HSR

Hungarian Studies Review

Vol. XI, No. 1 (Spring, 1984)

MINORITIES AND MINORITY AFFAIRS IN HUNGARY, 1935–1980:

Articles by

Thomas Spira

Leslie Laszlo

Raphael Vago

Hungarian Studies Review

The *Hungarian Studies Review*, formerly the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies* is a semi-annual interdisciplinary journal devoted to the publication of original articles and critical book reviews relating to Hungary and Hungarians. Since its launching in 1974, the *Review* has been committed to the policy of providing a non-partisan forum for the scholarly discussion and analysis of issues in Hungarian history, politics and cultural affairs.

The *Review* is published by the Hungarian Readers' Service in collaboration with the University of Toronto's Chair of Hungarian Studies.

Institutional subscriptions to the *Review* are $12.00 per annum. Individual subscriptions are $12.00 for one year and $20.00 for two years. Subscribers outside of North America please add $2.00 for postage.

Donations in support of the *Review* may be made through the University of Toronto. Cheques should be made to the "University of Toronto, Department of Private Funding;" please note somewhere on the cheque that the donation is in support of the *Hungarian Studies Review*. These donations are "tax deductible" in Canada. Donations in excess of $50.00 will be acknowledged in the *Review* on a periodic basis.

Correspondence regarding the publication of manuscripts, book reviews, etc., as well as subscriptions and donations should be addressed to the editors:

The Editors
Hungarian Studies Review
University of Toronto
21 Sussex Ave.
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5S 1A1

Statements or opinions expressed in the *Review* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the journal's editors.

Articles appearing in the *Review* are abstracted and indexed in *HISTORICAL ABSTRACTS* and *AMERICA; HISTORY AND LIFE.*

ISSN 0713-8083 (replacing 0317-204X)
Typesetting by Compsetting. Printed at the University of Toronto Press.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 1 (Spring 1984).

Contents

A Symposium on
Minorities and Minority Affairs in Hungary, 1935-1980

Our Contributors

LESLIE LASZLO teaches Political Science at Concordia University in Montreal.

THOMAS SPIRA teaches History at the University of Prince Edward Island and is the editor of the *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*.

RAPHAEL VAGO is associated with Tel-Aviv University's Russian and East European Research Center.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 1 (Spring 1984).

Symposium: Minorities and Minority Affairs in Hungary, 1935-1980

Introduction

N.F. Dreisziger

The question of minorities and minority affairs is usually associated with pre-1919 Hungary. There is some justification for this assumption. The minority problems of the old, "historic" Hungary dwarfed those of post-World War I "rump" Hungary in scope if not always in intensity. This fact is illustrated by statistics on national minorities in Hungary before and after that country's dramatic transformation in the wake of the First World War. From a country in which the dominant nationality barely made up the majority, post-war Hungary became one in which Hungarians comprised 90 percent of the population.[1] At first glance then, it might seem that the post-war peace settlement just about "solved" Hungary's nationality problem. On closer scrutiny, however, it becomes evident that this is not what happened. First of all, while the Treaty of Trianon detached from Hungary virtually all territories inhabited by such groups as the Slovaks, Rumanians and Croats, it also incorporated large regions inhabited by Hungarians into the successor states of Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia. As far as Hungary was concerned then, the treaty merely replaced a minority problem in the country with the problem of Hungarian irredenta in the neighboring states; in effect the Treaty of Trianon transferred the issue of national minorities from one country to three others.[2]

The post-war peace settlement failed to solve Hungary's nationality problem in another respect also. It left in that country enough minorities to plant the seeds of future trouble, especially under the unusual circumstances that were imposed on Hungary as a result of the rise of the Third Reich. The three papers that follow examine aspects of Hungary's minority politics

and policies in the context of the coming (and departure) of the "Hitler era" in Central European history.

The largest national minority left in Hungary after the Treaty of Trianon was the German. People of German background made up 6.8 percent of the country's population in 1920.[3] Under ordinary circumstances a minority of this size did not in those days pose serious problems for a country. But for a number of extraordinary reasons the German minority of Hungary did. First of all, most of Hungary's Germans, or Swabians as they were somewhat inaccurately called,[4] lived in so-called ethnic enclaves. Some of these German-populated regions, as Professor Spira points out in his study, were in strategically important locations either close to Hungary's borders, or near Budapest, the capital. The German minority issue in Hungary also assumed unusual significance when Hitler began his programme of expanding German power in East Central Europe. One of the by-products of this process was the radicalization of a sizable portion of Hungary's Swabian minority. This development further complicated the affairs of a nation already under a great deal of stress caused by internal political developments—such as the rise of right-wing movements—and international tension.

The expansion of Nazi German influence in East Central Europe, and eventually the imposition of German rule over this entire region during the Second World War, caused another minority issue to surface in Hungary. This was the question of the country's Jewry. Undoubtedly, the "Jewish problem" in Hungary on the eve and during the Second World War owed its existence mainly to external factors, the foremost being Adolf Hitler's plans for the Jews of Europe. But the issue had a Hungarian side to it as well, as a peculiar brand of anti-semitism did exist in contemporary Hungary. Several factors can be singled out as being the roots of these sentiments. One was the massive growth of country's Jewish population in the preceding decades. From a quarter million in the early 1840s, Hungary's Jewish group more than doubled by 1870; thereafter it grew by about 100,000 persons almost every decade. On the eve of World War I, Jews made up 5 percent of the country's population—23.5 percent of that in Budapest.[5] Much of this growth was the result of the immigration of Jews from the Habsburg Empire's Polish provinces. Obviously, such influx could not be integrated into national life in a short time and without some difficulties. But

there were further complicating factors. One of these was the predominance Jews had gained by the early decades of the twentieth century in Hungary's business life, in her professions and, especially, within the Hungarian intelligentsia. As a result, the Jews became an easily identifiable, "high profile" minority. They composed much of the country's middle class, indeed, as some observers say, they were the "only bourgeoisie" and, consequently, it was easy to identify them with the "negative side of middle class culture."[6] In Hungarian popular myth, the Jew was often the capitalist, the "usurer," or paradoxically, the radical intellectual ready to destroy the established political and social order. Hostile feelings against members of this group were easily aroused, even though many Jews had given enthusiastic demonstrations of their loyalty to Hungary and her national values and traditions.

Anti-semitic tendencies in Hungary were translated into legislative measures in 1938-1941, during the years when Nazi influence made the greatest inroads in the country and when the Nazi example in international politics made the greatest impression on public opinion in Hungary. Interestingly enough the years 1942 and 1943 saw a relative relaxation in official anti-semitism, a fact which no doubt contributed to Hitler's eventual decision to occupy Hungary and impose stringent conditions on her. One of these conditions was the solution of the Jewish question according to the requirements of Nazi ideology. As Professor Laszlo explains in his article, soon after the country's occupation by the *Wehrmacht* in March of 1944, the deportation of the Jews to concentration camps outside the country was started. But the ghastly undertaking was not carried to its ultimate conclusion: the liquidation of the entire Hungarian Jewry. At a propitious moment—after the Allied landings in Normandy when Hitler could not spare additional divisions to enforce his will in Hungary—the deportations were halted on orders from Regent Miklos Horthy, and a large group of Jews, those of Budapest, were saved from certain extermination. That this was done was in no small measure the work of Hungary's Churches.

After World War II Hungary became an even more homogeneous state than she had been earlier. Yet numerous problems remained in the realm of dealing with minorities and formulating minority policies. The first of these was the question

of the country's German minority. This issue was "solved" in the draconian way so familiar of the 1940s: most Germans were expelled from the country. The second major problem was the question of the formulation of a nationality policy that reflected the country's socialist transformation. The third problem was a more complex one: it concerned the adoptation in Hungary of a minority policy that was to serve the interests of not only the country's nationalities, but also as much as possible, those of the Hungarian minorities in neighboring socialist states.

The three papers that follow this introduction each deal with some aspects of Hungary's minority problems at one time or another in the four and a half decades after 1935. Professor Spira's article examines the process of the radicalization of elements of Hungary's German minority on the eve of World War II. In the next study Professor Laszlo looks at the role that Hungary's Churches played in the stopping of the deportation of Jews to Nazi death camps. In the last paper Dr. Vago surveys the evolution of Hungary's minority policies after 1945 partly in the context of the three problems referred to in the foregoing paragraph.[7] Each of these three articles contributes to the knowledge of a particular phase and aspect of the minority issue in modern Hungary. Though there are no overt interrelationships among them, grouped together in a mini-collection, they also help in the understanding of the larger question of minority affairs in a country passing through an age of national and international turmoil.

NOTES

1. Andrew C. Janos, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary, 1825-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982): 205.
2. On this see Steven B. Vardy, "The Impact of Trianon upon Hungary and the Hungarian Mind: The Nature of Interwar Hungarian Irredentism," in N.F. Dreisziger, ed., *Hungary and the Second World War* (Toronto: Hungarian Studies Review, 1983) : 21-5. This study is part of a special volume of the *Hungarian Studies Review*, Vol. X (1983). Also, Thomas L. Sakmyster, *Hungary, the Great Powers, and the Danubian Crisis, 1936-1939* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1980, Chapter 1.
3. Janos, p.205. The proportion of minorities in "rump" Hungary declined gradually as the years passed. By 1930, Hungarians made up 93 percent of the total population: the remainder consisted of Germans and miniscule groups of Slovaks, Rumanians and Croats. Jews were not considered a national minority.
4. Some of Hungary's Germans were not of "Swabian" background but hailed from Saxony, Austria, or from the Zipser-German districts of Upper Hungary, or from the Saxon counties of Transylvania.
5. *Ibid*, p.113, and also, pp.79-83.
6. N.M. Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others; A History of Fascism in Hungary and Rumania* (Stanford, California: Hoover, 197ö): 41. For a classic analysis of

the Jewish problem in Hungary see George Barany, "Magyar Jew or Jewish Magyar," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, VII, 1 (Spring 1974): 1-44.

7. As English is not the language of Dr. Vago's usual academic environment, his paper was more extensively edited from the point of style and presentation than the other essays in this volume.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 1 (Spring 1984).

The Radicalization of Hungary's Swabian Minority after 1935

Thomas Spira

After World War I, the victorious Allies redrew the national boundaries of the defeated Central Powers, partly in order to liberate their various ethnic minorities. The Paris Peace treaties might have redressed a few of these peoples' plight, but tensions between some of the East Central European states and their German-speaking minorities soon poisoned the international atmosphere and opened the door to German penetration of the region. The literature concerning these intra-national controversies is vast. Trianon Hungary's German minority, the so-called Swabians, has received fairly extensive coverage by Hungarian, Austrian, German and North American area specialists.[1] In spite of this, with the exception of Loránt Tilkovszky, no scholar has investigated in depth the radicalization of Hungary's Swabian minority, a process that began shortly after Hitler's *Machtergreifung* in Germany.

This study explains how the *Volksdeutsche Kameradschaft* (VK), the pro-Nazi wing of Hungary's Swabian movement, endeavoured to wrest concessions from the Hungarian government after 1935.[2] It concentrates on the year 1938, a crucial watershed not only for Hungary, but for the entire Danubian area. The Third Reich achieved hegemony in Central Europe that year. Austria was incorporated into Germany in March, and Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland followed in October. For the first time, Hungary and Germany shared a common frontier in what had once been Austria before the Anschluss. Now, Hungary risked being isolated from Poland and Italy by further German advances in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The Magyars were alarmed lest these external perils be exacerbated by internal difficulties. The government and public feared that Nazi propaganda would seduce the Swabians, especially those residing in Hungary's western counties adjoining former Austrian territory.

During the early postwar years, the few Swabian *völkisch* (nationally conscious) radicals had been harmlessly dispersed in the government-sponsored *Ungarländisch-Deutscher Volksbildungsverein* (UDV), the only Swabian cultural organization tolerated in Trianon Hungary. When the dissidents within the UDV, mainly young intellectuals, seceded from the parent organization in 1935, they still lacked mass support. But by 1938, the VK had begun to attract devoted followers from among a growing number of disaffected Swabians stimulated by Germany's successes. The *Deutscher Volksbote* (DV), the VK's official monthly publication, served as an efficient propaganda tool by combining thinly disguised National Socialist docrinal appeals with protestations of Hungarian patriotism.[3] The DV's editorials and articles were couched in eloquent but simple prose, so that the average Swabian peasant or worker might readily comprehend the essence of their *völkisch* messages. The DV's 1938 issues are particularly pertinent. They clarify how the VK's radical leaders sought to secure a special position in Hungary for their co-ethnics by exploiting Swabian desires for local autonomy and indigenous educational facilities.

A historical survey of the Swabians' position in Hungary explains some of the VK's reasons for demanding change.[4] Prewar Hungary's German population of nearly two million out of eighteen million inhabitants had been vastly reduced as a result of the country's dismemberment.[5] On June 4, 1920, the Treaty of Trianon ratified most of the post-war territorial changes. Hungary's population shrank by about two-thirds, and her territory by nearly three-quarters. This treaty also dictated several measures, including an array of regulations for the treatment of Hungary's remaining ethnic minorities. Post-Trianon Hungary's population of about eight-and-a-half million included a few scattered Rumanians, Slovaks, and Serbs. But the German minority was fairly numerous and influential. In 1930, the number of Hungarian citizens claiming to be German approached a half million, or nearly 6 percent of Hungary's total population. Only about 100,000 of them were scattered throughout Trianon Hungary. The remainder resided in strategic regions near Yugoslavia; around Budapest not far from the Czechoslovak frontier; and in the counties adjoining Austria.[6]

At war's end, Hungary's rulers enjoyed what they perceived to

be an unprecedented advantage. For many centuries, Hungary had been a multinational country; now, she had become a Magyar state, with the major exception of the Swabians. Postwar leaders wanted Magyars to be the dominant nationality. Non-Magyars could use their mother tongue, maintain their cultural heritage, and attend ethnic elementary schools in localities having sizeable minority populations, if they desired. However, if non-Magyars wished to succeed in professional careers or ascend the social ladder, they had to learn Magyar, and adopt Magyar cultural norms.[7]

Hungary's plans for a homogeneous Magyar nation-state clashed with growing Swabian autonomist aspirations. Before the war, the Swabians had been patriotic Hungarians, despite assimilationist practices that eroded their intelligentsia and thus imperilled their long-term ethnic survival. During the war, their leader, Professor Jakob Bleyer, conceded that the Hungarian state had every right to Magyarize the Swabian intelligentsia. It was, he believed, a normal part of urbanization and modernization through the natural process of acculturation. Swabian rural culture would survive these losses, but only if the German ethnic village school system remained vigorous.[8]

Shortly after the war, Bleyer changed his view about the passive role of Swabians in Hungarian society. As Minister of Education in postwar Hungary's first conservative government, Bleyer declared that the Swabians would have to be integrated into the Hungarian state system, although they would retain their linguistic and ethnic identity. German instruction in the nation's Swabian elementary schools and effective cultural programming directed mainly at Swabian rural communities, he thought, would ensure Swabian ethnic survival.[9] Until his death in December 1933, Bleyer campaigned ceaselessly to preserve and improve German-language elementary village schools, and for the right of Swabian cultural associations to function undisturbed. But Hungary's rural intelligentsia, especially the Magyarized Swabian village teachers and clergymen, thwarted Swabian desires for adequate German instruction. The UDV functioned under strict government surveillance and supervision. Its range and types of operations were so severely curtailed that its social and cultural functions failed to satisfy Swabian aspirations.

In June 1935, a simmering controversy involving Swabian moderates led by Gustav Gratz, Bleyer's successor as head of the

UDV, and Swabian radicals directed by the UDV general secretary Franz Basch, erupted in a bitter confrontation. The Hungarian authorities had indicted Basch for having publicly defamed the Magyar nation. Basch was charged with treason, tried, convicted, and sentenced to a long jail term. Gratz immediately ordered Basch's resignation from his UDV post. When Basch refused, Gratz replaced him. Basch and his followers therupon bolted, formed the VK, a rival organization, and began publicizing their views in the DV. This schism involving pro-government Swabian moderates under Gratz and the Nazi-oriented *völkisch* radicals under Basch was now complete and irreversible.[10]

The secessionists faced a number of difficult tasks. They had to persuade Swabians that the VK merited their support. This they did by enunciating various programmes designed to improve the economic, political, and cultural conditions of Swabian society without offending or frightening the Magyar public and the government. But by 1938 the Reich was much stronger than it had been in 1935. Almost simultaneously with the Austrian *Anschluss*, the VK escalated its demands on the Hungarian government. The radicals desired a better deal in the Swabian minority school system and special constitutional status for the Swabian minority.

In the VK's view, a thorough reform of Hungary's minority school system was long overdue. In the late 19th century, the German schools had prospered; but a number of ordinances deprived German-speaking students of all but elementary schools. Shortly after the war, even these institutions came close to extinction. A school law in 1923 created three types of minority institutions: Type A schools, or pure minority institutions, where Magyar was taught only as a subject; Type B schools, or mixed minority-Magyar institutions; and Type C schools, or Magyar institutions where German was taught only as a subject. In each community, parents and school boards decided which type of instruction would prevail. Only state-run institutions had to obey the law, but 86 percent of the Swabian schools were confessional. These were almost totally dominated by Magyar or Magyarized clergymen, and consequently Swabian parents desiring German education for their offspring in church-run schools rarely made headway.[11] Most Swabian parents had no choice but to send their children to

better-endowed and more adequately equipped Magyar institutions. Consequently, Bleyer and other Swabian leaders kept complaining to the government that the new regulation had failed to improve Swabian minority education.

Responding to mounting complaints, the government released a new school law in 1935 which abolished all but Type B institutions. By September 1, 1938, all Swabian children would have to choose either Type B schools, if their parents or local school boards desired them, or Magyar establishments. The new regulation failed to stem the tide of complaints by the radicals. Pedagogically, the DV considered Hungarian minority education absurd.[12] Type B institutions were not minority schools at all; rather, the government's instruments for assimilating Swabian children.[13] They were not staffed with competent German pedagogues, but by Magyar teachers with only a smattering of German. Teachers desiring minority education in the rural elementary schools faced retaliation by local functionaries, and risked obstructionism whenever they ordered German texts.[14] From the *völkisch* perspective, bilingual minority schools violated the spirit of *Volkstum*. Georg Goldschmidt, editor of the DV, explained that bilingual schools were not truly German schools, even when they were taught by qualified non-German teachers.[15] It was insufficient, in his view, merely to instruct children in the various disciplines; they had to be taught in perfect German and indoctrinated in the *völkisch* context. Swabian pupils would have to be acculturated in the German spirit, taught Magyar only as a subject, but at the same time encouraged to be Hungarian patriots.[16]

The DV publicized many complaints lodged by distraught parents against alleged abuses in the minority school system, and it offered several short and long-range remedies. The paper complained that the minority school system was dominated by Magyarized Swabian teachers, clergymen, and administrators who disdained German educational standards. It cited Somogy County, where German instruction had been banned by local officials since before the war in defiance of parental protests. In some localities, Swabian pupils were being punished for chatting in German after school hours. In more than one community, school prayers and other religious services had to be conducted in Magyar.[17]

The VK survey of several Swabian and mixed villages disclosed

a pattern of alleged violations. In nearly all instances the clerical teaching staff refused to permit German instruction of any type. These instructors either disregarded parental groups' decisions in favour of minority language instruction, or they sought to persuade parents to abolish German classes in favour of Magyar schools. In some localities, Magyarized clergymen or school authorities forbade parental groups to assemble; in others they tried to intimidate them. Allegedly, the gendarmerie was occasionally summoned to frighten the simple Swabian peasant folk. In some areas, parents were threatened with economic and other forms of discrimination.[18] In most villages, efforts to introduce the government's bilingual instruction plan were either defeated or indefinitely delayed.[19] Consequently, the villagers had to accept pure Magyar educational facilities for their children.

Zealous Magyar and Magyarized officials viewed the German educational system as a potential conduit for the dissemination of Pan-German and National Socialist propaganda among Swabian youth. In their own minds, sabotaging German instruction in the nation's schools served lofty patriotic purposes and thus made a lot of sense. Of course, the VK judged these practices from entirely different perspectives. In February 1938 Goldschmidt complained that the problems plaguing the German school system had intensified. The 1935 school law had aroused Swabian hopes and expectation which had been totally dashed thus far. All Swabian attempts to have school violations redressed had been thwarted by hostile administrators, who cleverly manipulated the system in defiance of the laws. Local functionaries laboured tirelessly to block parental requests for bilingual schools. If parental groups refused to cooperate, these officials would address the local school board, and badger its members until they agreed to establish pure Magyar institutions in the district. Indeed, after December 15, 1937, these pressure tactics bore their fruit. By virtue of a new decree, the nearly 400 minority schools situated in Swabian and mixed-language districts had to choose pure Magyar schools, unless they adopted bilingual instruction.[20] Once they had chosen Magyar educational facilities for their children, the parents could not change their minds.

The central government kept insisting that minority education would survive in the spirit of the 1935 school law; but the

December 1937 ordinance encouraged officials far removed from the government's scrutiny to thwart Swabian parental desires for minority schools in favour of Magyar institutions.[21] In the October 1938 issue of the DV, a prominent Swabian complained that the September 1, 1938 deadline for the 1935 school law had come and gone, but that effective bilingual education was still no closer than before.[22] A few months earlier, Goldschmidt had suggested safeguards to ensure the unhindered functioning of bilingual instruction. According to a clause in the school law, if at least forty parents in each locality submitted a written petition demanding minority education for their offspring, then the school authorities had to comply. Under this system, the government claimed, hostile officials would be unable to outmanoeuvre parental groups.[23] Goldschmidt suggested, therefore, that only written parental appeals be accepted by responsible officials.[24]

Around the middle of 1938, the DV's campaign to combat minority school violations reached a new stage. Previously, the VK had grudgingly supported the 1935 school law, which it now wished to discredit by disparaging the concept of bilingual education. The VK sought an entirely new approach to German minority instruction. This sudden transformation coincided with the Austrian Anschluss. The Swabian radicals were emboldened by the Third Reich's appearance on Hungary's western border, and by the growing National Socialist influence among the region's sizeable Swabian population. In February, the DV had still vigorously promoted bilingual education. It had dispatched numerous agents bearing printed petition sheets to Swabian and mixed-language villages, in hopes of encouraging parents to seek bilingual education for their children. At that time, Goldschmidt had labelled anyone obstructing this campaign "not only an opponent and an enemy, but an irresponsible scoundrel."[25]

By May, however, Goldschmidt had changed his mind. He condemned the government for having failed to promote the 1935 school law properly. In the same breath he repudiated the act, because its terms allegedly violated Hungarian law, and because parental groups would never be able to secure its implementation. The minority school dilemma would fester, in his view, until Swabians could send their children to German schools. Goldschmidt solemnly pledged to persevere until this objective was attained.[26]

In July 1938, the DV moderated its stand on education, but not because it experienced a change of heart. Minister of Education Count Pál Teleki had delivered a stern warning to Swabians regarding minority instruction. The government would encourage their legitimate cultural and ethnic peculiarities, Teleki promised, but the authorities would resist any schemes devised under the guise of defending minority rights, if the government considered them harmful. Wherever non-Magyars desired to establish minority institutions in the spirit of the 1935 school law, they could do so, but only if the government approved. In Swabian regions with Magyar minorities, Magyar institutions would have to be established to serve magyar pupils. Teleki believed that Swabian educational aspirations would now be satisfied, and the government expected all further agitation to cease. Goldschmidt accepted Teleki's plan, but only if Magyar children attended Magyar schools, and Swabian children enrolled exclusively in Swabian institutions. In the past, pressure had been brought to bear on Swabian children to attend Magyar schools. This would no longer be tolerated. Goldschmidt urged a gentlemen's agreement, whereby assimilation of either nationality would be legally forbidden. He also suggested that in the bilingual schools, German subjects be taught exclusively by German teachers in the *völkisch* spirit.[27]

In early November 1938, the Third Reich's influence in Hungary increased. That month the First Vienna Award restored large stretches of Czechoslovak soil with about one-million jubilant Magyars to Hungary. At the same time, the DV began to get more critical.[28] Heinrich Mühl wrote that as far back as 1923 the Swabians had doubted whether Hungary's minority school laws would ever be effective. In his view, the Magyars had never taken minority institutions seriously, and only used them to assimilate Swabian youth, rather than to create unilingual German institutions. In order to remedy this injustice, the government would have to consent to Swabian school autonomy. The ethnic community would serve as a corporate structure, and the VK would lead it. He warned the Magyars that not only individual German rights, but the demands of the Swabian *Volksgemeinschaft* would have to be honoured.[29]

The VK's idea of what constituted a nation differed from the Magyars' understanding of that term. The VK adopted Hitler's definition, which the DV sloganized in its February 1938 issue:

"We are all sons of the German Volk, no matter where our cradle rocked."[30] To the Swabians, nation and state were two distinct concepts. A person's membership in the nation hinged exclusively on his birth, whereas his affiliation with the state was a matter of personal choice. Nationality was thus an exclusive corporation created by God. It consisted of individuals linked by language, race, culture, and shared historical experiences.[31] The Magyars believed in assimilating alien peoples in the Magyar cultural and linguistic stream. To be a Magyar was a voluntary act of accepting Magyar cultural and political norms. To a Magyar, nation and state were synonymous and overlapping concepts.[32]

The VK recognized that an unbridgeable gulf separated the *volksbewusst* Swabians from the assimilationist and pragmatic Magyar majority. The DV identified and clarified some of these seemingly irreconcilable differences. Its writers tried to convince the Hungarian public that, far from menacing Magyar values in Hungary, the Swabians would become the Magyars' best friends once they were appeased. Ägidius Faulstich, a VK leader, considered it a "ticklish contemporary problem" to create the type of relationship between an ethnic minority and its motherland that would not be misconstrued as an unwelcome or disturbing intrusion by the host country.[33] In the current situation, the DV believed that responsibility for peaceful coexistence rested on Magyar shoulders. The Swabians had neither the wish not the strength to destroy the Magyars' dominance in Hungary. But the Magyars' belief in assimilation raised the spectre of extinction in the eyes of the Swabians, and contributed to the bitterness of their rhetoric. The Swabians had to convince the Magyar public that as much as they desired bilingual education, and welcomed economic opportunities and personal advancement in Hungarian society, they wished to preserve their German *Volkstum* even more.[34] Also that all the other problems besetting Swabian society would have to be remedied within an autonomous ethnic framework.[35]

After the Anschluss, Franz Basch appealed to the Magyar middle classes to forsake their "pathological fear of Pan-Germanism, National Socialism, or just united German power." The Magyars must recognize that the assimilationist era was over. The Swabians were caught up in the same process of nationalist enthusiasm as Germans everywhere. Basch attempted

to placate the Magyar middle classes: they ought to be of good cheer, because Swabian beliefs did not violate the spirit of the Hungarian constitution, and whatever the Swabians demanded, harmonized with Hungarian laws. Swabians would remain Hungarian patriots, but simultaneously venerate the German *Volk*.[36]

These protestations of devotion to Hungary coincided with the negotiations involving attempts by the VK to persuade the government to grant the Swabian ethnic group official legal status. According to the DV, the government rejected such a proposal, but conceded that the VK demonstrated "good will." The DV cautioned, however, that Hungary could not permanently veto Swabian requests to regulate their own affairs.[37] A people thwarted for too long might easily become radicalized.[38] The July issue prominently featured Béla Imrédy's June 2nd speech, in which the Prime Minister pledged to fulfill Swabian demands. He accused local officials who were paralizing the minority laws as having "regressive minds."[39]

For months, the VK prepared the public for a comprehensive view of its programme. The July issue of the DV emerged with a tentative listing of Swabian demands. These included the right to choose a Swabian leader; the resolution of the school problem; freedom to organize a political party; and "permission to live according to the laws of the state and the eternal laws of nature."[40] In August, Goldschmidt presented a detailed, definitive eight-point programme.[41] The Swabian ethnic community would have to be recognized as a corporate structure, and the school problem would have to be solved in the spirit of the 1868 nationality law. According to Goldschmidt's erroneous interpretation of this legislation, bilingual schools would be gradually transformed into German institutions, German teachers and texts would be made available, and all types of German schools would be created except universities. Swabians would be able to publish newspapers and magazines, establish autonomous clubs and associations, launch financial drives, conduct church services exclusively in German, and organize their own political party. This programme, which Goldschmidt labelled as the VK's maximum demands, was rejected by the government.[42] Goldschmidt complained that, in the long run, the government's rejection was unacceptable. After all—he argued—the Magyars demanded similar rights for their own

compatriots in the Successor States.[43] Hungary could not expect the Czechs, Rumanians, and Yugoslavs to treat their Magyar minorities properly, if the Magyars of Hungary "abused" their own ethnic groups. Moreover, Hungary would never be able to fulfill her vaunted leadership in the Danube Basin unless she succeeded in organizing the region's varied nationalities in a Hungarian empire that would grant ethnic autonomy to all non-Magyars.[44]

On November 26, 1938, the radical Swabians gained a temporary victory. The *Volksbund der Deutschen in Ungarn* (VDU), a new organization created in competition with the UDV, with Franz Basch as its leader, launched Hungary's *völkisch* Swabians on the road to exclusive control of the German minority. The VK's 1938 triumph was short-lived. Popular protest forced Prime Minister Imrédy to shelve the agreement. The VK temporarily muted its attack on the Hungarian government, on direct orders from Berlin. The Third Reich wished to avoid antagonizing Hungary at a time when her support would be needed on the eve of the planned attack on Poland.[45]

Two years later, however, the Swabians reached their goal. On August 30, 1940, Hungary granted privileged status to the Hungarian *Volksdeutsche*, on the same day the German-sponsored Second Vienna Award was announced. German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop and Hungarian Foreign Minister Csáky signed an agreement that established the *Volksbund* as the Hungarian German minority's exclusive legal representative. Having gained the status of a corporate body, the Swabian *Volksgruppe* now functioned virtually as a state within a state, and could legally engage as an equal in every type of political economic, cultural and educational activity.[46]

It would be tempting to ascribe the VK's short-lived victory in 1938 to the persistence and perspicacity of the *völkisch* Swabian leaders. In fact, the VK's unswerving determination on behalf of *Volkstum*, and its leaders' unbending views on the nature of nationality, frightened Hungary's public and government. In a flash of common-sense insight, the DV observed early in 1938 that, if an ethnic group desired to overthrow the *Staatsvolk* (the dominant nationality), or if the latter insisted on assimilating the former, a struggle was certain to ensue.[47] VK protestations of loyalty to Hungary notwithstanding, most Magyars remained

convinced that the Swabians in fact favoured the German *Volk* over the Hungarian nation-state. Conversely, most Swabians (and not only the radicals) were equally certain that Hungary expected every non-Magyar citizen to become fully assimilated. Only Germany's mediation between the two ideologically incompatible groups and their irreconcilable national objectives was able to defuse the controversies dividing them, albeit only temporarily. Thus, Swabian autonomy, achieved in August of 1940, was not a *bona fide* settlement of Magyar-Swabian differences, but a *Diktat* imposed on Hungary by the Third Reich for favours rendered.

The Swabian-Magyar controversy suggests that it may be impossible to settle differences definitively and equitably when fundamentally antagonistic creeds are involved. Hungary's Magyars embraced the nation-state principle, whereas the Swabian radicals subscribed to a *völkisch* philosophy. A compromise was out of the question, as the Swabian moderates discovered. Before Hitler's rise to power, a Hungarian citizen of German descent could simultaneously honour the German cultural nation and the Hungarian political nation-state; National Socialism, however, demanded single-minded devotion of all Germans to both the cultural and the political nation.

By insisting that even expatriate Germans be bound by these *völkisch* rules, the Third Reich forfeited its enviable position as an honest broker in all controversies in which other East Central European countries became embroiled in disputes with their indigenous German populations. Even at best, the involvement of a powerful third party in an intra-national dispute is bound to inhibit a lasting settlement. It not only tends to eliminate the possibility of a just resolution, but the imposition of a forced or a simplistic solution for complex issues also tends to aggravate the original grievances. Resentments then smoulder over the years, only to confront future generations with an intensified crisis. As the postwar expulsion of a large proportion of Hungary's German-speaking population on charges of treason attests, the docrinaire Nazi-imposed solution to the Swabian problem could not last.

NOTES

1. Comparatively few German-Hungarians or their ancestors actually came from Swabia (Schwaben) in southern Germany, but the name has become widely used nevertheless.

2. The Third Reich recognized the VK as the sole and legitimate Swabian representative in Hungary. Officially, Germany denied interfering in Swabian affairs. Unofficially and quasi-officially, however, Reich funds and agents found their way to the VK through circuitous routes.
3. All journals lacking government permits had to publish at intervals of not less than five weeks.
4. For a more thorough discussion of the period before 1938, see the folowing major publications: Ingomar Senz, *Die nationale Bewegung der ungarländischen Deutschen vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Eine Entwicklung im Spannungsfeld zwischen Alldeutschtum und ungarischer Innenpolitik* (Munich, 1977);Béla Bellér, *Az ellenforradalom nemzetiségi politikájának kialakulása* (Budapest, 1975); Thomas Spira, *German-Hungarian Relations and the Swabian Problem from Károlyi to Gömbös, 1919-1936* (New York, 1977); Matthias Annabring, *Volksgeschichte der Deutschen in Ungarn* (Stuttgart, 1954);G. Paikert, *The Danube Swabians* (The Hague, 1967); Franz H. Riedl, *Das Südostdeutschtum in den Jahren 1918-1945 (Munich, 1962)*; C.A. Macartney, *Hungary and her Successors* (London, 1937); Michael G. Hillinger, *The German National Movement in Interwar Hungary,* unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 1973; Anthony Komjáthy and Rebecca Stockwell, *German Minorities and the Third Reich. Ethnic Germans of East Central Europe Between the Wars* (New York and London, 1980).
5. Not counting Croatia.
6. Jakob Bleyer, "Bericht über die Lage der deutschen menderheit in Ungarn," in Gustav Gratz, *Dutschungarische Probleme* (Budapest, 1938): 245. The exact number of assimilated (Magyarized) Germans is impossible to gauge accurately.
7. C.A. Macartney, *National States and National Minorities* (London, 1934): 122; and J.A. Komjáthy and R.Stockwell, *German Minorities and the Third Reich* (New York and London, 1980): 43-4.
8. Jakob Bleyer, "A hazai németség," *Budapesti Szemle* (March 1917): 1-14.
9. "A nemzeti kissebbségek minisztériumának nyilatkozata," *Budapesti Közlöny* (August 17, 1919): 6.
10. According to Loránt Tilkovszky, they were completely dominated by Nazi *Volkstum* ideas. See "Volksdeutsche Bewegung und ungarische Nationalitätenpolitik (1938-1941)," *Acta Historica*, XII (1966): 61. For a dissenting view, see Joachim Kühl, "Das ungarländische Deutschtum zwischen Horthy und Hitler," *Südostdeutsche Heimatblätter*, IV (1955): 132-4. Also see Annabring, *Volksgechichte*, pp.100-101; and János Hajdú and Béla C. Tóth, *The "Volksbund"* in Hungary (Budapest, 1962).
11. L.Tilkovszky, "A német irredenta és Magyarország," *Történelmi Szemle*, XIII(1970): 373.
12. Georg Goldschmidt, "Gewissenlose Irreführung," *Deutscher Volksbote* (*DV*), IV, No.3, May 1938, p.5.
13. Heinrich Mühl, "Noch immer die Schulfrage," DV, IV, No.6-7, October, 1938, p.4.
14. "Gewissenlose Irreführung."
15. Georg Goldschmidt, "Die Schulfrage und die jetzige Leitung des UDV," *DV*, IV, No.1, February 1938, p.3.
16. Georg Goldschmidt, "Gehen wir in der Schulfrage einer Lösung entgegen?" *DV*, IV, No.2, April 1938, p.9; and "Schule und Volkscharakter," *ibid.*, No.4, July 1938, pp.6-7.
17. Jakob Zumpft, "Die Schulnot in der Schomodei," *DV*, IV, No.6-7, October 1938, p.3.
18. "Noch immer die Schulfrage."
19. Kaspar Hügel, *Abriss der Geschichte des Donauschwäbischen Schulwesens*)*Munich, 1957*), pp.22-3; and all 1938 issues of *Nation und Staat*(Vienna). For a dissenting view , see G. Paikert, "Hungary's National Minority Policies," *American Slavic and East European Review*, XI, February 1952, pp.214-15, who claimed that the minorities themselves demanded Magyar schools, so that their children might get ahead. Paikert admitted, however, that until the end of the 1930s, "the reluctance of lesser executives to put the educational legislation into effect reached at times...the state of almost open obstruction."(p.212). According to Paikert, this resistance was traditionally the "most effective and habitual vehicle of magyarization," and was zealously pursued by the majority of the lesser state officials, local bosses and the church authorities (*ibid.*).
20. 115.085/1937. IX.

21. Georg Goldschmidt, "Klarheit in die Durchfürung der Schulverordnung," *DV*, IV, No.1, February 1938, p.2.
22. Heinrich Mühl, "Noch immer die Schulfrage."
23. Goldschmidt, "Klarheit..."
24. "Die Schulfrage und die jetzige Leitung des UDV." Also see Walter Schneefuss, *Deutschtum in Süd-Ost-Europa* (Leipzig, 1939), p.78.
25. Goldschmidt, "Klarheit..."
26. "Gewissenlose Irrefürung."
27. "Kultusminister Graf Teleki über die deutsche Frage," *DV*, IV, No.4, July 1938, p.6.
28. See Loránt Tilkovszky, "A Volksbund szerepe Magyarország második világháborús történetében," *Történelmi Szemle*, XI, 1968, pp.296-7.
29. "Noch immer die Schulfrage."
30. "Adolf Hitler sprach," *DV*, IV, No.1, February 1938, p.1.
31. "Das Wesen unseres Volkstumskampfes," *DV*, IV, No.2, April 1938, p.6.
32. Tilkovszky, "A német irredenta," p.371.
33. Ägidius Faulstich, "Volksgruppe und Mutterland," *DV*, IV, No.1, February 1938, p.1.
34. "Das Wesen unseres Volkstumskampfes."
35. "Sind Assimilierungsbestrebungen vorhanden?" *DV*, IV, No.2, April 1938, pp.6-7.
36. Franz Basch, "Der Entscheidung entgegen," *DV*, IV, No.3, May 1938, pp.1-2; "Wir stehen," *ibid.*, No.6-7, October 1938, p.1.
37. "Tatsachen, von denen wir ausgehen," *DV*, IV, No.3, May 1938, p.2.
38. "Wir schreiten der Entscheidung entgegen," *DV*, IV, No.3, May 1938, p.2.
39. Georg Goldschmidt, "Zurückgebleibene Gehirne," *DV*, IV, No.4, July 1938, p.4.
40. Georg Beer, "Der Sinn unseres Volkstumskampfes," *DV*, IV, No.4, July 1938, p.4.
41. Actually only seven points. See Franz Basch's seven point programme, reproduced in *Der Auslanddeutsche*, XXI, 1938, p.782; and Franz Basch, "Deutscher Aufbruch in Ungarn," *Nation und Staat*, XII, 1938-1939, pp.210-11.
42. Loránt Tilkovszky, "Die deutsche Minderheit in Ungarn in der Zeit des Faschismus vor dem sweiten Weltkreig," *Jahrbuch für Geschichte der sozialistischen Länder Europas*, XV, 1971, p.74; and Loránt Tilkovszky, *Ez volt a Volksbund* (Budapest, 1978) pp.20-1.
43. Georg Goldschmidt, "Gedanken am 900 jährigen Todestag Stefan des Heiligen," *DV*, IV, No.5, August 1938, pp.1-3.
44. Georg Goldschmidt, "Unser Weg ist richtig," *DV*, IV, No.6-7, October 1938, pp.1-2. See Paikert, "Hungary's National Minority Policies."
45. Loránt Tilkovszky, "A német irredenta és Magyarország. A magyarországi népinémet (volksdeutsch) mozgalom útja," *Történelmi Szemle*, XIII, No.3 (1970) p.393.
46. Komjathy and Stockwell, *German Minorities*, pp.148-9; Hillinger, *German National Movement*, pp.217ff; Tilkovszky, *Ez volt a Volksbund*; Hajdú and Tóth, *The "Volksbund"* in Hungary; and Tilkovszky, *Revízió és nemzetiségpolitika*.
47. *"Das Wesen unseres Volkstumskampfes."*

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 1 (Spring 1984).

The Role of the Christian Churches in the Rescue of the Budapest Jews*

Leslie Laszlo

With the German occupation of Hungary on March 19, 1944, the sovereignty of Hungary was *de facto* terminated. The Gestapo launched a manhunt against the anti-German personages of Hungarian public life and cast those who did not succeed in concealing themselves into prison. Prime Minister Miklós Kállay found temporary refuge at the Turkish Embassy.[1] Regent Miklós Horthy at first thought of abdicating, but his fear that he would thereby be giving the Germans a free hand to subjugate the country completely and put the Arrow Cross Party into power caused him to remain.[2] In this way he actually succeeded in preventing the implementation of the Germans' plan for Operation Margarethe II. Had this plan been carried out a considerable part of the country would have been given as booty to the Rumanians, Slovaks and Croatians, while the remaining part would have been subjected, as hostile territory, to a German military dictatorship. Horthy also succeeded, when the new government was formed, in preventing the coming to power of the Arrow Cross Party. It was primarily due to his tenacious rear-guard struggle that a few of the more moderate members of the old establishment received a place in the extreme right wing

---

*A summary of this paper was presented to the meeting of the Central and East European Studies Association of Canada in Montreal, June 4-5, 1980. Particular importance and actuality is lent to this study by the recent publication of Randolph L. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide*; *The Holocaust in Hungary*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981). In this massive work, which was intended to become and to remain the most authoritative documentation on this subject, in the chapter on "The Attitude and Reactions of the Christian Churches" (v. II, pp. 1027-56), Braham completely ignores the Churches' role in the rescue of Jews and accuses them of silent complicity in the genocide.

government demanded by the Germans, and that the administration also remained for the time being in the hands of the old civil servants.[3] Nevertheless, it was clear that it was no longer possible to blindfold the Germans by means of apparent concessions.

Hitler insisted that the new government break completely with the "seesaw politics" of Kállay and demonstrate its loyalty to its powerful ally by absolute submission to German interests—which was to include the "solution" on the German model of the Jewish question. Horthy did not wish to accept the responsibility for the forcible actions that could be foreseen and therefore withdrew into almost complete passivity after the appointment of the Sztójay government. He no longer participated in the meetings of the Council of Ministers, he no longer chose to exercise his customary right of preliminary sanction of legislative acts and orders in council, and did not receive visitors. Horthy attempted in this way to make it known to the world, and especially to the Germans, that he regarded himself a prisoner.[4] Moreover, the German military honour guard kept watch over the entrance of the Royal Palace in which the Regent's offices and living quarters were located, thereby giving visible evidence to everyone that the head of the Hungarian state stood under the surveillance of foreign soldiers. It was only at the end of June that Horthy emerged from this inactive seclusion, when the cries for help from the persecuted Jews and the protests being raised in their behalf at home and abroad finally prompted him to act.

As feared, the gravest consequence of the German occupation was the campaign of extermination started against the Jews of Hungary, who numbered some 800,000 persons. This affected not only the Jews, as in addition to those of the Jewish religion, tens of thousands of Christians were classified as "Jews." The inhuman cruelty culminating in mass murder was tantamount to an attack on justice and morality; there could be no place for neutrality or indifference; humankind had to protest. This duty fell with even greater weight on the Churches, who were called to be the protectors of God's laws and of Christian morality.

The Apostolic Nuncio, Msgr. Angelo Rotta, as the representative of Pope Pius XII, called on Prime Minister Döme Sztójay immediately after the formation of the new government and asked moderation of him in connection with the planned measures against the Jews. As persecution of the Jews assumed

ever increasing proportions during the following weeks and months, the Apostolic Nunciature besieged the Foreign Ministry and the Prime Ministry with a veritable legion of official notes and personal protests, but with little success.[5]

The German occupation took the leaders of the Churches by surprise as much as it did the ordinary citizenry, and were just as much at a loss as to what course of action to follow. Under the influence of initial outrage, the leadership of the Protestant Churches decided to follow a policy of passive resistance toward the occupying power and toward the puppet government it had forced upon the nation; in other words, they would avoid all contact with them. This decision, however, proved to be completely unrealistic and the policy of passivity had to be given up within the first few days, since such a tremendous number of requests for assistance descended upon the Churches that they were forced to intervene before the government and the administrative authorities on behalf of the persecuted.[6] The representatives of the Churches had never before spent so much time making the rounds to various Ministries and other public authorities and had never submitted so many petitions and requests to state organs as they did in the matter of the "Jewish question" during the months of the German occupation.

In connection with the first discriminatory directives—which prescribed that persons classified as Jews be marked by a yellow star and that they be subjected to the Hungarian Jewish Council which had been set up at the command of the Germans—the efforts of the Christian Churches were primarily directed toward obtaining the exemption of baptized Jews from these directives.[7] These measures bore toward the baptized Jews the semblance of their being cast out from Christianity and being forcibly returned to the Jewish community and were therefore especially humiliating. When, however, the cruel and barbarous decrees which followed one another in quick succession became known, the leaders of the Churches could not watch all this passively. The government in the course of a few short weeks deprived the nearly one million persons classified as Jews of all their rights of citizenship, their jobs, their property, and finally drove them out of their homes and confined them to ghettos, and, taking away their food ration coupons, doomed them to slow extinction. Although Church leaders continued to regard as their first duty the protection and rescue of their own co-religionists, the

baptized Jews, at the same time they condemned, in the name of the love commanded by Christ and the demands of natural law and humanity, all injustice and inhumanity and asked that these be stopped, or at the least mitigated.[8]

The position of the Church leaders was not an easy one. Prince Primate Serédi bitterly complained that the government prepared everything in secret, without informing the Prince Primate in advance, as was customary of laws and decrees affecting the Church.[9] Moreover, when Serédi protested against measures that were already being carried out, the Prime Minister and his colleagues, feigning ignorance, simply denied everything.[10] The experience of the Calvinist Bishop László Ravasz was similar. Bishop Ravasz, as the representative of the Protestant Churches, went to see Regent Horthy, a Protestant himself, several times on behalf of the Jews and was shocked to see how the Regent himself was being misled by his ministers and generals.[11] When the Apostolic Nuncio, the Prince Primate, Bishop Ravasz, or others went to see the government with trustworthy data at hand about the Jews being forced into ghettos, the horrifying conditions that prevailed there, and the appalling cruelties of the Gestapo and the gendarmes, the ministers pretended never to have heard of these or claimed that these things were merely fabrications of enemy propaganda, primarily of the BBC. Later, they admitted about the deportations only that a few thousand Jews had gone to work in Germany.[12] The few concessions and mitigations, obtained for baptized Jews by the Churches, were almost completely disregarded in practice by the authorities.[13] In a similar manner, the promises of the government regarding humane treatment of the Jews, the termination of cruelties against them, and the reprisals against abuses of authority remained but empty words.

In view of the duplicity of the government, there were some among the clergy as well as the laity who judged further discussions to be futile and would have preferred the Primate to publicly and openly denounce the government.[14] Cardinal Serédi felt, however, that his open condemnation of the government—which the censorship then in effect would have prevented from coming to the knowledge of the public [15] — would not in the least have alleviated the fate of the persecuted, and in his eyes this alone counted.[16] Realizing that

because of the German occupation the Hungarian government's freedom of action was severely limited, the Prince Primate admonished those in power with great self-control and patience to bring about the cessation of cruelties and to treat the Jews humanely. He attempted in this way to obtain in the way of exemptions and mitigation the most that the government could grant under the given circumstances without incurring the wrath of the Germans.

In the eyes of the Prince Primate and the Protestant ecclesiastical leaders, the Sztójay government still constituted the lesser evil compared to an Arrow Cross government completely under German direction. In the spring of 1944 there was no other alternative.[17] Not every member of the Sztójay government agreed with such a bestial "solution" of the Jewish question; there could be some hope that certain changes or some alleviation might be obtained through the more humane members of the Council of Ministers. Cardinal Serédi evaluated the situation correctly when he distinguished three tendencies within the government. According to him, in addition to those who blindly persecuted the Jews, there were those who watched everything with indifference, while a third group would have liked to undo the whole thing, wishing that it had never happened.[18] Prime Minister Döme Sztójay himself spoke up several times during meetings of the Council of Ministers against the cruelties being perpetrated and urged humane treatment.[19] Béla Imrédy, the former Prime Minister, who entered the government on May 23 as Chief Minister for Economic Affairs, also spoke up in a similar manner.[20] Both of them were afraid of the Germans however and allowed themselves to be misled with regard to the conditions that really existed by Minister of the Interior Andor Jaross and by Under-Secretaries of State László Endre and László Baky, the fanatical executors of the extermination of the Jews.[21]

The most humane viewpoint within the government was represented by Miklós Arnóthy Jungerth, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Although Sztójay had retained the portfolio for Foreign Affairs for himself, he had, because of the pressure of his duties as Prime Minister, delegated the direction of the Foreign Ministry to Arnóthy Jungerth. The latter thus participated in the meetings of the Council of Ministers, where he had the opportunity to acquaint the ministers with the protests of foreign

countries and urged more humane handling of the Jewish question, for the sake of the foreign political interests of the country.[22] He thereby incurred the anger of Jaross, who regarded the Jews as belonging exclusively to the sphere of competence of the Ministry of the Interior.[23] But there can be no doubt that acquainting the Council of Ministers with the gradually increasing and strengthening protests from abroad had some effect on its members.

The Apostolic Nuncio, Msgr. Angelo Rotta, who was aware of Arnóthy Jungerth's good will and humanity, asked for his assistance in supporting the protests and petitions that he directed to the government, and the Deputy Foreign Minister readily complied.[24] The Nunciature also attempted to influence Imrédy, who was known to be a devout Catholic.[25] And Imrédy, as already mentioned, spoke out against the atrocities and recommended moderation. Prince Primate Serédi also contacted Imrédy, and Prime Minister Sztójay as well, and attempted to appeal to their humanitarian feelings. He dealt most frequently, however, with István Antal, the Minister for Religion and Education, since the maintenance of contact between the government and the Churches was traditionally the task of the Minister of Cults, as the incumbent of this office was usually called. Antal had the reputation of being an unscrupulous opportunist, who promised everything to the Prince Primate, only to deny it all calmly later.[26] It is true that he was not one of those who approved without any reservations the atrocities perpetrated against the Jews, but he was afraid of the Germans and did not dare oppose Jaross.[27] A more human attitude and greater courage was manifested by his subordinate, Under-Secretary of State for Cults Miklós Mester. The ecclesiastical leaders turned primarily to him for intervention. At the noted meeting of the Council of Ministers held on June 21, in the matter of the protests raised against the deportations, it was Mester who, at the request of Antal, presented the position of the Churches. In this connection, he not only spoke up against the illegal actions of the Minister of the Interior, but dared to recommend that Jewish affairs be taken completely out of the sphere of competence of the Ministry of the Interior.[28]

The cautious course of action followed by the ecclesiastical leaders and their seeming silence during the initial phase of the persecutions appeared to many people as cold indifference, lack

of sympathy, and even tacit consent. In order to dispel the doubts and misunderstandings connected with the conduct of the Church, Cardinal Serédi issued a pastoral letter on May 17, 1944 in which he related the discussions he had conducted with the government and the results achieved thereby, which he himself termed "meagre."[29] Against the accusations claiming that the Church had done nothing for the persecuted, Cardinal Serédi declared: "I must state the fact openly that (it has not been the fault), nor the neglect of myself, nor of the Hungarian Catholic Episcopate, that my long and weary negotiations with the competent home-government authorities, especially with the Prime Minister, could not produce better results, since I rose in defense of Justice in general, and of the natural and innate, viz., legally acquired rights of our Catholic brethren in particular."[30] As to why he did not raise his voice in public, the Prince Primate gave the following reasons: "If we kept our many and strenuous negotiations secret before the general public and if we did not publicly oppose the grievous regulations, this was done for the sake of our cause and in the desire not to aggravate the position of the Royal Hungarian Government. We did not wish to furnish anybody with a pretext for launching, parallel to our official negotiations, attacks upon our Catholic brethren—not yet affected by the regulations— and upon the rights and institutions of our Church, which might have resulted in the curtailing of its rights or the withdrawal of the concessions granted. We have neither abandoned nor betrayed the true cause or our Catholic brethren, but under the prevailing circumstances we could achieve no more."[31] Although the pastoral letter was officially addressed to the bishops, the Prince Primate wished to speak to a wider audience, primarily to the members of the Church who were of Jewish descent and who were suffering persecution. "I am asking the members of the Most Reverend Episcopate, and through them also our priests that we inform the interested parties in an appropriate manner and way, by word of mouth. And let us make them, who are affected by the iniquitous orders, understand, that, as far as I know, no one else, excepting us, took interest in their protection, and if they received relief in some peaceful way, they must ascribe it perhaps entirely to us, their bishops."[32]

In the middle of May, the deportation of the provincial Jews to Auschwitz and the other death-camps was started. The

government again met the protests of the Nuncio and of the Hungarian ecclesiastical leaders with deception, procrastination, evasive answers, and lies. While the ecclesiastical leaders and the foreign embassies were awaiting a satisfactory answer to their protest memoranda, the authorities under the leadership of Adolf Eichmann's *Sonderkommando* were transporting out of the country with incredible speed hundreds of thousands of persons in crowded cattle cars. As early as May 10, Cardinal Serédi informed the government in a memorandum that if the atrocities did not cease, the Episcopate would be forced to condemn publicly the policy of the government.[33]

The situation in the meantime deteriorated to such extent that the authorities did not even honour the promises made by the government in regard to the spiritual care of the Christians in the ghettos. The Bishop of Győr, Baron Vilmos Apor, who was president of the Holy Cross Society dedicated to the protection of baptized Jews, had especially bitter experiences. The local authorities prevented him from taking spiritual succour to his Catholic faithful suffering in the ghetto and, while the bishop was besieging the various governmental organs for an entry-permit for himself or one of his priests, the deportation of the captives of the ghetto of Győr was carried out with brutal cruelty.[34] At this point, Bishop Apor appealed to the conscience of the Prince Primate and urged that a collective pastoral letter be issued. It was not that he hoped that the government, or the Germans, would retreat because of the protest of the Church—the hopelessness of this had been explained to him by the Prince Primate—rather he felt that it was the duty of the Church to enlighten at least its Catholic faithful and to restrain them from complicity in the terrible crimes.[35] At the same time Apostolic Nuncio Rotta transmitted the Pope's message to the Prince Primate, which stated that the time had come for him publicly to condemn the inhuman actions being committed and to take a stand on behalf of the persecuted.[36] Cardinal Serédi had decided by this time to issue a collective pastoral letter and was working on its draft.[37] The final text, which was drawn up taking into account the remarks submitted by the other archbishops and bishops, was signed by the Prince Primate on June 29, 1944.[38]

In the introduction the bishops state firmly, that: "The Successors of the Apostles, each one a visible Head of the Church,

and the other bishops are, by the will of God, propagators (Can. 1327), guardians of God's moral laws both unwritten, that is to say "natural," and written, that is to say "revealed," and especially of the Ten Commandments (Can. 3362)." The pastoral letter then reminds the faithful of the struggle of the Church throughout the centuries for the protection of the poor and the weak against the oppression of the powerful and emphasizes particularly the services of the Hungarian Catholic Church in the field of social reforms. It then continues: "And if the innate rights of Man, such as the right of life, of human dignity, of personal freedom, of freedom of religion, of freedom of work, of freedom of private ownership etc. are unjustly suppressed or even curtailed by individuals, by certain temporal institutions or even by the authorities of the State, then the Hungarian bishops, as is their duty, put in their protesting pastoral words and point out that the aforementioned rights were not granted by individuals, by temporal institutions or even by the State, but by God Himself. Thus unless a legally valid sentence has been passed these rights can be suppressed or curtailed by no one and no earthly power save only by God or by him, whom God has given legislative, judicial or executive powers. Because there is no power but that from God (Rom. XIII.1). This power, however, should be executed only with justice, that is to say in harmony with the Divine moral laws, as God has given no power to anyone to infringe His own laws, such a procedure being contrary to His commands."

After thus setting down the general moral norms, the bishops raised their voices against the inhumanities practised in the conduct of the war, especially against the air raids directed against the defenceless population. Then, turning to the persecution of the Jews, the letter stated: "But we must point out that now, during this horrible World War, when we most need the help of God, and when we ought to avoid carefully every word and every action, by which we and our country might incur the wrath of God, we see, with unspeakable sorrow, that a series of measures are adopted in Christian Hungary that are contrary to the laws of God. We need not enumerate these measures in detail before you, our dear faithful. You know them and the method of their execution very well indeed. These measures have curtailed, or even suppressed, the innate rights of certain members of our community, among them also of such, as confess to the same holy

faith, and this merely because of their origin. All this has been effected without declaring any individual guilt on the basis of which a legal sentence could be passed. Only if you had to suffer from the same state of outlawry could you understand this situation."

It should be noted that the anti-Semitic extreme right had put before the public the allegation that everyone who defended the Jews, thus Horthy, the bishops, and even the Pope himself, had been bribed by Jewish money. Defending themselves against the accusation of being "hirelings of the Jews" the bishops saw it necessary to declare: "We in the present time—as your God-given bishops were in the past and will also be in the future—are free from being influenced by any individual or group interests. However, we would be neglecting our moral and episcopal duties were we not to guard against justice suffering damage and against our Hungarian fellow-citizens and our Catholic faithful being wronged merely on account of their origin. For this purpose we have tried by oral and written negotiations to defend justice in general, and to take under our protection those among our fellow-citizens and co-religionists who have been affected by the latest prejudicial orders. We have requested that these orders be annulled or amended.

Although we have succeeded, here and there, in securing some mitigation, for which we are grateful, yet we are filled by deep sorrow and grave anxiety as, in the course of our negotiations, we were unable to achieve what we most desired, namely that the unlawful limitations of civil rights and especially the deportations are stopped. However, as we relied upon the Christianity and humanity of the members of the Government, we had not given up all hope in spite of the meagre results obtained up to now. For this reason we issued no proclamation to you, but restrained ourselves, in the meantime taking all steps to achieve our purpose.

We see now, however, with great consternation, that despite our efforts all our negotiations on the most important points have up to now proved almost ineffective. Therefore we solemnly refuse all responsibility for the consequences. By coming before you in the defence of Divine laws we urgently request the competent authorities, who should be conscious of their responsibility before God and history, to repudiate the reprehensible orders. At this time, when our nation struggles for

its very existence, these orders not only lead to a lack of faith in the laws, but also destroy the unity of the nation, turn the public opinion of the whole Christian world against us and, above all, will cause God to abandon us.

As always, we can put our trust first of all in God, and we therefore beg of you, our dear faithful, to pray and work with us for the victory of justice and of Christian charity. Take care lest you incur an awful responsibility before God and man by supporting and acclaiming these objectionable actions. Do not forget that injustice will not serve the true welfare of your fatherland. Pray and work for all our Hungarian fellow-citizens and especially for our Catholic brethren, our Catholic Church and our beloved Hungary."

The pastoral letter was printed at a press in Esztergom and was mailed to the clergy in pastoral service with the injunction that it be read in all the Catholic churches of Hungary on Sunday, July 9.

The experiences of the Protestant Churches with the government were just as disillusioning as were those of the Prince Primate. When they received no reply to their protest against the deportations, which they submitted to the Prime Minister on June 21st, [39] they also decided in favour of a public declaration of protest and addressed a collective pastoral letter to their faithful at the same time that the pastoral letter of the Catholic episcopate was issued. [40] They wrote: "The undersigned bishops of the Reformed Church in Hungary and the Evangelical Church in Hungary, turn to you to inform you, in the presence of God, of the steps they had taken, in the name of the Evangelical churches at the Royal government. We inform the holy congregations that, after several petitions made in writing and spoken word, on June 23rd we presented a solemn memorandum of protest and plea to the premier. In this memorandum we related the events, regrettable to the utmost, which accompanied the segregation and deportation of Jews of Hungary, whether Jews or Christians by faith. Having stated that this mode of solving the Jewish question violated God's eternal laws, the memorandum went on as follows: "God has ordained us, that we declare to this generation His eternal gospel, and to stand as witnesses by the unchangeable laws of His world order, whether or not it pleases men. Standing on the ground of this divine commission, humble and sinful men as we are, yet testifying of God's word in the

sacred communion of faith and obedience, we condemn all modes of action which violate human dignity, justice and mercy and bring upon the head of our people the frightful judgment of bloodshed."

At the same time, we earnestly besought the Royal government to put an end to the cruelties, condemned by members of the government themselves as well, and enforce the formal pronouncements protesting, on the one hand, against the assumption that the extermination of the Jews was a reality, and containing instructions, on the other hand, for the humane administration of the rules and regulations pertaining to the Jews.

We have to note that these pleas of ours led to no results.

As bishops of the two Evangelical Churches, we feel it to be our duty to inform of these our brethren, all the members of our Churches, and the whole community of Christ's Church. We call the congregations to penitence, and the whole of the Magyar people to humble themselves under the weight of the mighty hand of God, whose mercies and saving grace we invoke upon our Hungarian nation."

Copies of this pastoral letter, put in envelopes and addressed to 2,000 Protestant ministers, were ready to be mailed, accompanied by instructions that they be read to all Protestant congregations on the following Sunday, July 9, at the same time that the pastoral letter of the Catholic bishops was to be made public, when the news arrived that the pastoral letter issued by the Prince Primate had been held back by the government at the post office.

Prime Minister Sztójay, for whom the ever more forceful protests from abroad could not have been very pleasant either, wanted by all means to prevent that the protest of the Christian Churches should come to the knowledge of the public and should thus create in the population a sentiment opposed to the government. When, after the deportations had been started, Cardinal Serédi kept coming forward ever more forcefully and with greater urgency against the atrocities, the Prime Minister sent to him his personal delegates in close succession; thus he sent István Antal, Minister of Cults and of Justice; Lajos Huszovszky, Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of the Interior; and the former Prime Minister Béla Imrédy, then Minister for Economic

Cooperation. The task of all these emissaries was to reassure the well-meaning prelate, to explain away and white-wash the actions of the government and of the authorities, and to put him off with promises, until such time as the "Jewish affair" had been completely settled, that is until every last Jew had been deported from the country.[41] Cardinal Serédi, however, saw through the game of the government, since reliable information coming to him from all parts of the country showed clearly that the representatives of the government were lying and wanted to dupe him. The Prince Primate was fighting with straightforward weapons, and, as we have recounted above, he decided to issue the pastoral letter only when he was forced to conclude with finality that it was futile to carry on honest discussions with dishonest partners.[42]

Upon learning of the contents of the collective pastoral letter of the Catholic bishops, the government sent a telegram to the post office in Esztergom forbidding the forwarding of the pastoral letter.[43] It was clear, however, that they could not prevent the Prince Primate and the bishops, who were firmly resolved to take the final step, from bringing the situation to the attention of the faithful by one means or another and from raising their voice of protest openly and in public. The meeting of the Council of Ministers called to deal with this matter agreed that a public protest by the Churches must be averted at any price, even if this should require serious concessions on the part of the government.[44] Minister of Cults—István Antal was again assigned to conduct the discussions with the Prince Primate. Cardinal Serédi received Antal coolly, protested against the seizure of the pastoral letter, and declared that he was willing to revoke the pastoral letter only if the government promised in an official letter to rectify the deprivation of rights that had occurred and if the atrocities were immediately stopped and the deportations discontinued. The Prince Primate also demanded that the Christians be permitted to leave the ghettos, that those who had been deported abroad be brought home, and that he be allowed to inform the faithful that the bishops were conducting discussions with the government over the Jewish question and that they had already achieved some results. Antal, as was his wont, promised everything.[45]

In the meantime, the office of the Prince Primate had found a way of forwarding the pastoral letter to the parish priests through

private channels. This did not remain hidden from the government, and therefore literally in the last hour, on Saturday, July 8th, which was the day before the Sunday that had been appointed for the reading of the pastoral letter, Prime Minister Döme Sztójay called personally on the Prince Primate, who by this time was seriously ill, at the latter's summer house in Gerecse. The Prime Minister was accompanied by the Ministers István Antal, Béla Imrédy and Antal Kunder. Cardinal Serédi received them in the company of Archbishop József Grősz of Kalocsa, Archbishop Gyula Czapik of Eger, Baron Vilmos Apor, Bishop of Győr and János Drahos, Vicar Capitular of Esztergom.[46] Sztójay first of all presented to the Prince Primate the official letter which he had requested. This letter contained the government's promise that it would investigate the atrocities, would severely punish those who had perpetrated them, and would take care that similar instances should not occur in the future. The letter further announced the establishment of "The Association of Hungarian Christians of Jewish Descent," which was to handle the affairs of Jews who belonged to one of the Christian denominations, independent of the Association of Hungarian Jews. The most important point contained in the letter was without doubt that in which the government declared that the deportation abroad of the Jews of Budapest would be immediately discontinued until further notice, and if later their deportation would nevertheless be resumed, the Christian Jews would still remain in the country.[47]

Although Sztójay's letter contained concrete concessions and, especially, held out hope for the rescue of the 250,000 Jews of Budapest, the Prince Primate found it to be insufficient. For the government did not make a definite promise that the deportations would be completely stopped—even in connection with the Jews of Budapest the letter merely indicated a pause in their deportation—nor did it hold out a prospect for the return of those, among them Christians, already deported. In addition, the Prince Primate had also specified that in case of the revocation of the pastoral letter he be allowed to inform the faithful of the discussions he had conducted up to that time with the government. Antal "did not remember" this stipulation. Cardinal Serédi was extremely indignant over the duplicity of the Minister of Cults and he hastened to declare that the bishops could forego the public reading of the pastoral letter solely upon

the condition that they be allowed to inform the faithful in some manner that they had not conducted themselves passively with regard to these grave questions but had for months carried on discussions with the government and that they were continuing these discussions. At this, Sztójay retired with his fellow Ministers for a private consultation. When they returned, the Prime Minister assured the Prince Primate that the government would faithfully execute the points mentioned in the letter, including the suspension of the deportation of the Jews of Budapest, and acceded, in addition, to the Prince Primate's wish regarding the notification of the faithful. The bishops, realizing that they could achieve no more—the deportation of provincial Jews had already been carried out and the Hungarian government could not, even if it had wished, regain those still alive from the hands of the Germans—agreed to call off for the time being the public reading of their pastoral letter.[48] That same evening, and again on the next day, that is on the morning of July 9, the following notification was broadcast on Hungarian radio: "Jusztinian Cardinal Serédi, Prince Primate of Hungary, wishes to inform all Catholic parish offices of the country that the collective pastoral letter of the Episcopate entitled "The Successors of the Apostles" and dated the 29th of the month past is intended for the information of the Most Reverend clergy and is not to be read out to the faithful."[49] On the next Sunday, the following announcement was read from the pulpits of all Catholic churches: "Jusztinian Cardinal Serédi, Prince Primate of Hungary, in his own name and in the name of Their Excellencies, the Hungarian Consistory of Bishops, informs the Catholic faithful that he has repeatedly intervened with the Royal Hungarian Government in the matter of the decrees affecting the Jews, especially the baptized Jews, and is continuing his negotiations in this direction."[50]

In the meantime, the government requested that Protestant ecclesiastical leaders also postpone the public reading of their pastoral letter and confer urgently with the government. The Protestant leaders, informed of the discussions being conducted at the Prince Primate's summer residence, agreed. Minister of Cults István Antal, accompanied by Under-Secretary of State Miklós Mester, met the Protestant ecclesiastical leaders on July 11, at the residence in Leányfalu of Bishop László Ravasz, who at that time was confined to his sick-bed. From the Calvinist side

there were present, in addition to Bishop Ravasz, Bishop Imre Révész and the clergyman Albert Bereczky, while the Lutheran Church was represented by Bishop Béla Kapi and the clergyman Szabolcs Lőrinczy. Antal first of all informed them of the agreement reached with the Catholic bishops and declared that the Prime Minister was willing to repeat in a letter addressed to Bishop Ravasz the promises he had made to the Prince Primate, if they also would be willing to forego a public protest. On the other hand, if the Churches insisted on reading out the pastoral letter, then: "the government must decide for itself whether it accept an open war with the Churches (according to German phraseology "the breaking down of the churches"), or it resign, paving thereby the way for the coming into power of the Arrow-cross Party (Nazi Party), whose coming into power, Hungary being under German occupation, might be taken for granted."[51] The life of the Jews of Budapest, some quarter-million people, was at stake. Therefore, the Protestant Churches also agreed to give up their plan of public protest, stipulating only that, like the Catholic episcopate, they also be allowed to inform their faithful of the efforts they had made and were continuing to make. As the Ministerial Council which met the next morning consented to this, the following message was read out in the Protestant churches on Sunday, July 16: "The bishops of the Reformed Church of Hungary and the Evangelical Church of Hungary wish to inform the congregations that in connection with the Jewish question, and particularly in the case of the baptized Jews, they have repeatedly made steps at the respective government officials and will continue to do so in this direction."[52]

By this time, neither Apostolic Nuncio Angelo Rotta, whom Prime Minister Sztójay hastened to inform of the agreement concluded with the Churches,[53] nor the bishops could any longer believe in the sincerity of the government's promises.[54] Therefore, when it became clear that the deportations had indeed stopped, the relief they felt must have been great. Other factors doubtless had a great deal to do with this namely, the protests of foreign governments, primarily of neutral states such as Switzerland and Sweden, the threats of the Allied Powers, and the telegrams that Pope Pius XII and Gustav V, King of Sweden, sent to Regent Horthy. Horthy, who by this time had had all that he could stand of the bullying and excesses of the Germans and

the Hungarian extreme right, was emboldened by the defeats the Germans had suffered at the front, and, without caring about Hitler's anger, gave a definite order to stop the deportations. Horthy had already expressed this intention at the Crown Council held on June 26, but the deportation of provincial Jews had continued.[55] The last train left Hungary on July 8, the same day, that is, when Sztójay with his fellow Ministers had gone to see the Prince Primate. It is also a fact that the first official statement set down in writing to the effect that the deportation of the Jews of Budapest would not take place, which was scheduled to begin two days later, on July 10, was made in the letter extracted from the Prime Minister by the Prince Primate and constituted an integral part of the "agreement" with the Churches.

This paper does not claim that credit for the rescue of the majority of the Jews of Budapest can be ascribed solely to the Prince Primate and to the efforts of the Christian Churches of Hungary. Regent Horthy himself cites the intervention of the Pope, the King of Sweden and the King of England as inducement to make his decision.[56] On the other hand, it seems incorrect to belittle the role of the Christian Churches of Hungary.[57] That the Sztójay government did indeed care about the position taken by the Churches is proven precisely by the government's conduct, as outlined above, in connection with the pastoral letters. In his letter to the Apostolic Nuncio, the Prime Minister definitely stated that the deportations were stopped at the request of the Church.[58] Whatever the exact situation may have been, an examination of the events clearly demonstrates that the Churches deserve a great deal of credit for the stopping of the deportations and thus for the rescue of the Jews of Budapest. As chief witness for the attitude of the Christian Churches and the conduct of the clergy during the terrible weeks of the deportations, László Endre, the ringleader of the persecution of the Jews in Hungary, is cited below. In his report to the Council of Ministers, he said: "We have to state, openly, that as far as aid to Jews is concerned, the priests and clergymen of all ranks of the Christian Churches unfortunately stand in the first row. Protection and intervention has never been on so high a scale as to-day. The assistance rendered the Jews by Christian priests and clergymen goes under the name of Christian and neighbourly charity."[59]

NOTES

1.Subsequently, in order to spare his hosts continual harassment, Kállay gave himself up voluntarily. The Germans took him to the concentration camp in Mauthausen and that is where he stayed until the end of the war.

2. See Nicholas Horthy, *Memoirs* (New York: Robert Speller and Sons, 1957): 214-5. Cf. Nicholas Kallay, *Hungarian Premier* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954): 432-4, 444-5.

3. See C.A. Macartney, *October Fifteenth; A History of Modern Hungary 1929/1945*, 2 vols. 2nd ed. revised (Edinburgh: The Edinburgh University Press, 1961) II: 247-63.

4. Ibid., pp. 264-5. Cf. Albert Bereczky, *Hungarian Protestantism and the Persecution of Jews* (Budapest, Sylvester Rt., n.d.): 14. It should be remarked that the Regent was not, strictly speaking, entitled to the right of preliminary sanction of legislative acts, by virtue of which under the Habsburgs the Ministerial Council had submitted important legislative proposals to Parliament only with the consent of the ruler. In practice, however, Horthy presided personally over Ministerial Councils when important matters were under discussion, and no laws were enacted without him or against his will.

5. For an account of the activities of the Nunciature, see the chapter written by Msgr. Angelo Rotta, who was the Papal Nuncio in Budapest at that time, "A budapesti nunciatúra diplomáciai ackiója a zsidók érdekében," Antal Meszlényi, ed., *A Magyar katolikus egyház és az emberi jogok védelme* (The Hungarian Catholic Church and the defence of human rights) (Budapest: Szent István Társulat Kiadása, 1947): 21-30; and Eugene Levai, *Black Book on the Martyrdom of Hungarian Jewry* (Zurich: The Central European Times Publishing Co. Ltd., 1948): 197-201, 223-6, 232-3, 354-9, 387-8. See also Ilona Benoschofsky and Elek Karsai, eds., *Vádirat a Nácizmus ellen; Dokumentumok a magyarországi zsidó üldözés történetéhez* (An indictment of Nazism: documents concerning the history of the persecution of the Jews in Hungary) 3 vols. (Budapest: Magyar Izraeliták Országos Képviselete, 1958, 1960, 1967) Vol.I: 317-31.

6. Bereczky, *Hungarian Protestantism and the Persecution of Jews*, pp. 13-14.

7. They succeeded in obtaining the following concessions: priests, ministers, monks, nuns and *diakonisszák* (members of a Protestant religious order for women) who were of Jewish descent were not obliged to wear the yellow star; the baptized Jewish marriage partner of an "ancestral Christian" was exempted from wearing the yellow star and from its consequences; a department for Christians was set up within the Jewish Council; and finally, the Christians were allowed to wear a white cross next to the yellow star. (See Meszlényi, *A magyar katolikus egyház és az emberi jogok védelme*, pp 48-53; Bereczky, *Hungarian Protestantism and the Persecution of Jews*, pp. 14-16.;

8. Following a repeated exchange of letters, which brought few results, Prince Primate Jusztinián Serédi paid a personal visit on Prime Minister Döme Sztójay in the interest of the Jews on April 13, and again on April 23. On this latter occasion the Prince Primate also tendered Sztójay a written memorandum in which he set forth the position of the Church against the government's measures that trampled human rights underfoot and in which he protested, going beyond the issue of the baptized Jews, against the cruel treatment being accorded the Jews in general. (The text of this memorandum can be found in Levai, *Black Book*, pp. 118-20.) Similarly, the Calvinist bishop László Ravasz was acting in the interest of all the persecuted when he appeared at an audience with the Regent on April 12 and 28, and when he paid a call on Prime Minister Sztójay on May 9. The petition of the Calvinist General Convent dated May 17, also contains a condemnation of the persecution of the Jews in general; it protests against the establishment of ghettos and cautions the government against starting deportations. (See Bereczky, *Hungarian Protestantism and the Persecution of Jews*, pp. 14-18.)

9. See his pastoral letter of May 17, 1944, to the bishops. The text can be found in *Important Declarations of Dr. Justinian Cardinal Serédi Prince-Primate of Hungary, Archbishop of Esztergom; Taken from his Pastoral Letters and Speeches which Refer to Actual Ecclesiastico-Political Questions* (Budapest, 1946): 46-7.

10. See his second pastoral letter to the bishops in the matter of "the persecution of Hungarian citizens of Jewish origin," ibid., pp. 13-19.

11. Bereczky, *Hungarian Protestantism and the Persecution of Jews*, pp. 17-18.

12. See the reply of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated May 27, 1944, to the

Note of Protest of the Apostolic Nunciature dated May 15, 1944, in Benoschofsky and Karsai, *Vádirat a nácizmus ellen*, I: 326-31; as well as the subsequent Note of the Apostolic Nunciature to the government dated June 5, 1944, in Levai, *Black Book*, pp. 199-200.

13. See Meszlényi, *A Magyar katolikus egyház és az emberi jogok védelme*, p. 61.
14. Ibid., pp. 54-5, 57-8.
15. Ibid., p. 58.
16. This same consideration prevented Pope Pius XII from publicly denouncing Hitler by name as a murderer in front of the entire world and excommunicating him, as some urged the Pope to do. In private conversations the Pope explained that, although such a theatrical gesture would earn him approval and applause in the Western countries, he would thereby be doing nothing to help the persecuted Jews and would, indeed, by enraging Hitler, be merely worsening their situation. See Eugene Levai, *Geheime Reichssache; Papst Pius XII hat nicht geschwiegen* (Köln-Müngersdorf: Verlag Wort und Werk GMBH, 1966): 127-8.

That the Pope's fear—as well as the Hungarian Prince Primate's—was justified, was demonstrated by events in the Netherlands. In that country, the public protest of the Bench of Bishops in the Summer of 1942 against the persecution of the Jews did not bring about the stopping of the deportations; on the contrary, the occupying German authorities replied to the pastoral letter of the bishops by rounding up and transporting to death camps the baptized Jews—among them priests, monks and nuns—who had up to that time been exempt. (Ibid., p.7. Cf. *Edith Stein; Eine grosse Frau unseres Jahrhunderts* (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1958): 179-87, 201.)

17. See Meszlényi, *A magyar katolikus egyház és az emberi jogok védelme*, pp.72-73; Bereczky, *Hungarian Protestantism and the Persecution of Jews*, p. 27.
18. See Meszlényi, *A magyar katolikus egyház és az emberi jogok védelme*, p.78.
19. See Levai, *Black Book*, pp.234-43.
20. Ibid., p. 242.
21. Ibid., pp. 235-40.
22. Ibid., pp. 235, 240, 243.
23. Ibid., p. 244.
24. See Apostolic Nuncio Rotta's testimony regarding this in Meszlényi, *A magyar katolikus egyház és az emberi jogok védelme*, p.22.
25. Ibid., p.26.
26. Ibid., pp.75-6. József Mindszenty, at that time Bishop of Veszprém, called Antal—and Minister of the Interior Andor Jaross as well—"a liar" in front of a public official, and he labelled the whole Sztójay government "a barefoot lot." See Dezső Sulyok, *A magyar tragédia* (The Hungarian tragedy) (Newark, New Jersey: Published by the author, 1954): 454.
27. Levai, *Black Book*, p.242.
28. Ibid., pp.241-2. Miklós Mester accepted his position as Under-Secretary of State for Culture in the Sztójay government at the request of Bishop Ravasz and with the consent of the president of the Smallholders' Party, Zoltán Tildy, who was a Calvinist minister. Tildy was living in concealment at the dwelling of the Calvinist minister—later bishop—Albert Bereczky. Mester enjoyed a close relationship with the Head of the Cabinet Office, Gyula Ambrózy, who had great influence with Regent Horthy, and Mester introduced Bereczky to Ambrózy. The idea of "exemptions granted by the Regent" originated with these three men; they succeeded, through Horthy, in obtaining the recognition of the Ministerial Council—and even of the Germans—for such exemptions. The life of several thousand persons was saved in this manner. (See Levai, *Black Book*, pp.241-2.)
29. The text of this pastoral letter can be found in *Important Declarations of Dr. Justinian Serédi*, pp.46-58. Since the translation is in places confused to the point of incomprehensibility, we have quoted the section that is given by Lévai also from the latter.
30. Ibid., p.47. The sentence given above in brackets is printed as "it has been his fault."
31. Levai, *Black Book*, p.122.
32. *Important Declarations*, p.57.
33. See Meszlényi, *A magyar katolikus egyház és az emberi jogok védelme*, p.68.
34. Ibid., pp.63-4.
35. Levai, *Black Book*, pp. 202-3, 206-7.

36. Ibid., pp. 202, 207.
37. See Meszlényi, *A magyar katolikus egyház és az emberi jogok védelme*, pp.67-68. Commenting on these passages Professor István Deák of Columbia University writes: "The tragedy is that the Prince Primate kept discreetly protesting the atrocities in the ghettos at a time when hundreds of thousands were already on their way to the gas chambers. One cannot help feeling that *timely* protestations in public (excommunication, interdict, etc.) would have slowed down the deportation process. They would not have stopped Eichmann but they would have thrown confusion in the ranks of the allegedly Christian gendarmes and civil servants without whose assistance the deportations were impossible. Or, at least, the Churches could have saved their collective souls. The Prince Primate's pastoral letter of June 29 came far too late."

Similar reproach was voiced by Gerald Reitlinger, *Die Endlösung; Hitlers Versuch der Ausrottung der Juden Europas 1939-1945* (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1961): 489. However, Levai disagrees and subjects Reitlinger to severe criticism in his *Geheime Reichssache*; Papst Pius XII. hat nicht geschwiegen, pp. 19-20.
38. Text in Levai, *Black Book*, pp.207-11.
39. Text: ibid., pp.218-20.
40. Text: ibid., pp.221-2.
41. See Meszlényi, *A magyar katolikus egyház és az emberi jogok védelme*, pp.62-5.
42. Ibid., p.66.
43. Ibid., p.71. This order, however, arrived when only the 700 copies addressed to the priests of the Archdiocese of Esztergom still remained at the post office; the pastoral letters intended for the other dioceses had already been forwarded, so that the contents became known throughout the country.
44. Ibid., p.72.
45. Ibid., pp.72-3.
46. Ibid., p.73.
47. Ibid., pp.74-5.
48. Ibid., pp.75-6.
49. Ibid., p.76.
50. Ibid.
51. Bereczky, *Hungarian Protestantism and the Persecution of Jews*, p.27.
52. Ibid., p.28.
53. The text of the Prime Minister's letter and of the Nuncio's reply can be found in Levai, *Black Book*, pp. 225-6.
54. See Meszlényi, *A magyar katolikus egyház és az emberi jogok védelme*, pp.76-8.
55. See Levai, *Black Book*, p.243.
56. On July 12, this is what Horthy told the German Ambassador, Edmund Veesenmayer, who was demanding the continuation of the deportations. (See Macartney, *October Fifteenth*, II: 306.) According to Levai, at the Crown Council of June 26 Horthy spoke of the protests of the Pope, of the International Red Cross, and of the Americans. (See *Black Book*, p.243.)
57. For example Macartney, *October Fifteenth*, II: 276-7, 302-3. This is true also in the case of Gerald Reitlinger, *Die Endlösung*; Hitlers Versuch der Ausrottung der Juden Europas 1939-1945, pp.488-9; as well as of Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961): 509-54; and Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem; a Report on the Banality of Evil* (rev. ed. New York: Viking Press, 1965): 194-202.
58. See Levai, *Black Book*, pp.225-6.
59. Ibid., p.236.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 1 (Spring 1984).

Nationality Policies in Contemporary Hungary

Raphael Vago

Hungarians constitute the largest ethnic minority in Europe: as many as 3,200,000 to 3,600,000 of them live outside of Hungary in socialist countries bordering the country. At the same time, Hungary has all but lost her multi-national character and has become an almost homogeneous state, with only about 450,000 people belonging to the national minorities, a mere four percent of the population.[1]

Hungary's present regime attaches great importance to pursuing a positive and tolerant policy toward the country's national minorities. The shaping of this policy has been influenced by the existence of large Hungarian populations in Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia. To put it in another way, the emergence of a tolerant policy toward the nationalities in Hungary can be linked to Hungary's awakened interest in the fate of Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries. Furthermore, the Hungarian regime's emphasis on the role of the nationalities as "connecting bridges" to the neighbouring states points to a certain degree of linkage—a very delicate and complex issue—that Hungary's officialdom draws between the fate of the nationalities in Hungary and that of the Hungarians living on the other side of the country's borders. The aim of this paper is to survey the emergence of the present Hungarian nationality policy and to outline the main external and internal factors that have influenced it.

The Shaping of Hungary's Nationality Policy, 1945-1968

During recent years the Hungarian mass media has tried to explain the apparent difference between the number of the national minorities as presented in the censuses versus a much higher official estimate of those numbers. The answer, as presented in a candid exposé in the popular foreign affairs weekly

Magyarország (Hungary) lies in the reluctance of the minorities to declare themselves openly, as each nationality "had a cross to bear."[2] Indeed, the postwar Hungarian regime and the Communist Party struggling for power had to contend with several issues on the nationality question, issues which in the view of the present-day Hungarian media, left their mark on the nationalities. The Germans were expelled, the Slovaks became the victims of the turbulent Hungarian-Slovak relationship in wake of the Slovak treatment of the Hungarians. After 1948, the South-Slavs in Hungary were affected by the worsening of the relations between Hungary and Yugoslavia. Whether the reluctance of the minorities to declare themselves as such was due to objective or subjective factors, this trend is evident today too, and worries the Hungarian policymakers who are interested in proving to the outside world that Hungary's minorities are growing and developing rather than diminishing in numbers.

For Hungary's postwar regime, each of the country's nationalities presented a unique problem. While the expulsion of some 170,000 Germans was not considered a difficult issue as there was almost a national consensus about doing so, the policy towards the remaining Germans and their inter-relationship with the Hungarian environment did pose difficult problems which were not solved until the late 1950s. A more important issue was that of the Slovaks in Hungary. Under the population exchange agreement of 1946 between Hungary and Czechoslovakia, 73,000 Slovaks left Hungary between 1946-48,[3] while about 100,000 Hungarians left Slovakia. The virulent anti-Hungarian policy pursued by the Slovak Communists under the leadership of Gustav Huşak resulted in anti-Slovak feelings in Hungary and put the Hungarian Communists in a difficult position. Problems arising from the resettlement of the Hungarians from Slovakia and Slovakia's image in Hungarian public opinion did not make for the untroubled cultural development of Slovaks in Hungary, in spite of repeated official assurances. Policy toward the Romanian minority was apparently not influenced by bad relations between Hungary and Romania over the future of Transylvania, settled in Romania's favour at the Paris Peace Conference in 1946. In a period in which the Hungarian Communists, for tactical reasons, appeared as the defenders of national interests, great interest was manifested in the fate of the Hungarians in Romania, but no attempt was made to link them

with the small Romanian minority in Hungary. Such was the tone of *Társadalmi Szemle*, the Communist Party's theoretical journal: "It's the firm attitude of the Hungarian democracy that the country's Slav and Romanian nationalities will receive support for their national development and cultural needs, without taking into consideration the fate of the Hungarians in the neighbouring states."[4] It should be emphasised that one of the distinctive features in the fate of the Romanian minority in Hungary was that Romania had not shown any interest in them. The situation of the South-Slavs in Hungary up to the Stalin-Tito split was favourable, just as Hungary generally approved of Yugoslavia's policy toward the Hungarians in Vojvodina and other areas.[5] The Jewish problem in postwar Hungary—outside the scope of the present study—posed a different issue to the Communists as it had no direct relevance to relations with neighbouring countries, nor could the regime's Jewish policy have any effect on the Hungarians living elsewhere. The Jewish question was treated as a special one, and the evolving attitudes favouring Jewish assimilation were in contrast to the regime's overall national policy.[6]

By the end of the war, the Hungarian Communists were well aware of the imminent changes in Hungary's borders as reflected in the emphasis on the demise of "Hungarian supremacy" in the program of the Hungarian CP issued in Szeged in November 30, 1944.[7] There is no evidence of long-range policy formulation on the nationality issue by the Hungarian Communists during their struggle for power. The Party concentrated on spreading its influence over areas inhabited by the national minorities, coping with such issues as friction between Hungarians and Slovaks. The first systematic outline of the new regime's nationality policy was published in the program of the Hungarian Workers' Party following the fusion between the Communists and what remained of the Social Democrats. The program not only assured the nationalities living in Hungary of equal rights and promotion of their "progressive culture" but also of the Party's support for "cultural exchange and free contacts with their mother-tongue nations in the neighbouring countries."[8] It was a period of many illusions, as remarked by Hungary's Foreign Minister Frigyes Puja in his memoirs on his activities in Battonya County in 1945: "At the time we still believed naively that national frontiers will be unimportant in the future."[9] The Party program on the

nationalities' free contacts was never implemented as relations with Czechoslovakia remained strained even after the 1948 February coup, they deteriorated with Yugoslavia after June 1948, and the Hungarian minority in Romania was rapidly cut off from any contacts with Hungary, just as there were no contacts between the Romanians in Hungary and Romania.

The influence of inter-state relations on nationalities and national policy is clearly illustrated by the fluctuations in the regime's policy toward the South Slavs and their attitudes to the regime. Following the Cominform break with Yugoslavia, the South Slavs were treated with "lack of confidence and discrimination,"[10] and their fate was linked to the state of relations between Hungary and Yugoslavia. After the 1955 "thaw" with Yugoslavia, Hungarian authorities ceased to consider South Slavs as potential "Titoists" and it seemed that a new era of Hungarian-South Slav relations would evolve. However, the South Slavs, in the light of their 1948-1955 experience, developed a sensitivity to any changes in Hungarian-Yugoslav relations. Their apprehensions increased during 1957-8 when Hungarian-Yugoslav relations once again became strained due to the Moscow led criticism of Yugoslavia's "revisionist" line. A major document dealing with the national question, the October 1958 Resolution of the Politburo of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP), called the local Party organs' attention to fears among the South Slavs that the restrictive measures applied after 1948 would be renewed as a result of the tension between the HSWP and the League of Yugoslav Communists. The HSWP's efforts to assuage the South Slavs had positive results; according to Hungarian sources, they were convinced that "the ideological differences concerning the Programme of the LYC would not lead to the repeating of the restrictive measures ten years before following the decision of the Information Bureau."[11]

Until the mid-fifties, the Germans—the largest ethnic minority in Hungary—were not even mentioned as one of the country's nationalities. Their specific economic, social and cultural needs were not considered. Naturally, under such conditions there was a strong tendency toward assimilation as a means of escaping the negative image of a German living in Hungary, an image reinforced by the Party's policy of collective punishment of the German nationality in the immediate postwar years.[12] By the

mid-fifties a gradual change became evident. There was an improvement of the educational facilities available to Germans and, in 1954, the first issue of *Freies Leben* was published. The regime criticized its own German policy in the May 1956 policy statement on the nationality question of the Hungarian Workers Party's Central Committee. The document acknowledged that during the period when measures were taken against former members of the SS, Volksbund and other Nazi organizations, people who should not have been punished as such were included in the expulsions and affected by the restrictive measures.[13] The building of confidence between the Germans and the regime was a slow process which until at least 1958 did not yield positive results, from the Hungarian official viewpoint. The 1958 Politburo decision on the national question mentioned friction between the Germans and the Hungarians resettled in their areas following their expulsion from Slovakia.[14] The document also mentioned results of "enemy propaganda" among the Germans following exchanges of letters with relatives living in the German Federal Republic, and the reluctance of many Germans to subscribe to the weekly *Neue Zeitung* for fear that by reading in German, even a paper issued by the regime, they would be accused of nationalism.[15] The conclusion to be drawn from Hungarian sources on the German issue is that the regime's anti-German policy in the first years had such a strong impact upon the feelings of the Germans that when the policy was changed and they were encouraged to assert national identity, the new line was received with hesitation and disbelief.

Following the East European pattern, in Hungary too "democratic associations" of the nationalities were formed. Actually these were Communist front organizations from the time of their establishment. In 1945 the Anti-Fascist Front of Hungarian Slavs was formed, subdivided later into the Democratic Association of South Slavs and the Democratic Association of the Slovaks. The Slav nationalities were given 5 seats in the 1947 elections, all of them on the Communist and front organizations' lists. The association of the South Slavs was recruited after 1948 into anti-Titoist activity.[16] The Association had the definite task of acting as the Communist Party's watchdog against any "nationalist" deviation among the South Slavs. The Slovak Association was involved in the process of population exchange with Slovakia and after its completion it was

drafted for local activities aimed at reducing tension between the Hungarians and Slovaks. The Democratic Association of Romanians formed in 1949 became a smooth running organization due to the small number of Romanians living in Hungary and it was not involved in any inter-state problems between the two states. The German minority's organization was founded only in 1955, and labelled in the beginning as the "Cultural Association of German Workers in Hungary " in order to emphasize the strictly cultural character of the German minority's activities.

If the nationality organizations' task was that of involving the nationalities in the building of the new socialist society, it was not achieved as the non-policy of the regime on the national question was reflected in the activities of the associations. Hungarian sources relate the loss of the mass character of the nationality organization in the early fifties.[17] During the era of the "New Course," new vitality was injected into the nationality organizations, and in June 1956, the Party's Central Committee published its first statement for many years on the nationality question. The document pointed to "shortcomings" and "mistakes" in the nationality policy, such as the influence of the rift with Yugoslavia on the regime's attitude to the South Slavs.[18]

The events of October 1956 left their mark more on Hungarians in the neighbouring states than on the nationalities in Hungary. There are no reports of specific revolutionary activity among the national minorities in Hungary. Following the crushing of the Revolution, along with the reorganization of the Party, the minority organizations were purged of alleged non-loyal elements and reactivated in the consolidation of the Kadar regime. The first post-October Party document on the national question was the one issued in October 1958. It outlined in clearer terms than previously the tasks of the nationality organizations which were defined as "allied bodies" to the Patriotic People's Front, and since then the secretaries of these organizations serve as members of the Council of the PPF. Another landmark in the institutional development of the nationality organizations was the decision taken in 1960 that every four years congresses of the leading nationality bodies should take place. Since then, the congresses have become the main forum for the presentation of the regime's nationality policy. By the mid-sixties, the Kadar regime had completed the

reorganization of the nationality organizations and manifested a growing interest in the development of the national minorities in Hungary. The ground was ripe for the linking of the national question to the country's foreign policies.

Hungarian Nationality Policy Since 1968—Internal and External Factors

Since 1968 it has become evident that as far as the national question is concerned Hungary regards the issue of the Hungarians in the neighbouring countries as an important one, a fact which has complicated Hungary's relations with her neighbours to a certain extent.[19] The legitimacy of the Kadar regime partially rests on the degree of interest that it shows in the fate of the Hungarians in the Danube basin. On this issue the regime correctly interpreted the sentiments of wide segments of Hungarian society which showed despair in face of the treatment of over three million Hungarians living in neighbouring countries.[20] The concern demonstrated in official circles since the late sixties about the fate of Hungarians abroad became one of the facets of what in the West is defined as "official nationalism of the regime."[21] The delicate *modus vivendi* reached between the Kadar regime and what seem considerable parts of Hungarian society is based among other things on the government's continuing interest in the fate of Hungarians abroad, especially in neighbouring socialist states. In turn, the positive policy toward the minorities in Hungary is aimed at securing the same conditions for Hungarians in the neighbouring states, thus strengthening the regime's legitimacy.

The new tone emerged in the spring of 1968, when, following the example of the political leadership, the Hungarian Writers' Union discussed the relation between Hungarian culture in Hungary and in the neighbouring countries, and stated that the Hungarian writers have the responsibility for Hungarian literature both at home and in the neighbouring socialist states.[22] Such a statement, well covered by the media, was issued at a time of intensive debates in Hungary on the role of nationalism and socialist patriotism, a debate which consolidated the official line on these issues.[23] The decision of the Hungarian Writers' Union sparked off a debate with Romania, which rejected the Hungarian line. *Gazeta Literara*, the weekly of the

Romanian Writers' Union, described the resolutions of their Hungarian counterparts as a "violation of those tenets which should govern the relations between friendly and fraternal states...."[24] Hungary did not intend to interfere in the nationality policy of neighbouring states, as the Romanian criticism suggested, but the issue of linking the nationality policies of the countries involved has been raised several times in various forms. One of the documented Hungarian official reflections on this issue was made at a session held at the Institute of Social Sciences of the HSWP, between July-December 1967.[25] The participants, high Party functionaries and leading representatives of the four major national minorities, analysed the negative aspects of pursuing an open policy that links the nationality policy of Hungary to that of the fate of the Hungarians abroad. Since that time Hungary's policy has been to formulate a line which officially denies any linkage, but which strives to set Hungary as an example for a positive nationality policy to be followed by other states. Kadar expounded this policy in explicit terms at the XIIth Party Congress when he stated that "...in Hungary, people of various nationalities live, work and prosper together, enjoying full rights as citizens of our state, in accordance with the principles of Lenin's nationality policy, our laws and Constitution. We wish the same for Hungarians living beyond our frontiers."[26]

In at least one case Hungary encountered a "reverse linkage." During the Czechoslovak reform era, the Hungarian minority in Slovakia raised demands for more autonomy, a call which was answered by the Slovak press with items on the "fate of the forgotten Slovaks in Hungary."[27] There is no evidence as to Budapest's involvement in the demands of the Slovak Hungarians and while Hungary had no reasons to discriminate against the Slovaks in Hungary, she strongly rejected any attempt to create a "linkage" between the treatment of the two nationalities, that of the Hungarians in Slovakia and the Slovaks in Hungary.

The question of assimilation among the nationalities in Hungary features prominently in the nationality policy of the regime. There are several factors which contribute to a process of assimilation. Mostly, the nationalities in Hungary do not live in close communities but are dispersed over wide areas, or live in villages with a majority of ethnic Hungarians.[28] Migration to the cities and industrial growth have also contributed to this process.

Direct pressure upon a nationality group, such as the regime's German policy in the first decade after the war, as mentioned, had contributed to the assimilation of the Germans. Official references to the issue of assimilation reflect the regime's worry. Summing up the policy on this issue the weekly *Magyarország* wrote:

> Natural assimilation cannot be prevented but it should not be sped up. Nevertheless, even this principle, if applied in the full sense of the word, would endanger the existence of the nationalities. Something has to be set against the grinding mill of natural assimilation to enable the small number of ethnic minorities to preserve themselves.[29]

The Hungarian policy of encouraging the national minorities to assert their identity could be hindered by the process of spontaneous assimilation. It could be assumed that by positioning herself against assimilation among the nationalities in Hungary, the regime reflects a certain apprehension that the Hungarians elsewhere face the same process. Hungary openly condemned assimilatory pressures to which Hungarians in the neighbouring countries have been exposed to during the last few years. Such was the tone of a review in *Valoság* of a book on the Hungarian minority in Yugoslavia. The reviewer referred to the "...definite assimilationist policy (towards the Hungarians) in some socialist countries since the 1950's, the gradual withdrawal of their minority rights, the closure of (their) schools and universities. There is no doubt that such tendencies are against human rights and opposed to socialism."[30] In the same review the author, Miklós Tomka, praised Yugoslavia's nationality policy even though statistics do show a strong assimilationist trend among the Hungarians of Yugoslavia.[31] However, this trend in Yugoslavia is more the result of natural assimilation than one of pressure applied by the regime. From Hungarian sources it is clear that while Hungary pursues an anti-assimilationist policy, the Hungarian minority in Romania, Czechoslovakia and to a certain extent in Yugoslavia is exposed to assimilationist pressures.

The educational-cultural encouragement of the minorities in Hungary is an integral part of the policy to help the nationalities to maintain their special cultural status. Currently, four main nationality papers serve an expanding readership in Hungary: the Serbo-Croatian *Narodne Novine*, the German *Neue Zeitung*,

the Slovak *Ludova Noviny*, and the Romanian *Foaia Noastra*. These papers "play an important part in providing information and helping to mould minds, giving a comprehensive picture of the political, economic and social life of the respective national minority." [32] These papers are weekly, the Romanian *Foaia Noastra* was bi-weekly until a few years ago when its publication was expanded. Radio broadcasts from regional studios as well as over the central network in the nationality languages, and local TV broadcasts are yet further signs of the regime's interest to foster the language and culture of the nationalities. Relative to the size of the minority population, the Hungarian minority programs are far better than those available to the Hungarian minority in Romania or Czechoslovakia.

The regime's view is that the "proper teaching of the native tongue is one of the preconditions for the existence of minorities." [33] Accordingly, since the beginning of the sixties, the national minority organizations have been calling upon their members to send their children to the kindergartens and schools of the minorities. Hungarian statistics show a rapid increase in the number of pupils in all levels of minority education between primary education and high school. [34] Although bilingual education is widespread as a result of language difficulties among the young generation, and in many educational establishments bilingual education was the only way to enroll pupils, this has not diminished the overall trend of gradual growth in the minorities' educational network. Parallel to the development of the minority school system, Hungary expanded the training programs for teachers belonging to the various national groups, including their training in the neighbouring states. The policy of promoting the educational development of the minorities encountered many problems. One of these was the reluctance of a "considerable number of teachers" of minority origin to return to their native villages. [35] The educational network is complemented by a wide variety of cultural activities, such as the development of the minority library system, lectures, folk music and dance festivals.

The Hungarian View on the External Role of the Minorities

Hungary pursues a policy of open contacts between the nationalities in Hungary and their "mother-tongue" countries

and attributes a special role to the minorities in the country's external relations, especially with the neighbouring states. Hungary acknowledges that the "national groups in Hungary constitute a fragment of some large nation from a linguistic and an ethnic standpoint" and that in the relations of Hungarian minorities with their linguistic kin beyond the borders they have to reckon with "emotional bonds, language, kinship relations and concrete requirements."[36] In order to meet these requirements, contacts were set up with neighbouring countries to help the educational-cultural work among the minorities of Hungary, perhaps with the aim of encouraging a reciprocal policy by the other states. The head of the nationalities section of the Ministry of Culture explained the reasons for promoting the foreign contacts of the minorities: "Naturally we meet the cultural demands of the nationalities from our own resources, but in our view the high level support of their culture is totally unimaginable without close relations with the mother tongue culture."[37] The result of this policy was the establishing of inter-departmental agreements for activities among the nationalities in Hungary, agreements signed with Yugoslavia, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia but not with Romania. The failure to reach cooperation agreements with Romania is mentioned frequently in the Hungarian media. For example, the Party daily *Népszabadság* noted that "educators of the nationalities receive further training in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and the GDR, and we are striving continuously for the possibility of training educators in Romania."[38] The weakest link in Hungary's attempt to promote the external contacts of the national minorities is the state of Romanian-Hungarian relations. There is a vast difference between the nature of Romania's relations to the Romanian minority in Hungary, and Hungary's treatment of the Romanians in Hungary. In various forums of the small Romanian minority in Hungary, for example, Romania is usually treated with special respect, while Hungary is almost never mentioned in the media of the Hungarian minority in Romania. In a characteristic hint to the difficulties encountered by Hungary in focusing Romania's attention to the Romanians in Hungary, *Népszava* emphasized that the Romanians of Hungary "would like their teachers and artistic groups to be invited across the border to show their achievements." The paper went on stating that "it would be

desirable if the nationality cooperation now limited to the counties of Arad and Békés would be expanded in content as well as geographically." [39]

During the past few years, official statements issued after bilateral meetings between Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and Hungary and Yugoslavia emphasized the role of the nationalities as connecting factors in inter-state relations. Meetings between Kadar and Huşak or between other high-ranking leaders of these states ended with statements stressing that "it was in their both countries' interest that the nationality groups should serve as a bond of friendship and thus strengthen the fraternal links between the two."[40] Western reports suggested a deterioration in the situation of the Hungarians in Slovakia,[41] yet Hungarian criticism of Slovakia is much milder than that occasionally directed against Romania.

Relations with Yugoslavia, perhaps the smoothest as compared to those with Czechoslovakia and Romania, have been based during the last years on the formula of the "connecting bridges." The "positive role of the Hungarians in Yugoslavia and the South-Slavs living in Hungary as a connecting bond between the two states," was reiterated in the first post-Tito high level meeting between the two states. However, occasional problems between Yugoslavia and Hungary are still evident from time to time. In 1977 during the visit of Milos Minic, Yugoslav Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs to Hungary, he declared that "it is a fortunate circumstance that the existence of nationalities is a source of discord between us," [42] yet in the same year, a book that appeared in Croatia claimed that the South-Slavs receive a disadvantagous treatment by the Hungarian regime, a claim that was strongly denied by Hungary. [43]

As already mentioned, Hungary's relations with Romania are the most problematic. Until June 1977, Romania refused even to pay lip-service to the Hungarian policy on the role of nationalities between neighbouring countries. A change in the Romanian policy, a rather short-lived one, came during a two-day meeting in June 1977 between Ceausescu and Kadar in Oradea (Nagyvárad) and Debrecen. The document issued after the talks mentioned for the first time since the war, the issue of Hungarians in Romania and the Romanians in Hungary. But even in the phrasing of the communique a certain hesitation, no doubt on Romania's side, could be felt:

> The sides were unanimous in considering that the existence of the Magyar nationality in the Socialist Republic of Romania and of the Romanian nationality in the Hungarian People's Republic is the outcome of historical development and accounts for an important factor in the development of friendship between the two countries... The solving of the question of nationalities, citizens of the respective countries, is a domestic affair falling within the competence of each one of the two countries. The sides consider that the existence of the nationalities in the two countries should turn to an ever greater extent into bridges bringing closer the Romanian and Hungarian peoples.[44]

The two countries also agreed to open consulates in Cluj (Kolozsvár) and in Debrecen. The agreement was implemented only in April 1980, after considerable foot-dragging by the Romanians who were anxious to delay the opening of a Hungarian consulate in the capital of Transylvania. Although, Romania was given an opportunity, if it needed one, to establish closer contacts with the Romanian minority in Hungary, following the Kadar-Ceausescu talks, there was no indication that Romania would show a greater interest in them.

Contrary to the understanding that was reached between the two states on the need to involve the respective minorities in inter-state relations, Romanian-Hungarian relations reached a low ebb by the end of 1977 and the beginning of 1978. Historiographical polemics between the two states, an almost constant feature in periods of strain in their relations, brought nearly to a halt the process of rapprochement reached in June 1977. Moreover, some publications in the Hungarian media criticised Romania for its attitude on the national question. Such was the tone of a two-part article by Gyula Illyés in *Magyar Nemzet*: "the Hungarian speaking population exceeding a million and living in minority status (is) deprived of its university where the language of teaching used to be its own..., more than 20 percent of the children of the largest national minority in Europe are not even taught the alphabet in their own language."[45] Illyés' accusations were rejected in a series of Romanian polemical publications such as that by Mihnea Gheorghiu in *Luceafărul*, the weekly of the Romanian Writers' Union. Gheorghiu labelled Illyés as a man "full of nostalgia for a dualism whose sun has set and the memory of the admiral

without a fleet,* feeling a gut hatred for members of other nations."[46]

The tone of the Hungarian replies to the Romanian accusations was somewhat pessimistic. Zsigmond Pál Pach, head of the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, wrote in reply to Mihnea Gheorghiu that on the national issue "We...imagined that the socialist transformation in itself would, as it were automatically, solve the national problem in the Danube region." Pach went on "we see things more realistically today.... National problems accumulated over a long period cannot be made to disappear from one day to the next."[47]

The Romanian-Hungarian polemics of 1978 were toned down through a series of high-level meetings between the two governments, but not before Ceausescu made one of his rare references to the Romanian minority in the neighbouring states. Speaking at a mass rally in Bucharest he declared that while there are two million Romanian citizens belonging to various nationalities, there are "six million" Romanians in the neighbouring states, whose fate was decided upon by the respective countries. The Romanian leader stated that the problems of the Romanian nationality in Hungary, Yugoslavia and other countries are not solved in Bucharest, but in Budapest, Beograd (Belgrád) and the other capitals, while the problems of the Hungarian, German, Serbian and other nationalities should not be solved in Budapest, Berlin, Bonn, Beograd or elsewhere, but in Bucharest by the Romanian Communist Party. He emphasized that Romania would never use the existence of the Romanian nationality in other countries in order to interfere in their internal affairs, yet at the same time, Romania would firmly reject any attempt by others to use the nationality question as a pretext to interfere in Romania's internal affairs.[48]

The Romanian position that emerged in June 1977 at the Kadar-Ceausescu talks indicated that at last Romania would recognize and accept the role that nationalities should play in inter-state relations. The subsequent hardening in Romania's

---

* Editor's note: this incredible reference is to Emperor-King Francis Joseph and Regent Miklós Horthy, not exactly idols for Illyés.

line was caused possibly by growing dissent among Hungarians in Transylvania. This dissent, such as the Király Károly affair,[49] slowed down the process begun in 1977. Hungary, keeping offical silence over dissenting voices from Transylvania, occasionally hinted at existing problems on the national issue with Romania. Such was the tone of the panelist over the popular Budapest TV program "forum" when answering a phone-in question on Romanian-Hungarian relations, replied that the "Debrecen-Oradea agreements of 1977 are partly on the way of being implemented."[50]

Through the years a curious linkage emerged between Romania and Hungary's relations on the nationality issue, and Romania's relations with the Soviet Union over the Bessarabian issue. It has been noted for example that Hungary chose to criticise Romania's nationality policy in the summer of 1971 at a time of increased Romanian-Soviet polemics.[51] Hungarian support for the Soviets' anti-Romanian steps has been linked to the Soviet backing of Hungary in opposing Romania's nationality policy, the Soviet Union's main motive being to counter Romanian pressure over the Moldavian issue. The Soviets frequently praise Hungary's nationality policy.[52] Moreover, the Soviet Union allows its small minority of some 200,000 Hungarians to step up and promote ties with the "mother-country." Hungary never misses an opportunity to praise the Soviet Union's nationality policy towards the Hungarians, a policy which in the words of *Magyar Nemzet* proves that "nationalities are bridges between nations and states."[53]

The fate of the nationalities in Hungary and that of the Hungarians in the successor states is linked to the role of nationalism in Hungary today. There is no doubt that the policy of the regime is one of drawing benefits from playing the role of a national party but without running any of the risks that could be involved.[54] While the regime's legitimacy does not necessarily rest on her achievements on the national question, the fate of the Hungarians in the neighbouring states is very close to the heart of most of Hungary's citizens, a feeling which should not be associated automatically with nationalism. The Hungarian regime chose the road of a positive attitude to the national minorities in Hungary, a policy which encourages them to assert their national identity, just as Hungary expects today that the

Hungarians in the Danubian basin should be able to assert their own specific ties with the mainspring of Hungarian culture and language. Thus, Hungary's policy in regard to the nationalities in Hungary is one which recognizes their uniqueness and ties with the mother-tongue countries while emphasizing their attachment to Hungary and the regime to whose fate they are linked.

NOTES

1. According to the Hungarian sources in Hungary there are some 200,000 Germans, 110,000 Slovaks, 100,000 South Slavs and 25,000 Romanians. See for example: László Tripolszky, "Promoting Ethnic Culture," *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, XXI, 77 (Spring, 1980) p.133. For a keen and critical analysis of the censuses in Hungary and on the Hungarians in the neighboring states, see Zoltán Dávid, "A magyar nemzetiségi statisztika múltja és jelenje," *Valóság*, 8 (1980) pp.87-101.
2. László Kövágó, "A szocialista nemzetiségpolitika kialakitásának utján," *Párttörténeti Közlemények*, XXVI, 3 (1980) p. 80.
3. On Czechoslovak-Hungarian problems see for example, Sándor Balogh, "Az 1946 február 27-i magyar-csehszlovák lakosságcsere egyezmény," *Történelmi Szemle*, 1 (1979) pp. 59-87; Károly Ravasz, "Adalékok a magyar-csehszlovák viszony történetéhez, 1945-1948," *Látohatár*, VII, 2 (1956) pp. 99-107, for a Hungarian Communist view of the period's Slovak-Hungarian relations see, "A szlovákiai magyarok kényszerkitelepitése," *Társadalmi Szemle*, vol. 2, 2 (1947) pp. 65-69.
4. Oszkar Bethlen, "A nemzetiségek Magyarországon," *Társadalmi Szemle*, vol. 1, 2 (1946) p. 116.
5. For the development of the policy of Romania and Yugoslavia towards their Hungarian minority see, Andrew Ludanyi, *Hungarians in Romania and Yugoslavia; A Comparative Study of Communist Nationality Policy* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, the Lousiana State University and Mechanical College, 1971); Andrew Ludanyi, "Titoist Integration of Yugoslavia: The Partisan Myth and the Hungarians of Vojvodina, 1945-1975," *Polity*, XII, 2 (1979) pp. 225-52.
6. Editors note: About this subject see Randolph L. Barham, *Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981) Vol. II, pp.1142-1184. C.S. also Robert Blumstock, "Jews in Hungary," an unpublished paper read at the Fifth Annual Conference of the American Hungarian Educators' Association, Toronto, 1980.
7. László Kövágó, "Népköztársaságunk nemzetiségi politikájáról," *Társadalmi Szemle*, 11 (1968) p. 31.
8. Kövágó, "A szocialista nemzetiségpolitika..." p. 78.
9. Frigyes Puja, *A felszabadult Battonya*, (Budapest: Gondolat, 1978) quoted by Rudolf Fischer in "Remembered History," *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, XXI (Summer 1980) p. 175.
10. Kövágó, "A szocialista nemzetiségpolitika..." p. 85.
11. Ibid., p. 85.
12. Sándor Novobáczky, *Magyarország*, May 4, 1980.
13. Ferenc Herczeg, "Nemzetiségi politikánk eredményei és feladatai," *Pártélet*, 4 (1978) p. 39.
14. Also with *székely* refugees from Transylvania who had been given land in districts formerly inhabited by Germans.
15. Kövágó, "A szocialista nemzetiségpolitika..." p. 85.
16. This was done also in some other of the Soviet satellites. In Romania, for example, South Slavs were also compelled to engage in similar activities.
17. *Nemzetiségi kérdés - nemzetiségi politika* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1968) pp. 54-5.
18. Kövágó, "A szocialista nemzetiségpolitika..." p. 83.
19. See for example: George Schöpflin, *Hungary Between Prosperity and Conflict*,

(Conflict Studies, The Institute for the Study of Conflict 1981) 136, pp. 21-3; Ivan Volgyes, "Legitimacy and Modernization: Nationality and Nationalism in Hungary and Transylvania," in George Klein and Milan J. Reban, eds., *The Politics of Ethnicity in Eastern Europe* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 198l) pp. 143-4.
20. George Schöpflin, "Hungary: An Uneasy Stability," in Archie Brown and Gray Jeack, eds., *Political Culture and Political Change in Communist Systems* (London: Macmillan, 1979) p. 144.
21. On Hungary's "official nationalism" see Peter Pastor, "Official Nationalism in Hungary since 1964," in George W. Simmons, ed., *Nationalism in the USSR and Eastern Europe in the Era of Brezhnev and Kosygin* (Detroit: The University of Detroit Press, 1977) pp. 410-19; Gabriel Fischer, "Nationalism and Internationalism in Hungary and Rumania," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, vol. X, 1 (1968) pp. 26-41.
22. *Élet és Irodalom*, May 18, 1968.
23. On the internal debates in Hungary on the problem of nationalism and internationalism see William F. Robinson, "Nationalism: Hungarian Problem Child," *RFE* Background Report, July 5, 1967; Andrew C. Janos, "Nationalism and Communism in Hungary," *East European Quarterly*, vol. V, 1 (197l) pp. 99-101.
24. Iános Szász in *Gazeta Literará*, July 25, 1968.
25. Part of the proceedings published in *Nemzetiségi Kérdés-nemzetiségi politika.*
26. *Népszabadság*, March 28, 1980.
27. *Predvoj*, April 4, 1968 quoted by Robert R. King, *Minorities Under Communism* (Cambridge, Mass.: University of Harvard Press, 1973) p. 117, also quoted and its content rejected in *Nemzetiségi kérdés-nemzetiségi politika*, p. 59.
28. Volgyes, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-1.
29. Sándor Novobáczky, *Magyarország*, May 4, 1980.
30. Miklós Tomka, *Valóság*, 9 (1969) p. 108.
31. For an analysis of the latest Yugoslav census see, Slobodan Stankovic, Yugoslavia's Census-Final Results, *RFE/RAD* BR/59, March 10, 1982.
32. Lászlo Tripolszky, "Promoting Ethnic Culture," *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, vol. XXI, 77 (Spring 1980) p. 136.
33. Miklós Klotz, "A nemzetiségek anyanyelvi oktatásáról," *Kritika*, 2 (1978) p. 4.
34. See *Pártélet*, 4 (1978), Volgyes, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-2.
35. Miklós Klotz, *Kritika*, 2 (1978) p. 5.
36. Tripolszky, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-6.
37. Interview with Dr. Ferenc Boros, *MTI*, October 12, 1977 in *Daily Report* (Foreign Broadcasting Information Service - FBIS) part II, October 13, 1977.
38. *Népszabadság*, April 19, 1980.
39. *Népszava*, October 26, 1973.
40. *Népszabadság*, September 17, 1977; for an elaboration of Hungary's views on the inter-state role of nationalities see, Jóo Rudolf, "A nemzetiségi kérdés az 1945 utáni államok európai államközi dokumentumaiba," *Külpolitika*, 2 (1977) pp. 78-92.
41. See for example László Sirchich, "A Felvidéki Magyarság Helyzetéröl" in *A XIX. Magyar Találkozó Krónikája* (Cleveland: 1980) pp. 97-113.
42. Miodrag Krdzic, "Yugoslav-Hungarian Relations," *Review of International Affairs*, vol. XXVIII, 645, February 20, 1977.
43. Kövágó, in *A szocialista nemzetiségi...* rejected the allegations that appeared in *Hrvatska narodna manjina u Madarskoj. Zavod za migracije i narodnosti*, Zagreb, 1977, p. 4.
44. On the Ceausescu-Kadar talks see*Népszabadság, Scínteia, Elöre*, June 16-19, 1977.
45. *Magyar Nemzet*, December 25, 1977, January 1, 1978, reviewed in *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, 72 (1978) pp. 120-2; *The Economist*, February 4, 1978.
46. *Luceafárul*, May 6, 1978.
47. *Élet és Irodalom*, July 8, 1978.
48. *Scínteia*, June 11, 1978 quoted by all major Romanian publications such as in *Revista de Istorie*, 9 (1978) p. 1531.
49. For Western press reports on the Király affair see for example, *The Times* (London) April 25, 1978, *Washington Post*, March 2, 1978; for the problems facing the Hungarian minority in Romania see, George Schöpflin, *The Hungarians of Rumania*, Minority Rights Group, report no. 37, London, 1978, Erdélyi Melléklet, *Irodalmi Újság*,

March-April 1977, for a view defending the Romanian position on the nationality issue see, N.M. Goodchild, ed., *Hungarian Realities in Romania* (London: Panopticum Press, 1980).

50. Budapest TV in *Summary of World Broadcasts* (SWV)/EE - October 20, 1979.

51. King, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-8.

52. See *Pravda*, February 3, 1972.

53. Zoltán Gyulay, *Magyar Nemzet*, July 16, 1980, on the Hungarian minority in Transcarpathia see László Ribanszky, "Small Concessions to the Hungarian Minority in Transcarpathia," RFE/RAD Background Report/219, September 9, 1980.

54. Schöpflin, *Hungary Between Prosperity and Conflict*, p. 22.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 1 (Spring 1984)

TO THOSE WISHING TO SUBMIT MANUSCRIPTS

1. The editors of the *Hungarian Studies Review* invite the submission of original articles and review articles in the field of Hungarian studies.

2. All manuscripts should be sent to the Editors, *Hungarian Studies Review*.

3. Persons wishing to review books for the *Review* should get in touch with the Editors.

4. Persons wishing to prepare review articles—either detailed discussions of a single book or a review of some area of Hungarian studies—should get in touch first with the Editors.

5. Since the *Review* does not normally publish highly specialized studies intelligible only to people in a particular discipline, contributors wishing to submit very specialized work should consult the Editors before sending in their manuscript.

6. The submission of an article to the *Review* is taken to imply that it has not been previously published and it is not being considered for publication elsewhere.

7. Manuscripts submitted to the *Review* are usually reviewed by two members of the editorial board (or outside readers) with the authors remaining anonymous. Comments on articles are conveyed to the authors with the commentators remaining anonymous.

8. Articles submitted to the *Review* should be between 4,000 and 8,000 words (ca. 16 to 32 pages) in length. Review articles should be between 1,500 and 3,000 words (ca. 6 to 12 pages) in length. Manuscripts outside of these limits will be considered if there is some good reason for their exceptional length or brevity. Articles in two parts may be accepted provided each part is independently meaningful and intelligible.

9. All manuscripts intended for publication should be submitted IN DUPLICATE. They should be clearly typed on one side of 8 1/2 x 11 inch or similar size paper. The entire manuscript should be double-spaced with ample margins. FOOTNOTES should be numbered consecutively in the text and typed double spaced at the end, beginning on a new page. The *Review* will also accept articles on 5 1/4 inch diskettes which fit TRS-80 computers and are in ASCII or Superscripsit format. Articles already on diskette would save the editorial office much time in editing and typesetting.

10. To avoid the loss of manuscripts in the mail, authors should always retain a copy of their contribution for themselves. The *Review* will not be responsible for lost articles. To save on postal costs, manuscripts are not normally returned to the authors unless their return is specifically requested.

11. On style, authors should follow previous issues of the *Review* or should use the *Chicago Manual of Style*. When in doubt, they should get in touch with the Editor.

12. Contributors whose native tongue is not English should have their manuscripts carefully edited by someone experienced in writing for English-language journals BEFORE submitting their work to the *Review*.

Hungarian Studies Review

Vol. XI, No. 2 (Fall, 1984)

HUNGARIAN LITERATURE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Dieter Lotze discusses a West German opera adaptation of Imre Madách's *The Tragedy of Man.* Marianna D. Birnbaum writes about the novelty of Endre Ady's language and style. Emery George presents an explanation for the lack of a Sixth Eclogue in Miklós Radnóti's oeuvre.

Review Articles

Robert Finch critiques four volumes of modern Hungarian poetry in the translation of Ivan Halasz de Beky.

Books

Institutional subscriptions to the *Review* are $12.00 per annum. Individual subscriptions are $12.00 for one year and $20.00 for two years. Subscribers outside of North America please add $2.00 for postage.

Donations in support of the *Review* may be made through the University of Toronto. Cheques should be made to the "University of Toronto, Department of Private Funding;" please note somewhere on the cheque that the donation is in support of the *Hungarian Studies Review*. These donations are "tax deductible" in Canada. Donations in excess of $50.00 will be acknowledged in the *Review* on a periodic basis.

Correspondence regarding the publication of manuscripts, book reviews, etc., as well as subscriptions and donations should be addressed to the editors:

The Editors
Hungarian Studies Review
University of Toronto
21 Sussex Ave.
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5S 1A1

Statements or opinions expressed in the *Review* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the journal's editors.

Articles appearing in the *Review* are abstracted and indexed in *HISTORICAL ABSTRACTS* and *AMERICA; HISTORY AND LIFE*.

ISSN 0713-8083 (replacing 0317-204X)
Typesetting by Compsetting. Printed at the University of Toronto Press.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 2 (Fall 1984)

CONTENTS

PAPERS

REVIEW ARTICLE

BOOKS

Our Contributors

EMERY GEORGE is a professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Dr. George is also a poet and translator. His most recent publication is an anthology of Radnóti's poetry translated into English entitled *The Complete Poetry* (1980).

DIETER P. LOTZE first published in our journal in 1979. A native of Germany, Dr. Lotze studied English philology and comparative literature at Berlin Free University and at Innsbruck University. He is author of several books, the most recent entitled *Imre Madách* (1981).

MARIANNA D. BIRNBAUM first published in the *Canadian American Review of Hungarian Studies* in 1979. She teaches Hungarian language and literature and comparative Ugric folklore at the University of California, Los Angeles. Dr. Birnbaum's most recent works include a volume on Janus Pannonius and another on Miklós Radnóti.

ROBERT FINCH is considered one of the founders of modern Canadian poetry. Two of his volumes of poetry won Governor - General's Awards. During a lifetime of distinguished teaching at the University of Toronto, he published numerous works of poetry and prose, one of which received the Lorne Pierce Medal for literature. He holds an honorary LL.D. from the University of Toronto and he has been made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada (1981).

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 2 (Fall 1984)

Imre Madách is Alive and Well and Dying in West Germany: Peter Michael Hamel's Opera "Ein Menschentraum" [1]

Dieter P. Lotze

Much of Hungarian literature—and thus a major aspect of Hungarian culture—is beyond the reach of the majority of foreign observers. The most obvious reason is linguistic: the comparative inaccessibility of the non-Indoeuropean language of a small Central European country impedes the first-hand acquaintance with a rich cultural heritage for all but a few specialists.

Numerous translations of some of the works of major (and even minor) Hungarian writers into other languages are available, to be sure, but many of them, especially attempts to recreate Hungarian poetry, convey little more than approximations or blurred reproductions of the originals. Thus, some well-read non-Hungarians of our times may be familiar with the name of Petőfi, who, mainly through his political involvement and his death for the cause of his nation's freedom, had become a symbol for liberal Europeans of the nineteenth century, such as German poet Heinrich Heine. Even philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche was inspired to set some German versions of Petőfi's poems to music. Yet few foreigners can truly appreciate his lyrical genius.

There is, however, also another factor which has contributed to this lack of appreciation. Hungarian literature is the artistic expression of a small and isolated country that has its linguistic and ethnic roots in the East, but that has for centuries—ever since embracing Christianity—considered itself part of the culture of the West. Furthermore, Hungarian writing reflects the experience of a tradition of continuous struggle to maintain national and cultural autonomy in the face of overwhelming pressure from without. It is no wonder, then, that literature and writers in Hungary have been playing a role that has differed

from that in most other, especially larger, countries or cultural entities. Hungarian authors frequently not only echo in their works that specific national experience, but also define both their mission and their audience in a way that differs from that of their counterparts in other nations. Again, Petőfi in his political engagement and in his use of poetry to appeal to the patriotism of his fellow countrymen could serve as an example. This tendency, in turn, may make much of Hungarian literature appear to the outside world as somewhat provincial, or, to state it in more neutral terms, as hard to comprehend for readers who have never shared those experiences.

If we view *The Tragedy of Man* (*Az ember tragédiája*) of 1859-60 by Imre Madách against this background, it is all the more astonishing that what Hungarians consider their greatest philosophical drama has been little noticed beyond their national and cultural borders. Part of the reason for this phenomenon may again be the numerous rather mediocre translations of the play, although there are notable exceptions.[2] But most Madách scholars will readily admit that the drama's significance lies much more in its philosophy than in the beauty of its language. And here Madách clearly differs from the vast majority of nineteenth-century authors in Hungary. His play, while considered by most Hungarians as reflective of their national experience, certainly defies the label of "provinciality." He seems to have deliberately avoided all specific references to matters Hungarian, except for a fleeting mention of János Hunyadi and a few oblique hints at Hungarian customs or Hungarian history. Ancient Egypt, classical Greece and Rome, Constantinople during the Crusades, Renaissance Prague, Revolutionary Paris, nineteenth-century London, and finally the science-fiction world of the future (including an egalitarian utopian society, an excursion into outer space, and a cold and barren area on a dying earth) are depicted as the significant stages of the rise and fall of mankind and society. Given this universality in scope and the fact that many of his dramatic scenes appear much better suited for the technical possibilities of modern film and television than for the theatre of his century, it is surprising that—apart from occasional (and not necessarily always successful) productions on European and American stages and a few doctoral dissertations and monographs[3]—there has been little public notice of *The Tragedy of Man* outside Hungary.

An unusual and noteworthy attempt to acquaint a larger European audience with Madách took place in West Germany recently. On June 27, 1981, Peter Michael Hàmel's opera *Ein Menschentraum* (A Dream of Man) premiered at the Kassel *Staatstheater*. Based on a libretto by the composer's father, the late Kurt Peter Hamel, and by Claus H. Henneberg, the work attempts to confront the twentieth-century viewer and listener with Imre Madách's life, achievement, and philosophy. What is classified by Hamel as "Musical Theater in Two Parts for Actors, Singers, Chorus, and Recording Tape," [4] it presents selected scenes from *The Tragedy of Man* in operatic form. Thus, Imre Madách seems indeed to be alive and well on the West German stage. But Hamel juxtaposes these dream visions from Madách's drama with realistic scenes set at the bedside of the dying playwright who discusses his life—including the failure of his marriage—and his world view with his strong-willed mother, Anna Majthényi, and with his friend Pál Szontágh. In the end, reality and vision can no longer be separated, and Imre Madách expires in the arms of his creation, Adam.

It goes without saying that any discussion of an operatic work must remain lopsided without an adequate emphasis on its music. Peter Michael Hamel's comments indicate the importance he places on this aspect of his work:

> The music in *Ein Menschentraum* is a looking glass in which an ultimately unchanging reality is presented in an always new and seemingly different fashion, in which it is mirrored, refracted, and reflected. Dream conditions become accessible and sound conditions, the repetition compulsion of the world resounds in repetitive movements, tonal centers become the subject matter of dreams, become sounds of dying. [5]

But there is no definitive score readily available, and the only existing tape recording of the Kassel production, made by the *Hessischer Rundfunk* radio network, is not accessible at this time. [6] Therefore, the following discussion will focus mainly on the literary and theatrical aspects of *Ein Menschentraum*. This task is made somewhat more difficult by the fact that, according to the composer, "no complete libretto exists since the dramatic texts were reworked be the director." [7] Yet the available information about the opera and its impact appears sufficient to allow certain conclusions.

Hamel's opera owes its existence to his father's preoccupation with Madách's drama, an interest that went back all the way to 1937 when he first attended a German production of *Az ember tragédiája* under the direction of Antal Németh, then in charge of the Budapest National Theatre. Kurt Peter Hamel, a theatrical director himself as well as a writer, later had the opportunity to visit Madách's birthplace at Alsó-Sztregova. This visit triggered in him the desire to use the ancestral home where the Hungarian playwright was born, where he had worked, suffered, and finally died, as the setting for a dramatic work. In 1975, Kurt Peter Hamel sketched out a plan for an opera. The final emotional impetus was the death of his wife in 1976. But the text remained a fragment when the writer died in 1979. Claus Henneberg, artistic advisor to the Cologne Opera, endeavoured to complete the work.

The composer, Peter Michael Hamel, was born in 1947. He combines an outstanding musical talent with interests in psychology, sociology, theatre, film, radio, and television and is the co-founder of the Munich *Freies Musikzentrum* which explores the role of music in social work, education, and therapy. It was his father's death that motivated him to compose *Ein Menschentraum*. He persuaded the Kassel theatre to commission the work whose completion was made possible by a scholarship from the German Academy "Villa Massimo" in Rome. His comments on his choice of topic, as recorded by Hans Joachim Schaefer, are revealing:

My decision to compose a work for the musical theater sprang not so much from theoretical and esthetic considerations, but rather from the fact that I was struck by a subject matter. I selected the subject of *Ein Menschentraum* because it touches on two experiences which I consider decisive in any human life: the experience of dying and death, and the experience of love. Both are very natural—but at the same time supernatural—events that have profound impacts on our lives. Both experiences mean the crossing of frontiers.

The experience "death of my mother" led my father to write the libretto. The experience "death of my father" caused me to compose *Ein Menschentraum*. Thus pervasion and spiritualization of a profoundly moving experience: a work of mourning. Death and love can guide us to a new consciousness, to

a deeper understanding of life, of the world, to a "religio" beyond any denomination. I am searching for this spiritual experience that gives man a new consciousness of meaning. [8]

For Hamel, the depiction of the death of Imre Madách becomes a vehicle to expand personal experiences—his own and those of the dying poet—into more general concerns, into a vision of struggling mankind.

At the centre of the events: a man is dying. In his agony, he experiences visions which take the form of dramatic scenes. Archetypical dream experiences, simultaneity of events that no longer have any logical connection with one another, hallucinations, and visions merge into a "panorama of life" which immediately before one's death contracts an entire life in its essential experiences into a sequence of freely associated images.

The "death zone" in which this "dream of man" takes place is not only connected with the life and death of Imre Madách, not only with his *Tragedy of Man*. The death zone concerns all of us. It is a general human phenomenon: that frontier region where a soul, under excruciating pains, begins to separate from its body. The intensive care unit, the death room, is an area of frightening experiences. I witnessed that when my father died.

The images that the dying man sees before his mind's eye, his visions, dreams, and hallucinations, are archetypes of human history, transferable in a general sense. [9]

How, then, does this experience translate into a concrete work for the musical theatre? Hamel treats the five scenes at Madách's bedside as straight drama. In contrast, the six scenes adapted from *Az ember tragédiája* are presented as opera. Yet the two spheres cannot be neatly separated. Madách sees himself as Adam, his former wife, Erzsi Fráter, as Eve, Pál Szontágh as Lucifer, and his mother as the Earth Spirit.

The poet, on his deathbed, demands from his mother, Anna Majthényi, a letter which Erzsi has written, asking him to forgive her unfaithfulness and begging for his understanding. Anna is very reluctant to give the letter to her son. She had always been opposed to his marriage because she did not want to relinquish her control over his life. This control, she claims, was necessary because of Imre's inability to cope with life's problems by himself.

Pál, too, comments on his friend's lack of self-confidence.

As the playwright is reading Erzsi's lines, Eve appears in his visions in ever changing forms: projections of Erzsi, and at the same time the ideal woman, embodiment of Goethe's "eternal femininity."

A fevered dream takes him out of the realm of his earthly existence; his bed changes into a space vehicle, and—as Adam—he attempts to rid himself of everything that ties him to his physical and psychological misery while traveling in the metaphorical sphere of pure thought. Even though he denies the attractive powers of his native planet, he is pulled back from death by the Earth Spirit, but is left with a feeling of inner emptiness.

It is this emptiness that the dying poet in the third scene recognizes as characteristic of his entire life. He accuses his mother of having caused his lifelong indecision. What to her was loving sacrifice, her son experienced as paralyzing interference which kept him from making his own choices. Pál announces Erzsi's visit, but Anna tries to prevent the encounter with Imre who is ready to forgive his wife. Doubts about himself and about the destiny of mankind continue to plague him.

In the next scene, he is Adam in the Ice Region, watching the last human beings in their struggle for a meaningless survival. This depressing experience reflects Imre's own situation: the world and his life end, in T.S. Eliot's famous phrase, (not with a bang but a whimper."[10] Mankind does not perish in one last great heroic effort, but, as Rolf Ronzier puts it in his program notes, "it suffocates in its own filth."[11] The last representatives of the human race have sunk to the level of animals, and in this setting, even the dream of Eve is reduced to a disgusting spectacle of grotesque animalistic sexuality. Adam wants to prevent this "tragedy of man," but is keenly aware of his own helplessness.

Meanwhile, at the poet's deathbed, Anna Majthényi blames Erzsi and Pál for Imre's self-doubts and for the deterioration of his health. Madách worries about his children who are growing up without the benefit of a healthy family unit. His son Aladár is likely to become as fainthearted as he has been, living under the same strong influence of Anna. He observes Aladár at play who, dressed as a Roman, rescues his sister Jolán from the clutches of a powerful enemy. To the play-

wright, his son's game is symbolic of Hungary's struggle for liberation. But Pál, the cool uninvolved intellectual, tries to convince him that his dream of human freedom can never be realized, just as the hope manifested in Christianity as the religion of love is ultimately in vain.

The two scenes that follow are patterned closely after Madách's drama. Featuring Adam as Sergiolus in Rome and as Tancred, the idealistic crusader in Constantinople, they seem to confirm Pál's nihilistic world view. Again, Madách sees his own emotional problems connected with the fate of mankind. In Rome, Adam and Eve exist side by side without any inner relationship just as Imre and Erzsi had in their marriage. The Constantinople scene ends with a nightmare: Lucifer has a swarm of witches set upon Adam in order to demonstrate the absurdity of separating love and sexuality. Significantly, Hamel connects the two scenes through an orchestral interlude whose music "has as its theme the perversion of the Christian symbol of the cross."[12]

In the struggle between Anna Majthényi and Pál Szontágh over the dying poet, Anna eventually realizes that she lost her son. Resignedly, she consents to Erzsi's visit. Pál continues his argument with Imre, criticizing him for having always been interested in theory only. He did not contribute in any practical or tangible way to the Hungarian Revolution. Throughout his life, he had been a loner, incapable of contact with the people. In his feverish phantasies, Madách hears a mob screaming for his head as the scene switches to Revolutionary Paris.

In his fight for the new ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity, Adam, as the professional revolutionary, reflects the ambiguous role played by Imre, the aristocratic revolutionary in the events of 1848-49 in Hungary. As Danton, he relinquishes his principles as he eventually grasps the possibility of a worthwhile life beyond ideology. It is characteristic that Eve appears here only in the single role of the young aristocrat, not in her second incarnation as the coarse, bloodthirsty "woman of the people" of the original scene in *Az ember tragédiája.*

The next dream vision reveals the grotesque world of the London *petite bourgeoisie* of the early nineteenth century, a world that resembles a lunatic asylum. Only money is of value in this society where man has become merchant and merchan-

diser. Eve, too, is now merely an object that can be bought. Everybody is eventually sent to Hell by Lucifer who remains alone with Adam to discuss the downfall of this society.

The final encounter between Madách and his wife shows how strongly they are tied together, how dependent they are on each other. But it is too late for a new beginning. Imre never understood Erzsi and never made her a part of his life. Each spouse had been blind to the other. As death approaches, all the real persons who had been close to Madách assemble around his bed, along with the characters from his drama. Eve, speaking for Erzsi, mourns the lost contact with her children. A last nightmare confronts the playwright with the technological society of the future where life is produced artifically, from where all human emotions have been banned, and where man has become a faceless being with no individuality. In the poet's agony, his relatives and his friend become blurred, shapeless figures, while the creations of his imagination accompany him to the very end. The viewer is left with vexing questions: what did the life, the work, the death of Imre Madách really signify? Was the creator of the "Hungarian *Faust*" blind until the very end, just as Goethe's hero is symbolically stricken with blindness shortly before his death?

Thus Imre Madách is dying once again—this time in an experimental opera on the West German stage. But, to return to (and to call into question) the statement made in the title of this essay, is he truly "alive and well?" Is Hamel's work an appropriate vehicle to acquaint a German audience with Hungary's greatest philosophical dramatist, to foster understanding and appreciation of him and of the culture he represents? The answer can only be cautious and qualified. Reviews of the Kassel premiere have pointed out that *Ein Menschentraum* would be puzzling or downright confusing to anybody not already familiar with Madách's life and work—which would apply to the vast majority of the audience.[13] Furthermore, while many of the biographical facts alluded to have a firm foundation in the poet's life, there are distortions and one-sided interpretations, for instance with respect to Pál Szontágh's alleged stifling influence on his friend, or concerning Madách's position in the 1848-49 War of Liberation. And certainly Hamel's fainthearted and indecisive poet is not the fiery and determined political orator, elected to the 1861 Diet in Pest as a representative of Balassagyarmat.[14]

While most Madách scholars would readily concede that much in, *Az ember tragédiája* is autobiographical in nature, we should not forget that this is only one—and not necessarily the most significant—level of his dramatic poem.

In the absence of definitive versions of the score and the libretto of *Ein Menschentraum*, it is, of course, difficult to do Hamel's opera justice. What was presented in Kassel was a complex work, combining not only Hamel's music and the text prepared by his two librettists—in part based on available German translations of *Az ember tragédiája* and on the views expressed in Wolfgang Margendorff's monograph on Madách[15]— but also an interpretation through the direction of Dieter Dorn and the settings and costumes designed by Hans Kleber. It is thus difficult to decide what was incidental to this particular production and its interpretation of Madách, and what is essential to Hamel's opera.

Madách's bed as a spacecraft, complete with blinking lights, obviously amused the audience rather than establishing a readiness to consider philosophical concepts.[16] Some aspects of the production look like gimmicks, designed to emphasize the continued relevance of Madách's ideas, but they seem to have interfered with the unity of the work and with the clarity of its message. Viewers were startled by a disco scene in an Italian beach resort as part of the Rome vision, by a character obviously modelled after the Ayatollah Khomeini, riding in his jeep past Tancred's crusaders in Constantinople (who—in their blue helmets—were made to look like United Nations soldiers), or by Madách's London scene taking place in an asylum.[17] It is to be hoped that future productions will help crystallize Hamel's contemporary concept of Madách and his world, so that the dying poet may continue to be "alive and well."

Certainly this controversial interpretation contains elements that shed some new light on the Hungarian play. Traditional Madách scholarship has considered his "Earth Spirit" as an echo—if not an imitation—of Goethe's *Erdgeist* in his *Faust* or perhaps as the one positive aspect of Madách's view of materialism (with Lucifer representing its negative, non-creative counterpart).[18] Hamel's bold association of Anna Majthényi with this spirit emphasizes his concept of the overwhelming power of the maternal element as both a necessary tie to nature and a hindrance for man in his attempt to reach ultimate freedom.

Hamel emphasizes the significance of the relationship between the individual and his society, commented on by many students of Madách before, as a problem faced both by the playwright and by Adam, his creation. A society that dehumanizes man by elevating money to be the ultimate value will as its final consequence, turn into an insane world where no relationships among individuals are possible anymore. Thus, Hamel's symbolism in changing the London setting to a virtual madhouse may be heavy and all too obvious, but its logic can hardly be faulted. Madách critics occasionally stressed the importance of the fact that in this scene (as in all the scenes following the one depicting the French Revolution) Adam no longer plays an active role or represents an historical figure. For Hamel, this follows naturally from the de-emphasis of the individual in capitalism. In this respect the composer's views are quite enlightening:

> I do not share the almost desperate pessimism of Madách. I am searching for a "positive utopia" which tends to be encouraging. To be more specific: to me that term signifies a "spiritual socialism" which truly recognizes the equality of all human beings. In an archetypical sense, we are all equal and therefore have a right to be treated equally. Each oppression runs counter to this right. The aim of the "positive utopia" is to free us from all pressures which do not allow us to become conscious of our own selves, to reach our own decisions, our own self-determination.[19]

It is quite consistent with this view that in the dying poet's final feverish dream of a technological utopia, human beings no longer have faces or other individualizing characteristics. Man has now become a replaceable cog in the machinery of society, rather than being encapsulated in his own self-centredness, as in the London scene. Under these circumstances both joy and sorrow have lost their meanings.

Perhaps it was Hamel's belief in a "positive utopia" that made him transform Madách's "Phalanstery" into a feverish and therefore distorted dream vision. For the same reason, he probably felt that the depressing Eskimo scene which, in the original play, had resulted in Adam's decision to commit suicide, had to be moved to a different spot in his opera, however tempting it may have been for him to leave it in its

final position as a reminder of man's technological capability in our atomic age to destroy his civilization.

But the most important change springing from Hamel's essentially secular views may be that in his opera there is no room for the metaphysical framework established by Madách. Thus, there in no Lord encouraging the despairing Adam at the end to have faith and to fight on. In this way, Hamel avoids the hotly debated incongruency between Lucifer's view of human history and the Lord's ultimate promise. But at the same time, through his emphasis on death and dying, he makes it harder for his audience to grasp and share his belief in a "positive utopia."

Yet the final scene of the opera makes one point about art and the artist that should not be missed. In the dying poet's last moments, his creations live and stay with him whereas the characters of his "real" surroundings are fading away. Perhaps Madách as a poet lives on through the work he created.

Az ember tragédiája has often been called the "Hungarian Faust". What Goethe wrote in a letter about Lord Byron's utilization of motifs from *Faust* for his *Manfred* is frequently quoted with respect to Madách's undeniable borrowings from the German poet. But Goethe's views seem also particularly appropriate—with certain modifications—when applied to Hamel's interpretation of Madách:

> This unusual and gifted poet has absorbed my Faust... He has used every theme in his own fashion, so that none remains as it was: and for this in particular I cannot sufficiently admire his genius. This reconstruction is entirely of a piece, one could give most interesting lectures on its similarity to the original and its departure from it: I do not deny, however, that the dull glow of an unrelieved despair will become wearisome in the end. Yet one's irritation will always be mingled with admiration and respect. [20]

NOTES

1. This article is the expanded version of a paper presented at the Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Hungarian Educators' Association at Montclair State College in 1982.

2. While the German translation by Julius Lechner von der Lech, *Die Tragödie des Menschen* (Leipzig, 1937) enjoyed wide distribution in German-speaking countries in the popular and inexpensive *Reclam* edition, the quality of its language is clearly inferior to that of Jenő Mohácsi's 1933 rendition, republished by Corvina in Budapest in 1957 and, in a revision by Géza Engl, in 1970. Jean Rousselot's French version, *La Tragédie de l'Homme* (Budapest: Corvina, 1966) is fairly faithful but not very poetic. None of the

English translations published to date gives a true impression of Madách's work, but the upcoming rendition by C. Thomas R. Mark, to be issued by Corvina Press in the near future, promises to fill a sorely felt need in this respect.

3. Enikő Molnár Basa's unpublished dissertation, "*The Tragedy of Man* as an Example of the Poème d'Humanité: An Examination of the Poem by Imre Madách with Reference to the Relevant Works of Shelley, Byron, Lamartine and Hugo" (University of North Carolina, 1972) contains much valuable information. My own Innsbruck dissertation of 1961, "Madáchs 'Tragödie des Menschen' in der Begegnung mit der deutschen Geisteswelt," similarly attempts to place Madách's drama in a wider philosophical framework. Some of the insights contained in it are elaborated on in the only book on Madách in English to date, my monograph *Imre Madách* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981). Wolfgang Margendorff's 1941 Jena dissertation, "Imre Madách 'Die Tragödie des Menschen' " was published in book form (Würzburg: Konrad Triltsch, 2nd ed. 1943). An adapted version of Géza Voinovich's classic study of 1914, *Madách Imre és Az ember tragédiája* was also published in Germany in a translation of Jenő Mohácsi.

4. See the program notes, "Ein Menschentraum," *Staatstheater Kassel*, June 27, 1981 (no pagination). This translation (and all others, except where notes) is my own.

5. Ibid.

6. Letter by Peter Michael Hamel to the author, October 15, 1981.

7. Ibid. Wolfgang Sandner's review, "Mit musikalischen Vorsätzen in die Hölle," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (July 1, 1981) lists some of those changes through which, he claims, Director Dieter Dorn turned real persons into stereotypes.

8. "Peter Michael Hamel im Gespräch zu 'Ein Menschentraum'," *Staatstheater Kassel* program notes.

9. Ibid.

10. T.S. Eliot, "The Hollow Men," *The Complete Poems and Plays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1971), p. 59.

11. *Staatstheater Kassel* program notes.

12. Ibid.

13. See Manfred Sack, "Musiktheater in Kassel: 'Ein Menschentraum' : Philosophie mit Musik," *Die Zeit* (Overseas Edition, July 28, 1981). (The brief article by "doromby," "Madách, az operahős," *Élet és Irodalom*, August 9, 1981, the only Hungarian reaction to Hamel's opera of which I am aware, is based on this review.) A similar point is made by Sandner (loc. cit.). Vera Lumpe's discussion in "Geträumte Tragödie - tragischer Tod" (*Frankfurter Rundschau*, July 3, 1981) is more circumspect, promising "interesting experiences" to an audience which brings "composure and patience" to the performance.

14. It should be remembered that it was Madách's growing reputation as an outstanding parliamentary speaker that drew the attention of János Arany to the unknown dramatist.

15. See Kurt Peter Hamel, "Auf dem Weg zum Libretto 'Ein Menschentraum'," *Staatstheater Kassel* program notes.

16. See Bernd Müllmann, "Die Ideale sind verkommen," (*Hessische/Niedersächsische Allgemeine*, June 29, 1981). Otherwise, Müllmann has high praise for Dorn's direction.

17. Jens Wendland ("Neue Naivität für die alte Oper," *Süd-deutsche Zeitung*, June 30, 1981) deals critically with some of these aspects of the Kassel production.

18. See István Sőtér's study, *Álom és történelemről: Madách Imre és Az ember tragédiája* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1965) and my monograph, *Imre Madách*.

19. Conversation with Hans Joachim Schaefer, *Staatstheater Kassel* program notes.

20. Quoted in Fritz Strich, *Goethe and World Literature*, trans. C.A.M. Sym (New York: Hafner Publishing Company, 1949), p. 256.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 2 (Fall 1984)

Innovative Archaisms in the Poetry of Endre Ady*

Marianna D. Birnbaum

Literary archaization is always innovative, primarily because it is a conscious effort on the part of the artist to lend by it a new markedness to his text. Markedness is achieved by replacing the expected with the unexpected. The aesthetic effect of archaisms in a literary text depends on how clearly the action of *choice* is felt, namely how obvious it is for the reader that the lexical item or structure the author uses was selected *instead* of one that would have readily come to mind. Thus the effectiveness of archaisms is enhanced if the *absence* of the replaced item is clearly felt in the *presence* of the one replacing it. This in turn means that only *recognized,* (perceived) archaisms may function as a literary device. [1] In their alien-ness, archaisms interrupt contiguity between sequential items in the text, and the greater the gulf between the expected and the archaic usage of language, the stronger the disruptive effect of archaisms. Consequently, in its intratextual position a lexical archaism may be conceived of as a metaphor rather than a synonym, its effect sharpened by the reader's awareness of the lack of spatio-temporal proximity. While this holds true for lexical items only, both the insertion of archaic vocabulary and grammar create a *radiation* in the text, comprehensively rearranging and redirecting the links in the chain of objects and actions, in form and meaning as well.[2] Yet, there is one essential difference: archaisms, their temporal alien-ness notwithstanding, are chosen from a pool of *known* items, since their desired effect is based on reader recognition,

---

**Note: A shorter version of this paper, read in Oxford, July 1981, was dedicated to the memory of Professor Robert Auty, an expert in the Central European literary languages and a devoted reader and translator of the poetry of Ady.*

i.e., on *tradition*. It is the "presencing" of tradition which operates in a successfully applied archaism.[3]

As in most European cultures, in Hungary too, early translations of the Bible, as well as the stock of proverbs and proverbial sayings are the most readily available fountainhead of archaisms. These properties also carry particular socio-cultural functions in our civilisation, and represent a special body of meaning. They are normally found in groups of texts marked by sets of distinctive features. Thus their transposition into a different type of text becomes, if momentarily, the most essential part of their new semantic content.[4]

In addition to quotations from the Bible and from the stock of proverbs, *any* recognizably archaic vocabulary creates an elevated atmosphere. Since the Neologist movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries brought about a qualitative change in the Hungarian language, vocabulary and grammatical structures drawing upon earlier sources are immediately felt as festive or at least quaint when found in a modern text. Almost always they contribute to an increased "lyrical state."

In Hungary too, the Romantic Revival with its passion for medieval words was the chief exploiter of archaisms. It is therefore no accident that Endre Ady (1877-1919), whose poetry abounds with post-Romantic features, had a genuine penchant for archaization. Of course, in addition to drawing on a well-defined *body* of earlier literature, Ady also broached what was by then a well-established literary tradition. The appreciative audience of his work had been created by the Romantic poets of the mid-nineteenth century. Furthermore, his archaic vocabulary merely underscored his poetic self-image, that of the messianic poet, a function equally rooted in the ideology of Romanticism.

As in the case of most post-Romantics, Ady's use of archaisms was more than just a renewed emotionalized stir of aesthetic imagination. Archaisms became an important poetic device by which he accentuated his modern ideas, expressing them in an older mode of consciousness. From the broadest, thematic, to the micropoetic and phonological level, Ady's archaizations permeate his entire poetry. In the following I shall attempt to demonstrate the various means by which he moulded his language to make it fit his artistic needs, and present a selection of examples in order to illustrate his approach and 'working process'.

His poem *A nagy Kéz törvénye* (The Law of the Great Hand) begins with the phrase, "...*Látjátok feleim*..." (Do you behold it, my brethren...). It is from the opening line of the *Halotti Beszéd* (Funeral Oration), the first continuous literary text in the Hungarian language, dating back to c. 1200. Being the earliest Hungarian linguistic monument, the *Funeral Oration* is taught in high school, and at least its first line is known to every Hungarian reader. Its evocative power sets the stage for the rest of the message in the poem, and enhances the role of the poet. As in ancient times it was the priest, performing the oration, 'now it is the poet who mediates between humanity and the inexplicable power above. The piece contains additional lexical archaisms, but the initial quote alone conditions the reader who will know that the most significant, existential issues will be treated in what follows.

On a more pedestrian plane, archaisms were used by Ady exclusively in order to state his own role in society, to identify his values and credo. For this purpose he drew on the vocabulary of some of the—historically incorrect—Hungarian origin myths. Most of those originated in the atmosphere of nineteenth-century feudal Romanticism, in the quest for finding the origins of the Hungarians, who were "orphans and without relatives in the center of Europe." Therefore, Hun, Avar, Scythian ancestors, as well as Protestant-influenced Hebrew-Hungarian linguistic parallels, found their way into the mainstream of Hungarian poetry, all in a pathetic search for a powerful national past. Ady exploited this tradition, but filled it with his own aggressive message, and frequently defended his own "Hungarianness" against the attacks of his conservative critics. A case in point is his *Az Avar-Domb kincse* (The Treasures of the Avar-Mound).[5]

Zengett az Avar-Domb	The Avar-Mound was singing
Őszi csendes éjeken	On quiet autumn nights
Apám kis földjén.	On the small estate of my father.
Zengett az Avar-Domb,	The Avar-Mound was singing,
Nekem zengett, csak nekem.	To me alone, alone to me.
Vad népe Bajánnak,	The fierce clan of Baján,
Véres fejű avarok	Avars with bleeding scalps
Nekem üzentek:	Sent word to me:
"Vad népe Bajánnak	"The fierce clan of Baján
Neked kincseket hagyott...."	Left its treasure to you alone...". [6]

His *Góg és Magóg fia vagyok én* (*I am the Son of Gog and Magog*), with which he stormed the palisades of tepid academism in Hungarian lyrical poetry, is one of the most consistent examples of Ady's use of the national past (as well as biblical and pagan material) as tropes in his poetry:

Góg és Magóg fia vagyok én,
Hiába döngetek kaput, falat
S mégis megkérdtem tőletek:
Szabad-e sírni a Kárpátok alatt?

Verecke híres útján jöttem én.
Fülembe még ősmagyar dal rivall,
Szabad-e Dévénynél betörnöm
Új időknek új dalaival?

Fülembe forró ólmot öntsetek,
Legyek az új, az énekes Vazul,
Ne halljam az élet új dalait,
Tiporjatok reám durván, gazul.

De addig sírva, kínban, mit se várva
Mégis csak száll új szárnyakon a dal
S ha elátkozza százszor Pusztaszer,
Mégis győztes, mégis új és magyar.

I am Gog and Magog's son,
Banging on your gates and walls in vain:
Yet I'm asking here everyone: may one weep
On the Great Hungarian Plain?

I entered Verecke's famous path,
Old Ugric songs still roaring in my ears,
May I now storm in from the South
With newer songs of later years?

Pour boiling lead into my ears!
The new bard, a new Vazul I'll be!
I am willing not to hear the song,
You may all beat and torture me.

Yet in pain and tears and without a hope

My song will soar on newer wings,
Though cursed and damned by Pusztaszer
A new Magyar glory it will sing.

The poem displays the fusion of Old Testament imagery with elements from early Hungarian history. The pounding last stanza, however, refers to the immediate political target of the poet: Prime Minister Count István Tisza, who is represented in the metonymic context of Pusztaszer, where he had his family estates. Ady's fury against that conservative politician was expressed in scores of poems, many of them overtly directed against him, while in some he appears, as above, couched in a transparent poetic device. Ady's 'pagan' source is the body of early chronicle literature, primarily Anonymus' *Gesta Hungarorum*, which is revealed by his symbolic use of names referring to pre-Christian origin tales of the Hungarians, recorded in that medieval historical work.

As opposed to those Romantics and post-Romantics who, on the basis of the revived origin tales, added further concoctions to a sentimental 'Magyar mythology,' Ady revolutionized the function of such archaisms by attacking with them the remnants of the very feudal system they were to mythologize.[7] His idiosyncratic symbolic use of archaic names and placenames stripped the words of their earlier semantic content and filled them with a new, poised political message. This function of Ady's archaizations is clearly detectable in *Páris az én Bakonyom* (Paris is my Bakony Mountain, 1907).

Nagy az én bűnöm: a lelkem.
Bűnöm, hogy messze látok és merek,
Hitszegő vagyok Álmos fajából,
S máglyára vinne
Egy Irán-szagú, szittya sereg.

Great is my sin: my soul.
My sin is that I can see far, and dare,
I am a traitor in Álmos's clan,
And they want me on the stakes
This musk-reeking, Scythian lot.

Each line furthers the effects of archaization, but at the same time reveals the opposite of a romanticized view of political

complacency. In the first, his sin is equated with his soul, a well-laid trap for the reader who thus expects a Christian confession, which is 'promised' to him by the contracted and inverted structure of the sentence. The second line's explanation, however, frustrates his expectation because in it the poet declares that his only sins are his 'vision' and courage and that he is more aware of reality surrounding him than his fellow-Hungarians. His admission, therefore, that he is a traitor among the self-aggrandizers who derive their raison d'être from past glory (Álmos, the father of Árpád, the 'Landtaker' and founder of Hungary, is his metaphor for past greatness), stresses his virtue, and not his sin. 'Musk-reeking,' which is meant by his phrase "reeking of Iran," refers to the old, fur-trimmed dolmans of the nobility who are stuck hopelessly in the past and are ready to destroy anyone representing a fresh idea. Thus the metonymic chain built in the last two lines, while lexically containing the properties of archaic Hungarian, succeeds in rendering their semantic opposite: it becomes the vehicle of the poet's radical message. The ambiguous title, introducing a mountain range in western Hungary, and equating it with Paris, can only be understood through Ady's biography, and the detailed knowledge of Hungarian history. Ady used his recurrent trips to Paris as escapes from the depressing and ominous realities of Hungary, as the Bakony Mountain was used as a hiding place by outlaws, runaway serfs, and after 1848, by Hungarian revolutionaries. The often romanticized stories of those are another aspect of a sentimental and conservative popular attitude towards the past which Ady challenged by having incorporated the concept into a forceful, activist poem.

This romanticized past, which only barely covered the nation's grief over yet another defeat, is recalled by a Hungarian mini-genre, the *Kuruc* folk song. The *Kuruc* songs, of the eighteenth-century are a readily identifiable sub-type of the Hungarian folk song. They were first sung by the *Kuruc* (insurgent) soldiers of Prince Rákóczi's national army, who were defeated in their effort to achieve independence from Austria in 1711. They are laments, reminiscent of the jeremiads influenced by the Old Testament, and deal with the misery of the homeless refugee, the poor exile, or the defeated patriot. Since it is primarily of lower-class origin, the *Kuruc* song draws mainly on the imagery and vocabulary of the traditional folk song. [8] Ady

also used the format and vocabulary of the *Kuruc* songs but filled them with an unmistakably contemporary message. By using this archaic frame, he forced the readers' attention to the fact that the social and political aspirations of the poor, expressed two hundred years earlier, had still not been satisfied in the first decade of the twentieth century. In this case, archaization enabled the poet to voice a continued chain of demands, and link together the struggles of the past and present.[9]

These songs either follow the monologue format, or the message is presented in a dialogue, similar to the *Két szegénylegény beszélgetése* (The Conversation of Two Poor Lads), a *Kuruc* folk song from about 1706. Since some of these songs refer to historical figures (as Tamás Esze, Albert Kis, András Boné), Ady, too, chose his own 'historical' character Tyukodi, who appears in a number of his *Kuruc* songs, and is often the poet's mouthpiece. Ady probably 'borrowed' the name from Márton Tyukodi, a Protestant pastor and sermonizer, who was active in the seventeenth century, and who published his work in Nagyvárad (1641), in Ady's second hometown. Thus the appearance of the name Tyukodi in any Ady poem is a 'signal' alerting the reader to the *Kuruc*, but also to the anti-aristocratic content of the piece.

Much has been written of Ady's role-playing, of his changing poetic self-image (Jesus, the prophets, pagan songsters and earlier Hungarian poets). Owing to such identification, the poet also dressed his poem in the language of the period, and he did the same when he picked historical figures with or about whom he conducted imaginary conversations. In *Dózsa György lakomáján* (Feasting on György Dózsa), the followers of the sixteenth-century populist rebel speak to one another in the language of a contemporary chronicler, Tinódi. In *Ilosvai Selymes Péter*, Ady, while musing about a chance to meet the author of the *Tholdi* epic (1574), uses the language and rhythm of that sixteenth-century narrative. Similarly, paying homage to Mihály Táncsics, the nineteenth-century Hungarian patriot (1799-1884), Ady switches his language to fit the style of the times of Petõfi and Táncsics. Yet, in none of these cases does he engage in a formalistic exercise only. The linguistic immersion enables him to "presence" his ideas, to close the gap between past and present, and to emphasize his point that times truly do not change when the plights and sufferings remain unchanged.

Frequently Ady alerts the reader to his intentions by choosing a motto to his poem. Often, these are quotes from the *Book of psalms*, the *Book of Prophets* or the *Books of Kings*. *A gyülekezet sátorában* (In the Tent of the Congregation, or In the Tabernacle), bears the following motto:

And Solomon went up tither to the brazen altar before the Lord, which was the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it. II. Chronicles 1.6

Ady indeed chose the reference as a kernel to his poem from which he braided his own ideas and to which he returned for a renewed contact in each stanza.

A GYÜLEKEZET SÁTORÁBAN

Áldozék pedig ott Salamon a rézoltáron az Úr előtt, mely a Gyülekezetnek sátorában vala; áldozék, mondom, azon tüzes, ezer áldozatokkal. Krónika második könyve I.6

A Gyülekezet sátorában
Vagyok galambokkal, kosokkal,
Csaknem tizenöt év óta már
Tüzes, ezer áldozatokkal.

Rézoltárod tüzét véremmel
Hiába öntöztem, nagy Isten,
Sem a te tüzed, sem az enyém
Nem lohadtak vad ereinkben.

És szerencséd elküldésére
Kegyelmedet hiába várom:
Aranykincset érő szép vérem
Ott pusztul el a rézoltáron.

A Gyülekezet sátorában
Nem szabad gyávának sem lenni
S tüzes, ezer áldozatokkal
Nem vagyok mégis semmi, semmi.

IN THE TABERNACLE

"And Solomon went up thither to the brazen altar before the Lord, which was at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it." II Chronicles 1.6

Inside the tabernacle of the Lord
for almost fifteen years I stand
with turtle doves, white horses, rams,
and fiery offerings from the shining hoard.

I shed my drops of blood like boiling rains
upon your brazen altar, God,
but neither your keen fire nor mine
has waned the least within our pounding veins.

Your holy grace in full of fortune sent
I vainly wait these fifteen years,
while on your brazen altar there
the golden treasures of my blood are spent.

The insecure of heart have never wrought
a deed within this tented shrine,
but with a thousand burnt offerings
I still have come to nought, have come to nought.

There is no archaic grammar in the original: lexical items, as *tabernacle*, *offering* and the like, create the atmosphere of old. It is actually noteworthy, how many more archaic features the translation contains.[10]

Occasionally, merely one line would allude to a biblical connotation, as in *A szememet csókold* (My eyes you ought to kiss), where the initial words, "Inségemből hozzád/fohászkodom sírással..." calls to mind the psalm, *Min hametzar karati ja...* (Out of my straits, I called upon the Lord....).[11] The poem is a love song in which search for happiness and gold are intertwined, and has altogether very little to do with faith. If anything, it has ties with witchcraft, since it features the motif of kissing the eyes of a person in order to make him see what he otherwise would not.

Of those archaizations which, instead of forming a particular whole in terms of form or message, appear as independent stylistic devices, Ady's doubling of some prefixes and his using of anaphora should be mentioned here. The rephrasing and repeat of verbal prefixes, so popular in the sixteenth century but obsolete in Ady's time, is revived in a number of his poems in which it serves to emphasize his message. In *Az ismeretlen Ada* (The Unknown Ada), he writes to the woman, "...egyszerre el-tova-tünsz" (...you suddenly disappear-away). Similarly in *Követelő írás sorsunkért* (Demanding lines about our fate); in

addition to his archaic use of *vagyon*, instead of *van* (there is), Ady says about God: "Az isten a szívemben vagyon/Csak néha el-kisétál" (God is in my heart/but occasionally he walks away and out). Repetition for the sake of emphasis, as *élve élek* (living I live) or *várván várva a véget* (waiting I wait for the end) evoke the mood of biblical language in the mind of the modern Hungarian reader.[12]

By the middle of the nineteenth century, replacing the Latin and German influenced usage, substantives modified by numerals or number-equivalents were used in the singular only. Thus, the following lines from Ady are striking for the modern reader, and he definitely conceives of the phrases as grammatically incorrect.[13]

...Két halottak lent feküdtek	Two dead bodies were lying below
Két hajdani szeretők...	Two lovers of early days,

For the same reason, "*minden* árulókkal..." (with *all* traitors...) in *Sírva gondolok rá* (I think of it weeping), the duplication of the plural sign is felt as an archaic remnant in the text.

The above quotes are still readily understandable, but the obsolete participle Ady used in the following quote, nearly obfuscates the meaning of the entire stanza:

Gyöngülnek ágaim	My branches are weakened
Húzza a sok igen	Pulled down by the yes-es.
S a megcsúfolt nemek	And the ridiculed no-s
Rozsdákkal megírvák	Written in rust
a leveleimen.	on my leaves.[14]

In *Krónikás ének 1918-ból* (A Sung-Chronicle from 1918), the archaic language of medieval chronicles is recreated by the repetitive use of the third person plural at the end of each line. Here Ady only chose such verbs which contained front vowels. Thus, according to the rules of vowel harmony, each final syllable became *-nek*. To increase the effect of archaic repetition he used the verbs in the reflexive or with a reflexive meaning. Thus, each line ends in *-űlnek*. The first stanza reads as follows:

Iszonyú dolgok mostan történűlnek
Népek népekkel egymás ellen gyűlnek
Bűnösök és jók egyként keserűlnek
S ember hitei kivált meggyöngűlnek.

Terrible things are happening these days,
Nations gather against one another,
Guilty and good suffer equally
Man's beliefs weaken especially.

In the case of *történni* (to happen), since the verb has no reflexive form, Ady simply made up one, and used it instead of *történnek*. In the sea of the following thirty-nine lines, his neologism impresses the reader as a genuine archaism. His "archaic" predication is entirely manufactured, it merely alludes to a kind of predication found in the sixteenth and seventeenth century chronicles, in which *vala*, the by then obsolete form of *volt* (there was), was customary. This was used by the most famous Hungarian chronicler, Sebestyén Tinódi, who in his *Cronica* (1554), describing Hungarian resistance against the Ottoman army, uses *vala* about a hundred and fifty times. It should be added however that his was already a conscious effort at archaization, since Hungarian poets have successfully employed rhyme and assonance since the mid-thirteenth century (cf. *Ómagyar Mária Siralom,* Mary's Lament).

One of the most frequent methods of archaization in Hungarian literary practice is the use of the obsolete conjugation *to be*. As shown above, this can be the repetition of *vala* in a poetic text, or the occasional injection of *vagyon*. Ady made ample use of these possibilities, mostly in order to create a special mood but at times also in order to design proper rhyme or rhythm. In *Elbocsátó szép üzenet* (Letter of Dismissal), the rhythmic function of *vala* is entirely clear:

...Ki előttem kis kérdőjel *vala*
Csak jöttömmel lett beteljesedve.

...that *you were* nothing but a little question
until with my arrival you became fulfilled.[15]

(One of the most exhibitionistic pieces of the entire body of Hungarian verse, this poem was not meant to have any archaic features. On the contrary, by its shocking self-revelations it asserted that, when it came to poetry, in Ady 's mind there was no private subject or any need for privacy.)

In another instance, instead of conveying a festive atmosphere, the archaic past tense creates a grotesque and comic rhyme.

Szép öcsém - mi kevélyek *valánk*
S kár, ha a magyar *falánk*.

My dear brother - we have been haughty
And it's a pity when a Hungarian is greedy.

Altogether, it seems that Ady chose obsolete predication as his most favourite vehicle of 'partial' archaization. His *Szent Margit legendája*, (The Legend of St. Margaret) contains five stanzas, and in these are found fifteen different forms of predication. Only two, *veté* (instead of vetette/*cast* in past tense) and *áldozák* (instead of áldozták/*they offered*) are archaic endings. Similarly in the four stanzas of *Rózsaliget a pusztán* (Rosebushes on the fallow), of the thirteen predicates only one, *megkisértetéк* (instead of megkisértettek engem *I have been tempted*), is archaic; yet it sets the tone for the entire poem. In several pieces, omission of the connecting vowels, which is mandatory in modern Hungarian, recalls the archaic forms in which consonant clusters were much more frequent. Such are *intnek* (instead of intenek-*they motion*), *megállítná* (instead of megállítaná-*he/she would stop it*), and the like.[16] Since in the history of the Hungarian language—parallel to the introduction of connecting vowels—a process of contracting syllables can also be traced, Ady's using *szólott* (instead of szólt *he/she spoke*), *állanak* (instead of állnak-*they stand*), etc., serves the same purpose.[17]

Ady's choice of obsolete Hungarian words make up another fascinating facet in his poetic diction. At first reading, they all seem to belong to the oldest lexical stock, yet one glance into the Hungarian etymological dictionary will yield surprisingly variegated data regarding their history. For example, *gyilok* (instead of *gyilkosság*-murder), turns out to be a neologism of the late eighteenth century, but obsolete by Ady's time. In its contextual position in the grand, neo-Romantic poem *A Hadak Útja, gyilok* sounds truly archaic.[18]

Ágyú, gyilok, úri bitangság
nem fog a mi dús ereinken...

Cannons, murder, gentry depravity
will not conquer our opulent veins...

Next to the word *ágyú*, the reader expects another modern weapon or a more modern sounding word for murder. The

markedly archaic effect is enhanced by the adjective *dús* in the next line. *Dús*, meaning rich or plentiful, also appears archaic in standard Hungarian. It is not a very old word in the language: it derives from Doge (the chief magistrate in Venice or Genoa), and entered Hungarian by Serbo-Croatian mediation (doze). In its unexpected synecdochic combination, the newly created phrase, and the form *gyilok* of the previous line, 'archaize' the entire couplet.

Another group of lexical items which demonstrate Ady's deliberate choice of archaization are foreign words, many of which have long been replaced by Hungarian ones, and which therefore lend an aura of quaintness to the text. A number of those, such as *Iszter, hélota, fáma, évoé, historia, pátria, hérosz, Januárius, pietás, Olimp*—all used in Hungarian spelling—are of Graeco-Roman origin and were favoured by poets even into the nineteenth century who hoped to attest to their erudition by using them. In Ady's poetry, they have a decidedly archaic ring.[19] On occasion, the insistence on a particular form of spelling is idiosyncratic to Ady. For example, *grimasz*, an international loan word which entered Hungarian about 1797, via the French form *grimace*, has never been spelled without a *z* in Hungarian. Thus the form *grimás* is Ady's own. [20] A different purpose is served, however, by his use of such foreign words which have sunk from the literary language into the dialectal sphere and are conceived of as old-fashioned, persisting only among the semi-educated. Thus, items such as, *ájer* (levegő-air), *forverz* (előre-ahead), *talján* (olasz-Italian), *náció* (nemzet-nation), or *cívis* (polgár-burgher), are all mildly contemptuous and emphasize the poet's ironic stance. [21]

Regional and obsolete words appear in Ady's poetry in the most unexpected, and precisely therefore, accentuated positions. *Ének a porban* (Song in the dust) provides an amusing example of this method. In it, Ady pokes fun at his own 'prophetic,' 'messianic' fate in Hungary. The next-to-last stanza reads as follows:

Mocsaras rónán bércekre vágytam,
Egy kis halomig hozott a lábam.
Forró, szűz lelkünk rakjuk a *sutra*,
Lalla, lalla,
Be megjártad itt, oh,
Zaratusztra.

On marshy meadows I was yearning for mountains.
My feet brought me merely to a mound.
We can ditch our flaming virgin souls,
Lulla, lulla,
You had poor luck here,
Zarathustra.

The members of the rhyming pair, *rakjuk a sutra* and *Zaratusztra* are taken from two entirely different areas of human experience. *Sut*, a sixteenth-century Hungarian word, originally meant the side-bench of a village fireplace (*Ofenwinkel*), where, according to folk tradition, old people, useless at work, would sit and keep warm. "Sutra dobni," a proverbial phrase, developed from this notion, and means: to discard, to ditch. Its appearance in combination with Zoroaster, the ancient Persian religious thinker, is rather unforeseen, and, therefore, highly comical, for the educated reader. The initiated, who would also know that Ady's poetic self-image was not immune to the influence of Nietzscheanism, derives additional enjoyment from this unexpected assonance.

Some regional words are totally unknown to the city person, who *is* the reader of Ady's poetry. Lack of familiarity operates in the case of *dancs*, in *Egy párisi hajnalon* (A Parisian morning). *Dancs* is a regional word of Rumanian transmission (*danci a gipsy boy,* from the phrase *den ci - give me something,* in Rumania). The word means *filthy*, and is obviously a racial slur (in Ady's time a Transylvanian dialect word). Thus the line *Gyűlölöm dancs, keleti fajtám...* (I hate my filthy, Oriental, race) was hardly understandable, and therefore conceived of as archaic by a reading public who was unfamiliar with the word.[22]

A phonetic variant of a word may retain its status in the standard language, or it may fall into the realm of dialects. In standard Hungarian, the word for girl is *leány*. It is of Finno-Ugric stock and was first recorded in 1055 when it appeared in the *Tihany Charter*, a Latin document containing some place names and fifty-eight common names in Hungarian.[23] Its palatalized form, *lyány*, is found in the *Jókai Codex* of 1448. During the ensuing centuries, the two variants appear side by side until, by the end of the nineteenth century, *lyány* was reduced to regional usage. Having become a dialect word, its presence adds a special connotation to any literary text. In Ady's poetry, there is a consistently maintained semantic split

betwen *leány* and *lyány*. *Leány* or *lány* denote his objects of spiritual love, refer to young virgins and innocent emotions, while *lyány* alludes to an erotically charged feeling, a sexual infatuation. The following are but a few examples of this semantic bifurcation. In *Kérdés kék szemekhöz* (Question to blue eyes) the subject is a new pure love to whom he appeals:*Édes kislányom, nyisd ki szemed...* (My dear little girl, open your eyes...). In *Túlsó part* (The other shore) the young girls "waiting" on the opposite shore are contrasted with the "available" woman in his room.[24] The first love, *Gizella kis zsidó leány volt* (Gizella was a little Jewish girl...). whose virginal lips (*leány-ajkad*), forever haunt the poet.[25] The first "kiss" is recalled, in *Heléna, elsõ csókom*. The buxom Serbian girl (*Nagytõgyû szerb leány...*) is not innocent, only the young poet is. Thus *his* shy, first experience is captured in the word *leány*. In another poem, in which the aging Ady watches himself with a degree of self-irony, he writes, *Vén úrfi, hajh, ki, ki a rétre, /ott szállnak a lepkék, s leányok* (Old fellow, alas, get out, to the meadows /where the butterflies and young girls fly...). Youth and ethereal innocence are envied here, in stark contrast to the poems speaking of a sensual desire to relive the experiences of earlier years. The memory of *A nyári délutánok* (Summer afternoons) recalls an entirely different atmosphere.

> Mikor az Ég furcsa, lila-kék
> S találkára mennek a *lányok*,
> Oh, be titkosak, különösek
> Ezek a nyári délutánok.
>
> The pointilism of purple sky
> and girls who steal to hideaways,
> upon these summer afternoons
> how clearly strange our spindrift daze.[26]

In *Az úri szũz dicsérete* (Praise of the genteel virgin), his violent attack on the girl's hypocritical behaviour is capsulized in the phrase, *vágyad több, mint az utcalyányé...* (Your cravings are more than the prostitute's). Ady's use of the word *utcalyány* is particularly interesting, since the compound is a calque, a translation from German. Originally a different combination was used in Hungarian: *örömleány* (*Freudenmädchen*), and later when the German *Strassenmädchen* became increasingly frequent in literature, *utcaleány* was coined. In neither case was the

second part of the compound used in a palatalized form, except in dialects. Thus Ady further 'eroticized' his message by opting for *lyány*, which for him carried a special meaning. In his highly archaized *Dul-kisasszonyok násza* (The mating of the young Dul-women) the man sing a 'mating song' to call the girls (*lyány*-csaló nótát). In the boldly erotic *Megölelném a lyányod* (I would embrace your daughter), desire for the mother is mixed with an urge to "have her" in her daughter. The daughter is perhaps still a child but since the *poet's* desire is anything but innocent, the daughter is referred to as *lyány*.

De ha meghalnék bűnömért,
Fölgyújtanám egy éjjel a világot.
Húnyt szemmel gondolnék reád,
Átfogná két veszett karom
S megölelném a *lyányod*.

Although death followed on my crime,
tonight the world could not burn hotter.
I think of you with eyes shut fast
and reach out accursed arms,
I would embrace your daughter.[27]

The act of defloration in *Fehér lyány virág kezei* (Flower hands of a "white" girl) is alluded to in the phrase, *omló szirmát egy fehér lyánynak* (crumbling petals of a 'white girl').[28]

The examples are too numerous to be even quoted by page number. Since Ady's poetry has a strong erotic charge, it contains, as expected, many more instances of the by him sensualized form, *lyány*.

The kudos in Ady's innovating archaization is his creating a new vocabulary in Hungarian by way of coining archaic-sounding neologisms. This he achieved by adding endings which were obsolete, or not used in connection with that particular word class. The following examples illustrate this technique: in *A nagy álom* (The great dream), he coins the phrase, *altatlan álom*, meaning sleepless dream, or dreamless sleep.

In Hungarian *al-* is the root to both sleep and dream. In

addition, *sleepless* in standard Hungarian is expressed as *álmatlan*, literally meaning dreamless. Owing to this ambiguity, the unusual ending, while strengthening the metaphor (death), also adds a quaint, archaic element to the meaning. According to the rules of Hungarian grammar, the superlative is marked by *leg* + *adjective* + *bb*, the latter often preceded by a connecting vowel. Ady's adding this affixation to a *noun* in the sentence ...*A tanító, a legrababb magyar*... (the teacher is the slavest Hungarian) is a nineteenth-century-type neologism of the kind which given its atypical formation, would not have survived, and would therefore sound archaic in a modern text. Similarly, when unusual frequentative endings are attached to a verb, *álldaltak* (instead of *álldogáltak* they were standing around), or *döföl̈t* (instead of *döfködött* he/she was butting repeatedly), even if they are modelled on existing endings, the reader used to the traditional forms, will find them, if not foreign, at least odd. [29]

Ady also created such constructs as *majdanta* (instead of *majdan* someday), *éhedt* (instead of *éhes* hungry), *temeszt* (instead of *temet* he/she buries), *fölönte* (instead of *fölötte* above him/her/it), which were all new, yet appeared archaic, although vaguely familiar to the reader. [30]

Inversion is often used by poets for emphatic reasons, but also for creating end-rhymes. In most literary languages inversion has an archaic ring and makes for disruption in contiguity. In Ady's highly romantic *Vízió a lápon* (Vision over the marshland), the mythologized self-image of the poet is emphasized by inversion, and the messianic quality of the message is enhanced by the method:

Vagyok fény-ember ködbe bújva,
Vagyok veszteglő akarat,
Vagyok láplakók csodája,
Ki fényre termett, s itt marad.

Fény-ember *vagyok*, ködbe bújva
Veszteglö akarat *vagyok*,
Láplakók csodája *vagyok*,
Aki fényre termett, és aki itt
marad.

I am a man-of-light wrapped in fog,
I am tarrying volition,
I am a wonder among the people of the marshes
who was born to light but remains here.

It is obvious from the above stanza that had Ady only used inversion in order to create an assonance he would not have to change but the second line. The incantation-like repetition provided by the three consecutive inversions add to the atmosphere of the entire poem, and increases the desired notion of the supra-natural.[31]

The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics states that "Archaism as a feature of literary style is especially associated with poetry and it was originally connected with meter" (enl. ed., 1965, 47). This is by the fact that archaization was most frequently manifested—at least in English poetry—by truncation, contraction or expansion of syllables in the metrical context. In Hungarian poetry, due to the agglutinating nature of the language, the possibilities for producing rhyme or assonance are much greater than in isolating languages, e.g., English. Nonetheless, in Ady's poetry a high frequency of such archaizations can be observed. Several examples can be traced directly to the Bible, and to one particular translation of it. This is the work of Gáspár Károlyi (c. 1529-91), whose translation of the Old and New Testament (1590) has remained to date the standard Protestant edition which was read also by Ady's family.

This source is tapped when Ady chooses the role of prophet. *Ellenségim*, instead of *ellenségeim* (my enemies) lends the poem a festive, biblical ring. In other instances however, it is indeed rhyme and meter which determine his choice. Yet, Ady would never contract or drop syllables, where the text otherwise would not benefit from the device.

The following three examples will illustrate his use of contraction as one of his methods of archaization, with the bracketed words showing standard modern Hungarian.

> *Itt régik a bűnök, itt régik az átkok* (*régiek* are old) (old are the sins, here and old are the curses) in *Két kuruc beszélget* (Two Kuruc soldiers talk), where contraction makes the syllabic parallelism stronger.
>
> *Valakinek szeme ragyog...* 'Halleluja, szép aranyok' (*valakinek a* — somebody's...*aranyak* — gold, pl.) (Somebody's eyes are sparkling...Hallelujah, pretty gold) in a *Gazdagság álma* (The dream of richness). Both the omission of the definite article and the use of a mid-vowel instead of the modern, open vowel (the beginning of this shift goes back to the thirteenth

century) conform to the metric needs of the stanza.

> *Én atyám, Mammon, szomorú szűzségem* (*szűzességem* virginity) (My father, Mammon, my sad virginity...) in *Psalm of the Monk of Mammon*, the contraction provides the desired hendecasyllabic line, but also contributes to the "increased lyrical state" of the text.[32]

Thus, as was stated earlier, innovative archaisms extend in Ady's poetry from the sound to the word, from the word to the phrase, and from there to the entire line. Intertwined they create that special inimitable texture of his poetry. Owing to his singular language Ady had no genuine following. He only had epigones whose weakness lay precisely in the fact that their studied combinations could never reproduce the same highly artistic and unique amalgam.

NOTES

1. As Charles Bally put it, "L'impression d'archaisme n'apparait que chez ceux qui ont étudié les anciens textes francais; et ce n'est pas la ce que suppose le fonctionement naturel de langue." *Traité de la stylistique francaise*, 2nd. ed., Paris, 1921.
2. Cf. my paper discussing the function of metaphor and metonymy in "An Armchair Picaresque: The Texture and Structure of George Konrád's *The Case Worker*," *Fiction and Drama in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, UCLA Slavic Studies*, I, 1980, 62-85.
3. Here, "presencing" is a term borrowed from Martin Heidegger who applied it in a partially different manner in *Poetry, Language, Thought*. Trans. by Albert Hofstadter.(New York, 1972): p. 208.
4. Cf. Yury Lotman, *Szöveg, model, tipus*. Trans. by Viktor Bánlaki *et al.*(Budapest, 1973): p. 57.
5. All quotations in the text are from Endre Ady. *Összes versei*. (Budapest, 1955). 2 vols. After page reference is to this edition. All translations, unless otherwise indicated, are my own.
6. Baján was a pagan leader.
7. To this group belong his references to *Hunnia* (meaning Hungary), as in *Menekülj, menekülj innen* (Flee, flee from here), or in *A Hadak Útja* (The way of the armies).
8. Sung, accompanied by music, the genre became so popular that in the fervor of the Romantic Revival many such items resurfaced. Some were genuine folk songs, others of learned authorship. A typical example for the latter was the output of Kálmán Thaly (1839-1909), who in 1864, among a group of authentic *Kuruc* songs, also published his own compositions, and tried to pass them on as original pieces from the eighteenth century.
9. For the most typical examples of Ady's *Kuruc* songs, cf. I: 235, 239, 266, and II: 92, 97, 178 and 281.
10. Translated by Anton Nyerges. *Poems of Endre Ady*. (Buffalo-New York: Hungarian Cultural Foundation, 1969): 262. For further examples for Ady's use of mottoes from biblical literature, cf. I: 335, 435, 447 and II: 84, 105 and 269.
11. Psalm 118. v. 5. From the *Jewish Publication of Society*, Reprint ed., 1917.
12. *Északi ember vagyok* (I am a man of the north) and *Pénz a remeteségben* (Money in the hermitage).
13. *Két hajdani szeretők* (Two lovers of old).
14. *A Kényszerűség fája* (The tree of impositions).

15. A. Nyerges, trans., *Poems of Endre Ady*, p. 355.
16. *Álcás vén valómmal* (With my masked old self) and *A proletár fiú verse* (The proletarian boy's song), respectively.
17. *A nagy Pénztárnok* (The great bank teller) and *Ki elveszti harcát* (He who looses his battle), respectively.
18. The Hungarian folk tradition refers to the Milky Way as the 'Way of the Armies.' On it Attila and his army "will return and liberate the Hungarians from oppression."
19. The examples are from Béla Zsolnai, *Nyelv és stílus* (Budapest, 1957): p. 274.
20. Cf. *A megnőtt élet* (Matured life).
21. *Ájer* and *civis* (I: 194), *forverz* (II: 68), *talján* (I: 59), *fáma* (I: 415), *Iszter* (I: 90), *Januarius* (I: 102), *Hunnia* (I: 81 and 188), *náció* (I: 100).
22. Similarly, the dialect word *cenk* (young dog), in the otherwise chanson-like *Búcsú Siker Asszonytól* (Farewell to dame success), creates an archaic node in the text, simply by its "unexpected" occurrence in this kind of material.
23. *Tihanyi Alapítólevél*, a Latin document, chartered by King Endre I, pertaining to the founding of Tihany Abbey on Lake Balaton. For further information on the recorded history of the word, cf. *A magyar nyelv történeti—etimológiai szótára* (Budapest, 1970) Vol.2: 733-34.
24. "*Túl a Dunán leányok...kislányok, várakozók...*"
25. *Az első asszony* (The first woman).
26. A.Nyerges, trans., *Poems of Endre Ady*, p.116.
27. Ibid., 208.
28. In *Elindult egy leány* (A girl started out), where within the same poem the girl's changing from virgin into the poet's lover is also marked by the change from *leány* to *lyány* (and not woman).
29. *Szép magyar sors* (Fair Hungarian fate), and the opening poem of the volume *A Magunk Szerelme* (The love of our selves).
30. Some of the examples are from B. Zsolnai, *Nyelv és stílus*, p. 276, and Gyula Szemere, *Ady Endre költői stilisztikája* (Székesfehérvár, 1941). Pécsi Tudományegyetem, *A Magyar Intézet Értekezései, 21*, esp. 6-14.
31. For further examples of such inversions, cf. *Sem utódja, sem boldog őse...* (Neither descendant nor happy ancestor...), I: 233. Also, I: 135, 179 and II: 85, 317. It is noteworthy that Ady used inversion mostly when referring to himself. In *Ruth és Delila* (Ruth and Delilah), the word *látlak* (I see you) creates a drum-like, pounding impact. Each stanza contains three lines, of which two begin with *látlak*.
32. Cf. also I: 13, 18, 73, 89, 229 and II: 90, 306.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 2 (Fall 1984)

Why Is There No "Sixth Eclogue"?

Emery George

Among great artists of any period, Miklós Radnóti must be counted in the ranks of those whose careers came to a close during their tender years; nevertheless, as Emil Lichtenberg has written so aptly of Mozart, "the giant arc of his life makes a whole."[1] The sole dissonant chord that disturbs the harmony of Radnóti's great trajectory, and renders the wholeness of his life's work problematic to this very day, is the lack of a poem number six in that distinguished series of eclogues in which the poet speaks of and to the times, with Vergilian naturalness, with a greatness transcending poetic diction. The lack of a "Sixth Eclogue" is not only disturbing; let us admit it freely: it is also painful. With hidden lyrical feelings we confront the mutilated series, and make attempts to fill the gap. Stillborn and yet alive, that "Sixth Eclogue" is hiding, it must be hiding somewhere among the eleven poems written between the "Fifth" and the "Seventh." How very much Radnóti scholarship wishes to recuperate from this sense of hurt is clear from an essay by Imre Trencsényi-Waldapfel, in which the great classicist identifies as the "Sixth Eclogue" Radnóti's poem fragment dated 19 May 1944.[2] My present paper considers all pertinent arguments; in fact, it calls attention to several additional poems not discussed in this connection to date. Its aim, however—and in this it departs, in substance as in method, from previous work—is not to determine which poem constitutes the "Sixth Eclogue," but to attempt to answer the question put in the above title: why is there no such work?

In textual criticism of the modern period, symptoms of wishful thinking associated with aspirations of textual completeness show most readily in places where one sets about organizing any portion of a poet's literary estate for book publication. Nothing that is fragmentary can or should become a book (with notable exceptions; with Sappho we have no choice). That it was most probably Radnóti's own wish to realize, at some fitting point in

the future, a separate volume from his series of eclogues (as he indeed did from the series of his *Calendar* poems (1942)), seems evident from the fact that, almost as an afterthought, he wrote a poem to the series in 1942. This is the magically festive, yet tragically attuned "*Száll a tavasz...*" (Spring is in Flight). The presence in the series of this exuberant poem conjures the ideal of completeness to such extent as to render the continued absence of a "Sixth Eclogue" a patent, and in any event an unbearable absurdity. In the course of the years following World War II, 1961 saw the fulfillment of Radnóti's wish; at this time, under the imprint of Magyar Helikon, the eclogues became a Liliput volume entitled *Eclogues*, edited by Imre Trencsényi-Waldapfel and beautifully illustrated with drawings by Piroska Szántó. In the afterword to the volume, the editor writes of the problem of the missing "Sixth" as follows:

> No poem bearing the title "Sixth Eclogue" has emerged from Radnóti's estate; on the other hand, we cannot—knowing the marvellously careful manuscripts of poems he wrote even during the days immediately preceding his martyrdom—assume that Radnóti could have forgotten the series number at which, back home, he had interrupted the writing of the eclogues. Thus we must either believe the "Sixth Eclogue" to be lost, or—what is more probable—that the poet had intended as number six of the cycle that untitled fragment which survives with the dating 19 May 1944. This—in contrast to "Fifth Eclogue," whose fragmentary nature is mere form, that is, a perfect instrument of expression serving the contents—is a fragment in the literal sense: it remained without an ending or a title, since on the day following, on 20 May 1944, he was called up for military labour service once again, a tour from which he did not return home. The total lack of bucolic symbolism in this fragment does not contradict our assumption; after all, hardly a trace of this could be found in "Fourth Eclogue," and not the least evidence of it in "Fifth." Supporting our thesis stands, however, its Old Testament allusion (to the prophet Isaiah in the last line), which to a certain extent connects it with "Fourth Eclogue," and prepares "Eighth."[3]

The poem dated 19 May 1944, known to us since the appearance of Radnóti's posthumous volume *Tajtékos ég* (Sky

with Clouds) (1946) under the title "Fragment," does in fact receive space in the *Eclogues* volume of 1961, as the lost "Sixth Eclogue." Trencsényi-Waldapfel's view and editorial practice are corroborated by those of Pál Réz, who, summarizing his predecessor's arguments in the afterword to his own *Eclogues* edition of 1979, adds: "...important additional proof is constituted by the fact that—as Tibor Melczer has noted—the (poem) 'I lived on this earth in an age...' is in essence a further elaboration of the Vergilian motto heading 'First Eclogue,' that is, an application to Radnóti's age, to the war years...."[4] Tibor Melczer, in his 1974 Budapest dissertation, notes that in the penultimate line of "Fourth Eclogue" the phrase "your anger's smoke" is likewise of prophetic impact and of biblical origin: it alludes to Chapter 30, verse 27, of The Book of Isaiah.[5] Although Melczer's observation dates from 1974, matters did not need to progress even this far in order for the view to find an echo in Radnóti scholarship done outside Hungary. As early as 1965, that is, four years following Trencsényi-Waldapfel's edition of the *Eclogues*, B.S. Adams wrote: "The Sixth Eclogue is lost as such, although it is commonly held that it exists under the title of *Töredék*."[6] Although in the notes to my second Radnóti volume I wrote a reply to this view, I now feel it insufficient to answer merely, as I do there: "...the lack of a 'Sixth Eclogue' does not injure the existing series; in fact the position of the lacuna only certifies its sense of appropriateness.'[7] For even if this is true, as it is also true that Shakespeare's set of sonnets is not damaged by the fact that one of its members (Sonnet 126) contains only twelve lines, the best way we can investigate our problem is by considering, as directly as possible, the poet's will and his fate. It is important for us to attempt to gain an insight into the shop secrets of the conscious artist.

The first secret of which I am thinking is that, if we must look for a "Sixth Eclogue" at any price, perhaps we could consider other poems as well. In order to do this with conviction, we must stress what I have felt for some time, namely, that the poem dated 19 May 1944 does not at all occupy a privileged position among imaginable—and defensible—candidates for the honour of being identified as the missing piece. However irreverent this may seem, I am sorry to have to report that Trencsényi-Waldapfel's arguments do not convince me. The poem which bears the date 19 May 1944 is a fragment in historic

fact only; in form, it is anything but that. It consists of five perfectly constructed five-line stanzas, each beginning with an anaphoric refrain (a feature which, we must admit, brings the poem close to the sign system of "Third Eclogue")[8] As to the total lack of bucolic symbolism, this is not at all the case for either "Fourth Eclogue" or "Fifth"; we can find, in both these earlier eclogues, rich images of nature and suggestions of the pastoral. In "Fourth Eclogue" such features are prominent especially in the second speech by "Voice" and in the stanzas spoken by "Poet" immediately following; in "Fifth Eclogue" we need but read the lines mirroring the fate of Radnóti's mourned friend, György Bálint: "Do you take walks in the leaves, in the forest muck; thick perfume, or / are you a fragrance yourself?" as well as the forest and blizzard images of the entire poem.

Over and against this, the impressive Isaiah allusion closing "Fragment" connects the latter not necessarily only with eclogues (there is, in any event, only one eclogue casting the role of a biblical prophet, the "Eighth"). Let us only recall the poem "Marginal Note to the Prophet Habakkuk" (in the verse collection *Meredek út* (Steep Road, 1938), as well as, in an even wider and more significant context, all of Radnóti's poems and prose works containing biblical allusions.[9] That, *in extremis*, in a poem written on the eve of his last reporting, the poet should permit himself a biblical reference, is understandable even apart from the logic and poetics of the work. The sole, really convincing, connection of the "Fragment" with the eclogues—something that Trencsényi-Waldapfel does not mention—is its addressing the times, the terrible historic age in which it is conceived. Here I agree with Melczer, namely, that the diction of "Fragment" relates it to Vergil's *First Georgic* and with the motto, taken from it, to Radnóti's "First Eclogue." This rhetoric can, however, be found equally easily in the poem "Walk on, Condemned!," as well as in numerous other poems which would truly deserve to be regarded as forerunners of the eclogues.[10]

If we look closely at the incomplete series—that is, only at "Spring is in Flight..." and the seven existing eclogues, entitled such by the poet—we may discover two dominant formal tendencies governing them. An eclogue "accepted" by Radnóti may be written in dialogue form only, but not in dactylic hexameters ("Second," "Fourth"), in hexameters but not in

dialogue ("Spring Is in Flight...," "Third," "Fifth," "Seventh"), or in both ("First," "Eighth"). An eclogue satisfying neither of these two formal criteria—one written, for example, in alexandrines and not in dialogue—has not survived. All this naturally does not imply that such a poem could not have been written, had it occurred to the poet to add such an eclogue to the cycle. The decision not to write every eclogue in dialogue form has its source in Vergil, in whose series only the odd-numbered poems obey this law. Relaxing this constraint a bit further, Radnóti could have arrived at the point of view that the dactylic hexameter line—which tradition and courtly convention oblige Vergil to use—should itself find an alternate in some other prosodic pattern favoured by the twentieth-century poet. Evidence, however, points to Radnóti having drawn the boundary line between the permissible and nonpermissible at this point. Naturally, an imaginable objection to such an argument would be that such regularity can be very deceptive, especially since, statistically speaking, eight poems could hardly form the basis for a reliable computation of probability. In place of attempts at inductive logic, we would do better to consider the will and unceasing artistic experimentation of the living poet. If we switch to such a point of view, there opens before us the possibility of taking into consideration poems other than "Fragment," as fully entitled candidates for the distinction of being named the crucial "Sixth Eclogue." I am especially thinking of two poems Radnóti wrote during the early months of 1944: "I Cannot Know..." and "They Just Couldn't Bear It...."

Both poems address the epoch, in their own ways; they say "no" to the poet's age, as "First Eclogue" expresses it. That the world of "I Cannot Know..." is from several points of view a continuation and elaboration of that of "Second Eclogue," that the two poems resonate in mutual sympathy, is observed also by Trencsényi-Waldapfel.[11] The poetry of "I Cannot Know..." is the language of the pained rhetoric of love of the fatherland. It pairs the guilt of a nation involving itself in tragedy with the world of feeling of the poet in love with the "tiny flutters," familiarities, of home. It has been said of this poem that in twentieth-century Hungarian poetry it is the closest correlate of Vörösmarty's "*Szózat*" (Oration), and it is surely no accident that in "I Cannot Know..." the home of Mihály Vörösmarty is so unforgettably mentioned. Besides this, one also seems to overhear

something from the "Hymn" of Ferenc Kölcsey, specifically in the closing lines of "I Cannot Know..."; I am thinking of the lines that speak of a people's capacity for atonement, of that critical "This nation has already atoned/ for past and future as well" ("Megbűnhődte már e nép / A múltat s jövendőt"). Here, I believe Radnóti to have known Babits's Dante translation too well, to decide unqualifiedly on Kölcsey's side in the question of whether or not his nation has already atoned for the future. In canto 27 of *Inferno*, the Tuscan Ghibelline leader, Guido da Montefeltro, completing the tale of his conspiracy with Pope Boniface VIII, puts the following words into the mouth of his dark angel, the devil versed in logic: "Absolved uncontrite means no absolution; / Nor can one will at once sin and contrition, / The contradiction bars the false conclusion" (lines 118-120; trans. Dorothy L. Sayers).

Next to this unmistakable moral position, the fitness of "I Cannot Know..." for eclogue candidacy is further enhanced by its imagery. That person who flies over it in a plane is akin with the pilot who in "Second Eclogue" converses with the poet, even if the former has no opportunity to learn of the crucial difference between his map and the finely detailed nature of the real landscape. Toward the end of the poem people are "hidden away in dark cellars"; this lets one anticipate the horror of the bombings, as this is clarified in its full weight in the language of "Second," "Seventh," and "Eighth Eclogues," in fact even in "First Eclogue," where similar passages refer to the military conduct of the Spanish Civil War. True to the eclogues, "I Cannot Know..." also speaks to contemporary issues, of the poet's fellow humans, of "workers here, and poets too, innocent, / and suckling infants in whom there grows intelligence"; the poet speaks, "in rebelling, of others, and (does) it selflessly" ("Not Memory, Nor Magic").[12] Next to the identical metrics, the *Nibelungenlied* line, in which most of "Second Eclogue" and all of "I Cannot Know..." are written, the visual form of the text of the latter poem, written in a single block rather than being divided into stanzas, also follows the poetics of "Second Eclogue." It is well known that of all the eclogues this early example contains the least number of speeches—both "Pilot" and "Poet" speak twice only.

Nor are the eclogue-like qualities of "They Just Couldn't Bear It..." called into question by a single disturbing feature or

circumstance; if anything, this later poem seems an even more convincing contender than was its predecessor. "I Cannot Know..." does immediately follow after an existing eclogue ("Fifth"), whereas the distance between "Fifth Eclogue" and "They Just Couldn't Bear It..." is two poems, exactly the number that separate "Third Eclogue" from "Second." But something that is far more important, in fact shockingly apparent, is that, like "Fifth Eclogue," "They Just Couldn't Bear It..." is also a requiem poem. In it the poet mourns his close friend, the painter István Dési Huber (1895-1944). The series of images occurring in the dignified poem, which in this work refer to real pictures by the artist: "cattle, horse, worker, poet..., / church...in your home village of Dés" (lines 11-12), furthermore, "coffin, pitcher, / firewall" (lines 23-24), seem to conjure before us a bucolic effect felt through the achievements of painting. [13] But bucolicism of this genre is no longer univocally the instrument of landscape mood, exclusive of environments created by man, any more than the bucolic presuppositions of "Third Eclogue" or of "I Cannot Know..." are that. After all, the innovative power of the bucolic poet in "Third Eclogue" is made manifest precisely in the fact that it is a question of an "urban bucolic"; the poet is sitting in a café and can make us believe that this is that appointed *locus amoenus* within which the pastoral muse can come to his aid. In this sense the painter's muse too was the creative spirit of village and meadow, as well as of city and factory.

Of an equal rank with bucolic allegiance thus won from the artist's vision, the capacity of "They Just Couldn't Bear It..." to address the age surpasses perhaps even that of "Fifth Eclogue." It is, of course, true that the moral significance of the latter resides precisely in that choked-off pain, owing to which the poet proves incapable of writing a "finished" poem about his dear friend, the journalist and writer, György Bálint (1906-1943), missing, then dead in the Ukraine. If we think of how very much Bálint was a man of the word, of creative feuilletonistics, and of how even in his motto: "I am outraged, therefore I am," he was a kin soul with Dési Huber, this pained silence, which causes the poet to carve his "Fifth Eclogue" into fragment, is all the more overpowering. "They Just Couldn't Bear It..." is, naturally, no fragment; it is, rather, a deeply-felt dirge, at the end of which the challenging voice calls to us and to the age from almost the height of Imre Madách, with the energy of his "Man: struggle" ("Ember, küzdj"):

> Man: be on the lookout, observe your world; this is the past, this the ferocious present— carry them in your heart. Live the evil moment, and always know what you must do for it to make it different.

If my above arguments, either on behalf of "I Cannot Know..." or of "They Just Couldn't Bear It..." sound convincing, so be it; conspicuously, I hope, I did on purpose discuss two poems, and I am sure it is clear that we could set up further criteria, on the basis of which we could let at least three or four additional "candidates" pass in detailed review. For this, to be brief, is not what is of the essence. What we are here aiming for is not positivistic, tangible "results," as these are so often understood in traditional scholarship; our attitude is not that which American humour can at times so strikingly caricature: "Will the real 'Sixth Eclogue' please stand up?" No—anything like this is, of course, out of the question. Instead of this I would like once again to call our attention to that terrible, and terribly simple, fact which we already know, namely, that a "Sixth Eclogue"—does not exist. *Why is this the case*? This, in my opinion, is the real question.

In order to enable ourselves to discuss this question effectively, we must allow ourselves a brief excursus into the semantics of the word *why*. It is well known that in the natural sciences there is no such question as: Why? Such a question, for example: "Why does water consist of hydrogen and oxygen?" we can easily answer by saying: "Because the Lord ordained that it shall be so." Needless to say, to provide such answers is the proper task not of physics but of theology. If, on the other hand, to the question: "Why do we have two eyes?" we reply: "So that we may see also in the third dimension," we furnish an answer worthy of some note, yet unworthy of modern biology. In the course of the history of the biological sciences, the phenomena of evolution were often explained in such a goal-oriented, unscientific fashion. Neither question is worth taking seriously by scientists. Yet with the two above questions, about the composition of water and about optics, I touch on philosophy's two favourite *Why*?'s, on mechanism and on teleology, on the *why*'s of cause and of purpose.[14] We can ask our question concerning the missing "Sixth Eclogue" thus: "What caused it not to come into being?" or thus: "What purpose did the poet think to serve by seeing to it that it not come into being?"

The circumstances that caused "Sixth Eclogue" to remain unwritten already form, naturally enough, the subject of a very considerable literature. Not that the contributions to it necessarily touch on our phantom poem. Of the fact that Radnóti most probably simply did not have time to write a "Sixth Eclogue," we can remind ourselves even without making an attempt at identification, as this is done by Trencsényi-Waldapfel. We can also look at the datings of the poems. Radnóti completed "Fifth Eclogue" on 21 November 1943; the poem which eventually received the title "Fragment" he wrote, as pointed out above, on the eve of this last report for labour duty, on 19 May 1944. Between these two dates, in the course of almost exactly six months, Radnóti writes or completes ten poems. He orders a cycle ("Slips of Paper"); he writes an important poem for a sad occasion ("They Just Couldn't Bear It..."); he finishes a poem left unfinished the year before ("Dream Landscape"; beneath it the date: 20 October 1943—16 May 1944). Ten poems as the result of six months' work may not seem like much, until we consider that about this time Radnóti was also working hard on a commissioned translation, of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Next to his always rather slow, extremely careful, method of working we may well view as somewhat inconsistent the almost Mozartean speed with which Radnóti was able to translate even the first two acts of Shakespeare's comedy. The letter in which the poet promises the translation is dated 24 January 1944, and in that letter Radnóti assures the publisher, the Franklin Society, of a May 31 deadline with the final manuscript.[15] We need not belabour the point that the real fragment the poet left behind is this beautiful translation. It could not, then, particularly surprise us to hear that Radnóti had neither the time left to devote, with the proper care and energy, to the composition of a "Sixth Eclogue," nor the nervous energy or attentiveness to do justice to a phase of his work which, over and above the business of datings (on which he at all times insisted), demanded of the poet the observance of a numerical order as well.

We must speak here a bit about the phenomena of forgetting, rather than entertain the possibility that in (very possibly) forgetting "Sixth Eclogue" the poet shows either relaxation of artistic discipline, or willingness to give up plans, worthily to round out and complete the oeuvre. Quite the contrary. From

István Vas, one of the late Radnóti's closest friends, we know that in those terrible days, when even the great poets were preoccupied in the main with going into hiding, and their attention was on the news over the radio, on the position of the front lines, and on the procurement of the necessities of life, Radnóti's energies remained unshakeably with his work.[16] It is, on the other hand, also from what István Vas has told me in personal conversation that I know how forgetful Radnóti could be in certain matters. In this forgetfulness, numbers occupied first place. He was incapable of remembering a telephone number; and, who knows, in those days perhaps it is the number 6 that could have been banished from his consciousness. That we are not, here, discussing strictly literary matters does not change the fact that our focus is a creative man, about whose mental patterns we are making informed guesses. In formulating such conjectures, it is especially on the level of perceptual psychology that biographical data can be of some service. But an account of the poet sitting at his desk and working on his poem is also a part of his biography. Here I deem it important to speculate also on how ambiguous the structure and fragmentary nature of "Fragment" is. From Mrs. Miklós Radnóti I learned that those ellipsis dots, two rows of them following stanza four and one after stanza five, present in modern editions of the poet's works, are there in the manuscript as well, and, as we also well know, the poem remained without a title. Despite this, as mentioned above, the poem itself is complete. Here we can hardly talk about phenomena of forgetting or of absent-mindedness. Is it possible that those ambiguous dots were meant to serve only as symbols of the painful silence of poets in wartime, as this is mentioned in the fifth stanza?

In the realm of concrete data we come upon yet another mechanistic explanation for the absence of a "Sixth Eclogue." And that is that, very possibly, the poet's lines were present in his mind, and that he wished to retain them in his memory until a suitable time for writing them down in a fitting manner should present itself. The fact that "surfing time" (as he formulates it in "Fourth Eclogue") did not grant him the tranquility to do this, makes it possible, even probable, that when in Lager Heidenau he was working on "Seventh Eclogue," he had still not abandoned the idea of working on and rounding out this other poem. Such a possibility naturally embraces cause and purpose both.

Although, in one sense, we cannot here speak of documentation, the situation throws light on an important corner of the poet's workshop. Radnóti scholars who have examined manuscripts by the poet could observe how rarely we are confronted with drafts gone over several times; we never come across manuscripts that present serious difficulties in decipherment (as do, e.g., the manuscripts of Georg Trakl). Nor could those perfect poems at Lager Heidenau and elsewhere around Bor have come about under those conditions, had the poet had to rely on a creative method based on extensive draftings and redraftings. Much rather, Radnóti ipso facto belongs among poets who work holistically, straight from the mind, relying on the mood, the energy, the suggestions of the auspicious moment. The work then comes into being, regardless of whether the pastoral muse must help the poet at home, in a café, or at one of the camps.[17]

Turning to the purely teleological side of the problem, inquiring solely about purposes that the nonexistence of "Sixth Eclogue" might be thought to serve, we leave the fields of data and documentation. It is well known to all who work on Radnóti's life and oeuvre that a great deal of material pertaining to both has not yet seen the light of day. Despite this, I dare believe that even if the day should arrive when we have access to all extant manuscripts, the chances for coming upon a written statement concerning a "Sixth Eclogue" are slim. But the fine irony of the matter is that, even if we were to make such a find—imaginably, a letter, a diary entry, the transcript of an interview—it would, in our particular instance, not necessarily be convincing, or, more important, reliable. I am not even thinking so much of Radnóti's occasional, Apollinaire-like and good-humoured, mystifying tendencies (for, faced with the seriousness of the hour, he may possibly have foregone such); rather, of the principle that in the area of interpreting and critically evaluating poetic intentions, it is not the poets who are the most highly qualified. The literary historian who provides this service must, however, concentrate solely on the mute evidence of available texts and of circumstance.

Let us set up a hypothesis, one that I have not yet encountered in the literature on Radnóti. How defensible is the assumption that the poet intentionally left out a poem entitled "Sixth Eclogue"? I do not mean to suggest either that the text was lost or that the poet first wrote the poem and then destroyed it. Rather,

I would like to weigh one of two additional possibilities. Either Radnóti left out the number itself, it being, presumably, a matter of indifference to him whether he called the next eclogue "Sixth" or "Seventh," or he actively and consciously renounced his aspirations to writing "Sixth Eclogue," while it remained of decisive importance for him which eclogue in the series he assigns which number. Between the two possibilities I would like to decide in favour of the latter. Anyone who has read Radnóti's eclogues with any amount of care could not help noticing the degree of importance of the ordinals that identify the individual members of the cycle; how impossible it is to interchange "First Eclogue" with "Second," "Third" with "Fifth," "Fourth" with "Eighth." Totally apart from the traditional mysticism attaching to the integers from one through nine (by courtesy of which we could also explain the rightness of the arrangement by pointing to the "perfection " of the numbers one and eight as underlying the rank and dignity of "First" and "Eighth Eclogues"), we could state that the moral *steadfastness* of tone in the eclogues stands outwardly symbolized by their *steadfastly* adhering to the numerical order that the poet, with his artistic intuitions, has assigned them. To such a view, these place values are no more interchangeable than are the acts in a play. Could it be possible that the poet, after having said all that he was given to say in the first five eclogues, as well as in their forerunners, decided that "Sixth Eclogue" can best stand its post by not putting in its physical appearance at all? According to this, the poet would have confessed faith by a gesture of conscious artistic sacrifice.

It is not, then, the "Sixth Eclogue" which remained a "fragment" but the entire series; not a single poem, but the whole oeuvre. But let us note the quotation marks placed around the word *fragment*; also what Imre Trencsényi-Waldapfel says about the character, the "fragmentary" identity of "Fifth Eclogue." It is a perfect instrument expressing the contents, an instrument serving the pain, the silence symbolized by and in the poem. In like manner, and mirroring precisely the method of "Fifth Eclogue," the lack of "Sixth" is an instrument playing, as it were, the music of that pain, that symbolic act of growing silent, about which the poet so eloquently speaks in the closing lines of the "Fragment" of 19 May 1944. It is important for us to remember that Radnóti speaks (more properly: sings) of growing silent (as he did earlier, in "In a Restless Hour"); he himself does not

actually take that road. And he certainly does not renounce his rights and aspirations to completing his series .of eclogues in a worthy manner. Yet we too seem to have some right to interpret the lack of a major eclogue as an act of personal sacrifice, given only that we are talking about the consequences of an artistic decision, rather than about a child of necessity. After all, Radnóti scholars of all time will be faced with the "fragmentary" nature of a cycle of poems which most assuredly seeks its equal in all of twentieth-century Hungarian poetry. Let this "fragmentariness" serve as a reminder that we can create fragments also by forcibly attributing a "wholeness" uncongenial to the nature of what is "fragment"; also of the truth that in the humanities it is often more important to ask the right questions than to attempt to furnish to them answers that seem possessed of finality.

NOTES

1. Emil Lichtenberg, *Mozart élete és művei* (Budapest: Rózsavölgyi, 1943), p.7.
2. Miklós Radnóti, *Eclogák*, ed. Imre Trencsényi-Waldapfel (Budapest: Magyar Helikon, 1961), afterword.
3. Ibid., pp. 96-98.
4. Miklós Radnóti, *Eclogák*, ed. Pál Réz (Budapest: Magyar Helikon, Szépirodalmi, 1979), p. 29.
5. Tibor Melczer, "Radnóti Miklós utolsó költői korszaka." Diss. Budapest (ELTE), 1974, p. 137.
6. B.S. Adams, "The Eclogues of Miklós Radnóti," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 43 (1965): 396.
7. Miklós Radnóti, *The Complete Poetry*, ed. and trans. Emery George (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1980), "Introduction," n. 42. (p. 46). This edition is quoted throughout the paper.
8. The poem written in five-line stanzas is a favourite form with Radnóti since his first verse collection, *Pagan Salute*; cf., e.g., "Tápé, Old Evening," "Elegy on the Death of a Hobo," "An Eskimo Thinks of Death," "In My Memories...," and "Á la recherche...."
9. In addition to a number of poems in the early books referring to icons and other portrayals of Christ, there are "And Cain Talked with Abel His Brother," (in *Pagan Salute* (1930)), the uncollected poem "Marginal Note to Luke"; furthermore, his prose works "The Revelation of St. John the Divine" and "On Dániel Berzsenyi." (The latter essay concludes with a reference to The Book of Daniel.)
10. Some suggestions (numbers indicate eclogues; titles following them their arguable forerunners): 1. "Peace: A Hymn"; 2. "Veresmart"; 3. "You Wonder, Dear One..."; 4. "End-of-October Hexameters"; 5. "As, Imperceptibly,..."; 7. "Fragment"; 8. "Á la recherche...." Trencsényi-Waldapfel (ibid., p. 80) calls attention to Radnóti's diary entry of 19 November 1940, in which he notes the Vergilian scene, at Szamosveresmart, that underlies the imagery of "Veresmart" (the poem bears the date 10 January 1941).
11. Trencsényi-Waldapfel, ibid., pp. 86-87.
12. Imre Bori writes: "On the basis of formal inspiration and correspondences in style, I would prefer to enlist, among the ranks of the eclogues, 'Not Memory, Nor Magic' " *Radnóti Miklós költészete* (Novi Sad: Forum, 1965), n. 33, p. 188.
13. See also the study by Béla Pomogáts, "Rekviem és ars poetica - Radnóti Miklós: Nem bírta hát...," *Kortárs* 23 (1979): 780-83. A series of the pictures referred to in the poem are reproduced in György Horváth, *Dési Huber István* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1976).

14. Although theology's main preserve is questions with a teleological intent, it is not by any means confined to such. The above question on the chemistry of water, followed by its proposed answer, is strictly within mechanics. Were we to pursue the inquiry and ask the next question: "Why did the Lord ordain this?" the answer would have to be teleological.
15. See Krisztina Voit, "Radnóti Miklós és a Franklin Társulat," *Irodalomtörténet* 63 (1981): 486-87.
16. "On 9 May, under the title 'Hiding Out,' he wrote a perfect little song....this, precisely, was what was so arresting: that in the poems written during these days filled with the fear of death and with humiliations, no turbulence could be felt; just this sublime tranquility lends them their peculiar beauty. I told him this, but he fended off my praise. It would be terrible, he replied, if these were his last poems—they are not great enough for that" (István Vas, "Radnóti emlékezete," in: I.V., *Az ismeretlen isten. Tanulmányok 1934-1973* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1974), p. 808).
17. With the enumeration of home, café, Lager, cf. Radnóti's own catalogue of places where he listened to his "kin poems" (rokonversek) written in foreign languages, and to their possible translations: "...this line of theirs or that one accompanied me...at home, over my desk and in company, in strange rooms, on the road, in cattle cars, over snoring comrades, in the library, at a concert, in waking and in sleep" ("On Translation") Afterword to Miklós Radnóti, *Orpheus nyomában. Műfordítások kétezer év költőiből* (Budapest: Pharos, 1943), in Pál Réz, ed., *Radnóti Miklós Művei* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1978), p. 709.

A suggestive example for the amount of time over which the conception of a poem can reside in a poet's mind, may well be "Spring Is in Flight...," the "Proem" to the eclogues. Granted that this poem, dated 11 April 1942, is the product of an occasion; its most reliable allusion to the demonstrations of 15 March of that year, to which the poem responds, may be found in the poem's mood and imagery. This, however, does not answer two, somewhat unrelated, questions: For how long did Radnóti carry within him certain lines or passages of the poem? and : since when had he considered the idea of writing a prefatory poem to the eclogues?

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 2 (Fall 1984)

Review Article
Four Modern Hungarian Poets

Robert Finch

Sándor Csoóri, *Wings of Knives and Nails*, trans.Ivan Halasz de Beky (Toronto: Vox Humana, 1981).
Mihály Ladányi, *Treeless, Stony Landscape*, trans.Ivan Halasz de Beky (Toronto: Vox Humana, 1981).
János Pilinszky, *Scaffold in the Winter*, trans.Ivan Halasz de Beky (Toronto: Vox Humana, 1982).
László Kálnoky, *Flash of Lightning*, trans. Ivan Halasz de Beky (Toronto: Vox Humana, 1984).

Sándor Csoóri, Mihály Ladányi, János Pilinszky, László Kálnoky are four modern Hungarian poets, translated into English by a fifth Hungarian poet, Ivan Halász de Béky. As the present reviewer is in complete ignorance of the Hungarian language, this article can only attempt to set down a reader's considered reaction to poems digested at one remove from the original

The four volumes of selected, and hence presumably representative, verse have what might be called a family resemblance. This, I believe, owes nothing to their having been translated by the same hand. All four poets clearly retain independence of mind, in spite of the cramping conditions brought about by Hungary's tragedy. Yet, undoubtedly as a result of those very conditions, the subject-matter of all four volumes is chiefly limited to major topics—life, love and art (i.e., poetry). There is no recording of visual experience, no description as such, no cultural nor anthropological narrative and, of course, no trivia since, practically without exception, the poems are speculative or philosophical meditations, rendered, however, at all degrees of forcefulness, from cold irony to explosive protest. In all four poets these varied intensities are fraught with an unmistakable significance, a significance

strikingly negative in tone, being based almost wholly on denial, absence, removal, exclusion and the like. The character of the contents of the four volumes is implied from the start by their titles: *Wings of Knives and Nails*; *Treeless, Stony Landscape*; *Scaffold in Winter*; *Flash of Lightning*.

For Sándor Csoóri, life's message, sent by the "enemy who stays far away today, too," is that we are defeated, this state being conveyed by means of striking figures, such as "our hand is a hand stuck in rock." Elsewhere, Csoóri represents life "collapsing like a board fence," gradually, or flying, on the "wings of knives and nails," something which is about to release or about to imprison but which never comes to the point of doing either. Despite such incertitudes, the poet prefers, however unprofitably, to linger on in time, while simultaneously seeing death as preferable to life. His constant attitude toward "life's inanities" is perhaps best summed up in *Maybe a Bullet*:

Maybe the cold tap-water would be good,
maybe the eternal life-tasting coffee: let me tremble,
maybe the cracking of snowstorm-shirt over my skin,
claw and iron filings on my eardrum,
maybe the lecherous hip-exhibition of the woman opposite in the mornings,
the slow shake of the ocean-going breasts outside the window,
maybe the brotherly elbow's pressure in between my ribs,
maybe a bullet in the window-frame.

The two chief sanities that life affords are love, the amative force, and ambition, the creative force. We are torn between the two. Love gives us our emotional identity: "nobody's nobody," since we all exist thanks to another. Love also supplies the strangely diverse materials which the creative force transforms into poetry, the only permanent thing we possess. Yet to practise poetry is as difficult as to practise love, says this able poet, who unjustly rates himself as a poet of intention rather than of execution, since, we are told, his work is continually hampered: "Hungary's premature hoarfrost sits down again on my threshold." We know he is speaking for all poets when he writes that there is no such thing as an "unsullied poem," never anything but "partial participation in a feast." In the long run, poetry, like love, is as fragmentary as life itself. A kind of longing for temporary escape from fragmentation suffuses a number of

Csoóri's poems, nowhere so definitely as in *Amsterdam Ramble* (the sole approach to narrative poetry in the four volumes):

If this quarter is the colony of sin, then I have arrived,
if this is the steamy market place of love, then I am at
home.

On the other hand, Csoóri often provides his reader with a poem that stands entirely on its own:

Poetry's Bachelor

Even my friends are whispering too
I am not for you, Poetry, I should buzz off,
You are a beauty-queen,
great virgin and whore in one person,
your eyelashes fly to the North like wild geese,
I am only a drover
and I plod after you, muddy up to the neck...

there is no city...
would make you stagger
and tumble you wall-white into my arms,
although I ran for you from Warsaw to Havana....

With the shame of a downtrodden life
and with anger, I think of you
maybe in a jealous manner, though not accusingly:
you can show your uncovered, dark loins to whom you want,
from your excited thigh
you can send even more inferior boys to heaven,
your lime-blossom scent is enough for me
and the leaf-veined firmament, which your breath
chases into my face.

Mihály Ladányi's poetry is concerned with aspects of our hopeless horizontality. Life is a "treeless, stony landscape" because the redeeming feature, the bird (of verticality) is always killed and, whether we look backward or forward, there is either confusion or nothingness. The result is flat monotony for both blue-collar and white-collar worker, also for him who chooses to be a collarless outsider, refusing programmes, never knowing

when his time will be up. The remedy? reject our artificial sophisticated society of the few, in favour of the renewal of rustic simplicity for everyone. The realization of such a fairy-land is balked (a) by what Ladányi, with characteristic wry wit, names the Transmigration of Souls, that is to say, our elitist system, whereby the degrading tyranny of one establishment is replaced by that of another, in endless succession; it is also balked (b) by life's telephone, which invariably rings a wrong number; finally, (c) if a man consents to conformity, he is reduced to lowering standards:

> I have measured the blood-pressure of the future
> since I have to give a talk about the future's blood-
> pressure at the Carrots' Conference,

and to making the ironical conclusion: "They could still be interested" (This Morning). Such predicaments might seem a pity, humans being a combination of dog and bird (submissiveness and aspiration) but what's the use when, "in the trains of the streets people are sitting, locked in the boxcars of houses" (*On Lateness*)? And whatever people do—sit, crouch or reach up—God remains either ineffectual (*Report*) or menacing (*The Birds' Desire*).

As for love, its refuge is desirable at any age, especially the older one gets, although ("like bread") it becomes decreasingly available, and increasingly expensive through demands it makes upon the lover, not the least of which involves the problem of children who, growing up, launch troubles that adumbrate war. In the special case of a poet, those same children endanger other offspring, his poems. Though not always, as is evident in *Drawing Contest*:

> Little kids,
> draw me
> a beautiful day without swearing,
> and that pretty lady, just as she comes this way,
> and draw a moonlit evening
> full of crickets for the lady,
> who sits down, and watches
> me make a fire in the courtyard—
> Then draw for us
> a bed, and finally
> give me too a
> clean sheet of paper.

The poet is indeed a special case, since, unperceived, he gives his life for many (*Inventory*). But his existence as poet is threatened by other things than the coming of children. He may be killed by attention (*Kidnapping*) or by indifference "Let Ladányi just write his anarchist little poems..." (*I Think No Doubt*); if he be condemned to take charge of a literature class, he finds the analysis of poetry results either in the metamorphosis, by those with sybilline breath, of a word into a bird, or that the analysis of poetry peters out in the unprofitable word-splitting of academic "scientists." In any case, as Ladányi writes in *Those Old Epigrams*:

> The centralization of our poetry industry
> has not led anywhere: —
>
> the ruling of the competition-conditions from above
> finally has led to a quality-worsening.
> Now didactical and technical
> problems have come to the fore
> and similarly
>
> > the fact that poetry is no longer of souls,
> > it has marched into the centuries
> > and may succeed as a literary-history.

Which carried one back to Ladányi's own *Epigram*:

> According to Christopher Caudwell
> in Communism there won't be any poetry.
> Considering poetry's present state
> we could be
> very close to Communism.

Yet Christopher Caudwell, neither in his *Illusion and Reality; A Study of the Sources of Poetry*, nor in his *Studies in a Dying Culture*, goes so far as to parallel Ladányi's *Shrinking Stanzas*, a poem which not only foresees poetry's demise but also its natural successor:

> Is it worth while to put words together?
> Already out of ten assembles sorrow,
> out of thirty one can make a funeral
> psalm.
>
> Is there a more mournful occupation on earth?

But often for only one word too.
And between the lines the Argus-eyes.

Well, rather the song of the wind, tears of the rain,
and the sparrows' iambic steps.

The title of János Pilinszky's book sets the tone for its contents. A scaffold is a temporary platform or stage on which a criminal is executed. Winter is a rhetorical expression for a protracted period of affliction, distress, misfortune and hardship. Human life is thus our "scaffold in winter," and human life, in a variety of its aspects, provides the theme of most of Pilinszky's verse. *Crime and Punishment* (though abstruse in expression) suggests that we are guilty of crime and await punishment, but that our execution is delayed. Throughout this stretch of delayed execution, which we call life, our key is lost, our lock unopenable and our shoes mark time (*Comparison*). We are also deserted by those who gave us life in the first place (*It Is Difficult Though*); yet we make things worse by the practice of incessantly fragmenting the life they gave us (*Through A Whole Life*), while we simultaneously ask the useless question the dead ask, a question never answered. Our existence is a nadir, a lowest state of depression (*The nadir's Festival*), a veritable *Scaffold in Winter*, a combination of our unknowingness and of "perhaps, God's silence?" Such is no time for self-indulgence, possibly not even for natural nostalgia (as in *On a Nice Day*). We must look to the measuring of supernal time:

Metronome

Measure the time,
but not our time,
the splinters' immobile presence,
the drawbridge's grades,
the winter-scaffold's snow,
the paths' and clearings' silence,
in the fragment's setting
the Father's promise.

The meaning of supernal time is diversely expanded in a series of other poems on life. *Step by Step* defines it as the dialogue of man and God. Pilinszky's side of the dialogue consists in patiently recording the effects of pain and chance (*I Will Watch*), in realizing his unworthiness (*I Don't Count*), in being aware that

what he has forsaken proves that he is found (*The Search of the Prodigal Son*), that through the Mass all men become a collective offering (*As Only*), that solely insofar as one has the harmlessness of a little child can one be truly communicative (*Cradle and Not Coffin*), and that it suffices to take life as it is :

Enough

However wide is the creation
it is more cramped than a sty.
From here to there. Stone, tree, house.
I do this, do that. I come early. I'm late.
And sometimes though, somebody enters
and what is, suddenly opens out.
The sight of a face, a presence is enough,
and the wallpapers start to bleed.

Enough, yes, a hand is enough, as
it stirs the coffee, or as it
"withdraws from the introduction."
It is enough that we forget the place,
the airless row of windows, yet
that returning at night to our room
we accept the unacceptable.

At the same time, we know that, whatever we do, our deeds live after us and finally judge us (*A Secret's Margin*) (*cf. Van Gogh's Prayer*).

God's side of the dialogue, according to the poet, consists in ordering the meaning of our being (*Every Draw of Breath*), in providing direct flight through life's maze (*Straight Labyrinth*), a path to salvation and happiness (*Although My Colour is Black*), and an eternal city beyond (*Admonition*). Despite unanswerable queries (*cf. Omega*), unreconcilable contradictions (*cf. Parable*) and every other enigma, grace remains:

The Rest Is Grace

The fear and the dream
were my father and my mother.
The corridor and the
out-opening countryside.

I lived this way. How will I die?
What is going to be my destruction?

The earth betrays me. Embraces me.
The rest is grace.

The subject of grace is mystically (and, for this reader, hermetically) extended in *Yes, The Foliage*, which would seem to identify the leaves for the healing of the nations with the Giver of grace:

Yes, the foliage shines,
the foliage shines on
and you are hanging in the foreground
of its mould, as a fruit.
Although you are man, you were man,
wayside God.

Pilinszky deals mystically also with human love: though a combination of companionship and crucifixion (*To Jutta*) and an alternance of fear and trust (*I Think*), such love will be clarified and glorified at the last judgment:

Before

The Father takes back the cross
like a splinter,
and the angels, animals of heavens,
will turn up the last page of the world.

Then we say: I love you. We say:
I love you very much. And in the sudden tumult
our cry will liberate the sea once more,
before we can sit down to the table.

László Kálnoky's book, *Flash of Lightning*, takes its title from a poem which may indeed stand as indicator of all the others:

In the flash of lightning a standing figure.
Hail of contempt in his eyes,
on his lips unpronounced verdict.
Only this hot-tempered gesture
signals that we are guilty.
At the next flash
he is nowhere, not sending us to our deserved place
And we are rolling in the dust unsuspiciously.

Specifically, however, this poem exemplifies a recurrent leitmotif, that of the executioner. So does *The Visitor*, in which

the presence of an invisible executioner, though audibly confirmed, cannot be determined as either approaching or being approached. Similarly, in *Toward Darkness*, while the body is slowly undergoing the dissolution of age:

> A hood covers the executioner's head,
> he will not, he cannot look into
> the reckoning eye of the one sentenced to death.

In *On My Birthday*, as body, brain and soul confront ultimate disintegration, the executioner is at last visualized:

> You will be castrated by genderless angels
> with stern silver faces.

These variants of the same motif typify life's apprehensions of death: the sudden premonition, the ambiguous, the reflective and the visionary. All four presage the cessation of creative power. In the face of such premonitions, *As A Work Method* sums up the poet's creative programme:

> You should fit word to word as carefully
> as someone who would be encouraged
> to speak only by his own absence,
> and as meticulously-exactly,
> as death works on the plan of wrinkles...
>
> You should look at the phenomena
> as an unblindfolded prisoner
> sees the trees, bushes
> one second before the volley.

Summer Garden evokes the dangerous atmosphere in which the creative programme is carried out:

> On a gunpowder barrel a frightened statue
> stands in the centre of the garden,
> at the moment before explosion.

In view of such contingencies, it is not surprising to find another recurrent, but unnamed, motif: that of desperation. Desperation is confronted in the vulnerability of middle age (*Midday*), in the tyranny of recollection (*Choking Memory*), in memory's deceptiveness (*The Reverse of The Light*), in the limitations imposed by inescapable obscurity (*In The*

Background), in the monotony of day-to-day activity (*Week Days*), in the reiterated numbing sensation that all is half-over but not yet done with (*Statements*), in the recognition of one's unimportance (*Instead of An Autobiography*), and in the stasis of aloneness: "I run at top speed where there is no forward or backward" (*Solitude*).

There are compensatory respites: when one's aloneness is shared with nature (*Just Like the Trees*), when there are intimations of immortality (*Rebirth*), when redeeming features of life's fiasco are perceived (*Roving On A Celestial Body*), when we are transported by the unexpected (*Surprises*), and when the uniqueness of individuality is assessed (*Wailing*):

> What you have forgotten
> cannot come into anybody's mind
> Because you were who you were.

But such rewarding moments are outnumbered by moments of defiance, the other unnamed leitmotif which, like the motif of desperation, counterbalances that of the executioner. Thus there is the rebelling against life's predeterminations (*Memory of My Career*), the incessant albeit vain effort to recapture vanished good (*Gasping for Breath*), the rejection of man's stupidity and superstition (*I Lived In Such A World*), the hopelessness of all defiance (*Blind Alley*), and yet, in spite of everything, the defiance of whatever powers there be *(Hamlet's Lost Monologue).*

The four poets may congratulate themselves on having a translator who, by using no superfluous word, has obviously respected their love of economy and compression. While the lapidary style occasionally renders interpretation difficult, an attentive reader's efforts are fully repaid by the timeliness of the poems' content. These are flowers of suffering. Their perfume, in its own way, is headier than that of any *fleurs du mal.*

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XI, No. 2 (Fall 1984)

Book Reviews

Marianna D. Birnbaum, *Janus Pannonius: Poet and Politician* (Zagreb: Opera Academiae Scientiarum et Artium Slavorum Meridionalium, 1981).

This is a broad and detailed account of the life, times and work of Janus Pannonius. In keeping with its subtitle, it places equal emphasis on the historical and literary importance of this Renaissance bishop. Little has until now been generally known about Janus in western countries, and so much, as this book demonstrates, is available to scholars on the subject, that this book is most welcome.

It is far more than a factual account. Birnbaum takes care, on occasion, to make us vividly conscious of Janus' emotions during the major crises of his life. His immersion in the cultural life of the Italian Renaissance, for example, began at the highly impressionable age of thirteen, when his uncle Joannes Vitéz, Bishop of Várad, sent him to be educated in Ferrara in 1447. This period is described together with a wealth of background material about the school of the great humanist Guarino Veronese (under whom Janus studied). Birnbaum does not neglect Janus' emotional response to this experience either, as evidenced in the following passage:

> Without any doubt, Guarino represented the humane ideal for Janus...He deeply believed that Guarino incorporated the best qualities of a scholar and a human being, and to resemble him remained his keenest aspiration. (p. 28)

It is, of course, Janus' writings that make such statements possible, and Birnbaum, properly allowing for the necessarily filial tone of earlier poems addressed to the master, points out that even in later letters Janus still speaks of his former mentor as a humane model. Scholarship here is at the service of emotional empathy. And as the book progresses we develop an increasing awareness of how much Janus' Ferrara experience of Renaissance

Italy meant to him, and remained a cultural lodestone to him in his later career as an eastern European bishop involved in court-politics.

The book is, however, more than a sympathetic and scholarly biography. Janus was appointed Bishop of Pécs well before the age of thirty in the Chancery of King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary who was himself a young man. Birnbaum deals with Janus' career and studies the questions of foreign policy that were urgent at the time. Perhaps the most important one was whether Hungary should concentrate on keeping the Turkish threat at bay, or to plunge itself into power-seeking towards the west, ignoring the Turks. Matthias finally chose the latter, and Janus strongly disapproved, even to the point of conspiring against the king. Birnbaum is not afraid to take a clear political position on these events: that Matthias was wrong and Janus right, as Matthias' eventual failure demonstrates. The author at times writes as a historian as well as a biographer.

Similarly, she prefaces her treatment of how Neoplatonism influenced Janus' poetry with a compendious few pages on the place of Neoplatonic philosophy in the thought of the late Middle-Ages and Renaissance. In the end, however, Birnbaum returns to the subject of Janus (who in a trip to Italy in 1465 met the great Neoplatonist Marsilio Ficino), and illustrates how, though influenced by the vocabulary and ideas of that school, our apparently secular bishop turned that system on its head, accepting re-incarnation, or pretending to, but hoping to return as an animal (regardless what kind) in the afterlife, provided it was not a human being. In this area as well Birnbaum is both a biographer and historian of the Renaissance.

Another passage that shows the breadth of this book and the adeptness of its author is the one analysing the change that came over Janus' poems praising Matthias:

> The more displeased Janus grew with Matthias' policies, the stronger and more inflated his praise became. (p. 140)

Birnbaum suggests that the later, apparently sycophantic poems are actually an exercise in irony, but "irony meant for a man who would no longer appreciate irony"; a process similar, perhaps, to a chill interruption of politeness into the conversation of an estranged friend. This passage provides a good example of the

close relation between history and literary criticism. An overview of Janus' relationship with Matthias helps the critical elucidation of the poetry; and the hypothesis provided by Birnbaum's interpretation of these particular pieces of poetry helps in the more detailed reconstruction of Janus' relations with his kind at the time of the latter's negotiations with Frederic III (1470).

The book deals carefully with the difficult subject of Janus' relationship with religion which was problematic to say the least because for our information we rely on poetry that is frequently oblique and ironic on the subject, and commonly secular in orientation. Birnbaum sensibly emphasizes that very secularity as the key to the matter, insofar as a key exists, and disagrees with scholars who have labelled the poetry as heretical. For to be heretical the poetry would not only have to be incompatible with Christianity but at the same time profess to be Christian, which it does not.

Birnbaum is equally careful with the much-contended question of Janus' nationality. The author avoids partiality, and arrives at the conclusion that Janus was Croatian, but that nationalistic attempts to claim him for Croatia or for Hungary are misleading. Being a typical product of the Renaissance, Janus was international, he represented Hungary in the mature work of his career, but he was mentally committed to the ancient Latin world, using Latin as his language, and classical Latin metres for his poetry. In doing that he was, of course, playing the part of an Italian humanist of the *Quattrocento*.

On specifically literary matters the book is sound. For example, it confronts the duality of Janus' poetry (parts of it very immediate, giving a strong sense of a particular person in a particular condition, other parts thoroughly conventional and rhetorical) by sensibly drawing attention to the "gap between the image and the thing itself which the poets of the Renaissance had no intention of closing." This refers to the completely symbolic use of images such as the rose, inherited from the Middle Ages by Janus and other Renaissance poets. Still, the vividness of Janus' descriptions of his sufferings from consumption, for example, remains startling in contrast with his conventional and rhetorical passages.

As should be clear by now, the book is admirably multi-disciplinary. The only major criticism to be made is of the English style, whose faults clearly come from the author's not

being a native speaker of this language. Even this criticism must be moderated however, in light of the fact that in the English-speaking world it is precisely our poor knowledge, until now, of this major figure of the fifteenth century that makes this fine piece of scholarship so welcome.

Peter Burnell
University of Saskatchewan

Paul Várnai, ed., *Hungarian Short Stories* (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1983).

The volume under review is a collection of fifteen short stories written by contemporary authors. When a new collection appears there are at least two questions that come to mind: 1. Is it a broad enough sampling of the literature the editor meant to introduce? 2. How does it compare to similar publications preceding it?

It should be stated right away that the volume falls short regarding selection. There should have been at least fifteen authors assembled, instead of thirteen, and each should have been represented by one short story only. Also, absent are such writers as Füst, Tersánszky, Veres, Szabó, Sarkadi, Fejes, Czakó, Bertha, Esterházy, Ördögh, Vámos—just to mention a few. There are no women writers included—Jókai, Szabó, Gergely, and a number of others, would have offered ample choice.

Dobai's opening piece is rather poorly conceived, introducing a filmscript style. Its shortcomings are amplified by a shaky translation. Mészöly's *Report on Five Mice* is, in turn, a very powerful story. Man's historical cruelty toward his fellowman has made us so callous that tragedies must be transferred to the world of animals and insects; from this new vantage point our feelings of pity and compassion may be elicited. Killing is made easier when distance is created between the murderer and his victim and especially when *life* is reduced to numbers. Killing a family of mice becomes a mathematical and not a moral problem when their fate is reconsidered in a geometrical progression. We have to read about mice in order to relive the horrors of Auschwitz. This kind of modern allegory was earlier used by Örkény in his *Honeymoon on Flypaper*. His *Requiem*—also performed on stage as part of *In Memoriam Ö. I.*—is included in this volume. The story is a perfect example of Örkény's preoccupation with memories, and our facing the past which seems invariably more important than the present. A contemporary echo of *The Return*

of Martin Guerre, Örkény's story, too, treats the horrors of war, prison and violence.

Déry, the doyen of Hungarian letters, chose children to portray man's cruelty toward the weaker, the unprotected. His tale is a softer variant of Csáth's *Little Emma*, a story which the American reader recently found on the pages of the *New York Review of Books*. The bully—no matter when and where—always finds accomplices, and the victim ultimately *becomes* the role that has been forced upon him. By the end of this story liberation arrives from the outside (just like in the *Lord of the Flies*) but the little fellow who had been locked in a cage is described as, "the sobbing ape...sitting in the dust."

Karinthy is represented by two stories, a questionable decision because they are of the same type and because one—translated by the same person—already appeared in Alvarez' edition of *Hungarian Short Stories* in 1967. In addition, both could have been written in the 1930s, and by a "bourgeois-commercial" writer, to boot.

Moldova's *The Sixth Book of Moses*, an amusing pastiche, written in an easy journalistic style, and well translated by the Morrys, will have a predictable appeal to the general readership since it could have appeared in any popular magazine.

Csurka's piece, *Happening* is an honest story, slightly old-fashioned, because detailed naturalism is no longer trendy in Western literature, unless it deals with violence. Possibly therefore, this aspect becomes the story's most fetching quality. His characterization is, however, somewhat clumsy. A good writer would not state about his hero that he was "a well-educated cynic." The reader should reach such a conclusion on his own.

More effective is Sántha's *There Were Too Many of Us*, owing to the surface-neutrality of narration, enhanced by the author's use of the first person singular. The story, which has also been made into a striking film in the 1970s, has its Japanese counterpart, *Snow-Land*, by Kawabata, demonstrating that poverty knows no country.

Kolozsvári Grandpierre appears with two stories: *Conditioned Reflex*, a plight for old-fashioned womanly virtues (the author cannot muster any irony when it comes to his male character), and *The Swing Door*, with its pseudo-modern, purple prose plot. Kamondy's rather weak, *The Student and the Woman*—which has been translated before—goes back to the same prototype of

feather-weight literature, appreciated mostly by middle-class housewives in prewar Europe.

G. Kardos' *You Must Like Théophile Gautier* reaches back to the years immediately following the war. At this particular juncture in life the question of how to distinguish the superficial from the essential appeared especially burning. With subtle irony the author shows how hard it is to identify the difference. Aston, who also translated Konrád's *Case Worker* into English, did an excellent job. His and Tezla's translation are the best in the volume.

None of the stories bear dates. This is a real shortcoming. In a country like Hungary, dates have a great significance. Between 1945 and the present, Hungary was transformed from a short-lived parliamentary democracy into a socialist republic, passing through such periods as forced nationalization and collectivization, Stalinization and Thaw, a heroic revolution and its bloody aftermath, followed by years of careful compromise, practised by both the government and the population. Therefore, depending on the date, the writing of a particular story could have demanded a great deal of courage, or none whatever.

After *Hungarian Short Stories* (Budapest, 1962), *44 Hungarian Short Stories* (Budapest, 1979), *Hungarian Short Stories* (London, 1967) not to speak of *Landmark* (Budapest, 1965), the even earlier *Flashes in the Night* (New York, 1958), and the most recent *Ocean at the Window* (Minneapolis, 1980), to mention the best known collections only, this volume is not a significant contribution to a better understanding of modern Hungarian prose. The introduction of Kattan is full of truisms and generalizations, and the stories are of mixed quality, indeed. An inordinate number of them have their plots focusing on the housing shortage, whereas true love and trust seem to be absent from recent Hungarian topics. The notes on the contributors are sloppy (there is no information regarding the translators), and even the alphabetization is wrong. Works of import are missing from the bibliographies: for example, Karinthy's last publication is from 1976.

This volume is obviously the result of a noble effort but not all noble efforts are worthwhile.

Marianna D. Birnbaum
University of California - Los Angeles

Articles in our Forthcoming Issue:

T. Kabdebo, "Some Jacobin Military Notions and Their Roots in Constitutional Proposals in Hungary."

A. Varpalotai, "Physical Education and Socialist Ideology in Hungary"

George Feuer, "Impact of Hungarian Scientists on the Development of Biochemistry"

Review Articles

Janos M. Bak, "Trianon: Sixty Years After"

Laszlo Kürti, "A History of Hungarian Immigration to and Settlement in the United States."

Books