

## **“Through Images Juxtaposed:” Two Hungarian Poetic Responses to Allen Ginsberg’s “Howl.”**

**Laszlo K. Gefin**

Allen Ginsberg’s poem “Howl” was published by City Lights Books in San Francisco on November 1, 1956. Two events marked the thirtieth anniversary of the publication: first, there appeared an annotated edition of the poem, containing facsimiles of original drafts, author’s emendations, correspondence, and other paratextual material.<sup>1</sup> The publisher’s blurb on the front flap of the book’s jacket states what should by now be a critical common-place, namely that “Howl” is “a prophetic masterpiece that helped change... the course of American poetry in this century.” Second, the Modern Language Association at its 1986 convention in New York allocated a special session to honor both poem and poet. The session leader, Professor Gordon Ball, introduced the panel and the subject of the session by saying that to many readers “Howl” has come to represent “the greatest achievement in American poetry since T.S. Eliot’s *Waste Land*,” and “one of the most influential poems of the past generation.”<sup>2</sup> These statements round out a host of similar comments made by poets and critics during the past decades, affirming Ginsberg’s, and “Howl”’s significance and influence in America and Western Europe.<sup>3</sup> Also, both poet and poem have received unusual attention among poets in the Central and Eastern European countries behind the Iron Curtain, as well as Polish, Czech, and Hungarian writers living in the west. It is not difficult to imagine that a poem such as “Howl,” which was found shocking, daring, and iconoclastic even by more tolerant western standards, should be particularly offensive and/or liberating in the repressive and centrally controlled atmosphere of socialist literatures. “Howl”’s transgressions of social, religious, nationalistic, and above all sexual taboos ought to have influenced the poetic practices and attitudes of a wide variety of poets, loosening up old forms, inspiring more free expression.

Such an image is not wholly inaccurate from a somewhat distant, generalizing vantage point, but the issues involved are not so simple. If we consider, moreover, that of all the literatures of East-Central Europe, Hungarian is perhaps the prudest, most "Victorian" ("Francis-Josephian?") and self-censored, it should be more than just a routine scholarly exercise to assess the influence of Ginsberg's "Howl." It may be worth demonstrating (1) the effect of the poem's formal innovations; (2) the resistance to, or acceptance of, Ginsberg's verbal "excesses;" and most important, (3) what attitudes did the poem engender and/or change toward American literature and American reality as a whole on the part of Hungarian writers.

The aim of this brief study is to attempt to assess this influence, but even at the risk of stating the obvious, I should begin by saying that poetic influence is the most difficult intertextual, or *transtextual*, "fact" to prove,<sup>4</sup> especially if one does not subscribe wholeheartedly (as in my case) to Harold Bloom's theories of poetic influence, their stress on anxieties of filiation, and consequent, mainly unconscious battles with, misprisions and misreadings of, the fateful poetic ancestor(s). Bloom's thesis, that "the profundities of poetic influence cannot be reduced to source study, to the history of ideas, to the patterning of images" is a de facto dismissal of textual evidence as a basis of establishing relationships of influence between literary works of art.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, I believe that as in all cases of attempted proof and validation, persuasive evidence can only come from the texts themselves, from the transtextual and contextual play and echo of signifiers, juxtaposed or, even if only conceptually, "superposed," in a variety of configurations.

An instance of just such transtextual genealogy may be observed in the new annotated edition of "Howl," where Ginsberg himself provides the reader with a mini-anthology of "precursor texts" to the poem (175–188). On reproducing *in extenso* various poems by Christopher Smart, Guillaume Apollinaire, Kurt Schwitters, Vladimir Mayakovsky, William Carlos Williams, and others, Ginsberg notes that "these poems were familiar to me by summer 1955," and adds that "memory of these verse rhythms superimposed on my own breath passed into the inspiration of 'Howl'." The mystery of precisely how these lines and rhythms "passed into" the mind of the poet is of course impossible and fruitless to probe; but from the little collection a great deal becomes evident. Taken singly, the precursor poems identify certain verbal, figurative, rhythmic, and other components that became changed and fused by Ginsberg during the writing of the poem; taken together, they testify to a basic poetic attitude, a poetic-philosophic-existential *stance* on Ginsberg's part

that made him receptive to all of them, in spite, or perhaps because, of their thematic differences. Thus, "Howl" is both a textually provable composite and a poetic whole with its own unique combination and shift of tones, redoublings, pathos and parody. With "Howl" "superposed," as it were, on now this, now that precursor text, simulating the effects of a palimpsest, overlaps of certain similar (though never identical) modes of diction, figuration, and rhythm may be shown to actually exist: the long line is Whitmanesque, the brash tone resembles Mayakovsky's, the repetitive syntax recalls Christopher Smart, the ellipses (such as "hydrogen jukebox" and "skeleton treasuries") may have been inspired by the surrealists, etc. In their fusion, of course, the final product can be seen to have been transformed into something wholly Ginsbergian, but still sharing with all precursor texts a spiritual kinship in terms of revolutionary fervor, a transgressive desire to "recreate the syntax and measure of poor human prose" (6), all of it suffused with a tenderness and compassion for which Whitman's "adhesiveness" is the most appropriate term.

Ginsberg's generosity of providing readers with a list of his own predecessors is unique, and I have not seen it repeated by Hungarian poets, particularly in relationship to "Howl." In my search for evidence I have looked at only those writers who have demonstrably been associated with Ginsberg's poetry, and I have finally settled on two poets who are also translators of "Howl." For the sake of contrast, I chose one poet from Hungary proper, and another from outside Hungary. The former, Ottó Orbán, lives in Budapest; the latter, György Vitéz, has lived in Montreal, Canada since 1957. Needless to say, I am not interested in comparing their translations of "Howl;" that exercise may in any case be of some limited profit to Hungarian readers only.<sup>6</sup> As stated above, my interest lies solely in establishing evident links, echoes, traces of transmission that testify to some forms of domestication, ingestion, and continuation of the spirit of "Howl."

As demonstrated by a common interest in Ginsberg, the works of the two poets in question are linked by a number of resemblances (although, as we shall see, the resemblances are superficial). Both are in their early fifties; both are innovators, though Vitéz has gone much further than Orbán in deconstructing traditional poetic patterns in his experiments with unusual word couplings, puns, cutups, and the like. Vitéz has increasingly used language, as suggested by John Cage, as "material" — i.e., without the customary respect and awe for the sanctity of tradition and language evinced by all Hungarian poets of his, and the older, generation — including

Orbán. In fact, evidence and influence of the Ginsbergian spirit as embodied in "Howl" is the best litmus test by which the signal differences between Orbán's and Vitéz's basic poetic attitudes may be most conveniently and conclusively measured. For this reason, I have concentrated on a single poem from the canon of each writer, both texts dealing with the art of poetry and the poet's role in contemporary society, which will make it possible for me to reveal "through images juxtaposed" ("Howl" 6), truths about both their positions and dispositions.

Of the two poets, it is Orbán who invokes quite frequently Ginsberg's name, makes references to his visits to America, and generally employs Ginsbergian devices, such as long lines, a good deal of confessional autobiographical data, and a large, at times loud public and/or prophetic voice. Orbán, however, stylistic and formal elements to the contrary, can hardly be considered anything but a very distant poetic comrade of the Beat writers. His strongly entrenched European, or more particularly Central-European, bias has prevented him from becoming truly receptive to the wide cosmic sweep of poets like Ginsberg, Corso, Ferlinghetti, and others. In several poems written over the past decade and a half, Orbán's references to his friendship with Ginsberg, his view of American poets and literature in general, and matters having to do with America have been characterized by a condescending desire to show up their naivete and amateurishness in contrast to the socially committed public stance he claims to profess.

The most telling example is found in the provocatively titled poem "Ginsberg Budapest" [Ginsberg in Budapest]. Here Orbán asks several important and vexing questions regarding the role poets may play in the present age — an age when they are either ignored or viewed with hostility, depending on their place of residence. Orbán imagines two possible choices available to poets, as follows:

Should we be Buddhists or quarrelsome queers in New York riding on the broomsticks of our obsessions to the witches' sabbath of our angelic dream talk or on the contrary keeping our fingers on the pulse of events do we know more or less what's on the mind of the average citizen under definite circumstances?<sup>7</sup>

From the way Orbán positions and articulates his choices, there seems to be no contest as to the alternative he prefers. Buddhists and "queers" (the Hungarian term employed by Orbán is the partly homophonic yet still homophobic *homokos*, a slangy variant of

*buzeráns*, the Czech form of which [*buzerant*] Ginsberg carefully noted in his memorable poem “Kral Majales”<sup>8</sup> are grouped together, and since the reference to Ginsberg is obvious, his being both Buddhist and homosexual, the terms serve as indices to a kind of Ginsbergian pseudo-alternative or artistic irresponsibility. This is followed by the image of the Ginsbergian poet as a devotee of the occult. Orbán alleges that instead of concepts or ideals, such a poet can have only obsessions, which then can only transport them to some weird non-place, outside the sphere of normal socio-historical human reality, to the *walpurgisnacht* of their “dream talk.” “Dream talk” is Orbán’s patronizing term for a poetic language that has transgressed the rules and regulations of traditionally sanctioned *rational* discourse, while also being a reference to the language of dreams, i.e., the unconscious — in other words, the very essence of Ginsberg’s and the surrealists’ attempt at unifying through ecstatic poetic language the artificially separated conceptual pairs of conscious/unconscious, rational/irrational, etc.

The putdown is followed by the obviously privileged image of the poet as some sort of physician, fulfilling his properly defined duties. Even if we disregard the incongruity of the image — a medical [medicine?] man taking the pulse of some such nebulous entity as “events” and then reading the mind of something equally abstract like the “average man” — there remain some problems with the role of the poet as diagnostician. One implication is relatively straightforward: the image may allude to the poet as shaman and tribal encyclopedist, endowed with obviously superior knowledge vis-à-vis the “average citizen.” On another level, Orbán (unwittingly?) invokes the Marxian substructure/superstructure dichotomy in terms of which the poet first examines the fundamentally determining economic and material factors in a given grid of “definite circumstances,” proceeding only then to find out about the citizen’s mental and cultural welfare, the latter being at all times dependent on the former. In socialist realist terms, it means the praxis of “going among the people,” mingling with workers and peasants, learning about the way they live, listening to them (“what’s on their minds”), and then write about them in a responsible and sensible manner. Considering the fact that in the more liberal political climate in Hungary no writer would dream of reinstating such practices (reminiscent of the Rákosi era of the late 1940’s and early 50’s), Orbán’s references are somewhat anachronistic, to say the least.

Another overtone embedded in the image of the poet as man of science recalls Stalin’s infamous designation of writers as the “engineers of the soul,” and Zhdanov’s subsequent degradation of

them to the middle rungs of the party hierarchy. Whether on the most lowbrow, schematic level, or employing sophisticated literary styles, the writer in the Stalinist era had no other role than to articulate the program of the party for the masses. For Orbán to invoke, albeit obliquely, this veritable ghost from the past, and with it, on the one hand, all the still untold suffering of individual writers, and, on the other hand, the still unassessed cultural damage caused by Stalin's (and his Hungarian representatives') policies, is far more "irresponsible" than any poetic "dream talk."

"Ginsberg in Budapest" ends on a somewhat paradoxical note. Before Ginsberg's departure from the Hungarian capital Orbán says farewell not only to the American poet, but to other things as well:

G'bye Allen g'bye I take leave of our muddled salvation of the howling poem of our youth of the illusions of the sixties when we imagined the intellectual as a knight in the shining armor of his reform projects we have nothing in common though it's good to know our essence is the same.<sup>9</sup>

It is in this leave-taking that the superficial resemblances between Orbán's and Ginsberg's (and, as we shall see, Vitéz's) poetic attitudes disappear, to give way to substantial differences. Orbán renounces the enthusiasm and fervor of his youth, discarding in the process the "howling poem" (i.e., "Howl") as so much embarrassing excess baggage, discomfitingly reminding him of a poetic and human identity with which, as with Ginsberg, he has "nothing in common." Orbán's farewell to his past is not fraught with nostalgia or regret: if anything, he sounds blithe and relieved, as if to suggest that the arduous enterprise of pulse taking and mind reading allows no sentimentality or even memory. Be that as it may, to speak of an identical "essence" uniting Ginsberg and himself — this being their never-ending curiosity of asking questions about the world — is a little disingenuous; for the questions the two poets ask, the answers they receive, and the "reports," medical or otherwise, in which they articulate them are irreconcilable. Poetic curiosity is not an ideal attribute devoid of historical contingencies — a fact one should not forget even when playing doctor.

György Vitéz's poetic program is markedly different from Orbán's, not the least because of having lived outside of Hungary for three decades. Instead of finding and/or inventing reasons for living and writing in North America (in contrast to Orbán who in several poems finds it necessary to justify why he has not emigrated

to America),<sup>10</sup> he has devoted his energies to attempt to answer other questions. For example, what are the outer limits of consciousness and poetic communication; how can one engage in newer and newer explorations and experiments without severing one's connections and commitments to the "howling poems" of one's youth.

Vitéz's relationship to Ginsberg's work in particular, and American poetry as a whole (apart from "Howl," he has translated several works by Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams, and Sylvia Plath, in addition to poems by a number of important Canadian writers such as Al Purdy and Gwendolyn MacEwen)<sup>11</sup> is less obviously visible than Orbán's. Yet the spirit seems to be closer than in the work of any Hungarian writer writing at home, except some of the most talented members of the newer generation of poets.<sup>12</sup> It is no exaggeration to say that Vitéz (and a few other Hungarian writers who settled in Canada and the United States after 1956: Tamás Túz, József Bakucz, András Sándor, László Baránszky) succeeded in flying by the Joycean "nets" of nationality and religion/ideology. Although he continues to write poetry in his first language, even there by both necessity and inclination he has shown an openness and inclusiveness, a serious playfulness which is not typical of poets who remained geographically, psychologically, and culturally bound to Hungary, to Europe. In this context, then, "Howl" could show possibilities of new poetic structuring, a welcome nonrationality of diction and metaphor. Perhaps even more important, Ginsberg's poem could come alive and stay alive for Vitéz because it spoke in its frenzied eloquence of a common experience — of exile, of pain, of otherness, of being homeless, marginal, and unaccepted. But it also spoke of a need for communion, and Vitéz's poetry, in spite of its having evolved to a level of incessant word play and various ingenious language games — a practice which, in George Bizsray's estimation, may be fraught with the danger of reducing poetry to "an endless combination of signs"<sup>13</sup> — has preserved a will to maintain some form of meaningful communication. In a relatively early poem, entitled "Amerika" [America], most of the issues relevant to his relationship to Ginsberg, and a declaration of poetic intentions may be observed.<sup>14</sup> Apart from the title, the poem has little or nothing to do with Ginsberg's poem by the same name; more significantly, Vitéz's "America" replays in its own way the suffering, accusation, and reconciliation of "Howl."

The poem recounts a bus trip from Boston to Montreal, the scene of some harrowing feelings of alienation and disorientation resulting from the poet's inability to feel at home in his new-found environment. Part I begins with questions:

What night is this, the darkness playing with its crumbling blocks  
what roads are we rushing on, what country is this, why is the bus  
empty as it takes me over the horizon? Why has the March snow  
melted on the hills of New Hampshire? (The rocks of the  
moonscape — Vermont — make the heart run faster why why the  
anxiety, — one wipes sweating palms on trousers as the snubnosed  
bus with its shiny underbelly lunges through the gates of a small  
town.<sup>15</sup>

In the poet's feverish mind one question stumbles after another, communicating his overwhelming sense of estrangement from even the most familiar components of the landscape, as if he were on a strange planet, and the seemingly recognizable elements were some sort of deceptive camouflage. The lonely traveller feels trapped in the bus, like a latterday Jonah inside his whale; also like the biblical prophet, the poet appears reluctant to play the customary poetic/prophetic role. For in partial answer to his angst-ridden questions, the reality he sees around him does not appear to be in need of a voice from the desert:

The peace is palpable over the houses hushed in dreams of sauerkraut not even the ghosts of the TV screen can scream it away. For here soldiers in wigs (history book) and redskins (Last of the Mohicans) were shooting at each other with arrows, whatever.<sup>16</sup>

The confrontation with a reality known up till now only from history books and novels becomes less threatening precisely because of the humanizing memories of those books; yet the difference between the world of books and the actual world of experience is not dissolved. Additional answers begin to emerge in Part II:

I've stumbled into a world where the children of the rich have long hair and would mop up the superhighways with their tears if the police would let them. I've come to a city where the poor fattened up on sweet nothing carve their fear with switchblades into the bent backs of the passers-by under the mile-long shadows of towering Babels erected not by arrogance but by guilt.<sup>17</sup>

The tone of the poet's critique of America, underneath the whimsical, deadpan exterior, is serious and cutting. Its social psychology is sound, devoid of the usual cant of pseudoexplanations coming from the right, offering racist and other accounts for crime and delinquency; if anything, Vitéz's assessment is basically



Marxist. The assumption that the “towering Babels” — echoing the skyscrapers and “robot apartments” in the Moloch section of “Howl” — are built by “guilt” rather than “arrogance” refers both to America’s super-power status and to the Puritan past, as well as the guilt felt by the white conquerors over the disinheritance of the indigenous population.

Like Part II in “Howl,” the second section of Vitéz’s “America” ends on a note of disillusionment and despondency, as when the poet characterizes his journey as “a pilgrimage robbed of any dignity,” while seeing the highway with disquieting foreboding: “Its end plunges into the sea. Dolphins are going to be marching on it one fine day.”<sup>18</sup>

In the third and final part, however, the tone changes, and a very different question is asked:

But what if I did not lose my way? Here can bloom conscience, this Sensitive Plant, waving to shimmering stellar wonderlands. And Liberty, at home under the redwoods, lifts up in her gigantic hands all her children who want to live who ride in boats on mountain lakes, who walk behind pineapple harvesting machines, who, like this bus driver, stop for a moment to say a few human words to the traveller who thought he was lost, and to his surprise finds himself among friends.<sup>19</sup>

The adjective “human” to the words spoken by the driver is doubly significant: apart from the connotation of general human friendliness, it finally dispels the traveller’s oppressive feeling of alienation as if he were on an other, nonhuman planet. In the belly of that monster of a bus he finds another human being as much in need of human companionship as he is. The criticism of America, of American capitalism has not been revoked, but now it stands qualified, attesting to the traveller-poet’s ability to move beyond the alien *surface* of this brave new world to the *substance* of a different, yet common humanity.

Without once explicitly alluding to anything remotely connected with Ginsberg or “Howl,” Vitéz’s “America” works through analogous stages of poetic unfolding. In its tripartite structure it creates an initial environment of estrangement and bewilderment, giving rise to a strong yet playfully figurative indictment of America, ending on an affirmative note, on a note of renewed faith in the possibility of some form of meaningful *communitas*. The guarantee for such a renewed “contract” comes from Vitéz’s unsentimental recognition of the crucial ideal of freedom, for only in its light may

the ills of society be seen for what they are: *ills* that can be remedied. In contrast to Orbán's notion of the poet as a functionary of some healing pretensions, Vitéz offers no practical solutions; he quite unceremoniously affirms the poet's role as witness, even that of a suffering witness, whose testimony may be useful to others. Likewise, he exhibits no interest in probing the mind of his new found companion; their act of communication is devoid of any ulterior motives on either side. The words exchanged are in truth an exchange of gifts, one of the most ancient and reassuring modes of human communication. Ginsberg's own "I'm with you in Rockland" in Part III of "Howl" is just such a gift extended over physical and mental distances to his friend Carl Solomon. In both cases, the verbal gifts are life-restoring, redemptive gestures, without which no truthful poetic account can be imagined.

The two Hungarian poets' responses to "Howl," then, have mapped out widely differing areas of poetic attitudes and concerns. It would seem that Orbán, either unconsciously or as a result of deliberate choice, refuses to part with wornout notions about the poet's task; his translating and reading of "Howl," his exposure to novel poetic avenues other than those of the nineteenth century bring out in him not the rebel but the zealous "doctor." The innuendo of his "Ginsberg in Budapest" — that the Ginsbergian and other similar poetic alternative is a kind of dabbling in idle witchcraft, and is without seriousness and a sense of responsibility — is repudiated not only by the Vitéz poem chosen as an example but most resoundingly by "Howl" itself, to say nothing of Ginsberg's later poetry. One of the most memorable passages in "Howl" can be found in Part III where the poet-narrator and Carl Solomon, in the real and imaginary madhouse "hug and kiss the United States under [their] bedsheets, the United States that coughs all night and won't let [them] sleep" (8).

It is perhaps redundant to point out that this image has "nothing in common" with Orbán's image of the poet as diligent diagnostician, with its lingering sense of self-importance and self-privileging. In a magical moment of reconciliation (of which the ending of Vitéz's poem, as suggested, is a poignant counterpart) the metaphysical entity of the United States is metamorphosed into a sick child, whom the two outcasts in the asylum "hug and kiss." The tenderness and delicate pathos of the scene has none of the clumsiness of "what's on the mind" of the benighted citizen. But that Ginsberg's image evinces a true sense of responsibility and the most mature way poets can respond to an unhealthy social or spiritual climate — that is, by showing tenderness and solicitude — is, I feel, beyond dispute.

After all, the illness of this “child” may not be fatal; for underneath the immediately worrisome exterior the loving poet — a sibling rather than an authoritarian parent — may glimpse its true and healthy soul: Liberty. And despite switchblades stuck in innocent bystanders, despite all the mindless and oppressive evidence of various manifestations of Moloch and other ills, the “Sensitive Plant” of conscience can flourish only under its protection.

The ideal of freedom and genuine human contact, then, are the crucial *loci* where, if “superimposed” over one another, Vitéz’s text may be seen to merge with Ginsberg’s. Instead of indebtedness or influence, it is perhaps more appropriate to speak of a free meeting of minds; but then *influentia* is just such a meeting, a flowing-together, fruitful and *responsible*. There is little doubt that its transmission from Ginsberg via Vitéz (and other poetic intermediaries) to younger poets in Hungary and elsewhere, is assured.

## Notes

1. Allen Ginsberg, *Howl*, ed. Barry Miles: Harper & Row, 1986. All references in this paper are to this edition.
2. Professor Ball is the editor of two important collections of Ginsbergiana: *Allen Verbatim: Lectures on Poetry, Politics, Consciousness* (1974) and *Journals Early Fifties Early Sixties* (1977). The members of the MLA Panel on “Howl” included Ann Charters, Barry Miles, Marjorie Perloff, and the present writer.
3. See Daniel Hoffmann “Poetry: School of Dissidents,” in *Harvard Guide to Contemporary American Writing*, ed. Hoffmann (Cambridge, 1979), 517–521. Also George Bowering, “How I Hear ‘Howl!’” in *On the Poetry of Allen Ginsberg*, ed. Lewis Hyde (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1984) pp. 370–378. See also in the same collection by the present writer, “Ellipsis: The Ideograms of Ginsberg,” pp. 272–287.
4. The term “transtextual” is Gérard Genette’s, referring to all types and modes of one text’s relationship to another; see his *Palimpsestes: la littérature au second degré* (Paris: Seuil, 1983), p. 9.
5. Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 7.
6. I would like to set the record straight, however, by stating that György Vitéz, and not Ottó Orbán, is the first Hungarian translator of the poem, a fact missing from the bibliography section in the annotated edition as provided by Bill Morgan. Vitéz’s translation was published in Montreal, on 28 May 1960, in 100 copies, with notes.
7. The poem appears in the volume *A visszacsavart láng* [The Flame Turned Low] (Budapest, 1979), p. 84. It should be noted that in a later poem written about Ginsberg and himself (“Vendégelőadók” [Guest Lecturers], *Élet és Irodalom* XXX, 35 [29 August 1986], 1), Orbán appears in a more generous mood. Yet he is still bent on making distinctions between the two of them, unabashedly in his own favour, as when he describes Ginsberg on a Budapest street demonstrating the healing powers of a Chinese dance, while he himself continues to have faith in the wild horse under the reins of “logic” (i.e., poetry). Translations in the paper are my own.
8. In *Planet News* (San Francisco: City Lights, 1968), p. 89.
9. The Hungarian original is as follows: Viszlát Allen viszlát zavaros üdvösségünk fiatalságunk nagyhangú versétől búcsúzom a 60-as évek illúzióitól amikor az

értelmiségit reformkori páncéljában pompázó lovagnak láttuk semmi közünk egymáshoz de jó tudni hogy lényegünk közös

10. See for example "Miért nem élnék Amerikában?" [Why I would not live in America], in the volume *The Flame Turned Low*, p. 77.

11. The translations of Canadian poems have appeared in the anthology *Gótika a vadonban* [Wilderness Gothic] (Budapest: Európa, 1984). 12. Younger Hungarian writers unburdened by the literary past include Tibor Zalán, Imre Péntek, Ernő Endrődi Szabó, Judit Kemenczky, Endre Kukorelly, János Géczy, János Sziveri, Endre Szkárosi, to mention only some of the most important. One recent anthology of young poets: *Lélegzet* [Breath/Inspiration] begins with a translation of Ginsberg's essay/manifesto on poetic breath and oral expression. It also includes a text by a new poet, János Kurdi Fehér, which begins "Allen Ginsberg, újra kell futózni a koponyát" [Allen Ginsberg, we'll have to retreat the skull].

13 See George Bisztray, *Hungarian-Canadian Literature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), p. 49.

14. The poem has appeared in Vitéz's first (belated) volume of poetry, *Amerikai történet* [American story], Paris 1975.

15. The Hungarian original is: Micsoda éjszaka ez, egymásraomló kockáival játszik a sötétség milyen utakon robogunk, — milyen országba tévedtem, miért üres a busz mely hetedhétárra visz? Miért olvadt el New Hampshire dombjain a márciusi hó? (A holdbeli táj — Vermont — szikláit megfuttatják a szívet miért, miért szorong az ember, — nedves tenyerét nadrágjába törli mikor egy kisváros ajtaján belőlud a törpeorrú fényeshasú gépezet.)

16. The Hungarian original is: Érezni lehet a békét savanyukáposztás álomra szenderült házak fölött még a televízió (ejtő)ernyős kísértetei sem tudják elhessegetni Itt parókás katonák (történelemkönyv) meg rézbőrűek (Utolsó Mohikán) lövöldöztek egymásra nyíllal, miegymással.

17. The Hungarian original is: Olyan világba botlottam hol a gazdagok gyermekei hosszú haját növesztenek és könnyeikkel mosogatnák föl a nemzet szuper-országút-jait ha a rendőrség megengedné nekik. olyan városba kerültem hol olcsó hús híg levével főlhízalt szegények bicskával vésik félelmüket a járókelők meggörnyedt hátába nem góg, de büntudat emelte bábel-tornyok mérföldes árnyékában

18. The Hungarian original is: méltóságától megfosztott zarándokút, and, Egyenesen a tengerbe lóg a vége. / Egy szép napon delfinek fognak vonulni rajta

19. The Hungarian original is: De hátha nem tévedtem el? Itt kivirágzik a lelkiismeret, ez az Érzékeny Palánta, villódzó csillag-szépségek felé integet. És fölemeli nagy tenyerébe a vörösfenyők alá költözött Szabadság élni kívánó gyermek-eit kik a tengerszemeken csónakáznak, kik az ananászszedő gépek mögött ballagnak kik, mint ez a buszsofőr, egy pillanatra megállnak, hogy emberi szót szóljanak az utazóhoz aki azt hiszi eltévedt és meglepődik, hogy hirtelen társakra akadt.