

HSR

Hungarian Studies Review

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In this volume Austro-Hungarian society is examined in two papers and a review article. Blair Holmes analyses the problem of premarital pregnancy in nineteenth and early twentieth century village community, Edward Plater comments about István Szabó's film depicting life and high society in the last decades of the Habsburg Empire, and Sandor Agocs reviews István Deák's book on the Habsburg officer corps. In other articles, Bela Vas-sady writes about the relationship between turn-of-the-century Hungarian-American mutual aid associations and the Hungarian ethnic press, Stephen Satory outlines aspects of the diverging careers of composers Bartók and Kodály, and Moses Nagy comments on Rumanian author Emile M. Cio-ran's characterization of Rumanians and Hungarians.

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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. It is co-published by the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada and the National Széchényi Library (Budapest, Hungary).

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A Note from the Editors

Profound changes have taken place in the lives of Hungarians in East Central Europe during the past few years. The collapse of the Soviet Empire, the change of regime in Rumania, and the disintegration of Yugoslavia, all had significant impact on Magyars living in Hungary and in the neighbouring countries. The reestablishment of a pluralistic society and a democratic political system in Hungary, the demise of old-style communism elsewhere in East Central Europe, are promising developments. The economic stagnation, social tensions, and rising nationalism throughout that region, however, are threats that cannot be ignored. In particular, the civil conflict in the former Yugoslavia, and the ethnic strife in Rumania and Czechoslovakia, make the lives of Hungarians in those states as uncertain as ever.

These developments offer opportunities and pose new challenges to the Hungarian Diaspora's cultural ventures such as our journal. The main purpose of the *HSR* has always been, and will always be, apolitical: the presentation of the results of recent research on Hungarian subjects. But in the past, during the last decade-and-a-half of communist rule in Hungary, we also served as a forum for the publication of studies that could not appear in the scholarly press of Hungary, or that of neighbouring communist countries. With the gradual liberalization of academic life in Hungary during the 1980s, this function of our journal became less and less important, and came to an end in 1989 with the demise of communist rule in Budapest. During this period we were faced with another challenge: how to find ways of cooperating with scholars in Hungary, in particular with those that were not committed to the traditions and ideology of the discredited communist regime. Means were found for involving Hungarian scholars in our work, even before 1989. It might be recalled, for example, that one of our contributors in 1987 was Géza Jeszenszky, at the time a university teacher and opposition intellectual in Budapest, who is now Hungary's Minister of External Affairs. During these years other Hungarian scholars have also submitted their work to our journal, and were published in it.

The changed political climate permits even further cooperation today, and we have taken advantage of this situation. As a result of long negotiations, we have found a co-publisher for our journal in the venerable National Széchényi Library (Országos Széchényi Könyvtár) in Budapest. The other co-publisher is the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada, a member of the Learned Societies of Canada, whose membership has supported our journal's activities since the mid-1980s. The journal's editing, the managing of the subscriptions, and the task of typesetting will be done in Canada, while its production (printing, binding, etc.) and distribution will be done in and from Hungary. This division of tasks is logical, as editors and editorial advisers with a knowledge of the ways and means of scholarly publishing in the West (and, above all, of academic English) are here, while the facilities and options for printing and distribution are better in Hungary.

It is probably known to our subscribers that the *Review's* activities have been hampered during the past several years by the lack of a prominent publisher and, by ever increasing production and distribution costs. Thanks to this new agreement, the former problem has been solved, and the latter has been alleviated. Another concern remains with us: the scarcity of publishable manuscripts. However, in this respect too, we hope that our new situation—in particular, our high-profile affiliation—will encourage more scholars to submit their studies to us for consideration. We will also try to reduce our publication delay by printing one combined volume, a double issue, for 1992. If this will not fill the usual 128 pages, we apologize.

With the political changes of the past few years behind us, with our new-found link to an established Hungarian institution, we will take up the challenges of the future. We hope to do more in bringing to the world's attention the cultural problems and political situation of Hungarian minorities beyond the borders of Hungary. We will try to expand our subscription base. In particular, we'll try to reach a larger portion of the world's libraries—a difficult task in times of recession and decreasing library budgets. We believe that our track record of publishing for nearly two decades justifies these efforts, and the difficulties that some of Hungary's foreign-language scholarly journals are experiencing in publishing nowadays, give us further incentive to attain this aim. Lastly, we hope to continue our efforts to promote collaboration with students of Hungarian studies in Hungary, especially those who are capable of working and being published in a world language. Together with them, we will continue to inform the scholarly community of the world of the heritage and culture of Hungarians of Hungary, of the Magyar minorities of the neighbouring states, as well as those of Magyar immigrant groups elsewhere.

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Hungarian-American Mutual Aid Associations and their “Official” Newspapers: A Symbiotic Relationship

Bela Vassady

In its 1924 retrospective on the first generation Hungarian immigrant experience in the United States, the 25th jubilee edition of the large and successful Hungarian-American daily, the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava* [American Hungarian People's Voice], noted that neither the Hungarian ethnic fraternal nor their newspapers could have survived their early years without each others' mutual support. The Jubilee edition further noted that it had required 25–30 years of immigrant experience before this state of interdependence had finally come to an end.¹ This symbiotic relationship, best exemplified by the development of the so-called “official newspaper” phenomenon whereby large weekly or daily newspapers were selected to act as official organs (i.e. advertisers and promoters) by the large fraternal associations or federations, was common practice among many first generation East European immigrant groups from the 1890s to the 1920s. Besides the Hungarians, other East European groups known to have engaged in similar fraternal-press relationships included the Rumanians, Slovaks, Poles, Slovenes, Serbians, and Croats.² The consequences of this practice—on the negative side, mutual financial dependence, loss of managerial and journalistic integrity, vituperative competition; on the positive side, survival in the early years of struggle—were shared by all of these groups, including the Hungarian immigrants, whose experience will be examined in this paper.

This study will attempt to demonstrate how the official newspaper relationship influenced the development of the Cleveland based weekly newspaper, the *Magyar Hírmondó* [Hungarian Herald], and the swiftly growing Hungarian-American fraternal, the Verhovay Aid Association, during the first decade of the twentieth century. The major Hungarian-American fraternal and newspapers involved in official newspaper relationships at the

turn of the century will be introduced first. Next, a short summary of the *Magyar Hírmondó*'s record of selection to official newspaper status by these fraternal during its first five years of existence (1900–5) will follow. Finally, the study will conclude with a detailed analysis of the *Hírmondó*'s experience with the Verhovay Aid Association after the latter decided to support it as its sole and exclusive official newspaper from 1905 until the *Hírmondó*'s demise in 1909.

I

During the formative decade of the 1890s in the Hungarian-American community, the ethnic press played a crucial role in initiating, organizing and unifying local fraternal societies into large, national federations. The large fraternal federations, in turn, supported their ethnic newspapers by advertising in them and eventually by selecting one or several of them as their “official” newspapers to represent them to their members and to the community at large. This practice originated in the 1890s³ when the early press began printing directories or guides, called “*egyleti kalauz*” (fraternal directories or gazettes), for the small fraternal associations mushrooming within the nascent immigrant communities. At first, the “*egyleti kalauz*” comprised simple membership lists published at the local level. By the turn of the century, however, as some of the local fraternal amalgamated into large national federations, they began to employ national newspapers with wide readerships to represent their interests. Thereafter, their published *egyleti kalauz* grew to include extensive lists of member lodges, the names of their officers, announcements of their social events and official meetings—all of which frequently filled as many as 4 to 5 pages of the official newspaper.

This relationship was almost universally practiced by the large newspapers and fraternal during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The large fraternal federations normally selected their official newspapers by democratic vote of their membership at their annual or biannual conventions. Not surprisingly, the choice often went to the newspaper with the most subscribers among the members. The selected newspaper reaped lucrative rewards. It attracted new subscribers and advertising, and its presses were used by the fraternal to print in-house publications.⁴ Massive political campaigns, waged by the competing newspapers' supporters among the rank-and-file in their local chapters and lodges, preceded the conventions. The resulting stormy showdowns over this issue between highly polarized newspaper factions or parties at the conventions proved to be among the high points of these meetings. The actual selection process was normally left to the last day or two of the convention to assure that all competing newspapers remained to cover the entire meeting.⁵

Between meetings, disgruntled members were encouraged by this system to ignore normal channels of redress for their grievances by turning to the editors of opposing newspapers to vent their fury at their fraternal organization. Naturally, the fraternal's official newspaper felt obliged to respond in kind to defend its employer. Exchanges of this kind frequently led to highly personalized attacks between competing editors and sometimes degenerated into interminable press wars feeding on long remembered animosities.⁶

The first Hungarian publisher-editor associated with the official newspaper practice on a national scale was Gustave Sz. Erdélyi, owner of the *Amerikai Magyar Nemzetőr* [American Hungarian Guardian]. Established in 1884 in New York City as the first successful Hungarian weekly, Erdélyi's newspaper, like those that succeeded it, survived more by dependence on individual benefactors and the support of the emerging fraternal societies than by quality journalism. Accurately assessing the needs of his unlettered worker/peasant subscribers, Erdélyi's *Nemzetőr* set the journalistic pattern emulated by other first generation newspapers until the end of the second decade of the twentieth century. Together with the weekly *Szabadság* [Liberty], which began publishing in Cleveland in 1891, it engaged in populist/nationalist sensationalism and passionate quarreling with other newspapers over fraternal, church, and other community movements and issues.⁷ As the first influential Hungarian immigrant newspaper on the East Coast, the *Nemzetőr* was selected during the 1890s as the official newspaper for the largest of the Hungarian-American fraternal organizations, the Sick Benefit Societies Federation of Bridgeport, Conn. (referred to hereafter as the Bridgeport Federation). Upon this newspaper's demise in 1899, its official status with the Bridgeport Federation was passed on to its successor in New York City, the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*.⁸

Since by the turn of the century the largest concentrations of Hungarian immigrants were located in Cleveland (Ohio) and New York City, these cities became the headquarters for the largest privately owned non-sectarian newspapers competing for Hungarian-American readership on a national basis. The New York City community supported the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava* (which, after replacing the *Nemzetőr* as a weekly in 1899, emerged by 1904 as one of the two largest dailies in the United States) and the much smaller biweekly *Bevándorló* [Immigrant], founded in 1901.⁹ The Hungarian-American community of Cleveland produced three prominent privately managed non-sectarian national newspapers. These were the weekly *Magyar Hírmondó*, founded in April 1901, and two dailies: the *Magyar Napilap* [Hungarian Daily], which had the unusual distinction of starting out as a daily in 1904 (instead of taking the usual route of beginning as a weekly), and the already mentioned *Szabadság*, which from a slow start as a weekly in 1891 grew into a daily by 1904 in response to competition from the *Magyar Napilap* and *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*.¹⁰

Of the six large fraternal federations extant at the turn of the century, five regularly chose official newspaper representatives from among the above mentioned national newspapers. The three largest federations were non-sectarian immigrant workers' organizations with fast proliferating chapters. They included the Bridgeport Federation, the Verhovay Aid Association, and the Rákóczi Sick Benefit Association. Two smaller but still important bodies competing for official newspaper representatives were sectarian (denominational) federations, including the Hungarian Reformed Federation of America and the St. Mary, Patroness of the Hungarians' Association. The sixth body, the Hungarian Workers Benefit Association, was a socialist organization. It subsidized its own ideologically oriented organ and made no use of the national/secular press to promote itself.¹¹

As the largest of the fraternal federations at the turn of the century, the Bridgeport Federation set the pace for the other Hungarian-American associations. The Federation was the first to employ the most influential newspaper in its geographical region as its official organ (it chose the *Amerikai Magyar Nemzetőr* of New York City in the 1890s, followed in 1899 by the *Nemzetőr*'s successor, the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*). The Federation set another important precedent in 1903. To avoid the deleterious affects of vicious political battles before, during, and after its biannual conventions over the selection of its official newspaper, at its 1903 convention the Federation decided to employ three large newspapers to represent it instead of just one; it selected the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*, *Szabadság*, and *Magyar Hírmondó*.¹² It also began the practice of advertising in all other newspapers which regularly attended and reported on its annual conventions and other activities.¹³

Unlike the denominational fraternal associations of some of the other Eastern European immigrant groups (such as, for example, the Slovaks and Poles), during their formative years the Hungarian-American denominational federations did not publish their own in-house official organs. Hungarian-American ecclesiastical newspapers were independently run by clergy publishers who competed, along with the secular press, to be selected as official newspapers of the denominational federations. The denominational federations preferred it that way because they, like the non-denominational federations, gained wider publicity and avoided the most nefarious effects of press wars (of which the most ferocious were "clergy" press wars, waged by clergy editors)¹⁴ by choosing several official organs, from both the secular and denominational press, to represent them.¹⁵ While this practice helped the denominational federations avoid being monopolized by their clergy run newspapers, it had the negative effect of multiplying the potential meddlers in their perennial political and theological squabbles.¹⁶

Since Hungarian-American publishers, editors, and journalists played an

important role in influencing the nature of the described official newspaper relationship, the character and quality of these journalists deserve discussion. As already noted, competition for circulation and advertising revenues was intense. Routinely engaging in populist polemics, nationalistic sensationalism, and personal invectives, the editors emulated behavioral patterns established earlier by the *Nemzetőr* and *Szabadság*.¹⁷ Robert Harney has labeled them "pen fighters"; Robert Park criticized them for their "ruthless and violent fighting methods;" and Julianna Puskás referred to their "veritable press wars."¹⁸

Robert Park has been one of their harshest critics.¹⁹ He described them as "failed drifters" with no previous journalistic experience who exploited the "emotional luggage" of gullible Hungarian immigrants by participating in the "petty graft of parish politics and fraternal society intrigue."²⁰ Park concluded that the editors of the two great dailies, *Szabadság* and *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*, had an "evil" influence on Hungarian-American life because they had a monopoly on power and no Hungarian-American movements could succeed without their support and approval.²¹ His strongest invectives were reserved for the staff of the *Szabadság*, and especially for its founder, owner, and editor (from 1891 until his death in 1913)—Tihámér Kohányi. Kohányi, he suggested, was among the worst of his kind—an inexperienced opportunist rooted in the "small, untitled, and in later years largely landless Magyar gentry" which in Hungary represented "conservative and chauvinistic Junker rule."²²

Park's harsh assessments have not gone unchallenged. Julianna Puskás has pointed out that the quality of the early dailies did not so much reflect their editors' lack of training and experience as it did the low quality demands of their readers.²³ Robert Harney has questioned Park's and others' quick and easy assumptions about editorial quality in the absence of scholarship analyzing the occupational mobility and social backgrounds of early editors.²⁴ In fact, a very cursory survey of the journalists involved in the events under discussion points to men of training and education, albeit competition in the New World produced opportunistic tendencies among them. Thus, while Kohányi did reflect the chauvinistic tendencies of the Hungarian gentry, he had experience as a journalist in Budapest before migrating to the United States. He worked at many different jobs after his arrival, including manual labor and door to door peddling, before moving to Cleveland to start the *Szabadság* in 1891.²⁵ A man of immense energy who took on all comers as he built his paper by appealing to his worker/peasant readership and absorbing losing competitors (including, as we shall see, the *Magyar Hírmondó* and the *Magyar Napilap* in 1909), by 1910 Kohányi came to be recognized as one of the leading lights in the Hungarian-American community.

During the first decade of the twentieth century *Szabadság's* leader-

ship was challenged by Imre Fecsó, a newcomer to Cleveland, who began publishing three newspapers, including the daily *Magyar Napilap* and the weekly *Magyar Hírmondó*. While Fecsó came close to reflecting Park's stereotype of the inexperienced newspaperman with a limited education,²⁶ he made no claims to journalistic ability and did no writing or editing. He was a businessman with the good sense to employ a relatively high quality staff to edit his newspapers. His staff included, among others, Henrik Baracs, Tivadar Hodinka, Géza Farkas, Károly Rácz Rónay, Árpád Mogyoróssy, and Gyula Rudnyánszky. All were accomplished writers with journalistic experience in Hungary and the United States.²⁷

While a tacit division of labor apparently did exist between the Midwest and East Coast based newspapers and the fraternal organizations which employed them in their respective geographical regions, each newspaper, regardless of its location, was prepared to challenge any other for official status when the opportunity arose. For example, additional challenges to Kohányi's and Fecsó's Cleveland based newspapers occasionally arose among newspapers published in New York City. The largest of these papers, the daily *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*, was founded, edited, and published after 1899 by Géza Berkó, another example of an experienced journalist. The *Népszava* grew swiftly by appealing to its urban, professional environment and manifesting a more liberal emphasis on Americanization.²⁸ Of the two other important newspapers in New York City in this decade, the Socialist daily *Előre* [Forward]²⁹ and the weekly *Bevándorló* [Immigrant], only the latter was non-ideological and competed for official newspaper status. Its editor, Mihály Singer, had studied in Vienna, was fluent in both German and English, and was described as a practitioner of the "Budapest style" of journalism.³⁰

II

Having introduced the "official newspaper" environment within which the press and fraternal organizations operated at the turn of the century, our analysis can now shift to a description of the Verhovay Aid Association and the symbiotic relationship it developed with its official newspaper, the *Magyar Hírmondó*, during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Founded in 1886 by Hungarian miners in the anthracite coal region of northeastern Pennsylvania, by 1902 the Verhovay Aid Association emerged as one among three or four Hungarian-American fraternal organizations which had attained national stature. While still in its infancy and confined to the anthracite region of Pennsylvania during the 1890s, the Verhovay Aid Association had been ignored by all but one small, local Hungarian-American newspaper which made the first attempt, albeit unsuccessfully, to become its official newspaper.³¹ However, as new Verhovay chapters

proliferated in the coal and steel producing regions of western Pennsylvania and Ohio after the turn of the century,³² the Association came to the attention of influential Hungarian-American newspapers published in Cleveland, Ohio. By the Association's first national convention, held in 1902, and continuing thereafter for the next three years, the membership routinely shifted its selection for official newspaper back and forth between Cleveland's two weeklies, the *Szabadság* and *Magyar Hirmondó*, producing in the process a strong pattern of competition between the respective owners of these two newspapers, Fecsó and Kohányi.

From the time it first began publication in 1900, the changing nature of the *Magyar Hirmondó*'s editorial comments on the official newspaper relationship illustrated how editors and publishers were buffeted by the competitive environment in which they found themselves. At first very much opposed to the official newspaper system, the *Magyar Hirmondó* made it clear that the Hungarian-American press and fraternalists were well aware of the negative influences the practice exerted upon them and upon the Hungarian-American community at large, and that the press and fraternalists therefore wanted to do everything in their power to avoid the practice. The assumption supported by some newspapers that the successful development of fraternalists depended upon their promotion by their official newspapers was questioned by the *Hirmondó*. Moreover, the *Hirmondó* suggested, newspapers which depended for their revenues on fraternal organizations would not retain an independent voice because the editors' opinions were dictated by institutional and pecuniary interests.³³ The *Hirmondó* described what it called the "dilemma of press and fraternal relations" in the following manner: the press and the large fraternalists were the keys to community development (the *Hirmondó* ignored the role of the churches), they needed each others' support to perform their functions properly. The press needed to remain free to criticize, advise, and educate the Hungarian-American fraternalists and community without engendering suspicions about its motivations. If the press were perceived as "competing" for official newspaper status, its advice and suggestions would come under suspicion. Productive development for both fraternalists and newspapers, the *Hirmondó* concluded, would be possible only within a free and competitive environment.³⁴

As the *Hirmondó* began to participate in official newspaper relationship after 1903, however, it switched to defending the system and attacking the unfair "tactics" of its main rival, the *Szabadság*.³⁵ In response to a disgruntled letter-to-the-editor from one fraternal society member suggesting that the "servant (by which the writer meant the press) was becoming the master (of the fraternal association)," the *Hirmondó* responded that the official press was neither its servant nor master but "served" the association.³⁶ When in 1903 the *Hirmondó* announced that to "avoid suspicions" about its motives it was no longer "competing" for official newspaper selection

at the upcoming Bridgeport Federation convention, it was in fact signaling, in the language of the times, its intention to do just the opposite. Further indicating its new-found support for the official newspaper system was the *Hírmondó*'s suggestion that divisiveness at conventions over this issue could be avoided if large fraternal federations employed several official newspapers instead of just one. The evil consequences of competition and favoritism could thereby be avoided, the *Hírmondó* concluded, insuring that all editors could speak frankly and openly about fraternal issues without engendering suspicions about their motives for doing so.³⁷

That the *Hírmondó* had emerged as a major player in official newspaper competition became evident when in 1903 the Bridgeport Federation decided to shift to "collective" official newspaper representation and selected the *Hírmondó* as one of its representative organs. Then in November 1905 came the unexpected Verhovay decision to make the *Hírmondó* Verhovay's sole official newspaper. Apparently without consulting the Verhovay membership, the Verhovay officers had decided to break their contract with the *Szabadság* (which had only recently been appointed by democratic vote at the June 1905 convention) for "neglecting its responsibilities" in representing the Association.³⁸ In an even more unprecedented move, the officers recommended that to avoid future neglect from its official newspaper, the Association should appoint the *Magyar Hírmondó* as its "exclusive" organ to which all members would thereafter be required to subscribe.³⁹

At this juncture the *Hírmondó*'s recently equivocating editorial philosophy on official newspaper status took an unequivocating turn toward supporting the idea that large fraternal should employ only one official newspaper. Thereafter, until its demise in 1909, the *Magyar Hírmondó* argued that to achieve their full potential for growth, large fraternal federations required the services of only one official newspaper, to the exclusion of all others.⁴⁰ The repeated efforts of Imre Fecsó's *Magyar Hírmondó* after 1905 to sell the Verhovay membership (and, in the process, the Hungarian-American community) on this idea until the collapse of his newspaper in 1909 will be the focus of the balance of this paper.

III

In 1905, the *Hírmondó* and the Verhovay officers defended their unprecedented exclusive organ proposal by arguing, first, that mandatory membership subscription fees would pay for the exclusive services of the official newspaper without incurring extra costs to the organization; second, that using one newspaper would enable the fraternal to disseminate the same controlled news about the organization to all members; third, that the selected newspaper could be expected to devote all of its resources and attention to promoting the Verhovay Association; and fourth, that as

the 30,000 member Slovak Catholic Union was prospering while requiring its members to subscribe to its official organ (*Jednota*), so, too, could the Verhovay Aid Association be expected to prosper with its exclusive official newspaper, the *Magyar Hírmondó*.⁴¹

Szabadság refuted these arguments. First, it reminded the *Hírmondó* of its (the *Hírmondó*'s) previously published declarations against representation of fraternal by only one official newspaper; second, it denied the existence of parallels between church related fraternal such as the Slovak federation and non-sectarian fraternal such as Verhovay; third, it recalled that the Bridgeport Federation had shifted to using several official newspapers to avoid the previously experienced negative consequences of selecting only one; and finally, it accused the Verhovay officers and the *Hírmondó* of conspiring to give a \$3000 monopoly to the *Hírmondó* based on the proposed two year contract requiring the 1500 membership to pay annual subscription fees of \$1.00 per man.⁴²

When in early 1906 the Verhovay management decision to switch from the *Szabadság* to the *Hírmondó* was put to the test by a mail ballot of the rank-and-file, it received support, but just barely, and on the old terms. While the employment of only one newspaper was accepted, it excluded the mandated subscriptions feature and continued the practice of shared fraternal advertising with other newspapers.⁴³ Thus while the *Hírmondó* was recognized as the Association's sole official newspaper for the publication of news, *Szabadság* continued to publish the Verhovay *kalauz* and no specific newspaper was mandated for purchase by the membership.

Although the *Magyar Hírmondó* had failed to win exclusive status with mandated membership subscriptions, its role after 1905 as the only newspaper with direct official access to Verhovay news had important consequences. On the one hand, the *Hírmondó* could claim credit for the tremendous growth the Association was experiencing during the second half of the decade.⁴⁴ On the other hand, its increasing dependence upon Verhovay patronage resulted in its publication of a flood of uncritical praise for all managerial actions and decisions between the 1905 and 1907 conventions. In the process the *Hírmondó* became the mouthpiece for the fraternal's national leadership and also exercised undue influence upon the organization's internal politics.⁴⁵

In 1907 the *Hírmondó*'s renewed efforts to be selected as Verhovay's exclusive official newspaper⁴⁶ was again unanimously opposed by the representatives of *Szabadság* and the other newspapers present at the convention. The *Hírmondó*'s opponents argued anew that the proposed change would provide the *Hírmondó* with a virtual monopoly over Verhovay readership and policy. A stormy debate over this issue at the convention resulted in action similar to the previous 1905 decision: the *Hírmondó* was reelected for two more years as Verhovay's official newspaper under the old con-

tract, permitting the use of other newspapers as advertisers and rejecting the exclusive subscription feature.⁴⁷

At the 1909 convention held in Pittsburgh, this struggle over official newspaper status produced a crisis situation which demonstrated how closely the success or failure (indeed, the very survival!) of both the fraternal and its official organ had come to depend on each other. For weeks before the meeting the *Hirmondó* provided the Association with controlled news coverage, praising all actions of the officers. Campaigning hard among the local chapters to have itself elected as the Association's exclusive newspaper, the *Hirmondó* again argued that the alternative practice of employing several newspapers stifled fraternal development by depriving it (the fraternal) of the exclusive attention and support that one newspaper could provide for its future growth.⁴⁸

Géza Kende, Kohányi's second in command on the *Szabadság* staff, argued to the contrary. He warned that for two years the public had been left ignorant of all Verhovay activities except for the controlled, highly suspect propaganda printed in its official newspaper. He suggested that since the non-official press was prevented from providing objective news, the fraternal was losing its legitimacy within the Hungarian-American community. By selecting only one newspaper to represent the Association, Kende cautioned, the membership was losing control over managerial policy by being compelled to read the same censored version of the news. Finally, he refuted recent *Hirmondó* allegations suggesting that the Bridgeport Federation was experiencing declining membership because it employed several official newspapers instead of only one to represent it.⁴⁹

When the June 7, 1909 convention opened in Pittsburgh, floor battles immediately ensued over two related issues which traditionally divided the membership: questions about financial mismanagement and selection of the official newspaper. The financial mismanagement question split the delegates between the supporters of the officers, defended by the *Hirmondó*, and their opponents, supported by newspapers competing for official status and led by *Szabadság*. As usual, factional tensions reached their highest pitch over the official newspaper issue when Imre Fecsó repeated his offer of the "free" services of the *Hirmondó* on an exclusive subscription basis.⁵⁰ Géza Kende responded for the eight opposing newspapers at the convention by arguing that the Association would gain more collective services and publicity if it used several newspapers instead of relying on only one.⁵¹ Kende further explained that Fecsó's proposal deprived Verhovay members of the freedom to subscribe to the newspaper of their choice; that it threatened the survival of other newspapers excluded from advertising income; that it thwarted the independence of the press by making it reluctant to criticize fraternal officers for fear of losing advertising support; and that prepaid membership subscriptions (membership had grown to nearly

eight thousand) would result in total financial dependency for the struggling *Hírmondó* upon the Verhovay Association's continued support.⁵² To end the bickering over this issue at conventions, the *Szabadság*, *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*, and other newspapers argued in favor of the alternative proposal, suggested by the *Hírmondó* itself to the Bridgeport Federation in 1903, of routinely appointing two or more major newspapers to official status on an equal basis.⁵³

By 1909, the mood of the membership was in fact turning sharply against the Verhovay officers who were being accused by convention investigative committees of mismanagement and favoritism. Several factors contributed to these suspicions. First, there was the traditional Hungarian-American working men's fear of being exploited by their fellow white-collar compatriots. To Hungarian-American workers, their exploiters included their pastors and businessmen, but especially their newspaper editors and journalists.⁵⁴ Second, mismanagement resulting from the loose accounting methods used by the Verhovay officers was clearly demonstrated by the investigative committees. And finally, as the regional base of membership expanded westward, growing suspicions about a conspiracy favoring Fecsó, who had spent his early years as a miner in the anthracite region,⁵⁵ and the anthracite based officers who still monopolized management,⁵⁶ began to work against Fecsó's official newspaper.⁵⁷

Noting the growing opposition, Fecsó hurriedly withdrew his exclusive offer. But the officers, recognizing that their survival had come to be tied to that of the *Hírmondó*, used questionable parliamentary tactics to win the *Hírmondó*'s re-appointment as the Association's newspaper based on the old contract.⁵⁸ These tactics of the officers, combined with their surprising reelection to their respective offices (only the president, Arnocky, was replaced, despite revelations about mismanagement by all of the officers),⁵⁹ left a veil of suspicion over the entire convention upon its adjournment.

Ensuing events demonstrated how the official newspaper issue could magnify other political questions surrounding the fraternal federation and eventually lead to destructive consequences for both it and its representative newspapers. As the disgruntled delegates returned to their respective lodges after the convention, their lingering suspicions about mismanagement and favoritism exacerbated two political irritants which were coming to a head within the membership. The first of these was a growing regional polarization reflecting the organization's shifting power base as it expanded westward. On the one side stood an alliance of New York City lodges supporting the lodges located in the original Verhovay anthracite heartland comprised of the founding "mother" society in Hazleton, Pa., and its early offshoot lodges located in the surrounding hard coal regions of northeastern Pennsylvania. On the other side were the more recently founded lodges located in the western Pennsylvania and Ohio coal and

steel producing regions which were growing increasingly influential.⁶⁰

The second political issue related to rank-and-file resistance to centralization. As the Association outgrew its anthracite origins, many of the chapters displayed great resistance to relinquishing the localized democratic practices and autonomy which they had enjoyed in the past.⁶¹ These two issues—regional polarization and the struggle against growing centralizing tendencies, both products of expansion and the inevitable growing pains of a small, local, informally managed fraternal evolving toward becoming a national insurance company—were brought to a head by the official newspaper issue of 1909.

In the summer of 1909 what at first appeared to be a routine press war following a contentious Verhovay convention turned into something much more serious than that. The growing dissension over the festering issues described above was fueled by a flood of negative press reports published by three competing newspapers—the New York based *Amerikai Magyar Népszava* and *Bevándorló*, and the Cleveland based *Szabadság*.⁶² Attacking the managerial decisions and style of the Verhovay officers, each newspaper claimed it wanted to “save” the Association by printing its version of the news. As the events of the next months demonstrated, their mutual recriminations led to the opposite result, nearly destroying the fraternal association.⁶³

Confused and angry, the members of one Verhovay lodge after the other reported their refusal to accept the *Hírmondó* as their official newspaper and their unwillingness to send future publicity information and fees to it. As some of the chapters withdrew altogether from the Association in protest against the actions of its officers,⁶⁴ the extreme dependency relationship which had developed between the *Hírmondó* and the Verhovay organization forced Feecsó's two newspapers to file for bankruptcy. The two defunct newspapers were immediately absorbed by Kohányi's *Szabadság*, thereby greatly enhancing the latter's prestige and influence within the Hungarian-American community.⁶⁵ Left on the defensive and in need of the support of a powerful newspaper, at their October quarterly meeting the Verhovay officers next decided to replace the *Hírmondó* with the *Szabadság* as Verhovay's official newspaper. Inadvertently, the officers thereby repeated the mistake they had made in 1905: because they chose *Szabadság* without membership approval, they were deluged with renewed criticism for practicing arbitrary management from the top.

Accused of having “purchased” official status instead of being democratically elected to it,⁶⁶ it was Kohányi who now found himself attacked from all sides. His opponents reminded him that he had argued for the use of several newspapers as Verhovay advertisers;⁶⁷ that he had denounced as illegal the recent re-election of the *Hírmondó* to the status of official newspaper, a status which he now inherited; and that he was contradicting

himself by shifting from condemnation to praise of the officers' policies and actions.⁶⁸

The resulting newspaper polemics and internal fraternal dissension split the Association into two nearly equal political factions. In an effort to bring about a resolution, two New York chapters proposed holding an extraordinary convention in New York City, and were supported by the Hazleton, Pa., "mother" society and other lodges located in the surrounding anthracite region.⁶⁹

This call from the eastern lodges for an extraordinary convention was a blatant challenge to the authority of the central office which had been temporarily relocated, amidst much protestations, from the Hazleton "mother" society to Pittsburgh.⁷⁰ While the Easterners were partially appealing to this regional rivalry, they were also exploiting the previously described wider political struggle between the rank-and-file and management over the intruding forces of centralization and professionalization within the fraternal.⁷¹

Attended by approximately one half of the delegates, the extraordinary convention convened by the Eastern lodges met in New York City during November 1909. Clearly controlled by two large New York City chapters (38 and 83) and the Hazleton mother society with its anthracite allies,⁷² the convention denounced the Pittsburgh based management and elected new officers to replace them (including two ex-officers from the anthracite chapters who had been removed at or since the earlier Pittsburgh meeting).⁷³ The official newspaper dilemma was resolved by the appointment of several newspapers to that status, on an equal basis, including *Szabadság* and two New York based papers, the *Bevándorló* and the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*. In addition, the *Egyleti Élet*, also of New York, was to serve as a monthly advertiser, to be paid by each chapter annually for its services.⁷⁴

Having split into two competing factions, the Verhovay Association was at this point on the verge of self-destruction. Management had completely lost control of the organization and the fraternal's fate passed into the hands of competing newspaper editors. All decisions, directives, and announcements were conveyed by the press, usually accompanied by slanderous letters and libelous counter charges.⁷⁵

Some of the delegates who attended the extraordinary convention in New York had hoped that bringing the membership together again might mediate issues. But since the meeting was boycotted by management and half of the delegates, and since it was regionally biased, this proved impossible. Yet the New York meeting did achieve two positive influences. First, it convinced the reluctant Verhovay officers to call an extraordinary convention of their own.⁷⁶ Second, with the fate of the fraternal hanging in the balance, the competing newspapers finally recognized that the potential dissolution of the Verhovay Association would benefit no one and mutually agreed to

stop printing material which had fanned the flames of factionalism.⁷⁷

The third and final Verhovay convention to be held that year was convened on November 30, 1909, in Pittsburgh. Concern about press competition for official newspaper status and the interference, factionalism, and enmity which in the past had resulted from it, immediately generated a debate over a proposal to exclude representatives of the press from all future discussions and votes taken on official newspaper issues. However, the delegates' concern about the possibility of losing press coverage as a result convinced them to back away from this drastic step.⁷⁸ Instead, they turned to the oft proposed suggestion that official status be offered, on an equal basis, to all major newspapers represented at the convention.⁷⁹ During 1909 and most of the decade thereafter, this meant the selection of *Szabadság* and *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*, and usually one other newspaper from the Pittsburgh area. Thus, the practice of selecting multiple newspapers for this role was finally established. The idea of using a mandatory, exclusive newspaper to which all members had to subscribe was not seriously broached again.⁸⁰

Not until after 1918, when the Association decided to publish its own in-house organ called the *Verhovayak Lapja*, did the above described symbiotic relationship between the press and the fraternal slowly come to an end. After 1918, the commercial press and the large fraternal federation became fully independent of one another. "Official" reporting was done by the *Verhovayak Lapja* which reflected the institutional interests of the Association, while the commercial press became the source of "instant" news reporting, as opposed to the "controlled" institutional reporting which it had earlier been compelled to provide. As other large fraternal federations followed suit, on a national level, at least, the era of close relationships between large fraternal federations and their "official" newspapers came to a close during the 1920s.

NOTES

- 1 *Amerikai Magyar Népszava 25 éves Jubileumi száma* [The 25th Anniversary Issue of the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*] Apr. 20, 1924 special issue. See Sect. IV, Hungarians in America, p. 2. The *Amerikai Magyar Népszava* will hereafter be referred to as AMN and the source quoted above will be cited as AMN 25th Anniversary.
- 2 Sally M. Miller (ed.), *The Ethnic Press in the United States* (New York, 1987), 46, 54-6, 278, 315, 839-42, 845-46, 356, 373-74, 395-98, 404.
- 3 According to one source, the idea was transplanted by the immigrants from Hungary where they were accustomed to receiving news, laws, decrees, etc. in official newspapers published by their government. Géza Kende, *Magyarok Amerikában* [Hungarians in America] (Cleveland, 1927), 2:266-7.
- 4 Géza Hoffmann, *Csonka munkásosztály. Az amerikai magyarság* [Truncated

Laboring Class: The Hungarian-Americans] (Budapest, 1911), 184; Julianna Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok az Egyesült Államokban, 1880–1940* [Hungarian Immigrants in the United States] (Budapest, 1982), 299; Kende, *Magyarok*, 2:266–7.

5 Kende, *Magyarok*, 2: 266–7.

6 Notwithstanding Robert F. Harney's correct characterization of ethnic newspapers ("official" or otherwise) as providing the "central forum for the exchange of ideas and communication of information within the ethnic group," it is clear that many immigrant group practices, in particular the official newspaper relationship, could lead to a breakdown of cohesion as well. For Harney's comment, see *Polyphony: Bulletin of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario* (Spring/Summer 1982), Introduction, p. 2.

7 Otto Árpád Taborszky, *The Hungarian Press In America* (Washington DC, Catholic University Masters Thesis, 1955), 16; Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok*, 287. That their methods fit the requirements of the environment they found themselves in was attested by their success.

8 *AMN 25th Anniversary*, Hungarian American Section IV, p. 1.

9 During the first two decades of the new century the second largest daily in circulation in New York City was actually the *Előre* (Forward). However, *Előre* was a socialist paper which served as the official organ for the fraternal of the Hungarian wing of the Socialist Party and therefore did not compete with the secular national papers.

10 For discussions of the press, see Géza D. Berkó, *Amerikai Magyar Népszava Jubileumi Dicszabuma 1899–1909* [The Jubilee Anniversary Album of the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*] (New York, 1910), 56–59, hereafter cited as Berkó, *AMN 10th Anniversary Album*; Also see Taborszky, *The Hungarian Press*, and Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok*, 284–302.

11 For a good description of Hungarian associations, see Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok*, 223–49.

12 *Magyar Hirmondó* Aug. 20, 1903; *Ibid.* Sept. 8 and 15, 1904; Sept. 15 and Sept. 21, 1905. This newspaper will hereafter be cited as MH.

13 MH Dec. 25, 1905, Sept. 13, 1906, Sept. 12, 1907, Sept. 30 and Oct. 7, 1909.

14 Until the turn of the century, the Cleveland based *Magyarok Vasárnapja* [Hungarians' Sunday], under the control of Károly Böhm, had a monopoly on official status in the largest Catholic federation, the St. Mary, Patroness of the Hungarians Federation, headquartered in Cleveland. However, as Catholic churches, new priests, and membership in the Federation grew with the growth of immigration, an opposing leadership emerged in western Pennsylvania under the McKeesport based Kálmán Kováts and his new, aggressively chauvinistic newspaper, *Magyarok Csillaga* [Hungarians' Star]. By 1904 Kováts was presiding over the Federation and his newspaper had replaced the *Magyarok Vasárnapja* as its official denominational organ. As a result, the Federation was threatened with dissolution during this period as the Clevelanders agitated to break away to start their own organization and the Pennsylvanians threatened to do the same. See MH July 9, 1903 and Dec. 1, 1904.

Similar potential crises developed in the Protestant Hungarian Reformed Federation by the turn of the century. As with the Catholics, philosophical dif-

- ferences between clergy newspapers, in this case the *Reformátusok Lapja* [The Reformed News] vs. the *Heti Szemle* [The Weekly Journal], began to tear the Federation apart. By 1905, the consensus within the Federation was that clergy press battles were the primary retardant to its growth. (MH Sept. 28, 1905, and Oct. 5, 1905).
- 15 For example, at its Oct. 1903 meeting, the Catholic federation selected the three newspapers which received the highest votes of its membership at its convention: the *Magyarok Csillaga*, *Szabadság*, and *Magyar Hírmondó*. It continued the same practice through 1905. (MH Oct. 8, 1903; Nov. 23, 1905). Likewise, at the Oct. 1903 convention of the Hungarian Reformed Federation, the choice went not only to the *Reformátusok Lapja* but also to the secular *Magyar Hírmondó* for "wider coverage." (MH Oct. 27, 1903). During the next two years, *Szabadság* was added for the same purpose. (MH Oct. 13, 1904; Oct. 19, 1905).
 - 16 See MH May 26 and Oct. 13, 1904; and *Ibid.* Oct. 19, 1905. By 1904, for example, the *Magyar Hírmondó* was very much embroiled in the personality quarrels of the two leading Hungarian priests, Bóhm of Cleveland and Kováts of McKeesport.
 - 17 Berkó, *AMN 10th Anniversary Album*, 60, 108; Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok*, 294.
 - 18 *Polyphony*, Introduction, 2; Robert F. Park, *The Immigrants and their Press* (New York, 1921); Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok*, 294.
 - 19 Park did not know Hungarian. His negative views of the Hungarian American press were based on his disgruntled informer, Eugene S. Bragger (born: Ernő Szekeres), who apparently detested all manifestations of Hungarian nationalism, including that which appeared in the press. Steven Bela Vardy, *The Hungarian-Americans* (Boston, 1985), pp. 72–3, 177–78.
 - 20 Park, *The Immigrants*, 74–6; 349–50. Park indicted them harshly, concluding that they were "much below the old country standard of their profession"; that they represented "that dangerous type . . . the unsuccessful 'gentleman' . . . accustomed to good living and unaccustomed to work . . ."; and that they were failures in Hungary who came without training, and comprised a small group with no mobility potential, circulating among a few newspapers in America.
 - 21 *Ibid.*, 75–76, 349.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, 347–48. Kohányi was a ruthless competitor, absorbing his defeated adversaries. He never became an American citizen, remaining an ardent Hungarian nationalist. Park referred to his editorial staff as "a rock of refuge for shipwrecked Hungarian gentlemen from the old country . . ."
 - 23 Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok*, 300. Newspapers which learned adapt to the sensationalist, nationalistic, and contentious predilections of their peasant/worker readership were usually more successful in the competition for subscribers.
 - 24 *Polyphony*, "The Ethnic Press in Ontario," 4.
 - 25 Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok*, 287–293; Kende, *Magyarok*, 1:277; *Ibid.*, 2:189–203; Emil Lengyel, *Americans from Hungary* (Philadelphia, 1948), 197.
 - 26 Kálmán Káldor, *Magyar-Amerika írásban és képen* [Hungarian-America in Words and Pictures] (St. Louis, 1937) 2 vols, 1:43; Kende, *Magyarok*, 1:277; MH Mar. 19 and Dec 31, 1908. Having attained some high school education in Hungary as a teenager, Fecsó came to the USA in 1883 and worked in several

Pennsylvania mining regions before moving to Cleveland in the 1890's to invest in a saloon. Thereafter he became active in Hungarian-American movements and invested in many business ventures, including immigrant farming colonization schemes and three newspapers. He came to be identified with spearheading the idea of using one mandated official newspaper as the best means to develop fraternalism. He tried to compete with Kohányi for leadership but lost the battle and was deserted. His main failing was that he overextended himself financially and went bankrupt.

- 27 Baracs was editor of the MH from its inception in 1900 until he was replaced by Hodinka in 1905. Both men had reached high levels of education and been journalists in Hungary (MH Jan. 4, 1905 and Jan. 4, 1906). Mogyoróssy was a renown Latinist who had attempted to start and edit several newspapers in the 1890's before he became one of Fecsó's editors at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century (MH Apr. 1, 1907). Rudnyánszky was a poet and disillusioned journalist in Hungary. After leaving the *Hirmondó* in 1909 he tried but failed to start his own paper. He returned to Hungary in 1912, a poor and broken man (See *Detroiti Újság*, Sept. 5, 1969, quoted in Edmund Vasváry Collection, Micro roll #9, Hungarian American Foundation, New Brunswick, New Jersey; also see MH Dec. 31, 1908 and *Szabadság* July 7, 1909.) While the journalists of this period were clearly better trained and more experienced than their detractors have given them credit for, they were a disillusioned lot operating in a very competitive environment. Most of them attempted, at one time or another, to start their own newspaper, almost always without success. Often required to do everything from editing to printing, reporting, and distributing, they were underpaid and had little hope for upward mobility as they circulated between the handful of newspapers which successively appeared and disappeared within the Hungarian-American community.
- 28 After coming to the United States as a teenager in the 1890s, Berkó received his journalistic experience by working for several years for a Hungarian newspaper, the *Amerikai Népszava*, in New York City. In 1899 he bought this newspaper and began the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava* (AMN). By the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century, the AMN emerged as the major daily on the East Coast. Unlike the *Szabadság*, it toned down its nationalism and stressed Americanization to its more urban, skilled, and professional audience. After Kohányi's death in 1913 it became one of the two recognized leading newspapers in the Hungarian-American community. Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok*, 293-4.
- 29 Before the First World War, *Előre* was third in circulation among the big dailies.
- 30 Fluent in both English and German, he was described as a "high caliber writer" who was more interested in "reporting than leading." One source suggested that because Singer did not offer, in style or content, what his public wanted, when he later attempted to turn his paper into a daily, it failed. See Edmund Vasváry Collection, micro roll #9, Hungarian-American Foundation, New Brunswick, New Jersey.
- 31 The 1892 attempt by the Hungarian immigrant intellectual, Árpád Mogyoróssy, to exploit his relationship with the founders by pressing them to exclude all newspapers from Association meetings except his own Hazleton based newspaper, *Önállás*, was the beginning of a pattern, much more evident later, whereby

- editors and owners of newspapers used their personal contacts with fraternal management to win official newspaper status. See Joseph Daragó (ed.), *Verhovayak Lapja: Verhovay Segélyegylet 50 éves jubileumi kiadványa* [The Verhovay News: the Verhovay Aid Association's 50th Anniversary Publication] (Pittsburgh, 1936), 45.
- 32 The Association grew rapidly after 1903. At its first national convention in 1902 it reported 1,000 members and 20 chapters. By 1906, it had doubled in size, after which its growth rate was even more phenomenal, reporting 18,203 members and 267 chapters on the eve of the First World War. See Bela Vassady, "Themes From Immigrant Fraternal Life: The Early Decades Of The Hazleton Based Hungarian Verhovay Sick Benefit Association," Chap. 2 in David L. Salay (ed.), *Hard Coal, Hard Times: Ethnicity and Labor in the Anthracite Region* (Scranton, Pa.: The Anthracite Museum Press, 1984), 23.
 - 33 MH June 14, 1900. This article appeared before two federation conventions. The *Hirmondó* also complained that any newspaper which was not "official" was suspected of "competing" for official status every time it praised or criticized a fraternal in print.
 - 34 MH July 5, 1900. The *Hirmondó* also correctly pointed out that press independence was threatened when the federations became convinced that they were "helping" the newspapers by employing them, and when the newspapers became convinced that they could not exist without federation support. Under these circumstances, the *Hirmondó* concluded, newspapers will no longer fulfill their journalistic responsibilities, but only the special interests of their employers.
 - 35 MH Apr. 2, 1903. Fecsó began his daily newspaper, the *Magyar Napilap*, in 1904. As its primary competitor, this immediately forced the *Szabadság* to also become a daily. Thereafter, all of Fecsó's newspapers, including the *Magyar Hirmondó*, began to engage in the kind of competitive quarreling the latter had earlier renounced.
 - 36 MH July 30, 1903.
 - 37 MH Aug. 20, 1903.
 - 38 *Szabadság* Aug. 3, 1905; MH Nov. 16 and Dec. 21, 1905. This was a very unusual action. Apparently, the officers had been empowered at the June convention to select another paper if *Szabadság* was deemed unsatisfactory in promoting the fraternal.
 - 39 *Szabadság* Dec. 7, 1905. *Szabadság* was serving several fraternal associations. Verhovay apparently was now insisting sole representation. At the same time the *Magyar Hirmondó*, despite its increasing advertising business, was in financial trouble and had been forced into decreasing its annual subscription price due to the vicious competition. Thus, both the fraternal and the *Magyar Hirmondó* had incentive to strike a new kind of deal.
 - 40 After the 1905 decision, the *Magyar Hirmondó* and Fecsó lauded everything that came out of the Federation. The Verhovay officers were referred to as "20th century" men for wanting a mandatory paper. MH Dec. 7, 1905.
 - 41 MH Dec. 7, 1905. To the last of these arguments the *Szabadság* correctly responded that the Slovak Catholic Association owned and published its own organ because it was an ecclesiastical fraternal, so that it was not analogous to the Verhovay case. See *Szabadság* Dec. 7, 1905.

- 42 *Szabadság* Dec. 5, 1905; MH Dec. 27, 1905.
- 43 MH Feb. 15, 1906.
- 44 In 1905 Verhovay had reported 1600 members. By February 1906 that had grown to 2498, and one year later to 4319.
- 45 On the detrimental role of the press, see Hoffmann, *Csonka munkásosztály*, 184; Kende, *Magyarok* 2: 266–271, 307–8; AMN 26 June, 1909.
- 46 MH May 30, 1907.
- 47 MH June 13, 1907 and Jan 2, 1903.
- 48 Vladimir Deák, a top Verhovay officer, personally visited chapters before the convention, promoting the selection of the *Hírmondó*. For examples of the *Hírmondó*'s campaigning before the convention, see MH May 13, 17, 20, 27 and June 10, 1907.
- 49 The *Hírmondó* claimed that this was because the Association had not been accorded proper attention by either of its two newspapers. However, *Szabadság* pointed out that the Bridgeport Federation had in fact grown to a membership of over 10,000 during the recent period.
- 50 MH June 17, 1909; *Szabadság* June 14, 1909.
- 51 AMN May 20, 1920, describing Kende's reminiscences; Kende, *Magyarok*, 2: 314–5. The hot tempers and emotions at such meetings were demonstrated by the fact that after his speech Kende was physically threatened by members of the opposition and required police protection for the remainder of the convention.
- 52 Kende, *Magyarok*, 2: 313–15; AMN June 14 and 17, 1909; *Szabadság*, June 14, 1909.
- 53 AMN June 14, 1909; Kende, *Magyarok*, 2: 314–15.
- 54 At this convention the membership passed a new by-law excluding schooled men from serving as officers, emulating similar rules made earlier by other Hungarian associations. The Verhovay provision excluded pastors, journalists, and businessmen who had "business associations" with the fraternal organization. The rule was not repealed until 1911, and the tradition of drawing leadership from working class roots continued into the 1920's. See AMN June 14, 1909. The precedent opposing educated elite leadership in fraternalism was set in 1897 by the Bridgeport Federation. See Hoffmann, *Csonka munkásosztály*, 177–8; Kende, *Magyarok*, 2: 316.
- 55 According to Kende, in 1884 Fecsó was one of the founding members of the Freeland Hungarian Society, Verhovay's Hungarian fraternal predecessor in the anthracite region. Kende, *Magyarok*, 2: 316.
- 56 Until 1909 leadership of the Association remained monopolized by a coterie of men associated with the Hazleton mother society and its original anthracite offshoots. The 1904 convention chose Joseph Arnoczky (Freeland, Chap. 1) as its president, and Andrew Buczko (Mt. Carmel, Chap. 2) as treasurer. Arnoczky was re-elected in 1905, together with Vladimir Deák (Hazleton mother society), who was made secretary and Andrew Bolla (McAdoo, Chap. 11), chosen as treasurer. Buczko and Bolla had both served as treasurers in their respective anthracite chapters, and Deák had been president of the Hazleton mother society. In 1907 the same group of anthracite men was returned to office, and was in control during the 1909 year of crisis. See Vassady, "Themes from Immigrant Fraternal Life," 26.

- 57 AMN June 14, 1909; Kende, *Magyarok*, 2:314–5.
- 58 *Szabadság* June 14, 1909.
- 59 The secretary, Deák, remained in office, as did Bolla, the Verhovay treasurer who had been accused of financial mismanagement; only the president, Arnocky, was replaced. Bolla was reelected despite the fact that investigations during the convention had demonstrated his total ignorance of accounting and bookkeeping procedures. He had not been cleared of mismanagement by the time the vote was taken at the end of the meeting. *Szabadság* June 15, 1909.
- 60 Vassady, "Themes from Immigrant Fraternal Life," 23, 27.
- 61 *Ibid*, 24–5.
- 62 *Szabadság* summarized the unresolved problems facing the fraternal association. It concluded that Verhovay's inner operations would now remain unpublicized for two more years, because, as before, only the *Hirmondó* would be privy to its news. Pointing to the misdeeds of the officers which had remained covered up until they were investigated and revealed at the annual Convention, *Szabadság* suggested that the necessary public scrutiny would be provided only by open reporting. *Szabadság* editorials, June 16, 21, 24, 1909.
- 63 AMN June 26, 1909; MH July 1, 15; Aug. 19, 26; Sept. 16, 1909.
- 64 AMN July 29–31, Oct. 14, Nov. 1, 1909. On Oct. 14, 1909, AMN reported that seven chapters had left the Association and joined its larger competitor, the Bridgeport Federation.
- 65 AMN Oct. 11, 1909.
- 66 *Szabadság* claimed there was precedent for the way it had been chosen. In 1899, when the first large Hungarian-American newspaper of national scope, the *Amerikai Nemzetőr*, ceased publication, it had been the Bridgeport Federation's official newspaper. The status of official newspaper was passed on to the AMN without the calling of a new convention. See *Szabadság* Oct. 15, 1909.
- 67 Earlier in the year at the Pittsburgh convention, *Szabadság* and the other competing newspapers had argued that they could provide all *kalauz* and news services for the Association for \$500 each. The majority of the Verhovay delegates supported this proposal. In addition, the newspapers had also argued in favor of Verhovay selecting more than one official paper. It is interesting to note that at the same time as all this trouble was brewing in the Verhovay Association, the Bridgeport Federation reelected as its official papers the *Szabadság* and the AMN without rancor or incidents. The Verhovay still had this lesson to learn.
- 68 AMN Oct. 11 and 18, 1909.
- 69 Confusion prevailed between the authority of the mother society in Hazleton and the Pittsburgh office recently used as headquarters by the new officers. Efforts to explain to the rank-and-file that the Hazleton "mother" society no longer had any more power or authority than other chapters did not sink in easily, especially among the anthracite lodges. *Szabadság* Nov. 17, 1909.
- 70 Whether the headquarters should remain in Hazleton or move to Pittsburgh was a debated issue in Verhovay ever since the fraternal's center of gravity shifted westward during the first decade of the twentieth century. Several efforts to make the move were reversed by legal action taken by its opponents until the move finally became permanent in the 1920's.
- 71 *Szabadság* Nov. 2, 1909. *Szabadság* itself had earlier called for an extraordinary

convention when it opposed the reelection of the *Hirmondó*. In November 1909 the Verhovay lodges split almost equally on the issue, publishing opposing views in the new official paper, *Szabadság*, and supporting views in its competitor, the AMN.

72 *Szabadság* Nov. 17, 1909; *Ibid* Dec. 2, 1909.

73 The two anthracite officers replaced were Arnocky and Deák. Arnocky had been removed at the June Pittsburgh meeting and Deák had been forced to resign in the fall of 1909 before the New York meeting.

74 AMN Nov. 16 and 18, 1909.

75 In its Nov. 17, 1909 issue, the *Szabadság* condemned "The Big Comedy in New York." It referred to the meeting as a "treacherous conspiracy," and accused two New York newspapers, the *Amerikai Magyar Népszava* and the *Bevándorló*, of poisoning the air to produce these results. At this juncture, the *Szabadság* was printing all letters written by friends of the officers, while the New York papers countered by publishing all letters from the opposing side. *Szabadság* Nov. 17, Nov 30, Dec. 2, 1909; AMN Oct. 18, Nov 1, 15, 18, 1909.

76 In what turned out to be a futile effort to avert the New York meeting, the officers met on Nov 9 and made the decision to call a second official convention to start on Nov 30, 1909 in Pittsburgh. See *Szabadság* Nov. 11, 1909.

77 *Szabadság* November 8, 1909.

78 AMN Dec. 1, 1909.

79 *Szabadság* Dec. 3, 1909.

80 AMN Dec 2 and 4, 1909; *Szabadság* Dec. 21, 1911, part 5, p. 2. In fact, as described earlier, the precedent for this approach had been set earlier by the Bridgeport Federation after many years of warfare between the *Szabadság* and AMN. Also see Kende, *Magyarok*, 2:315 and *Szabadság Naptára* (1908), 194.

Premarital Pregnancy in Western Hungary: Féltorony, 1827–1920¹

Blair R. Holmes

Although the governments of the European states published numerous statistical accounts of their populations during the nineteenth century, such works, because of their aggregate nature, are unable to reveal many aspects of the the lives of the populations tabulated. Historians are well aware of the nature of national or regional groups, but have relatively little in-depth information concerning individuals. Because nominal data require extreme efforts, social historians are often forced to concentrate on village studies. This has the advantage of permitting analyses of great depth into individual lives, and the disadvantage of generalizing on the basis of a single community. Nevertheless, valuable insights can be gained from studying the situations and activities of those who, until recent years, remained largely unknown. In the case of Féltorony, Moson County, Hungary, the parish registers provide enlightening information concerning marriage and the sexual behaviour of the village's inhabitants.

Between the years 1827 and 1920, 1701 marriage ceremonies were conducted in Féltorony. Because of the common practice of marriages occurring in the bride's village of residence, fewer grooms than brides were indigenous to Féltorony,² with less than three-quarters (71.0%) of the grooms (1208) and more than five-sixths (84.3%) of the brides (1434) being residents of the community.³ In some cases, neither of the marriage partners were residents of the village and, hence, are lost to further analysis. It is assumed that the majority of brides whose husbands were not residents of Féltorony moved to the villages of their new spouses.⁴ In some cases, couples resided in Féltorony for several years and then migrated. Some couples might have moved from the village to cover the fact that the wife was pregnant prior to wedlock, but such is unlikely. A previous study has indicated that there was relatively little internal migration within Moson County.⁵ In addition, there was probably little or no shame in being pre-

maritally pregnant. Such a large percentage of the brides who remained in Féltorony were pregnant upon being wed, that it is difficult to imagine that most who moved were pregnant also.⁶ Premarital sexual intercourse, especially among those considered engaged to be married, was acceptable and viewed as a natural consequence throughout most of Europe.⁷

While it is theoretically possible to trace the couples who married in Féltorony and lived elsewhere, the attempt has not been made. Rather, the author has chosen to deal with the pairs who married and continued to reside in Féltorony. As a result, it has been possible to reconstitute 646 "complete" families. For the purposes of this study, the term "complete" refers to those families for whom the marriage date, the birthdates of the children and the death date of one the spouses are known.

Table I indicates the distribution of the completed families during the period of this study.

TABLE I

Year	Total Marriages	Completed Families	Percentage
1827-39	207	137	66.2
1840-50	181	118	65.2
1851-62	187	104	55.6
1863-74	199	116	58.3
1875-84	192	70	36.5
1885-95	188	55	29.3
1896-1904	186	29	15.6
1905-12	186	14	7.5
1913-20	179	3	1.7
Total	1701	646	38.0

Beginning in the 1875-84 period, there is a substantial decline in the number of reconstituted families, because the risk of losing one's spouse declined, due to the increasingly brief span when deaths could occur and, possibly, improving health conditions. Because there is no record of divorces in the village, only the death of a marriage partner completed the family cycle.

The clergy in Féltorony was assiduous in its duty of recording vital events promptly. Prior to 1852, it is not possible to determine exactly the birthdate of a child, because only the date of christening was recorded. It is impossible, therefore, to determine if baptisms were delayed to "legitimize" children. Beginning in 1896, the parish registers were under the control of civilian authorities and listed only the date of birth. Between 1852 and 1896, however, the dates of birth and christening were listed, enabling one to learn if pregnant brides delayed the baptisms of their children to avoid social censure. In 94.2% of the illegitimate births, baptism occurred on

the birthdate or the day succeeding the birth, and an additional five per cent on the second day following birth. If premarital pregnancy carried less social disgrace than illegitimacy, there is no reason to suppose that it was desirable to delay the christening of a child. Also, the possibility of consigning a child to eternal damnation, if unbaptized, likely outweighed considerations of possible sexual impropriety.

Due to the relatively primitive nature of medical practice and the high level of infant mortality, there was little chance for prematurely born children to survive. It cannot be assumed that a child born less than full term could have been conceived legitimately. Thus, for the purposes of studies during the nineteenth century, an interval of eight completed (less than nine) months is considered adequate for statistical purposes to determine pregnancies resulting from premarital conceptions.⁸

Of the 646 brides in the completed families, 124 (19.2%) were clearly pregnant upon marriage, i.e., gave birth within eight and one-half months. An additional 30 births occurred prior to the end of nine months. It appears, at the utmost, that nearly one-quarter of the brides (23.8%) was pregnant while at the altar.⁹ This rate is not extraordinary anywhere in Europe in the 19th century.¹⁰ Such a rough figure, however, is misleading, because it fails to take into account births prior to marriage; still births; abortions, spontaneous or induced; and brides incapable of becoming pregnant due to age or physiological factors. When these factors are considered, a different image of premarital pregnancy appears.¹¹

For 91 of the brides, premarital pregnancy was not an issue, because they had given birth prior to marriage. When this group is added to those pregnant at marriage, nearly three-eighths (37.9%) of all brides had experienced at least one pre-marital pregnancy. In nearly all cases, the husband was the father of the illegitimate child. Over 60% of the birth records for illegitimate children list the names of both parents. For nearly all remaining cases, the nearness of the wedding date to the birth of the child strengthens the conclusion that the husband was also the father of the child. Men in Féltony were either responsible for their sexual behaviour, or women successfully validated their paternity claims. In less than three per cent of the cases is there a question regarding the paternity of a child.

Several couples had more than one illegitimate child before becoming married, the most extreme case having five.¹² Nearly all couples with illegitimate children were being married for the first time. Only three men and two women involved in an illegitimate birth had been married previously.

It is impossible to know how many of the brides had pregnancies which ended in spontaneous abortions, but the first pregnancy recorded for many brides was not their initial pregnancy, because "well over 10% in past centuries" terminated in spontaneous abortions or stillbirths.¹³

A substantial proportion of the brides (112) never gave birth. For at least

17 brides, pregnancy was out of the question due to advanced age, leaving a pool of 629 brides who could have engaged in premarital intercourse and become pregnant. If, as has been the case historically, six to eight per cent of the brides were infertile,¹⁴ the pool of 629 potentially pregnant brides is reduced further. No age was given for 62 brides. Therefore, between 33 and 95 of the brides were at an age when they normally would have been fecund, but were apparently not.

If 154 of the potentially fecund brides were premaritally pregnant, the expectant mothers being married were a maximum potential of 29.2%. When the mothers of illegitimate children are added, approximately 46.9% of the brides gave birth prior to or shortly after marriage.

With such a high percentage obviously engaging in premarital sex and becoming pregnant, it is quite likely that numerous others engaged in illicit sexual behaviour without becoming pregnant. Because of infertility, contraception and pure luck in avoiding pregnancy, it is not possible to determine more precisely the prevalence of premarital intercourse.

One indication that the level of premarital intercourse might have been high was the relative fertility of those who became pregnant prior to marriage and those who did not. If the level of premarital intercourse remained equal for all females, those who were more fecund would be more likely to become impregnated. In Féltorony, pregnant brides were apparently more fecund than their unexpectant counterparts.¹⁵ On the average, expectant mothers at the altar bore 6.58 children during their marriages, whereas the non-pregnant brides gave birth to an average of 6.32 children. This difference in fecundity remained consistent regardless of age at marriage.

Because intercourse between betrothed couples was apparently common and socially acceptable, it is hard to escape the conclusion that in Féltorony "wedding and pregnancy were closely associated, with conception occurring either shortly before or immediately after the ceremony."¹⁶ Of the 154 pregnant brides, nearly one-third (30.5%) gave birth within three months of being wed, with 24.6% of the children born in the second trimester following marriage.¹⁷ The average time following marriage for a pregnant bride to give birth was 144 days.

A striking feature of the premarital pregnancies is the unusually large proportion of conceptions occurring shortly before the marriage, and the number of brides in the final days of pregnancy during the ceremony. Slightly more than one-sixth of the brides became pregnant within one month prior to wedlock, while one bride in five was in the final month of pregnancy. For the intervening months, there is little variance.

Once married, conception was seldom delayed. Within one year following marriage, nearly three of five non-pregnant brides (59.8%) had given birth. Of the first births of the families being studied, 42.2% were conceived in the three-month period preceding or succeeding marriage.¹⁸

It has been asserted that weddings and conceptions displayed a seasonal distribution, i.e., that couples delayed wedlock and intercourse due to religious restrictions or the pressing obligations of earning a livelihood. The assumption has been made that the period surrounding the harvest prevented couples from indulging themselves, while Lent obligated them to restrict their times of marriage and coitus. In Féltorony there was clearly a correlation between marriage and the religious and employment seasons. During the period of this study, only one couple wed in December, and few did so in March, April or July. Nearly one-half (45.8%) of the marriages were celebrated in January and February, while November, which followed the hectic period of the harvest, witnessed 17.8% of the weddings.

While marriage might have been influenced by time constraints, there is less evidence to warrant the belief that sexual intercourse was influenced strongly also, although there is a weak correlation between the seasons and premarital conception. December and January, probably due to the relative agricultural inactivity, were the most frequent months of conception. Once the Lent and Easter seasons passed, May became a time of heightened sexual activity. In general, the winter months (November-February) were a time of greater marital and nonmarital conception, while the most physically demanding months of work (July-October) saw fewer conceptions and marriages. However, the differences between months of increased or decreased conceptions were not great.

Studies of illegitimacy have indicated a dramatic increase of premarital sexual activity beginning in the latter half of the eighteenth century and continuing for approximately a century. Thereafter, premarital conceptions and illegitimacy declined, it is believed, due to an increase in contraception.¹⁹ Féltorony was clearly no exception to this pattern. Prior to 1900, the percentage of pregnant brides increased from 23.9% to 35.5%.²⁰ After the turn of the century, premarital pregnancy dropped dramatically from the preceding decades. The greatest amount of premarital pregnancy occurred between 1863-74 and 1885-1905, when nearly one-third (32.5%) of the brides were definitely pregnant. After 1905, the percentage of expectant brides dropped to less than one in five (18.2%).²¹

While it is clear that premarital sex was commonplace, it is less certain that the level of such activity increased and the ages of participants became lower over time. Although there is no definitive way to measure the level of premarital coitus, the degree of premarital pregnancy according to the ages of the mothers is an indicator of the trends in sexual behaviour. On the average, pregnant brides gave birth at a slightly younger age (24.1) than non-pregnant brides (25.0), while the mothers of illegitimate children averaged 24.3 years at delivery. For the males, those who fathered illegitimate children were the youngest of their gender's groups to marry at an average age of 27.7 years. The husbands of pregnant brides averaged 28.4 years,

and the husbands of non-pregnant brides were oldest with an average age of 29.0. It is difficult to attribute much significance to these age differences, because there remains the possibility that those least economically or socially desirable as sex partners were obligated to wait longer to get married.

For 440 of the couples it was the first marriage for both partners. Of this group, 103 brides were definitely pregnant, while an additional 21 were possibly pregnant. When the couples who had an illegitimate child are included (85), nearly half of the group (47.5%) had definitely experienced premarital coitus. If those who remained childless are excluded, a total of 52.6% were obviously sexually experienced prior to marriage.

TABLE II
PERCENTAGE STATUS OF BRIDES AND GROOMS
ACCORDING TO AGE²²

Wife Age	%Preg	%PossPreg	%NotPreg	%Illegit
15-19	20.3	5.1	67.8	6.8
20-24	23.2	3.8	51.5	21.5
25-29	21.3	2.8	55.6	20.4
30-34	26.2	0.0	57.1	16.7
35-39	16.7	4.2	75.0	4.2
Husband Age				
20-24	23.9	2.2	56.0	17.9
25-29	24.6	2.2	53.1	20.1
30-34	16.7	6.9	53.9	22.5
35-39	15.8	5.3	73.7	5.3

The rate of premarital pregnancy and illegitimacy according to age (Table II) does not indicate that the level of sexual activity in Féltony increased significantly among younger women during the nineteenth century. For the women not pregnant at marriage, there was an extremely slight increase in age at first birth. For premaritally pregnant brides, the average age at marriage declined by less than two months. The mothers of illegitimate children experienced an average decline of more than four months in average marriage age between 1827 and 1920.

For husbands a similar situation prevailed. Men who wed pregnant brides declined in age an average of slightly more than two weeks at the time of first birth. Men whose wives were not pregnant upon being wed increased in average age by three months over the century. The only apparently surprising feature is that the fathers of illegitimate children increased in average age by nearly eight months.

The possibility that a pending marriage and sexual relations were closely

correlated is strengthened by the fact that the highest percentages of premarital pregnancies and illegitimacies occurred at the modal marriage ages for both genders.

After 1885 the limited number of "completed" families makes statistical inferences weak. When the average age trends are calculated for the 1827–1885 period only, the results are different. All groups of brides saw an almost equal increase in average age at first birth. The same applied to the husbands of pregnant and non-pregnant brides. Only the husbands whose wives had born illegitimate children witnessed a decline in average age, nearly seven months. In none of the cases, however, was there an even progression of trends. Thus, it is inferred that there was no increase of premarital sexual activity among the younger fecund members of the community.

Of the brides in marriages involving previously unmarried persons, 90.2% can be traced to a maternity. For widowers, the figure was 84.3%, for widows 63.9%, and for the previously married couples, 35.4% are traceable to a maternity.

It is obvious that couples who were remarrying did so infrequently because of an impending birth. In cases where both couples were remarrying, only three brides were pregnant. It was slightly more common for a remarrying wife to have become pregnant from a bachelor. Most common among the remarrying population was the husband who was marrying a pregnant maiden. Even so, all these pairings accounted for only one premarital pregnancy in six (16.3%), while being nearly one-third of the marriages. Of the 112 women who had been married previously, ten were pregnant, two were possibly pregnant, and three had born an illegitimate child. It might be presumed that most of them had little time to become pregnant or were skilled in holding off men until marriage.²³ Of the 139 men who had been previously wed, ten had definitely impregnated a maiden, seven had possibly done so, and three had fathered illegitimate children by their prospective spouses. None of the mutually remarrying couples had begotten an illegitimate child. One reason for the lower percentage of pregnancy among couples who were remarrying was their more advanced ages and the fact that most of them, especially the men, had children from previous marriages.²⁴

The likelihood that a widow would become pregnant prior to marriage or bear children afterward was much less than for maidens. A major, obvious determinant in this regard was the age of the women. The average maiden who married a bachelor wed at 23.4 years, so could expect to have nearly an equal number of years of fertility, whereas a widow who remarried a bachelor, averaged 34.0 years of age, thus having approximately half as many possible years to give birth. Widows who remarried widowers were nearly always beyond child-bearing years.²⁵

The ages of the widows is reflected in the fact that only eight of 112 remarrying widows were premaritally pregnant. In two cases husband and wife were remarrying, while in six cases the widow had been impregnated by a bachelor.²⁶ In addition, only 13 maidens became pregnant by widowers, leaving the vast majority of premarital pregnancies (83.1%) the result of matches between bachelors and maidens.

In addition, all except four of the widows already had children from their previous marriages and were likely less disposed to propagate more. Only half of the remarrying widows gave birth, with an average of 3.14 children.²⁷

After examining the cases of all brides who eventually proved fecund, it must be inferred that there was little teen-age sexual promiscuity. Even if the normal age of *menarche* had been between 16 and 18, it is quite unlikely that the teen-age female population as a whole could have avoided pregnancy as long as it did. Only one-eighth of the pregnant brides were under the age of 20, a figure matched by the non-pregnant brides. The average, nearly equal ages for non-pregnant and pregnant brides indicates clearly that bridal pregnancy in Féltorony was not due to youthful improprieties.²⁸

The notion that the male rural population of Europe attempted to determine the fertility of the females prior to marriage is fallacious so far as Féltorony is concerned. Nearly one-sixth of all marriages had no issue. Among the previously never-married couples, nearly one in ten (9.8%) never had any children, and nearly half were not pregnant at the time of marriage.

There was an inverse relationship in Féltorony between premarital pregnancy and age at marriage. The average age of premaritally pregnant brides increased in the first half century of this study from 23.5 to 25.3 years. At the same time, the percentage of pregnant brides dropped from 23.4% to 15.7%. After 1875 the ages and percentages of pregnant brides fluctuated, but maintained an inverse relationship, which strengthens the conclusion that a rising age in marriage did not contribute to increased sexual license prior to marriage.

However, while premarital pregnancy was decreasing, there was an increase in illegitimacy and a drop in the ages of the mothers. Between 1827 and 1850, the percentage of premarital pregnancy was three times that of illegitimacy. After 1850 the relationship changed drastically, such that illegitimacy equalled and then surpassed premarital pregnancy until 1885. Thereafter, there was a return to the relationship at the beginning of the period.

When combined, the percentages of pregnant brides and brides with illegitimate children rose significantly after 1863, dropped after 1885, but continued at a higher rate than in the earlier decades of the study, indicating an increase of sexual promiscuity after mid-century with a smaller

percentage of expectant mothers being wed. There was an increase of sexual activity after 1850 with women becoming pregnant at younger ages and more of them bearing illegitimate children. By 1885 illegitimacy declined, due to an increase of pregnant women getting married and, perhaps, the use of contraceptives. The percentage of illegitimacy between 1885-95 was only slightly more than half that a decade earlier, while premarital pregnancy nearly doubled.

TABLE III
PERCENTAGES OF PREMARITAL PREGNANCIES AND
BRIDES WITH ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN AND
AVERAGE AGES²⁹

	%PMP	Avg. Age	%Illeg.	Avg. Age
1827-39	29.2	23.5	10.1	26.4
1840-50	27.9	23.8	5.9	27.0
1851-62	21.3	24.7	18.8	22.7
1863-74	24.5	25.3	30.9	24.6
1875-84	23.2	22.4	32.1	23.4
1885-95	31.6	23.7	21. ¹	23.9
1896-1904	33.3	24.9	11.1	25.3
1905-12	20.0	—	—	—
1913-20	—	—	—	—
Total	26.3	24.05	17.2	24.29

An interesting feature of premarital pregnancy in Féltorony is its transmission to succeeding generations. Women who were pregnant or had given birth prior to marriage, were more likely to have daughters do the same, than women who were not premaritally pregnant. Nearly half (49.1%) of the daughters of mothers who had born an illegitimate child themselves did the same or were pregnant at marriage. Still higher were the daughters of mothers who had been premaritally pregnant; 59.6% of them were premaritally pregnant or bore illegitimate children. In contrast, 46.8% of the daughters of mothers who were never pregnant prior to marriage conceived prior to wedlock.

In Féltorony there was no consistent relationship between age differences between mates and premarital pregnancy.³⁰ In approximately three-quarters of all marriages the husbands were older than their wives, with little variance between the premaritally pregnant and other couples. On the average, however, the husbands of pregnant brides were nearly eight years (7.8) older than their wives, while the grooms of non-pregnant wives were seven years older. The fathers of illegitimate children were closest in age (4.7 years) to their subsequent wives. The only major differences in age relationships is that a large majority (nearly 70%) of the spouses in

non-pregnant marriages were within seven years of age. The premaritally pregnant were more evenly distributed over the range of ages, making the mean marital ages for both groups nearly equal.

For both groups of husbands, a large proportion (bachelors: 12.7%; widowers: 10.6%) were at least 15 years older than their wives, the average being nearly 20 years. Two widowers, whose wives bore children, were more than 30 years older than their wives.

In contrast to modern studies, there was little age difference between pregnant and non-pregnant brides in Féltorony if the wife was older than her husband. Nearly equal proportions (one-fifth) of both groups were older than their husbands. Only in the case of the mothers of illegitimate children were fewer wives (one-eighth) older than their husbands.³¹

There was clearly a relationship between the marriage-first birth interval and the age of brides. It appears, also, that a greater percentage of the youngest women married only because they were pregnant. Although the youngest age group had the lowest percentage of premaritally pregnant brides,³² once pregnant they waited the longest before getting married. As pregnant brides became progressively older, the length of the marriage to birth interval increased, until the 30–35 age group, when there was a slight decline. On the average, a premaritally pregnant bride aged 15–19 gave birth after only three months (89 days) of marriage, whereas the 20–24 age group averaged nearly four months and those aged 25–29 averaged five months. Once married, however, brides in the youngest group who were not pregnant, waited longer before becoming pregnant. Less than half of them (44.1%) produced a child with 12 months of marriage. Possibly due to their advanced age, brides between 30–34 had the highest percentage (65.7%) of first births within a year of marriage.

The family of birth and its economic status also played a role in the level of premarital pregnancy in Féltorony. Premarital pregnancy and illegitimacy were inversely related to economic status. Parents with greater social status and higher levels of economic leverage were less likely to have children who became pregnant prior to wedlock. For a young couple whose social status in the village was high and whose future livelihood depended upon inheriting the family farm, there was a lower level of premarital pregnancy.³³

Men engaged in agriculture were the least likely to impregnate their prospective wives or beget illegitimate children, as less than one-quarter (23.9%) did so. The artisanal and pastoral populations, which were less economically secure and more likely to be transient, had substantially higher percentages of illegitimate children and premarital pregnancies. More than one-third (36.2%) of the artisans and a higher proportion (37.5%) of the pastoral group had wives who became pregnant prior to marriage. The segment of the village's population which had the least to lose economi-

cally was most likely to engage in premarital intercourse, or least likely to practice contraception. Over half (52.4%) of the agricultural and domestic servants and day-labourers had pregnant brides or illegitimate children.

Proportionate to occupations, a similar pattern existed. The husbands in agriculture comprised 46.4% of those whose occupations were known, yet they were responsible for only 29.2% of the premarital pregnancies and illegitimacies. Those in pastoral and commercial pursuits, and the artisans produced illegitimate children and premaritally pregnant brides nearly equal to their proportions of the occupations. The service population, consisting of day-labourers and domestic and agricultural servants, comprised one-quarter of the occupations, yet was responsible for 37.1% of the premarital births and pregnancies.

Although Féltorony was similar to other villages in east-central Europe, this investigation has revealed that generalities do not apply equally to all segments of a village's population. It is evident that rampant premarital sexual behaviour by the unmarried portion of the community did not occur, and there is no indication that a general decline in sexual morals occurred. Most of those who bore illegitimate children or were premaritally pregnant did so with the expectation that marriage would follow.

There was not an increase of sexual permissiveness among the youth. Rather, the community desire to permit only those contemplating marriage to engage in coitus persisted. There was, as elsewhere in Europe, an increase in premarital behaviour late in the nineteenth century, but not because a wider range of ages were involved. As the end of the century approached, there was a substantial decline in premarital pregnancy, likely due, in part, to an increase in contraception. Féltorony was relatively wealthy and close enough to Vienna that modern methods of birth control could be obtained relatively easily.

Those not bound to the traditional economic structure and who had the least reason to remain sexually inexperienced, were most inclined to engage in coitus. However, even these persons did not depart from equating sexual intercourse with future wedlock.

NOTES

- 1 The author is grateful to the Department of History and the College of Family, Home and Social Sciences at Brigham Young University for financial assistance in compiling and analyzing the data for the following article. Computer assistance was also provided by Margie G. Holmes.
- 2 P.E.H. Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy in Rural England in Earlier Centuries," *Population Studies*, XX, No. 2 (November 1966), 238.
- 3 For further information regarding residential propinquity, see Blair R. Holmes, "Marriage and Internal Migration in Moson County. Féltorony as a Case Study, 1827-1920," *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies*, VII, No. 2 (Fall

1980), 101–134.

- 4 In many cases, the wife returned to the village of her birth and marriage to deliver her own first child. Because the birth register recorded her address, it is evident that a large proportion of the brides were resident in nearby villages.
- 5 Cf. *ibid.*
- 6 Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy in Rural England in Earlier Centuries," 239; P.E.H. Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy in Earlier Rural England Further Examined," *Population Studies*, XXIV (1970), 63.
- 7 John Knodel, "Two and a Half Centuries of Demographic History in a Bavarian Village" *Population Studies*, XXIV (1970), 366; John R. Gillis, *The Development of European Society, 1770–1870* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), p. 6; Ira L. Reiss, *Premarital Sexual Standards in America* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1960), pp. 26–27.
- 8 Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy in Rural England in Earlier Centuries," p. 233; K.G. Basavarajappa, "Pre-marital Pregnancies and Ex-nuptial Births in Australia, 1911–66," *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology*, IV (1968), 127–8.
- 9 One bride, however, might not have been able to get to the church on time, because she was delivered of a child on the day of her wedding.
- 10 This figure is extremely close to that found in Indiana (23.7%) between 1962–67 within the white population. Cf. Daniel Scott Smith, "The Long Cycle in American Illegitimacy and Prenuptial Pregnancy," in Peter Laslett (ed.), *Bastardy and its Comparative History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 364.
- 11 Cf. Thomas P. Monahan, "Premarital Pregnancy in the United States," *Eugenics Quarterly*, VII, No. 3 (September 1960), 135.
- 12 A total of eleven couples gave birth to 29 illegitimate children prior to marriage.
- 13 Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy in Rural England in Earlier Centuries," p. 235. In Féltony, three of the pregnancies ended with a stillbirth, which approximates closely the percentage of still births in England. Cf. Basavarajappa, 128.
- 14 Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy in Rural England in Earlier Centuries," 233–38.
- 15 Cf. Daniel Scott Smith and Michael S. Hindus, "Premarital Pregnancy in America 1640–1971: An Overview and Interpretation," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, V, No. 4 (Spring 1975), 541; and Lolagene Coombs *et al.*, "Premarital Pregnancy and Status before and after Marriage," *American Journal of Sociology*, LXXV, No. 5 (March 1970), 801, 810.
- 16 Gillis, 6.
- 17 Cf. Peter Laslett, *Family Life and Illicit Love in earlier Generations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 128.
- 18 Cf. Peter Laslett, *The World we have Lost* (3rd ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984) p. 139.
- 19 E.g. Edward Shorter, "Illegitimacy, Sexual Revolution and Social Change in Modern Europe," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, II (1971) 49. Cf. Edward Shorter, John Knodel, Etienne van de Walle, "The Decline of Non-Marital Fertility in Europe, 1880–1940," *Population Studies*, XXV (1971), 376.
- 20 This total does not include brides who were possibly pregnant or those who have given birth to illegitimate children.
- 21 Shorter, "Illegitimacy, Sexual Revolution and Social Change," p. 240.
- 22 Those groups with too few members to be statistically significant have not been

included.

- 23 Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy further Examined," p. 64.
- 24 Cf. Blair R. and Margie G. Holmes, "Remarriage in Western Hungary: Féltorony, 1827–1920," *East European Quarterly*, XXIV, No. 3 (September 1990), pp. 281–305. There are indications in other studies, that more advanced ages of marital partners resulted in a lower frequency of coitus and, hence, fewer pregnancies; cf. Daniel Scott Smith, "The Demographic History of Colonial New England," *Journal of Economic History*, XXXII, No. 1 (March 1972), 180–82.
- 25 Maidens who wed widowers were nearly as young (24.5) as maidens marrying bachelors. The average widow who remarried a widower was 43.8. Bachelors who wed widows were, on the average, 30.5 years old and bachelors marrying maidens 26.9. Widowers who wed maidens averaged 37.9, while widowers remarrying widows were 45.4.
- 26 This pregnancy rate of 7.14% is much lower than the general rate and approximated that of earlier centuries in England; cf. Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy further Examined," 64.
- 27 This figure is based on those cases where it is known whether or not the widows had children from previous marriages. In slightly more than half of the cases it has been impossible to reconstruct the former families of the widows. These widows accounted for 77.8% of the children.
- 28 Cf. Laslett, *World we have Lost*, 155.
- 29 The figures for the table are based on only those women who gave birth.
- 30 Cf. Samuel H. Lowrie, "Early Marriage, Premarital Pregnancy and Associated Factors," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, XXVII, No. 1 (1965), 51.
- 31 For the premaritally pregnant, 20.8% of the wives were older than their husbands. Of the non-pregnant, 18.1% were older. Only 13.1% of the mothers of illegitimate children were older than their spouses. Cf. Monahan, "Premarital Pregnancy in the US," 140.
- 32 This is the case when brides who have given birth previously to illegitimate children are included.
- 33 It has been established that marriages in Féltorony were nearly always dependent upon economic status, with extremely infrequent instances of individuals marrying outside their own class. See Blair R. and Margie G. Holmes, "Wealth and Marital Mobility in Western Hungary: Féltorony, 1827–1920," *Hungarian Studies*, IV, no. 1 (1988), 103–12.

**István Szabó's Film
of Inner Conflict and Political Prophecy:
The "Poseur"
in István Szabó's *Colonel Redl***

Edward M.V. Plater

The Hungarian director István Szabó's film *Colonel Redl* is based on the life of Alfred Redl (1864–1913), who rose from humble beginnings to become chief of army intelligence in the Austro-Hungarian Empire but fell from grace and committed suicide when it was discovered that he had been selling military secrets to the Russians. The demoralizing effect of this shocking incident on supporters of the Monarchy was compounded by the sensational revelation after his suicide that he had been leading a secret life as a homosexual.

Szabó deliberately deemphasizes the licentious and perfidious character of this historical villain, creating instead a generally sympathetic portrait. His reason for doing so, as we shall see later, has to do with the wish he expressed in an interview with Tamás Koltai to create a specifically East Central European film: "It seems that we cannot see this story and these developments other than with East Central European eyes. I hope that the film will convey in one way or another a critical reflection of this experience."¹

In the same interview Szabó spoke of the opportunity the Redl material gave him to explore the conflict of a person who wanted to be someone else, someone he was not,² and stressed in this connection the importance of the "*Ausstrahlungskraft* (radiating power)" of a film actor's face to convey the psychological aspects of such a conflict. Referring to *War and Peace* he stated: "Tolstoy devoted many pages to Natasha Rostova; in the film, by contrast, the face of the actress must convey everything."³ The ability of the actor's face to convey meaning is an integral part of the basic strategy at work in *Colonel Redl* to reveal the protagonist's inner life. Szabó does not resort to the novelist's device of entering the character's mind. He

does not, for example, use voice-overs, dream sequences, or flashbacks, to reveal Redl's unspoken thoughts and feelings, but relies, rather, on action, dialogue, and outward appearances. As we shall see, these two factors working together—the wish to create an East Central European film and the wish to explore from the outside the inner conflict of a person at odds with himself—have determined the final shape and complexion of the film *Colonel Redl*.

Let us begin by examining Szabó's treatment of the inner conflict, for it takes us directly to the heart of the film. What his external approach means for the audience is indicated at the very outset, where he prefaces the story with a sequence that sets the stage for everything that follows. The very first image we see is an extreme close-up of a camera lens. This is followed by a close-up image of the title character, staring directly into the camera. This shot lasts for approximately one and three-quarters minutes, though it is interrupted twice by a shot of a building that, as we soon learn, is home to the Redl family. The image of Redl is actually frozen, but it comes to life for a few seconds between the credits on three separate occasions, during which we notice slight movements of his head. The image appears to have been shot through a filter that creates a decidedly blue cast and diffuses the light, blurring contours and softening textures. Behind and immediately to the left of Redl's head we see a bright, luminous glow, the source of which appears to be a ceiling or wall light. This light, as well as its reflection on the wall behind Redl, is both distracting and irritating to our eyes, and thus tends to interfere with our view of the face looking out at us from the screen. The primary lighting source of the image is off screen to the right. It illuminates the left side of Redl's face while leaving the other side virtually in darkness.

All of this is of the utmost significance to the unfolding story and to our response to it. First, Redl's long, steady gaze directed at the camera, and hence at us, challenges, indeed defies, us to discover what kind of a person he is. The sustained freeze frames are like photographs of the title character that we are invited to study for the measure of the man depicted. And this becomes, in fact, our primary task as we view the unfolding story. Secondly, the fact that Redl does not move away or even turn his head between the extended freeze frames suggests that he is posing for the camera. The sidelighting, however, which illuminates half of Redl's face while leaving the other half in darkness, indicates symbolically that his posing is more than simply striking an appropriate pose for a picture; it suggests that there is a duality about him, a dark side that he conceals, thus presenting a false image of himself to the outside world. That it will be difficult to discover the real Alfred Redl concealed beneath his outward appearance is indicated by the fact that the dazzling light behind his right shoulder and its reflection on the anterior wall make it hard for us to look

directly at him and the filtered image with its altered colors and blurred lines also reduces our ability to see him clearly.

In fact, these features of those initial photos of Redl—the brilliant back lighting and the diffusion filter—are characteristic of the way in which the entire film is shot. Whether inside or out, in scene after scene the air seems laden with haze that softens and blurs the outlines and textures of the images; and dazzling white light, usually from windows or the white globes of incandescent lights located next to or directly behind the characters, shines into our eyes, making it hard to see—both literally and figuratively—the important details of the evolving portrait. In this way the film continuously refers back to the initial freeze frames and reminds us that we are to think of it as an evolving photograph and to study the outward appearance of the subject in order to discover his true nature.

Periodically, at significant moments throughout the film, the director also reminds us of these initial freeze-frame photographs and our task as viewers, when he stops the action to give us a prolonged close-up of Redl staring directly into the camera. For example, much later in the film Redl returns on a mission to his home region, Galicia. On his way back to the train he asks the driver to go past his childhood home, the building intercut with the shot of him at the beginning of the film. Melancholy music on the soundtrack evokes a sombre feeling, as does the image itself, the abandoned looking homestead against a gray, overcast sky. The camera cuts to a close-up of Redl staring out the back window of the car as it moves away down the road. Here again he seems to be looking straight at us, as at the beginning of the film, and we are challenged to deduce from all that we have seen up to this point what thoughts are going through his mind and what his true character is. The desolate look on his face, which we have ample time to study, suggests that in spite of his denial of his humble origins he is overcome with feelings of sadness and remorse upon seeing again his boyhood home. Such pictures of the protagonist staring out at us from the frame, occurring at critical junctures, become a major visual motif of the evolving narrative portrait Szabó creates.

The narrative begins with Redl's childhood. In the very first scenes the camera is placed so that we experience everything through his eyes, while he remains completely out of sight. In low-angle shots we see his parents looking down at us and smiling, his classmates looking back at us as we hear his voice reciting a poem he has written in praise of the Emperor, his teacher looking at us and praising him for his poem, and his mother telling us how grateful he must always be to the Emperor for making possible his admission to the military academy and what an honor it would be if he came home one day as an officer. By having us experience all of this from young Redl's point of view Szabó makes us feel much more keenly the psychological effect that these experiences must have on him as an

impressionable young boy. We are therefore not surprised that when we actually see the young Redl for the first time he is striving to prove himself worthy of the honor the Emperor has bestowed upon him. As he exercises with his class on the parade ground of the military academy, he outdoes all his fellow classmates in keeping up with the commands of the exercise instructor.

A significant element of this exercise sequence is the introduction of the young Hungarian, Baron Kristof von Kubinyi, who becomes Redl's good friend. Their friendship, perhaps solidified by the punishment they endure at the hands of the class, is already hinted at in the way in which Kristof is introduced. Twice, while the cadets are doing push-ups and again while they are hopping in place in a squat position, the camera cuts from a close-up of Redl to a close-up of Kristof. The cuts, however, match the movement of the two boys so perfectly that the viewer is startled to realize at the end of the second exercise, when we see them stand up, that a switch has taken place. This editing trick hints at the friendship of Redl and Kubinyi and their intertwined fates. At the same time it suggests the union of Austria and Hungary and thus serves, as we shall see, to make the story of Alfred Redl politically relevant to its own time—the film was made in the mid-1980s.

The first of the protracted close-ups of Redl referred to earlier that recall to mind his posing at the beginning of the film occurs in the scene in which he upbraids his subordinates for laxity and negligence in the performance of their duties and for dishonoring their uniforms in their contacts with the local population. After singling out several officers by name for special reprimand, Redl continues: "We, the officers of the Monarchy, must lead by good example, so that the populace will trust us and know that the Emperor, the Monarchy, will protect them. My question is: Does the Monarchy need you personally? Each one of you personally? Here, and at this post? You give yourselves the answer. I'll wait." There follows a long pause, during which Redl stares for several seconds directly into the camera and hence at us, as if inviting us to peer into his eyes and discover for ourselves what hidden motives may be lurking in the innermost recesses of his mind. We ask ourselves whether he is posing now. Is his own personal ambition the real reason for this chastisement of his subordinates? Is his purpose to whip them into shape in order to gain approving notice from his superiors?

If so, his wish is fulfilled, for he does rise through the ranks with astonishing success for a man of his humble origins. In this case, his superior, Colonel Ruzitska, who is himself fed up with the situation at this border post, confides to Redl that he intends to retire and to recommend him to take over as District Commandant, adding: "I believe you will definitely be a success." On the other hand, Redl's dedication to the Emperor, in whose army he serves and whom he looks up to as to a father figure (literally in

the next scene, where we see him with a smile on his face gazing up at a picture of Franz Joseph), is genuine. This soon becomes obvious when he physically attacks his friend Kristof in front of prominent citizens of the district because of his disrespectful remarks about the army and the Emperor. Which of the two motives is at work in Redl's harsh treatment of his fellow officers? Or do both play a role? As we see, the blinding light and blurred contours of this unfolding narrative portrait do not readily surrender the secrets of its subject.

In one respect, however, there is no doubt that Redl is posing, pretending to be someone he is not, namely in respect to his humble origins. In the scuffle between Kristof and Alfred, Kristof calls him a "*Weichensteller*" (switchman), alluding to his father's lowly position with the railroad. It is clear that this epithet strikes home with special force, for Redl gets to his feet, awkwardly backs out of the room, and stumbles outdoors to get some fresh air. The incident marks the end of their friendship.

Redl's wish to conceal his peasant background is confirmed when his sister comes to visit him at his barracks post. He tells her not to come there again and not to use his name, cruelly dispatching her with money she does not want.

The director keeps the question of Redl's sexual preference almost constantly in the foreground, for, as we know from the end of the film, his homosexuality plays a crucial role in the events that lead to his downfall and its revelation therefore must not be allowed to take us completely by surprise, causing us to react in utter disbelief. Beginning with the vague suggestion of homoeroticism in the young Redl's reaction when Kristof's grandfather innocently places his hand on his grandson's wrist as he praises his young friend, the filmmaker hints again and again at the possibility that Redl may turn out to be homosexual. The incident at the academy in which Redl's piano instructor rests his hand on the boy's thigh is a case in point, as is the incident at the brothel, when the adult Redl is grabbed and kissed on the stairs by a fellow officer.

The inconclusiveness of such incidents is illustrated by the scene at the inn in the Vienna Woods. It is the first scene between Redl and Kristof's sister Katalin as adults. Although Katalin is now married, it is she who makes amorous advances, while Redl's mind is still on the Emperor, whom he had caught a glimpse of, to his great delight, on their way to the inn. Katalin detects the smell of horse and saddle on Redl, which has always given her pleasure, and says: "The fine smell of the soldier. Kristof never smells like a soldier. Do you smell the soldier on him?" Redl seems taken aback by the question, which no doubt strikes him as too intimate to be put to one man about another. Redl is also visibly disturbed by Katalin's turning down the bed. "I have made us such a lovely wedding bed," she says. When Redl asks what her husband will say when she gets

home, she replies: "I have neither the time nor the desire to entertain with courtesy the man of the moment, as one does in refined society, *de faire la poseuse*." While we accept without hesitation this frank assessment of her own character, we are acutely aware, as we watch their lovemaking, again initiated by Katalin, that just the opposite may be true of her partner. A little later she asks him why he has his eyes closed and if he is thinking of someone else. He reluctantly admits that he was thinking of Kristof, though he denies that he had been thinking of him the whole time. She then asks which of them he loves more and receives the evasive reply: "I have liked you both very much." Katalin, however, persists, much to Redl's discomfort: "And now?" He answers, again skirting the issue, speaking instead of how things are going for him: "Now things are going well for me. But I do not know for how long. You know, Kristof . . . and I . . . we uh . . . uhh . . . actually I am afraid of him." Katalin: "But now you have gotten over him." Redl replies, "No," adding emphasis by shaking his head. One wonders, of course, why he is afraid of Kristof and what Katalin means by her response. Does she think the close friendship between Alfred and her brother has kept him from loving her? And does she mean that now that he has made love to her he has conquered his attraction to him? It is a puzzling, ambiguous conversation, full of sexual overtones, and leaves one with the impression that Katalin may well consider Alfred to be bisexual.

The entire exchange is shot in extreme close-up, the two heads crowding the frame, with Katalin's turned toward Alfred's as she anxiously awaits his every answer. The result is that we sense even more keenly that Alfred feels cornered, is hiding something, and does, indeed, himself *fait le poseur*.

That Redl himself is aware of trying to pass himself off as someone he is not becomes unequivocally clear in the scene in which he does what the audience has been doing all along. Alone in the darkness of his office in the building housing the intelligence service, he examines the file that has been put together on him and, after reading the report, looks thoughtfully at two photographs of himself and whispers the words: "poses, poses." After some additional thought he takes pen to hand and with the slightest trace of a smile does something very curious and unexpected—he adds the one word "dishonest" to the report, underlining it and punctuating it with an exclamation point. Redl's contemplation of the photographs of himself not only mirrors our own activity as we view his narrative portrait; it also points again to the difficulty of our task, by revealing unmistakably that Redl is, in fact, aware that he is guilty of posing, of cultivating a false image of himself, and therefore, we may assume, exercises great care not to reveal his charade.

The restaurant scene between Redl and General von Roden, his friend and champion from the early days of his military career, offers further evidence for us to consider as we try to decide the question of Redl's sexuality. It is

a mesmerizing scene, in which von Roden reluctantly confronts Redl with the rumor he has heard that he is a homosexual, and Redl, in a dual sense, plays the poseur. First, he laughs uncomfortably when von Roden brings up the rumor, but does not answer the charge, since the General immediately dismisses it as political intrigue. Then, as von Roden continues to talk, Redl begins to stare off to the right. The camera is presently placed in his line of vision so that he seems to be staring directly at us, thus repeating again the situation at the beginning of the film and inviting us to peer into his soul and discover the answer to Roden's question for ourselves. The camera then reveals what has caught his attention. We see a man seated at another table with a sketch book, drawing a picture of Redl, i.e. attempting to capture his essence on paper, and thus providing another hint of the challenge the director has given us to discover the truth about Redl by studying him with as intent and discerning an eye as that of the portraitist. The camera then cuts to a two-shot of the General, who is still talking, and Redl, who is still staring off to the right. As the General says, "I have the impression that you make enemies very easily," Redl turns his head back to him, swallowing nervously. The duality suggested here, particularly in Redl's possible concealment of at least latent sexual deviance, perhaps even to the point of refusing to admit to himself that it exists, is, again, anticipated in the long take of him at the beginning of the film, where, it will be recalled, the sidelighting illuminates one half of his face while leaving the other half in darkness.

In the very next scene, on the balcony of Katalin's apartment overlooking the sea (presumably the Adriatic), Katalin advises Alfred to marry in order to reassure people like von Roden and promises to introduce him to a girl from a good Viennese family, this in spite of the fact that she still loves him herself. As they walk through the streets of the city, she interrupts Alfred's monologue on the threat of war and its consequences for the Monarchy and, pointing to an ancient ruin, says: "Now take a look at where we are walking. Hmm? What remains?" implying that one's personal happiness is more important than the fate of the Monarchy. She then attempts to kiss him, but he grabs her and pushes her away with the words: "Stop that!" prompting her response that his civilian clothes are the biggest lie of his life. This response indicates a belief (or a wish to believe) on Katalin's part that there is nothing sexually deviant about Alfred and that it is only his passionate devotion to the Monarchy that gets in the way of their love, leaving no room in his life for any other passion. At the same time it seems to allow for the possibility that Alfred, though a perfectly normal man, is simply not attracted to this particular woman. And this must give the viewer pause who has already made up his mind that he is homosexual.

As gradually becomes clear, however, the message of one scene may be contradicted by that of the next or a subsequent scene—indeed much

of the film's tension and vitality stems from such a dialectic⁴—and this is the case with the scene of Redl's wedding night. His young wife has to ask him twice to come in from the balcony, and when he replies, "Yes, I am coming," the sound of resignation in his voice is unmistakable. He comes in, but not until he methodically closes the shutters, the glass doors, a second set of glass doors, and the drapes does he turn toward his bride, and then only with a sigh of reluctance, like a man who has put off a distasteful duty as long as possible and now can delay no longer.

Redl's posing takes an ominous turn when he is drawn into the Archduke's plot (historically unfounded) to find a scapegoat in order to create an incident that would strike fear in the heart of the army and unite the people behind the throne, a decidedly treasonous scheme to wrest power from the old Emperor. The Archduke stipulates that the incident should have some connection with the Balkans and that the Russians should be involved. After eliminating various ethnic groups for political reasons he concludes that someone from the Ruthenian minority, to which Redl belongs, would suit his purpose very well and tells Redl: "Look for an exact double of yourself, Redl . . . Someone of similar origin, similar career, similar connections, then you will have the man."

Redl does in fact find a Ruthenian who evidence indicates has been selling military secrets to the Russians and goes to Galicia to arrest him; but the man commits suicide during the search of his house, thus depriving Redl of a scapegoat to bring back to the Archduke. During the search of the house, however, he comes across a piece of paper on which the words "heir to the throne" and "St. Petersburg" are written together with the name of his estranged friend Kristof von Kubinyi, with whom he only recently had an unpleasant encounter. Kubinyi, who had just returned from St. Petersburg and been assigned to the Hungarian Affairs section of the General Staff, told Redl: "Whenever you need something in this area, please come to me first." When Redl countered with the same offer, however, Kubinyi interrupted him and bluntly replied: "I do not snoop around behind comrades' backs. All the best." Now, with the note in his hand, Redl stands motionless for several seconds, his mind apparently groping for a clue to its meaning. Presently the trace of a smile appears on his face, as if the answer had suddenly come to him. Upon returning to Vienna he requests permission to ask Kubinyi a few questions. The Archduke rejects his request and, suspicious of his motive, states contemptuously: "A dead double is no double. Spin your web better. Above all faster. Or do you want to use von Kubinyi in place of a Ruthenian? Kubinyi is no double of you." Redl insists that the Crown Prince has misunderstood him, but the viewer, recalling the cold rebuff Redl had received from Kubinyi, may well wonder if he was not indeed considering betraying him. The question is never answered. It remains one of those dark, blurred areas in that initial "photograph" of Redl

which the sidelighting obscures rather than illuminates. There is, however, no misunderstanding Redl's betrayal of the man who has encouraged and stood up for him throughout his career—von Roden. After expressing his own contempt for "this senile Roden with his tearful look" the Archduke bluntly asks Redl: "You were his fervid admirer? Or not?" to which Redl hesitantly and sheepishly replies: "Imperial Highness, he was. . . , in truth, a little sentimental."

The next scene is another visual reminder of our main task as we continue to look at the unfolding narrative portrait of Redl. We see the Archduke and his Chief of Staff studying a photograph of him as they exchange the following observations:

Franz Ferdinand: "Yes, Redl. The profile. Really pitiless type. Yet there is something about him that indicates an extreme sensuality."

Chief of Staff: "Slavic face."

Franz Ferdinand: "Yes, the cheek bones. To judge from the photograph, clearly a brutal personality."

He then adds the chilling remark: "Lieutenant-colonel Redl. First we shall promote him," indicating his intent to make *him* the scapegoat of his plan to save the Monarchy.

The accuracy of the Crown Prince's observations regarding Redl's ruthlessness and brutality is confirmed in the next scene, in which Redl tells the woman who has loved him and been his friend and confidante for years that he will kill her if she ever betrays his trust. We also learn in this scene that Redl engages in the same activity as we have been engaged in from the start and as we have just seen the Archduke practicing. Katalin notices a photograph of Franz Ferdinand on Redl's desk and asks: "Why is this here?" There is a cut to a close-up of Redl as he answers: "I would like to know, what he is thinking."

This scene is most important, however, for showing us Redl symbolically in the process of beginning to let down his guard, abandon his pose. Convinced that the heir to the throne is planning a military putsch to seize power for himself and that the only one who still believes in the old Monarchy is the Emperor, he has become completely disillusioned. As the scene begins, we see him standing by his desk in uniform, his jacket buttoned right up to the gold collar, as he gives vent to his bitterness and frustration over the apparent disintegration of his world. We next see him in front of a window with Katalin looking over his shoulder and telling him that nothing else matters but life. He turns to her with a quote from Montaigne that indicates his frame of mind: "It is not a sin to be a part of it. It is a sin to remain a part of it." At this point he has completely unbuttoned his jacket. Next we see him without his jacket, stretched out on a settee, resting his head on Katalin, who is seated next to him. As she inclines her

head toward his, however, he sits up—thus avoiding her advances—and removes his stiff shirt collar, and, while unbuttoning the top button of his shirt, says: “I cannot prevent what is brewing. What I wanted to defend, does not exist.” At this point he looks at the collar, which here becomes a metaphor for the formal, hierarchical world he had wanted to defend, and tosses it down. The camera cuts immediately to a high-angle shot of the two of them, clothed as before, lying face up and side by side on top of the bed. Suddenly Redl sits up, prompting her to do the same, and says: “I dreamed my father was sitting on my shoulders and pressing me to the ground.” It is the first mention of his father since the scene in which Alfred, still a young boy, declined to attend his funeral so that he could take part in the confirmation rite at the academy, in effect rejecting his biological father in order to gain an imperial godfather. The dream seems to indicate that Redl senses that his own downfall is near and that it has to do somehow with his denial of his father many years before.

Redl’s disillusionment, his continued unresponsiveness toward the beautiful and infinitely patient Katalin, his fear of his undoing, his feeling of guilt toward his father (and, one may assume, his entire family), and especially his relaxation of his pose, symbolized by shedding his military jacket and stiff collar and unbuttoning his shirt at the neck while proceeding from a standing, to a sitting, and finally to a reclining position, all prepare us for his downfall, which begins in the next scene, at the masked ball.

In order to appreciate fully all that happens in this scene, however, we must first consider another development that also approaches its climax here and that, in fact, Redl’s life comes to represent—the plight of the Dual Monarchy. It is this development that gives the film the special relevance, referred to at the outset, to its own time. The identification of Redl with the Monarchy rests, first of all, upon his unwavering devotion to the Emperor and to the Imperial and Royal Army, for which he deliberately suppresses his own regional and ethnic ties. To his fellow officers he says: “Either one is an officer in the Imperial and Royal Army, or Bohemian, Ruthenian, or Jew.” Second, Redl is a mixture of the three major ethnic groups that make up the Monarchy—Slavic, German, and Hungarian, and thus representative of the whole. As the young Redl tells Kristof’s grandfather: “My father was Ruthenian. He is in part of German extraction. I believe my mother’s grandfather came from Hungary. Yes, they were Hungarians.” Third, his love-hate relationship with Kristof von Kubinyi, the Hungarian aristocrat, who represents the eastern half of the Dual Monarchy, corresponds to the increasingly tense relations at the time between Vienna and Budapest. Fourth, Redl’s posing has its parallel in the efforts of the Monarchy to maintain, through its army and its conduct of foreign affairs, its “great power” status in Europe after its exclusion from Germany in 1866 and its relegation, in the eyes of many, to the position of a “German outpost for

the control and order of central Europe.”⁵ Moreover, it has its parallel in general in the particularly Viennese proclivity to make believe, substituting court etiquette and ceremony for real power.⁶

It would be difficult, however, for the viewer to identify Redl with the Monarchy, if major changes had not been made in the known facts of the Redl affair. This is, no doubt, the reason for the liberties Szabó took in filming the story, liberties which led him to preface the film with a disclaimer stating that characters and events are completely fictitious. Above all, Redl’s treachery, which involved passing countless military secrets to the Russians over a period of more than a decade and selling out his own intelligence agents, had to be diminished. Szabó reduces it to a single disclosure of military secrets, which, in fact, turns out to be no treachery at all, since Redl realizes he has been set up by Franz Ferdinand and is passing information not to a foreign government but to an informer in the Archduke’s employ. Szabó also transformed Redl’s active homosexual life into an inner struggle to contain an ever growing conflict between this private proclivity and his official public persona, a conflict which culminates in a single surrender to temptation. He thereby introduces an internal drama in Redl’s life corresponding to the internal struggle of the Dual Monarchy to reconcile the increasingly disaffected national groups within its borders.

Let us now proceed to the masked ball, where the private struggle and the national one come together in a riveting scene fraught with tension and irony. As Redl comes up the staircase and is about to enter the ballroom, a lady addresses him as “Colonel”—thus tipping us off to the fact that he has been promoted and, consequently, that the Archduke has set his plan in motion—and tells him that masks are mandatory. He laughs and asks, “Does that apply to me too?” “Yes, until midnight. It applies to everyone,” comes the response. With a mask covering his eyes he enters the ballroom and is almost immediately stopped by a man who says: “Oh, Colonel Redl, whom we all fear, is here too.” He inquires: “And your wife?” Redl answers perfunctorily: “Unfortunately in a sanatorium.” The man then asks: “May one ask why?” and Redl replies, again perfunctorily: “A shadow on her lung, since childhood.” Redl obviously finds the subject of his wife boring and the questions irritating and makes no attempt to hide how he feels. It is as if he had decided to give up acting a part, to forego posing. This idea is symbolically reinforced by the fact that the mask he is wearing does not conceal his identity. The man recognized him immediately.

As Redl moves among the other guests—the military and civilian elite, who represent the Monarchy—he overhears bits of conversation, all of which have to do with the imminence of war and the breakup of the Monarchy. In spite of the appearance of carefree devotion to pleasure

in this opulent scene of glittering chandeliers and gay waltz music, of smart uniforms and elegant gowns, the air is rife with predictions of doom. Like Redl, these members of the social elite appear to be forsaking their tendency to indulge in self-delusion and are expressing, instead, their true feelings. They have given up pretending that all is well, that the Monarchy is strong and will survive.

Midnight arrives and all the guests remove their masks. A quick cut to Redl shows him taking his off with a swift and emphatic yank, symbolic of the unmasking to come. A drum roll announces the entrance of the Heir Apparent, whom the crowd receives with nods and curtsies, unaware, of course, that within a short time he would be assassinated by a Slav nationalist and that his murder would bring to fruition the dire predictions on all their lips. The camera cuts away to a close-up of Redl watching from a distance. It is another one of those long takes (13 seconds) in which he seems to be staring straight at us and we are forced to ask ourselves what he is thinking. This time his head is somewhat averted so that he is looking out of the right corners of his eyes, which suggests distrust and suspicion. Presently Katalin approaches with a man whom she introduces as Lieutenant Velocchio. In a close-up the man smiles and says "Alfredo Velocchio." This is followed by a brief close-up of Redl, who simply gives his surname. The irony of the situation is unsurpassed. While Redl is looking on with suspicion at the entrance of the Archduke, the bait the latter has prepared for him approaches from another, unexpected direction, on the arm of his longtime friend and confidante Katalin. Thus, just as the man whose assassination was to furnish the pretext for the war that led to the demise of the Monarchy makes his appearance before its representatives, so the man who provides the pretext for the charge of treason that leads to Redl's demise appears — almost simultaneously — before him.

What happens next finally confirms beyond any doubt the suspicion that has been growing ever more insistent in us that Redl is, in fact, homosexual. Seduced by the tall, handsome youth, he succumbs completely to the latter's sexual allure. One last shot of Redl staring directly into the camera leaves no more room for doubt. We know from the preceding shots of the scene that he is clad in a robe, sitting languidly on a settee, staring across the room at Velocchio, who is lying asleep in bed. The close-up, in which the camera is positioned in Redl's line of vision so that he appears to be staring directly at us, reveals an expression not seen on his face before, an expression of utter contentment. There is no need to hold this shot as long as the earlier ones, for Redl has completely abandoned his posing here so that his outward appearance offers no obstacle to our effort to peer into his soul.

By finally surrendering to his latent homosexuality, Redl makes himself an easy target for blackmail and hence a perfect scapegoat for the Arch-

duke's plan to incite a little war to save the Monarchy. He soon suspects that Velocchio has been sent to get military secrets from him, and when he learns that he is interested above all in plans for the deployment of troops against Russia, he is certain that the Archduke has set him up. Realizing that it is all over for him, he begins reeling off the military secrets that Velocchio was sent to gather. It is a meaningless act, born of despair, for it makes no difference whether Velocchio gets secret information from him or not. After all, Franz Ferdinand can always furnish his informant with all the military secrets he needs in order to appear in court as a credible witness.

Redl, however, refuses to play the role assigned to him in the public trial that is to take place and thus seals his doom. One of the people who come to visit him prior to his death, while he is under house arrest, is his old friend Sonnenschein. His reappearance here, at the end of Redl's career, reminds one of the duel to which he had challenged Schorm near the beginning of Redl's career; and that duel, paradoxically, prefigures Redl's suicide. The way Redl cocks the gun and holds it upright while he paces back and forth between the door and the dressing table against the opposite wall of his room is reminiscent of how Schorm and Kubinyi, who had stood in for Sonnenschein, faced each other after having paced off the proper distance, with cocked pistols held upright beside their heads. In the case of Redl's duel, however, his opponent is his other self, his double; and when the shot is finally fired, both fall dead. This interpretation is supported by the fact that we occasionally catch a glimpse of Redl in mirrors as he paces around the room and thus seem to see two of him simultaneously. The mirror over the dressing table, to which our attention is perhaps deliberately drawn by having Redl crash into it, is especially important in this regard, for even though we rarely see Redl's reflection in it, we realize that it must register his image continuously as he desperately rushes back and forth between the dressing table and the door, finally halting midway — facing the mirror — to pull the trigger.⁷

There are still other factors that reinforce the connection between Schorm's duel and Redl's suicide. It will be recalled that Schorm was rumored to be, like Redl, homosexual. Also, like Redl, he had been leading a double life until the revelation that he had been writing libelous attacks on the army under a pen name. Finally, like Redl, he was accused of treason. Schorm, however, appeared for his duel in civilian clothes, a sign of his refusal to continue to lead a double life; while Redl carries out his sentence in full uniform, having buttoned up his jacket and put on and buttoned his coat before taking the gun into his hand, as if still clinging desperately to the identity he had worked so hard to create.

There are two changes in Szabó's treatment of the historical Redl's suicide that are significant here. First, unlike the historical Redl, who implored

his captors to bring him a gun and allow him to commit suicide,⁸ Szabó's Redl does not wish to die but is forced to commit suicide after refusing to cooperate in the planned trial and is brought the unwanted suicide weapon by his former friend Kubinyi. Secondly, the historical Redl did not die in his colonel's uniform but in a silk dressing gown, into which he had changed from his military tunic before shooting himself.⁹ These changes in the film are consistent with and, indeed, a direct result of the decision to minimize Redl's treason and sexual deviance in order to facilitate the audience's identification of him with the Dual Monarchy. They accord with the historical fact that Vienna sought to the very last to preserve the Monarchy, only acquiescing to its demise out of necessity.¹⁰

The film does not end with Redl's death, as one might expect, but with a brief epilogue showing us the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and the outbreak of the First World War. Szabó seems to have added this epilogue primarily to complete the parallel between the life of Alfred Redl and that of the Dual Monarchy. Just as Redl failed in the end to suppress his dual nature and died by his own hand, so Austria-Hungary failed to solve its internal conflicts and, by condoning war with Serbia following the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, in effect committed suicide.¹¹

What emerges, then, from a close study of *Colonel Redl* is an intriguing portrait of a man who, like the Dual Monarchy he served, sought in vain to contain the growing conflict within him beneath a harmonious exterior, finally succumbing, again like the Dual Monarchy, to treachery from without and the inherent contradiction of his (its) own nature. Our task, however, does not end here. The completion of the parallel in the film itself increases the likelihood that the audience will recognize these larger implications of Alfred Redl's personal story and, once having done so, will take the next step and seek to relate them to their own circumstances. Especially the viewers in the authoritarian societies of East Central Europe who saw the film in the mid-1980s, when it premiered, and whom Szabó had in mind (as pointed out earlier) when he made the film, would have grasped the implications of the politicization of Redl's personal struggle. For example, they may well have viewed the Archduke's double-cross as a warning that those who inform against others, whether out of loyalty to the state or personal ambition, may eventually wind up as victims themselves of the ruthless people they serve. Above all, however, they would have found confirmation of their own experience that the achievements and popularity of Communism were mere propaganda, a pose; and they would have gotten the message (happily, prophetic, as it has turned out) that the dissolution of the involuntary amalgam of once proud and independent nations then dominated by the Soviet Union, was, like the ultimate failure of Redl and the Dual Monarchy to contain their inner conflicts and preserve their union, merely a matter of time.

Thus Szabó did indeed achieve the goals he spoke of in that interview with Tamás Koltai during the shooting of the film. He created in *Colonel Redl* a masterful psychological portrait of a man tragically at odds with himself and at the same time offered a critical, yet ultimately optimistic, message regarding the political situation in his own region of the world, East Central Europe.

NOTES

1 *Film und Fernsehen*, Heft 3 (1985), p. 22.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*, p. 24.

4 I disagree with the criticism expressed by Pat Anderson that “the film has too many ambiguities” (*Films in Review*, XXXVII, Jan. 1986, p. 45). On the contrary, I believe that the apparent contradictions, rather than frustrating the viewer’s interest, function to sustain it.

5 Hans Kohn, *The Habsburg Empire, 1804–1918* (New York, 1961), p. 50.

6 Frederic Morton, for example, speaks of the Empire as a “triumph of form over substance” and a masterpiece of “survival through sheer style” (*Thunder and Twilight*, New York, 1989, p. 86).

7 Robert Asprey, in his heavily researched book *The Panther’s Feast*, (1st Carroll and Graf ed. New York, 1986), states that Redl shot himself in front of the wardrobe mirror, where he had dragged a couch to catch his slumping body (pp. 259–60).

8 *Ibid.*, p. 256.

9 *Ibid.*

10 Robert A. Kann, *A History of the Hapsburg Empire 1526–1918* (Berkeley, CA, 1974), p. 518.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 519.

Editors’ note: any pictorial illustrations to this article are courtesy of Orion Classics Inc., the distributor of *Colonel Redl* in the United States.

Bartók and Kodály: A Parting of the Ways

Stephen Satory

Béla Bartók (1881–1945) and Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967) have long been regarded as the two greatest Hungarian musicians of the twentieth century. They were close friends and collaborators for thirty-five years, from 1905 until Bartók's emigration from Hungary in 1940. "Bartók and Kodály": from 1910 on their names were paired together consistently, and without doubt this pairing has contributed to the popular misconception that their careers and music were largely similar. In fact, despite a number of common factors in their personal and professional development, their compositional styles and ideological dispositions diverged considerably. In this paper I attempt to bring the reader's attention to similarities between Bartók and Kodály but also to salient distinctions within the similarities. However, instead of presenting a straightforward listing of affinities and divergences, I strive to pursue a discussion of Bartók and Kodály more freely, proceeding in chronological order on the whole.

Both musicians spent their childhood and adolescence in small provincial towns of prewar Hungary, Bartók in Nagyszentmiklós, Nagyszöllős, Nagyvárad and Pozsony and Kodály in Kecskemét, Galánta and Nagyszombat. They both settled in Budapest before the age of twenty. Their years of study at the Liszt Academy overlapped:¹ Bartók was a student from 1899 to 1903 and Kodály, from 1900 to 1905. Many years later (1950), Kodály wrote of these years, pointing to another similarity with Bartók, their avoidance of socializing:

We [Bartók and I] went to the same school, the Liszt Academy for several years after 1900. However, we never met. Bartók was always there on different days than I. In any case, Bartók was always a particularly retiring individual who did not even socialize with his own classmates. [. . .] I did not have a friendly disposition myself; the fact that I was extremely busy also stood in the way of social contact.²

The two musicians made each other's acquaintance months later, in 1905, in the salon of Emma Gruber who later became Kodály's wife. On discovering their common interest in Hungarian folk songs, they quickly struck a friendship and made plans to collaborate in collecting folk songs.³

Already in their youthful careers, differences between Bartók and Kodály were evident in a number of ways. Their course of study differed: Bartók studied primarily to be a concert pianist, his studies in composition constituted a secondary discipline. Indeed, in subsequent years, touring as a concert pianist remained his primary source of income. Kodály also pursued dual avocation, as a composition student at the Liszt Academy and as a student of ethnomusicology at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His doctoral dissertation, entitled "The Strophic Structure of Hungarian Folk Song," was accepted at the University of Budapest in 1905.⁴

A second early difference between Bartók and Kodály concerned their attitudes to Hungarian nationalism. At the turn of the century they were both deeply involved in the anti-Austrian and Anti-German ideological movement. Bartók's fervent patriotism was evident in several areas: he wore national attire in public, as a photograph of 1904 shows; he began all of his letters of the year 1903 with the first line of the Hungarian anthem, "Isten, áldd meg a magyart!" (God bless Hungarians!); and he attached enormous importance to speaking in Hungarian. He even demanded that his mother and sister share his devotion, as the letter of September 8, 1903, to his mother attests: "Speak in a foreign language only when absolutely necessary! [. . .] If 'it's difficult to get used to it,' then one must take pains; the Hungarian language deserves it."⁵

At first Bartók's nationalist fervor and anti-Austrian feeling existed concurrently. This was borne out in his early patriotic symphonic poem,⁶ *Kossuth* (1903) by his quotation, in distorted fashion, of the first two bars of the Austrian national anthem. This work, and in particular, this quotation, was at first accompanied by controversy. Kodály reported later:

At an orchestral rehearsal an Austrian trumpet-player refused to play a parody of the Austrian national anthem as demanded by the score of a new composition. The anthem, *Gott erhalte*. . . , was in Hungary the hated symbol of Austrian oppression, whereas the new work was Bartók's *Kossuth*, a programme symphony, its theme being the latest heroic effort of Hungary towards independence in 1848. The distorted anthem symbolized the Austrians' flight.⁷

However, Bartók's intense nationalist sympathy and anti-German stance were soon mollified by his discovery of the music of the German composers Wagner and Richard Strauss; the music of the latter in particular, exercised a strong influence on Bartók's early development. Thus for him the threat of Austro-German inundation soon lifted, signaling the beginning

of a new openness to world music and to the collecting of international folk music sources. According to musicologist György Kroó: "In 1904–1905 he abandoned both his national attire and his active anti-Hapsburg affiliations, recognizing that the specter of German Romantic music . . . was being driven away by the influence of East European peasant songs."⁸

Like Bartók, young Kodály was also passionately devoted to Hungarian nationalism in music. He wrote in 1906:

[. . .] the time will come when there will be Hungarian music in the home, when Hungarian families will not be content with the most inferior foreign music-hall songs or with the products of domestic folksong factories, when there will be Hungarian singers, when not only the lover of rarities will know that there are Hungarian folksongs other than "Ritka búza" and "Ityóka-pityóka."⁹

Bartók's internationalism was not paralleled in Kodály's career. For Kodály, Hungarian national culture continued to be threatened by German culture.¹⁰ Unlike Bartók, Kodály collected only Hungarian folk music. Much of his energy from the 1920s on was occupied in the cultivation and promotion of Hungarian folk music tradition. His nationalism was manifested in three principal ways: by his continuing emphasis on correct Hungarian prosody in vocal music, in the avoidance of stylistic experimentation and in the promotion of a patriotic attitude.¹¹ These were transmitted in his teaching of composition students at the Liszt Academy and in his essays and pedagogical writings.

After their initial meeting in 1905, Bartók and Kodály planned to collaborate in field trips to collect folk-music performances in remote villages of Hungary; their first trip took place in 1906. Most of their field recordings were made individually, but they frequently pooled their resources. Kodály wrote of their collaboration:

We divided the territories between us. From time to time we got together, each of us bringing along in his satchel the results of his collection. We then set side by side the tunes which attracted us the most, and put the whole collection into one pile.¹²

They accomplished their collecting by persuading peasants to sing, then by notating the music by hand or recording it by means of an Edison phonograph. Later they transcribed it into Western musical notation, with an intensive effort to include in their transcriptions refinements of pitch and rhythm. Their choice of research locale diverged, however, reflecting their differing attitudes to Hungarian and non-Hungarian music. Kodály visited outlying Hungarian villages, but Bartók became interested in collecting Slovak, Rumanian and South Slavic songs as well. Later, a year before his death, Bartók acknowledged their difference in an essay written in 1944:

Kodály studied Hungarian peasant music almost exclusively and utilized it as a new resource. I, on the other hand, widened my sphere of interest and my liking to the musical folklore of neighbouring East European countries. Indeed, in the course of my field research, I ventured to Arabic and Turkish lands as well.¹³

Bartók and Kodály incorporated Hungarian folk music (and in Bartók's case, non-Hungarian folk music as well) in three ways. First, they used authentic folksongs intact, unaltered; in such cases the folk melodies were clearly displayed and unchallenged by accompanying material, which usually took the form of chordal harmonizations. Such settings appear in Kodály's *Felszállott a páva* (Peacock Variations, for orchestra, 1937–9) and in Bartók's *Gyermekeknek* (For Children, for piano, 1908–9). Second, folksongs were arranged in more complex, often polyphonic textures, but their melodies still retained their folk authenticity intact. An example of this practice is Bartók's *Improvisations for piano*, Op. 20 (1920). Third, Bartók and Kodály both wrote melodies which are not authentic folksongs per se; rather, they are inspired by authentic folksong models, emulating their style and construction. One finds such melodies in the string quartets of both composers, for example in the third movement of Bartók's *Fifth String Quartet* and in the first and second movement of Kodály's *Second String Quartet*.

As we have seen, Kodály himself acknowledged his and Bartók's reserved character, already evident in their student years at the Liszt Academy. Bartók was a private, solitary, rather forlorn man. After his death in 1945, Kodály wrote of him in eulogy: "He has gone. Happy are those who could help him in removing the barbed-wire fence he raised around him in self-defence."¹⁴ Bartók's anguished loneliness accompanied him throughout his life; he gave vent to bitterly pessimistic feeling in a letter to his mother from Paris on 10 September 1905:

[. . .] there are times when I suddenly become aware of the fact that I am absolutely alone! And I prophesy, I have a foreknowledge, that this spiritual loneliness is to be my destiny. I look about me in search of the ideal companion and yet I am fully aware that it is a vain quest. Even if I should ever succeed in finding someone, I am sure that I would soon be disappointed.¹⁵

The extent of Bartók's dependence on Kodály is indicated by a passage from Bartók's letter to the British composer, Frederick Delius on 7 June, 1910: "I am very much alone here [in Hungary] apart from my one friend, Kodály; I have nobody to talk to . . ."¹⁶

Like Bartók, Kodály was a rather solitary, reclusive person. This reclusiveness was externalized not in anguished soul-searching as in Bartók but

in a certain aloofness which alienated others. For example, the writer Béla Balázs, his fellow-student between 1901 and 1905, wrote in his diary (18 April 1905): "Yesterday I walked in the Buda hills with Kodály. I cannot get close to him. I really don't know what to do. Sometimes it seems to me that his cold aloofness is rooted not in proud avoidance but rather in conceitedness."¹⁷

Kodály's reserve was perceived by his students as well. They found him remarkably distant and difficult of approach. For example, Ferenc Farkas wrote: "He was not friendly. If in the halls of the Liszt Academy or on a city street we greeted him respectfully, he looked over our heads with a vacant glance."¹⁸

Throughout their lives Bartók and Kodály wrote articles in support of each other. Kodály's greatest difficulties with government and press came in 1920. During the communist "Council Republic" of 1919, Kodály assumed a directorial position at the Liszt Academy along with Bartók and fellow-composer Ernő Dohnányi. The subsequent counter-revolutionary government charged him with unpatriotic conduct, relieved him of his professorship at the Liszt Academy and sent him on leave for six months. In addition, he was fiercely attacked in the press for being a pale imitation of Bartók. Bartók himself rushed to Kodály's defence in an article in the periodical, *Nyugat*:

I do not regard Kodály as the best musician in Hungary because he is a friend of mine. He has become my only friend because, apart from his splendid qualities as a man, he is the greatest musician in Hungary. That it is I, and not Kodály, who have most benefited from our friendship is but further proof of his splendid qualities and his self-effacing altruism.¹⁹

Kodály, too, stood in defence of his friend. He had ample opportunity to do so since Bartók's music met almost invariably with incomprehension and hostility from press and public.²⁰ An early example of Kodály's writing in support of Bartók was a newspaper article of 1919:

Nine years had to elapse before Bartók could step before an indifferent concert audience with an evening of his works. During this time, he has completed a long list of new works which have struck terror into the hearts of listeners who have mistakenly wandered into its path; and they have elicited frivolous bantering from uncomprehending and ill-intentioned newspaper criticisms. They have brought ridicule and persecution for Bartók. But he has gone on his own path with the imperturbability of one with a sure instinct.²¹

However, much of the co-operation and support occurred on the human level. When it came to compositional style, differences eventually

overshadowed plans for co-operation. Both composers wrote their second string quartets during the years of World War I, between 1916 and 1919. During these years, they talked intensively about these works sharing many compositional ideas. In fact, as a result of Kodály's advice, Bartók made certain revisions in the second movement of his work (1915–17).

But the reverse was true as well. Kodály's *Second String Quartet* (1916–18) was influenced by Bartók's daring compositional innovations: the first movement of Kodály's quartet constitutes considerable shift from his usual conservative, diatonic, tonal writing to a fairly dissonant, chromatic texture.

Substantially different from Kodály's quartet is Bartók's *Second Quartet*, written at about the same time as *The Miraculous Mandarin*. Its fast and vigorous second movement in particular constitutes Bartók's contribution to the powerful revolution in rhythm of the early twentieth century, of which the best-known example is Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. Bartók's movement contains a very high level of harmonic dissonance and a great deal of narrow-gauged, chromatic melody; these factors place it firmly within the avant-garde movement of the early twentieth century. In addition, it has passages which emulate Arabic folk music which Bartók collected in 1913 during his field trip to Biskra, Algeria. The third movement of Bartók's quartet is a sombre dirge-like piece which betrays also the influence of the new, atonal music of the pioneering Viennese composer, Arnold Schönberg.

The stylistic chasm between Bartók and Kodály widened further in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Between 1919 and 1923, Kodály, challenged by government and the press, composed little. In fact, his only published composition from this period is the *Serenade for Two Violins and Viola* (Op. 12). This work constitutes a step backward in experimentation, from the moderate adventure of the *Second String Quartet* to a safer, more conservative, diatonic style. By contrast, Bartók was furiously active. He composed his boldest, most chromatic music during these years, *Three Studies for Piano* (Op. 18, 1918), two sonatas for violin and piano (1921 and 1922) and *The Miraculous Mandarin*, a pantomime for dancers and orchestra (1918–19).

Two compositions written in 1923 provide a further illustration of the gradually widening stylistic gap between Bartók and Kodály. The occasion was the Hungarian celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the unification of Buda and Pest, an event for which both Kodály and Bartók were commissioned to write festive works. Bartók set to work first and completed the *Dance Suite*, which included folksong elements from North Africa, Rumania and Hungary. Initially Kodály also wanted to write a dance suite, but upon learning of Bartók's composition, changed his mind. Instead, he composed a choral-orchestral work, the *Psalmus hungaricus*, based on the fifty-fifth psalm adapted by a 16th century Hungarian poet, Mihály Kecskeméti Végh.

The opening of the *Psalmus hungaricus* contains some harsh dissonances, but the tune, played by the violins, utilizes the pentatonic scale, which is found throughout Hungarian folksongs (and in the folksongs of many other nations). The crisis-like introduction soon gives way to the first four lines of the psalm sung in a reassuring, conservative idiom: it is sung unaccompanied, in unison and in four-square phrases by the chorus. This is the prevailing style of the work.

By contrast, Bartók's *Dance Suite* begins with a somewhat threatening atmosphere, with the bassoons playing a low-range conjunct, dance-like melody, with occasional interruptions by strings and piano with very harsh, dissonant harmony. Bartók's phrases are rarely regular in this piece, and he is constantly driven to vary melodies and themes which, on their return, are quite difficult and challenging to recognize. Bartók treads the middle ground between avant-garde experimentation and attractive, accessible folk music, with a masterful result.

In the 1920s and 1930s and indeed, throughout the remainder of his career, Kodály's style remained virtually unchanged. By contrast, Bartók's style changed constantly: stepping back from his earlier, radical experimentation of the 1920s, he reached his "classical" period in the 1930s with works like *Cantata profana* (1930), *String Quartet No. 5* (1934), *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celeste* (1936) and *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion* (1937). However, in the works of his last six years (1939–45), composed after his immigration to Western Europe and to the United States, he reverted to a tonal, more easily accessible language in works like *Divertimento* (1939), *String Quartet No. 6* (1939), *Concerto for Orchestra* (1943), *Piano Concerto No. 3* (1945) and *Viola Concerto* (1945).

The differences between Bartók and Kodály were exalted in the reception of their music in the Stalinist era, between 1948 and 1955.²² In these years, Kodály's multi-volume choral method, intended as a complete text for universal music education, was disseminated widely and gained enormous recognition and acceptance on the international scene. Moreover, given the readily accessible style of his music and the easy recognizability of its folk tunes, Kodály's music was deemed completely compatible with the Zhdanovian strictures imposed by the government in 1948–49. As a result, he was installed as the institutional composer par excellence. His compositions became the exclusive model which young composers used in learning their craft, and divergence from this model was not tolerated.

On the other hand, the reception of Bartók's music suffered a devastating blow during these years. Most of his important works were banned from the concert and theatre stage, except for a few works where Hungarian folksongs could be unequivocally identified by listeners. Kroó wrote:

[. . .] Bartók's mentality, the essence of his heritage, proved unusable

and anachronistic to his compatriots. The complex laws of his works pointed towards an aristocratic manner of composition that seemed impossible to follow and was consequently banned by the cultural leadership.²³

A great reversal came in 1955–56: with the easing of political and cultural tensions, the banned works of Bartók quickly became accessible to musicians and to the public. At once his music became the symbol for stylistic experimentation for Hungarian composers; indeed, his music was the first gate through which they passed in the opening up of their artistic horizon. He quickly came to be regarded as a hero, an artist determined to create in his own manner, despite societal hostility and incomprehension. In this period, contemporary Hungarian composers studied Bartók's music for its own sake, but also as a first step in re-establishing contact with the music of other countries.²⁴ Much later, in the 1980s, Bartók's influence can still be seen, especially in contemporary Hungarian string quartets.

In the world of today's international art-music, Kodály is regarded as a conservative composer, a representative of the national trend of the early twentieth century. Paul Griffiths, a British writer on twentieth-century music, wrote of Kodály: ". . . he contributed to the founding of a strong compositional tradition in Hungary, if more as teacher than as composer."²⁵ And Hungarian musicologist György Kroó wrote:

The oeuvre of Kodály [. . .] primarily developed the national character of the new Hungarian school (exclusive dependence on Hungarian folklore, interest in Hungarian history, Hungarian subjects and the historical layers of Hungarian art music, close relationship with Hungarian literary and folk language and genres) and it set a classical example by its sense of and demand for quality.²⁶

Musicians, on the other hand, have viewed Bartók as one of the three or four most important composers of our century, and a tremendous inspiration for today's musical world. Of Bartók Griffiths wrote: "His six string quartets and other works [. . .] count among the highest achievements in twentieth-century music."²⁷ And György Kroó echoed this sentiment: "Bartók began a general stylistic germination, melted the ice and with his own works drew attention to Stravinsky and Schönberg as well. He widened the horizon and provided a new perspective, backward and forward."²⁸

The music of Kodály and Bartók represent conservative and liberal tendencies in Hungarian music. Despite the amicable coexistence and co-operation of the two musicians during their lifetime, their distinctive musical attitudes stamped the history of twentieth-century Hungarian music with a characteristic, fascinating duality.

NOTES

- 1 This institution, founded by Franz Liszt in 1875, is most commonly known in English as the Liszt Academy. Hungarians refer to it most frequently as Zeneművészeti Főiskola (College of Musical Arts) or as Zeneakadémia (Academy of Music).
- 2 László Eörsze, *Kodály életének krónikája* (Chronicle of Kodály's Life) (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1977), p. 30. The translation is mine [S.S.], here and elsewhere, unless otherwise indicated.
- 3 They met four times in May and June 1905 at Emma Gruber's residence.
- 4 Bartók did not write a dissertation.
- 5 Demény, János (ed.), *Béla Bartók: Letters*, tr. Péter Balabán and István Farkas (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), p. 30.
- 6 The symphonic poem is an orchestral genre which flourished in the second half of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, generally composed in a single movement. One of its most important exponents was Franz Liszt whose works in this genre undoubtedly inspired Bartók's composition.
- 7 From "Béla Bartók," (1921) *The Selected Writings of Zoltán Kodály*, tr. Lili Halápy and Fred Macnicol (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1974), p. 87.
- 8 "Bartók and Hungarian Music," *Bartók and Kodály Revisited*, György Ránki, ed. (Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987), p. 134.
- 9 From "Hungarian Folksongs," (1906) *The Selected Writings of Zoltán Kodály*, p. 10.
- 10 Surprisingly, his early writings and correspondence contain no reference to his fear of the German inundation of Hungarian music. It was not until 1932 that he said in a speech to the Circle of Friends of the West (Budapest): "That [the first decade of the twentieth century] was when the Wagner-cult was at its peak here. At concerts they played only pieces where if it had not been for the fact that the programme notes were printed in Hungarian, one would have believed that one was in a small town in Germany." *Visszatekintés—összegyűjtött írások, beszédek, nyilatkozatok* (Looking Back—Collected Writings, Speeches and Articles), Ferenc Bónis, ed. (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1964), Volume II, p. 488.
- 11 György Kroó. *A magyar zeneszerzés 30 éve* (Thirty Years of Hungarian Musical Composition) (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1975), p. 35.
- 12 *Visszatekintés*, Volume II, p. 457.
- 13 From "Magyar zene," *Bartók Béla összegyűjtött írásai* (The Collected Writings of Béla Bartók), András Szöllősy, ed. (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1966), Volume I, pp. 759–60.
- 14 "Béla Bartók the Man," *The Selected Writings of Zoltán Kodály*, p. 101.
- 15 Demény, *op. cit.*, p. 53. It is somewhat surprising that Bartók did not find solace from his loneliness in his two marriages, to Márta Ziegler (1909–23) and Ditta Pásztory (1923–45).
- 16 Demény, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
- 17 Quoted in István Gál. "Kodály és Balázs Béla barátsága—a fiatal Kodály Balázs Béla naplójában" (The Friendship between Kodály and Béla Balázs—Young Kodály in the Diary of Béla Balázs) *Kodály-mérleg* (Kodály Balance), János

- Breuer, ed. (Budapest: Gondolat, 1982), p. 372.
- 18 *Igy láttuk Kodályt* (This is How We Saw Kodály), Ferenc Bónis, ed. (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1979), p. 190.
 - 19 Béla Bartók, "Kodály Zoltán," *Nyugat* 14/3 (February 1921), pp. 235–6. Republished in Hungarian in Szöllősy, *op. cit.*, Volume I, pp. 621–2; in English translation in Béla Bartók *Essays*, ed. Benjamin Suchoff (London: Faber and Faber, 1976), pp. 469–70.
 - 20 Already early in his career Bartók's piano compositions were attacked with venom in a Berlin newspaper: "We must wonder if there is anyone at all who takes Bartók seriously, as for example his publisher has done; otherwise how could he have published his Ten Easy Pieces for Piano and Fourteen Bagatelles? [. . .] It is clear that here we are dealing with a pathological case [. . .] Compared to these partially stupid orgies of dissonance Max Reger, Debussy and Scriabin seem timid, pale orphans. There is hardly a single piece in either collection which does not seem a bad joke." (From an article by August Spanuth in *Signale für die musikalische Welt* 76/33 (18 August 1909), translated into Hungarian in János Breuer, *Bartók és Kodály—Tanulmányok századunk magyar zenetörténetéhez* (Bartók and Kodály—Studies in the Hungarian Musical History of Our Century) (Budapest: Magvető, 1978), p. 41. Later, in 1926, the Cologne première of one of his greatest masterworks, *The Miraculous Mandarin* (1918–19) was interrupted by scandal and its performance was violently attacked in the German press. At the Budapest Opera two performances were planned, in 1931 and 1941; each was cancelled at the last minute. The *Mandarin* was shelved and not performed in full in Budapest until 1956.
 - 21 *Pesti Napló* (Pest Diary), 22 April 1919. Reprinted in *Zenetudományi Tanulmányok*, Vol. VII, (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1959).
 - 22 Neither could help the reception of their music in the Zhdanovian era. Bartók died in 1945 and Kodály found himself in a position of prominence created by others. However, Kodály continued to write essays in unflinching support of Bartók's music during the 1950s: "Bartók the Folklorist" (1950), "In Memory of Bartók" (1955) and "On Béla Bartók," (1956) *Selected Writings of Zoltán Kodály*, pp. 102–8, 109–111, 112–3 respectively.
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 - 26 György Kroó, "New Hungarian Music," *Contemporary Hungarian Music in the International Press*, B.A. Varga, ed. (Budapest: Editio Musica, 1982), p. 7.
 - 27 Griffiths, "Béla Bartók," *op. cit.*, p. 27.
 - 28 Kroó, *A magyar zeneszerzés 30 éve*, p. 87.

Emile M. Cioran Looks at Rumanians and Hungarians. A Characterization or Caricature?

Moses M. Nagy

Emile M. Cioran is a Rumanian from Transylvania who lives in France and writes in French. He was born in the Hungarian village of Resinár (now Rasinari, Rumania), studied in Bucharest, went to Paris in 1937 never to return to his native land, keeping for companion a faithful "destiny" which fills the space of his dreams and thoughts. In this foreign environment he considers himself as "an intruder, a troglodyte" (HU, 30), without past, present or future. Among the many Protean personalities he likes to put on, we should not hope to find the face of the poet; he is too "unhappy (. . .) to be a poet," he says, and "sufficiently indifferent to be a philosopher": he is contented to be lucid and to feel to be condemned [" . . . Je ne suis que lucide, mais assez pour être condamné" (LS, 73)]. Cioran does not write poetry, but he likes to philosophize, and without identifying himself as a philosopher, he pours all his poetical inspiration into his very personal way of looking at the world, his favorite subject being the vanishing and collapse of civilization, in general; and the "decomposition" of the present civilization of nations, in particular. Did he really decide to become a "décomposeur?" Reading beyond his *Précis de décomposition*, one is drawn to the conviction that Cioran has assumed the rare endeavor to defend the prerogatives of a past golden age which never existed, except in the form of primitive societies, which are being wiped out by sciences, psychology, psychoanalysis, philosophy, religion, etc. "Only the illiterate," he says, "have given me the *frisson* of being, which stands as a witness to the truth. Carpathian shepherds have made a much deeper impression upon me than the professors of Germany, the wits of Paris" (TE, 136). On the other hand, Cioran contemplates, with a kind of bitter delight, how great nations rise and fall; how eager they are to enter into history, if they have not yet participated in its making, and how sadly they exit, carrying

their shame of having failed, sliding into the backstage of History. Russia makes the first case, Spain illustrates the second (TE, 68).

Cioran draws an even more pessimistic picture of small nations. First of all, they experience neither "sudden expansion," nor "gradual decadence" (TE, 69). "Their evolution cannot be abnormal, for they do not evolve. What is left for them? Resignation to themselves, since, outside, there is all of History from which, precisely, they are excluded" (TE, 69). It seems that for Cioran History and great Nations reserve the exclusive right to play games in which it is impossible for small nations to find a place, thus they are transformed, in spite of themselves, into victims. Being excluded from major games, small nations are condemned to quarrel among themselves, hating each other, not being big enough to fight.

Now, how does Cioran look at his native country? In the many tentative surveys he offers on the state of the soul of the world today and its culture, he spends little time on asking questions like, "How one can be a Rumanian" (TE, 80). His answers, when he gives them, should be taken with their face value, for Cioran, as a moralist, responds to his own question both with utter sincerity and with his whole life: he wants to be a man before being called a Rumanian. Then, as a Rumanian, since he spent most of his life in "exile," he is bound to be objective, when considering the possible ethnic and cultural problems of Transylvania. Finally, as a Transylvanian Rumanian, in regard to the Hungarian question, he may not stand on the same ground as his fellow countrymen from Moldavia or Vallachia.

Before further analyzing Cioran's sentiments for his native land, I would propose a short philosophical digression which should help us to understand his unique character. In his *Histoire et utopie*, he accuses the Hungarians for having inflicted upon him the "worst humiliations" one can experience, "that of being born a serf" ["la pire des humiliations, celle d'être né serf" (HU, 18)]. But he calls Moldavia the "Paradise of neurasthenia," "a province of a charming sadness absolutely unbearable" (EA, 154). His skeptical non-humanism finds men "Marginal to God, marginal to the world, marginal to ourselves," and he reaches the paroxysm of his skepticism, by exclaiming that ". . . it is incredible that one can be a man" (FT, 48). To follow him on his ladder of metaphysics (theology?), one cannot but descend. This whole world being a failure, one cannot imagine that it was created by God. "Nothing could persuade me," he says, "that this world is not the fruit of a dark god whose shadow I extend, and that it is incumbent upon me to exhaust the consequences of the curse hanging over him and his creation" (NG, 89). And again, "It is difficult, it is impossible to believe that the God Lord—'Our Father'—had a hand in the scandal of creation. Everything suggests that He took no part in it, that it proceeds from a god without scruples, a feculent god. Goodness does not create,

lacking imagination; it takes imagination to put together a world however botched" (NG, 4). Man should not clutch his destiny at such a god; if he does, he degrades himself to the level of an "obsolete animal" (FT, 52). He goes even farther to ask, "What did God do when He did nothing? How did He spend, before Creation, His terrible leisure?" (FT, 87). One can readily see that Cioran reduces God's existence and activities to fit human thinking. On the one hand, he implies that God, if He had existed before Creation, must have been bored—"The only argument against immortality," he says, "is boredom" (LS, 63)—on the other hand, he agrees to settle humanity on the level of the animal life. It is not a question of happiness, nor of immortality; Cioran does not promise anything of that sort; he hopes to convince his readers that "The lowest animal lives, in a sense, better than we do" (FT, 44). One finds any number of texts in Cioran where his nostalgia for nature and natural goodness grazes the doctrine of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Consciousness kills happiness.

His reluctance to enjoy civilization, culture, history, begins with birth. It seems that for Cioran the very beginning of life is marked with the unbearable burden. "No one recovers," he says, "from being born, a deadly wound if ever there was one. Yet it is with the hope of being cured of it some day that we accept life and endure its ordeals. The years pass, the wound remains" (FT, 69). Obviously, there is no way to excuse oneself, saying that "I do not forgive myself for being born" (TBB, 15), because the nostalgia for non-being makes existence neither void nor less pleasant. From the failure of Creation by God, Cioran arrives to a kind of conclusion that "Paradise is the absence of man" (FT, 69), which brings us close, I suppose, to the Sartrean thesis that "L'enfer, c'est l'autre." If, then, birth is an "irreparable event" (FT, 170), what should a small nation do with its individual citizen, who is "the accident of an accident," because, after all, "life [itself] is an accident?" (FT, 128).

With the least hesitation, Cioran confesses that he hates Rumania because of its people who are "enamored of their own torpor and almost bursting with hebetude" (TE, 70). He pitches up his tent between Montesquieu and Voltaire, and raises the question with the former: What does it mean to be a Persian ["or as the case would have it, a Rumanian?" (TE, 70)], and he answers with Voltaire, by saying that "we"—meaning Rumanians—"we had sprung from the lees of the Barbarians, from the scum of the great Invasions, from those hordes which, unable to pursue their march West, collapsed along the Carpathians and the Danube, somnolently squatting there, a mass of deserters on the Empire's confines, daubed with a touch of Latinity" (TE, 70). He says that every time he is tempted to exterminate his whole nation, he is retained by this thought that, "One does not massacre stones" (TE, 70). And he reaches the climax of his black humor, by saying that "My country whose existence, obviously, made no sense seemed to me

a résumé of nothingness or a materialization of the inconceivable . . . To belong to it—what a lesson of humiliation and sarcasm, what a calamity, what a leprosy!” (TE 71).

Of course, Cioran will not stand on this last negative point; after all, no country deserves so much despise. His country does offer him at least one great edifying example: Rumania taught him what a nation of destiny may be. He finally understands that, unlike Germany—where destiny is found within the German character and, therefore, it often turns against the German people to destroy it—“the Rumanian Destiny,” being an outsider, demands only to adapt oneself to it. “It would be indecent for Rumania,” he asserts, “to believe in effort, in the utility of action” (TE, 71). In the passive attitude of his nation, Cioran finds a gold mine of strength and virtue by which it (his nation) has been able to overcome adversities and enjoy prosperous days. In short, Cioran finds it gratifying to know that Rumania can furnish the world both with a knowledge of “savoir-faire” and a sense of “relaxation in face of Necessity” (TE, 72). He finally enlarges the horizons of his views on his country by identifying the tone of its heart with the “Balkan popular sensibility” which expresses its lamentations in the chorus of the “Greek tragedy” (TE, 73).

And what about Hungary and the Magyars? Having been born in Transylvania, Cioran must have a “workable” knowledge of the Hungarian language and character. In a fictitious dialogue, his imaginary interlocutor asks him the question, “Do you persevere in your prejudices against our little neighbor to the West, and do you still nourish in their regard the same resentments?” (HU, 16). It must be noticed that he calls Hungary “notre petite voisine de l’Ouest,” signifying by that, I suppose, that Hungary being a small nation, certainly smaller than Rumania, has no international role to play, therefore no input in world politics. That perfectly fits his general philosophical principles, and without openly denigrating Hungary, he situates her outside of history, in a kind of political “limbo” of idleness. However, just as in the case of Rumania he abandoned his negativistic attitude to find the real face of his people and nation, with Hungary, too, he overcomes his personal prejudices to admire the values and virtues of the Magyars; not without some reservation, though.

There are two eminent qualities of the Magyars which occupy the mind of Cioran: the character of the Hungarian and his language. Being convinced that the Magyars are related to the Huns, Cioran endows the Hungarian nation with all the characteristics of the Huns. Now, It is a historical fact that the Huns tried to stretch their dominion and power over the whole Western Europe. Having failed in their conquest, they too settled down on the shores of the Danube. Their strolling around Europe, however, did not happen without “savagery” and “terror.” That was a part of their nature that they brought in from Asia. This penchant for savagery, the

Hungarians have prolonged it and they keep it alive in their “melancholy made of subdued cruelty,” Cioran concludes (HU, 19–21). Cruelty, the way he sees it, does not mean a negative virtue in the life of a nation. Cioran—and I would take his predicament with a grain of salt—sees in cruelty a source of vitality, a kind of Bergsonian “élan,” which carries the nation into its future. “Only cruel peoples,” he says, “have the chance to approach the very source of life, its palpitations, its kindling arcana: life reveals its essence only to eyes inflamed with blood-lust . . .” (TE, 68).

It would be a difficult task to classify nations according to the cruelty they practiced against others or underwent on the hand of others. Who would have fathomed a few centuries ago the infinite pain that ideological cruelty can afflict on nations, on a whole continent? And the extent of the political and economical pressure a nation can exercise on a particular ethnic group, who will ever be able to measure the anxiety it causes! But, in spite of Cioran’s subtle accusation, it is interesting to note that in his general pessimistic survey of the Western civilization, he makes some remarkable exceptions. He admires with no reservation the vitality and the genius of the Jews, and the beauty of the Hungarian language. One may find his views on the Jews theologically wanting, for Cioran believes that their strength lies not so much in the possible supernatural vocation that they had received, as in the way they imposed their faith on the Heavens. “Is this people not the first to have colonized heaven, to have placed *its* God there?” (TE, 79). This euphoria he experiences in the “colonized heaven” of the Jews, Cioran also rediscovers it in the realm and atmosphere of the Hungarian language.

Before spelling out his personal feelings about Hungarian, it will not be without interest to survey briefly Cioran’s sentiments about language in general. One of the phenomena of the general decadence in French culture that makes him suffer is the slow decay that he perceives in the evolution of the French language: “. . . We are attending the splendid disintegration of a language” (TE, 132). But then, what should a language be like? On this issue, too, Cioran, faithful to his dialectic thinking, proceeds by contradicting himself. Although he himself is a writer who writes in a foreign language, he seems to condemn this very practice. “A writer worthy of the name,” he states, “confines himself to his mother tongue and does not go ferreting about in this or that alien idiom” (NG, 90). He passes an even more severe judgment over himself by condemning the “man who repudiates his language for another,” for, by changing his language one changes both “his identity and his disappointments” (TE, 74). One would take it for granted that he is a happy person—as his alter-ego tries to make him realize it (cf. HU, 9)—because if he lost a mother tongue, in exchange he received an international language, French. But his dream about language does not coincide with this reality, for, as he says, “I dream

of a language whose words, like fists, would fracture jaws" (NG, 88). That ideal language could refer to German or Russian, I suppose. As for French, Cioran thinks that it defends itself against intruders, and he looks at it as if it were a fortress: a stiff syntax keeps the words in an order, a "cadaveric dignity," and not even God could dislodge them from the place where they have been assigned to (HU, 10).

This is the language which captivates his imagination and subjugates Cioran's whole being. It fascinates him in spite of the pains he had to pay for gaining it. That, however, does not explain entirely his fascination; he seems to have given up his mother tongue with few regrets. What he calls "regrets," elicits very little compassion. Speaking of his mother tongue that he traded in for the elegance of French, he regrets, he writes with humor in *Histoire et utopie*, "l'odeur de fraîcheur et de pourriture, le mélange de soleil et de bouse, la laideur nostalgique, le superbe débraillement" (HU, 10). I can easily understand that, after what he said about his own mother language, Cioran sincerely envies his Hungarian neighbors, not only for their "arrogance," but also for their language. His admiration for the Hungarian language, as I mentioned, should be compared to that he feels for the Jews. Two different entities, two different judgments and appreciations, though.

From what Cioran says of the Hungarian language, one would conclude that it responds to his "linguistic dream." Leaving aside, for the time being, the musical quality of the Hungarian, we can agree with Cioran that its rhythm and tonality do remind the listener of a fist which "fractures" jaws. Its "ferocity," he says, has nothing in common with anything human. He then goes on, remembering the world of Baudelaire's "Correspondance" and "Hymne à la Beauté" in which the poet looks at the universe as a compact unity where the sound of another world is associated to the perfume of corrosiveness and power, sounding both as a prayer and roaring. Where does all that beauty come from? From heaven or hell? "Whether you come from heaven or hell, what difference does it make, O Beauty! enormous monster, frightening and ingenuous," exclaims Baudelaire. And here is the text of Cioran:

Je jalouse, je vous l'avoue, l'arrogance de nos voisins, je jalouse jusqu'à leur langue, feroce s'il en fut, d'une beauté qui n'a rien d'humain, avec des sonorités d'un autre univers, puissante et corrosive, propre à la prière, aux rugissements et aux pleurs, surgie de l'enfer pour en perpétuer l'accent et l'éclat. (HU, 17)

Reaching these heights of admiration for the Hungarian language, Cioran, as if feeling the vertigo of having flown into a forbidden sphere, reassures his readers that he is far from letting himself be promoted to the "rank of the Hungarian ["promu au rang de Magyar" (HU, 19)]; on the contrary,

keeping in mind that he was “ridiculed, booed at, mistreated” (HU, 19), he repeats that their insult has settled so deep in his mind and soul that, if his enthusiasm should diminish by one degree only, he would no longer boast of the vain honor the Hungarians bestowed upon him by persecuting him. This subtle but cynical remark should not take the place of my conclusion. Cioran knows that peoples, just like individuals, inspire contradictory sentiments, “we love and hate them at the same time” (HU, 19). I would add to all that we love them for what they are; and we hate them for the same reason. Fortunately, we cannot change them, but history invites us to change our attitudes. That is what colonial powers had to learn, and that is how modern history is being written. I agree with Cioran that, “La patrie n’est qu’un campement dans le désert” [“Your homeland is but camping in the desert” (HU, 10)]; but the great art of rapport between nations is to be willing to share the space of this very desert.

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REVIEW ARTICLE
A Uniform-Mad Army:
The Austro-Hungarian Officer Corps

Sandor Agocs

Beyond Nationalism. A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps 1848–1918. By Istvan Deak. New York: Oxford University Press. 1990. 273 pages.

In his “collective portrait” of the Habsburg officer-corps Istvan Deak sets out to analyze “the social and ethnic origin of the officers, their reason for entering service, their education, training and ideology, their way of life and peculiar customs, their role in politics, culture and society, the evolution of the officer corps between 1848 and 1918, its relations with the civilian authority, its responsibility for the survival and for the ultimate breakup of the monarchy, and finally, its impact on the post-1918 history of east central Europe.” (p. 4) This is a very extensive promise, and one which the volume is not amiss in fulfilling. The value of Deak’s book derives not only from the richness of its theme but also from the fact that, apart from his use of a vast range of interpretative works and memoirs, Deak taps hitherto virtually unused sources in the Vienna and Budapest War Archives. His “Acknowledgements” include a long list of those who helped him in the daunting task of evaluating and computer-analysing large portions of the personnel files of a heavily bureaucratized army that compiled tons of written information on its officers. The cooperation of a great many people, and Deak’s willingness to spend several years on the project, resulted in a unique volume that adds a new dimension to our understanding of one of the most important institutions of the Habsburg domain. “*In deinem Lager ist Österreich*” is brought out in sharp relief in Deak’s tale, which shows the army as a sustaining and unifying force for the monarchy. Eventually,

when the Dual Monarchy disintegrated, the army's collapse became a key factor in the undoing of the Habsburg state.

Deak sets out the background of the monarchy's "enormous political, ethnic, and institutional complexity" (p. 9) in a long "Introduction" that is of use even to those who are not unfamiliar with the nature of the "polyglot empire." This is followed by two chapters on the historical development of the Habsburg armed forces, which began in the seventeenth century with a "group of disorderly nobleman and mercenaries" (p. 78). Deak's analysis of the officer corps is laid out at an unhurried pace in eight chapters, but always with an economy of words. To the social and political focus of the title, the author could have added cultural and psychological factors also, for his collective portrait is characterized by these dimensions as well. A chapter on the army's performance in the Great War, an "Epilogue" entitled "Habsburg Officers in the Successor States and in the Second World War," and a very informative "Appendix" "On Belles Lettres, Memoirs and Histories" complete the volume. Extremely clean formal aspects—there is but a single spelling error, on page 77—complement the content of this superb book.

Reigning monarch for sixty-eight years, Francis Joseph is the principal protagonist in Deak's cast of characters. Ascending to the throne in a time of civil war, he attempted to retain for himself the roles of ruler, prime minister, and commander in chief. In fact, in the 1859 war with France and Sardinia, he suddenly appeared on the scene, dismissed the general in charge, and assumed direct command. He suffered a disastrous defeat at Solferino and made no further attempts at generalship, but he never gave up the notion that the armed forces were a Habsburg family possession: "my army," just as the populations of the empire were "my peoples" and the leadership, generals and bureaucrats alike, his "servants."

The incredible bureaucratic layering and duplication within the army, which made administrative efficiency virtually impossible, originated at the centre. Assuming the role of supreme commander, Francis Joseph enlarged his personal military cabinet which was headed by another of his household "servants," Count Karl Ludwig Grünne, described by Deak as a "haughty aristocrat (among haughty aristocrats)." He was "an inexperienced soldier and a poor politician" (pp. 45–46), who ran up one conflict after another with the Ministry of War and the general staff. Duplications within the command structure, which came about as a direct result of the old Habsburg policy of "divide and rule" and were compounded by the divergent interests and aims of nationality groups, weakened the efficiency of the army. Compromises among the major groups, such as the 1867 *Ausgleich*, satisfied certain of the nationalities, but left others dissatisfied while leading to still greater duplications, such as the creation of four separate armed forces (p. 85).

The general staff, frustrated by interference from the emperor's personal staff and by the increasing ethnic pressures, began to assert itself during the latter half of the nineteenth century, eventually becoming a force unto itself and a political pressure-group. Ironically the general staff and with it the central command was created by the "female king," Maria Theresa. Being a woman, she let the generals run her wars. But her male successors, beginning with her son Joseph II, moved to establish themselves as commanders in chief, often with disastrous results. However, as Francis Joseph's case was to show, they were unwilling to give up. These imperial ambitions eventually led to a conflict between the emperor and the general staff. After the retirement of General Friedrich Beck—another of the emperor's trusted "servants"—and his replacement by Franz Conrad, the general staff became, according to Deak, an "ideological opposition" (p. 73) to the aging emperor, who eventually capitulated to it. Conrad, driven by Social Darwinist notions, became convinced of the "need" to go to war; a war which he saw as a struggle for survival among states and a means to save the unity of the monarchy. Other generals around him drifted into racist ideas, seeing the coming war as a struggle between the superior Germanic and the inferior Slavic races. Through its general staff the army became a pressure-group that was instrumental in pushing the monarchy into war after—and ironically because of—the death of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, who, as Deak puts it, "was a determined opponent of the war" (p. 75). The old emperor became a tool in the hands of "his" war-mongering generals, thinking that he was still completely in charge. He prefaced the declaration of war with "I decided," thereby sealing the fate of his House, which would not survive defeat in the war he had "decided" to wage.

The social composition of the officer corps that Francis Joseph ordered to go to war had undergone massive changes during the decades preceding World War I. Once a refuge for the sons of the old historical nobility, the army had, after reforms that picked up pace in 1867, become indifferent to the social origins of its officers. As a gradual "embourgeoisement" of the officer corps set in, the proportion of nobles in the armed forces, especially of those in command positions, decreased. By 1896 only a little over 20% of the career officers and in 1903 only a third of the generals were of noble origins. The aristocracy, the highest echelon of the nobility, tended to join the prestigious cavalry regiments. Deak reports that in 1905 "seventy-five great noble families were represented by only ninety-five career officers in the Joint Army and Navy, a much smaller number than a few decades earlier. Moreover, sixty-six of the ninety-five were in the cavalry, contrasting sharply with six in the infantry, ten in the artillery, and four in the general staff. Without any doubt, by the first decade of the twentieth century, the great Austro-Hungarian aristocratic families had

begun to abandon their emperor." In explaining the "growing indifference of the great nobility to the Habsburg cause," Deak mentions the increasing influence of "local nationalist ideologies" and "financially more rewarding careers" outside the military (p. 164). Both of these, it turns out, played a role in deterring enlistment from every social class, for "in the years immediately preceding World War I, an officer's career in the Joint Army was beginning to appeal to fewer and fewer young men" (p. 91).

In describing the economic conditions awaiting young subalterns on graduation from the military academy, Deak provides insight into why military careers became unappealing. When he reported to his regiment the young officer was "confronted with middle-aged lieutenants [. . .] many of them embittered alcoholics" (p. 97); embittered because of extremely slow promotion in the peacetime army, a force that had not experienced war for several decades. This helps to explain the initial enthusiasm among officers following the 1914 declaration of war. Aside from promising rapid promotion, the war also brought relief from a "poverty-stricken existence" (p. 121). The old system under which the "cost of living and the officer's pay had only the vaguest relationship to one another" (p. 114) continued into the twentieth century in the Habsburg military.

Military service as the life time obligation of the noble, which he provided at his own expense, was a concept that had become obsolete with the appearance of mercenary armies in early modern times. But together with other remnants of the feudal mentality, it survived in the Habsburg realms, where during the 1850s a lieutenant's income matched that of only the lowest categories of master artisans. Out of his miserly pay the officer had to pay for the upkeep of his equipment, including a white uniform. Deak reports one problem connected with this practice: "In the late 1850s General Count Franz Gyulai ordered every officer and man in his Army of Italy to sport a black mustache. This miraculous transformation could be achieved only with the help of generous doses of black shoe-polish, but when it rained, the polish ran, the white uniform was ruined, and with it, the officer's financial stability" (p. 117).

By 1907 the officer's pay was above that of the average industrial worker, but still compared unfavorably with the pay of his counterparts in the French and German armies. The Habsburg officer, who had to pay for his home, horse, and uniforms, for setting up a household, and if married, for the support of his family, often had to borrow at usurious rates from types like local innkeepers, landlords, NCOs, even from enlisted men. Honor demanded that his regimental commander act as enforcer for the money-lenders. Sinking into debt was connected not only with low pay, but with the "psychological pressure to 'enjoy life', in other words, to overspend (p. 120-121)." The "lovely, wild lieutenant's existence": fancy dress uniforms, partying with champagne-corks popping and gambling at

high stakes was part of a lifestyle in a "happy-go-lucky," "uniform-mad" army that pretended that its officer corps was the cream of society, while in fact it was just like the army itself: kept alive on inadequate budgets, financially bankrupt.

After the general staff became a political pressure-group under Conrad's leadership, defence appropriations were increased, but these improvements, coming in the years immediately preceding the war, were a case of "too little too late." In any case, they went into the purchase of armaments, such as the warships which the Monarchy's pretensions of naval strength demanded. As far as the officer corps was concerned, the army looked upon it as a burden, continuing policies aimed at minimizing this burden at the officers' own expense. The result was that the norms of bourgeois life in a bourgeois age eluded Habsburg officers even after the "embourgeoisement" of the army.

Probably the most important of the bourgeois amenities that the officers had to forego was marriage. The Habsburg officer married, on the average, ten years later than the rest of the monarchy's male population, but the majority of officers did not marry at all, not because this would have interfered with the "loosely wild lieutenant's existence," but because they were not allowed to contract marriages. It is not entirely accidental that Deak discusses this topic in a chapter which also deals with crime. Regulations going back as far as 1812 restricted the number of married officers to one-sixth of a regiment's total cadre and demanded a large bond to be deposited at the time of the marriage. Typically, the cost of the bond was greatest in the combat branches, the army's intention being to relieve itself and the state of any responsibility for the officer's widow and children if he died in combat. If he survived his twenty years of service, the officer would be left with a "nest of eggs" to supplement his miserly pension. Continued "improvements" came with the modernization of the army. By 1907 half of the regimental officer corps was permitted to marry, but the cost of the bonds had increased to nearly thirty times a lieutenant's average annual pay. The solution was to find a wealthy bride, but families were usually reluctant to put down such a large amount of money and to place their daughter's future in the hands of a constantly-moving, financially insolvent groom who ran the risk of an early death. Officers often found themselves resorting to the newspapers' personals columns, a practice standing in violation of the army's code of honor.

If his salary put him on a level with the lowly industrial worker, the officer's code of honor, or, more precisely, his duty to defend his honor at all costs, "raised him," as Deak states, "above ordinary mortals [. . .] it made him a special person, who, like his supreme commander, the emperor, was above the law in many respects" (p. 128). If an officer, the officer corps, the armed forces, or the emperor was insulted in his presence, the

officer had immediately to silence the offender with his sword unless he happened to be a gentleman and accepted a challenge to a duel. Dueling was condemned by the Catholic Church, forbidden by the army's criminal code, but it continued nonetheless, encouraged by the army leadership. Staring at an officer, giving him an involuntary push on a crowded tram, or calling him a "liar" or even an "ordinary person" called for a challenge to a duel. This obsession with honor—and we have to remember that the emperor's declaration of war used the defence of honor as a justification—elevated the Habsburg officer above the "ordinary person" and made him a member of a distinct elite that was out of touch with contemporary social and intellectual reality.

The officers' education, the raising of this elite social caste, was in part responsible for this lack of perspective. In detailing the educational process Deak suggests that the young subalterns "commissioned after seven or eight years of virtual imprisonment [at the military academy] often felt utterly lost in the great world" (p. 81). The regiment became their "home," their "fatherland." His exploration of the officers' lack of social or ethnic sensitivity, their obsession with dueling and medieval notions of honor, carries Deak into—one cannot resist the pun—a Freudian slip. He argues that "sociocultural considerations were not part of any nineteenth century academic curriculum" at military schools (p. 92). But his tale ends not in the nineteenth, but well into the twentieth century, when social segments and institutions that isolate themselves from reality as the Habsburg army did, are asking for trouble and usually get it.

This failure to make the officers aware of ethnic and national sensitivities was probably the most important shortcoming of their education. At first, the army's "ethnic blindness," its attempt to cool national fervor in the officer corps, seemed to have been a success. Already, however, before the war it began to produce diminishing returns as the enrollment at the military academy of the Joint Army began to decline. The Hungarians may have been the loudest in asserting their aspirations to national independence but they were not alone in the polyglot empire in making these demands. In accounting for the population of the Dual Monarchy—and the ethnic composition of the army's cadre—Deak lists eleven major nationalities with "others" representing 4.5% of the total. The compromise of 1867 accommodated one of the eleven, the Hungarians, but left, as compromises usually do, so much dissatisfaction even in Hungary that an open break with Austria remained in the realm of possibility, prompting General Beck to develop plans for the invasion of Hungary only a decade or so before the outbreak of the Great War. Francis Ferdinand, whose dislike of the Hungarians was well-known, apparently leaned toward a new compromise that would have given the Czechs relative autonomy. But even a triple monarchy would have left eight major nationalities and a host of "others"

demanding recognition as “distinct societies,” to use the modern Canadian euphemism. That these aspirations were thwarted became an important factor in the performance of the Habsburg armies during the war.

The 1914 mobilization gave the monarchy 3,260,000 soldiers, led by 60,000 officers, a very low ratio of 54,3 enlisted men to each officer. This is interesting information to those of us who have collected oral history from enlisted men in the infantry. Their perennial complaint was that “you could never see an officer in the trenches.” Obviously there were not enough officers to go around. But further questioning of the Hungarian peasant soldiers also brought out angry comments about the backbreaking job of building fancy bunkers for their officers while they were shivering in the trenches, and about the high-flying officers’ lifestyle that continued during the war, with champagne flowing at banquets in the bunkers.

The fact that one rarely sees a war-time photo of officers dining without an array of bottles in front of them shows that there was some truth to these comments, as there probably was in the allegations that infantry officers sent enlisted men out on dangerous patrols, watching their progress with binoculars from behind cover. This writer is probably not alone in wondering if the wartime performance of an officer corps can be properly described without a detailed analysis of the officers’ interaction with the men they led, something that Deak does not attempt. Given the focus of his volume, Deak has very little to say about the enlisted man. This becomes especially marked in the chapter on the Great War, which is in a way the conclusion to the study, since it deals with the wartime performance—the great test—of the Habsburg army and its officer corps.

Deak states that the armed forces “served a dual purpose: to preserve the empire by preventing domestic revolts and to enhance the glory of the ruling house in foreign wars.” He argues that “between 1848 and 1914, the army of the Habsburg dynasty accomplished the first task admirably, maintaining the empire merely by its presence,” but failed in external wars (p. 7). As for the Great War, he talks of “victories despite weaknesses” at the beginning and seems to ascribe something of a final victory to the Habsburg army by saying that when the end came “not a single enemy soldier stood on Habsburg territory” (p. 192). This suggestion may trouble some readers who recall that the Habsburg army had to be bailed out again and again by its German ally, just as it was helped to “victory” in 1848 by the armies of the Tsar.

So was it a victory? Did the Habsburg army succeed? How does one measure the success of an army? Is it the number of dead and wounded it left on the field, showing its members’ willingness to fight, that marks the success of armies? Is the number of soldiers lost to captivity a sign of failure? The Habsburg army’s wartime record can be made to support both readings.

Deak's volume invites arguments about these troubling questions of military history because it touches on them but does not attempt to resolve them. The untraditional nature of the study—it does not have formal conclusions—contributes to the reader's sense of unsettledness. Would not the stated focus on the officer corps require an appraisal of the collective performance of the members of this body, once a chapter on the great trial of World War I is added? Deak talks of the army as "poorly led from the very beginning" (p. 191), but in his next sentence he inculpates General Conrad and does not really discuss what role, if any, the officer corps might have played in the disaster that the war turned out to be for the army and the monarchy. If he considered these issues in formal conclusions he probably would have revised the earlier statement he makes: that the army was still at the "dynasty's side" "at the beginning of November 1918, even after the breakup of the monarchy itself" (p. 4). Unless one reduces the notion of an army to its generals the idea that the Austro-Hungarian army remained loyal to the emperor through the war and disintegration simply does not correspond to historical reality.

Deak himself provides the evidence for this argument. Describing the post-1914 phase of the conflict, he talks of the "war of the reserve officers," who joined the corps in overwhelming numbers. This created enormous problems for the army. In the linguistic Babel that was the Joint Army, even the career officers had serious trouble functioning. Although at the academy they received training in languages, "instructing the recruits in their mother tongue" was a "terror" for them (p. 239). It must have been far worse for the reserve officers who had to hurry through training and then lead hastily assembled units made up largely of overage or underage men with no previous military experience into battle. One is tempted to establish a correlation between this lack of training and the enormous losses suffered by the Habsburg army, and Deak refers, somewhat disapprovingly, to a historian who has suggested that "problems in communication were the main reason for the failure of the Habsburg army" (p. 194). But the lack of linguistic preparation of the reserve officers was not the only way these men might have contributed to the defeat that the ill-equipped and unprepared Habsburg army experienced. The reservists brought with them and propagated nationalist ideologies among their compatriots in the ranks. In Deak's words, "They were chiefly reserve officers who participated in, or often led, the national revolutions" (p. 203), that completed the disintegration of the monarchy and forced the end of the Habsburgs' multinational empire.

From this angle, the army was a miserable failure, as was Habsburg policy. The horrifying denouement of the principle of "divide and rule" comes from the tales of this writer's father who was a corporal in the Sixth Hussar regiment—a Joint Army formation—much decorated for bravery.

One act he did not get a medal for was to serve in the firing squad that decimated a Czech regiment suspected of planning to desert to the Russians. Despite the death of every tenth man in the unit, the Czechs went over a few days later, opening up the front for the Russians, who encircled the Sixth Hussars. Corporal Agocs, so his tale went, was one of the thirty-some men of the Sixth who got away.

The end of Deak's story, the disintegration of a state amidst an explosion, an orgy of nationalism, makes his introductory remarks appear ironic. For he talks of reexamining "the Habsburg experiment" and expresses hope of finding a "positive lesson" in it (p. 9). Since he completed the book in December 1989, we have witnessed the end of two other multinational "experiments": Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. The similarities to the monarchy, pace Istvan Deak, are rather striking. The recent cases reaffirm the ultimate futility of "keeping the lid on," frustrating ethnic and national ambitions through "ethnic blindness" or worse, through repression. One might go so far as to say in disagreement with Deak that the worst damage caused by the Habsburg—and Communist—"experiments" was that they prevented the normal development of nationalism, thus allowing extremely explosive forces to accumulate and burst to the surface with volcanolike destructiveness.

Because it is thought-provoking to the point of inviting arguments such as these, and also because it is original in methodology and content—covering a wide range of topics—Deak's volume offers much to students of the history of Central Europe.

BOOK REVIEWS

Thomas Spira, *The German-Hungarian-Swabian Triangle 1936-1939: The Road to Discord*. East European Monographs, No. CCLXXXV. Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1990. 275 pages.

As a result of the Versailles and Trianon peace treaties with their denial of the right of self-determination to large minorities of Germans and Magyars, the foreign policies of Germany and Hungary were revisionist in the interwar period. But Central European boundaries were impossible to revise until Hitler began to use force in 1938, a turn of events which posed both a challenge and a danger to Hungary. How could Hungary with its large ethnic German minority of Swabians benefit without being drawn into Nazi Germany's orbit? This is the central question Thomas Spira is attempting to address in his inquiry into the triangular interaction between Hungary's Magyar rulers, Germany's Nazi regime, and Hungary's Swabians.

Relying largely on relevant English, German, and Hungarian historical literature and published source materials, Spira examines systematically how Hungarian diplomacy, economic policy, and minority practices responded to Nazi Germany's expansion in Europe. Each of these issues receives separate and equal attention, and their evolution is analyzed year by year. The fourteen chapters include informative introductory and concluding ones, which provide a historical context and help to integrate the book's different aspects.

The author argues that between 1936 and 1939 Hungary managed to preserve its freedom of action by an astute combination of caution and craftiness. While eluding Nazi German designs to control Hungarian domestic and foreign policy, Hungary's leaders were able to further their country's own revisionist objectives until as late as 1939. In its diplomatic dealings with Germany and the Little Entente powers Hungary skillfully

engaged in what Spira termed *Realpolitik*, in its commercial relations Hungary reneged on contractual obligations imposed by Germany, and in its minority language policy Hungary practiced duplicity, i.e., a shrewd strategy of legislating pseudo-concessions.

Spira identifies three objectives of Hungarian foreign policy in 1936: to revise the 1920 Treaty of Trianon, to avoid war, and to prevent German domination of eastern Europe. He concludes that successive Hungarian governments, especially those of Gömbös and Teleki, came close to achieving these goals by making the best possible use of opportunities and limited resources. Spira contends that Hungarian diplomacy in 1938 slowed down Hitler's timetable in Czechoslovakia for half a year. On the other hand, Hungary appears as a willing accomplice in isolating and eventually dismembering Czechoslovakia, as evidenced by its desire to annex all of Slovakia and more. Spira maintains that Hungary was able to contain temporarily the Third Reich's advance in East Central Europe, but this contention conflicts with Hungary's apparent aspiration to restore with the help of Germany and Italy its pre-World War I boundaries at the expense of Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia.

The record of commercial relations confirms Hungary's conflicting ambitions of defying German supremacy on a wide range of issues (e.g. by defaulting on tying its allocation of agricultural produce to German requirements) while benefiting from Germany's reliable market. Not so much subservience to Germany, as the loss of its lucrative Italian and Austrian customers compelled Hungary to increase trade with Germany. Instead of a satellite, Hungary thus became Germany's uneasy ally of convenience. It is arguable whether by the outbreak of World War II Hungarian-German relations should be characterized as "thinly disguised mutual animosity."

Hungary's minority policy from 1936 to 1939, according to Spira, was largely determined by public apprehensions of the Third Reich's intervention into Hungary's internal affairs. The desire to preserve its independence stiffened Hungary's resolve to refuse meaningful educational and cultural concessions to German Hungarians. Ironically, this minority policy also encouraged the growth of pro-Nazi sentiment among Swabians and increased Hungary's difficulty of balancing its obligations to Germany without compromising Hungarian sovereignty.

Spira's in-depth study conveys a sympathetic image of the perceived dilemma of Hungarian policy-makers in the 1930s. It also raises issues begging to be addressed from a present-day viewpoint. For example, the reader needs a critical discussion of Hungarian minority practices and Hungary's enduring quest for large chunks of Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. How did Hungarian politicians and governments reconcile their persistent opposition to any form of multiculturalism with the demand for self-determination to Magyars living outside the borders of postwar Hungary?

By pointing out that the territories Hungary wanted contained non-Magyars resentful of pre-World War I Magyar assimilationist policies, Spira implies that Hungary's revisionist territorial demands ignored the principle of national self-determination. How did Hungarian leaders expect to satisfy this territorial quest short of war or a pact with the devil? Spira seems to regret that "Hungary lacked both strength and influence to bend events to suit its requirements." What policies a stronger and more influential Hungary would have been prepared to pursue is a question that deserves pondering.

Overall, the book is well written and provides a balanced analysis of a complex and controversial episode. Although left with some questions, a reader who is no expert in Hungarian-German relations can be rewarded with surprising insights into little known aspects of pre-World War II European history.

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Péter Sárközy, *Letteratura ungherese—letteratura italiana*. Roma: Carucci, 1990. 248 pages.

The historical and cultural interaction between Italy and Hungary during the past millennium is a rich area for study. Volumes have already been written about such special subjects as the relationship between Hungary and the Duchy of Parma, and between Venice and Hungary during the Renaissance. Professor Sárközy's book is neither the first on this subject, nor the most exhaustive. What it is is a penetrating and selective exposition of a large field, written in lucid language and published in a respected and widely read Italian academic series ("Gaia"). As such, it fills a conspicuous vacuum in an immense production which tended to be heavily scholarly, or in a more popularizing vein, mostly written and published for Hungarian readers. This is the first time that the wider Italian reading public can learn of its country's ties with a little known neighbour.

The volume has three major sections. The first and briefest one informs the reader about the impressive development of Italian studies in Hungary. The second part surveys the stages and forms of Italo-Hungarian literary and cultural contacts, from St. Stephen's Christianizing effort to the image of Italy in 20th-century Hungarian literature. Finally, the third segment presents selected chapters that illustrate the interaction between the two countries, such as the Arcadian tradition in Hungarian literature, Fiume as a Hungarian centre of Italian studies before World War I, or Dante as a literary model for modern Hungarian poets.

Sárközy's erudite rationalism excludes any mystified "cultural affinity" of national characters from the comparison criteria. Instead, he gathers in-

formation from as many periods and sources as possible. Thus we get more than literary analogy, since the author actually offers a multi-dimensional perspective on the intellectual tradition of the two countries. He points out, for instance, the impact of Italian language and literature on Hungarian Protestantism, dwelling on aspects of Transylvania's indebtedness to Italy. Non-literary influences, those of architecture, fine arts, theatre and music, receive well deserved emphasis. According to Sárközy, this continual and uninterrupted Italian influence greatly contributed to the occidental character of Hungarian culture and was especially important after the Turks had left the eastern part of the country in shambles. Latin and Italian language and culture form a continuity in Hungarian consciousness as the poetry of Janus Pannonius, the country's first great national poet, proves.

Sárközy also offers illuminating insights into some wider theoretical questions. His survey of the debate on the concept of pre-romanticism in Italian and Hungarian literary scholarship points to interesting analogies between the bias of both conservative and Marxist criticism which regarded enlightened classicism and romanticism as incompatible phenomena. Another example may be the seemingly narrow question of the "decadent" nature of Mihály Babits' translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy* – a question that actually derives from the pre-Raphaelite movement, the source of all neo-romantic and art nouveau ("secessionist") manifestations of modern literature and art.

Laudable is any work which guides the reader fairly and intelligently through an area worth knowing. Even more commendable is a study whose implications also inspire scholars to explore literary phenomena in yet inadequately recognized directions. Professor Sárközy's book eloquently satisfies both expectations. It is a work worth reading and fully deserving translation into both English and Hungarian.

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Czigány Lóránt, *Nézz vissza haraggal*. Budapest: Gondolat, 1990. 202 pages.

The title of this essay collection is a literal translation of John Osborne's 1958 drama, *Look Back In Anger*, which was published in Hungary under a different title. As the quintessence of England's trend-setting literary generation of "angry young men," Osborne laid the foundation for a tradition of iconoclastic cultural criticism in his country. While it remains to be seen whether Czigány's volume will pilot a similar development in Hungarian literary criticism, the very slow pace of change in post-communist Hungarian culture makes one wish for such a turn of events.

Considering the sum of his activity, the author is a doyen of Hungarian literary scholarship outside of Hungary. A refugee of the revolution, Czigány eventually made Osborne's country his home. As librarian, professor, contributor to the BBC and dozens of Hungarian as well as emigrant publications, Czigány was the logical choice of the new Hungarian government for "cultural ambassador" at its embassy in London.

This volume is a selection of Czigány's essays, mostly polemic in nature, from the period 1967–88. The eighteen papers vary in size, but even more in content. *In toto*, the collection is a fascinating survey of the Hungarian literary scene during the Rákosi and Kádár eras. Clearly, 1956 is a significant dividing line—yet, reading Czigány one realizes how little the criteria of the party's cultural policy changed after the revolution.

The Rákosi regime is the easier target, although one wonders why no denouncement comparable to Czigány's sixty-page essay, "Keeping Step" (*Lépéskényszer*) on the "nationalization" of Hungarian literature between 1946–51, appeared in print for more than thirty years in post-revolutionary Hungary. Could it be that the author did not talk in generalities, but called the subservient court poets of the regime by name? Or, that he challenged the myth of socialist cultural supremacy by revealing the immense devastation of private and ecclesiastical libraries after 1949? (These are just two possible explanations.) It should be noted that the production, teaching and assessment of literature was the one cultural field that demonstrated the most stable continuity from 1949–89. The same authors who contributed to the volume celebrating Rákosi's sixtieth birthday in 1952 kept publishing lavishly subsidized poems under Kádár; and the same communist professors of literature, who were appointed in 1949 to positions previously held by competent patriotic scholars, continued to teach and write propagandistic histories or criticism of literature until just recently.

This is not to say that there were no new phenomena emerging after 1956. Czigány's essays deal with several. For the extraterritorial reader, particularly interesting is the willy-nilly "discovery" of emigrant Hungarian literature during the 1960s. Naturally, the artistic values of this literature had to be underrated, and its independence from centralized, official Hungarian ideology ignored. Czigány's quotations from a number of cultural personalities and old country figureheads, actually reveal, behind the condescension and sarcasm, the envy that writers who had committed themselves to the regime felt toward the freedom of the expatriates. As one essay illustrates, some Hungarian "scholars" went so far as to claim the achievements of emigrant colleagues (the case in point being the discovery of an unpublished Bessenyei manuscript) for themselves.

Indirectly relevant to the literati's existence, *extra Hungariam*, is Czigány's irritation at the puristic zeal of certain linguists in the old country. These norm-setters "are unwilling to realize that language renewal is a

permanent process.” Reading the nonsensical mixed idiom of pretentious Hungarian journalists or various “experts” is hardly more annoying than to be continually corrected by omniscient self-made stylists, especially if they learn that the writer or speaker resides abroad (and, may we add, if they do not know any foreign language at all).

Nowadays one loud message from Budapest is about the need for a national consensus on general reconciliation. Czigány’s book is an expression of disagreement. Hungarian literature and culture will not be able to face a renewal unless the distortions and insincerities of the past are fully revealed, alongside the names of those responsible for them.

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Regio: Kisebbségtudományi Szemle [Regio: Review of Ethnic Studies], No. 1, Vol. I (January 1990), and No. 2, Vol. I (April 1990). ISSN 0865–557X

Kisebbségkutatás: szemle a hazai és külföldi irodalomból [Minority Studies: Review of Literature at Home and Abroad], No. 1, Vol. 1 (1991–92).

Ethnic or nationality studies have played an increasingly prominent role in Hungarian scholarship, and even in journalistic and political writings. Perhaps it is a reflection on this preoccupation with minority affairs that in Hungary’s first post-communist government a student of ethnic studies, Lajos Für, was appointed to the defence portfolio.

There is an obvious explanation for Hungarian concern for minority problems. Hungarians constitute some of Central Europe’s largest minorities. Millions of them live in the neighbouring states, especially Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Serbia. Hungary too has its own minorities, small in size by comparison, but not negligible in terms of minority-majority relations (one has in mind the problems of integrating the rapidly expanding Gypsy population of the country). And, Hungary had had significant minority problems in the past, during World War II and, especially, before 1919.

The two periodicals reviewed here are devoted to ethnic studies and related fields. Judging from its first two issues, we can state that *Regio*’s format resembles that of a regular interdisciplinary learned journal. This periodical contains papers, documents, commentary in several disciplines often from noted academics, including linguists, historians, sociologists, as well as observers of current affairs. Its main focus is the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia, and indeed an editorial note confirms the journal’s intention to focus on this subject, but certainly not to the exclusion of studies concerning the minority question in the entire Carpathian Basin. The contributors seem to be of various ethnic background. Though the major-

ity appear to be Hungarians from Hungary and Czechoslovakia, there are a few among them for whom a non-Hungarian or Czechoslovak affiliation is indicated. The editorial board lists numerous scholars with various responsibilities. The actual task of editing seems to be shouldered by Tamás G. Filep and László Tóth. Editorial and subscription offices are given as 1068 Budapest, Gorkij fasor 38.I.34. This reviewer does not know if this address is still correct at the time of the publication of these lines.

Kisebbségkutatás is a somewhat different journal. It features reviews of literature relating to ethnic studies. The reviews are groups according to themes or disciplines. These include such categories as ethnic or national consciousness, ethnic literature, language usage, culture, ethnic politics, minority law, the history of national and ethnic minorities. A great many periodicals are surveyed by *Kisebbségkutatás*'s reviewers. Most of these are published in East Central Europe and in Germany or Austria. Regrettably, there is only one North American journal listed (*Nationalities Papers*) even though this reviewer can think of other relevant journals, and not necessarily our own periodical. The managing editor of *Kisebbségkutatás* is Győző Cholnoky, and its publisher is the Országos Idegennyelvű Könyvtár [National Library of Foreign-language Publications]. The address of both is Budapest, Molnár u. 11. Pf. 244, Hungary.

Kisebbségkutatás seems to aim above all at making Hungarian readers familiar with the basic outlines of research published in non-Magyar languages and thereby offering them knowledge and perspectives that they otherwise might not gain. While this journal's East and Central European focus is both inevitable and understandable, we can only hope that in the future more attention will be paid to other regions of the world as well, and in particular to the problems that concern the Hungarian Diaspora.

N.F. Dreisziger
Royal Military College of Canada

Nádasdy Mausoleum [facsimile edition]. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1991.

As the seventeenth century approached its zenith, the royal historian Illés Berger was completing a three-volume chronicle of Hungary to be published by Lőrinc Ferencfi, the royal secretary, in his own printing house. While this project was never finished, proofs of the intended illustrations from 59 copper plates were printed in 1632. The plates became the property of the Jesuits in Pozsony, then made their way to Count Ferenc Nádasdy, the vice-palatine. Nádasdy commissioned historical annotations to accompany the pictures. The text, which was mostly compiled from available works (by Thuróczy, Bonfini, Istvánffy and others), was translated into Latin by the Jesuit scholar Avancini, and into German by the Nuremberg

writer von Birken. The prints and the bilingual text were published in Nuremberg in 1664 with preface and sponsorship by Nádasdy.

It is a matter of debate whether the eclectic Baroque publication, "Mausoleum," is primarily an artistic, literary, or historical genre. It consists of engraved representations resembling ornate tombstones with appropriate commemorative lines called *éloges*. While the pseudo-sculptures are stereotypes, often fantastic, and full of iconic symbols, and while the text adds nothing to the historiographic corpus of the time, both do, nevertheless, contribute to a better understanding of seventeenth-century Hungarian historical awareness.

The author accepted the legend of Hunnish-Hungarian relations uncritically. Attila is depicted as the first king of the Hungarians, but he is preceded by five fictitious "princes of the Hungarians," and immediately followed by Árpád, another "prince." St. Stephen's praise is the most extensive, covering ten pages. Ferdinand IV is the last king mentioned, since his successor, Leopold I, was still alive at the time of publication.

Easily missed references reveal the latent political significance of the volume, and the probable intentions of its sponsor. The author emphasizes that János Zápolya was Hungary's last national king and blames the nation's nobility for the discord which eventually led to the Habsburgs' (that is, "foreign kings' ") coming to power. He hastens to add that Ferdinand I was a good king; nor does he criticize any other Habsburgs. Yet, the fact that he represents the pagan prince Örs' struggle against two enemies as a supreme example of Hungarian gallantry is a clear indication of a seventeenth-century national ethos shared by Péter Pázmány as much as Miklós Zrínyi. Even the acceptance of the Hunnish origin myth can be regarded as an insistence on a distinct Hungarian national origin and sovereignty. It is probably not entirely coincidental that a few years after the publication of the *Mausoleum*, Nádasdy was beheaded as a participant in the so-called Wesselényi conspiracy.

As Nádasdy explained in the preface, the book was meant to preserve the memory of a national past in a turbulent age which threatened Hungary's survival. Nowadays this is not an irrelevant idea when public awareness of a more than thousand-year-old history is to be expurgated from less than half a century of extremely efficient indoctrination which has diffused slander, distortions and resulted in a national inferiority complex. Nádasdy's intention to foster patriotic education is still more than timely.

George Bisztray
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Appendix

Photographs from the film **Oberst Redl (Colonel Redl)**

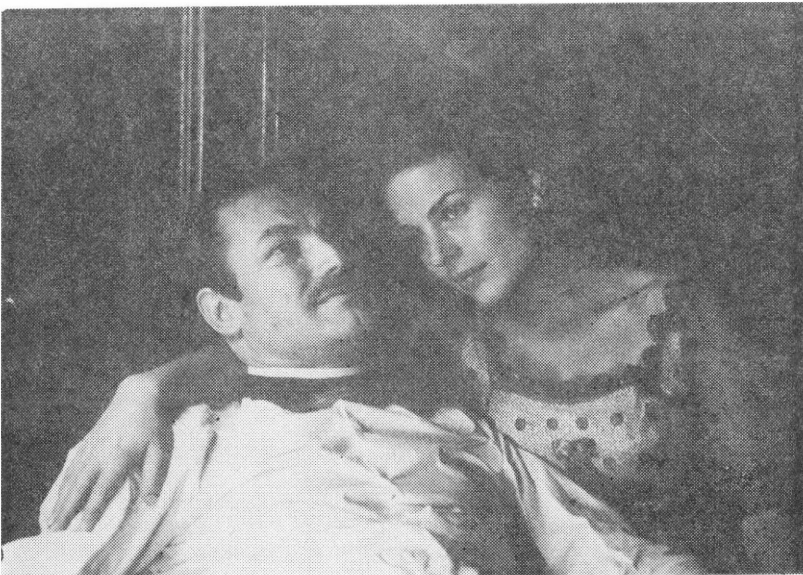
Courtesy of Orion Classics



"With a mask covering his eyes he enters the ballroom . . ." (p. 53).



Franz Ferdinand: "Yes, Redl. The profile. Really pitiless type" (p. 51).



Redl and Katalin: "He reluctantly admits that he was thinking of Kristof" (p. 48).

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