national budget which might be felt on the consumer level; see United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, *Economic Survey of Europe in 1975* (New York, 1976), Part I, Ch. 2.
72. See Brezhnev's report on the XXV Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, *Népszabadság,* February 25, 1976, pp. 1–14. For an analysis of Soviet economic policy see Gregory Grossman, "An Economy at Middle Age," *Problems of Communism,* March–April, 1976, pp. 18–33. Grossman points out that there is no serious thought given to liberalizing reforms in the Soviet Union. The tenth Five Year Plan is based on "retarded" growth and no rapid advance in productivity is expected.
73. See Kádár's speech on the Soviet Party Congress, *Népszabadság,* February 27, 1976, pp. 1–2.

APPENDIX I

The Composition of the National Assembly After the 1975 Elections

Total Number of Seats: 352	*Absolute Numbers*	*Percentages*
High party functionaries	69	19.6
Higher ranking officials of the government, including economic administration and mass organizations	116	32.9
Leading intellectuals and artists	6	1.7
Workers	76	21.5
Factory foremen and similar groups	33	9.3
Professionals (physicians, artists, teachers, lawyers, etc.)	46	13.0
Clerics	6	1.7

Notes: a) The party functionaries represent 19.6 percent or about three times the ratio of party members in the total population. This is 22 or 6.6 percent more than the 1971 figure, which was 47 or 13 percent; see *Népszabadság,* April 8, 1971, pp. 7–10.

b) The category of higher ranking officials includes many party members: the exact number is not known.

c) The top three categories constitute the political elite and include 191 representatives, which is between 1/2 and 2/3 of the total.

Source: The table was composed by the author on the basis of the official report in *Népszabadság,* June 1, 1975, p. 3, and July 5, 1975, pp. 1–4.

APPENDIX II

1974 National Income in Percentages of the 1973 and 1970 National Income

	1973 = 100%	1970 = 100%
Bulgaria	107.5	133.3
Hungary	107	128
GDR	100.3	124.4
Cuba	108	140
Mongolia	105.6	123.5
Poland	110	145
Rumania	112.5	155.3
USSR	105	126
Czechoslovakia	105.5	122.4

1974 Investments in Percentages of the 1973 and 1970 Investments

	1973 = 100%	1970 = 100%
Bulgaria	109	131
Hungary	108	118
GDR	104.2	117.7
Cuba	—	—
Mongolia	108.1	125.8
Poland	125	208
Rumania	117.3	155
USSR	107	129
Czechoslovakia	108.7	135.3

1974 Industrial Production in Percentages of the 1973 and 1970 Production

	1973 = 100%	1970 = 100%
Bulgaria	108.5	140.9
Hungary	108.2	130.1
GDR	107.4	128.5
Cuba	108	139
Mongolia	108.3	144.8
Poland	112.2	149.2
Rumania	115	164.5
USSR	108	132.8
Czechoslovakia	106.2	129.1

Source: Based on the report by the Statistical Department of the Secretariat of the COMECON, published in *Népszabadság,* February 21, 1975, pp. 4–5, and *Izvestia* (Moscow), January 25, 1975, p. 5.

A Bibliography of the Hungarian Revolution 1956

(Supplement II)*

I. L. Halasz de Beky
(compiler)

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* The present supplement contains 117 entries of books and pamphlets, bringing to 730 the total of published works relating to the Hungarian Revolution. The list covers the period of October 1956 to July 1, 1976. The arrangement of the entries follows that of the main *Bibliography of the Hungarian Revolution 1956* (University of Toronto Press, 1963), *i.e.*, the entries are divided by languages. For the first supplement see Francis S. Wagner (ed.), *The Hungarian Revolution in Perspective* (Washington, D.C.: F.F. Memorial Foundation, 1967), pp. 255-336.

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BOOK REVIEW*

Remember Hungary 1956

Francis Laping and Hans Knight, eds. *Remember Hungary 1956.* Center Square, Pa.: Alpha Publications, 1975. Pp. 381. $30.00.

This superb compilation appears as a fitting memorial on the twentieth anniversary of the Hungarian revolution. Between October 23 and November 4, 1956, the Hungarian people, united as perhaps never before in their history, swept away the dictatorship of the Communist Party and challenged the Soviet Union's hegemonic rule. The consensual objectives of the revolution were national independence and neutrality, a pluralistic democratic system, a mixed economy and the termination of compulsory collectivization, and basic freedoms of speech, press, religion, and association.

While the revolution easily demonstrated the devastating unpopularity and weakness of the indigenous Communist Party, it could not withstand the naked might of Soviet imperialism. The restoration of Communist dictatorship was a painful process, and many years passed before the Kádár regime managed to forge a certain *modus vivendi* with the Hungarian people through an "alliance policy" reflected in the famous slogan "those who are not against us are with us." Kádár himself has described the revolution as a national tragedy, and on the occasion of the party's 11th congress in 1975 he claimed that eighteen years' experience had shown that the dictatorship of the proletariat "was not such a bad dictatorship. One can live under it, create freely, and gain honour."

In fact, the Hungarians have achieved a notable degree of affluence and even a certain cultural freedom while foregoing the democratic political system and national independence anticipated by the revolution. Notwithstanding the false promises of peaceful coexistence and

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* Other book reviews slated for this issue will appear in Vol. IV, No. 1 (Spring 1977) of *CARHS.*

détente, this is perhaps all that they can hope to attain under Soviet tutelage.

The contemporary documents, appraisals, and photographs in *Remember Hungary 1956* provide a vivid reminder of those days of heroism, euphoria, and tragedy. The tree of liberty, wrote Thomas Jefferson, must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. The Hungarian people paid a heavy price for their challenge to totalitarianism and foreign oppression, and the memory of their historic gesture must be nurtured for the sake of future generations.

A small correction that imposes itself is that in the bibliography two works by Professor Béla Kovrig are wrongly attributed to this reviewer.

University of Toronto Bennett Kovrig

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Géza Csermák de Rohan
1926–1976

Géza Csermák de Rohan had a distinguished career as ethnologist, museologist and university teacher. He was born in 1926 in Budapest into a family of French origin. From 1945 to 1950 he attended the *Institut Français* and the University of Budapest. He received his first doctorate in 1950. After teaching in the University's Department of Ethnology, he became Curator in Hungary's National Museum of Ethnology, a post which he held until 1956. From 1957 to 1965 he was a Research Fellow at the *Musée de l'Homme* in Paris. In 1966 he earned a doctorate in ethnology at the Sorbonne (University of Paris). From 1966 to 1969 he was Professor of Cultural and Social Anthropology at the Catholic University of Paris. In 1969 he came to North America and, after being Visiting Professor of Sociology at Eastern Illinois University (1969–70) and Laval University (1970–73), he became Assistant Chief of the Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, National Museum of Man, in Ottawa.

Professor de Rohan was fluent in French, English, Hungarian and German and had a reading knowledge of four other languages. He had conducted ethnological research and field work in Hungary, Spain, Scotland, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, the U.S.A. and Canada. During the last few years of his life he was co-ordinator of the *Bekevar Team Project* studying Hungarian pioneer settlers in the Canadian prairies.

Professor de Rohan was the recipient of numerous research grants and fellowships granted by such institutions as the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the National Centre of Scientific Research in France and the Fulbright Foundation. He was a member and officer of numerous learned societies and academic associations. He was the founding editor of *Ethnologia Europaea* (Paris, now Göttingen), and participated in the editorial work of several other journals including: *Folia Ethno-*

graphica, the *International Journal of Sociology* and the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies.* Professor de Rohan was the author of five books, close to fifty articles and some eighty other publications. At the time of his death, he was a member of the University of Western Ontario's Department of Sociology. He is survived by his wife Thérèse, and children: Zoltán, Henri, Stella and Paola. His untimely departure is a great loss to scholarship in general and Hungarian studies in particular.

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CONTRIBUTORS (continued from page 70)

Introduction to the Literature of Eastern Europe (an essay, anthology and bibliography, AAASS, 1977). He is also the author of the novel *The Ice Age* (Simon & Schuster, 1965) and of an autobiographical essay *God's Vineyard* (forthcoming). Currently Professor Aczél is working on a new novel, as yet untitled.

BÉLA KIRÁLY has had a distinguished career both as a soldier and a scholar. He graduated from Hungary's best military academies, became a member of the country's General Staff and was the Commandant of the War College in Budapest before his arrest in 1951 by the Communists. He was freed from prison in 1956 and served as the Military Commander of Budapest and Commander-in-Chief of Hungary's National Guard during the Revolution. After his escape to the West Professor Király obtained a Ph.D. in history at Columbia University and became Professor of Military History at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York. He is also an honorary faculty member of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

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I. L. HALÁSZ de BÉKY (LL.D., B.L.S.) was born and educated in Hungary. Former assistant editor of the literary weekly *Élet,* he served a prison term from 1950 to 1955 for editing an underground newspaper. During the Revolution he was on the staff of the pro-revolutionary paper *Igazság.* In addition to the *Bibliography of the Hungarian Revolution 1956* he published the *Bibliography of Hungarian Dictionaries, 1410–1963* (University of Toronto Press, 1966), *Arccal a falnak* (Amerikai Magyar Irók, 1972), *Rab és börtönőr* (Amerikai Magyar Irók, 1975) and *Count István Széchenyi: A bibliography of works in the University of Toronto John P. Robarts Research Library* (1976). Dr. de Béky is on the staff of the University of Toronto's Robarts Research Library.

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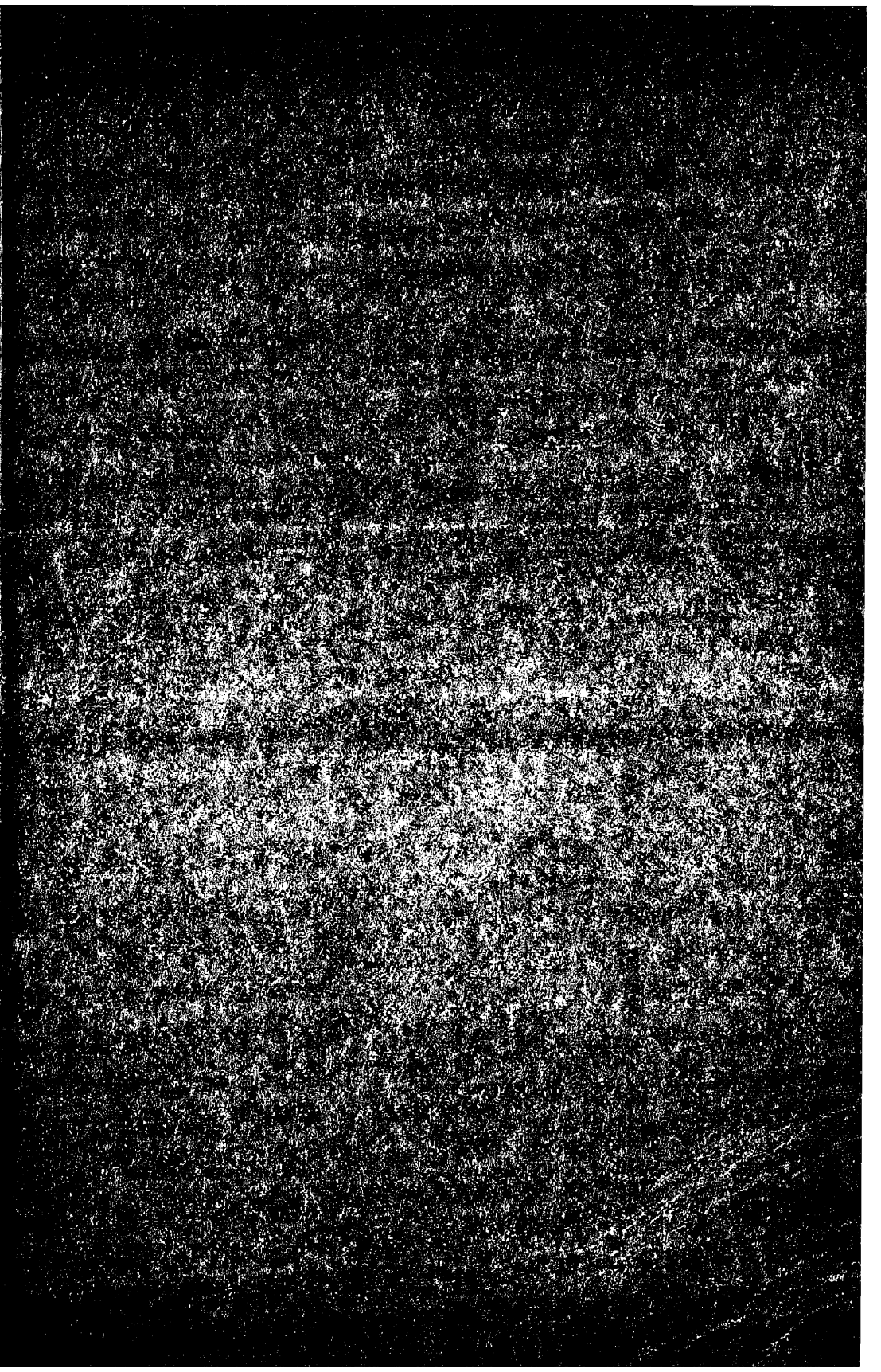

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