

The Canadian-American

REVIEW

of Hungarian Studies

Power Struggle in Hungary: Analysis in Post-war Domestic
Politics, August–November 1919 *EVA S. BALOGH*

Symbolist and Decadent Elements in Early Twentieth Century
Hungarian Drama *IVAN SANDERS*

The Hungarian Image of Benjamin Franklin *ANNA KATONA*

A Traditional Historian's View of Hungarian History
S. B. VARDY

The Folk Traditions of Rural Hungary:
A Photographic Record *VERONIKA GERVERS-MOLNÁR*

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The *Review* is published by the Hungarian Readers' Service, a non-profit organization incorporated by federal statute in Canada.

Institutional subscriptions to the *Review* are \$12.00 per annum. Individual subscriptions are \$12.00 for one year and \$20.00 for two years. University students and teachers may obtain personal subscriptions for \$8.00 per annum. Please direct inquiries to Dr. Harcsar (for address see below).

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

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ISSN 0317-204X

Printed by Brown & Martin Ltd.
Kingston, Ontario, Canada

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Power Struggle in Hungary: Analysis in Post-war Domestic Politics August–November 1919

Eva S. Balogh

In the history of nations there are times which can truly be called watersheds. The one brief year between October 1918 and November 1919 is a case in point in the history of modern Hungary. Within a year after the lost war Hungary's situation changed drastically: from monarchy to republic; from old-fashioned liberalism to white terror; from sham parliamentarianism, through brief periods of precarious democracy and bolshevism, to no recognized government at all—and all this against the backdrop of foreign invasions and the ultimate loss of two-thirds of the country's former territories. By August 1919, the revolutionary period was ostensibly over, but there was no political consolidation in sight. For almost four months a bitter power struggle took place in Budapest in which all the old and new parties participated and in which the Allies, eager to conclude peace with a representative government, also had a hand.

The political crisis of 1919, central to an understanding of Hungary's inter-war development, has not received sufficient attention in the hands of those few historians who have studied the period in any depth. Early conservatives saw the fierce political struggle as simple "personal jostling" for power among selfish and petty political upstarts.¹ Marxist critics have been apt to dismiss the party struggle altogether as a mere camouflage for the united effort of "the Hungarian ruling classes" to introduce white terror, stamp out bolshevism, and punish the working class for its support of the Hungarian Soviet Republic.² Recent American studies also brush aside the political crisis of 1919 as irrelevant. They either claim that "the fierceness of the struggle that ensued between factions [was] misleading" since "in reality, no sharp [ideological] difference existed between the groups"³ or they ignore the crisis on the grounds that the "political sub-structures" were neither important nor influential in the face of the growing power of the military.⁴

This paper, by contrast, views the party struggle of 1919 not as the

beginning of Hungary's counterrevolutionary era but rather as the end of her unfinished revolution of 1918. In this light, the power struggle ceases to be a squabble among petty politicians or a useless exercise of like-minded counterrevolutionaries; instead, it takes on the dimensions of the final agony of the makers of the October revolution.

Outwardly, the October revolution of 1918 seemed to mark the peaceful transition of Hungarian political life into modernity. There was only one minor armed clash and one assassination: István Tisza, the embodiment of the old order, was murdered on the night of October 31. Beneath this calm exterior, however, lay the seeds of political turbulence. Although the new revolutionary regime was genuinely committed to the purest democratic principles, the three-party coalition of Mihály Károlyi was hardly representative of the Hungarian people. The Social Democratic party, the most powerful component of the coalition, could rely on organized labor, but the working class in agricultural Hungary was inherently weak. The other two parties, the Radical party of Oszkár Jászi and the Party of Independence of Mihály Károlyi, appealing as they did to the democratic segments of the middle classes, were in an even weaker position. In spite of the country's long parliamentary tradition, true supporters of democracy were few and far between in Hungary.

Revolutionary governments are apt to be created overnight, but they are rarely able to withstand the test of time. The coalition, hastily formed on October 31, 1918, was no exception. It is true, the Hungarian people greeted the formation of the new government with great enthusiasm, but their outbursts of joy were as much due to the arrival of peace and independence as they were to the passing of the old regime. Soon enough, the population would become disenchanted. The first stirrings, however, came from within the government itself; the Social Democrats, who had been given two ministerial posts in the original coalition, demanded a larger share of power. They were successful in their demands; by January, the Social Democratic party was the strongest in the coalition. Other groups were not so successful in gaining a voice in the government. In the October coalition, for example, the largest segment of Hungarian society, namely the peasantry, was entirely ignored. It was not until January that István Nagyatádi Szabó, the peasant leader of the Smallholders' party, was offered a portfolio in the government.

Another group which found itself outside of the coalition both in October and in January comprised the conservative middle classes, the petit bourgeoisie, and the unorganized and unattached blue collar

workers of the cities. The spokesman for this amorphous group was the Christian Social People's party. The rise of the Christian Socials had been rapid. In 1910 they had sent only a handful of representatives to Parliament; by January 1919, they were regarded as a serious electoral threat to the survival of the Károlyi regime.⁵ Nor was their strength overestimated. In the first post-war elections of 1920, they ran shoulder to shoulder with the Smallholders' party, the single largest party in the country.

While the Christian Social People's party was the most important oppositional party to the left-dominated coalition, it was not the only one. The large and middle-size landowners, in anticipation of the proposed land reform, established a party of their own, ironically called the National Peasant party. The large industrialists followed suit and created the Hungarian Bourgeois party. The conservative politicians of the old regime, after a few months of hibernation, founded the Party of National Unity. The right-wing members of Károlyi's Party of Independence abandoned their party leader and organized their own Party of Independence. The former Democratic party, the party of the Budapest middle classes (especially the Jews), re-emerged as the Bourgeois Democratic party. Although the organization of these parties was only in an embryonic state in January 1919 and although their following was small, their very creation was indicative of the unsettled political conditions which characterized the period. It was becoming evident that only elections could put an end to the chaos which was developing in Budapest.

However desirable elections had become by early 1919, they were not to take place. On March 21, the Social Democrats and a handful of Communists, burying their differences, united and declared the establishment of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. The Soviet Republic, which speedily introduced a one-party system on the Bolshevik model, lasted only 133 days, but its effects on Hungarian politics were devastating. It thoroughly discredited the Social Democrats without whom, it was charged with some justice, the ill-fated dictatorship of the proletariat could never have been introduced. It also further undermined the already battered reputation of the Károlyi coalition which, it was widely held, was either unable or unwilling to check the unwarranted ambitions of the Social Democrats and the reckless, subversive activities of the Communists. The shift in public opinion towards the right, gradual between October 1918 and March 1919, took a violent turn after the fall of the Soviet regime.

Given the violently anti-Communist and anti-Socialist sentiments of

the population by late July 1919, the formation of an all-Socialist government on August 1 was clearly ill-conceived. From its inception, the new government was faced with a distrustful, sometimes hostile population and a disobedient civil service corps. Moreover, the Allies made it clear to the Social Democrats that they would not recognize any Hungarian government which was not representative. Reluctant but hard-pressed, Gyula Peidl, prime minister for six brief days, did initiate conversations with select party leaders. It was evident, however, that, even after the fiasco of the Soviet Republic, the Socialists did not envisage a coalition in which they held a subordinate position. By all indications, their concessions were meager. They tentatively agreed to allot two cabinet posts to the counterrevolutionary government of Szeged, a group formed during the Soviet period outside of Communist-dominated Hungary. In addition, they offered one portfolio to Nagyatádi Szabó of the Smallholders' party and another to Sándor Giesswein, a Christian Social whose ideological outlook, quite democratic and progressive, appealed to the Social Democrats but by no means reflected the views of his party as a whole.⁶

Social Democratic plans to dominate the projected coalition government came to an abrupt end on August 6 when a group of counter-revolutionaries, sensing the Socialists' determination to retain political leadership, staged a *coup d'état* and arrested the whole cabinet. If nothing else, the *coup*, which was executed expeditiously and which met with widespread approval within Hungary, should have convinced the Social Democrats that their opponents were determined and that they themselves were defenseless and without support. Yet they were not so easily discouraged. Due to the Allies' insistence on a coalition government, the Social Democrats still had a chance to wield some political power. Perhaps, they thought, the clock could still be turned back to the final days of the Károlyi period when their political strength was at its height and their power supreme.

István Friedrich, the new prime minister, had no intention of excluding the Social Democratic party from his government. Yet, as a conservative member of the former Károlyi party, he was determined to revert to the *status quo* of the early phase of the democratic revolution when the Social Democrats played only a subordinate role in the coalition.⁷ Accordingly, Friedrich's first plan for a coalition government included only one portfolio for the Social Democrats. Otherwise, he planned to resign the premiership in favor of Márton Lovászy, a disaffected Károlyi man who had gathered the majority of the Party of Independence members, including István Friedrich, under his banner in

January 1919. Friedrich, most likely, had his eye on the post of minister of war since he had served as undersecretary of war in the Károlyi government between November 1918 and January 1919, when he had resigned as a protest over the government's steady shift to the left. Friedrich asked Gusztáv Gratz, an old-time liberal, to be foreign minister and Lóránt Hegedüs, a banking expert and a member of the Hungarian Bourgeois party, to be minister of finance. In addition, the Smallholders would have been given two ministerial seats and the Szeged government one or two portfolios. As during the Károlyi period, the Christian Social People's party was ignored.⁸

Both the Social Democrats and Friedrich were unrealistic in their political strategy. Turning the clock back to March 1919 was as illusory a goal as returning to the *status quo* of October 1918. No longer were the Social Democrats the only target of public wrath; all politicians who had participated in the October revolution, including Friedrich himself, were suspect. Lovász's proposed premiership was immediately vetoed by the other politicians because he was "compromised" by his role in the democratic revolution of 1918.⁹ István Nagyatádi Szabó, who in January 1919 had been quite happy to join the Socialist-dominated coalition government, now refused to participate in a government in which the Social Democrats had even one portfolio.¹⁰

As Friedrich's plans for a coalition government were crumbling, the extreme right made its first bid for power. On August 7, the radical wing of the Christian Social People's party, under the leadership of István Haller, a former member of parliament and editor of a Catholic newspaper, and János Anka, a right radical journalist, formed a new party: the National Christian Socialist party.¹¹ According to participants, the actual organization of the party had already begun during the Soviet period, and the party leaders claimed that by the end of the Kun regime they had 15,000 followers. This number may have been an exaggeration, but the Christian Socialist party's determination was real. On August 14, István Haller and János Anka led a twelve-member delegation to the prime minister¹² "to demonstrate that their party was the strongest political base in Hungary" and to demand an all-Christian—i.e., anti-liberal, right radical, and anti-Socialist—cabinet. Moreover, the party barraged the prime minister's office with "hundreds of delegations" in order to convince Friedrich that no government could survive without its active participation.¹³ Friedrich, who had originally planned to exclude even the conservative faction of the Christian Social People's party, was now confronted with a vocal and well-organized group of a truly radical composition which claimed wide public support for its ideology.

Friedrich, hard pressed by the right radicals, received no assistance from the Social Democrats. He soon decided to give three portfolios to the Social Democratic party—one more than they had had in the first Károlyi cabinet, but Ernő Garami, the real authority of the decimated party, flatly refused the new offer.¹⁴ The ostensible reason behind the refusal was the presence of the Archduke Joseph, a Habsburg, as governor of Hungary. However, as later developments proved, Garami's real objection was much more fundamental; he simply refused to participate in a government which was not dominated by his own party and the radical democrats of the Károlyi period. In fact, he was seriously thinking in terms of his own premiership.¹⁵ Under these circumstances, the organization of a moderate coalition government was unlikely.

Laboring under unusually difficult conditions, Friedrich showed himself to be a master of political manipulation. On August 15, he was able to announce the formation of a coalition government which, if it had ever been allowed to function, might have formed the basis of a moderate administration. He managed to overcome Nagyatádi Szabó's objections to Social Democratic participation in the government, and the Smallholders received two portfolios in the coalition. Lovászy, in a generous spirit, accepted the post of foreign minister. Friedrich courageously withstood the right radicals' demand for a purely Christian government and persuaded their leaders to join a coalition in which they would be in the minority. One portfolio was given to Károly Huszár, a man of the conservative faction, and one to István Haller, the spokesman of the radicals. Three ministerial posts were reserved for the Social Democratic party. Thus in the sixteen-member cabinet only four men belonged to the conservative or right-wing parties, while seven ministers were drawn from the Party of Independence, the Smallholders, and the Social Democratic party. The rest of the posts were filled with non-political experts. It seemed that Friedrich and Lovászy were determined to keep a balance between the extreme right and the extreme left. Lovászy announced that the new government was resolute in its struggle "not only against Bolshevism but also against reaction."¹⁶ Time proved, however, that this was a very difficult proposition in post-war Hungary.

The survival of Friedrich's coalition government required the active support of the Social Democratic party. In the first place, the Allies refused to recognize a government which did not include Socialist representatives. Moreover, the democratic bourgeois parties were far too weak, without Socialist support, to withstand the formidable attack on their ranks from the right. Lovászy therefore announced that the

government laid "great stress" on the good will of the Social Democrats, who would "surely agree to join" the coalition once the government demonstrated its democratic convictions.¹⁷ Lovászy's hopes were dashed. Garami showed no inclination to cooperate with the government, claiming that the presence of the Archduke Joseph precluded participation, regardless of the composition of the government. In addition, it was rumored that the Social Democrats were not satisfied with three cabinet posts; they demanded five.¹⁸ That demand, if met, would have wrecked the formation of a cabinet since the animosities between Socialists and non-Socialists had only intensified since August 6.

The readiness of Lovászy and Nagyatádi Szabó to make common cause with István Friedrich was a blow to the Social Democratic leadership. Their party had been abandoned by the very people on whom Garami had counted in his "struggle against Friedrich,"¹⁹ whom he disliked and mistrusted. Indeed, the Social Democratic party seemed to be totally isolated. In this situation, the only hope for the party was the intervention of the Great Powers. Therefore, a day after the formation of the new cabinet, Garami departed for Vienna to sound out and to influence the Allied representatives.²⁰ His aim was twofold: to prevent a possible Habsburg restoration and, with the removal of Joseph as the head of state, to cause the fall of Friedrich's coalition. Garami's mission was successful. Under pressure from members of the American Relief Administration and its director, Herbert Hoover, the Supreme Council forced Joseph out of office on August 22, 1919.²¹ The Hungarian Social Democratic party seemed victorious.

But the Socialist triumph at the time of Joseph's departure from office was hollow. What followed was a rapid shift to the right both in public opinion and in Friedrich's outlook. Realizing that the Social Democrats had been instrumental in the removal of the Archduke Joseph from office and, consequently, in the fall of his government, Friedrich—never very warm towards the Socialists—became openly antagonistic. He made dark references to "politicians" who were trying to influence the Entente missions against his government and to "in-trigues" which would never stop regardless of the composition of the cabinet.²² He reconsidered his original offer of three posts to the Social Democratic party, claiming that "the Socialists were not entitled to a larger field of action than their numbers warranted,"²³ and on August 24 announced that he was willing to grant the Socialists only two portfolios.²⁴ The Social Democratic party answered in kind. On the day of Friedrich's announcement, the Executive Committee of the party voted against participation in any government headed by István Friedrich.²⁵

Friedrich's reaction was violent. He warned that although he had had to sacrifice "the symbol of Christian Hungary in the person of the Archduke Joseph" to the ambitions of the Social Democratic party, he would "yield no further."²⁶ For good measure, he added that he would not leave office "to gratify the personal aspirations of other parties."²⁷ The archduke's forced resignation and the fall of the coalition was a watershed; from this point on, Friedrich began to court right-wing political elements.²⁸

The new government which Friedrich formed on August 28 reflected the extreme political polarization of post-revolutionary Hungary. Lovász and Nagyatádi Szabó, duly impressed with Garami's success in winning Allied support, hurriedly abandoned what looked like Friedrich's sinking ship. Desperate to form a government, Friedrich turned to the National Peasant party, the party of the all-powerful landowning class. No longer did he attempt to draw the Social Democrats into the combination; on the contrary, he filled the cabinet posts which had been reserved for them with members of the Christian Socialist party, which had begun a campaign to build a powerful Christian trade union movement.

Public opinion overwhelmingly favored the *de facto* government of Friedrich. An Italian newspaperman observed that the prime minister's popularity had soared in the previous few weeks "owing to his bold and energetic attitude."²⁹ Vilmos Vázsonyi, a Jewish liberal politician and head of the Bourgeois Democratic party, had to admit that at least three-fourths of the population supported the existing government, which represented "the real true general opinion of Hungary."³⁰ István Bethlen, a conservative aristocrat and no friend of Friedrich, confessed that, contrary to his earlier opinion, he no longer believed that a coalition government was a prerequisite to the political consolidation of the country. In his view, "the socialist party . . . [had] lost considerable ground even among the industrial and working classes" while the "Government of Mr. Friedrich [had] succeeded in gaining a crushing majority of public opinion."³¹

Their influence greatly diminished, the liberal and Social Democratic parties sought ways in which to re-establish themselves. After abandoning a wild scheme by Lovász and "other prominent men" to overthrow Friedrich's government by force,³² the liberals made serious attempts to organize a bloc which would include all parties left of center. In spite of protracted negotiations, no liberal bloc ever emerged; the left was far too disorganized and ideologically divided. The first man to dissent was Vázsonyi, whose party had an important following in Budapest. Upon

hearing that Lovász had been contemplating a *coup d'état*, Vázsonyi began negotiations with Friedrich.³³ The prime minister, always eager to receive support from the liberals, welcomed Vázsonyi with open arms, but he was soon forced to retreat when members of his cabinet and the newspapers of the Christian parties violently objected to the Jewish Vázsonyi joining the cabinet.³⁴ Although Vázsonyi's attempt to cooperate with Friedrich was frustrated, his very willingness to abandon the cause of Lovász and Garami showed the fragile nature of the proposed liberal bloc. The next problem the leftist forces encountered was the attitude of István Nagyatádi Szabó, whose cooperation was vital to the liberal cause. In fact, Nagyatádi Szabó could make or break any political grouping in the immediate post-war period. Sensing the Smallholders' growing importance and always eager to be on the winning side, Nagyatádi Szabó refused to "give up [his] party's independence"³⁵ and preferred to sit on the fence until the political alignments gave a clearer indication of the relative strength of the right and the left.

The liberal bloc did not materialize, but the extensive reporting of the preparations for the formation of such a bloc immediately spurred the Christian and national parties into action. Fearing a concentration of the opposition parties, the leaders of the rightist parties began to consolidate their ranks. Unlike the liberals, the Christian and national groups managed to bring about a Christian bloc within weeks. Negotiations began on October 4 when the Christian National party, headed by Pál Teleki, merged with the Christian Social party.³⁶ A few days later, further negotiations took place with other Christian parties, and on October 25, 1919, the establishment of the Party of Christian Unity was announced.³⁷ Moreover, negotiations with other parties such as the still uncommitted Smallholders' and Peasant parties continued with a view to establishing a massive Christian bloc.³⁸

Once the Social Democratic leadership realized that the liberals could not organize a strong bloc, they decided to seek Allied help abroad once again. On October 8, Ernő Garami and Manó Buchinger left for Vienna, ostensibly to negotiate with the representative of the Czechoslovak government in the Austrian capital on the question of Czechoslovakia's supply of coal for impoverished Hungary. Their real goal, however, was not Czech coal, although they did get that;³⁹ rather, Garami and Buchinger spent their time in Vienna negotiating with Entente and Czech representatives in an attempt "to get rid of Friedrich."⁴⁰ Their original plan called for the retention of Romanian troops in Budapest, under whose protection a coalition government, composed predominantly of the parties of the left, could be established.⁴¹

The Allied representatives were not enthusiastic; after all, the Supreme Council had been trying to dislodge the Romanians from the Hungarian capital for months.⁴² The Socialists' next move, therefore, was to approach the Czechoslovak government. On October 15, Foreign Minister Edward Beneš received a copy of the Hungarian plan, the result of cooperation between the Social Democrats and émigré politicians of the Károlyi era. Their memorandum proposed that an international gendarmerie of 15,000 to 20,000 troops should be created and sent to Hungary in order to pacify the country. Furthermore, the memorandum envisaged a new coalition government in which one-third of the cabinet posts would be allocated to the Social Democrats, one-third to the liberal bourgeois parties, and one-third to the growing Christian bloc. It was not a modest political plan, considering the strength of the left-of-center parties, and it could have been achieved only by the employment of an international force.⁴³ But Beneš liked the plan and, although he could not "promise them any active intervention . . . without the concurrence of the Great Allied Powers," he was ready to support it in its general outline. Accordingly, with minor alterations, Beneš sent the memorandum to the Quai d'Orsay where, again, it was favorably received.⁴⁴ In the hands of the Supreme Council, however, it met its death; in spite of French support, the British, American, and Italian representatives violently opposed it.⁴⁵

In the meantime, in the absence of the Social Democratic top leadership, the bourgeois liberal parties began to consolidate their ranks. Realizing that the formation of a massive oppositional bloc was hopeless, they concentrated their efforts on the creation of a single liberal party. Even this modest goal, however, was beyond the reach of the party leaders. From the long negotiations two liberal parties eventually emerged. On October 12, Vázsonyi joined forces with the small, newly-created National Liberal party, establishing the National Democratic Bourgeois party.⁴⁶ On October 15, Márton Lovászy and Ferenc Heinrich agreed to merge their parties, the Party of Independence and the Hungarian Bourgeois party, calling their combination the All-Hungarian National party.⁴⁷ Both groups sensed their inherent political weakness. Vázsonyi anxiously awaited the arrival of Count Gyula Andrassy, Jr., the monarchy's last foreign minister, and Count Albert Apponyi, the doyen of Hungary's pre-war political life; perhaps they could assist him in his negotiations with the other parties.⁴⁸ Lovászy, once a very close friend of Károlyi, turned to the politicians of the former Party of National Work, that is the followers of István Tisza, Károlyi's archenemy.⁴⁹ At the same time, both parties worked hard to

induce Nagyatádi Szabó to stand behind their combinations, thereby hoping to gain the sympathy and support of the Hungarian peasant class. The Smallholders, however, refused to commit themselves; Nagyatádi Szabó announced that his party was "Christian, liberal, and democratic and therefore destined to be a bridge between the Christian bloc and the liberal parties."⁵⁰

The fruitless negotiations among the opposition parties, their inability to gain the active support of the Smallholders, and their realization that the Christian bloc was rapidly gaining ground put considerable stress on the formally united but ideologically divided liberal parties. The All-Hungarian National party was the first to show the signs of strain. Lovászy and Heinrich could not agree on immediate strategy. In the former's opinion, negotiations with Friedrich would be in vain, especially since the liberals could not organize a united bloc. Heinrich, on the other hand, was quite willing to negotiate with Friedrich. Heinrich, having a stronger position in the party, emerged victorious from this argument. In the second half of October, to the annoyance of the other liberal politicians, the National party, represented by Lovászy and Heinrich, undertook negotiations with the prime minister. The basis of the conversations was a list of demands prepared by Lovászy: the formation of a non-partisan government, an effective check on the growing class and religious hatred, the granting of all political rights, and the restoration of social tranquility. In return, the All-Hungarian National party was ready to join the government. Friedrich, riding high on his popularity and being aware of the weakness of the National party, assumed a rather high-handed attitude. In theory, he agreed with all of Lovászy's demands, but he made it clear to the National party delegation that while he believed that Vázsonyi's Democratic party had a substantial following in Budapest, he was less sure of the National party's strength and constituency.⁵¹ The conversations, not surprisingly, broke down without Friedrich formally answering the demands of the National party or making any promises concerning participation in the government.

The failure of the All-Hungarian National party's negotiations with Friedrich coincided with the arrival in Budapest of Sir George Clerk, the special representative of the Supreme Council, who delivered the Allies' demand for the immediate organization of a coalition government, with or without István Friedrich.⁵² Clerk's presence in Budapest indicated that the Great Powers were growing increasingly impatient with the Hungarian political deadlock and were intent on ending it, even if this meant undisguised interference in the domestic affairs of a

vanquished nation. The importance of Clerk's mission was not wasted on Hungary's politicians. Immediately after the arrival of the special representative, there were signs of renewed willingness, at least in certain circles, to end the crisis without further Allied interference. The call for cooperation and unity came, as before, from the All-Hungarian National party in the form of a public appeal published on October 26.⁵³ This time, Friedrich, fully aware of Clerk's demands, eagerly seized the opportunity to show his conciliatory attitude and his willingness to compromise. The prime minister now readily accepted Lovászy's demands and indicated that he would be happy to negotiate directly with the other opposition parties, including the Social Democrats.⁵⁴

If Clerk's presence in Budapest had a mellowing effect on Friedrich, his disclosure that Social Democratic participation in the government was a prerequisite for recognition had exactly the opposite effect on Garami. The Social Democratic leader admitted that Clerk's revelation "naturally incredibly strengthened the position of the Social Democratic party."⁵⁵ In the light of this new information, they once again resolved not to negotiate with István Friedrich under any circumstances.⁵⁶ The bargaining position of the Socialists proved to be a powerful magnet which drew the hitherto uncommitted parties into the Social Democratic orbit. Vázsonyi, who had been eager in the past to make his peace with Friedrich, now found himself in perfect agreement with Garami.⁵⁷ The Smallholders, who had consistently refused to join either combination, now considered the Social Democratic and liberal parties the clear winners; accordingly, István Nagyatádi Szabó shifted his position and openly committed himself and his party to the anti-Friedrich forces of Garami and Vázsonyi.⁵⁸ Finally, the Social Democratic success split the All-Hungarian party. While Ferenc Heinrich, the co-chairman of the party, was negotiating with Friedrich, his colleague Lovászy sided with the leaders of the other opposition parties.⁵⁹ Clerk, confronted with what seemed to be united opposition to Friedrich's premiership, concluded that István Friedrich had to resign.⁶⁰ The news that Clerk was willing to sacrifice the prime minister for the sake of a workable coalition government spread like wildfire in Budapest.⁶¹

Friedrich's reaction to the news of his pending political demise was swift and "absolutely defiant."⁶² The prime minister took exactly the same position which Garami had taken all along. If the Allies insisted on his removal from the head of the government, the Party of Christian National Unity and the cabinet members would boycott the negotiations. The conservative bloc would thus not be represented in the cabinet, in spite of the fact that everyone knew that it had the majority of the public behind it.⁶³

The Allies threatened Friedrich's premiership but, ironically enough, they also contributed indirectly to his obdurate refusal to resign and to the Party of Christian Unity's steadfast support of his stance. At long last, the Allies forced the Romanian army to leave Budapest. The Hungarian National Army, hitherto confined to territories west of the Danube, would now be responsible for the maintenance of order in the Hungarian capital. This army had been created by the Szeged counter-revolutionary government during the Soviet period and, within a few months, it had become a notorious gathering place for *déclassé* elements who espoused a right radical ideology and who introduced a veritable white terror in the territories under their jurisdiction. The Friedrich government, having no independent military force behind it, had endeavored, on the one hand, to persuade Admiral Miklós Horthy, the supreme commander, to put an end to his army's illegal activities and, on the other, to convince him to support the *de facto* government in Budapest. Up to November, he had been unsuccessful in both of these endeavors; the atrocities continued unabated, and Horthy refused to subordinate his army to the government. In a power struggle between the right and the left, however, the likelihood of the National Army supporting the rightist forces seemed almost certain. Admittedly, Horthy was not entirely satisfied with the Friedrich government because "it was not explicitly Christian and national and it [was] still a transition from the Commune,"⁶⁴ but its opponents, the Social Democrats and the liberals, were clearly worse. In Horthy's opinion, they were solely responsible for all of Hungary's recent misfortunes. Thus the news of the National Army's arrival in Budapest raised high hopes in the ranks of the Party of Christian National Unity and sent chills down the spines of the Social Democrats and the liberals.

Clerk, fully aware of the army's importance in the political struggle and faced with a deadlock, began negotiations with Miklós Horthy. If he could convince the Supreme Commander to support a coalition government in which the Social Democrats and the liberal parties participated, his mission could easily be accomplished. A promise from Horthy that he would cooperate with such a coalition would lull the suspicions of the leftist parties, and it would, at the same time, break István Friedrich's resistance to his resignation. Once Friedrich left the cabinet, an agreement between the Christian parties and their opponents could be achieved quickly. After all, the politicians of the liberal camp repeatedly assured Clerk that the only obstacle to their participation in the government was the presence of the prime minister.

While Sir George Clerk's decision to employ Horthy in his negotia-

tions with the Hungarian parties was perfectly understandable and, from his own point of view, could be considered “a masterstroke,”⁶⁵ the willingness of the Social Democrats and the liberals to negotiate with Horthy seemed totally incomprehensible. Only a few weeks earlier, the Social Democratic party had energetically urged the Supreme Council to disarm the dangerous forces of the National Army.⁶⁶ But, though they feared the National Army, they were even more desperate to get rid of Prime Minister Friedrich.

When, on November 4, Clerk asked Horthy to a meeting with leftist politicians and when Vázsonyi, Garami, Lovászy, and Nagyatádi Szabó agreed to accept the Admiral’s assurances of his support for a coalition government in which their parties participated, it was clear to contemporary observers that Friedrich’s resignation was imminent. It was argued that “if Horthy [was] ready to sit down with Friedrich’s political opponents . . . he [left] M. Friedrich without support [so that Friedrich could not] any longer maintain his unbending *non possumus* attitude.”⁶⁷ The liberal camp was jubilant. Suddenly Horthy, whom they had consistently portrayed as a man of reaction, became a pillar of democracy and “a Hungarian Saint George.”⁶⁸

The agreement between the liberal camp and Horthy achieved one of the aims of the opposition, namely, the resignation of István Friedrich as prime minister of Hungary. However, it did not and could not help them to accomplish their main objective. As Garami admitted to Clerk, the Social Democratic party’s real desire was the establishment of “a coalition government in which the preponderance of the Christian Union” was broken.⁶⁹ The opposition parties pressed their cause in the ensuing negotiations. The Democratic party of Vázsonyi demanded one portfolio in the new government; the All-Hungarian National party of Lovászy, three portfolios, and the Social Democratic party, two.⁷⁰ In addition, the Smallholders laid claim to two ministerial posts. But the powerful Christian bloc, though ready to compromise on the person of the prime minister, had every intention of retaining their dominant position in Hungarian political life. They were prepared to admit one liberal, one Social Democrat, and one Smallholder to the cabinet, but they did not contemplate an entirely new political orientation.⁷¹ They found support for their stance in Sir George Clerk, who had made up his mind that the Christian bloc must be fully represented in the cabinet.⁷² In this decision, he diagnosed the political climate of the country correctly. At the same time, however, he exhibited a certain distaste for the “extreme Jewish and social democratic elements,” as he called the leftist leaders.⁷³

The liberals and Social Democrats not only lost Clerk's support in the renewed struggle over the composition of the government; Horthy also began to retreat from the position he had outlined at the November 4 meeting. On November 7, he made a public statement concerning the real meaning of the crucial word 'subordination' which had appeared in the published text of the document signed by the participants in the earlier meeting. Horthy now claimed that he did not mean "to subordinate the army to the government"; instead, he promised "to support the new government just as he had been supporting the Friedrich government."⁷⁴ Considering that Horthy had in no way supported the Friedrich government but had in fact worked against it, this announcement sounded most sinister. And if the Social Democrats still had any doubts about Horthy's intentions after November 7, they soon learned of his true feelings for their party. On November 12, Horthy, known for his indiscretions, was interviewed by the correspondent of the *Nemzeti Újság*, the official organ of the Christian bloc. During the interview Horthy announced that "as far as the Social Democrats are concerned, I do not 'negotiate' with them, just as the Romanian troops of occupation did not 'negotiate' with them. I order, and they obey."⁷⁵ Clerk's support withdrawn and Horthy's army on the march, the liberal camp had lost all of its trump cards.

The sudden reversal of the liberals' fortune was not wasted on István Nagyatádi Szabó. Initially an outspoken enemy of the Social Democratic party and a willing participant in Friedrich's government, Nagyatádi Szabó was not a firm supporter of the liberal cause. Once the Smallholders realized that neither Clerk nor Horthy stood squarely behind the liberals and the Social Democrats, they were quite ready to swing their support to the Christian bloc. On November 14, Nagyatádi Szabó made the startling announcement that he had left the liberal bloc and now intended to support the battered Friedrich government.⁷⁶ Nagyatádi's desertion was perhaps the harshest blow to Garami's political strategy since Lovász had joined Friedrich's government on August 15. The constituency of the opposition had now shrunk to a very small minority indeed.

Garami, realizing the consequences that these developments would have on Hungary's political future, made one more desperate move. He now proposed that the Social Democratic party "use its favorable position due to the Entente's insistence on its participation in the government . . . and . . . decline to join the coalition and with this gesture . . . prevent the recognition of a government formed against it by the Entente."⁷⁷ This new strategy involved grave risks for Garami's party.

Clerk was on the verge of leaving Budapest if “within a few days no coalition government [was] formed which he [could] approve.” Garami, however, was optimistic about Clerk’s reaction to the new Social Democratic stance. He hoped that Clerk, in his eagerness to achieve a personal success, would put further pressure on the Christian bloc to accept a greater number of liberal and Social Democratic politicians in the cabinet. Moreover, even if Clerk refused to placate the Social Democrats and left the Hungarian capital without any tangible results, Garami was not pessimistic. After all, he argued, “everything would remain the same as before.”⁷⁸ In fact, Garami grossly miscalculated the situation, as the Executive Committee of the Social Democratic party recognized when they vetoed his plan. Clerk was siding more and more with the rightist forces, and his return to Paris with a report of Garami’s intransigence might have swayed the increasingly impatient Supreme Council to withdraw its support from the Social Democrats. Moreover, if Clerk had departed without either recognizing the Friedrich government or establishing a new coalition cabinet, nothing would have remained the same, as Garami supposed, because Horthy would have intervened. The admiral was becoming annoyed with the political game even during Clerk’s stay in the capital, and towards the end of the crisis he threatened “to arrest the whole company and to appoint a government which the Entente will recognize.”⁷⁹

On November 22, the newspapers announced the formation of a new coalition government under the Christian Social Károly Huszár, minister of education in the Friedrich government. The painfully slow negotiations under the watchful eyes of the Supreme Council brought meager results for the liberal forces in general and the Social Democratic party in particular. The Huszár government, which was hailed as a master stroke of Sir George Clerk’s diplomacy, hardly differed from the previous Friedrich governments in composition. With the exception of Károly Peyer, the new Social Democratic minister of labor relations, and István Bárczy, the National Democratic minister of justice, every cabinet member had served previously under Friedrich. Even Friedrich remained in the Huszár government as minister of defense. All in all, the months of governmental crisis achieved very little: Friedrich’s removal from the premiership and one seat for the Social Democrats.⁸⁰

The damage caused by Garami’s refusal to negotiate with Friedrich was almost incalculable, both to his own party and to Hungary’s democratic future. To be sure, the record of the two previous regimes was bound to lead to a considerably more conservative regime than that of Mihály Károlyi. However, the protracted political crisis only further

convinced the public that Hungary's misfortune was the result of immoral and injurious politics conducted by Hungary's political elite before, during, and immediately after the Soviet interlude. If the Social Democratic party had accepted the three ministerial posts offered to it in August, a viable coalition government in which the liberal elements predominated could have been established. Moreover, the Supreme Council would undoubtedly have immediately recognized this government. Such recognition would have given the government the prestige which Friedrich's government never had. It would also have put the government into a stronger position *vis à vis* the military. As it was, with one governmental crisis after another, the army soon came to be regarded as the only stable organization in the country. The liberal camp's willingness to draw Horthy and the National Army into political conversations also spurred the army's own ambitions; it allowed Horthy and his followers to view the army not as an apolitical force but as an organization with a political destiny. Without a doubt, the liberal camp's aim was the maintenance of democratic institutions in Hungary, but their tactics had exactly the opposite effect: the spectacular growth of the political right and the suppression of all remnants of Hungary's democratic revolution.

NOTES

1. Gusztáv Gratz, *A forradalmak kora: Magyarország története 1918-1920* (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1935), p. 249.
2. Dezső Nemes, *Az ellenforradalom története Magyarországon (1919-1921)* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1962), p. 35.
3. István Imre Mocsy, "Radicalization and Counterrevolution: Magyar Refugees from the Successor States and Their Role in Hungary, 1918-1921" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, 1973), p. 225.
4. William Michael Batkay, "The Origin and Role of the Unified Party in Hungary, 1919-1926" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1972), p. 56.
5. Jenő Gergely, "Keresztényszocialisták az 1918-as magyarországi polgári demokratikus forradalomban," *Történelmi Szemle* 12 (1969): 47.
6. Mrs. Sándor Gábor, comp., "Böhm Vilmos, bécsi magyar követ jelentései a Peidl-kormányhoz és Ágoston Péter külügyminiszterhez," *Párttörténeti Közlemények* 6 (November 1960): 202, and *Népszava*, August 5, 1919. See also Gyula Peidl's speech in Parliament, August 2, 1919, in Jenő Kalmár, *Kik hozták be a románokat Budapestre, vagy hogy ütötték agyon Friedrich, Csilléry, Pekár úrék a magyarországi szociáldemokrata pártot?* (Budapest: Népszava, 1922), p. 121.
7. On István Friedrich and his political stance at the time of the *coup* see Eva S. Balogh, "István Friedrich and the Hungarian *Coup d'État* of 1919: A Re-evaluation," *Slavic Review* 35 (1976): 269-286.

8. The proposed composition of the government can be found in Thomas T. C. Gregory to the Supreme Council, August 6, 1919, United States, Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. The Paris Peace Conference 1919*, 13 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1943–1947), 7: 604. Henceforth cited as *FRUS PPC*. On plans for Lovászy's premiership see *Nemzeti Újság*, October 9, 1919. On Lovászy's willingness to accept the post see Ernő Garami, *Forrongó Magyarország: Emlékezések és tanulságok* (Vienna: Pegazus, 1922), p. 156, and Albert Halstead to the American Commission to Negotiate Peace (henceforth cited as *CNP*), August 9, 1919, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (henceforth cited as *N.A.*), Record Group 59, M820/215/0278. On the ministerships of Hegedüs and Gratz see Halstead to *CNP*, August 13, 1919, American Relief Administration (henceforth cited as *ARA*)—Paris—H74, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.
9. Halstead to *CNP*, August 14, 1919, *ARA*—Paris—H74.
10. Garami, *Forrongó Magyarország*, p. 159; Manó Buchinger, *Küzdelem a szocializmusért: Emlékezések és élmények*, 2 vols. (Budapest: Népszava, 1946), 2: 95. Foreign newspapermen also reported on the Smallholders' objections to joining the Social Democrats in a coalition government. See Segrue to Hiatt Press, August 15, 1919, *ARA*—Paris—H74.
11. Jenő Gergely, "A Magyarországi Radikális Keresztényszocialista Párt (1919. szeptember – 1920. július)," *Századok* 106 (1972): 1051.
12. *Budapesti Közlöny*, August 14, 1919, evening.
13. Recollections of the Christian Social politicians in the first issue of their newspaper, *Nemzeti Újság*, September 28, 1919.
14. Archduke Joseph to Clemenceau, August 16, 1919, *FRUS PPC*, 7: 709, and Halstead to *CNP*, August 13, 1919, *ARA*—Paris—H74.
15. Vilmos Vázsonyi, a close associate of Garami, was convinced that Garami aspired to be the next prime minister of Hungary. *Beszédei és írásai*, 2 vols. (Budapest: Az Országos Vázsonyi-Emlékbizottság, 1927), 2: 255. Garami found support in Thomas T. C. Gregory, a member of the American Relief Administration; see Gregory to Logan, August 14, 1919, *ARA*—Paris—H74, and Garami, *Forrongó Magyarország*, p. 160.
16. *Budapesti Közlöny*, August 15, 1919, evening.
17. "Interview with Lovászy," Bing, United Press, August 15, 1919, *ARA*—Paris—H74.
18. Segrue to Hiatt Associated Press, August 15, 1919, *ARA*—Paris—H74.
19. Garami, *Forrongó Magyarország*, p. 162.
20. Atter to Isenmann, Reuter, August 15, 1919, *ARA*—Paris—H74.
21. *FRUS PPC*, 7: 803.
22. *Tag*, August 23, 1919, *N.A.*, Record Group 59, M820/215/0549.
23. *New York Times*, August 28, 1919.
24. *Budapesti Közlöny*, August 24, 1919.
25. András Fehér, *A magyarországi szociáldemokrata párt és az ellenforradalmi rendszer, 1919. augusztus – 1921* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1969), p. 36.
26. *New York Times*, August 28, 1919.
27. *Manchester Guardian*, September 1, 1919.
28. Ferenc Harrer, a liberal and a former follower of Mihály Károlyi, speculated that Garami's behavior "probably contributed to Friedrich's shift to the right." *Egy magyar polgár élete* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1968), p. 447.
29. *Daily Telegraph*, September 2, 1919.
30. Vázsonyi's disclosure to one of his Romanian friends in Switzerland. J. Schiopul to Herron, September 11, 1919, George D. Herron Papers, vol. 5, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

31. Bethlen to Clemenceau, September 27, 1919, S. H. Bulletin No. 1036, October 10, 1919, Hoover Institution, Stanford University. Trade union membership dropped drastically in the second half of 1919 and in 1920. See Budapest, Statisztikai Hivatal, *Budapest székesfőváros statisztikai évkönyve, 1921–1924* (Budapest: Budapest székesfőváros statisztikai hivatala, 1925), p. 490. The Social Democratic party refused to participate in the 1920 elections, but on the basis of void ballots cast in Budapest an approximation of their strength can be made. In Budapest sixteen per cent of all votes, in adjusted figures, was cast for the Social Democratic party, while in the country as a whole the Social Democratic vote did not exceed six per cent. *Ibid.*, p. 566, and Hungary, Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, *Magyar statisztikai évkönyv*, new series, vols. 31–33 (1923–1925) (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1927), p. 274.
32. Causey to Gregory, September 12, 1919, Thomas T. C. Gregory Papers, Box 1, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.
33. *Nemzeti Újság*, September 28, 1919.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Nemzeti Újság*, October 3, 1919, and *Az Est*, October 3, 1919.
36. *Nemzeti Újság*, October 4, 1919.
37. *Nemzeti Újság*, October 26, 1919.
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Népszava*, November 5, 1919.
40. Ágnes Szabó, ed., “Részletek Ágoston Péter naplójából,” *Párttörténeti Közlemények* 9 (May 1963): 177. The *Nemzeti Újság*, reporting from “a very reliable source,” announced that Garami’s final destination was Prague, although it was believed that he was to see not Beneš but Mihály Károlyi; October 13, 1919.
41. Fehér, *A magyarországi szociáldemokrata párt*, p. 43.
42. Halstead to Lansing, October 10, 1919, *FRUS PPC*, 12: 579.
43. “Entwerrungsplan für Ungarn,” October 15, 1919, N.A., Record Group 59, M708/3/0460-0465. Beneš met the Hungarian delegation on October 16, 1919, *Národní listy*, October 17, 1919, cited in Alena Gajanová, *ČSR a středoevropská politika velmocí (1918–1939)* (Prague: Academia, 1967), p. 54.
44. Beneš’s conversation with the British *chargé d’affaires* on the details of the memorandum is reported in Gosling to Curzon, October 23, 1919, Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919–1939*, 45 vols. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1946–1973), I: 6: 304. Henceforth cited as *DBFP*. The French proposal, based on the original memorandum and entitled “Note from the French Delegation: The Situation in Hungary,” can be found in *FRUS PPC*, 8: 918–920. The French were ready to participate in the proposed international force; see Minutes of the Heads of Delegations, November 4, 1919, *Ibid.*, pp. 939–940.
45. Great Britain and the United States did not want to send military contingents to Hungary and refused to consider using Romanian, Czechoslovak, and Yugoslav troops. Italy was afraid of the employment of Yugoslav troops, especially under French command. Great Britain’s representative put his finger on the real problem: Hungarian conditions were not yet conducive to democracy, and any Allied intervention for the establishment of a government not representative of popular feeling could achieve only temporary results. See Minutes of the Heads of Delegations, November 3, 1919, *FRUS PPC*, 8: 908–912.
46. *Az Est*, October 12, 1919.
47. *Az Est*, October 15, 1919.
48. *Az Est*, October 4, 1919.

49. *Nemzeti Újság*, October 4, 1919.
50. *Az Est*, October 18, 1919.
51. *Az Est*, October 21, 1919.
52. Draft telegram to Monsieur Friedrich, October 11, 1919, *FRUS PPC*, 8: 787.
53. *Az Est*, October 26, 1919.
54. *Pester Lloyd*, October 26, 1919, quoted in *Review of the Foreign Press: The Political Review* 1 (1919–1920): 13.
55. Garami, *Forongó Magyarország*, pp. 169–170.
56. *Az Est*, October 28, 1919. On the resolution of the party's Executive Committee to this effect, see Fehér, *A magyarországi szociáldemokrata párt*, pp. 44–45.
57. *Az Est*, October 29, 1919.
58. *Nemzeti Újság*, November 6, 1919, and *Az Est*, November 9, 1919.
59. For the controversy between Heinrich and Lovászy and for the separate negotiations see *Az Est*, November 1, 2, 8, and 9, 1919, and *Nemzeti Újság*, November 4 and 8, 1919.
60. Clerk to Supreme Council, November 1, 1919, Polk Papers, Yale University.
61. *Az Est*, October 29, 1919.
62. Clerk to Supreme Council, November 4, 1919, *FRUS PPC*, 9: 9.
63. *Az Est*, November 2, 1919.
64. György Borsányi, ed., *Páter Zadravec z titkos naplója* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1967), p. 243.
65. *Times*, November 8, 1919.
66. "Entwirrungsplan für Ungarn," October 15, 1919, N.A., Record Group 59, M708/3/0460-0465.
67. *Times*, November 8, 1919.
68. *Az Est*, November 9, 1919.
69. Fehér, *A magyarországi szociáldemokrata párt*, p. 47.
70. *Az Est*, November 9, 1919.
71. *Az Est*, November 12, 1919.
72. Clerk to Supreme Council, November 1, 1919, *FRUS PPC*, 8: 947–948.
73. Clerk to Crowe, October 25, 1919, *DBFP*, 1: 6: 310.
74. *Népszava*, November 7, 1919.
75. *Nemzeti Újság*, November 12, 1919.
76. *Nemzeti Újság*, November 14, 1919.
77. Garami, *Forongó Magyarország*, p. 185.
78. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
79. Diary of Countess Gyula Andrássy, Jr., November 20, 1919, quoted in Elek Karsai, *A Sándor-palotában történt, 1919–1941* (Budapest: Táncsics, 1967), p. 27. See also Harry H. Bandholtz, *An Undiplomatic Diary* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933), p. 235.
80. Although the liberals succeeded in having István Bárczy appointed minister of justice, they did not actually gain ground since Lovászy, a member of the Friedrich government formed on August 15, was missing from the combination.

Symbolist and Decadent Elements in Early Twentieth-Century Hungarian Drama*

Ivan Sanders

I

In his first major work of literary criticism, an ambitious history of modern drama, György Lukács devotes an entire chapter to a discussion of trends in the Hungarian theatre. Although he wrote this important, and still relatively little-known, synthesis originally in Hungarian (a rather inelegant, German-influenced Hungarian, one might add), Lukács does not hesitate to point out that Hungarian dramatists have not made an original contribution to Western dramatic literature, and what is more, predicts—in 1911—a rather bleak future for Hungarian drama.¹ As Lukács's other youthful works, this study of modern drama displays awesome erudition and keen insights into patterns of social and intellectual evolution implicit in literary development; yet the work's rigorously consistent theoretical framework is distressingly rigid, often betraying Lukács's cardinal and all-too-familiar weakness as a literary critic: his indifference to purely literary values.

In the *History of the Development of Modern Drama*, Friedrich Hebbel is seen as the father of modern drama and the Hebellian notion of the necessary coincidence of personal and historical tragedy as the only legitimate source of drama.² Lukács was not yet a Marxist when he wrote his treatise, but he had already been influenced by the modern sociological theories of Max Weber and Georg Simmel, which in turn incorporated some of the conclusions reached by students of *Geistesgeschichte*, the approach to intellectual history just then coming into its own.³ Thus, in examining nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Western drama, Lukács considers only those works dramatically valid that offer grand syntheses: characters that embody the spirit of the age, particularized conflicts that intimate larger upheavals — in short,

*I am indebted to the National Endowment for the Humanities for the grant that made research for this paper possible.

dramas that impress us with a strong sense of historical inevitability. In view of Lukács's early intellectual commitment and consequent opposition to pure aestheticism in literature, it is interesting that he was nevertheless among the first to discuss under the same heading such dramatists as Maeterlinck, Hofmannstahl, Hauptmann, Yeats, Wilde and D'Annunzio, and indeed may have been the first to deal critically with Symbolist drama.⁴ Lukács prefers "decorative stylization" to Symbolism and associates the term primarily with Maeterlinck's theatre which he greatly admires but which he must ultimately reject because it does not offer the kind of synthesis he looks for in modern drama. Maeterlinck's attempt to create mood, to dramatize states of mind and nameless terrors, results in breathtakingly beautiful theatrical moments, according to Lukács. "The essence of these beautiful moments is the strongly symbolic fusion of psychological, lyric, musical and pictorial elements in a given scene which expresses definitively and unforgettably the emotion underlying the scene."⁵ Lukács is also quick to discern the philosophical and spiritual implications of Maeterlinck's dramas: "Maeterlinck's only aim is to express feelings—man's feelings toward the infinite, the eternally unknown, and those ultimate internal and external forces which can not be further analyzed but whose irresistible and immanent power we all sense." Yet for all his praise, Lukács would not consider Maeterlinck's plays truly dramatic. They are "merely" decorative, elliptical, ballad-like; in none of them is there an "all-encompassing sense of inevitability and universality."⁷

After rejecting, ruefully, it seems, even the most radical dramatic experiments of his time as timid and limited, it is hardly surprising that Lukács speaks disparagingly of Hungarian drama which in the second half of the nineteenth century remained largely unaffected by the new European literary trends, or absorbed only the extrinsic features of certain foreign models. Interestingly enough, the only nineteenth century Hungarian drama Lukács does think highly of—Mihály Vörösmarty's charming fairy play, *Csongor és Tünde* [Csongor and Tünde]—is one which, according to Lukács, is close in spirit not only to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* but to some of the late nineteenth century Symbolist dramatic attempts. "The stylistic peculiarities of *Csongor und Tünde* have not lost their relevance," writes Lukács in his chapter on Hungarian drama; "on the contrary, they never seemed so modern as today when there is a trend in drama everywhere toward fantastic, anti-Platonic, anti-tragic fairy plays which, in order to render perceptible their ethereal content, draw on the spirit of the folktale (Hauptmann, Yeats, Synge)."⁸ In relating what he considers the single

significant nineteenth century Hungarian play to a major current within the Symbolist theatre, Lukács once again reveals an affinity for a literary trend which he champions on aesthetic grounds but repudiates for ideological reasons.

Of course, Lukács may have admired Vörösmarty's *Csongor and Tünde* because it, too, is a kind of synthesis: a felicitous blend of "the fantastic and the real, the coarse and the magical, the sublime and the grotesque, the playful and the profound."⁹ In being able to fuse disparate elements into a harmonious whole, Vörösmarty was indeed a lonely figure in Hungarian drama. Lukács as well as other Hungarian critics were well aware of the fact that the enormously popular playwrights of the early twentieth century (Ferenc Molnár, Menyhért Lengyel, etc.) were never able to assimilate successfully new dramatic techniques in their slick social dramas and easily exportable drawing room comedies. They tamed the more daring achievements of the Naturalist, Symbolist and, somewhat later, Expressionist theatre so that the innovative techniques became mere external adornments in their works. In discussing Ferenc Molnár's plays, the essayist Antal Szerb notes that "his [Molnár's] symbolism is Ibsen's, Maeterlinck's and Hofmannstahl's symbolism watered down to suit the tastes of his bright, though not too bright, public."¹⁰

II

It is generally agreed that drama was the only genre not to undergo a process of rejuvenation during a ten-year span between 1900 and 1910 that proved to be a particularly productive period for Hungarian literature in general. Perhaps it is for this reason that György Lukács greeted the Symbolist-inspired dramas of Béla Balázs with such unwavering, and according to contemporaries quite unjustified, enthusiasm.¹¹ Balázs was a member of the intellectual circle that gathered around the young Lukács, and he also became a close personal friend of the philosopher-critic. This loose circle of young poets, sociologists and artists, which met regularly in Balázs's Budapest apartment during the mid 1910's and included such men of great future renown as Karl Mannheim and Arnold Hauser, was partially responsible for changing the course of Hungarian cultural life during the first two decades of the twentieth century, even though it was never part of the mainstream of the reformist-modernist movement (whose bastion was the periodical *Nyugat*), but was in fact often in opposition to that liberal, aesthetics-conscious mainstream.¹² Politically more radical, intellectually more

sophisticated than the writers of *Nyugat*, Lukács and his circle were students of German culture. They journeyed to Heidelberg and Berlin, while the poet Endre Ady and his followers, motivated perhaps by the traditional Hungarian antipathy for things German, turned to France for inspiration: to them the West meant Paris. Balázs's plays and poetry, as well as Lukács's literary theories, were on the whole too speculative, too abstract, too "German" for Hungarian tastes; and the fact that both of them came from a Jewish background and were perfectly bilingual — Lukács of course wrote most of his works in German — further alienated them from the leading modern poets of the day, who, despite their Western orientation, had a strong sense of ethnic identity.

The two groups' attitude towards Symbolism is a clear example of their dissimilar approach to literature. The so-called first generation of *Nyugat* poets were heavily influenced by French Symbolism, though most of them were attracted not so much to the philosophical implications of the movement as to the supple, sensuous, musical language created by Symbolist poets.¹³ It is a curious, though by no means unexplainable, fact that Stéphane Mallarmé's work, aside from some early sonnets, was not translated into Hungarian by the leading *Nyugat* poets who were otherwise enthusiastic translators of Baudelaire, Verlaine and a host of other Symbolists, including minor, now-forgotten poets. Mallarmé was of course recognized as the sage of the Symbolist *cénacle*, but his poetry was far too cerebral and metaphysical for a group of Eastern European modernists whose mysticism, irrationalism and decadence were tempered by a down-to-earth native tradition. However, it is precisely the philosophical and metaphysical aspects of Symbolism that interested men like Lukács and Balázs. They should have become familiar with Mallarmé, but because they were much closer to German literature, they approached Symbolism via Goethe, the German Romantics, Wagner and others who are known to have had a profound influence on the theorists of the movement. Thus, in expressing the notion that all things in the world are symbols, emblems of a higher reality, or in drawing attention to the incantatory nature of poetic language, Béla Balázs is echoing Novalis, E.T.A. Hoffman and the Schlegels rather than Baudelaire or the later Symbolists. Even when Balázs's point of departure is a writer who has little to do with Symbolism, his conclusions are strikingly close to theories enunciated by poets and dramatists associated with the movement. For example, in an essay entitled "Friedrich Hebbel and the German Romanticists' Meta-

physical Theory of Tragedy” Balázs comes close to defining Symbolist drama:

We may speak of the symbolic impact of sensory impressions that supersede the power of words, or of the ability of drama to express ultimate things with the techniques of concealment and silence. . . . The Germans, the greatest masters and theoreticians of modern drama, who also have the best feeling for metaphysics in modern culture, have recognized this, as well as the fact that a drama must be symbolic in both content and form.¹⁴

Balázs was primarily a poet and playwright, and not a systematic thinker à la Lukács. Unlike Lukács, he was just as interested in Symbolist poetry as in Symbolist poetics. In 1908, four years before the publication of his *Misztériumok* (Mysteries), a collection of three one-act plays closest to the Symbolist spirit, Balázs wrote an essay on Maeterlinck, which contains a number of highly impressionistic and subjective observations on the aesthetics of the Symbolist theatre—observations which are nevertheless more illuminating at times, and more to the point, than Lukács’s densely theoretical discussions. Alluding to such plays as *L’Intruse* and *Les Aveugles*, Balázs states:

The true hero of Maeterlinck’s dramas is an invisible, all-powerful mystery. In the languid silence nothing seems to happen, yet an invisible force takes over and represses life. The static drama depicts the advent of this force, and of the great enigma that embraces us like a dark forest. The most visible and dramatic manifestation of this force is death. Death is the ancestor of all of these dramas, though it appears not as a terrifying tragic end, not in the guise of graves and skeletons, but as a dark, lurking secret — a symbol of the great mystery. Death is an invisible but live figure that walks among people, caresses them, sits at their table — an uninvited guest. Nothing happens in these plays. Life happens.¹⁵

Balázs is convinced that Maeterlinck revolutionized drama, and the essay makes it clear that its author has become an advocate of this new, plotless, often voiceless theatre of mood, nuance and effect. “I am forever envious of musicians who do not have to speak,” Balázs confesses, “and forever in love with drama that does not speak.”¹⁶ Despite his tendency to view Symbolism in terms of German Romantic poetry and philosophy, Balázs is aware of course of the vast difference between German Romanticism and Maeterlinck’s Symbolism: “His [Maeterlinck’s] probe is not intellectual. His profundity is not akin to Goethe’s or Hebbel’s. He wants to capture ‘unthought’ thoughts, which is not a German profession.”¹⁷

III

In view of Balázs's admiration for Maeterlinck and the Symbolist theatre, it is perhaps not surprising that his three one-acters, whose collective title, *Misztériumok*, inevitably brings to mind Mallarmé's use of the term *mystère* in connection with drama,¹⁸ contains significant Symbolist elements. By far the best-known of the three one-act plays (mainly because it served as the basis for Béla Bartók's opera, about which we will speak presently) is *A Kékszakállú herceg vára* (Bluebeard's Castle), a stark two-character drama. In choosing the legend of Bluebeard as the subject of his play, Balázs was in all probability influenced by Maeterlinck's three-act fairy play, *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue*, which he called, in his 1908 essay, Maeterlinck's "most profound" drama.¹⁹ The legend of Bluebeard (whose historical model is usually said to be Gilles de Rais, a cultivated fifteenth century French nobleman turned sex-fiend) is allusive and violent enough to serve as the subject matter of a Symbolist play. Earlier literary treatments of the legend emphasized the horrific aspects of the story of the depraved woman-chaser. Maeterlinck and Balázs, however, tried to humanize the main protagonists, and used the legend as a metaphor for human predicaments and longings. As in so many Symbolist poems and plays, the setting in Balázs's drama is an exteriorization of a state of mind. Balázs himself makes this clear in his preface to the German text of the play: "Bluebeard's castle is not a real stone castle. The castle is his soul — a dark, mysterious, locked-up castle."²⁰ (In the original version of the play the castle is listed as one of the *dramatis personae*.) The minstrel introducing the drama also has this idea in mind when he asks:

Szemünk pillás függőnye fent:
Hol a színpad: kint vagy bent,
Urak, asszonyságok?

[Our eye-lash curtain is raised
But where is the stage, out there or in here,
Lords and ladies?]²¹

Balázs's Bluebeard is not a perverse Don Juan but a sullen, troubled man; and his latest bride, Judith, senses the enormity of his sins and the extent of his spiritual disquietude, and expresses her fears in terms that suggest an awareness of the symbolic character of the setting. Touching the damp wall of the castle Judith cries out: "Sír a várad, sír a várad!" [Your castle cries, your castle cries.] When she hears the wind whistling through the dark passages of the castle, she says: "Oh a várad felsóhajtott!" [Your castle has sighed.] And when the first door is opened,

revealing Bluebeard's instruments of torture, Judith exclaims in horror:

A te várad fala véres!

A te várad vérzik!

[There is blood on your castle wall;

Your castle is bleeding!]²²

One by one the doors of Bluebeard's castle fly open, exposing weapons, treasures, vast lands — the possessions of a powerful and proud male. From behind the seventh door the former wives emerge, beautiful, sad creatures, resplendent in their wedding gowns. Though her curiosity is satisfied, Judith is more terrified than ever, and Bluebeard, after realizing that baring his soul had not relieved his anguish, bids her to join the other women, which Judith stoically does, weighed down by her new crown and robe.

There is disagreement among critics as to the precise extent of Balázs's indebtedness to Maeterlinck. According to literary historian Miklós Szabolcsi, for instance, Balázs paid closer attention to Charles Perrault's famous fairy tale on the subject than to Maeterlinck's version of the legend.²³ However, György Kroó in his lengthy account of the history of the Bluebeard legend concludes that *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* "is, in a sense, the source" of *Bluebeard's Castle*.²⁴ A comparison of the two works reveals that Balázs did borrow some of Maeterlinck's dramatic devices — for example, the motif of the seven locked doors. To be sure, the Hungarian dramatist changed the images behind the doors: in Maeterlinck's play the first six doors lead to rooms filled with jewels, in *Bluebeard's Castle* only one of the locked doors contains dazzling precious stones; but the seventh door in both plays conceals Bluebeard's former wives who have been imprisoned, not killed. The two dramas are also similar in their rather obviously symbolic use of lighting. In both plays the stage is shrouded in darkness, and the opened doors emit blinding shafts of light. It is of course Ariane and Judith who are associated with light — they both radiate love. Ariane reacts ecstatically to the dazzle of diamonds pouring out of the sixth chamber:

Immortelle rosée de lumière! Ruisselez sur mes mains, illuminez mes bras, éblouissez ma chair! Vous êtes purs, infatigables et ne dormez jamais, et ce qui s'agit en vous feux, comme un peuple d'esprits qui sème des étoiles, c'est la passion de la clarté qui a tout pénétré, ne se repose pas, et n'a plus rien à vaincre qu'elle même! . . . Pleuvez, pleuvez encore, entrailles de l'été, exploits de la lumière et conscience innombrable des flames! vous blesserez mes yeux sans lasser mes regards!²⁵

Judith also yearns for light; she would like to deliver Bluebeard from the darkness by illuminating his murky soul:

Lesz fény, szegény, Kékszakállú
Megnyitjuk a falat ketten.
Szél bejárjon, nap besüssön
Tündököljön a te várad!

[There shall be light, poor Bluebeard
We shall throw open these walls.
Let the wind blow, the sun shine;
Let your castle glitter.]²⁶

There is even a similarity between the animism of the two castles. As we said, Judith talks about Bluebeard's abode as though it were a living thing. In Maeterlinck's play, Ariane's Nurse exclaims as she is about to open the first door:

Prenez garde! — Fuyez! Les deux battants s'animent et glissent comme un voile.²⁷

We should also note that the dissimilarities between Maeterlinck's and Balázs's plays are as striking as the similarities. *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue*, a far less mysterious, indeed a less Symbolist, play than Maeterlinck's early one-acters, is really only about Ariane who is the prototype of the liberated woman. At the end of the play, after enraged peasants capture Bluebeard, Ariane asks them not to harm him. She herself leaves when realizing that she can be of no help either to Bluebeard or to his former wives who are too submissive to opt for freedom. Ariane is "the light-bringer in Maeterlinck's drama," according to Bettina Knapp, author of a recent monograph on Maeterlinck; "she has attempted to illuminate what was living in perpetual darkness and confusion — the other wives. She has the courage to venture forth alone in forbidden, and, therefore, terrifying realms, which is the fate of many light-bringers."²⁸ Balázs's play, on the other hand, is almost completely devoid of external action and its ending is not nearly as unambiguous as that of *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue*. Next to Maeterlinck's eventful play, *Bluebeard's Castle* is a static drama in which — as one of its unsympathetic critics put it — "two people clamor on stage for an hour and nothing happens."²⁹

Even though it was performed as a play, Béla Balázs's *Bluebeard's Castle* was made famous by Béla Bartók who used a somewhat shortened version of the Balázs play as the libretto for his one-act opera by the same title (first performed in 1918). Because Bartók's dark-toned, somber, chillingly dissonant music is as atmospheric as it is dramatic,

we might conclude that it is the perfect complement to a Symbolist play — just as Debussy's and Richard Strauss's scores are ideal musical counterparts to plays by Maeterlinck and Hofmannstahl. However, there are music critics who argue that the combination of Balázs's words and Bartók's music produces a far different effect than the music dramas of Debussy. According to György Kroó only Maeterlinck's and Debussy's world can be said to be subtly, intimately suggestive; Bartók's opera is elementally symbolic.³⁰ Indeed, if we view the castle as having straightforwardly allegorical rather than suggestively symbolic significance; if we read the drama as an internalized psychological confrontation between tragically incompatible Man and Woman, we have less and less reason to believe that *Bluebeard's Castle* is a Symbolist play. And if we accept the interpretation that Bluebeard represents the eager and insatiable adolescent who "with each kiss experiences the joy of liberation as well as the desire for even sweeter kisses,"³¹ then we are further removed from Symbolism and are edging closer to allegorical drama. Yet, even if we concede that *Bluebeard's Castle* is preoccupied with clear-cut psychological conflict and is therefore not Symbolist in theme, its language, staging and atmosphere remain essentially Symbolist. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that one of the most significant changes the Symbolist movement underwent in Eastern Europe has been its "folklorization."³² Béla Balázs's *Bluebeard's Castle* is an almost perfect example of this process since Balázs's — and Bartók's — avowed purpose was "to portray the modern soul with the unmixed, primeval colors of the folk ballad. We believed that the very new must be transplanted from the very old, but in such a way that the original material survive the process of our spiritualization and not evaporate between our fingers."³³ It is above all the terse, elliptical, strategically stylized and repetitive language of Balázs's drama that gives it its Symbolist flavor. Balázs was aware of the existence of Hungarian folk ballad versions of the Bluebeard legend and wanted to transfer to the stage the dramatic spirit of these ballads.³⁴ In Béla Bartók Balázs found an ideal collaborator, for at the time he wrote his opera Bartók had already begun his investigation of Eastern European folk music.

In order to fully appreciate the significance of the Symbolist use of the ballad form, we must again refer to Lukács's *History of the Development of Modern Drama* which, we could safely assume, had a profound effect on members of Lukács's circle, and especially on someone like Balázs who considered himself primarily a dramatist. In his chapter on Maeterlinck Lukács defines the Symbolist theatre in terms of the ballad. He is aware of course of the narrative nature of the ballad form,

yet he believes that "Maeterlinck's dramas are ballads. They are expressions of a tragic sense stripped of all extraneous detail, though the feeling itself is expressed simply, naturally."³⁵ Lukács does not consider the ballad an adequately dramatic form; nevertheless he ascribes much of the power and tension of Symbolist drama to its ballad-like qualities. Maeterlinck's dramas, like the ballad, "depict states, not relationships, human traits, not human characters, moods, not worlds."³⁶ According to Lukács, Maeterlinck reduced the realism of the ballad as much as possible. "First he wanted to eliminate all external action so as not to disturb the internal happenings. Then he dispensed with those human traits and features that did not have a direct bearing on his characters' fate. Finally he did away with verisimilitude with regard to time and place."³⁷

It is precisely these reductive techniques that we encounter in Balázs's *Bluebeard's Castle*. Yet to reduce the drama to simple allegory would be an unjust oversimplification. We could, as has been suggested, conclude that *Bluebeard's Castle* is about the tragic irreconcilability of the male and female ego; but we could also concentrate on Judith's curiosity, on her relentless search for the unknown. The opening of the doors could be seen as a lifting of the veil which is a frequent and powerful image in Symbolist literature. Even the familiar—and richly allusive—motif of the forbidden chamber, as well as the theme of the redemptive secret turned fatal, adds to the polyvalent character of the drama. For every critic who detects non-Symbolist elements in Balázs's drama, there is another who would classify it as a Symbolist play. For example, József Ujfalussy, in his book on Bartók, places the drama in the mainstream of the Symbolist tradition.³⁸ He sees a clear thematic connection between the Tristan legend, *Pelléas and Melisande* and Balázs's *Bluebeard's Castle*, and relates Golaud's dark and bleak castle to Bluebeard's domicile. According to Ujfalussy, "if we call Melisande the 'white woman of the castle,' she leads us to Ady's poem; if we name her Judith, she reappears in Balázs's play."³⁹

The two other plays in the trilogy — *A tündér* (The Fairy) and *A szent szűz vére* (The Blood of the Holy Virgin) — are far less evocative than *Bluebeard's Castle*. In these dramas the attempt to poeticize and spiritualize basic psychological conflicts becomes much too self-conscious and contrived. *The Fairy* has a story-book Germanic setting, and *The Blood of the Holy Virgin* is medieval in decor. Despite the more concrete locale, however, the author does not aim for a sense of realism in these dramas. His objective rather is to take characters quite modern in sensibility and place them in a hazy, pseudo-historical setting. The conflict in

The Fairy is between a young woman, her fiance, and her old love who after a long absence mysteriously reappears and raises some fundamental questions about love, thereby shattering the serenity of the young couple. *The Blood of the Holy Virgin* is also about a triangle: two knights who have vowed eternal friendship during a crusade meet again in the castle of one of the comrades who in the meantime has taken a wife. A classic conflict develops between friend and wife, with the anguished husband standing in the middle. The antagonists stab themselves to prove their love but are revived by the Holy Virgin whose statue comes alive. At the end of the play the wife goes off to a convent and the two friends join another crusade.⁴⁰ As we can see, the irreconcilability of friendship and love, as well as, in a larger sense, the eternal strife between man and woman is the leitmotif running through all three *Mysteries*.⁴¹ But the stylized decor and language lend even these two plays a Symbolist aura. Moreover, the sense of foreboding and troubled expectation present in both plays is highly reminiscent of Maeterlinck's "théâtre de l'attente."⁴² For example, Oliver, the old sweetheart in *The Fairy* is associated with the ill-omened wind, and with a fairy that, according to local legend, hides out in the nearby woods. Like the castle in Balázs's first one-acter, the wind is listed as a character in *The Fairy*. It blows frequently and ever more menacingly throughout the play. The character of Oliver is also interesting because he is a wanderer, a figure often encountered in Symbolist literature, in search of the undefinable, the unattainable. "Nem, nem vagyok én soha egyedül," he tells his former love. [No, I am never alone.]

Velem van minden még nem élt napom,
 Ezer nyitott ajtóval áll körül
 És néz és vár és hív és integet.
 Velem van minden, ami nincsen itt,
 Velem van minden, ami még lehetne
 S kiált utánam: jer értem, jere!

[I have with me my still unspent days;
 They open a thousand doors for me,
 And look and wait and beckon and wave.
 I have with me all that is not here,
 All that could still be,
 Calling out: Come, come after me.]

IV

Balázs's Symbolist—or perhaps semi-Symbolist—attempts appear to be the only example, in Hungary, of this type of theatre. While

Symbolism triumphed in Hungarian poetry, in drama it seems to have made even less of a dent than elsewhere in Europe. Yet if we examine the history of early twentieth century Hungarian drama, we discover that there were sporadic attempts, sometimes by the popular dramatists of the age, to exploit the atmospheric, pictorial and poetic potentials of the theatre, and downplay conventional plot and character development. Many of these playwrights were responding to the spirit of Art Nouveau and Secession, which were themselves offshoots of Symbolism. Secession, a term widely used only in the Germanic world and Eastern Europe, refers to a movement in art that stressed the ideals of aestheticism developed by the pre-Raphaelites and the French Symbolists, and favored subjectively stylized, lush, sinuous formal elements, as well as the fusion of the primitive and the modern. It is this last feature that characterizes Hungarian Secession at its best. The incorporation of folk motifs in turn-of-the-century “modernist” architecture, the search in the early poems of Endre Ady for the primitive, pagan Magyar spirit, the utilization of folk-ballads in Balázs’s poetry and plays are all examples of Hungarian Secession which, as an artistic trend, was rather short-lived. Its heyday was between 1895 and 1905, and it never developed into a full-fledged culture movement.⁴⁵ Secessionist techniques were widely imitated, vulgarized, and the term itself soon became a pejorative, associated with kitsch. In recent years, however, there has been a resurgence of interest in Secession, and historians of literature and art have shown that its influence has been more pervasive, and in some cases more positive, than previously believed.⁴⁶

The language of the theatre was also influenced by the ornate secessionist style. Two dramatists in particular—Ernő Szép and Dezső Szomory—were partial to this style which in large measure defined their artistic sensibility, labelled Decadent by most of their critics. But as Pál Réz points out in his essay on Ernő Szép, Decadence in the Hungarian context doesn’t signify the ennui of an overripe, overrefined civilization, or a waning life force in conflict with an intensified zest for life, but rather a quiet aestheticism, an inward-turning, asocial stance, a deliberate cultivation of certain easily recognizable mannerisms and a morbid fascination with death.⁴⁷ Like Paul Verlaine, Ernő Szép was a consciously naïve poet. All of his writings exude a childlike innocence and charm, as well as a wise understanding of the vicissitudes of life. He mixes poetic and prosaic subjects,⁴⁸ and the “simplicity of folk tales with the most up-to-date French stylistic trends.”⁴⁹ It is in this connection that we find *Az egyszerű királyfi* (The Prince of Yore), one of his lesser-known plays, significant. Like Vörösmarty’s *Csongor and Tünde*, men-

tioned earlier in this essay, *The Prince of Yore* is a fairy play, an everyman tale in peasant garb, which draws on practically all the popular elements of Hungarian folklore. However, as Dezső Kosztolányi pointed out in his review of the play, first performed in 1913, Ernő Szép combines the charm of primitive folk art with the techniques of a Beardsley drawing.⁵⁰ *The Prince of Yore* has nothing to do with the sentimental native-populist theatre still very popular in Hungary at this time, or with populist literature in general; it is not even so much a play as a series of tableaux, set pieces, incorporating the favorite characters and conventions of Hungarian folktales. A peasant prince is pursued by Death who is also depicted as a simple, rather good-natured Hungarian peasant. The young prince, however, is an atypical fairy tale character in that he is listless and world-weary. Whereas Balázs was attracted to the simplicity of Szekler (székely) folk ballads, Szép crowds into his play a whole gallery of folk characters, a thesaurus of poems, proverbs, jingles, rhymes, wordplays, etc. We are faced with an abundance of riches which often seems excessive. However, the Decadent character of the play stems not only from its self-conscious primitivism, but also from its preoccupation with death. The final speech made by Death is a lyrical celebration of the eternal rest, a seductive appeal to the death wish:

Félsz lemenni a földbe, kedves kis cselédem? Ó, te balga, nem látod, hogy lefelé kívánczik minden a világon, az anyaföld felé? Nem látod a szomorúfűz ágát, hogy borul lefelé, nem nézted meg a daru tollát, hogy lankad a földnek, a búza boldog kalásza hogy hajlik lejjebb, lejjebb, meg a szép őszi falevél milyen édesdeden száll, száll a fáról a földre. A friss égi harmat, a fehér hó is a földre jön az égből, a fényes esti csillag megunja a magosságot, lefelé szalad a föld felé, a dicső nap is lefelé ballag alkonyattal, minden a földet keresi, minden a földbe vágyakozik. . . Ó, be áldott is a lágy anyaföld, be drága, be ékes, be jóságos, be kívánatos, be gyönyörűség.

[You are afraid to go into the ground, my pet, aren't you? But don't you see, you little fool, that everything in the world moves downwards, toward mother earth? Haven't you noticed the drooping branches of the weeping willow, or the crane's flagging feather? The happy wheat-stalks bend low, and the autumn leaves fall gently from the tree onto the ground. Fresh morning dew and white snow also fall from the sky, as does the bright evening star when it tires of its lofty perch. At dusk even the glorious sun sinks low — all things long for, reach for, the good earth. . . Oh, blessed mother earth, how dear and precious you are, how kind and tempting and beautiful.]⁵¹

Dezső Szomory epitomized for many Hungarians the dandified literary gentleman. He spent seventeen years in Paris, between 1890 and 1907; and although these were still crucial years for the Symbolist movement, he seems to have known little more about it than what was reported in newspapers and popular magazines.⁵² He was considered a modernist in Hungary, yet his taste was rather conservative: Stendhal, Balzac, Renan were his favorites, and he was proud of having been a regular in Alphonse Daudet's salon in Paris. Szomory wrote short stories and some poetry, but he was a born dramatist, if only because he knew how to create pathos on stage with overpowering words, and how to deflate it with devastatingly pedestrian words. A late-Romantic, Szomory outdid the Romantics with his overembellished, sonorous, interminable, and ultimately self-mocking tirades which became his signature. Alluding to Wagner, he often expressed the desire to create a language that would be a kind of synthesis, a *Gesamtkunstwerk* based on the word.⁵³ Szomory would also have agreed with Oscar Wilde, according to whom "a mask tells us more than the face."⁵⁴ In his personal life Szomory eagerly cultivated the image of a Des Esseintes-like decadent and narcissist; his poses and eccentricities, his carefully stage-managed affairs, scandals, sufferings made him a celebrated and controversial literary figure. A cult of beauty informed all of Szomory's works and shaped his lifestyle; the aestheticization of pain and death became an especially conspicuous feature of his work. During the First World War, he wrote a series of fictitious eyewitness reports from the Western front. In one of them he exclaims: "These stiff-bodied young soldiers stretched out in pools of blood over the black wreaths of crows make a beautiful, oh, God, forgive me, an incredibly beautiful sight."⁵⁵ Szomory wrote a number of plays — "tumultuous spectacles," he called them — about Habsburg kings, as well as social dramas in which the accent is always on passionate, if ill-fated, love affairs. But the play we are concerned with here — *Sába királynője* (The Queen of Sheba) — was never performed; we do not even know for sure when it was written. The manuscript was believed lost and only recently rediscovered among the author's papers by his biographer, Pál Réz, who speculates that it was composed in the early twenties. In his notes on the forgotten play, Pál Réz discounts Szomory's claim that *The Queen of Sheba* is his chef d'oeuvre. Réz believes "it is merely a libretto, waiting for an inspired composer. . . [In it the author] tries to revive the antiquated and unrenewable dramatic tradition of Maeterlinck and D'Annunzio."⁵⁶ Yet the

importance of *The Queen of Sheba* as a Symbolist play should not be underestimated. In his essay on the Symbolist theatre, Hartmut Köhler points out that in addition to myth, legend and fairy tale, "the voluptuous paganism of antiquity" can be a rich source for a Symbolist play. (Interestingly enough, Köhler mentions in this connection the Portuguese Eugenio de Castro's *La reine de Saba*.)⁵⁷ What attracted Szomory to the Biblical story was clearly its decorative aspects. His *Queen of Sheba* is more of a pageant than a play. The actual story of the relationship of Solomon and Belkiss—the psychological aspects of the romance or the historical background—is of little importance to the author. The scenes containing narrative interest (the one in which Belkiss tries out her riddles on Solomon, for example) are the weakest in the play. The emphasis is on spectacle, verbal and emotional crescendos, aria-like tirades, climactic theatrical moments — Belkiss' triumphant entry to Jerusalem, her equally dramatic leavetaking, etc.

What is especially interesting about the play from a Symbolist point of view is that Szomory's exotic, opulent decor includes a profusion of birds and flowers which not only echo the details of the legend of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, but are clearly Symbolist in inspiration. Solomon sends his favorite bird, a hoopoe, as a messenger to Sheba, and with it a whole flock of birds take off, darkening the sky and forming a "winged cloud."⁵⁸ Similarly, Belkiss is surrounded by, and is identified with, rare and beautiful flowers.⁵⁹ Indeed, the unreal, luxurious, hothouse atmosphere of the play is quite reminiscent of the rarified ambience of much Symbolist poetry. What is more, Belkiss resembles a figure favored by the Symbolists: Salomé. The prophet Jossué in the play warns Solomon of the terrible consequences of his involvement with the Queen. Like Jokanaan in Wilde's *Salomé* he is — quite literally — a prophet of doom. At the end, Belkiss watches with satisfaction as Solomon, intoxicated by love, is about to have the prophet put to death.

We could cite further Symbolist traits in *The Queen of Sheba*, but before going too far in spotting resemblances and parallels, we might do well to recall that Symbolist drama, in Hungary as elsewhere, is an imposed critical category. It is unlikely that Szomory was consciously adapting Symbolist devices in his drama. If nothing else his ever-present irony and merciless self-parody; his embracement of "l'esprit cruel et le rire impure" separate him from "true" Symbolists. We should also keep in mind that a major problem in dealing with Szomory's Symbolism, indeed with Hungarian Symbolism in general, is that the term is very loosely used by Hungarian critics and writers. The dividing line between

Symbolism, Neo-Romanticism, Impressionism, Decadence, Art Nouveau, Secession is often blurred and the labels are used interchangeably. (For example, in an essay on Dezső Szomory, Kálmán Vargha talks about Szomory's "symbolist-secessionist period."⁶⁰ We must remember, too, that Lukács's term "decorative stylization" encompassed both Symbolism and the artistic impulses covered by the term Secession.)

VI

In this essay we attempted to isolate certain thematic and stylistic traits in early twentieth century Hungarian drama, which reflect an awareness of the Mallarméan-Maeterlinckian notion of an internalized, "detheatricalized," evocative theatre. We also tried to examine Decadent features in certain Hungarian plays. We define Decadence as an aspect of Symbolism, which in its Middle European incarnation manifested itself in an overrefined aesthetic sensibility, an excessive preoccupation with death and a predilection for heavily stylized and overcharged forms of expression. Our choice of plays was to a certain extent subjective; it is conceivable that similar elements could be found in other Hungarian plays of this period.⁶¹ Béla Balázs's *Mysteries*, Ernő Szép's fairy play and Dezső Szomory's Biblical drama may be considered examples of experimental theatre, not wholly successful, but significant nevertheless from both a literary and dramatic point of view. These unconventional attempts did not have much of an impact on the development of modern Hungarian drama which has been generally unresponsive to new dramatic theories and practices, and is to this day heavily representational.⁶² It should be noted, though, that while Béla Balázs's plays (with the exception of the operatic version of *Bluebeard's Castle*) have not been staged in fifty years, Szomory's dramas — the more conventional ones, to be sure — are again in vogue in Hungary. There is hope at least that audiences attuned to the subtleties of language, mood, feeling in the theatre might learn to appreciate these static, "unstageworthy," Symbolist-inspired Hungarian dramas.

NOTES

1. György Lukács, *A modern dráma fejlődésének története* (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1911), vol. 2, pp. 494-531.
2. Lukács, *A modern dráma*, vol. 1, pp. 351-393. After he became a Marxist, Lukács scorned most of the Symbolist playwrights. In a 1966 interview he declared that Maeterlinck's works had become "unreadable." See Theo Pinkus,

- ed., *Gespräche mit Georg Lukács* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1967), p. 26. Understandably, Lukács retained his great admiration for Hebbel. See for example "Hebbel és a modern tragédia megalapozása" in Lukács, *Világirodalom* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1969), vol. 2, pp. 332–366. For a more objective appraisal of Hebbel and the modern theatre, see Ronald Peacock, *Poet in the Theatre* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1946), pp. 64–76.
3. See Lukács's preface to an anthology of his theoretical writings on literature, *Művészet és társadalom* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1969), pp. 5–6.
 4. Lukács, *A modern dráma*, vol. 2, pp. 240–290. Lukács was also among the first to note the similarities between Symbolism and Naturalism. He points out that in eliminating contrived plots, in suggesting an all-powerful force behind human action, in searching for the *tragique quotidien*: "the reflection of a sense of fatality in everyday things," Symbolist drama is strikingly close to Naturalism. Lukács's conclusions are echoed by modern critics. For example, Anna Balakian in her *The Symbolist Movement* (New York: Random House, 1967) states: "Naturalism and symbolism are both nurtured by fatalistic philosophies in which the human will is subordinated to outer influences and pressures." (p. 138) John Gassner in *Form and Idea in Modern Theatre* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1956) defines Symbolism as "naturalist playwrighting with its teeth drawn." (p. 106.)
 5. Lukács, *A modern dráma*, vol. 2, p. 279.
 6. *Ibid.*, p. 262.
 7. *Ibid.*, p. 258.
 8. *Ibid.*, p. 503.
 9. Pál Pándi (ed.), *A magyar irodalom története* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1965), vol. 3, p. 453.
 10. Antal Szerb, *Magyar irodalomtörténet* (Budapest: Révai, 1943), p. 492.
 11. See György Lukács's collection of essays on Béla Balázs's work: *Balázs Béla és akinek nem kell* (Gyoma: Kner Izidor, 1918). These essays illustrate Lukács's polemical zeal as well as his blindness to Balázs's limitations as an artist. For a recent view of Balázs, Lukács and their circle, see Ferenc Fehér's introductory essay in Béla Balázs, *Az álmok köntöse* (Budapest: Magyar Helikon, 1973), pp. 5–24. For an appraisal, in English, of Balázs the writer and thinker, see Lee Congdon, "The Making of a Hungarian Revolutionary: The Unpublished Diary of Béla Balázs," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 8, No. 3 (1973), pp. 57–74.
 12. See Kristóf Nyíri's interview with Arnold Hauser, in which Hauser reminisces about Lukács, Balázs and others, in *Kritika*, Nos. 4 & 5 (1976), pp. 5–9; 16–18. It is often pointed out that an important reason why Lukács and his circle did not have a more decisive role in shaping Hungarian culture in the 1920's and 1930's is that after 1919 almost the entire group left the country. Lukács and Balázs became Communist émigrés, staying first in Austria and then moving on to Russia. By the time they returned to their native country in 1945, a whole generation had grown up who hardly knew of their existence.
 13. In his definitive study on the influence of French Symbolism on Hungarian poetry, André Karátson points out that "les Hongrois de l'époque, sauf Béla Balázs et Dezső Kosztolányi, y pensaient peu, préoccupés qu'ils étaient de révéler leur moi intime et de transformer les rapports entre la poésie et la vie nationale." *Le symbolisme en Hongrie* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1969), p. 442.
 14. Béla Balázs, "A tragédiának metafizikus teóriája a német romantikában és Hebbel Frigyes," *Nyugat* 1 (1908), 89. We might add here that some of Lukács's

- formulations also coincide with Symbolist perceptions. In one of his essays on Balázs, Lukács reaches the conclusion that Shakespeare was a great symbolist since his symbols “mean everything and nothing in particular; they are musical and non-intellectual” (Lukács, *Balázs Béla*, p. 63.). Mallarmé reached a somewhat similar conclusion. Haskell Block points out in his *Mallarmé and the Symbolist Drama* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1963) that according to the French poet Shakespeare’s “cosmic symbolization” makes him “the great precursor of the symbolist drama.” (p. 91)
15. Béla Balázs, “Maeterlinck,” *Nyugat* 1 (1908), p. 448.
 16. *Ibid.*, p. 450.
 17. *Ibid.*, p. 452.
 18. Like Mallarmé, Balázs was deeply aware of the mystery inherent in theatre; and although the title *Misztériumok*, according to some critics, simply refers to the parabolic aspects of the plays, quasi-religious, ritualistic elements are very much present, especially in the third drama, *A szent szűz vére* (The Blood of the Holy Virgin).
 19. Balázs, “Maeterlinck,” p. 449. It should be noted that Lukács believed *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* to be “an insignificant” play. (*A modern dráma*, vol. 2, p. 287.), and in general considered Maeterlinck’s late work too explicitly philosophical and therefore not Symbolist, indeed not at all dramatic. The wise man, Lukács maintained, is by definition “not tragic” (*A modern dráma*, vol. 2, 286.). In a sense Balázs’s other youthful literary works — his many fables, fairy tales and parables — could be related to Maeterlinck’s later writings since both writers moved away from Symbolism in the direction of didacticism and philosophy. Balázs also wrote non-symbolist social dramas which are rather abstract illustrations of Lukács’s and others’ dramatic theories. However, while in exile in Russia and Germany Balázs made a name for himself as a film theorist and critic and his preoccupation with the visual medium could perhaps be related to his early interest in Symbolism.
 20. Béla Balázs, *Válogatott cikkek és tanulmányok*, ed. by Magda K. Nagy (Budapest: Kossuth, 1968), p. 35. There is an interesting resemblance between the castle image in Balázs’s play and Endre Ady’s poem “A vár fehér asszonya” [The White Woman of the Castle] whose opening line is: A lelkem ódon, babonás vár/Mohos, gögös és elhagyott (My soul is an ancient bewitched castle/Mouldering, haughty and abandoned.) See Karátson, *Symbolisme en Hongrie*, p. 122.
 21. Béla Balázs, *Az álmodok köntöse*, p. 197.
 22. *Ibid.*, pp. 203–206.
 23. Miklós Szabolcsi et al., *A magyar irodalom története* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1966), vol. 6, p. 247.
 24. György Kroó, *Bartók színpadi művei* (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1962), p. 25. György Lukács, on the other hand, rejected any attempt to link Balázs’s *Bluebeard’s Castle* with Maeterlinck’s *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue*, and went as far as claiming that while Maeterlinck’s images are “abstract,” Balázs’s dramas are “terse, precise and richly sensuous expressions of the inner life of a dramatic here.” (*Balázs Béla*, p. 58.) In this particular essay Lukács was responding to an article by Mihály Babits in which Babits criticized Balázs’s dramas for their lack of poetry and imagination. See *Nyugat*, 6 (1913), pp. 166–169. Other critics have also questioned Balázs’s Symbolism. In his essay on Balázs’s dramatic theories, Ferenc Fehér notes that while “Maeterlinck was a conscious Symbolist, Balázs was one only accidentally and momentarily.” Ferenc Fehér, “Narcisszus drámái és teóriái,” in Béla Balázs, *Halálos fiatalság* (Budapest:

- Magyar Helikon, 1974), p. 21. On the other hand, Miklós Szabolcsi maintains that Balázs's theatre is closely related to Maeterlinck's Symbolist dramaturgy. *A magyar irodalom története*, vol. 6, p. 247.
25. Maurice Maeterlinck, *Théâtres* (Brussels: P. Lacomblez, 1912), vol. 3, pp. 142–143.
 26. Balázs, *Az álmok köntöse*, p. 202.
 27. Maeterlinck, *Théâtres*, vol. 3, p. 138.
 28. Bettina Knapp, *Maurice Maeterlinck* (Boston: Twayne, 1975), p. 99.
 29. Emil Haraszti, *Bartók Béla élete és művei*. Quoted by Kroó in *Bartók szinpadai művei*, p. 29.
 30. Kroó, *Bartók szinpadai művei*, pp. 105–106.
 31. See László Bóka's essay on Balázs's play in a special illustrated edition of *A kékszakállú herceg vára* (Budapest: Helikon, 1961), p. 62. A contemporary critic—George Steiner—sees the castle and Judith's curiosity as a symbol of modern man's search for ultimate and devastating truth about his culture. See Steiner's *In Bluebeard's Castle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).
 32. See for example Vilmos Voigt, "Folklore in Symbolism," MS, to be published in *The Symbolist Movement in the Literatures of European Languages*, under the aegis of the International Comparative Literature Association.
 33. *Bécsi Magyar Újság*, May 21, 1922. Quoted by Kroó, p. 35.
 34. See "Molnár Anna balladája" in *Új guzsalyam mellett* (Bukarest: Kriterion, 1973), pp. 26–27. In this version of the legend, the Bluebeard figure hangs his victims on a tree.
 35. Lukács, *A modern dráma*, vol. 2, p. 251.
 36. *Ibid.*
 37. *Ibid.*, p. 261.
 38. József Ujfalussy, *Bartók* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1965), 2 vols.
 39. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 169. See also footnote 20.
 40. *The Blood of the Holy Virgin* is the least satisfying of the three *Mysteries*, and its symbolism is the most literal. For instance, the rich tapestry we see hanging over the grim walls of a Norman castle clearly suggests the changes made by Blanka, the lovely wife. In a climactic moment her husband's comrade expresses his jealousy by angrily tearing off the wall hangings.
 41. This conflict was rooted in Balázs's personal life. Two fictionalized accounts of his friendship with Lukács and with members of Lukács's circle — Balázs's own *Lehetetlen emberek* [Impossible People] and Anna Lesznai's *Kezdetben volt a kert* [In the Beginning was the Garden] — reveal some of the dilemmas highlighted in the *Mysteries*.
 42. See Guy Michaud, *Message poétique du symbolisme* (Paris: Nizet, 1966), pp. 445–448.
 43. Significantly, the title of Balázs's first volume of poetry is *A vándor énekel* [The Wanderer Sings]. According to Lukács the wanderer is a highly ambiguous symbol: he symbolizes those moments "when everything becomes symbolic." (Lukács, *Balázs Béla*, p. 65.)
 44. Balázs, *Az álmok köntöse*, p. 247.
 45. See Aladár Komlós, "A magyar art nouveau vagy a nemzeti és európai elv összeolvadása," in his *Vereckétől Dévényig* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1972), pp. 99–156.
 46. For a brief overview of recent research on this subject, see Lajos Pók, "Szecesszió és nosztalgia," *Nagyvilág*, 21, No. 5 (1976), pp. 758–762.
 47. See Pál Réz's introductory essay in Ernő Szép, *Úriemberek vagyunk* (Budapest: Magvető, 1957), pp. 5–17.

48. André Karátsón in his chapter on Szép lists some of these themes: "De quoi s'entretient-on avec Szép? De choses éminemment poétiques: des fées, des princesses, des nuages, des cygnes, des roses, mais aussi de choses éminemment prosaïques: des lits de faits, des visages mal rasés, des godillots de soldat, de la toux et du cri du ventre." *Le symbolisme en Hongrie*, p. 345.
49. Ernő Szép, *Üriemberek vagyunk*, p. 17.
50. Quoted by Pál Réz in Ernő Szép, *Színház* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1975), p. 123.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
52. In *Levelek egy barátinőmhöz*, a series of fictitious letters to a lady friend, Szomory speaks rather disparagingly of Jean Moreas, one of the "activists" of the movement, and gives a sampling of his own unabashedly imitative Symbolist verse (Budapest: Atheneum, 1927), pp. 164–165.
53. See Pál Réz, *Szomory Dezső* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1971), pp. 17, 83.
54. See Oscar Wilde, "The Truth of Masks," in *Complete Works of Oscar Wilde* (London: Collins, 1948), pp. 1060–1078. Compare Wilde's statements in this essay, as well as his famous Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, with some of Szomory's observations in his *A párizsi regény* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1969): "The power of appearance, of all artifice, is always greater than the power of reality." (p. 19.) "Beauty is never of any use. The useful goes hand in hand with the ugly." (p. 34.)
55. Szomory, *Harry Russel-Dorsan a francia hadszíntérről*. Quoted by Réz in *Szomory*, p. 154.
56. Dezső Szomory, *Színház* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1973), p. 285.
57. Hartmut Köhler, "Symbolist Techniques in the Theatre Arts," MS, to be published in *The Symbolist Movement in the Literatures of European Languages* under the aegis of the International Comparative Literature Association.
58. Szomory, *Színház*, pp. 760–765.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 769.
60. Kálmán Vargha, "A novellista Szomory," in Dezső Szomory, *Az irgalom hegyén* (Budapest: Magvető, 1964), pp. 20–21. For a discussion of the problems of defining Symbolism, see René Wellek's "The Term and Concept of Symbolism in Literary History" in his *Discriminations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 90–121.
61. László Bóka calls our attention to Mihály Babits's symbolic fairy play, *A második ének*, which, in 1911, also bucked the Naturalist trend, and sought to project an *état d'ame* on the stage. See Bóka's essay in Balázs, *A Kékszakállú herceg vára* (Budapest: Helikon, 1961), pp. 59–75.
62. One of the many possible reasons why Symbolism in the theatre did not have a stronger effect in Hungary is that it arrived almost at the same time as Naturalism which clearly overshadowed it. In 1904, when Lukács and others established Thália, Hungary's first *théâtre libre*, Naturalism was still considered the latest word in drama. Thália staged such masterpieces of Naturalist theatre as Gorki's *The Lower Depths* and Strindberg's *The Father*. No play by Maeterlinck was performed during Thália's four years of existence between 1904 and 1908, though works by Hauptmann and D'Annunzio were staged.

The Hungarian Image of Benjamin Franklin

Anna Katona

"The impact of this new American man upon Europe," commented Henry Bamford Parkes on Franklin, "was of the greatest importance."¹ The Philadelphia printer, son of a Boston tallow-chandler, acted as the agent of the Pennsylvania Assembly in London during 1757–1762 and resided in Paris during 1776–1785. Between 1778 and 1784 he served as the rebellious American colonies' minister plenipotentiary at the French court. Because of his prolonged stay in Europe, Franklin became a symbol for all ideas and ideals associated with America. "If eighteenth-century America borrowed its theories from Europe," said Parkes, "it more than repaid the debt by the encouragement it offered, by its mere existence, to European liberalism."² His long sojourn in London and Paris made Franklin the most accessible representative of the Founding Fathers to Europeans. Besides his political role, his invention of the lightning conductor, this epochal discovery in the field of electricity, contributed to Franklin's early fame in Europe, and brought him honors in all parts of the continent.³ Franklin, the scientist and politician, was soon to capture the attention of Hungarians.

His European presence accounted for Franklin's early recognition in Hungary as an American patriot. Colonel Mihály Kováts (who was to die in the defence of Charleston, S.C. in 1779), volunteered to serve the American cause in a letter to Franklin in January 1777.⁴ János Zinner (later a professor of philosophy and mathematics in Kassa), "prefect of the Imperial and Royal Academy of Buda," as he signed his letter to Franklin of October 26, 1778,⁵ asked Franklin for material for two books he was planning to write in Latin on the American Revolution. In a second letter, dated September 23, 1783,⁶ Zinner offered his *Notitia Historica de Coloniis Federatis in America* to the thirteen states. Since the Latin works have not been found, it is believed that the results of those researches had been incorporated in his other writings.⁷ His German *Merkwürdige Briefe und Schriften der berühmtesten Generäle in America* [Noteworthy Letters and Writings of the Most Famous Generals in America] (1782),⁸ is a survey of the American Revolution's

major military figures, both patriot and loyalist. It also contains a few Franklin letters and a short biography of the American in which he is described as an exceptional philosopher and statesman. Considering the political situation in Habsburg-dominated Hungary at the time, it is not surprising that Zinner cautiously refrained from speculating on the revolutionary struggle's outcome. Zinner's 1778 letter to Franklin tells much about political attitudes in Hungary and illustrates the sympathies of her progressive-minded intellectuals. Zinner began with a tribute to the Habsburgs, a prudent caution lest his letter fell into the wrong hands. "I was born the subject of a great monarchy," he wrote, "and under a government whose rule is mild." But he soon revealed his true feelings about the War of Independence: ". . . I cannot tell you what joy I feel, when I hear or read of your progress in America. To speak the truth, I look upon you and all the chiefs of your new republic, as angels, sent by heaven to guide and comfort the human race." Zinner confessed that his reason for writing his book was the desire to spread the ideas of the American Revolution. "To give a public manifestation of this sentiment, I have composed a work in Latin." Commenting on this letter in Franklin's *Works*, Jared Sparks noted the "interest taken in American affairs even in the remote parts of Europe."⁹ Because of her unfortunate political status at the time, Hungary was a remote country indeed in more than one sense of the word.

At the same time when Hungary's political thinkers discovered Franklin the politician, her physicists realized his importance as a scientist. In 1776, the first lightning conductor was installed on the Royal Palace in Buda, and in his joy over the event, Lőrinc Orczy, a rather conservative, aristocratic poet, dedicated a poem to Franklin.¹⁰ If Zinner pioneered in making the versatile American known as a progressive statesman, a fellow-scholar in Buda, Pál Makó, was equally eager to acquaint his countrymen with Franklin's achievement in the field of electricity. His book on the subject appeared first in Latin, then in 1772 it was translated into German and finally in 1781 it also appeared in Hungarian.¹¹ In 1786, the periodical *Merkur von Ungarn* reported that another physicist, Elek Horányi was teaching Franklin's theories on electricity to two young noblemen, Antal Grassalkovich and Ignác Almássy.¹² As early as 1785–1788, Franklin's theory became an examination question at the College of Sárospatak, one of the country's most famous Protestant colleges.¹³

The Jacobin conspiracy of 1794–1795 in Hungary was inspired by French ideological influences, but there was also an impact of American political thought. The writings of the conspiracy's participants reveal an

acute awareness of the events in America, and Franklin's name is frequently mentioned. Two facts are noteworthy about these references. First, the conspirators were aware of Franklin's prominence both as a scientist and as a politician. In his pamphlet *Oratio ad Proceres et Nobiles Regni Hungariae*, the conspiracy's chief figure pointed to Franklin, the inventor, as a man eminent in "disciplinis physicis et mathematicis."¹⁴ At the trial of the conspirator Szecsenacz, the prosecution presented the lawyer Samuel Kohlmayer's letter, dated November 20, 1790, as evidence. Referring to the accused, Kohlmayer cited Turgot's famous remark on Franklin "non quidem coelo fulmen, sed tamen eripuit sceptrum tyrannis."¹⁵ The second point about the Hungarian Jacobins' Franklin image is even more important, because of its pertinence to István Széchenyi's fascination with the American statesman, namely Franklin's dedication to the common good. Eighteenth-century Hungarian intellectuals very much appreciated Franklin's sense of public service and respected his community-orientedness. In his funeral oration over the deceased Alajos Capuano, a friend and public figure, Ignác Martinovics cited Franklin as an example of a life's dedication to the common good.¹⁶

Indeed, the main idea of *Tempefői* (1793), a drama by the greatest poet of the age, Mihály Csokonai Vitéz, displayed a similar concern. "Blessed endeavor," one of the characters exclaims, "which though prompted by self-interest, works for the public good." Csokonai admired Franklin, one of the creators of a free republic. In a letter to Sándor Bessenyei, probably written in 1795, Csokonai voiced his most personal feelings and convictions: "An exile in my own country," wrote the poet after his expulsion from the College of Debrecen, "I am dragging along my days in boredom. My only happiness consists in finding a new world for myself, where I can build a Republic and a Philadelphia and — at least there, like Franklin did — eripio fulmen coelo sceptrumque tyrannis."¹⁷

It is difficult to assess how widely Franklin was known in late eighteenth-century Hungary. There are a few safe guesses, though. Since the *Hadi és más Nevezetes Történetek* [Military and Other Famous Stories] as well as the *Bétsi Magyar Kurir* [Vienna Magyar Messenger] published obituaries on Franklin's death, it is fair to assume that newspaper readers were familiar with his name.¹⁸ The Sárospatak College examination requirement and Csokonai's comments on the American statesman suggest that Franklin's political activity was as well known among students as his scientific contribution. Recent assessments rate the popularity of some of Martinovics's pamphlets rather

high.¹⁹ The distribution of five-thousand copies within three days of publication was a considerable achievement. Franklin was certainly well-known among late eighteenth-century progressive Hungarian intellectuals. He failed to reach a wider audience, however, before well in the nineteenth.

II

The first attempt at introducing Franklin's ideas to a wider audience — with the twin purpose of entertaining and educating — was made in 1816. János Kis translated excerpts from Franklin's writings, probably from a German collection, without ever mentioning Franklin's name. The message was important, not the man behind the ideas! Kis translated a portion of Franklin's *The Way to Wealth* as *A szegény Jakab, kinek elegendője volt* [The Poor Jacob Who Had Enough]. He included it among other moralizing essays in part four of his *Iffjúság barátja vagy Hasznosan mulattató darabok a két nembeli iffjúság számára* [A Friend to the Young or Pieces Providing Useful Entertainment for Both Sexes].²⁰ The lengthy title clearly betrayed the intention of the translator and was quite characteristic of the development of Franklin's image in Hungary. From the very beginning of the nineteenth century, the "Poor Richard" image prevailed and Franklin came to be regarded as an exemplary, virtuous personality, whose private life and principles might have a beneficial influence on the youth. In contrast to eighteenth-century thought, which celebrated Franklin the statesman and the scientist, János Kis saw in Franklin the educator of the young. This feature was to dominate the image of the great American in Hungary. Slowly but effectively it pushed the image of the politician into the background, and later into oblivion.

A more complete selection of Franklin's writings was published in 1836,²¹ the work of an anonymous compiler and translator, identified as "S.J." A twenty-two-page introduction precedes eighty-one pages of a rather random collection, based probably on a German compilation. The preface emphasized Franklin's virtues. The extremely long title suggests that the translator wished to attract all segments of society: *Franklin arany kincses ládátskája vagy Útmutatás, mikép lehet az ember munkás, okos, kedves, jólmagabíró, rényes [sic] és boldog. Mint az élet minden viszonyaiban szerfelett hasznos, véneknek és ifjaknak, de különösen az elsőeknek, nélkülözhető tanácsadót, úgy ajánlja honfitársainak S. J. Kassán 1836* [Franklin's Little Treasury Chest or Guidelines How to Be Zealous, Wise, Kind, Healthy, Virtuous and Happy.

S. J. Recommends it in Kassa to All his Countrymen as a Useful Counsellor to All Ways of Life Both to the Old and the Young, but Especially to the Former]. The title honored the spirit of contemporary Hungarian popular literature and that of *Poor Richard's Almanack*. The thirty-eighth chapter, entitled: "A szegény, öreg Richárd vagy módok, mikép lehet meggazdagodni" [Poor Richard or Ways to get Rich] rendered a more complete translation of *The Way to Wealth* than Kis's, which did not include the frame-story, Father Abraham giving advice to a gathering of people.

Lajos Szilágyi's partial translation of *The Way to Wealth, Franklin az öreg Rikárd neve alatt* [Franklin under the name of Old Richard], 1848,²² has a preface with some political implications. The translator was keenly aware of the need for a policy embodying compromise among Hungary's numerous ethnic minorities and different religions. He admired Franklin as the representative of a nation where ethnic groups lived in harmony and as a man of tolerance, and proposed to translate the *Autobiography* as well as other parts of the *Almanack*. The political overtones of the Franklin image did not disappear in nineteenth-century Hungary altogether. Intellectuals involved in political activity during the Reform Age recognized Franklin's achievements as a progressive statesman. The Transylvanian Ferenc Szilágyi, a future participant in the War of Independence of 1848-49 was busily engaged popularizing the image of Franklin. In 1818, he published a balanced Franklin biography in the periodical *Erdélyi Muzéum*.²³ It paid obeisance to the multiple activities of Franklin, and considered both the positive and negative features of his character. Another Transylvanian, the first Hungarian ever to write a travelogue on the U.S., Sándor Farkas Bölöni must be mentioned as a contributor to the Hungarian image of Franklin, the politician, with entries in the twelve-volume encyclopedia *Közhasznú Ismeretek Tára* [Encyclopedia of Useful Knowledge], and random but perceptive and informative remarks on Franklin's political activities in *Útazás Észak Amerikában* (1834) [A Journey in North America].²⁴

The climax of Franklin's impact in Hungary was Count István Széchenyi's fascination with the American statesman.²⁵ The compatibility of the two politicians' aims, ideas and achievements accounted for Széchenyi's interest in Franklin. The Hungarian Jacobins had been aware of Franklin's commitment to the public good. The same commitment attracted Széchenyi, whose father possessed a copy of Zinner's book, and the young Széchenyi may have gathered his first information about the American statesman from this work. His own library boasted

of three books on Franklin: a three-volume London edition of his works, a two-volume London edition of his correspondence, and a French collection.²⁶ He made the following entry in his *Diary* about the latter: "Ein Buch, welches auf mein ganzes Leben den größten Einfluß haben wird" [A book that will have the greatest influence on my whole life].²⁷ The book to which he alluded was only recently (1824) published in Paris by Ch. A. Renouard: *Mélanges de morale, d'économie et de politique, extraits des ouvrages de Benjamin Franklin et précédé d'une note sur sa vie* [A Moral, Economic and Political Miscellany, Excerpts from the Works of Benjamin Franklin prefaced with a note on his life]. The title with its references to morals, economics and politics, explains Széchenyi's interest. He was getting involved with Hungary's political and economic problems, and he believed that these had moral implications.

Széchenyi admired and imitated Franklin's method of exercising virtues and fighting vices.²⁸ When we ask why, we cannot overlook the fact that Franklin's success story was also that of Philadelphia and the young American Republic. Széchenyi had something similar in mind for himself and his beloved Hungary. Because he endeavored to serve his country and to play a leading public role very much like Franklin had, he must have been fascinated with the American's deliberate and conscious effort to discipline himself and to educate himself into the kind of person who could succeed in a public career. Two ideas from Széchenyi's epilogue to his *Hitel* [Credit] illustrate the compatibility of the two politicians. First Széchenyi emphasized his hatred of extremes of all sorts. He tried to describe himself as a peacemaker, a unifier searching for a middle of the road policy, Franklin's "golden mean," if you like. Széchenyi's ideas were those of a practical, pragmatic, prudent, and cautious politician. Nobody could have been more compatible with Franklin's view of the useful public figure. Said Franklin: "I even forbid myself, — the use of every word or expression in the language that imported a fixed opinion, such as *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, etc., and I adopted, instead of them, *I conceive*, *I apprehend*, or *I imagine* a thing to be so or so, — for the last fifty years no one has ever heard a dogmatical expression escape me."²⁹ In his second important statement in the epilogue to *Hitel* Széchenyi tried to focus the attention of his countrymen on a future they might shape; he begged them to turn away from the unchangeable past. Dedicated as he was to public affairs, he tried to prepare people's minds in Hungary for changes by publicizing the issues. Széchenyi emulated Franklin's example: "I endeavored to prepare the minds of people by writing on the subject in the newspapers."³⁰ They both fought for a better future by "proposing new institutions."³¹

A comparison of the list of their respective major achievements displays amazing similarities. On Franklin's side: Fire Company, Subscription Library, Orphan House, Philosophical Society, University and Hospital. On Széchenyi's side: the National Casino, the regulation of the Danube, the Chain Bridge linking Buda and Pest, and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Széchenyi's dedicated service to regenerate his country was an achievement similar to that of the Philadelphian nation-builder. Though under very different circumstances, ultimately both statesmen were involved in building a nation, Franklin in the literal sense of the word, Széchenyi indirectly but not less intensively. He certainly had the vision of a regenerated Hungary, and had a lion's share in its creation. Notwithstanding Hungary's calamity of 1849, and Széchenyi's personal tragedy, Hungary became a better country, and the Count's contribution to its development cannot be denied.

In the second half of the nineteenth century more accurate, detailed, and authentic information about Franklin came to the attention of Hungarian scholars, mainly from German and French sources. More and more original Hungarian works appeared, dealing with United States history, and all of them paid tribute to Franklin's statesmanship. The most objective and informative biography reaching Hungary was F.A.A. Mignet's *Vie de Franklin*, translated in 1874 as *Franklin élete* [Franklin's Life].³² However, this objective evaluation of the free-thinker, cautious politician, and utilitarian businessman, seems to have had little or no impact on the Hungarian Franklin image. As Franklin's appeal reached a wider audience, his image lost its public and political features. The versatile real person came to be distorted into a one-dimensional figure, an exemplary religious and virtuous idol showing people the safe and sure way to a successful personal life. In trying to assess this development, we have to consider two facts. One was the political situation in Hungary. In 1867, a political compromise was reached with the Habsburgs. Under the radically different circumstances created by the *Ausgleich*, Hungarian politicians lost interest in the United States as a democratic model state. As a result, the ardent political involvement with the young republic, so characteristic of many outstanding public figures in the Reform Age, like Sándor Farkas Bölöni, Miklós Wesselényi, István Széchenyi and Lajos Kossuth, also declined. The other important fact to be considered was the change of the Franklin image in America. As the United States entered a new phase, Franklin, the successful businessman, overshadowed Franklin, the Founding Father, and he came more and more to be identified with Poor Richard who "made good." Also, all over Europe, Franklin came

to be regarded as the archetype of the successful American businessman.

The only Hungarian contribution on Franklin in the second half of the century with some political overtones came from István Türr, a former participant in the 1848–49 War of Independence. He returned to his homeland on a pardon arranged by Queen Victoria. Türr was a freemason, hence his interest in Franklin. On the Budapesti Iparoskör's [Budapest Craftsmen's Association] request, he delivered a lecture about Franklin on 16 November 1880 to an audience of craftsmen. Türr recognized the special interest of his audience, and he talked about Franklin, the self-made man. With the number of hopeful emigrants from Hungary increasing, the image of the self-made man came more and more to be associated with America. In the same year, Türr's lecture was published as *Franklin Benjámín élete és tanairól* [On Benjamin Franklin's Life and Teachings].³³

The dominant tone of the approach to Franklin in the second half of the nineteenth century was set by László Szalay's biography, published in the series, *Statusférfiak és szónokok könyve* [Book of Statesmen and Orators] in 1850. Szalay emphasized the success-story aspect of Franklin's life. He took extremely seriously the American's concern with being and appearing honest. Franklin had written in his *Autobiography*: "In order to secure my credit and character as a tradesman, I took care not only to be in *reality* industrious and frugal, but to avoid the appearance to the contrary."³⁴ Franklin, the tradesman and businessman, was to address himself to a wide audience in Hungary during this period.

It is certainly significant that in 1854, its first year, *Vasárnapi Újság* published a translation of Franklin's "Father Abraham's Speech."³⁵ *Vasárnapi Újság* was a popular magazine published for an unsophisticated audience. Its interest in Franklin testifies to the fact that his name was a household word in Hungary, and that his appeal had shifted from the intellectuals to a less educated public. In 1873, *Vasárnapi Újság* was acquired by the Franklin Társulat [Franklin Society], founded in the same year for the purpose of popularizing knowledge in Hungary. It could not have chosen a better symbol for such an enterprise than the name of the Philadelphian who had dedicated so much energy to "conveying instruction among the people," and who had tried to disseminate knowledge through his *Almanacks*.³⁶ The contributions of the Franklin Társulat during its many decades of existence were enormous. Not surprisingly, in 1873 *Vasárnapi Újság* published János Dömötör's "Franklin Benjámín élete" [The Life of Benjamin Franklin], a biography stressing industry, honesty and success.³⁷

Another popular publication, *Kis Nemzeti Múzeum*, also propagated Franklin's image as the exemplary, successful, virtuous businessman. In its fourth number in 1873, it included what was described as a second edition of an anonymous work, "Franklin Benjámín élete és bölcsessége" [Benjamin Franklin's Life and Wisdom], a writing vying with the others in its moralizing tone.³⁸ It is noteworthy that this piece followed another moralizing story in the same issue, Heinrich Zschokke's "Goldmacherdorf" [Goldmaking Village].

All these works featured much correct information, yet distorted the true and complex Franklin image by unduly emphasizing certain features in the character and life of this many-sided personality. Since Franklin was remarkably versatile, his figure lent itself easily to distortion by eager but well-intentioned interpreters who wanted to educate the unsophisticated public. A good example of this tendency was a book written by a Lutheran minister, Vilmos Győry, entitled *Egy igaz polgár élete* [The Life of a True Citizen] in 1869. The Lutheran Society republished it in 1927 in its series "Heroes of Christianity."³⁹ This time, the title was slightly altered to *Franklin Benjámín, egy igaz polgár élete*. In the preface, Győry claimed to have based the book on Franklin's *Autobiography*. His main point was to prove that one can be simultaneously honest and rich. Claiming to have followed the *Autobiography*, Győry presented Franklin as a religious person. He certainly disregarded some of Franklin's confessions about his religious beliefs. "My indiscreet disputations about religion," the American wrote at one point, "began to make me pointed at with horror by good people as an infidel atheist." Later Franklin confessed: "I soon became a thorough Deist."⁴⁰ To describe him as a hero of Christianity was to stretch the truth exceedingly.

III

The twentieth century brought no dramatic change in Franklin's Hungarian image. Besides routine references in history and physics textbooks, he is still very much a writer for the young. The conclusion of the most recent article on Franklin in Hungary is relevant from this point of view. Katalin Halácsy ends her brief survey by saying: "That grandpa in his hexagonal specs can still teach the younger generation the way to live an honest life."⁴¹ Symbolically, the first Hungarian contribution on Franklin in the twentieth century came from an educator. On 16 May 1906 Ferenc Kemény delivered a lecture to the Magyar Tanítók Egyesülete [Hungarian Teachers' Association], titled "Frank-

lin Benjámín.” The lecture was later published in *Magyar Pedagógia*.⁴² Kemény drew a realistic image of Franklin the pedagogue, the self-educated man, a person concerned with universal education, including women. The Teachers’ Association’s special interests naturally limited Kemény’s approach to only one aspect of the versatile Franklin.

It was Franklin, the public figure, who got lost somewhere along the way. Consequently, it was refreshing to see Franklin linked with Washington in the most detailed twentieth-century analysis of his personality in Lajos Joób’s *Washington és Franklin*, published in 1910.⁴³ Being a free-mason, the author’s interest in Franklin was self-evident. The great merit of Joób’s 186-page biography lay in its emphasis on the many-sidedness of Franklin’s career. The author did not curtail the Franklin image to any particular endeavor, though he stressed the features most compatible with his own attitudes. Joób’s contribution was unique in Hungary.

The twentieth century has seen several editions of Franklin’s works and some biographies published, mainly for the young. Following a long line of more or less complete translations of *The Way to Wealth* (usually included in various compilations of moralizing pieces), a separate edition appeared in 1914, *A gazdagodás útja amint azt a szegény Richárd, egy pennsylvániai kalendáriumban világosan megmutatja* [The Way to Wealth as Clearly Shown by Poor Richard in a Pennsylvanian Almanac].⁴⁴ In his preface, Mihály Láng, the translator, quoted several pages from the *Autobiography* which referred to *Poor Richard’s Almanack*.

In spite of the many allusions to, and occasional quotations from the *Autobiography*, no Hungarian translation of Franklin’s work was published before 1921. Pál Pruzsinszky produced the first Hungarian version, *Franklin Benjámín önéletrajza* [Benjamin Franklin’s *Autobiography*], sponsored by the Franklin Society.⁴⁵ The book’s preface was a further contribution to the distorted image of an exemplary, virtuous man. Very soon after, Ödön Wildner published a second translation under the same title.⁴⁶ Neither of these translations was complete. The first full translation had to wait until 1961. In *Franklin Benjámín számadása életéről* [Benjamin Franklin’s *Account of His Life*], Tibor Bartos produced an excellent version of this early masterpiece of American literature.⁴⁷ The translation did not necessarily mean any increased interest in Franklin. It was due rather to the endeavor in the 1960’s and 1970’s to compensate for the serious neglect in making American masterpieces accessible to Hungarian readers. A Magyar version of the *Autobiography* certainly was long overdue.

Bartos’s translation of that work marked the climax. What remains

to be said is rather on the negative side. Early in the century, *Vasárnapi Újság* dutifully tried to revive interest in Franklin with a short biography, *Franklin Benjámín élete* [Benjamin Franklin's Life].⁴⁸ Later, fictional biographies by well-known German and French novelists were made available in translation. In 1948, the Franklin Society published *Franklin, egy optimista élete*, translated from André Maurois's *Franklin, la vie d'un optimiste* [Franklin, Life of an Optimist].⁴⁹ The book was intended for children. Lion Feuchtwanger's *Füchse im Weinberg* was translated three times,⁵⁰ in 1948 by Ferenc László as *Állanférfiak, cselszövők, bohémek* [Statesmen, Schemers, Bohemians], in 1953 by Győző Határ as *Rókák a szőlőskertben* [Foxes in the Vineyard], and in 1963 by Tibor Déry as *Rókák a szőlőben* [Foxes in the Vineyard]. The Franklin Society may have chosen Maurois's book because of its subject, but the interest in *Füchse im Weinberg* was evidently prompted by Feuchtwanger's fame rather than Franklin's.

The original Hungarian contributions to Franklin biographies were intended for children, thus for a limited audience. In 1957, Endre Sós presented an elderly Franklin narrating his life, in *Aki az égtől elragadta a villámot* [The Man Who Took the Lightning from Heaven].⁵¹ An abridged version of the same book appeared in 1970, co-authored with Magda Vámos, and with a new title, *Franklin vagyok Philadélfiaiból* [I am Franklin from Philadelphia].⁵² The book was rewritten in order to accommodate the series "Nagy emberek élete" [Lives of Great Men].

Though Hungary dutifully celebrates all the commemorations recommended by the International Peace Council, the 1956 Franklin Year produced nothing of any importance. An article by Antal Mátyás, "Franklin Benjámín közgazdasági nézetei" [Benjamin Franklin's Economic Views]⁵³ commands interest, because it attempted to establish Franklin among the forerunners of Marxism. His versatility may have lent itself to various interpretations and distortions, but it is difficult to see him as an early Marxist.

In the twentieth century, Franklin's image underwent great changes in America. The contradictions and ambiguities in his personality were exposed, and explored, and consequently, a complex, sometimes controversial figure emerged. What makes the present Hungarian image so inadequate is the lack of any honest attempt to construct a complex image of a truly great historical personality. Marxists could hardly be expected to appreciate Franklin, the successful businessman, but Franklin, the participant in the American War of Independence, should still command their interest, even if he was not a revolutionary. The

contradictions and paradoxes in his character lend themselves easily to a dialectical interpretation and his negative views on religion must endear him to all Marxists. Indeed, it is surprising that no Hungarian Marxist has taken up the challenge to present a Marxist view of Benjamin Franklin.

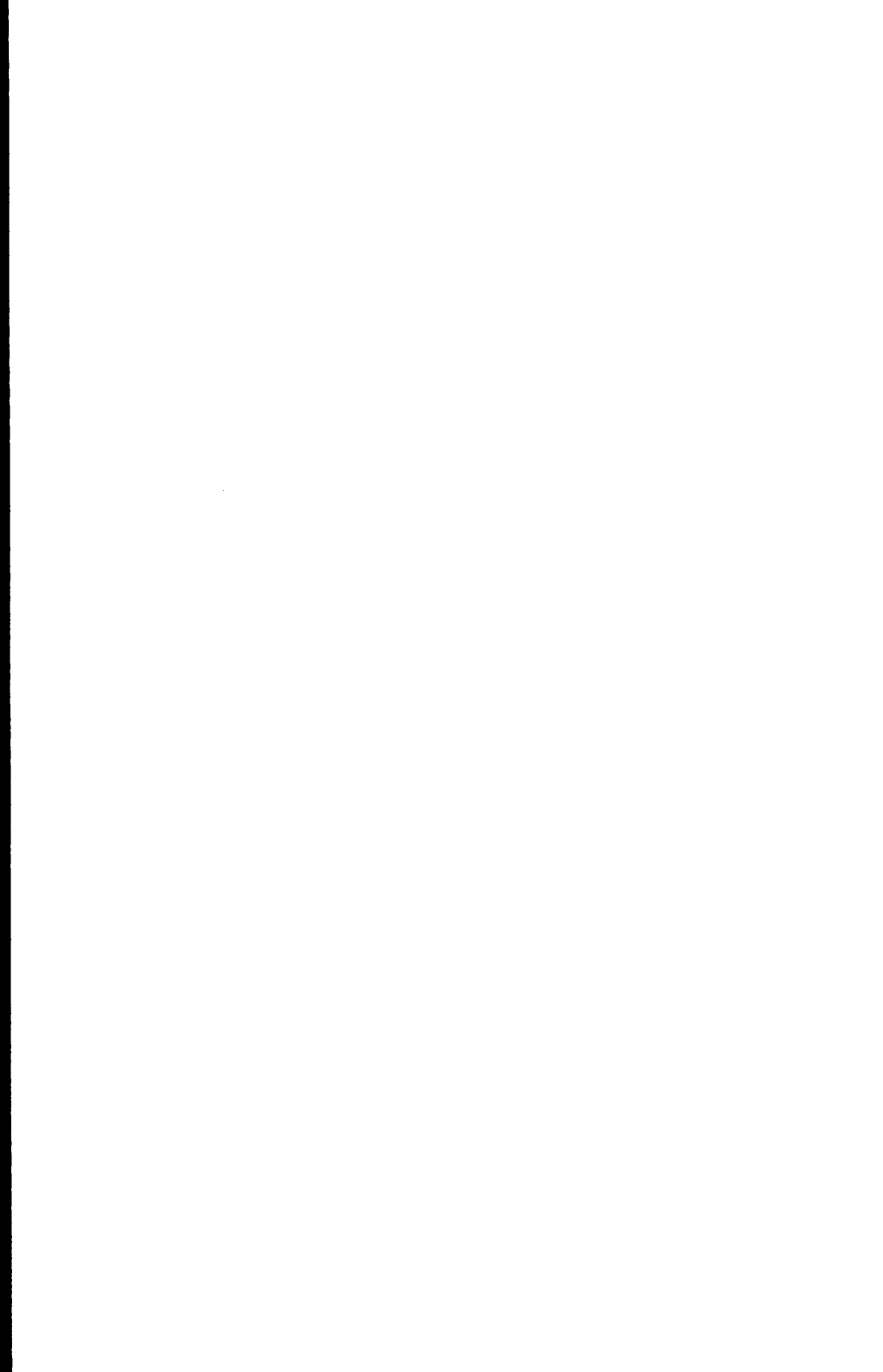
To sum up, in the Hungarian reception of Franklin we can discern a pattern of a changing image matching a changing audience. Franklin's extreme versatility has enabled different ages and different audiences to choose those aspects in his character which most closely corresponded with their needs. At no time has Franklin been presented to Hungarians in his full complexity. In the eighteenth century he attracted only members of the intellectual élite. They respected and admired him as an outstanding scientist and as an exceptional public figure who devoted his life to the public weal. This image survived in the nineteenth century among some of the greatest Hungarian patriots, such as Bölöni, and Széchenyi. But the nineteenth century also witnessed the broadening of Franklin's appeal on the social scale. Hand in hand with this development came a definite change in emphasis in the evaluation of Franklin. The scientist and the politician were replaced by the Poor Richard image. His personal success story overshadowed his contribution to the public good. Those trying to popularize the exemplary, virtuous Franklin cited *The Way to Wealth* rather than the entire *Poor Richard's Almanack*. This is a pity. Whereas Father Abraham's Speech championed only the prudent and sober virtues of hard work and thrift, the *Almanack* covered much wider ground. Besides disseminating knowledge and encouraging private virtues, Franklin also tried to educate people to be good citizens: "Nature expects Mankind whould share/ The Duties of the publick Care."⁵⁴ In nineteenth century Hungary, the colorful, many-sided, flesh-and-blood Franklin was whittled down and distorted into a symbol of bourgeois virtues. No attempt was made in the twentieth century either to revitalize or rectify the Franklin image. Though Franklin would never have denied those virtues, they were only a part of his many-sided character. After all, he spent twenty years in establishing himself as a businessman, and forty in serving the public good. It is this combination and this proportion which make Franklin an uncomfortable figure and an unlikely idol in today's Communist Hungary.

NOTES

1. Henry Bamford Parkes, *The American Experience* (New York: Random House, 1959), p. 62.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 62–63.
3. Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography* (New York: Lancer Books, 1968), pp. 237–238.
4. The original, dated January 13, 1777, is among the Benjamin Franklin Papers in the American Philosophical Society's Library.
5. Jared Sparks (ed.), *The Works of Benjamin Franklin* (Boston: Tappan and Whittemore, 1836) 8: 303–304. The "Royal Academy" may be a reference to the university founded in Nagyszombat by Cardinal Péter Pázmány in 1635 and operating between 1777 and 1790 in Buda.
6. Franklin Papers, no. 2616, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
7. István Gál, "Zinner János kassai professzor, Benjámín Franklin barátja és amerikai függetlenségi dokumentum-gyűjteménye 1782-ből" [John Zinner, Professor in Kassa, Benjamin Franklin's Friend and His Collection of Documents about the American War of Independence from 1782], *Irodalmi Szemle* 13 (1970): 638–644.
8. Johann Zinner, *Merkwürdige Briefe und Schriften der berühmtesten Generäle in America, nebst derselben beygefügeten Lebensbeschreibungen* (Augsburg, 1782).
9. *The Works of Benjamin Franklin*, 8: 303–304.
10. Oszkár Szimán, "Az első magyar nyelvű könyv az elektromosságról" [The First Hungarian Book on Electricity], *Fizikai Szemle* 10 (Aug. 1960): 252–255.
11. *A Mennykőnek mivoltáról s eltávozásáról való böltelkedés melyet deák nyelven írt, és most jeles másolásokkal és toldalékokkal megjobbitott Makó Pál, magyarázta pedig Révai Miklós.* [Consideration on the nature and departure of lightning, written in Latin, and now improved with excellent illustrations and supplements, by Pál Makó and translated by Miklós Révai]. Pozsony and Kassa: Mihály Landerer, 1781. See Francis S. Wagner, "The Start of Cultural Exchanges between the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the American Philosophical Society," *The Hungarian Quarterly* 5 (April–June, 1965): 91.
12. *Mercur von Ungarn* (1786), p. 977.
13. Jolán Zemplén, *A magyarországi fizika története a XVIII. században* [History of Physics in Eighteenth-Century Hungary] (Budapest, 1964), p. 47.
14. Kálmán Benda (ed.), *A magyar jakobinusok iratai: Naplók, följegyzések, röpiratok* [The Hungarian Jacobins' Documents: Diaries, Notes, Leaflets] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1952–1957) 1: 139. On this subject see also Denis Silagi, *Jakobiner in der Habsburger Monarchie: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des aufgeklärten Absolutismus* (Vienna: Herold, 1962), and Paul Bódy, "The Hungarian Jacobin Conspiracy of 1794–95," *Journal of Central European Affairs* 22 (1962): 3–26.
15. Benda, *op. cit.*, 2: 359.
16. *Ibid.*, 1: 354.
17. Csokonai Vitéz Mihály, *Minden munkája* [Complete Works], ed. Balázs Vargha, 2 vols. (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1973), 2: 809–810.
18. *Hadi és más Nevezetes Történetek*, December 10, 1790; *Bétsi Magyar Kurir*, July 29, 1790.

19. Béla Dezsényi and György Nemes, *A magyar sajtó 250 éve* [Two Hundred and Fifty Years of the Hungarian Press] (Budapest: Művelt Nép Könyvkiadó, 1954), p. 30.
20. Published in Pest by Trattner, 1816.
21. Published in Pest in 1836.
22. Published by Lajos Tichy in Nagyvárad in 1848.
23. *Erdélyi Muzéum* (1818), pp. 20–78.
24. Sándor Farkas Bölöni, *Utazás Észak Amerikában* (Kolozsvár, 1834).
25. On this subject see George Barany, *Stephen Széchenyi and the Awakening of Hungarian Nationalism, 1791–1841* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968); István Gál, “Széchenyi and the U.S.A.,” *Hungarian Studies in English* 5 (1971): 95–119.
26. László Szabó Bártfa (ed.), *Gróf Széchenyi István könyvtára* [Count István Széchenyi’s Library] (Budapest: 1873).
27. *Széchenyi Naplói* [Diaries], ed. Gyula Vizsota, 2 vols. (Budapest: 1926–1939) 2: 537.
28. *Ibid.*, 2: 716–721.
29. Franklin, *Autobiography*, pp. 135–136.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
32. F. A. Mignet, *Franklin élete*, trans. Attila De Gerando (Budapest: Kis Nemzeti Múzeum, 1874).
33. István Türr, *Franklin Benjámín élete és tanairól* (Budapest: Légrády testvérek, 1880).
34. Franklin, *Autobiography*, p. 107.
35. *Vasárnapi Újság* (1854): 238.
36. Franklin, *Autobiography*, p. 142.
37. *Vasárnapi Újság*, April 16, 1873.
38. *Franklin Benjámín élete és hőlcessége* (Budapest: Kis Nemzeti Múzeum, No. 4, 1873).
39. Vilmos Györy, *Egy igaz polgár élete* (Pest: Corvina Könyvkiadó Társulat, 1869); *Franklin Benjámín, egy igaz polgár élete* (Budapest: Luther Társaság, 1927).
40. Franklin, *Autobiography*, pp. 36 and 92.
41. Katalin Halácsy, “Benjamin Franklin’s Image in Hungary,” *The New Hungarian Quarterly* 17 (Winter, 1976): 121–25.
42. Ferenc Kemény, “Franklin Benjámín,” *Magyar Pedagógia*, 1906.
43. Lajos Joób, *Washington és Franklin* (Budapest: Kilián, 1910).
44. *A gazdagodás útja, amint azt a szegény Richárd egy pennsylvaniai kalendáriumában világosan megmutatja*, trans. Mihály Láng (Budapest: 1914).
45. *Franklin Benjámín önéletrajza*, trans. Pál Pruzsinszky (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1921).
46. *Franklin Benjámín önéletrajza*, trans. Ödön Wildner (Budapest: Rózsavölgyi és Társa, 1927).
47. *Franklin Benjámín számadása életéről*, trans. Tibor Bartos (Budapest: Európa, 1961).
48. The biography appeared in the series “Vasárnapi könyv könyvtára” [Sunday Books’ Library] in 1921.
49. André Maurois, *Egy optimista élete*, trans. Mária Várady (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1948).
50. Lion Feuchtwanger, *Államférfiak, cselszövők, bohémek*, trans. Ferenc László (Budapest: Nova, 1948); *Róák a szőlőskertben*, trans. Győző Határ (Budapest: Új Múza Kiadó, 1953, reprinted 1956, 1958); *Róák a szőlőben*, trans.

- Tibor Déry (Budapest: Európa, 1963, reprinted, 1967). Some of the reprints appeared under a title originally used by another translator.
51. Endre Sós, *Aki az égtől elragadta a villámot: Franklin Benjámín életregénye* (Budapest: Móra Kiadó, 1957).
 52. Endre Sós and Magda Vámos, *Franklin vagyok Philadelphiából* (Budapest: Móra Kiadó, 1970).
 53. Antal Mátyás, "Franklin Benjámín közgazdasági nézetei," *Közgazdasági Szemle* 3 (1956): 453–460.
 54. Benjamin Franklin (publ.), *The Complete Poor Richard Almanacks*, reproduced in facsimile (Barre, Mass.: The Imprint Society, 1970), p. 205.



REVIEW ARTICLES

A Traditional Historian's View of Hungarian History

S. B. Vardy

Küldetés. A magyarság története [Mission. The History of the Magyars]. By Ferenc Somogyi. (A magyar öntudat forrásai/The Sources of Hungarian Consciousness I.) Cleveland, Ohio: Karpat Publishing Company, 1973. 656 pp. Numerous maps, illustrations, tables, \$12.00.

To write a brief factual account of an institution's history is not an insurmountable task for a trained historian. Many of them can also produce respectable monographs on limited topics — be these biographies of historical figures, or detailed studies on limited problems in history. To produce a major and complex synthesis of a nation's history, however, is quite another matter. Usually, only mature scholars can tackle such undertakings with a reasonable hope of success. Not that others have not made such attempts. But the results were usually feeble chronological summaries, with little or no understanding of the forces and major trends of the nation's history.

If we look back in the history of Hungarian historical studies, starting with the emergence of "scientific" historiography in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, we note that only a handful of major (mostly multivolumed) syntheses of Hungarian historical developments have appeared. These were written either by such exceptionally gifted historians as L. Szalay (1813–1864), M. Horváth (1809–1878), I. Acsády (1845–1906), H. Marczali (1856–1940), B. Hóman (1885–1951) and G. [J.] Szekfű (1883–1955), or by a group of outstanding scholars under the direction of a gifted organizer, such as S. Szilágyi (1827–1899).¹ The most exceptional among these summaries was undoubtedly Hóman's and Szekfű's joint eight-volume (later five-volume) *Magyar History* (1928–1934),² which is still to be surpassed in its sheer brilliance as a synthesis of Hungarian historical developments.

In addition to these really outstanding multivolumed syntheses, Hungarian historians have also produced a number of significant shorter summaries. Some of the better interwar examples include the worthy popular syntheses by such scholars as S. Domanovszky (1877–1955), F. Eckhart (1885–1957), M. Asztalos (b. 1899) and S. Pethő (1885–1940), I. Szabó (1898–1969), and D. Kosáry (b. 1913).³ A number of these also appeared in one or more of the Western languages. But it was Kosáry's *A History of Hungary* (1941) that became perhaps the most popular short summary of Hungarian history in the Anglo-Saxon world.

The trend set by the above scholars in the area of short one or two-volume syntheses was discontinued after 1945 in Hungary. Marxist historiography initiated the age of collective syntheses. Some of these are major undertakings, such as the four-volume university textbook (1961–1975),⁴ the two-volume popular synthesis edited by the “father” of Hungarian Marxist historiography, E. Molnár (1894–1966),⁵ and published in three separate editions since 1964, or the ten-volume *History of Hungary*, now under preparation by the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.⁶ There are also a few shorter popular syntheses.⁷ But whether short or long, they all reflect the collective view of Hungarian Marxist historiography, and not the personal interpretation of the author or the authors. True, these interpretations have become quite sophisticated and of high quality in recent years, but they all have to reflect the Marxist view of history.

The situation is different in Western historiography on Hungary, where the traditions set by the individual interwar interpreters of history were continued by such scholars as D. Sinor (b. 1917) and C. A. Macartney (b. 1895). Moreover, during the late 1960's Kosáry's popular history also reappeared with a sizable addition by the present author.⁸ It is to be lamented that none of the above scholars went ahead to produce a major multivolumed synthesis of Hungarian historical developments. That, however, may still be in the making.

In addition to the above English language summaries, Hungarian scholars in the West have also produced a number of small Magyar language syntheses of Hungarian history. Until recently, the most noteworthy of these was G. [J.] Miskolczy's *The History of the Hungarian People* (1956).⁹ But this work covers the history of the Magyars only between the Battle of Mohács in 1526, when the medieval Hungarian state fell to the Ottoman Turks, and the First World War. Of the other Magyar language summaries Ö. Málnási's *The Candid History of the Hungarian Nation* (1959) is closer to a political or publicistic tract than

to a detached history.¹⁰ The multi-authored *Hungarian History* by M. Ferdinandy, G. Miskolczy, S. Gallus and B. Szász, on the other hand, was prepared basically for use as a textbook on the secondary school level.¹¹ Thus, one who wished to read a scholarly and non-Marxist summary of the whole course of Hungarian history in the Magyar language on a higher than secondary level, had to turn to one of the difficult-to-get interwar syntheses.

The situation remained unchanged until three years ago, when Ferenc Somogyi's *Küldetés* [Mission] appeared. Professor Somogyi's work is the first more-than-cursory attempt in the last three decades by a non-Marxist Hungarian scholar to summarize the whole course of Hungarian history in the Magyar language. Naturally, he undertook this task from the vantage point of an idealist, rather than a materialist philosophy of history. Yet, while breaking sharply with the philosophy that rules current historical scholarship in Hungary, Somogyi made great efforts to take into consideration the most recent developments and results of Hungarian historical sciences.

Even a cursory glance will tell the reader that Somogyi's *Küldetés* is the result of long years of research, meditation and teaching. It is the product of a scholar who started out as a legal historian at the University of Pécs in Hungary during the 1930's, and then ended up as a socio-cultural historian in the United States.¹² His synthesis is basically the refined version of his lectures on Hungarian social, cultural and political history that he delivered during the 1950's and the 1960's, both at St. Stephen's Free University, as well as Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.¹³ Thus, it is not the esoteric work of a secluded research scholar, but rather the product of a teaching historian who had devoted long years of his life toward making the history of the Magyars comprehensible to an audience that had little or no background knowledge about Hungary. This is demonstrated both by the structure, as well as by the content of the work.

Structurally, Somogyi's *Küldetés* is divided into five parts, each of which is sub-divided into a certain number of chapters. Each of the five parts deals with a different problem area or phase of Hungarian history, which fit into Somogyi's conception of Hungarian historical evolution. The five parts contain fifty-one chapters, which adds up to roughly twenty-five chapters or lectures per semester.

Contentwise, the five chapters in Part I are devoted to such fundamental matters as the nature of civilization, history, and man, the development of human civilization, the nature of the Eurasian nomadic empires and their relationship to the sedentary civilization of Europe.

The seven chapters in Part II start out with a discussion of the ethnic and linguistic development of the Magyars, continue with their proto-history before the conquest of the Carpathian Basin, and finally end up in the conquest itself and the subsequent establishment of the medieval Christian Hungarian Kingdom. This part contains much that is new in Hungarian proto-historical scholarship. Professor Somogyi even considers — and then basically discards — the so-called “theory of the Sumerian origins of the Magyars,” which has been proposed by a number of mostly self-trained historians and linguists, and enjoys considerable popularity among the general public.¹⁴ Somogyi’s coverage is particularly good in the area of the socio-political system, and the material and spiritual culture of the Magyars. This reader would have probably given more attention to the theory of the “double conquest” proposed by Professor G. László in Hungary, which holds that the “Late Avars” of 671 were in fact Magyars.¹⁵ He would also have discussed the institution of the “double kingship,” and along with it the role of Prince Kurszán as the supreme, if perhaps nominal ruler of the conquering Magyars.¹⁶ Attention may also have been given to the theory of “Southern” Moravia, proposed by Professor I. Boba of the University of Washington,¹⁷ and to G. László’s theory of the possibility of two separate Moravias in the ninth century. But these developments are so recent, and their acceptance or non-acceptance so tenuous, that their inclusion may simply have confused the readers. Certainly none of the relatively recent Western syntheses have anything to say about them.

The remaining three sections (Parts III–V) of Professor Somogyi’s *Küldetés* deal with the history of the close to nine and a half centuries since the death of Hungary’s first Christian king, St. Stephen, in 1038. Part III covers the period between 1038 and 1433, Part IV the period between 1433 and 1699, and Part V the period from 1699 to our own days.

The above periodization of Hungarian history is rather unorthodox. The usual dates are connected with the Christianization of Hungary in 1000 A.D., and the destruction of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom by the Ottoman Turks in 1526. But in Somogyi’s view of Hungarian historical evolution, his new periodization scheme does make a great deal of sense. For the foundation of medieval Hungary was basically a long process that began with the Magyar conquest and came to fulfillment with the rule of St. Stephen. Thus, his death can in fact be regarded as the end of that foundation process, which established her firmly in the community of European states.

The next turning point in Somogyi's scheme — King Sigismund's coronation as Holy Roman Emperor in 1433 — is perhaps less easily understood and defensible. But in his scheme it still falls into place. It was roughly around that date when Hungary assumed her "mission" as one of the main defenders of Europe and Christianity against the Ottoman Empire and Islam. In fact, from the mid-fifteenth century on, the primary determining factor in Hungary's history was the advancing Ottoman Turkish power, or more specifically, the Ottoman-Christian duel that was shaping up and fought for the next two and a half centuries largely on Hungarian soil.

The Turkish presence in Hungary ended basically with the Peace Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699. This treaty also initiated a new chapter in Hungary's history, and set her upon a new course that was characterized by a growing search for national self-determination. This Hungarian "search for freedom" is the dominant theme of the fifth and final section of Somogyi's synthesis. It is a theme that characterized Hungarian history under Habsburg rule, as well as during the past six decades, when the Magyars were subjected to German and Russian pressure and domination.

Throughout his coverage of the history of the past one thousand years, the author pays considerable attention to Hungarian constitutional, social and cultural developments — which is completely in harmony with his interest and his scholarly background.

In addition to what has already been said, the dominant themes that run through Somogyi's synthesis are his religiosity and his belief in the ordained mission of his nation. Undoubtedly, this is an idealist view, which, if combined with his traditionalism, may not appeal to many of the so-called "modern" historians. But it is a respectable view, that may even be called "refreshing" in this age when the historical sciences are dominated by various far-out materialist, quantitative, psychohistorical, and a multitude of other "modernistic," but also hopelessly chaotic and mostly ephemeral orientations.

Somogyi's text of about 550 pages is supplemented by nearly 100 pages of appended material. These include linguistic and genealogical tables, lists of Hungary's monarchs, statesmen and prime ministers, ruling princes of Transylvania, the number and names of counties at various stages of Hungary's administrative development, as well as a detailed name and subject index. There are also a number of maps and illustrations in the text itself.

No single historian agrees with all of the conclusions and approaches of another historian. And this will also be the fate of Professor So-

mogyi's synthesis of Hungarian history. The views and conclusions he presents here are the results of his own experiences in the study of Hungarian history. But whatever one's agreement or disagreement, the *Küldetés* is a worthy synthesis of Hungarian historical evolution that deserves the attention of all historians. It combines the more traditional and idealist philosophy of its author with the up-to-date research results of Hungarian historical sciences, and does so with the needed scholarly detachment, and without prior ideological commitment to any deterministic philosophy. Should it ever be published in an English version in a slightly revised form, it could serve as a healthy idealist counterpart to the recent English language Marxist synthesis of Hungarian history that appeared under the editorship of E. Pamlényi.¹⁸

NOTES

1. László Szalay, *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary], 6 vols. (Leipzig, 1852–1854 and Pest, 1857–1895); Mihály Horváth, *Magyarország történelme* [History of Hungary], 6 vols. (Pest, 1860–1863; 2nd ed., 8 vols., 1871–1873); Ignác Acsády, *A magyar birodalom története* [The History of the Hungarian Empire], 2 vols. (Budapest, 1903–1904); Henrik Marczali, *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary] (Budapest, 1911); Bálint Hóman and Gyula Szekfű, *Magyar történet* [Magyar History], 8 vols. (Budapest, 1928–1934; 7th ed., 5 vols., 1941–1943); and Sándor Szilágyi, ed., *A Magyar nemzet története* [The History of the Hungarian Nation], 10 vols. (Budapest, 1895–1898). The main Hungarian authors of the latter volumes were: H. Marczali, A. Pór, G. Schönherr, V. Fraknoi, I. Acsády, D. Angyal, G. Ballagi, S. Márki, and G. Beksics.
2. See above.
3. Alexander Domanovszky, *Die Geschichte Ungarns* (München and Leipzig, 1923); Ferenc Eckhart, *Magyarország története* (Budapest, 1933) and its English version, *A Short History of the Hungarian People* (London, 1931); Miklós Asztalos and Sándor Pethő, *A magyar nemzet története* [The History of the Hungarian Nation] (Budapest, 1933); István Szabó, *A magyarság életrajza* (Budapest, 1941), and its German version: Stefan Szabó, *Ungarisches Volk. Geschichte und Wandlung* (Budapest and Leipzig, 1944); and Dominic G. Kosáry, *A History of Hungary* (Cleveland and New York, 1941).
4. *Magyarország története. Egyetemi tankönyv* [History of Hungary. University Textbook], 4 vols. to date (Budapest, 1961–1975). Of the four volumes, the first deals with Hungarian history up to 1526, the second between 1526 and 1790, the third between 1790 and 1849, and the fourth between 1849 and 1918. The authors and editors include well over a dozen prominent Hungarian scholars.
5. *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary], ed. Erik Molnár, 2 vols. (Budapest, 1964; 2nd ed., 1967; 3rd ed., 1975).

6. *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary], editor-in-chief Zsigmond Pál Pach, projected 10 vols. (Budapest, 1976-). So far only vol. 8 dealing with the interwar period (1918–1945) has appeared in print under the editorship of György Ránki. It is a massive volume of 1,400 pages.
7. *A magyar nép története* [The History of the Hungarian People], G. Heckenast *et al.* (Budapest, 1951; 3rd ed. 1953); *A magyar nép története* [The History of the Hungarian People], E. Pamlényi *et al.*, 2 small vols. (Budapest, 1954); and Mátyás Unger and Ottó Szabolcs, *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary] (Budapest, 1965; 2nd ed., 1976).
8. Dominic G. Kosáry and Steven B. Várdy, *History of the Hungarian Nation* (Astor Park, Florida, 1969). Várdy added the section on the period between 1918 and 1968.
9. Gyula Miskolczi, *A magyar nép történelme a mohácsi véstől az első világháborúig* [The History of the Hungarian People from the Battle of Mohács till World War I] (Rome, 1956).
10. Ödön Málnási, *A magyar nemzet őszinte története* [The Candid History of the Hungarian Nation], 2nd ed. (Munich, 1959).
11. Mihály Ferdinándy, Gyula Miskolczi, Sándor Gallus and Béla Szász, *Magyar történelem* [Hungarian History] (Cleveland, 1957).
12. On Ferenc Somogyi, see S. B. Várdy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography* [East European Monographs, No. 17] (Boulder and New York, 1976), pp. 192, 195, 274, 275.
13. On Somogyi's activities in Cleveland see S. B. Várdy, "Hungarian Studies at American and Canadian Universities," *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies*, vol. II, no. 2 (Fall 1975), pp. 104–105.
14. For two English language works on this theory see Ida Bobula, *Origin of the Hungarian Nation* (Gainesville, Florida, 1968), and Sándor Nagy, *The Forgotten Cradle of the Hungarian Culture* (Toronto, 1973).
15. Gyula László's most significant relevant works are: *Hunor és Magyar nyomában* [In search of Hunor and Magyar] (Budapest, 1967); *A honfoglalókról* [About the Conquerors] (Budapest, 1973); and *Vértesszőlőstől Pusztaszerig* [From Vértesszőlős to Pusztaszer] (Budapest, 1974).
16. György Györffy first came up with the idea of the "double kingship" and Kurszán in 1955 in his study entitled "Kurszán és Kurszán vára" [Kurszán and the Castle of Kurszán], in *Budapest régiségei*, vol. 16 (Budapest, 1955), pp. 9–40, which he later republished in his *Tanulmányok a magyar állam eredetéről* [Studies on the Origins of the Hungarian State] (Budapest, 1959).
17. See Imre Boba's two works: *Nomads, Northmen and Slavs* (The Hague, 1967), and *Moravia's History Reconsidered* (The Hague, 1971).
18. *A History of Hungary*, ed. Ervin Pamlényi, translated by László Boros, *et al.* [Compiled under the auspices of the History Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences] (London, 1975). This work is basically a shortened and revised version of the work listed in note 5.



The Folk Traditions of Rural Hungary A Photographic Record

Veronika Gervers-Molnár

Elindultam világ útján: magyar népszokások [I Set Out on the Highway of the World: Hungarian Folk Customs]. By Péter Korniss. With a preface by Sándor Csoóri, and ethnographical notes by Ferenc Novák. Budapest: Corvina (1975). ISBN 963 13 1051 5.

Hungarian folk culture, customs, and art have been studied extensively by scholars since the mid-nineteenth century, and have been a major subject taught in the departments of ethnography at several Hungarian universities. The richness of this culture has inspired writers, musicians, dancers and other artists as well as enthusiastic amateurs, who all found in it a Source, a 'Fountain of Life'. On the other hand, the material culture has been carefully collected by museums, and the folklore preserved in writing and on tapes. Against this background, Korniss' volume stands out as a new and possibly last effective attempt to save the essence of Hungarian rural life and the reality of folk customs.

Korniss, a photographer of exceptional talent with a particular interest in human subjects, introduces the "reader" of his book to a selection of traditional customs, still alive in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in eleven photographic essays of over a hundred pictures. Some of these essays are connected to the great religious festivities of the year, Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, which recall the theatrical plays of the Middle Ages as well as certain elements of a much earlier, pre-Christian past. Other customs, which to a great extent survived in children's games, are purely pagan in character. In a few essays, the emphasis is on such major events in a human's life as marriage and death; while elsewhere the secular festivities of rural life are depicted, as the harvest of the grapes, the 'dance house', or the ceremonial dressing of a young girl for Sunday.

Illustration on opposite page: Shepherd from Szék [Sic]. Kolozs County [Jud. Cluj], Transylvania, Romania. 1967.



After a plain title page, each essay is presented to us without words. Everything is concentrated into series of black and white photographs, which have and need no captions. Korniss' pictures have an incredible capacity to depict the events as well as the sentiments of all participants. Though they are still photographs, they contain all the movements of the happenings. The viewer senses the slowness or quickness of the dance at the 'dance house', and can hear the rhythm of the music. One feels the splash from the full buckets of water with which young men drench village girls on the morning of Easter Monday, a custom which preserves the rites of an ancient fertility cult to celebrate the coming of spring.

We are also introduced to innumerable faces of old and young among the many different types of Hungarians. Each of these faces is caught in a special enduring moment, and each expresses the lively, human background in which these beautiful, old customs have survived for centuries, if not for millenia. In a 'dance house' of Szék village in Transylvania, we feel the excitement and anticipation of girls and young men, their happiness at being together and of dancing, the origin or constancy of a romance, the sadness or uncertainty of some, and the half-formed desires and wishes towards the unknown. We see the paid musicians playing, apparently unconcerned, in a corner of the room; a lonely man dancing a solo; and those shining eyes which discover each other at the petroleum light in the semi-dark house.

In another essay, we sense the deep feeling of sadness and mourning over the dead, and the bareness of the cemeteries. In the small Transdanubian village of Csököly, we see a group of old women dressed in white linen garments. The tradition of white mourning, which has also survived in parts of nearby northern Yugoslavia, is well known from ethnographical studies. But Korniss' pictures are the first to show the Csököly women in their somewhat unusual white mourning outfit, not as a curiosity, but as an expression of the tragic dignity of mourning and remembrance. Looking at the old women praying together at home, or going through the village towards the cemetery, one cannot help but recall Dürer's vivid description of an Antwerp procession in 1520, in which widows walked together in white garments:

A very large company of widows also took part in this procession. They support themselves with their own hands and observe a special rule.

Illustration on opposite page: Women mourning in white. Csököly, Somogy County, Hungary. 1970.



They were all dressed from head to foot in white linen garments, made expressly for the occasion, very sorrowful to see. Among them I saw some very stately persons.

Indeed, the origins of the white mourning outfit of Csököly go back to a medieval western European tradition.

In contrast to the Csököly custom, the funeral of a young man from Rimóc is shown in the almost total blackness of the night. Alongside his open coffin, mounted at home, black mourners pray and sing their monotonous chants while slowly counting the beads of their rosaries. In their black head-kerchiefs pulled over their faces, and with their hands — rough from work — clasped in prayer, these women are the motionless guardians of the dead, since the body may never be left alone before interment. All this is unforgettable for, quite apart from the funeral, the figures in the photographs become symbols of death and sadness.

The customs and events which Korniss portrays in his book have been photographed by innumerable photographers, ethnographers, and amateurs since the early days of the camera. Many such pictures have been published in both popular and scholarly works, or were exhibited, and made into postcards. Korniss, however, is the first and only photographer to succeed in catching the very essence of Hungarian country life, and to depict it with the reality of which only the camera is capable. Yet there is more to these pictures than photographic equipment and skill. Korniss works at the highest level of artistic sensitivity and with great technical know-how. Instead of forming a new and particular photographic style, he allows the liveliness of his subjects to overcome “composition”, “construction”, cut-outs and enlarged details, and the use of different lenses for various effects. Indeed, while he has obviously used all the possibilities of his camera and of his profession, we are not aware of the “photographic” side of his pictures, but rather identify ourselves with the people in them.

Individual depictions of special moments have been done by many photographers throughout the world past and present. Their “results” can often be compared to the sensitivity and skill of Korniss. But instead of catching the beauty or interest of an occasional moment, Korniss devoted himself to the depiction of a series of individual themes within a single setting. The result is a continuous photographic story of Life through the traditional customs of villages in Hungary and Transylvania.

Illustration on opposite page: The rites of Easter Monday. Acsa, Pest County, Hungary. 1970.



Because of the economic and social changes of this century, and particularly the drastic changes of the last few decades, the life style and ancient customs of the past are on their way out in Hungary, as almost everywhere else in the world. The abandonment of villages by the young in search of the financial and material advantages of the cities and industrialization, and the speed of transportation and communication are cutting the life line of old traditions. These traditions are already almost extinct in most places where "culture" has been exchanged for "civilization". In fact it is surprising that Korniss was able to find so many lively "fossils" of the past. But all these glimpses of rural life are on the wane. Some activities, still common only a decade ago, have now disappeared. Many of the photographs in the volume could not be taken again.

The photographic record, which Korniss provides, is of invaluable significance in exhibiting the human aspects and realities of traditions, which heretofore were only preserved through the frequently unimaginative, generalizing nature of ethnographical studies. Korniss' approach with the camera recalls the work of Béla Bartók on Hungarian folk music. Without Bartók and his followers, the many-sided musical culture of a nation on the borders of East and West would not have survived. Furthermore, Bartók could never have composed his own works without first having carefully studied folk music and being imbued with its great artistic imprint. Without Korniss' photographs, we would certainly be much the poorer also. With the passing of those generations which experienced these traditional customs, we would only be aware of them through scholarship. That, however, could hardly give the rich spontaneity, the happiness and sadness behind the traditions, which his photographs preserve in an artistic manner.

One can but hope that Korniss will publish many more volumes in the future from the thousands of pictures he has taken. It is a mission which should be and which is appreciated by the general public as well as by artists, ethnographers and historians. It is hardly surprising that in little over a year, more than 20,000 copies of this unique book were sold in Hungary alone. Its message, nevertheless, speaks not only to Hungarians but to the world, and his pictures can be understood in their human content without any special knowledge of the customs which they depict.

Illustration on opposite page: Old People's Day. Mezőszilas, Somogy County, Hungary. 1960's.



It should be added that for the historian and ethnographer, a valuable summary of each custom is given in an appendix, in which the names of the villages and the year when the photographs were taken is carefully noted. A poetic preface by Csoóri introduces the reader to the uniqueness of these photographs, and to the real significance of Korniss' approach and art.

Some of the photographs reproduced here are from the book, while others are in the possession of the reviewer.

Illustration on opposite page: Girl from Kazár. Nógrád County, Hungary. 1969.

Illustration on the back of this page: Early morning at Szék [Sic]. Kolozs County [Jud. Cluj], Transylvania, Romania. 1960's.



Book Reviews

A középkori Magyarország rotundái [The Rotundas of Medieval Hungary]. By Vera Gervers-Molnár. Művészettörténeti Füzetek [Publications of History of Art], No. 4. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972. Pp. 95.

Among the publications of art history, sponsored by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Professor Gervers-Molnár's study about the round churches of medieval Hungary is the fruit of ten years of research on a heretofore little explored territory of early Romanesque architecture. While the work deals primarily with the round churches of Hungary, it also offers, in twenty-five pages, a brief but comprehensive account on the origins and development of this particular architectural type and its most important examples in East Central Europe, notably in Dalmatia, Moravia, Bohemia and Poland.

The *rotundas* or centrally planned round churches represent a specific group of the early Romanesque churches in Central and Eastern Europe. The origin of this group, according to the author, can be traced back to one single prototype: Charlemagne's palace chapel at Aachen, consecrated by Pope Leo III in 805, which formed part of the imperial palace-complex. While the palace bore reminiscences of the first Christian emperor, Constantine the Great, and his Sacred Palace in Constantinople, the imperial chapel and later burial place of Charlemagne soon became a symbol of the new empire of the West, and presumably it was modelled after the *Chrysothriclinos* or Golden throne-chamber of the imperial palace of Byzantium. Both, the palace and chapel, served ideologically to stress the equality of Charlemagne's imperial authority with that of the emperors of Byzantium. From a technical point of view, however, the direct prototype of the Aachen chapel was the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna, erected in the sixth century during the reign of Justinian I, and itself probably following Byzantine models. Thus, in the view of Professor Gervers-Molnár, the Carolingian palace and chapel of Aachen are spiritually and from a technical point of view linked to the Byzantine tradition. While her theory emphasizes the influence of the Aachen chapel (and indirectly Byzantium) in the devel-

opment of the Central and East European rotundas, less attention is given in this context to the early Christian circular churches in Rome, like the Church of Santa Costanza, or the Church of San Stefano Rotondo, or one of the best preserved monuments of the Antiquity, the great circular hall of the Pantheon, later consecrated as a Christian church under the name Santa Maria dei Martiri. Here the question inevitably arises, how much if any influence can be attributed to these late antique and early Christian models in the development of the round churches of Central Europe, since the architects of Charlemagne must have been familiar with them.

In addition to the Aachen chapel, the earliest, best preserved and most significant round church in East Central Europe is in Zadar (Zara), Dalmatia, the Church of San Donato, built early in the ninth century and thus contemporary with the Aachen chapel, or only a few years younger. In the construction of the San Donato church "the influence of West and East met each other," asserts the author. Yet its role in the development of later round churches in the East Central European area still remains inconclusive.

The larger part of the book deals with the round churches of Hungary, discussing in great detail the origin, architectural and functional characteristics of altogether 64 rotundas, all of them following the Central European pattern. There are also described a few monuments whose origin is uncertain, and their architectural characteristics defy the classification.

Most of the round churches in Hungary were built in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. After the disaster of the Mongol invasion of 1242, during the general reconstruction of the country, the new Gothic style eliminated this form of the Romanesque from church architecture.

The earliest round churches in Hungary followed closely the pattern of the palace chapel of Aachen, and served, like their prototype, as royal chapels, attached to the royal residences. Another smaller group of round churches in Hungary were built near seigneurial castles, as court chapels for the use of feudal lords. From the end of the eleventh century on, the round churches became more frequent in Hungary and they served in great number as ordinary parish churches in the villages. The author examines in great detail the different characteristics of these churches, classifying them with respect to the form or number of their apses, the form of the choir, the presence or absence of a tower, etc. We are offered the systematic description of over 40 such parish churches, some of them existing in ruins only, from the territory of the old historical Hungary, and all of them reflecting the influence of a general

Central European pattern of round churches, modelled after the chapel of Aachen. Direct Byzantine influence is demonstrable in one round church only, or rather from its description dating back to the early nineteenth century, since the church itself was demolished in 1805. There are also a few round churches which belong to a group possibly affiliated with models of the Near East, perhaps Palestine or the Caucasus, where round churches existed already in the seventh century. One such church in Hungary, at Karcsa, in the eleventh century belonged to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and it is the assumption that it was they who brought this particular type of centrally planned church to Hungary.

This book, the product of remarkable research, offers a wealth of well organized data and information about its subject. It is completed by a "Summary" in English, and its usefulness is enhanced by numerous sketches and photographs of the most important round churches of the area in discussion.

University of Bridgeport

Andor Urbanszky

The Corvinian Library. History and Stock. By Csaba Csapodi. Trans. by Imre Gombos. *Studia Humanitatis*, I. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973. Pp. 516.

This volume is truly a labor of love. Dr. Csaba Csapodi has devoted almost a lifetime to the history of the Bibliotheca Corviniana, the famous library of the Renaissance king of Hungary, Matthias Corvinus (1458–1490). His patient and exhaustive research, assisted by his scholarly wife Klára Gárdonyi Csapodi, have enriched Hungarian Medieval and Renaissance studies for decades. The large number of articles describing their thorough search for lost volumes of the Corvinian Library attest to their success. A few years ago they also published, with the assistance of UNESCO, a superbly illustrated volume (*Bibliotheca Corviniana. The Library of King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary*, Budapest, Corvina Press, 1969), which summarized the state of their research at that time.

Dr. Csapodi's latest work is a definitive study on this subject and will be, in all probability, the last word on the library of King Matthias for several generations. It is a reference book of inestimable value. The work is divided into two parts. In the first section the author discusses the history of the library, its size, development and destruction, as well as the previous estimates of its stock. The second part consists of the

reconstructed *Repertorium* of the volumes, which according to the author, were part of this famous collection.

In the discussion of the growth and decline of the Corvinian Library, Csapodi sees four distinct periods. The first stage of development extends from the election of Matthias in 1458 to 1472. The king probably had a few books of his own at the beginning of this period and might have inherited volumes from his father, János Hunyadi, and from the collections of previous Hungarian kings. Yet, the number of books Matthias had in 1458 could not have exceeded 100 volumes. Thus this collection, which eventually surpassed almost all libraries of its time, with the exception of the Vatican, had a most modest beginning. Under the influence of Archbishop Vitéz János, his nephew the poet Janus Pannonius, and the Italian humanist Galeotto Marzio, King Matthias began earnestly to collect a library. The first period in the history of the Bibliotheca Corviniana ended with the disgrace and tragic death of both Vitéz and Janus Pannonius and the acquisition of almost all of their books by the king through confiscation. This is how, for example, many of the Greek volumes of Janus became part of the royal collection. Csapodi estimates the number of volumes to be between 500 and 600 by the end of this phase. The second period covers the years 1473 to 1484. After a slow start the number of volumes increased, especially after the arrival of Queen Beatrix of Aragon, and reached about 1,000 books. The third stage, 1485–1490, witnessed the peak of development in the history of the collection. After the capture of Vienna in 1485, Matthias Corvinus was at the height of his power, spent lavishly on books abroad and employed scribes and illuminators at Buda, so that the yearly increase of codices is placed at about 150. Thus the total number of books in the royal library proper is estimated at about 1500 to 1600. To this number the author adds 300–400 incunabula and calculates that about 150 volumes were ordered but never delivered to Buda due to the sudden death of the king. Csapodi concludes that the total stock of the Bibliotheca Corviniana ranged between 2000 and 2500 volumes. These numbers seem a little inflated and a more conservative estimate would be more realistic. The fourth and final stage extends from the death of Matthias in 1490 to the Battle of Mohács (1526). This period can be characterized as one of lingering decay. Not only did the successors of Corvinus neglect the continued growth of the collection, but some volumes were squandered, previous orders remained undelivered and the scriptorium of Buda fell into decay. Following the fateful battle of Mohács, Suleiman the Magnificent entered the city of Buda in early September of 1526. The bulk of the Corvinian Library was removed at

that time to Istanbul, where many of the volumes were forever lost. A few hundred tomes, mainly theological and ecclesiastical in orientation, escaped the fate of the magnificent royal collection, and were later found in one of the basement rooms of the ruined royal palace. This group of books was subsequently mistakenly identified with the Corviniana collection, although Csapodi points out that they belonged to the Royal Chapel and not to the Royal Library.

The *Repertorium* covers almost 350 pages and shows meticulous scholarship. There are 1040 items enumerated by Dr. Csapodi and they are arranged alphabetically by authors. Each entry contains the name and identification of the author, whether the volume is an authentic Corvinian codex, place of preservation, date and origin, physical description (i.e., size, script, decorations, illuminations, heraldic signs, binding), possessor, complete bibliography, and in some cases an illuminating special note about the history of the particular volume. Also useful are the Appendices, especially I and II, where a concordance of previously used numeration of Corvinian volumes is given, and an alphabetical list of places of preservation is provided. The volume also has an excellent bibliography.

In the reconstruction of the probable content of the library, Dr. Csapodi included not only the authenticated Corvinian volumes but also a number of other books. Among these are codices which belonged to Queen Beatrix and King Wladislas II, volumes dedicated to Matthias and the Queen, books copied at the request of the king as gifts for others. Also included in the *Repertorium* are items of probable authenticity, volumes mentioned by the Italian humanist poet Naldo Naldius as being in the king's collection, and books probably used by the historians Antonio Bonfini, Petrus Ransanus and János Thuróczy in the writing of their own contemporary accounts of the history of Hungary. The ecclesiastical books found in 1686 in the ruins of the palace are also included in this list, although it is probable that they were never part of the Royal Library. Here again, a more conservative approach and greater discrimination would have strengthened the author's position.

If we consider that János Csontos, one of the first great scholars to seriously attempt a reconstruction of the stock of the Bibliotheca Corviniana, knew of only 108 codices in 1881, we can truly appreciate the immense success of the detective work of his successors, especially the monumental achievement of Dr. Csaba Csapodi. This volume is a welcome addition to the growing number of excellent books published in western languages by the Akadémiai Kiadó of Budapest.

Tolerance and Movements of Religious Dissent in Eastern Europe. Edited by Béla K. Király. Series: East European Monographs, Number 13. Copyright by *East European Quarterly*, Boulder, Colorado. New York: Columbia University Press, 1975. Pp. xii + 227.

The book under review contains thirteen separate essays by twelve contributors on a topic that has not really been treated by American East European scholarship: religious tolerance and dissent in East Central Europe.

Not counting the introductory essay by H. J. Hillerbrand, which has been prepared specifically for this volume and contains general reflections on the topic of the book, the twelve remaining essays have all been prepared as lectures for several independent symposia between the years 1971 and 1975. These essays are organized around three themes: 1.) religious intolerance, 2.) religious dissent within the Jewry, and 3.) religious tolerance in East Central Europe.

Of these three themes, the second is perhaps the most self-contained, in that the two essays that deal with it both concentrate on a rather limited aspect of East Central European history: an inner controversy within the Jewish community of the area. The "hostile phase" of the controversy between the Hasidim and the Mitnaggedim is treated by M. Wilensky, and the "phase of dialogue and reconciliation" by N. Lamm.

The other two themes are treated in five essays each. Of the five essays on intolerance, three deal with this question primarily from the vantage point of Czech history (the essays by F. G. Heyman, P. Brock and M. S. Fousek), and one each within the context of Austrian (R. A. Kann) and Hungarian history (B. K. Király).

This system of apportionment also holds true for the theme of religious tolerance, where three of the essays deal with the tolerant nature of "Pax Ottomanica" (E. K. Shaw, S. J. Shaw, and S. Fischer-Galati), and only one each with the Polish (A. G. Duker) and Hungarian (B. K. Király) aspects of this question. (It should perhaps be noted here that S. J. Shaw's contribution is closer to a brief commentary on the Ottoman *millet* than to an independent essay on par with the other contributions.)

Of these thirteen contributions by twelve authorities, the two that deal with Hungarian developments were both written by the editor of the volume, Professor B. K. Király of Brooklyn College. Although it would be desirable, lack of space does not permit us to do more than to give a brief summary of their content and of the author's conclusions.

The first of these essays, entitled "Protestantism in Hungary between

the Revolution and the *Ausgleich*," (pp. 65-85) centers largely on the so-called "Protestant Patent of 1859," and on the Hungarian reaction to the same. This short-lived Patent was basically an attempt on the part of the Austrian authorities of the period of post-revolutionary absolutism (1849-1860) to limit the traditional Protestant autonomy in Hungary. Although based partially on Josephinism, the motivation behind it was largely political. So was the Hungarian reaction to it. Irrespective of their denomination, all Hungarians regarded this Patent as simply another attempt at curtailing Hungarian political and individual liberties, and they reacted to it accordingly.

Given the almost simultaneous defeat in Italy, Vienna could hardly do anything, but to retreat. And thus this Patent, which was repealed after only eight and a half months, hardly did more than to aggravate the already tense Austro-Hungarian relations. On the other hand, by shaking up the Viennese leadership, it may have contributed to the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867.

Professor Király's second contribution, "The Sublime Porte, Vienna, Transylvania and the Dissemination of Protestant Reformation in Royal Hungary" (pp. 199-221), is basically a brief analytical history of the rise of Hungarian Protestantism in the sixteenth century. It covers this development right up to the Law of 1608, which granted religious freedom to the Protestants, and an almost equal treatment with the Catholics.

Following the lead of some of Hungary's great Reformation historians, Professor Király perceives this Protestant victory to have been the result of a number of interdependent factors. He sees the most significant of these as (1) the Ottoman conquest of Central Hungary, (2) the impact of the nearly independent and mostly Protestant Transylvania upon Royal Hungary, and (3) the consolidation of the gentry's dominance, or in other terms, the nobility's successful defense of their "constitutional liberties" against Habsburg centralism.

Professor Király concludes his essay with the statement that "the direct and indirect consequences of Protestantism in Hungary were progressive for intellectual life, education, culture and constitutional liberty, and were retrogressive in the social sphere." (p. 209). While much of this statement would be acceptable to most historians, I personally would qualify the last part of his conclusions. It is true that the gentry's dominance—in addition to securing all of the above liberties—also led to such reactionary social developments as the enserfment of the peasant masses. But this "second serfdom" was more the result of the general social and economic tendencies throughout East Central

and Eastern Europe of that period, than the result of any specific developments in Hungary. For this very reason it was not limited to areas under Protestant influence. In fact, the only areas of East Central Europe that were free from "second serfdom" were those under Ottoman control. And this was so precisely because of the tolerant and egalitarian nature of the Ottoman system during the height of its power; a fact that has also been pointed out by Professors E. K. Shaw, J. S. Shaw, and S. Fischer-Galati in their respective contributions to this volume.

The book ends with a useful list of the biographies of ten of the twelve contributors. (For some reason, the biographies of M. S. Fousek and E. K. Shaw were not included.) But it lacks a name and subject index, which would have enhanced its usefulness considerably.

All in all, this work under the editorship of Professor Király is a good start in the right direction, and the author-editor should be complimented both for his own contributions, as well as for his efforts in putting this pioneering volume into the hands of American scholars.

Duquesne University

S. B. Vardy

A magyar irodalom fogadtatása a viktoriánus Angliában, 1830–1914 [The Reception of Hungarian Literature in Victorian England, 1830–1914]. By Lóránt Czigány. Translated from the English by Bálint Rozsnyai. Irodalomtörténeti Füzetek 89 [Literary History Booklet No. 89]. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1976. Pp. 287.

Literature is a form of art which is bound more to the original language than any other art forms (painting, sculpture, music, etc.). It is of course possible to translate literary works, but the translated versions always lose something of the original flavor. This is all the more so, when the literature in question is the product, and therefore a reflection of a small self-contained world. Such is usually the case with literatures of small nations which use minor languages. Having been enclosed into their small world, and having been constantly subjected to the pressures and dominance of larger nations, they are usually less able to look upon problems from a universal perspective. For this reason, their literature is also more self-contained, has less universal application, and consequently—notwithstanding their innate merits—cannot be fully appreciated by the outside world.

To this must be added the problems connected with translation.

Literary works written in one of the major languages are usually translated into minor languages by some of the best literary artists of these nations. But this is not true conversely. Major literary figures of one of the major nations seldom take the trouble to study one of the minor languages simply for the sake of translating allegedly great literary works. Thus in most instances, these translations are done by second and even third line literary figures, or by enthusiastic devotees whose native tongue is other than the major language into which they translate.

The Hungarian language also belongs to the category of minor languages. Moreover, it has the drawback of being totally different from all of the Indo-European languages. And the fate of Hungarian literature is bound to the fate of the Hungarian language. Thus, although it has produced a number of great literary figures—particularly in the area of lyrical poetry, its achievements are basically unknown and unappreciated outside of Hungary. It is true that the works of a number of significant poets and novelists were in fact translated into several major languages, but their impact was generally slight and short-lived. This is equally true for the German-speaking world that was the first to discover Hungarian literature already in the 18th century, as well as for the English-speaking world, that did not come to this discovery until the Hungarian Reform Period of the 1830's and 1840's.

The earlier German discovery had already been treated in a number of noteworthy studies by such 20th century scholars as Gusztáv Heinrich, Róbert Gragger, József Turóczi-Trostler, Antal Mádl and others. The reception of Hungarian literature by the English-speaking world, however, had been barely touched until the appearance of the book under review.

Dr. Lóránt Czigány's effort is a commendable one for two reasons: first, because this is the first major effort to analyze and to summarize Anglo-Hungarian literary connections, and more specifically the reception of Hungarian literature in Britain during the 19th and the early 20th century; and second, because—due to the lack of noteworthy studies in this area—much of the work is based on original research. The result is an outstanding overview of this whole question up to the period of World War I.

Dr. Czigány divided his work into six chapters, each of which describes a specific phase in this development. The first is a brief introductory chapter that places the problem into a proper setting and discusses the level of English awareness about Hungary in the period between the 16th and 19th centuries. Chapter II concentrates on the pioneering efforts of Sir John Bowring whose *Poetry of the Magyars*

(1830) and other writings were largely responsible for making the English reading public aware of the existence of Magyar literature, even though many of his translations were weak and misleading. The following chapter is devoted to the writing of those pioneer British travelers who visited Hungary during the Hungarian Reform Period, wrote about their experiences, and thus aided the spread of knowledge about Hungary, Hungarian culture, and Hungarian literature. The most productive of these was Julia Pardoe, whose *The City of the Magyar* (1839–1840) also contained a summary and selection of Hungarian literature. This is followed by a chapter on the activities of the Hungarian immigrants, who took advantage of the popularity of the Hungarian cause to introduce the British public to some of the better specimens of Hungarian literature. Among others, they were responsible for introducing Baron Joseph Eötvös to the English reading public. Eötvös's *The Village Notary* was the first Hungarian novel that attained a degree of popularity in England. The chapter on the achievements of the Hungarian immigrants is followed by separate chapters on Sándor Petöfi and Mór Jókai. The latter of these became by far the most popular Hungarian writer in England. In fact, as Czigány correctly asserts: "He was the only one [among Hungarian authors] known [to the British reading public] not through a political sympathy for the Magyars, but rather through his personal enchantment of the readers." Jókai reached the height of his popularity in England around the turn of the century, and then it suddenly came to an end.

Czigány asserts—and rightly so—that contrary to the popular belief in Hungary, Hungarian literature never reached mass popularity in England. Moreover, even those authors that did reach a degree of popularity, did so for reasons other than the real or alleged innate literary value of their works. Initially, this interest was fueled by the search for the exotic; and later also by the activities of the post-1849 immigrants and by the general sympathy for the Magyar cause. Thus Eötvös's *The Village Notary* was read primarily because of its political content and implications. And even Jókai's popularity proved to be temporary. It too was based largely on the search for the exotic and for the romantic in an age of realism and naturalism. As soon as this enthusiasm for the exotic and the romantic waned, Jókai's popularity also came to an end. Following Jókai's brief entrance into the English-speaking world, no other Hungarian author scored such an achievement, and Hungarian literature remained—and is still today—basically a *terra incognita* for the average English (and American) reader.

Dr. Czigány performed an excellent and valuable job in bringing all

these details together. His achievement is all the greater, as he has no real predecessors. Except for slight articles and occasional references in studies dealing with Anglo-Hungarian relations, no one has dealt with this topic as yet. We can only wish and hope that someone will do a similar study on the reception of Hungarian literature in North America. Dr. Czigány's work should also appear in English. In that case it may be advisable to bring it up to date by including the scholarly publications since 1965, which is the date of the completion of his manuscript.

Robert Morris College

Agnes Huszar Vardy

People in the Tobacco Belt: Four Lives. By Linda Dégh. Ottawa: National Museum of Man, Mercury Series, Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, Paper No. 13, 1975. xx, 277. 10 plates. \$3.50.

This volume is of compelling interest for two reasons. First, as a restatement of the author's theory of folklore studies as applied to an interpretation of immigrant life in North America. As here developed, this conception not only defines the viewpoint of the folklorist, but suggests a holistic perspective for historians, ethnologists and in fact for all students of North American cultures. Secondly, the volume makes available four fascinating life histories of Hungarian immigrants to Canada, enriched by the discriminating notes and comments of the internationally known folklore scholar. These documents constitute valuable primary sources of Hungarian immigrant life and of Canadian social reality. But beyond that they demonstrate how the approach proposed by Linda Dégh can result in a refined interpretation of the immigrant experience. Not only students of Hungarian immigrant life, but all scholars interested in the interaction of cultures can benefit from the reading of this volume. For this reason, this publication of the National Museum of Man can be considered a landmark discussion of North American immigrant and ethnic studies.

The author outlines her conception of folklore research in the introduction. The first point discussed is the interpretation of life histories as sources of folklore and cultural expression. A refined and accurate interpretation of these documents requires, in the view of the author, the consideration of three essential criteria. In the first place, the integrity of these testimonies as original, personal and reflective statements of a life experience must be safeguarded. Secondly, in recording statements, maximum freedom of expression must be assured to the re-

spondent and the role of the interviewer must be minimized. Thirdly, care should be taken to arrange a natural setting for the interview, primarily by encouraging a spontaneous conversational tone and interaction with family members.

Another indispensable rule is to interpret the personal life of the respondent in the context of the cultural environment in which he lives and acts. This requires the scholar to realize the relationships and images between the individual ethnic culture and the larger society. The author suggests that in the Canadian case this would require an awareness that "people are conscious of their ethnicity and are as proud of their ethnic adherence as they are of their Canadian citizenship . . . there is lively communication between them without causing a merger and general discoloration of ethnic features." (p. xiii.)

Interpretations of life histories must also be attentive both to the general patterns and deeply personal elements communicated. Obviously, life histories provide us with information on the process of immigration. Yet, as the author reminds us, "the biased interpretation of factual events reveals both human creativity and the diversity of aspects of the dry facts recorded by historians." (p. xi.)

Finally, Linda Dégh defines the specific immediate context in which immigrant life can be studied most fruitfully. That is the interaction between region and ethnic community, a concept she has discussed in an earlier work.* Region is seen as the particular occupational, economic, social, historical, and geographical context of the host country in which the social existence of the immigrant has evolved. An examination of the regional context is particularly important in interpreting the life rhythm of immigrant groups and their adaptation to the new society. In previous investigations, Linda Dégh has related the life of Hungarian immigrants to the Calumet region of Northern Indiana. In this study she interprets four Hungarian immigrants in the context of the tobacco farming district of Ontario. Her attempt to relate personal experiences to this particular environment explains to a large extent the vitality and realism of the source materials recorded.

The main body of the volume presents the text of the four life histories with the author's notations. Each personal statement provides the full text of the interview as translated by the author. In addition, each statement is accompanied by an introduction to the present environment of the respondent, an ethnographic description of the narration, and an analytical appraisal of the folklore, language and personality of the narrator.

It appears most useful to comment on the personal statements by

reviewing their contributions to several key issues of Canadian immigrant life. It should be added that these comments reflect not so much the viewpoint of the folklorist, but that of the historian of immigrant settlements. Such a viewpoint will suggest that these documents should be of interest to all students of the immigrant experience.

The first obvious value of these personal statements is their confirmation of the general process of immigrant life, illustrating a specific sequential pattern. Three of the statements reflect the generally familiar pattern of immigrants who arrived in Canada in the 1920's. They inform us that they settled in the western provinces as agricultural laborers. Then followed a period of transition, characterized by search for satisfactory employment, marriage, adjustment to the new society, migration, and in many cases acute dissatisfaction. Finally all three immigrants settled in the Ontario tobacco belt. They entered the stage of retirement there at the time of the interviews. Within this common pattern, however, an infinite number of personal, occupational, temporal, and locational variations appeared. These variations constitute the crucial explanation of the motives, lives and meanings of immigrant life as reflected in these personal histories.

One of the highly significant variations is that of motivation to emigrate to Canada. These personal testimonies tell us a great deal about this issue. The three testimonies suggest that the generally familiar motive of East European peasant migration was involved: to earn money for the payment of debts and for the purchase of landholdings in their native land. Two cases, however, reveal an additional, highly prevalent motive that became important as a result of World War I. The annexation of formerly Hungarian territory to Rumania forced many Hungarians, particularly of military conscription age, to leave Transylvania and to emigrate to Canada. One respondent explained:

You were asking: why did we come here from Transylvania? Because the Romanians treated us abominably. And they ran away so that they could dodge the draft. There were many of us here from Transylvania, only fifty were my friends from the neighbor communities and none of them served in the Romanian army. All were about eighteen or twenty years old . . . There were 320 of us on the same boat. . . None of them were over twenty. . . They mistreated us in the Romanian army and of those who came to our village after discharge, one became deaf, they broke the nose of the other. (p. 235.)

Another theme reported in these personal testimonies is the critical period of the transition stage between arrival in Canada and permanent settlement. For some, this period was brief and merciful, as in the case

of the respondent who purchased his tobacco farm ten years after arrival. Others spent decades migrating and working in the western provinces. The second respondent spent more than thirty years in the agrarian areas of Saskatchewan and Alberta, experiencing numerous hardships, disappointments and constant discouragement before finally settling down in the tobacco belt in 1958 at the age of 60. Obviously these two immigrant lives are vastly different. While the former rightly considered his transitional phase a prelude to successful tobacco farming, the second informant spent virtually his whole life in a series of occupational misadventures. Still another case is that of an intelligent and clever Székely immigrant. Assisted by an extensive network of Transylvanian kinsfolk, he found urban employment near Montreal throughout the 1930's, enabling him to purchase a tobacco farm in 1941. He remembered his period of transition as a period of deep personal and economic satisfaction. Such an experience played a role in his success as a tobacco farmer and entrepreneur.

The most complex issue raised in these personal histories is the question how success and failure as an immigrant can be explained. Stated more specifically, what elements are responsible for determining the fulfilment or failure of immigrant hopes for a better life? At least three elements or circumstances appear to be decisive. First is the crucial role of family-kinship networks. They assist arriving immigrants in adjustment to Canadian life, but also provide vital information, advice, personal companionship, and economic support. John Kósa, the most perceptive student of Hungarian immigration to Canada, has documented the unquestioned importance of this process.** The personal life histories recorded by Linda Dégh confirm the key role of these networks in the success of immigrants. The most convincing example is that of the Székely immigrant noted earlier: throughout his Canadian life strategically placed relatives or villagers assisted him in Alberta, Montreal and Delhi.

Second, it is vital for the immigrant to relate to the regional socio-economic environment. The tobacco belt offered favorable opportunities to immigrants capable of disciplined work and entrepreneurship, particularly if they entered the area in the 1930's or 1940's. A combination of circumstances related to the characteristics of the region explain these opportunities. Economic conditions, land prices, social ties among those who settled earlier, good advice received, length of land tenure determined in significant ways success or failure.

Thirdly, as the author emphasizes, the social ethic of the immigrant played a role. The fourth respondent in her collection, a peasant family

who came to Canada after 1956, had great difficulties adjusting to the commercial, profit-centered, non-supportive economic and social scene in Canada. Throughout their life they had preserved the puritan, village-oriented, non-commercial ethic of the impoverished proud peasant. In Communist Hungary, they had lived a community-centered life in a Budapest industrial district. After several misadventures, they obtained a share-tenancy in the tobacco belt. Their deeply held social views, forbidding commercial speculation and profit-centeredness, coupled with their social and psychological isolation in Canadian society, produced a sense of failure and discouragement, which persisted even fifteen years after their arrival in Canada.

We have commented on only some of the most visible issues raised in these immigrant life histories. They demonstrate the rich informational and conceptual contributions of this form of immigrant source material to an understanding of Canadian and North American immigrant experience. They suggest also that the proposed theory of research outlined by Linda Dégh presents a viable and refined avenue of exploring the interaction between immigrant and North American cultures.

*Linda Dégh, "Approaches to Folklore Research Among Immigrant Groups," *Journal of American Folklore*, 79 (1966): 551-556.

** John Kósa, *Land of Choice: The Hungarians in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957.

Ohio State University

Paul Bódy

En is voltam jávorfácska. . . * By Sári Megyery. Paris: Magyar Műhely, 1975. Pp. 383. \$8.00.

Ours is the golden age of memoirs, but Sári Megyery's autobiography is more than mere reminiscence of yet another immigrant. It is a thorough exploration of a tantalizingly exciting life, an authentic mirror of an equally fascinating era and a valuable document about several outstanding figures of the Hungarian literary renaissance between 1920 and 1938. The writer, like Puck, hops from lover to lover, from country to country, mesmerizing the reader who dizzily follows the meteoric career of this extraordinary woman. Ambivalence in her attitude is apparent throughout the book: she alternates between yearning nostalgia and sharp criticism of her social class. She delivers her chronicle with scathing sincerity; thus her story becomes a moving human credo as well as reliable literary source material.

Part I describes her childhood at the beginning of the century among the Hungarian gentry. It is a world in which dullness, greed, gluttony, corruption, pride and prejudice prevail. The protagonists, her relatives, are grotesque, ancient dames, gallant country squires, antediluvian phantoms who belong to a wax museum dedicated to immortalize a sunken society. With gentle irony and loving understanding, the author delivers her bold indictment and gradually removes the masks from each actor of the drama. Her grandfather, the highly respected judge, a champion of justice, turns out to be an ardent anti-Semite; his wife, the noble *grande dame*, is a stingy, petty, nagging snob. Her elegant aunts stand naked as shallow coffee-klutch damsels whose major preoccupation is to catch rich, preferably aristocratic husbands for themselves and their nieces. This is a world of Kálmán Mikszáth or Jane Austen. The young Sári, perpetually discontent in this suffocating atmosphere, is driven by an internal force to break away.

Her sympathies are generous, her descriptions throb with passion in the portrayal of her parents. The weak, unhappy, hen-pecked, sensitive father, a prominent lawyer, is caught in the web of an agonizingly bad marriage. Since he lacks ambition and refuses to climb the social ladder, his wife becomes almost paranoid. A typical product of the gentry, she is a supreme hostess, a card-playing, flirtatious society queen, a sycophant, more concerned with pretense and propriety than substance. Her obsession with rank, position and never-enough-money drives the family to despair.

The home boundaries could not hold the exquisitely beautiful, precocious Sári too long. After she enrolls in an acting studio, she is soon discovered by major producers. At the age of 19, Sacy von Blondel (her new stage name) gets a contract with the Usher firm in Berlin, acts in Teinhardt's theaters and becomes a superstar, leading lady in 49 movies.

But she remains unfulfilled in spite of her glamorous life. In quest of something more meaningful, at the zenith of her career, Miss Blondel quits acting and returns to Budapest to dedicate her life to literature. In a short time she publishes one book after another; novels, volumes of poetry, collections of essays: *Csak a fényre vigyázz* [Beware of the Light Only], *A szerelem a szerelmesé* [Love Belongs to Lovers], *Végkielégítés* [Final Settlement], *A vendég* [The Guest], to mention only a few. In addition, she contributes to a number of newspapers and magazines. Though lacking in serious depth, her pen moves with the same ease as she did before the cameras.

In 1938 she travels to Paris to sign a contract for a book, never returns to Hungary, marries a distinguished playwright, André Lang, and

begins her academic career. After attending the Sorbonne and Cambridge, she launches her new books in French and English.

Part II may be entitled: "In the Shadow of the Gods." During her stay in Budapest, the blonde beauty is quickly embraced (both literally and figuratively) by the chief members of the *Nyugat* [West] literary circle. The ensuing chapters recount her friendship with Dezső Kosztolányi, Ernő Szép, Frigyes Karinthy, Ferenc Molnár, Lajos Zilahy, Sándor Márai, Lőrinc Szabó and scores of others. These portraits are highly sensitive and full of venerating compassion.

The true historical value of the book, however, is provided in the third part, which contains hitherto unpublished private letters written by the most prominent men-of-letter. These epistles were replies to a questionnaire prepared by the author in 1936 as a project, sponsored by a literary club. The question was: "How is a poem born? Give your solution to the mystery of creation!" All the addressees answered immediately. One cannot help being moved by some of these confessions. "A poem is a terribly monumental thing!" sighs Karinthy, the sensational humorist. He was the first to reply, followed by the above-mentioned writers and many more.

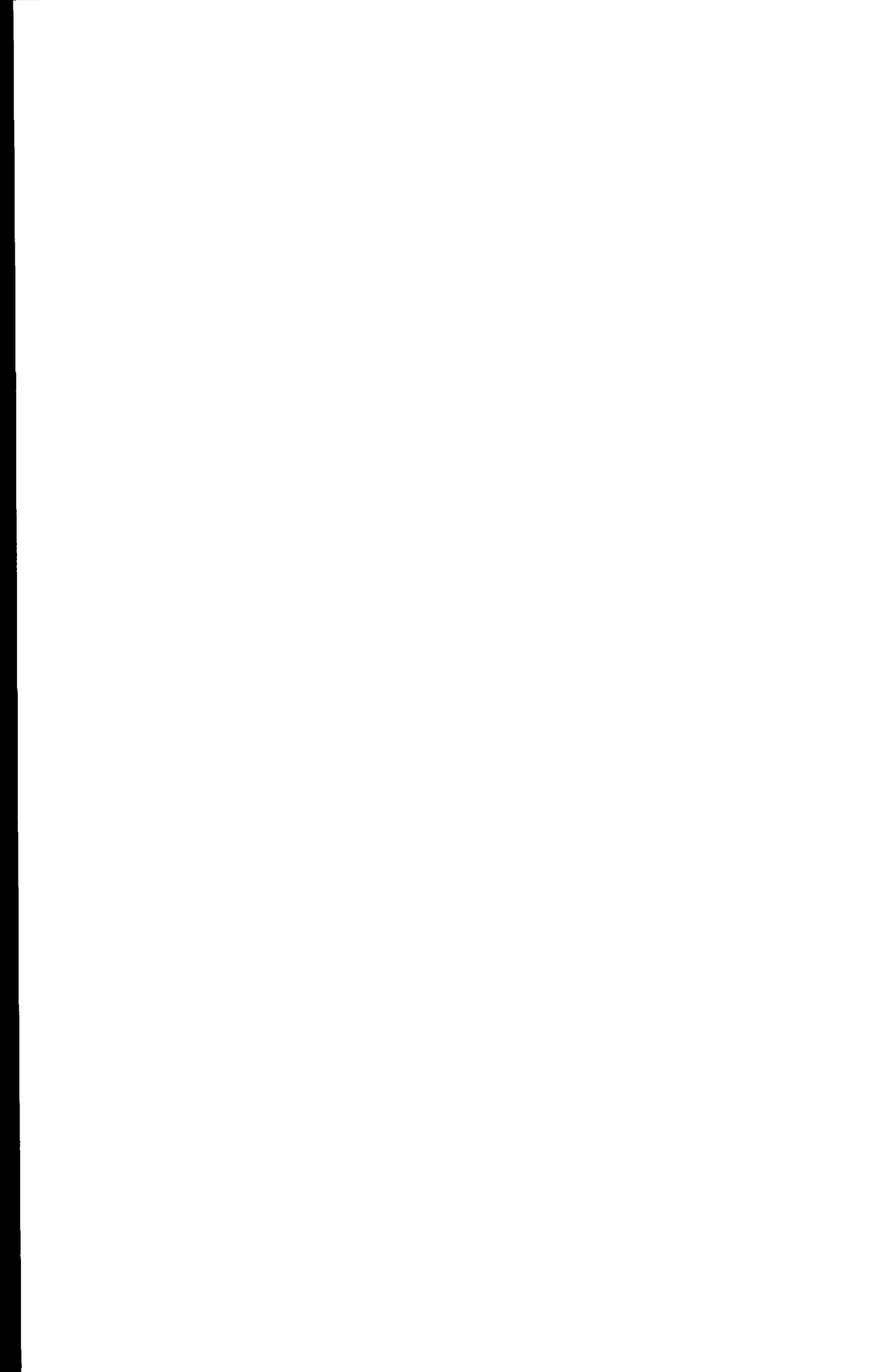
These rare, valuable literary documents were found accidentally after the war in an old chest. The entire material was donated to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

The book is free of pathos, clichés and mannerism. Although some sentences are ungrammatical, the style is colorful and vivid revealing the author's enthusiasm for the Magyar tongue. In the introduction she writes: "My sole motivation for writing this memoir was my love for my native tongue! I have tried to protect it for decades with an almost schizophrenic passion from the influence of my adopted languages." After living abroad for forty years, the writer succeeded splendidly.

Sári Megyery emerges as a warm, generous, courageous person, a forerunner of Women's Liberation, who maintained her humanism and integrity in all circumstances. In her merciless reviewing of the failures of her kinfolks, and the exploration of the predicament of a woman in that doomed society, she has produced a powerful record of a long-gone world, a notable contribution to Hungarian literary history and a fascinating, highly readable book.

* The title, "I Too Had Been a Tiny Maple Tree. . ." comes from Kosztolányi who playfully called the writer a "tiny maple tree."

Clara Györgyey



Review of Reviews

Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon [Ecclesiastical Society in Medieval Hungary]. By Elemér Mályusz. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971. 398 pp.

This study . . . is the result of ten years of a research conducted between 1934 and 1944, and put in its final form only twenty-seven years later. There is no indication that more recent material has been added to the original research . . . [T]he aim of the book is to demonstrate that the structural division of the clergy in medieval Hungary, its life, activities, the rivalries among its various strata, as well as the deep gap which existed between the upper, middle and the lower clergy, reflected the structure and nature of the contemporary feudal society of Hungary. The prominent role, significance and merit of this ecclesiastical community was that it provided, almost exclusively, the framework for the development of an intellectual segment which, at least until the advent of the renaissance period, was missing in the secular community of the feudal society.

The book discusses in great detail, on the basis of original documents, papal tax-records and testaments of individual clergymen, the sharp contrast in the social and economic status between the upper and middle clergy (bishops and canons) and the lower clergy (parish priests). Although the bishops frequently held important state positions, their education corresponding to the highest contemporary standards, and were granted large feudal estates, the so-called "private church" (the parish priests) served the spiritual needs of the village community. The village priest was almost illiterate, his knowledge of Latin extended only to the indispensable parts of the liturgy, and his economic basis was usually a small piece of land donated by the local gentry-landowner. . . .

Thematically the strongest, most coherent part of the book deals with the monastic clergy. In Hungary, like elsewhere, the monastic orders during the feudal era were the centers and carriers of cultural, intellectual and literary activities. Among them the Benedictine order had a significant role in the collection and preservation of manuscripts. One of their oldest monasteries, Pannonhalma, possessed already in the

eleventh century, a collection of eighty codices, among them the famous Pray-codex which contains the earliest extant text in Hungarian vernacular: a funeral oration. Particularly interesting is the discussion of the Pauline order which apparently is the only genuine Hungarian order, founded in the thirteenth century near Pécs and approved by Pope Urban V in 1367. One of its vicars in the sixteenth century was instrumental in introducing the spirit and the teachings of the *Devotio Moderna*, and Thomas Kempis' *De Imitatione Christi*. Among the mendicant orders the Dominicans occupied a prominent place in the religious and cultural life of medieval Hungary. . . . More importantly, the Dominicans maintained several schools of higher education. One of them, the *studium generale* in Buda, early in the sixteenth century, had the privilege to confer the university degree of a *magister*.

In view of the exceedingly large amount of detail, the monograph sometimes is lacking in lucidity and calls for improvements in the organization of the material. Nevertheless it is a veritable treasure-house of information for every scholar who is interested in the study of the life and activities of the medieval church in Hungary.

Andor Urbanszky (University of Bridgeport), in *East Central Europe*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1974).

A History of the Habsburg Empire. 1526-1918. By Robert A. Kann. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974. xiv, 646 pp. Maps. \$25.00.

Professor Kann's new work is well-organized and based upon an extensive and, in many cases, exhaustive knowledge of sources in Western languages, particularly German. The author surveys the development of both the Austro-German and the Hungarian parts of the monarchy from the Turkish and religious wars of the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries through the First World War in a style that is clear and succinct.

Geographically, the emphasis throughout the volume is on the Austro-German regions, and more often than not, the problems of the monarchy are seen from Vienna as the center. . . . There are, of course, good reasons why Vienna should be at the heart of things, and the broad view Kann gives us is valuable, but in his preface he has drawn attention to the fact that the development of the monarchy can be fully understood only if the various political units and ethnic groups that com-

posed it receive proper attention. I don't think he has granted them equal time.

The non-German nationalities are generally dealt with in cursory fashion. To take the first half of the nineteenth century as an example, the Czechs probably get the fullest treatment, as in the discussion of the nationality problem in the chapter covering the period 1815–79. On the other hand, there is little depth to the discussion of social and political realities in Hungary in the decades preceding the revolution of 1848. . . .

As for subject matter, emphasis is given to political and administrative history and foreign affairs. There are some very good chapters here, particularly those concerned with the political evolution of the monarchy from 1648 to 1748 (in which Kann argues convincingly that the monarchy's beginnings as a great power should be dated from 1648 rather than 1700–1748), the reforms between 1740 and 1792 (which he treats as a single, unified period), and finally the *Ausgleich* and its ramifications, Austrian political life and administration, 1879–1914, and the history of the First World War—all of which are detailed and balanced accounts. Economic questions are by no means neglected, but they are accorded less importance and space than politics and foreign affairs. Cultural matters are not well integrated into the whole, and, except for the Austro-Germans, they tend to become catalogs of authors and their works. . . .

[T]he book, as a whole, is a useful addition to the literature in English on the Habsburg monarchy; indeed, it is the most extensive account we have for the period covered. The narrative is supplemented by a long, well-arranged bibliographical essay, stressing works in German, English, and French, and a valuable appendix containing population and nationality statistics and maps.

Keith Hitchins (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) in *Slavic Review*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (March, 1976).

Comenius and Hungary. Essays. Éva Földes and István Mészáros (editors). Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973. 177 pp., 68 plates. \$11.00.

In commemoration of the three hundredth anniversary of the death of Jan Amos Comenius (J. A. Komenský, 1592–1670) many conferences were held throughout Europe in 1970 and a vast literature has been published since 1970 on this distinguished scholar.

Comenius and Hungary embodies the material of the conference

under the joint sponsorship of the Pedagogic Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO held at Budapest and Sárospatak, November 23–26, 1970. Sixteen scholars participated, twelve of whom represented Hungary; three, Czechoslovakia, and one, West Germany. The conference dealt primarily with Comenius' stay at Sárospatak, that little-explored period of 1650–1654. With the use of primary sources, Comenius's personality and works were fitted into the context of political and intellectual history of seventeenth-century Europe in general and Hungary in particular. All sixteen lectures shed in some way new light on the activities of this great educator. . . . Among the highlights is Sándor Maller's (Secretary General of the Hungarian UNESCO Commission) lifelike portrayal of the scholarly development and maturation of Comenius from his early youth to his death. . . .

Some of the contributions are not of a sufficiently scholarly level, but without exception they all offer a worthwhile addition to Comenius studies. The volume is indispensable to scholars concerned with the educator's variegated activities in Hungary. There is but one aspect the conference did not even touch upon; it is Comenius' influence on Hungarian pedagogy, which, since the Sárospatak period, has catafalped. . . .

Sixty-eight contemporary illustrations, one map, a well-compiled dictionary describing at length personages and institutions of Comenius' Hungary, a list of his works published in Hungary, and useful bibliographical notes enhance the scholarly value of *Comenius and Hungary*.

Francis S. Wagner (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.) in *East Central Europe*, Vol. II, No. 2 (1975).

Szabad királyi városok gazdálkodása Mária Terézia korában [The Housekeeping of Royal Free Towns in the Age of Maria Theresa]. By István Kállay. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972. 200 pp.

This book is about the administrative and financial housekeeping of the royal free towns of Hungary during the reign of Maria Theresa. After Kállay describes the governing institutions of the towns, he becomes an accountant reporting the incomes and expenses of the towns in question. As can be expected, therefore, the book is important, but as unreadable as a corporate report.

The municipal governments delegated the authority to supervise economic affairs to a committee of the town council, to the town judge, to the major, or to combinations of the above with the notary also called in at times. Yet the burghers exercised considerable voice in town affairs through their elected representative, the *tribunus plebis*, whose authority increased during the period under consideration. He was present at the allocation of the war taxes, took part in the review of the town's accounts, and, significantly, could report directly to the Royal Chamber in Pozsony in matters of dispute. The everyday duties in economic affairs were handled by the Stadtkammerer, who unlike the *tribunus*, was a paid official, but who could be either elected by the burghers or appointed by the council. Under his supervision there were as many as twenty-five inspectors and officials of varying importance, from the Militarcasse Inspector to the Marktrichter and the Waldmeister.

Kállay relates the duties of each of these officials, then discusses the incomes and expenditures of the towns in detail. He divides the incomes into five categories: 1) authorized by royal patents, i.e., wineries, breweries, mills, brick manufacturies, butchers, tariffs on goods entering the town, etc.; 2) accrued from interests on loaned capital or rents on leased real estate properties owned by the towns; 3) income from manors, villages, forests, commons, hunting, and fishing rights; 4) derived from official functions such as fines; 5) house taxes, printing, pharmacies, mines. The greatest share of the income of the towns was from the sale of wine, beer, and from house taxes. . . .

Kállay also asserts that the royal free towns accumulated substantial liquid assets which were not invested into industry or commerce, but were used for "usury" (p. 124). Since borrowed capital can be invested as well by the borrowers, the role of the towns as credit-generating institutions may have had substantial effect on investments, hence on the economic growth of Hungary. This possibility was not adequately explored by Kállay.

The economic growth of the royal free towns is another consideration ignored, even though the data indicate a substantial increase in economic activity. . . .

It is clear, in sum, that Kállay is uncomfortable as an economic historian, but is at his best when describing the administrative institutions of the towns. The book is more useful, however, for the data it contains on the economic activity of nineteen royal free towns. . . .

John Komlós (University of Chicago), in *East Central Europe*, Vol. II, No. 2 (1975).

Österreich-Ungarn und der Französisch-Preussische Krieg, 1870-1871.
By István Diószegi. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974. viii, 311 pp.
\$15.00.

Students of nineteenth-century foreign policy have every reason to welcome this translation of István Diószegi's book, published in Hungarian in 1965. Based upon extensive research . . . it is the first thorough study of the Dual Monarchy's preparations to intervene in the Franco-Prussian War, its attempts to work in the French interest when such intervention became inadvisable, its efforts to block South German adhesion to a new German imperial structure, its unsuccessful diplomacy during the crisis caused by Russia's abrogation of the Black Sea Clauses of the treaty of 1856, and the cumulative effect of these events upon the direction of Austro-Hungarian policy after the spring of 1871.

The key figure in this story is Franz Ferdinand Graf Beust, who was a minister in Saxony from 1849 to 1866, and Emperor Franz Joseph's foreign minister from 1867 until his retirement from politics in 1871. Metternich once called Beust a political tightrope walker, and Mr. Diószegi confirms the aptness of this description by recounting the way Beust pursued his hazardous course above the heads of the contentious political factions of his country. Although the factions had sharply divergent views on foreign affairs, Beust assured himself of their joint support at the beginning of his Austrian service by following a firmly anti-Prussian policy, which appealed to the resentment of the Court party over the defeat at Königgrätz, the anti-Bismarck prejudice of the Austrian liberals, and the fears of Prussian expansion that were rife among the Hungarian followers of Deák and Andrassy. But support for this line was not always reliable (the Deák party was more afraid of Russia than of Prussia, and the liberals were susceptible to the appeals of German nationalism), and external circumstances made it, in the long run, unsupportable. Prussia's defeat of France altered the European balance so completely that the Austro-Hungarian government felt compelled, by May 1871, to seek an accommodation with Prussia and, subsequently, with Russia. The government also began to think in terms of finding compensation, at Turkey's expense, in southeastern Europe. . . .

Gordon A. Craig (Stanford University) in *Slavic Review*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (September 1976).

Magyarország az első világháborúban, 1914–1918 [Hungary in the First World War, 1914–1918]. By József Galántai. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974. 453 pp.

Professor Galántai's work on Hungary's participation in World War I fills a significant need for a comprehensive study on this subject. Its main value lies in its methodical and well-documented coverage of all the important aspects of the war pertaining to Hungary, but placed within the broader framework of international relations and internal conditions within the Monarchy. One should not look for controversies, new approaches, or profound personal characterization of the leading statesmen in the book, but its steady evenness and scholarly reliability are adequate compensations.

Nevertheless, there is one part in Professor Galántai's work where he strikes out boldly to offer a radically new interpretation of why Count István Tisza, prime minister of Hungary, abandoned his initial opposition to the war. According to the author, Tisza was primarily concerned about a potential invasion of Transylvania by Romania, and he gave his consent to the war only when Romania's neutrality seemed to be assured and Germany appeared willing to adopt a bulgarophile policy. Such a willingness was a crucial turning point in maintaining Bulgaria as a counterweight to Romania, and, thereby, an effective deterrent to a possible aggression by Romania.

Although Professor Galántai's logic is beyond challenge, the conclusion he draws is at least partially incorrect. Tisza was undoubtedly worried about the exposed position of Transylvania, and he did constantly urge a foreign policy line which assigned an increasingly important role to Bulgaria as the pivot of Austro-Hungarian influence in the Balkans. However, Tisza's concept was a long-range one because he was well-aware that Bulgaria was still suffering from the debilitating consequences of its defeat in the recent Second Balkan War. . . .

Much of the fear of a possible Romanian attack on Transylvania was based on the constant factor of the hostility of the Romanian public towards Hungary, and on the recent Russian-Romanian rapprochement, which increased rather than diminished the risks involved in any armed conflict. Yet, Tisza drowned his fears and eventually joined the war party, because a barrage of German messages made it appear that to let the opportunity of settling the account with Serbia slip would have incurred German displeasure, and perhaps even the eventual break-up of the German-Austro-Hungarian alliance. Tisza, to whom German power was the principal guarantor of Austria-Hungary's assumed great-

power status, could accept such a risk less than the risk entailed in a war. This explanation is, of course, the "conventional" one, but it still stands in the reviewer's opinion. Therefore, Professor Galántai's interpretation cannot be accepted in terms of its single-minded exclusiveness. Nevertheless, he correctly emphasizes Tisza's frantic search for a foothold in the Balkans, demonstrating that his foreign policy, although forcefully pursued, was severely limited by the scarcity of his available options, given the implacable hostility between Hungary and its Southern Slav and Romanian neighbors.

Gábor Vermes (Rutgers University, Newark) in *East Central Europe*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1975).

Az ellenforradalom nemzetiségi politikájának kialakulása [The Formation of the Nationality Policy of the Hungarian Counterrevolution]. By Béla Bellér. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975. 290 pp.

With the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary was transformed from a multinational state, where barely fifty per cent of the population was Hungarian-speaking, to a rump country, one-third of its former size, where almost ninety per cent of the people were Magyar and only three per cent could not speak Hungarian. Thus, a long book on Trianon Hungary's nationality policy would seem, at first glance, to be painfully beside the point. A closer look, however, reveals that, despite the somewhat misleading title, Béla Bellér's study deals with an important aspect of Hungarian domestic and foreign policy in the 1920s, namely, the revisionist aims of the Horthy regime.

Only a small part of Bellér's book is devoted to Hungary's nationality policy per se. . . . It could not be otherwise, for with the Treaty of Trianon "the nationality question" ceased to be a real issue. In 1918, when the Károlyi government established the Ministry of Nationalities, the problem of accommodating dissident nationality groups was pressing. With the signing of the Treaty, territorial autonomy was no longer in question, and even cultural autonomy lost much of its political and practical significance.

Bellér's study of Trianon Hungary's nationality policy suffers from ideological clichés—for instance, that the post-revolutionary regime was fascist and that "the nationality policy of the Hungarian Soviet Republic was based on the teachings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin and on the historical experiences of the Great October Socialist Revolution."

At times, he is unduly harsh on the Budapest government, as when he criticizes the regime for not accepting the provisions of the Treaty of Trianon months before the Hungarian peace delegation arrived in Paris. His valuational conclusions are often undocumented and in seeming conflict with the facts. For example, after stating that 65.2 per cent of those participating in the Sopron plebiscite of 1921 voted for Hungary and that, even considering irregularities, Hungary was the clear winner, he announces (without further explanation) that "the victory was not glorious." . . .

The greater and more valuable portion of the book is devoted to the undercover propagandistic activities of the Ministry of Nationalities. Although the avowed goal of the Ministry was the protection of the rights of Hungary's minorities, the very budget of the Ministry is telling: the Ruthenian department, nominally in charge of 1,500 Ruthenians in Hungary, received exactly the same portion of the budget as did the German department, responsible for 551,211 Hungarian subjects of German origin. The Ministry was not so much a clearing house for minority affairs within the country as it was a vehicle for Hungary's revisionist aims.

The attention of the Ministry was first directed to the Slovak question. Its zeal was understandable. In November 1919 František Jehlička, a close associate to Andrej Hlinka, leader of the Slovak People's Party, arrived in Budapest, claiming to speak for his imprisoned party chief. He revealed that the Slovaks would vote for reunion with Hungary if Hungary, in turn, would grant them territorial autonomy. In January 1920 the officials of the Ministry, in long bargaining sessions with Jehlička, hammered out the provisions of the proposed autonomy. At the same time, with the assistance of the Ministry, a network of pro-Hungarian Slovak émigré groups was planted both in Hungary and in Poland. In addition, Magyarone Slovaks living in Slovakia received subsidies for their pro-Magyar propaganda campaigns inside the Czechoslovak Republic. Soon, similar networks were established to work for Ruthenian autonomy.

Bellér provides some fascinating details about Hungary's endeavours to promote Slovak and Ruthenian reunion with Hungary. Unfortunately, he does not deal with the diplomatic repercussions of these ill-conceived and often badly executed ventures. In themselves, they were simply desperate, foolish schemes. But they led to exaggerated fears of Hungary's designs on her victorious neighbours and, in this way, contributed significantly to the early isolation of Hungary and to the formation of an anti-Hungarian combination, the Little Entente. When,

in 1922, the Ministry's doors were closed forever, the Hungarian government acknowledged that its propagandistic schemes had failed and that any revision of the Treaty of Trianon would have to be postponed.

Eva S. Balogh (Yale University), in *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Fall, 1975).

A magyar polgári történetírás rövid története [The Short History of Hungarian Bourgeois Historiography]. By Emma Lederer. Budapest: Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1969. 197 pp.

Hungarian Historiography and the Geistesgeschichte School. By Steven Béla Várdy. Cleveland, Ohio: An Árpád Academy Publication, 1974. 96 pp. \$4.00.

Gyula Szekfű (1883–1955) occupies a pivotal importance not only in the development of Hungarian historiography but also in the political history of twentieth-century Hungary. The contradictory course of his life mirrored his country's changing fortunes, or rather misfortunes, and the controversy surrounding his major works, *Három nemzedék* (Three Generations) and *Magyar történet* (Hungarian History; with Bálint Hóman), was, and is, political as well as scholarly. Both of the books under review attest, however reluctantly, to the intellectual and political significance of his remarkable career.

Emma Lederer's short history of what she is pleased to call "bourgeois" historiography exemplifies the high quality of post-1956 Hungarian Marxist research. Based on her series of university lectures, the book is an admirable introduction to the generally unphilosophical practice of Hungarian historians, Szekfű notwithstanding, from the Revolution of 1848–49 to the end of the Second World War. Lederer maintains that this period witnessed significant progress in research techniques, accompanied by increasingly retrograde theoretical constructions. The brief prefatory chapters on Western European historians and philosophies of history focus on Germany because "in the theory and practice of history, German historical science exerted the primary, if not the only influence on the entire development of Hungary's bourgeois historiography." (p. 25). In the principal chapters Lederer analyzes the Hungarian Positivist School — for want of a

better name — of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries before turning her attention to Szekfű and the *Geistesgeschichte* School of the inter-war years.

While personally sympathetic with Szekfű, . . . Lederer indicts him on two counts. According to the first count, the *Verstehen* method employed by Szekfű is irrational and the importance he attached to spiritual-intellectual history is *ipso facto* reactionary. The second count states that Szekfű's anti-Semitism and Magyar chauvinism perverted his historical judgment and served not to increase understanding, much less to promote progress, but rather to buttress the nefarious policies of the Horthy government.

It is difficult to see how any fair-minded jury could find Szekfű guilty on the first count. The method proposed by Wilhelm Dilthey is not irrational in the sense Lederer suggests; it is a discipline designed to study phenomena judged to be beyond the range of scientific reason. Further, her contention that the basic assumption of the *Geistesgeschichte* School — that *Geist* (“Spirit” or “Mind”) is the stuff of history — is “reactionary” rests on her commitment to Marxism. Non-Marxists may therefore be forgiven for dismissing this charge.

The second count is more serious. In *Három nemzedék* Szekfű elevated anti-Semitism to a principle of interpretation; in attempting to account for the “catastrophic” Hungarian revolutions of 1918–19 he suggested that Jewish radicals had carried the logic of pre-war liberalism to its ultimate conclusion. Now even if, as I believe, Szekfű's well-known preference for Széchenyi and “conservative reform” can be defended, his analysis of the “three generations” from the Reform Era to the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy cannot. . . .

Steven Béla Várdy's book comprises the Hungarian text, with English summary, of an address delivered to the Árpád Academy in Cleveland. The author's aim is a modest one; he wishes to refute those who, like Lederer, argue that Szekfű and the *Geistesgeschichte* School were without serious challengers in the period between the wars. While acknowledging the ascendancy of *Geistesgeschichte*, he insists that other schools of history were very much alive. Of the various anti-*Geistesgeschichte* schools discussed, Várdy thinks most highly of the Ethnohistory (Népiségtörténeti) School and its principal representative, Elemér Mályusz.

The argument is persuasive, even though the need to present it is a measure of the length of the shadow cast by Gyula Szekfű. Be that as it may, this fine monograph, which includes an excellent bibliography,

serves notice that the appearance of Várdy's English-language work in progress on the history of Hungarian historiography will be a publishing event of importance.

Lee Congdon (Madison College) in *East Central Europe*, Vol. II, No. 2 (1975).

Environmental Deterioration in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Edited by Ivan Völgyes. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974. xvi, 168 pp. \$14.00.

While the momentum of the environmental movement in the West seems to have slowed a bit, it appears to be accelerating in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. This is to be applauded because the challenge there is as great or greater than that which exists in the West. Unfortunately, most Westerners are still uninformed about just how serious the problem is in Communist countries.

Environmental Deterioration in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, while repeating and even republishing much of the material that has become available about the Soviet Union, does offer some new material in English about Eastern Europe. The chapter by György Enyedi is a forthright statement about conditions in Hungary. David Kromm reports on a public opinion survey which he supervised and which, among other things, revealed a striking awareness by low income residents of the pollution problem of Ljubjana, Yugoslavia.

Leslie Dienes provides details for Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, and shows just how serious environmental disruption is in these three countries. For example, Budapest, as of 1972, dumped as much as two-thirds of its sewage into the Danube without even primary treatment. Furthermore, because most of the homes in Eastern Europe are heated with poor quality soft coal, the level of sulfur concentration in the air during the winter is far above the levels in most other parts of Europe and the parts of the USSR where central heating is used. . . .

Except for the section by Ihor Stebelsky on soil erosion and dust storms, and the section by Philip Micklin on the Caspian Sea, much of the material on the USSR either has already appeared in print (and sometimes in the same articles by the same authors) or is not especially insightful. . . .

Marshall I. Goldman (Wellesley College), *Slavic Review*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (March 1976).

Ungarn. Geschichte und Gegenwart. Eine Landesbiographie. By Denis Silagi. Second Edition. Hannover: Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, 1972. 168 pp.

Silagi's study was designed to be a national character sketch — “a living picture” as the author puts it — rather than history in the orthodox sense. Silagi believes that recent events offer better insights and clearer perspectives than the history of more distant happenings. Consequently, most of the text covers developments after World War II. Only thirty pages are devoted to events antedating the eighteenth century, and the period terminating with World War II is disposed of in only twenty-five pages. . . .

To what extent does a survey such as this serve a useful function? Superficial readers might be content with matters as they stand. Two brief paragraphs on Széchenyi, and only one on Kossuth, might suffice for the literary browser. Serious scholars would certainly expect a more circumspect coverage, as well as adequate documentation and a bibliography comprising at least major works written in the most prevalent Western languages. All these ingredients are missing, unfortunately, to the detriment of this otherwise interesting account. . . .

On the whole, Silagi's survey follows a moderate course between the two extremes of traditional and Marxist historical exegesis. Although the author betrays an occasional pro-Magyar and anti-Communist bias, his is a sensible and fair account of the history of a nation which has always been plagued by partisan and extremist interpretations. This study should be of some interest to the educated German public, whereas the scholar will find it of lesser significance, because of its relative superficiality and lack of documentation. Several useful maps and a guide to Magyar pronunciation for German speakers round out this modest contribution to the history of Hungary.

Thomas Spira (University of Prince Edward Island) in *East Central Europe*, Vol. 2, no. 2 (1975).

Soziologie und Gesellschaft in Ungarn. Edited by Bálint Balla. Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke Verlag, 1974. 4 vols. 160, 128, 186 and 154 pp.

Professor Balla has translated and edited these four separate volumes on society and sociology in Hungary. Hungarian-born and educated,

Balla now teaches sociology at the Institute of Social Science, Technical University in West Berlin.

Next to the Poles, the most interesting sociologists in eastern Europe are undoubtedly the Hungarians. Since 1960 one can speak of the revival of Hungarian sociology whose characteristic feature is empirical research. These volumes describe social reforms, social problems, political bureaucracy, and the mechanism of economic laws. Through them we have a clearer view of the phenomena of "interest-plurality" and "interest-conflicts" within Hungarian society. This thorough analysis is based not on abstract theories but on case-studies and concrete data.

These volumes contain original contributions by well-known Hungarian scholars on socialist society in Hungary. Balla introduces the volumes with a detailed essay on the nature of Hungarian sociology. He believes there is something unique about Hungarian society which distinguishes it from others in East Europe. We would not dispute that each society has its own peculiarities, but, on one point Balla is mistaken. The monolithic political and economic system prevailing in East European countries has created problems which are common to them all. . . .

It is most appropriate . . . to mention some of the themes discussed in these volumes: the history and state of Hungarian sociology, the Marxist approach to the problem of social structure, development of Marxist sociology in socialist countries, the role of sociology in political leadership, the sociological problems of division of labour in the family, social structure and school system, sociological problems of new housing settlement, and how organized irresponsibility endangers the system of decision-making.

Peter Raina (Osteuropa-Institut, Free University of Berlin) in *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (June 1976).

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Watson Kirkconnell
1895-1977

Watson Kirkconnell, scholar, teacher, publicist, poet and translator, died this February in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. Born in Port Hope, Ontario, he received his university education at Queen's University in the nearby city of Kingston, and at Oxford University. Professor Kirkconnell's teaching career began in Winnipeg's Wesley College where, between 1934 and 1940, he was the chairman of the Department of Classics. From 1940 to 1948 he served as chairman of the Department of English at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario. From 1948 to 1964 Professor Kirkconnell was President of Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. During his academic career he also served as national secretary, chairman and president of several learned societies and institutions, including the Canadian Authors' Association and the Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Throughout much of his life Kirkconnell had been involved in civic affairs. During the turbulent 1930's and 1940's he fought against the new totalitarian ideologies, especially communism. He was also a devoted and effective spokesman for Canada's European immigrant ethnic minorities.

Kirkconnell had a special interest in Hungarian culture both in Hungary and in Canada. His love for Magyar poetry resulted in several volumes of verse translation, the most notable being the *Magyar Muse* (1933), and the monumental but, alas, still unpublished *Hungarian Helicon* (1,180 pages in manuscript).

His devotion to things Hungarian involved Kirkconnell in the work of the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies* first as a contributor and, from 1975 to his death, as one of the journal's mentors and its Honorary Editor.

Watson Kirkconnell, O.C. (1968), M.A., Ph.D., D.ès L., D. Litt., L.H.D., D.P.Ec., LL.D., F.R.S.C., prided himself with having won numerous highly coveted academic and literary honours; with competence in several, diverse disciplines; with familiarity with some fifty languages; and with a list of publications almost unmatched in length and scope. With his passing our journal has lost a devoted adviser and

friend; Hungarian-Canadians, a loyal and effective spokesman; and the world of learning, a scholar of extraordinary achievements and range of interests.

In a forthcoming issue our journal will pay a special tribute to this remarkable man.

(NFD)

OUR CONTRIBUTORS (continued from page 2)

IVAN SANDERS received his B.A. and M.A. from the City University of New York, Brooklyn College, and his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from New York University. At present he is associate professor of English at Suffolk County Community College, Selden, Long Island, N.Y. Professor Sanders' studies and articles on Hungarian literature, as well as on other literary topics, have been published in *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *Commonwealth*, *America*, *World Literature Today* (formerly *Books Abroad*), *East European Quarterly*, *The Polish Review* and *Hungarian Book Review* (Budapest). His Hungarian-language essays and reviews have appeared in *Valóság*, *Nagyvilág*, *Helikon* (Budapest) and *Új Látóhatár* (Munich). His translation of György Konrád's novel *The City Builder* [A városalapító] will be published by Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich in the fall of 1977.

ANNA KATONA is Professor of English at the College of Charleston, Charleston, South Carolina. Previously she had been Chairman of the University of Debrecen's Department of English, and the editor of *Hungarian Studies in English*. Her publications include *A valóságábrázolás problémái George Eliot regényeiben* [The Problems of Depicting Reality in the Novels of George Eliot] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1969), and, with Miklós Szenczi and Tibor Szobotka, *Az angol irodalom története* [The History of English Literature] (Budapest: Gondolat, 1972). She has also edited *A Casebook on the United States* (Budapest, 1969).

STEPHEN BELA VARDY, a regular contributor to our journal, is Professor of History at Duquesne University.

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