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In this issue Peter Hidas examines the relationship of Hungary's public and the Habsburg military in the decade after the Hungarian War of Independence of 1848–49, Magda Némethy writes on László Németh's ideas on education, and Francis S. Wagner writes on the situation and treatment of Gypsies in post-1945 Hungary. In a review article, Géza Jeszenszky examines recent works on the controversial Hungarian statesman, István Tisza. These studies are followed by reviews of two "foreign language" works relating to Hungary and Hungarians.

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The Army of Francis Joseph and Magyar Public Opinion, 1849–1859

Peter Hidas

1. The Sources

Mid-nineteenth century measurements of public opinion do not meet modern standards. Deficiency in methodology, however, can be compensated with the introduction of supplementary data and historical analysis. In attempting to give a reasonably accurate picture of public opinion vis-a-vis the Habsburg army in Hungary in the 1850's, the researcher must turn first to contemporary public opinion reports or *Stimmungsberichte*.

Initially, the *Stimmungsberichte* were prepared bi-weekly, then monthly, bi-monthly and, from 1855, quarterly. The degree of reliability is higher at the beginning of the decade and at the lowest administrative level. Such reports, which were filed regularly with the Ministry of Interior, were to aid the government in Vienna gain an accurate picture of the reaction of the Hungarian people to various governmental measures and international events. The government attempted to secure accurate reporting. Questionnaires were distributed. Reports from the same districts were demanded from the civil administration, the army, the police and/or the gendarmerie.

As authorities did at the time, we can now compare the reports to test their reliability. The lowest common denominator of such reports were, and still can be, generally accepted. In addition, one can put more faith in army reports since they had less political axes to grind after 1850 and because they presented more straightforward reports than the others. The accounts of the civil servants should be given some credence since they were written by local officials familiar with their districts—and with the reliability of their informers. On the other hand one should note the interest of the police

and gendarmerie to reassure their superiors that, as a result of their hard work, all was well in Hungary. Similar inclinations of local officials to present a rosy picture, however, were balanced by their desire to obtain popularity at home through the easing the burden of their charges.

In addition to the *Stimmungsberichte*, other sources which also reflect public opinion are available. The Hungarian press mirrors the views of certain intellectuals and nobles. Freedom of the press was curtailed little in the early 1850's. The peasants expressed themselves through collective appeals, demonstrations, violent actions and draft dodging, or through submission. The gentry and the middle classes showed their emotions through collaboration or resistance as did the aristocrats. Contemporaries later wrote of the heroic days of passive resistance in the age of darkness. Romantic and nationalist historians were happy to elaborate on such themes. Their works demand utmost skepticism. The reports of government agents provide a better guide to public opinion in mid-nineteenth century Hungary.

2. Army of Occupation

During the summer of 1849 there were three armies in Hungary: the Austrian, the Russian and the Magyar. By the end of the year there was only one, the Austrian. The Magyar soldiers were heading for home, the Russian interventionists were returning to their bases in Poland and southern Russia, while a quarter of Francis Joseph's armed forces settled down in Hungary for a long stay. His entire Third Army had been entrusted with the pacification of Hungary until 1868.

The actual size of the Austrian armed forces fluctuated from month to month and place to place. It is difficult to establish the size of the units stationed in Hungary at any given time. Usually, about half the army was on active duty. There were mass call-ups and mass furloughs, depending on the international situation and the domestic state of the economy. In January, 1848, 250,000 men were on active duty out of a total of 400,000.¹ The official tally of 1861 indicated a peace-time force of 280,000 and a war enrollment of 630,000.² To end the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence, General Haynau employed 175,000 troops to suppress the Magyars. Soon many units were transferred to Bohemia to face the Prussians. More followed when war appeared to be imminent in 1853.³ Between 1849 and 1867 the average size of the Third Army can be set around 40,000. According to the *Ordre de Bataille und Dis-*

location of the Third Army,⁴ in the first month of each year the number of soldiers present in Inner Hungary was as follows:

1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	1866	1867
46,000	48,000	41,000	36,000	39,000	41,000	48,000

Of these many were Magyars. Their presence was contrary to the traditional policy of assigning draftees away from their home province. Any significant breach of that policy can be taken as a sense of security by the authorities, although the question of emergency, that is, a shortage of other troops, should not be excluded as another plausible explanation.

For the 1850's the sources are less revealing. Professor Rothenberg states that in 1850 there were 90,000 soldiers stationed in Hungary and the Military Border Districts, but he does not give the ratio.⁵ The First Cavalry Corps in Hungary registered 10,634 men, 25% below the figures of the 1860's.⁶ There are no other indicators which point in the same direction. Recruitment remained steady until the 1860's. Hungary always raised a single *Feldjäger* (chasseur) battalion, the 23rd, from 1849 to 1860. The requirements were then substantially increased. The situation was similar in the other parts of the Empire.⁷

Table One
Distribution of Chasseur Regiments in the Austrian Empire

Year	Hungary and Transylvania	Bohemia-Moravia	Austria
1817	nil	7	5
1853	1	10	8
1857	1	8	8
1860	4	11	10
1867	2	18	13

Hungary provided 14 full infantry regiments both in 1853 and 1857 but in 1860 the counties sent enough recruits to fill 23, and, in 1867, 27 infantry regiments.⁸ Thus, one can conclude, despite the gaps in the data available, but taking into consideration population growth of the first half of the nineteenth century, that neither the Habsburg army nor the number of troops assigned to Hungary changed significantly between 1849 and 1860. As a matter of fact the

soldier/civilian ration decreased between 1817 and 1860 except for the years 1848–1849.

3. Army and Politics

The army was one of the traditional pillars of the Habsburg Empire. Vienna and the army, however, did not always see politics eye to eye as Hungary was reconquered in 1849.

A cabinet minister wrote to Commander-in-Chief Prince Windischgrätz on December 27, 1848 suggesting the division of Hungary into semi-autonomous districts of nationalities. Windischgrätz ignored the plan. The general, an ultra-conservative federalist, with influence at the court and a large army behind him, pressured the Liberal Centralist Austrian government of 1849 to cooperate with a group of Hungarian aristocrats, the so-called Old Conservatives. At a meeting on 6 January 1849, the Cabinet reluctantly authorized negotiations with the most active loyal aristocrats for the purpose of forming an unofficial council to advise the Government on the reorganization of Hungary.⁹ The Committee soon began its work but could achieve little, since the Cabinet, anxious to restrict their activities, sent a senior civil servant to oversee, in fact, confine, the Council's activities, to the application of governmental policies.¹⁰ This was not to the liking of Windischgrätz. Without waiting for instructions from the Liberal Centralists, the Prince began to pursue his own Hungarian policies independently of the Viennese Cabinet but with the support of the Old Conservatives. As his forces entered Hungary in January 1849, Windischgrätz appointed provisional royal commissioners to assist the military in pacifying and administering Hungary. The commissioners were, without exception, Hungarian Conservatives.¹¹

On 15 January 1849 László Szögyény-Marich, former Vice-Chancellor of Hungary and now a leading Old Conservative, received Windischgrätz's invitation to take immediate charge of Hungary's political administration. According to Szögyény-Marich the offer was accepted at their 17 January meeting on the condition that Hungary's integrity along with the country's constitutional institutions would be preserved. Magyar hegemony was to be safeguarded and, as a consequence, the official language of public administration was to remain Magyar.¹² On January 20th Szögyény-Marich occupied his post at Buda and began organizing various governmental offices.¹³ The civil administration's leading personnel were recruited exclusively from the ranks of the Old Conservatives, who were determined to shape Hungary as they had proposed in their

memoranda to the Crown. In Pest County, Commissioner Antal Babarczy obtained authorization from the Military for the parallel display of both Imperial and Hungarian colours. Similar concessions were granted in Fejér and Veszprém counties.¹⁴ Szögyény-Marich protested every step the Liberal Centralists had taken towards the separation of Croatia from the Kingdom of Hungary. On the publication of a new centralist constitution in Vienna, Szögyény-Marich, along with the Unofficial Advisory Council, submitted his resignation in protest. None of the resignations materialized when Windischgrätz reassured the federalist Old Conservatives of his continuous support.¹⁵

The Prince disapproved of Minister-President Schwarzenberg's Hungarian policies. Windischgrätz condoned the exclusive use of Magyar as the language of public administration despite the Government's explicit instructions to the contrary and in contrast with his personal preference for the German language. Pre-1848 institutions were restored at Buda and several officials were told outright not to maintain direct communication with the Liberal Centralist ministers without the Commander-in-Chief's authorization—in distinct contravention of earlier instructions to Windischgrätz by the Minister of Interior, Bach.¹⁶

The Liberal-Centralist ministers understandably prepared for the moment when they could convince the Emperor of the absurdity of the situation, the incompatibility of aristocratic federalism in alliance with a military clique and liberal centralism with a wider social base. It was Kossuth who unintentionally came to their rescue. His army mounted a successful spring campaign, shattering Windischgrätz's military reputation. On 6 April, 1849 the commander-in-chief was dismissed. When Windischgrätz's replacement, Lieutenant-General Baron Ludwig Welden, misunderstanding the existing political situation, invited the Old Conservatives to assist him in establishing a military dictatorship in Hungary, he met the fate of his predecessor.¹⁷

4. Haynau

The Cabinet now selected General Haynau to command the Third Army and to bring Hungary under martial rule. He was well qualified for the task being a fine commander, popular with his troops,¹⁸ and because of his past successes at suppressing local rebellions in Lombardy. Haynau lived up to his reputation by defeating the Hungarians without decisive support from the Russian interventionist forces, and by retaining control over Hungary until the

government became firmly established and the threat of a new uprising, if there was one, completely disappeared. Nevertheless, the Liberal-Centralist government did not intend to give a free hand to the military. On 4 June 1849 Baron Karl Freiherr von Geringer, Councillor in the Ministry of Interior and Bach's trusted official, was appointed commissioner in charge of the civil administration in Inner Hungary.¹⁹ Geringer and Haynau, the latter having become military governor of Hungary just five days earlier, were to apply Bach's centralist reform program to the pacified country.

At first there was little disagreement between Haynau and Vienna. Francis Joseph and his Cabinet were determined to treat the Magyar leaders with severity and punish the most dangerous revolutionaries. The young Emperor personally accepted Schwarzenberg's arguments on the necessity of expiation and terror.²⁰ Haynau, a mean, suspicious and hysterical person, agreed wholeheartedly:

I would hang all the leaders, shoot all the Austrian officers who had entered the enemy's service, and reduce to the rank of private all those Hungarian officers who had earlier served us either in civilian capacities or as sergeants. I accept the responsibility for this terrible example to the Army and to the world.²¹

During the autumn months Haynau and his military courts delivered a dreadful blow to Hungary. Death sentences were pronounced and actually carried out on 114 individuals, 89 of whom were former Imperial officers.²² An additional 386 persons were sentenced to death but their sentences were commuted to prison terms. Not less than 1756 people were jailed.²³ England, Russia and France exerted pressure on Austria not to persecute the Hungarian insurgents after their demise. Although the Viennese government rejected all interference in the internal affairs of the Empire, by the end of August 1849 the Cabinet began to yield. Haynau was instructed to moderate the policy of reprisal.²⁴ The general became infuriated. Neither he nor his officers had much respect for the Liberal-Centralist ministers. The generals and other senior officers, according to Adolf, a well informed spy in Pest, were Absolutists and only the junior officers cared for the March Constitution and the new policies of the government.²⁵ Haynau and his coterie felt that only military dictatorship could serve the Emperor and his glory. With great gusto Haynau embarked to discredit the ministers and create a new image of the Military.

The Hungarian press watched his shenanigans with amazement. The *Pesti Napló* reported on March 21, 1850 that Haynau has freed the revolutionary F. Shuller, who was recently sentenced to death. The paper reported eight more such reversals on April 4th. In the same month the general authorized a benefit concert for the political prisoners at the National Theatre.²⁶ Soon the Haynau Institute was established to aid the veterans of both sides.²⁷ Five colonels of the Kossuth army, who were recently sentenced to 18 years each, were suddenly released and their confiscated estates were also returned. An additional sixty officers were set free from the military prison of Arad.²⁸ Twenty six members of Hungary's revolutionary parliament who in 1849 participated in the dethronement of the Habsburgs were freed after sentencing.²⁹ In July Haynau was dismissed. The cabinet gradually deprived the army of its major role in pacification. The subsequent commanders of the Third Army, Count Wallmoden-Gimborn and Baron Appel, were political non-entities. By the time Archduke Albrecht took command in 1852 the Liberal-Centralists were on the run. The absolutist Emperor took Absolutist ministers and advisors thus eliminating the need of army politics.

5. Conscription

The army of Francis Joseph was thoroughly old fashioned. Gentlemen officers whose promotion was usually due to their high position in society and common soldiers whose very presence in the army was connected to either their low social or anti-state behaviour could not constitute a modern army.

Recruitment policies were part of the problem. Many of the officer corps were recruited from abroad, mainly from Germany and some from England. By 1859, 52% of the officers were "foreigners." Such commanders had little understanding of their men.³⁰ As a punitive measure, the government intended to enroll the whole Kossuth army, both the regular soldiers, the *honvéds*, and the local militia, the national guardists, under the imperial colours.³¹ On 20 August 1849 100,000 men were ordered to report to recruiting stations. This was a serious mistake. Neither the army nor the civil service had the capacity to handle so many recruits. In the early part of 1849 not even Kossuth was able to find enough soldiers for his revolutionary armed forces. His national guardists began to drift home in droves. The summer brought defeat, desire for family and civilian life. There was resistance to the Austrian draft too, and those who were caught in the new round up, particularly the former *honvéd*

officers who were enrolled as ordinary soldiers in various Imperial regiments, eventually became a volatile element.³²

Once in the army the new recruits talked among themselves of politics, often in the presence of police spies. Defection was frequent. They promised each other of beating Haynau to death, hanging the Kaiser and rushing home in case of a new rising.³³ The drafted *honvéds* had to be guarded. Every tenth soldier escaped from a Pécs transport.³⁴ Geringer reported to Vienna that the gendarmerie was unable to catch all the draft dodgers and that many newly enlisted men were in hiding.³⁵ Some villages refused to send a single soldier to the recruiting centres.³⁶ Others aided the deserters or threatened the guards of the new recruits. The 37 draftees who ran away at Dunaföldvár took their guards' weapons and began terrorizing the collaborators of Paks. The local administrator requested the dispatch of soldiers, who duly arrived but refused to deal with the situation. The case was left with the mere 36 gendarmes who handled the security of the whole county.³⁷

As the regime moved towards consolidation, the army released most of the veterans of the War of Independence, including those who were potential hazard to army discipline. Haynau freed all national guardists and *honvéds* over the age of 38, sons without brothers and those who paid the Treasury 500 *forinis* or supplied substitute. The defenders of Fortress Komárom, the last Hungarian stronghold, received amnesty.³⁸ Before the end of 1850 the Minister of War exonerated draft dodgers who were on the run, or in jail or who were about to be tried.³⁹ Searching for volunteers was temporarily suspended in Hungary.⁴⁰ The Emperor pardoned those officers who had left the Imperial Army without the retention of their ranks.⁴¹ In January, 1851, several categories of *ex-honvéds* were released and the following summer the Minister of Interior terminated the *honvéd* draft altogether.⁴² The Imperial Script of October 12, 1851 ordered the reduction of army staff and the dissolution of reserve *honvéd* regiments. Many other types of regiments were also disbanded or reduced. Masses of soldiers were sent on unlimited furlough.⁴³

From mid-1851 drafting became a routine matter accepted by the population as part of life. The government remained cautious; despite the increased population most counties were required to supply the same number of recruits for their regiment in 1853 as in 1817.⁴⁴

Table Two
Infantry Regiments Raised in
Inner Hungary and Transylvania

Crownland	Year			
	1817	1853	1857	1860
Hungary	10	14	14	23
Austria	10	9	9	9
Bohemia	9	7	4	10
Galicia	11	11	11	13
Moravia	5	4	4	4

Table Three
Population of Selected Hungarian Counties

County	Year			
	1821 ⁴⁵	1847 ⁴⁶	1857 ⁴⁷	1869 ⁴⁸
Máramaros	159,000	177,000	185,000	221,000
Heves-Borsod	369,000	320,000	350,000	528,000
Bereg	110,000	126,000	138,000	160,000
Békés-Csanád-Csongrád	167,000	368,000	483,000	514,000

New regiments were established by the counties of Máramaros, Heves, Borsod, Bereg, Békés, Csanád and Csongrád, where the population growth was well above average.

The call-up for military service was administered by the civil service usually once a year, between February and April. Married people, only sons of elderly parents, civil servants, priests, teachers and college students with good marks were exempted.⁴⁹ The Liberal-Centralists democratized the process; for a while no cash payment

was authorized for release from military duty. Later the old system was reintroduced but the cost of exemption was too high for most noblemen to take advantage of. The charge was 1500 *forints*, the average yearly salary of county chiefs.⁵⁰ Among those who were of draft age only 10 to 25 per cent were actually taken for the usual eight-year stint. In the Buda District, for example, 30,114 men registered for military service in 1856. Only 67 paid the exemption fee, 3975 were absent without cause and 8542 moved, emigrated or died since the census of 1851. The actual contingent drafted numbered 3940 men.⁵¹

The drain on manpower was not overwhelming. Secret agents reported few complaints. According to one such agent grievances about call-ups ceased once the *honvéds* and the National Guardists were released.⁵² Brigadier-General Heyntzal reported in 1852 on the prevailing satisfaction in his district over the universality of the levy.⁵³ Two years later the army's agents noted a similar mood among the peasants while the police observed the outrage of better families concerning the outlawing of substitution. In fact, in 1854 large contingents were secured by the enlistment of volunteers in the Nagyvárad District.⁵⁴ A contemporary police gazette listed by district the names of all draft dodgers wanted between 1852 and 1854. There is no evidence of mass avoidance of service. The list contains a meager 69 names for Szabolcs County, 240 for Somogy, 133 for Békés and 610 for Abauj-Torna for the first half of 1852. By the end of the year there were 764 on the Szabolcs county list. Next year the Somogy county list shrank to 50, 2/10,000 of the population. From Nyitra, only 149 made the list, and from the populous town of Nagyvárad, only 16 draft dodgers were wanted by the police.⁵⁵ Only by the end of the decade was the rhythm of drafting interrupted by hard times, political troubles and military defeats.

In 1859 the officers of the 46th Infantry Regiment began to complain about the high frequency of desertion of new recruits.⁵⁶ The Sopron District public opinion report, for the first time spoke of opposition to the draft and blamed it on labour shortages. The *Stimmungsberichte* speculated on the possibility of criminal elements volunteering to obtain arms and then might join the deserters to threaten public order.⁵⁷ Another report frankly stated that the so-called volunteers were actually now "roped in".⁵⁸ Next year more and more furloughed soldiers would not return to their units. Military authorities, however, were reluctant to admit to such breeches of discipline which would damage regimental reputation.⁵⁹ In Gömör County the peasants of Osgya openly debated ways and means of preventing the draft of their youth. In Zemplén County

some peasants blamed the local nobility's renewed political opposition to the government for the recently increased drafting quotas.⁶⁰ The draft for 1860 had to be suspended. The peasants rejoiced.⁶¹

Between 1849 and 1859 the soldiers were simply "putting in time." In 1859, they were asked to fight and possibly die for the Emperor, fight and die far away from their homes. After 1848, after emancipation, this was too much to ask.

6. Servicing the Army

Quartering, *corvée* and the occasional use of the army to dampen the class struggle in the countryside created conflicts between soldiers and peasants. On the other hand, the use of soldiers in the aid of flood victims and in the prevention of natural disasters, such as floods, eased the tension between the army and the lower classes. The generally apolitical behavior of the peasantry, which was partly due to their increased standard of living in the 1850's, meant law and order in Hungary and the correspondingly reduced role of the army as a policing force.

The presence of three armies in Hungary in 1849 imposed immense burden on the population. The economic hardship hit the peasants worst since they were the primary suppliers of soldiers, foodstuff, quarters and transport facilities. According to a county official, there were more troops in Pest County than the population could possibly feed. The leftover crop was not enough for the support of the villagers. The situation at one point became critical because the Austrian army used the peasants' essential draft animals.⁶² The Town of Vác complained that the presence of cavalry battalions and their 2700 horses led to the impoverishment of the population.⁶³ Often the problem was the unfair distribution of quartering obligations among districts.⁶⁴ At time payment for quartering was avoided but the new county chiefs made their protests at Pest effectively.⁶⁵ In 1851, a new law regulated services for the army: barracks were built, cash payments were made obligatory and a fairer distribution of the burden attempted.⁶⁶

Services rendered to but not paid for by the imperial army during the Hungarian War of Independence became tax deductible.⁶⁷ In the 1850's the army either paid with money or tax vouchers or a combination of the two. The use of vouchers occasionally caused problem in the cash-starved countryside. According to a Trencsén County report when the initial cash payments for food transport from army depots was replaced with tax vouchers, the few additional pennies the peasants received was not enough to buy fodder for

the draft animals for the two-three day trip.⁶⁸ Difficulties multiplied during the Crimean War when large Austrian units were moving across Hungary towards the eastern and southern extremities of the Empire. The First Cavalry Corps, for example, stayed in the Kassa District for more than three months in 1855. People complained and claimed that the soldiers paid and treated their hosts better in Galicia, Bukovina and Transylvania.⁶⁹ Similar grievances were filed from other districts.⁷⁰ During the previous year the problems were not as severe. The 7th Gendarmerie Regiment reported that the population despite the extraordinary demands for quartering and draft animals, expressed no dissatisfaction to date. The local Viceroyalty Office in the same district observed that the villagers were doing their best, but hinted at the existence of political tension. The officials of the Pest and of the Nagyvárad districts expressed their astonishment over the fact that the peasants performed transport service "accurately and willingly" not excluding harvest time.⁷¹ The reason for cooperation was economical rather than political. The *Stimmungsberichte* show the complete disinterestedness of the peasants in the Eastern Question and other foreign policy issues. What mattered was the extra income from transport, housing the army and the increased agricultural prices. There was a good harvest in 1854. Nevertheless, prices kept climbing and contemporaries attributed the rise to army procurement.⁷² By 1855 increasing demands began to interfere with production. The vouchers disturbed the accounting of the peasants. Wherever quartering was used as a punishment to a community, and that was done sparingly, resentment flared.⁷³ The main body of the peasantry cooperated with the army. They posed no security problem and showed no great hostility towards the army.

With the exception of the years 1849 and 1862, there were few recorded peasant disturbances in Hungary between 1849 and 1867. Political demonstrations were not numerous when compared with occupations of the former commons or properties of estate owners and with contract breaking incidents. Less than ten per cent of the conflicts involved death or injury.⁷⁴ In the history of Hungarian peasantry the significant dates were not August of 1849, the surrender at Világos, or 1860, the end of Neo-Absolutism, the year when a deal was struck between the Hungarian nobility and Francis Joseph, but April of 1848, 1853 and 1862. In 1853 the emancipation which began in 1848 was finalized. The number of conflicts between authorities and the peasantry declined until the early 1860's, when returning anti-Habsburg county officials rekindled the class struggle.⁷⁵

Law enforcement, in any case, was within the domain of the gendarmerie from 1850. The army was rarely called in by this new police force of about 1500 men, mainly composed of Magyars and former army men, who in time earned the respect of the population. The gendarmerie was feared by all, including the army and as a result the commanders were reluctant to involve their troops in political oppression. The role and influence of the army in political affairs was gradually reduced. From November, 1850, the civil and military administration of the country was separated. Already in July the military courts were excluded from the purge of the civil service and educational institutions. The military courts, nevertheless, remained active and retained wide jurisdiction until 1854, when in the midst of the Crimean War, the state of siege was lifted.⁷⁶ Contemporary Hungarians could not understand this latter development because at the time, war was not far from the borders.⁷⁷ The reduction of the standing army by 109,000 men and the parallel war preparations of the Third Army further confused the public.⁷⁸ In fact, in many parts of Hungary there were no soldiers within miles.⁷⁹ The High Command felt secure enough to use Magyar units to replace those garrison battalions which moved to the Principalities to face the Russians.⁸⁰ In 1857 a further reduction of the Third Army was ordered along with the dissolution of army security forces.⁸¹ The High Command properly conceived that the security situation in Hungary did not demand the active participation of the army in political administration. The weak internal cohesion of the military establishment in the 1850's cannot be explained with the destructive influences of the heavy commitment of the Austrian army to the maintenance of internal security.⁸² Neither can Solferino be blamed on Austria's inability to deploy her entire armed strength in the field in 1859 because of the alleged need to have large formations in Hungary and Croatia to guard against uprisings.⁸³ An explanation for the behaviour of Magyar units in Italy 1859, mass desertion and general unreliability, must be sought elsewhere, certainly not in the Hungarian domestic scene, but possibly in the impact of exile propaganda and in the influence of the enrolled former Kossuth officers.

Between 1849 and 1859 the most radical wing of the nobility in exile, in the army or in retreat in the countryside, was politically discredited; resistance to the regime could be but minimal. The aristocrats campaigned with the support of the gentry against the Liberal-Centralists but failed to obtain political concessions, although they contributed to the destruction of the reformist cabinet and its replacement by a much worse one from the Hungarian point

of view, the Absolutist- Centralist regime. The bulk of the gentry faithfully adhered to the aristocratic leadership; the Old Conservatives waited patiently for concessions, collaborated massively, caused no trouble and required no military measures. Only after Solferino, when the Hungarian nobility rediscovered the weakness of the Habsburg Empire and discarded the inefficient Old Conservative leadership, was the army called upon to restrain and bully nationalist gentry-led demonstrators in the towns of Hungary. But before 1859 many nobles collaborated. They may have snubbed army officers at balls or longed for Austrian involvement with defeat in the Crimean conflict but their faith in the Old Conservatives, their disappointment with 1849, their fear of the gendarmerie and the lower classes, their post emancipation economic malaise politically paralyzed them for a decade. The army was not one of their main concerns and the army viewed them as impotent dreamers. In 1859 and 1866 the roles were reversed; as the weaknesses of the army became obvious so grew the influence of the Hungarian nobility. The Austrian Liberal-Centralists were swept away, the peasantry neutralized, and the Absolutist-Centralists' credibility destroyed on the battlefields. Now the gentry could reach out for political power, for a deal which included the replacement, at least in Hungary, of the Habsburg army with a Hungarian one. The deal was struck in 1867. A new army was created a year later.

Notes

1. Istvan Deak, *The Lawful Revolution. Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians 1848-1849* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 191.
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Education for Quality of Life in the Works of László Németh

Magda Némethy

To become a respected author in a small East-Central European country such as Hungary is far from easy, and a rather special task. The role of, as well as the results expected from, authors is very different from that of writers living in the West. The reason lies not only in linguistic limitations, but also in the fact that only a few million people understand the language. The task of "men of letters" in Hungary could easily be construed as a mission. Authors can become an integral part of, and foster social processes, sense the subconscious needs of society and then attempt to respond.

From time to time, an author's intentions may be misunderstood. His vision may be mistakenly regarded by others as a political program. But literature aims higher than politics, anticipating future alternatives, rather than merely those of the present. Such anticipation can also occur in the fields of sociology and education, and, it is true, even in politics, but it should never be confused with a definite program.

László Németh alerts us to the problems of the future through his works and suggests how to avoid such problems with a foresight involving local and universal concerns of human interest. The life-work of Németh (1901-1975) spans forty-five years and acts as a sensitive gauge reflecting successive waves of social needs in Hungary. Though he had ceased writing a number of years before his death, his works are more timely now than when they were written. This essay seeks to introduce Németh, particularly in the context of his world of ideas that he regarded as "long-range weapons," and to expound such views of his that may be applicable today in suggesting solutions for the future.

Active young people of today are not likely to find the time or patience to pore over Németh's multifaceted collected works, which

fill some fifty volumes, even if they are able to read Hungarian. They may know some of his novels, or perhaps they have seen one of his plays performed, but the true measure of his message, and the genius with which he parlayed it, is best seen in his essays and articles. The yield of his last working years, in particular, offers valuable insight distilled from a lifetime of experiences and struggles.

On his father's side, Németh came from Transdanubian peasant stock. His father was the first educated man in the family, a secondary-school teacher, and a model for his son. Németh went through medical school in Budapest, but he was more interested in literature. Christmas 1925 was an important milestone in his life, for that was when he married and, coincidentally, also launched his literary career by winning a short-story competition sponsored by the magazine, *Nyugat* (The West), the most prestigious and significant Hungarian periodical of the day.

After that, Németh decided to devote his life to literature, but he almost always had other jobs on the side. He worked variously as a dentist, a medical doctor in the school system and a secondary-school teacher like his father. Of his large family, four of his daughters reached adulthood. During the siege of Budapest in 1945, Németh's family home and his library were destroyed. When the war was over, he chose to live mostly in the country, first at Hódmezővásárhely and then at Sajkód, a small settlement on Lake Balaton's Tihany peninsula.

Németh's education was particularly broad in that he kept up his studies in the natural sciences based on his university training and was widely read in history as well as world literature. He had a strong critical acumen for picking out literary talent both in Hungary and abroad. He could read in 15 languages and, therefore, knew contemporary literature in a variety of original tongues. Németh came to grips with all forms of literary expression, and while his results were outstanding in all *métiers*, he forsook a solely literary career. When he was twenty-four he tried to become the "organizer of Hungarian intellectual forces."¹ For twenty years he strove to fulfill this goal; only as a result of decades of tribulation did this aim evolve into a pedagogic one.

Finding insufficient opportunities for publication, Németh launched his own one-man periodical, *Tanú* (Witness), of which seventeen volumes were published between 1932 and 1937. The magazine was intended to be a means of inquiry and information. He said, "My periodical is inspired by...the anguish in ignorance... I regard the essay as the genre of public learning.... I want this periodical to be the chlorophyll of our intellectual life... through which

knowledge is converted into attitude... and into morality.”² Németh recognized the risk of an education with an over-emphasis on humanistic aspects. He believed that such an education would eventually lead to a schism between humanism and science and was always the proponent of a synthesis of the two.

In 1934, Németh was appointed director of literary programs at Radio Budapest. He attempted, subsequently, to develop the station into a cultural organ. From the outset he warned that radio (and by extension, all mass media) could educate people, but it could also just as effectively mislead and stupefy them. The 1930s were perhaps Németh’s most creative period, in which ideas and programs for change that had inspired him up to then began to crystallize in writing.

For Németh, the ideal person was in harmony with his environment, was well balanced, and had fully developed his potentials. He wanted to invent a way of establishing a truly up-to-date cultural fabric for Hungary. According to him, a cultured person “understands his mission, and his actions become an integral part of the problem-solving process of humanity.”³ Quality was the central theme of Németh’s world of ideas, and he set this down as a guiding principle not only for himself and his work, but also for his fellow-men.

In 1925, José Ortega y Gasset’s *Revolt of the Masses* outlined the domination of a gray mediocrity in all walks of life; for Ortega, “the masses” signified a segment of society that lacked outstanding qualities. Németh confronted this concept with one of his own: the “revolution of quality.” He first mentioned the term in 1933, in *Tanú*, and later incorporated it into most of his writings. In the capitalist and Marxist systems alike, the most important consideration seems to be quantity; Németh sought to establish a system whereby value would be measured on a scale of quality. “Quality,” in this sense, should be the leading principle not only in regard to social structure, but in all walks of life. Németh opposed the soulless nature of labour and hoped to see mere bread-winning converted into interesting work. Every office or workshop could in effect be a kind of laboratory in which experimentation would enrich daily work. All that was needed was for people to find a means of converting their work-places into “laboratories.” Németh believed that such an idea of “quality,” in tandem with a more equitable distribution of goods and services, could be achieved best through a socialistic order, albeit a qualified one—qualified in that he saw a classless society more as a populace of intellectuals than as representing the lowest common, proletarian, denominator. In future, not only would the propor-

tion of intellectuals in society increase rapidly, but also, in his vision, almost all jobs would require more brain power; thereby, most industrial and agricultural occupations would be almost considered intellectual pursuits. He said, “The motto ‘proletarians of the world, unite’ [implying that we must sink to a proletarian level] was a nineteenth-century slogan. Today I tend to hear a more optimistic slogan: Let’s all become intellectuals.”⁴ Németh was not referring to the old-fashioned middle class as his ideal (he was actually quite critical of this segment of society), but a new group of intellectuals he wished to cultivate and develop through his writings. He himself was the most typical representative of this group.

At a 1943 conference in Balatonszárszó, Németh outlined the immediate tasks of the “new intellectual.”⁵ Analyzing the causes for, and possible solutions to, Hungary’s wartime woes, he was moved to ask:

What is the reason for the intense suffering, unknown for the last few centuries, that has suddenly been dumped onto humanity? The cause is mechanized despotism on the part of marauders in alliance with new technology. Despots believe the soul of a nation is measured by the amount of weaponry it has. They seek to change nations into hordes of collectives, and attempt to replace our high, God-inspired standards with low ones of their own invention. They control our dreams by artifice. While “plunder” and “impotence” are contradictory terms, still, when men ally themselves with machinery, people are impotent to stop the plunder, and the machines will not cease oppressing our souls. As if we haven’t got enough problems fighting our day-to-day enemies, we also have to wage war against this man-machine centaur. The beast will trample the crop of our diligence until God, in the embodiment of heroism, nobleness and self-sacrifice, converts these horrid machines into domestic animals of love.⁶

What should the new man of intellect be like? If reform is merely external and superficial, instead of being tied to the reform of human integrity as well, the “new order” cannot be much of an improvement over its predecessor. Instead, certain qualities—greater nobility, more self-criticism, stronger morals, a heightened sense of responsibility and higher ideals of life—must be developed. Németh’s version of socialism based on quality had nothing to do with wielding power; rather, it represented a moral standard. His

model human being would be of strong morality and have a great sense of culture. "Quality" would be inseparable from his flesh, and would characterize his disposition. Németh considered that idea important, saying "man weighs only the secondary matters with his brain, but uses intuition to decide about destiny."⁷ A small nation's right to survive, he reasoned, should be dependent on the fact that it exemplifies the best qualities of the individual, in macrocosm.

The years 1944 and 1945 brought many changes in Németh's life. His home was destroyed in the war and he moved to the country. From that point on, he was no longer a part of the intellectual ferment of Budapest or of the launching of new programs at the war's end. He could quite easily have been liquidated during the Rákosi régime. Until 1956 he lived in constant fear for his life. In the interim, he earned his living mostly by translating from at least six languages. Also in this period, Németh developed into a true educator, teaching at a country school for five years, a period he later recalled as being a very happy time. Though writing was always a lifelong passion for him, he was very much an educator at heart, and in that role he still strove to develop his ideal of the moralistic human being and the exemplary lifestyle for his nation.

Miklós Béládi very aptly characterized Németh's method thus:

László Németh did not surround his writings with a scaffolding of abstract nomenclature. However, it would be wrong to conclude that he undervalued theoretical ideas as opposed to practical ones. He thought highly of ideas in general; only the morality of a sound lifestyle was more important to him. Ideas interested him in so far as they were vehicles for clarifying real-life problems. Technical questions in the field of natural sciences were interesting to him because they represented a part of life, and his outlook on literature was also scientific.⁸

As an educator, Németh was a man of logic, insight and synthesis. He approached the teaching of humanistic subjects in a scientific way and stressed the integral nature of the "two cultures." Quality of life was very much dependent on one's system of values, and was closely related to one's knowledge and education.

In September of 1945 Németh wrote the booklet, *Reorganization of Public Education*.⁹ In it he made a number of suggestions that he hoped would be implemented for the reform of school system from the elementary to the university level. The end of the war, in his view, should have made his suggestions for reform particularly time-

ly. With a postwar growth in prosperity, intellectual progress should also occur. He recommended six elementary grades, followed by six secondary that would emphasize four different streams of scholarly activity, that is, humanities, technology, agriculture and administration. Németh proposed three years of industrial or agricultural training for particularly weak students. All high schools would teach the four major streams, but in varying proportions according to the schools' mandates.

In his work *Negyven év* (Forty Years), Németh summed up this immediate postwar period thus:

On the surface it may have seemed that I was concerned solely with compiling a new curriculum, yet in reality I wanted to see produced a new man of world civilization. This would be reflected in the aspirations of the curriculum. In my first article, "The Reorganization of Public Education," I defined these aspirations: school should become a concentrated preparation for life, giving a wide view on the world, as well as on vocations. At its best, education should instill a high level of brotherhood in the populace and produce a society in which people respect one another's work. My book was the first to suggest to the Hungarian public that agricultural and technical training be introduced into the curriculum. During the years I taught at Vásárhely, my goal was to prepare notes on the lessons I taught and from them to compile four textbooks, one each on history, natural sciences, applied mathematics and languages. It was also my desire to introduce an innovative model for textbooks; the books would start off with a survey of the subject, proceed to the main lessons, then some short articles to stimulate more interest, and end up with a guide to further reading, a bibliography and a glossary. I intended such textbooks to serve as a kind of Noah's Ark for the preservation of the elements—and particularly the sparkle and buoyancy—of Western civilization. But though I attempted to work on them even during the years I was slaving as a translator, unfortunately only a few fragments of my four textbooks actually got written.¹⁰

It is regrettable that the Hungarian regime in the late 1940s, when instituting educational reforms, gave no serious considerations to Németh's ideas and suggestions for practical changes.

In 1961, with many years of teaching behind him, he turned again to the subject of education in a series of essays published under the title, *A második hullám* (The Second Wave).¹¹ His four major themes were still the foundation of an ideal curriculum, guided by historical principles; in his approach to the teaching of history, Németh followed and used chronology as much as possible. He believed education should give an overview of the subject to the student, but the real goal was “to understand our place in the world, and to mould our existence into a useful component in harmony with the rest.”(p. 320)

The most timely essay for today’s world in *The Second Wave* is “Ha most fiatal lennék” (If I Were Young Today) (pp. 331–47).

In it, Németh suggested that though most young people enjoyed better economic conditions now than several decades earlier, they are none the less not happier. The fact of having more free time than ever before was a mixed blessing. He said, “The more independence and leisure time young people have, the more they must face the new task of creating their selves. In the past, young people used to be shaped by a long work-day or, if they were not working, by need and distress.”(p. 332) Németh reasoned that, “as the free time not occupied by work and sleep continues to grow, everybody’s life becomes like a small ‘research institute,’ in which individuals and families must make informed decisions on the use of leisure hours, and intelligent choices concerning entertainment and education.” (p. 333)

This is not a trifling question. Work, in healthy surroundings, cannot ruin people; on the other hand, free time, if not applied properly, can have a disastrous effect. History has shown... many examples of children, born into a rising social class with a historic mission, suddenly finding themselves secure and prosperous, and beginning to decay morally because of it. (*Ibid.*)

Németh wished to see people to arrange their lives according to his philosophy of life in general, which is not to say that he regarded the world necessarily in the same way as the good Christians of the past, as a place of trials and tribulations. Nor did he see earthly existence as a difficult, but important, test that would entitle him to salvation in the next world. However, he found he could not conceive of the world in the popular conception, as being a garden of pleasure in which one gets by with a little bit of work, or if one were clever enough, with the right kind of maneuvering.

For a truer perspective, Németh started by analyzing the functioning of the universe:

What is this enormous machinery of magnificent order, and yet sometimes of exasperating irrationality?... How could it be seen in any other way but as a field of enormous possibilities? Not only possibilities already realized, but also those latent under the surface. A chemist would easily understand what I mean. Where were those many hundreds of thousands of organic and inorganic compounds before they were called up in the last century by chemical technology? Obviously they were present in our world, but undeveloped. Life, too, was latent until—perhaps only on our planet with its favourable conditions, or maybe at distant points in the universe as well, like the tips of a Christmas tree—life was activated, just lit up. Since then, life has dashed through infinite varieties and forms before human awareness suddenly burst forth.... The fact that I am the proprietor of such an awareness, although it sometimes makes me uncomfortable, is nevertheless marvelous.... (p. 334)

László Németh saw life as a voyage in which we pass through the landscape of various ages. On a voyage, our perception is more acute than at other times, and we are more like travellers in our first years of life, living in a state of searching interest, trying to understand human secrets and the depths of social relationships. Why, he asked, can we not sharpen our attention with the passing years, instead of allowing it to fade and become sluggish. Németh did indeed believe that we could sharpen our sense of discernment, that the possibility exists now more than ever:

If on leaving... I were asked what provided me with my greatest joy in life on earth, I should say it was learning. Not the learning that leads to an examination, but the inquiry conducted out of curiosity—for instance an excursion into a new language, and through that, into an unknown world, into a science or into an occupation. (p. 335)

Németh believed that broadening one's base of experience and knowledge was what made life intriguing. It was his opinion that the current problems inherent in learning derived from the lack of a program with an overview; people rushed through studies selected

purely at random, rapaciously, and the result of such a grasping greed was that one was unable to construct a proper model for oneself of the world. He recommended that introducing the spirit of natural sciences into life, conducting experiments and making observations, would make the onerous seem interesting and the infamous, instructive. He even likened the bench of the galley to a laboratory bench. Moreover, Németh claimed, the new-found interest would light the soul and keep it alert, increasing the capacity to learn. On the other hand the worries and pains that gnaw into the soul tend to dampen our enthusiasm for the world around us.

He postulated that most suffering comes from our improper comprehension of the second major proposal of our invitation to life. In fact, while life can be likened to a voyage, it can also be considered a process of sculpturing. Man exists not merely to admire already realized potentials in the world; the latent possibilities of our world must be continually developed, our lives and ourselves shaped, bent or carved into the best possible configuration. Németh saw morality as being a regulatory system that serves to bring the most out of a person after biological development was complete, and ambition as its impulse. However, he warned that the wrong kind of ambition, infusing us at a tender age, might lead to a great deal of unhappiness.

For Németh, the right kind of ambition was cause-centred rather than self-centred; those with the right kind would become advocates of a beautiful, majestic purpose. Proper ambition, he reasoned, would not only prevent great suffering, but it would enable one to develop fully:

People grow like trees, groping in all directions with their roots, their connections. Taller and healthier foliage may be produced by developing more and better connections in the world. Someone who takes his mother, his child, his friends, his homeland seriously, will become wealthier in the process, no matter what these relationships come to later. The wrong kind of ambition cuts off, tears up, rots away these fibres with its impatience and tough competitive spirit. It locks the soul into a shell of offensive self-adulation, and the spirit withers away. On the other hand, the right kind of ambition turns the attention to a purpose, to work and to people, by seeking out, like a tree, new nutritive minerals that will help it broaden its root system. (pp. 338f)

Németh felt that no one field of endeavour, whether artistic, scientific or political, had a monopoly on either the creative or the destructive forces of such opposing ambitions. There are those in all walks of life who are quite willing to bend the rules in order to succeed at any cost, being interested in appearances alone, while some turn their attention to the reason behind their labours:

[...] the real strength of a society lies not in its rocket-like talents, but in the values of ordinary people working at ordinary tasks in society. In practice, however, the age of free enterprise turned the self-asserting instinct of the young towards careers that are spectacular and lucrative. (p. 339)

Real success, to Németh, consisted of a harmoniously developed and well-balanced life, which would share its warmth with others. The dignity of such a life could be recognized immediately; people sought its secrets and tried to follow its prescriptions.(p. 340) “If I were one of the young people of today,” he said, “I should seek to associate myself with major exploratory interests in life.”(p. 341)

Németh was indeed inclined to express opinions on a multitude of subjects, for instance, on the closely connected themes of work, leisure and education; he cautioned people not to let their work and their interests become separated, but to do what they enjoyed, if possible. He also said man ought not to live only to consume; “It is sad that a significant part of mankind spends life in acquiring and consuming the available products. We can protect ourselves from this danger through self-control and self-development.” Németh believed the dividing line between real entertainment and real learning should not be too distinct.(p. 344)

He also had things to say about the perennial battle of the sexes; for one thing, although conditions for good male-female relationships were more favourable than those of a few years earlier, relationships had not adequately improved. However, he noted, the sexes are not segregated today, and women can earn a living and, therefore, do not depend on men. Divorce is a means whereby people can extricate themselves from failed marriages, yet there are even more problems related to “love” than ever before. The reason for this, as he saw it, was that:

[...] our imagination and taste are directed towards certain stereotypes by movies, the arts and fashion. There are only a few (not necessarily the best) individuals in the opposite sex who approach this stereotype; others are regarded as

merely a compromise or a substitute. By challenging these stereotypes, literature and—particularly—the visual arts are able to help perceive the charm often mixed with plainness in real individuals. This then should facilitate the physical approach of the souls; it should teach our sensuality to be more spiritual, and at the same time, more realistic.(p. 345)

An even more serious problem, as he saw it, was that the feeling of economic security eventually leads many to plunge into pleasure, and love itself is made indistinguishable from mere physical pleasure. All the other values one's partner might have, we do not bother to discover, or these facets become boring and we neglect them. Furthermore, he warned us not to take marriage too selfishly or too carelessly. One should not get involved in a marriage impulsively or at too early an age. Németh said he himself approached marriage with a pledge of semi-asceticism, and this tack was rewarded with the moral support necessary for such an undertaking.(p. 345)

At times, when parents are disappointed in their lives or marriages, they transfer their aspirations and ambitions to their offspring, and an exaggerated "cult" of children follows. There is a limit to how much care and pleasure a young person needs and, indeed, can absorb. Exaggerated attention, whether in the form of indulgence or pretense, results in more harm than neglect does:

The ability of a child is neither our disgrace nor our honour. It is drawn through the lottery of genetics from the properties of our ancestors. It is wise... to regard children as our portion of man's future. They are small bodies, in which we have to support sprouting potentials with a continuous radiance of good will.(p. 346)

In *Sajkódi esték* Németh also published an essay on religious education ("A 'vallásos' nevelésről," pp. 9–73) Religious upbringing, he reasoned, should have as its goal the development in the child of a pious awareness of the integration of the universe that would include a sense of responsibility towards his own potential, as well as an interest in, respect for and compassion towards all men and all forms of life.(p. 52) Németh's idea of an ideal educator was of one who set an example that would motivate youth to direct themselves toward, and imitate, true nobility of conduct. "The family or the classroom should have an atmosphere [as it is ultimately the atmosphere that is effective in education] in which the instinct of self-assertion is converted to morality."(p. 60)

Németh felt we should regard the universe with awe and balance our own self-admiration with a healthy respect for the world:

Where this respect is replaced by disregard or insolence, man becomes his own God, [...] and instead of developing himself further, he cuts off all roots of self-evolution. For his interrupted growth he begins to compensate with hollow delusions. People develop themselves through their relationships; these are the root-tissues which provide nutrients necessary for man's unfolding.(p. 36)

In other words, people can best develop through synthesizing a respect for the universe with good relations with their fellow-men. In his last productive years, Németh sensitively analyzed the very same problems in his novels, *Esther Égető* and *Compassion*, and in his play, *The Large Family*.

He considered morality, rather than pleasure, to be the motivating life force and understood that to accept moral guidance requires considerable effort and self-discipline, but the reward would be a better society and a richer life. He asked us, does not the blessing of human intellect oblige us to preserve, use and further develop our intelligence? Readers, whether they agree or disagree with Németh's program for life, should nonetheless give some thought to his suggestions and think of them as an antithesis to our chaotic present.

Notes

1. László Németh to Ernő Osváth, editor-in-chief of the *Nyugat*, December 1925, Vienna. Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum, Budapest.
2. *Tanú*, I:1 (1932).
3. László Németh, *Sajkódi esték* [Evenings in Sajkód] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi 1961). Our source: a reprint in Németh's collected works, vol. 16, 1974. Quotation on p. 293. All subsequent references to this work are incorporated in the text.
4. László Németh, *Az értelmiség hivatása* [The Mission of the Intelligentia] (Budapest: Turul, 1944).
5. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
8. Miklós Béládi, "Minőség és erkölcs Németh László gondolatvilágában," in *A mindentudás igézete* (Budapest: József Attila Kör, 1984) p. 214.
9. László Németh, *A tanügy rendezése* [The Reorganization of Public Education] (Budapest: Sarló, 1946). More recently reprinted in *A kísérletező ember* (Budapest: Magvető, 1973).
10. László Németh, *Negyven év* [Forty Years] (Budapest: Magvető / Szépirodalmi, 1969), p. 28.
11. Published in the collective work *Sajkódi esték*, pp. 291-361. The page references are in the text.

The Gypsy Problem in Postwar Hungary.

Francis S. Wagner

Historical Background

It appears that more publications deal with Gypsies than with any other ethnic group. Already in 1914 George F. Black compiled a Gypsy bibliography listing 4,577 published works. The body of material that has been written about them has grown steadily since. Yet the Gypsies remain one of the most mysterious and least-known peoples. Though research institutes like the prestigious Gypsy Lore Society (with its highly esteemed *Journal*) and several other institutions and periodicals have tried to encourage research on them, many questions remain unanswered. This is partly responsible for the negative policies most governments have followed concerning Gypsies in the course of modern history.

The ancient home of the Gypsies was located in India. From there they migrated between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries and mingled with peoples of the Near East, Northern Africa, then through the Balkan Peninsula they entered Eastern, Central and even Western Europe. Their mixing with other peoples was limited so that this itinerant race has retained its distinctive phenotype until now.

Gypsies were mentioned in European chronicles as early as 1322 in Crete, 1346 in Corfu, and 1370 in the Peloponnesus. Their appearance was recorded in 1407 and 1414 in Germany, 1416 in Transylvania, and in 1417 in Moldavia and Hungary. Sigismund, King of Hungary, Bohemia and other realms had given a letter of safe-conduct to one of the first groups of Gypsies entering Western Europe in the fifteenth century. This letter of safe-conduct, dated 1423, said among other things:

“...Our faithful Ladislas, Chieftain of the Gypsies and others dependent on him have humbly besought us... our special benevolence. It has pleased us to grant their request... If the aforesaid Ladislas and his people present themselves in any place within our Empire... we enjoin you... to favor and protect them in every way... And if any trouble or disturbance should arise among them... Ladislas alone, shall have the power of judging and acquitting...”¹

Being a migratory people with no steady occupations, there was little possibility of modifying their primitive culture. Due to the almost complete lack of acculturation, they were stigmatized by chroniclers as “liars, thieves” who devoted themselves to “pagan customs.” This negative characterization evidently led to cruel persecutions in all countries, especially wherever they appeared in larger numbers. In 1725 Frederick William I of Prussia condemned all Gypsies over 18 years of age to be hanged. The situation did not differ essentially in France, England or Spain.

During the same century, in the spirit of the Enlightenment, some rulers started regulating Gypsy life in order to raise their socio-economic status to the level of non-Gypsy serfs. In the Habsburg Empire, Maria Theresa (1740–1780) and her son, Joseph II (1780–1790), tried to abolish the Gypsies’ nomadic way of life by issuing appropriate decrees. In 1761 the Emperess prescribed that Gypsies should settle down permanently. Maria Theresa issued another proclamation in 1773 to improve the socio-economic position of Gypsies. The new law instructed local authorities to demolish all Gypsy huts and to provide solidly constructed houses for them. The decree threatened to punish those Gypsies who abandoned their new houses by imprisonment. Furthermore, the law proclaimed that Gypsy women and children should wear the same national costumes which were peculiar to the peasantry of the region. Also, the institution of Gypsy vaivodes was abolished, and Gypsies were placed under the jurisdiction of non-Gypsy village judges. This same decree prescribed that Gypsy children be educated by peasants under the supervision of local parish priests with the hope of settling them in villages as artisans. Needless to say, this experiment failed completely.²

The 1848–1849 revolutionary years did not affect Gypsy affairs in the Habsburg Monarchy. While serfs were emancipated, Gypsies remained outside of the society’s mainstream. As elsewhere in Europe, they continued to live from one day to the next, moving

from place to place and committing offenses to obtain food and other basic necessities.

The lifestyle of Europe's Gypsydom helped spawn the ideology of racial superiority. The apostles of this new "science" were English, American, French and German thinkers who pioneered the theories which very soon deeply affected the philosophy of nationalism. Comte Joseph de Gobineau (1816–1862), influenced by American authors on the "inferiority" of Negroes, prepared his *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*. Since discrimination is unfortunately a barely controllable human instinct, many a scientist, historian and politician utilized it to justify his own standpoint and sentiment on inter-ethnic affairs. Racist explanations of history—that is, doctrines about the survival of the (biologically) fittest and other relevant speculations—won wide acceptance in some countries, foremost of all in Great Britain, the United States, and Germany. With the growing popularity of such theories in Central Europe, significant progress in the status of Gypsies did not occur for a considerable period of time.

Archduke Joseph's initiatives in the closing years of the past century to settle the Gypsies of the Habsburg realm permanently, belonged to the very exceptional cases. His well-compiled *Cigány nyelvtan* [Gypsy Grammar] (Budapest, 1888) was a major linguistic accomplishment. But most of his Central European contemporaries had become influenced by the theory of racial superiority. Among them was publicist Kálmán Porzolt, who in the August 6, 1907, issue of *Pesti Hírlap*—Hungary's leading newspaper—asserted that "Civilized state has to exterminate this [Gypsy] race. Yes, exterminate! This is the only method." Even Dr. Antal Hermann, Jr., the son of a liberal-minded, internationally famed ethnographer, in a public lecture in 1913 emphasized: "The nomadic life of Gypsies is full of mysticism, romanticism, stealing, burglary, kidnaping of children, animal poisoning, and murder."³

Despite the wide-spread prejudice in Hungary and elsewhere against the Gypsies, no legislative measures tried to change the existing conditions. In the meantime only a few individuals and their families became assimilated; the overwhelming majority of Gypsies did not change their much-criticized lifestyle. This situation remained basically unchanged even during the interwar years.⁴

During the Second World War the Gypsies' situation greatly deteriorated throughout Central and Eastern Europe. In the Germany of 1941 Gypsies could only be found in concentration camps. Thousands of German Gypsies perished there. About 80,000 of Gypsies from East Central European countries also lost their lives in

Nazi extermination camps.⁵ The defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 brought relief for what was left of this ethnic group. Yet, as the years passed, it became more and more obvious that the "Gypsy problem" was not going to disappear.

Population

Because Gypsies have been a nomadic people since their origins, there are no reliable census figures about their numbers. Nowadays an estimated 7-8 million Gypsies live the world over. They can be found everywhere with the possible exception of Japan. Hungary's Gypsy population is on the rise, while non-Gypsy population in the past decades has been stagnant. In 1976 their estimated number was 320,000;⁶ in 1978, according to Miklós Gerencsér, it was about 350,000.⁷ The latest figure was given in June 1985, according to which out of Hungary's total population of nearly 11,000,000, approximately 3.7 per cent is Gypsy.⁸

As a consequence of Hungary's increased industrialization as well as urbanization, more and more Gypsies have settled in industrial centers and big cities, especially in Greater Budapest, the country's largest industrial center. In Pest County alone there were more than 20,000,⁹ and in the likewise well-industrialized Borsod County, Gypsies constitute 9.05 per cent of the population.¹⁰

Language

The Gypsy problem in the Danubian region has not been adequately studied from the standpoint of ethnology. Nevertheless, there is a general understanding that all tribes (groups) belong to the same stock. Experts usually do not go further, and as a rule, the distinction is made linguistically. The ancient Gypsy (Romany) language is spoken only by a very small and diminishing fraction.

Gypsies in Hungary can be classified by dialect into three kinds: Hungarian, Rumanian and Walachian Gypsies. The Hungarian Gypsies, whose mother tongue is Hungarian, do not understand the ancient Romany (Gypsy) language. This group is relatively susceptible to assimilation. Roman Gypsies are those who speak a dialect of the Rumanian language. They are in some degree bilingual. They can speak or at least understand Hungarian. The members of the third group, the so-called Walachian or Olah, speak the original Romany; most of them understand some Hungarian.

The above linguistic classification is all the more significant, because it corresponds to specific cultural, and socio-economic

categories of the aforementioned groups (tribes) within the otherwise fairly heterogeneous Gypsydom.¹¹

Socio-Economic Development

It seems to be a generally accepted view in Central and Eastern Europe that there was no social (class) stratification among Gypsies. This view is not in accordance with the facts. Gypsy society was never completely classless, and probably continues to be socially variegated even today. Different occupations reflect appropriate social status. "Vaivodas," the leaders of their communities, used to rely for their status upon the relatively more cultured and wealthier strata of their communities. Also, musicians were socially higher placed than, for instance, makers of adobe bricks or basket weavers belonging to the same tribe or clan. Undoubtedly, horse dealers were also higher ranking than unskilled labourers within the same Gypsy community. The lack of communications between the members of different tribes and clans can also be explained as a basically social phenomenon brought about by occupational differences more than by ethnic dissimilarities. Gypsies with Hungarian or Slovak mother tongues have tended to be more "civilized" (i.e. assimilated) than others, and there have always been many musicians among them. Rumanian Gypsies were chiefly wood- and forest workers, while Walachian (Olah) Gypsies were mainly versed in metal working and horse trading.¹² Those Gypsies who were more civilized and economically better off than the majority of their communities tended to separate themselves from Gypsydom and emphasize their "similarity" with non-Gypsy citizens. Without any doubt Gypsy society has also been built upon social classes. However, among the Gypsies these classes were (and are) less well developed than in bourgeois and socialist societies in which social hierarchies are quite marked.

In Hungary tremendous socio-economic changes have occurred in the wake of the Second World War. In accordance with these phenomena, authorities had sought new ideas and methods in approaching the Gypsy question. A 1961 decision of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party dealt with housing, settlement, employment and education of Gypsy citizens. In its spirit a 1964 government decree ordered the dispersion of Gypsy settlements in order to integrate Gypsies into national life. In the course of its enforcement, however, some local authorities allocated better houses for them but in completely segregated Gypsy areas.¹³ As late as 1971, 70 per cent of Gypsies lived in segregated settlements under very primitive cir-

cumstances. By the early 1980s, only about 20 per cent of them had lived in segregated areas, under somewhat improved conditions.¹⁴ The ultimate purpose of the fair housing policy was to make possible the change in their way of life. Therefore, Gypsy families were supposed to be relocated in purely non-Gypsy environments so that Gypsy ghettos could be eliminated. This policy was pursued, for example, by the city of Salgótarján where in 1977 Gypsies formed 5 per cent of the total population.¹⁵

Better housing, specifically oriented sanitary measures,¹⁶ systematic child welfare have contributed to the rapid growth of the Gypsy population through natural reproduction. Still another factor in the transformation of Hungary's Gypsy society was increased participation of Gypsies in the labour force. In the early sixties only 20 per cent of Gypsy men had permanent jobs in industry and on state farms; as of 1971 there were already 30 per cent.¹⁷ In the early eighties, 85–90 per cent of men and 40–50 per cent of women worked.¹⁸

Culture and Education

Although the distinctive physical characteristics of Gypsies cannot be discounted, these factors in themselves are not decisive determinants in inter-ethnic relations. Folk customs, rites, language—and above all, ideology—should be taken into consideration. Among these factors the role of language is not all-important since the majority of Gypsies have, after all, forgotten their original (Romany) mother tongue. Only 65,000 of them are able to speak the Gypsy language in Hungary.¹⁹ Despite the fact that their migrations from India had occurred centuries ago, Gypsies everywhere in the world have preserved the main characteristics of their cultural identity. This is partly due to their isolation from outside influences. Distinctive elements of their heritage are evident the world over, yet Gypsy culture has its regional characteristics, too. For this reason the culture of neighbouring peoples should sometimes also be taken into consideration in analyzing Gypsy phenomena.

There can be little doubt that Gypsy concepts and practice of religion, ritual, folk medicine and ethics, to mention only a few, fundamentally differ from their non-Gypsy counterparts. Their religious views and customs shed some light on their philosophy of life. The whole problem goes back to the times when Gypsydom was presumably a uniform ethnic (racial) entity and migrations did not bring them into contact with so many different civilizations. It seems to be an established fact that Gypsies have always followed the religion of the majority peoples of the territories they have lived in.

In Hungary it was the Catholic Church. Not a single Protestant can be found among them in Hungary. A few of them belong to the Greek Catholic Church; they had entered Hungary from Rumania in recent decades. But it would be erroneous to think that Gypsies' Christianity is identical with that of non-Gypsies. Their denominational belonging means nothing more than the fact that Gypsy children were baptized in Catholic churches. The texts of the New Testament have not influenced either their folklore or religious life to any degree. Gypsies are not churchgoers, and do not participate in religious ceremonies at all. Even wedding ceremonies are conducted in a very non-religious manner by vaivodas or Gypsy judges, or, if they do not exist, by the oldest man of their community. The name of God hardly occurs in their usage. The concept of God does not play any central role in their thoughts. Thus blasphemy is unknown. Similarly, the existence of the other world is not a theme in their beliefs. Gypsy Catholicism is a kin to Monophysitism in which the human and divine in Christ constitute only one nature. The name of Christ does not appear in Gypsy folklore and that of Holy Virgin very rarely. Fasting is also an unknown institution in Gypsy life. These criteria of Catholicism are characteristic of those Gypsies only who are not yet assimilated to any degree culturally, that is, of the overwhelming majority of Gypsies.²⁰ One factor has partly been responsible for this type of religious view and practice: the lack of spiritual care on the part of the churches. With the exception of the administration of baptism, Gypsies have been neglected and left out of the missionary work.

To help Gypsies to adopt to society, education should play an all-important role. In the past, neither the state nor society took the education of Gypsies seriously. Emperor Joseph II (1780–1790) tried to do so. On ascending the throne he issued a decree that all Gypsy children should enroll in schools. Soon 8,388 Gypsy children were placed in state-owned educational institutes and 9,463 on farms under the patronage of foster parents. Within a few years all of them ran away. By the advent of the twentieth century, the Kingdom of Hungary had compulsory universal education at the elementary level. Law No. XXXVIII of 1868 laid down a new system under the direction of József Eötvös, head of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education. At a later time, but still years prior to the turn of the century, sweeping reforms were initiated to modernize secondary schools in order to raise the standards of education in line with Western patterns. Despite these then up-to-date efforts, Gypsies were not affected by them. At the end of the nineteenth century, only 1 out of 400 vagabond Gypsies was able to read and write; only 3 or

4 were literate out of 100 semi-vagabonds; and 93.5 per cent were illiterate among the permanently settled Gypsies.²¹ According to a survey compiled in 1971 by the Sociological Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, only 39 per cent of the Gypsy population over age 14 were illiterate. By the early 1980s, 96 to 100 per cent of Gypsy children of public school age were enrolled in general schools, and 45 to 62 per cent of pre-schoolers were attending kindergartens.²²

In Hungary compulsory education begins at the age of six and lasts for eight years. The trouble starts immediately with the registration of Gypsy pupils according to reports by teachers. Some parents do not even know the age of their children, and a proportion of parents living in Gypsy settlements consider schooling as meaningless. Because of the disadvantageous family background, Gypsy children's psycho-physical development falls short of the level of non-Gypsy classmates. It is in most cases insurmountable. For example, the Hungarian vocabulary of six-year-old Gypsies is reported to consist only of 30–40 words. The result is that at least 50 per cent of them become drop-outs already at the end of the first school year, and some of the remaining 50 per cent do not pass because their substandard performance cannot even be measured.

One attempt aimed at improving conditions was the creation of desegregated schools. Many teachers and most of the parents of non-Gypsy children had deemed this ineffectual. They argued that under the socio-economic and cultural conditions of the times, Gypsy students were unprepared to fulfill the curriculum requirements. Furthermore, the behavior of Gypsy and non-Gypsy students in too many cases resulted in conflicts among the students. Because the percentage of drop-outs among Gypsy students in desegregated schools was extremely high, all-Gypsy schools came to be favoured by some experts as a means of changing the situation.

There are several factors that preclude the necessary cooperation between Gypsy and other school children in integrated schools. Perhaps one of the most important is that Gypsy children do not like to engage in communal play. As a result, "white" children tend not to make friends with Gypsy ones. Therefore, the feeling of togetherness can develop very rarely among these children of different races. Another fundamental gap existing between Gypsy and other children is that Gypsies at school age find it difficult to understand any kind of abstraction.²³ Abstract terms, even the concept of time, seem to be outside of the grasp of Gypsies. This is another very serious disadvantage of theirs in the educational process, not to men-

tion the lack of discipline which is a family heritage of Gypsy children.

With a view to raising the intellectual level of Gypsy children, kindergartens in cities and specially designed preparatory (pre-school) courses in villages have tried to close the gap. Local councils have provided children with clothes and shoes—otherwise Gypsy children could not attend schools during rainy and colder seasons. Administrative and school authorities had done much to raise Gypsies from their poverty-stricken conditions to the living standards and cultural level of the majority population.

Schools and other forms of education are only capable of creating a lasting basis for effectively regulating inter-racial relations. We should not overlook the difference existing between European civilization and the primitive cultural characteristics of the Gypsies. Under current socio-economic and cultural circumstances, there is little hope for the process of acculturation in any direction. Both cultural spheres are almost hermetically sealed off from each other and therefore from influencing each other. All the more it is necessary to emphasize the significant role of education which, combined with a proper social policy, could create a healthier social and cultural environment for the underdeveloped Gypsies.

In the early 1980s, there were still striking differences between Gypsies and the majority population at the expense of their undisturbed coexistence. The thin stratum of Gypsy intellectuals and other middle-class elements did not modify the situation to any degree because their number was low and they tended not to participate in efforts aimed at improving the socio-economic and cultural status of Gypsydom.

Myth and Reality

There can be no question in anyone's mind that the post-1945 regimes in Hungary, just like elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe, have treated Gypsies in a positive, humane way, in contrast to the previous governments' practices. The socio-economic and cultural level of many Gypsies was elevated. By the early 1980s many of them held permanent jobs; however, still only 1.5 per cent of working Gypsies had become skilled workers.²⁴ It is also true that as a concomitant phenomenon of this progress, the community or "ethnic" consciousness of Gypsies had grown, and began exhibiting some of the symptoms of the American Black separatist movements. These ethnically conscious Gypsies preferred to live in ethnic

quarters, to work in all-Gypsy units, and wanted segregated schools where Romany was one of the languages of instruction.

Hungary, whose nationality policy recognized the legitimate existence of ethnic minorities, has treated the "Gypsy question" quite flexibly. In connection with Gypsies, the concepts of race, ethnicity, as well as social stratum, are equally significant in policy implementations.²⁵ This point of view is more realistic and opens the door equally either to assimilation or to self-determination. Three of the basic tasks of integrating minorities in mainstream national life: housing, employment and education have been relatively well-handled in Hungary. But prejudice against Gypsies by the overwhelming majority of the public continued to exist. There are two reasons for this. One of them is the so-called "Gypsy criminality." The crime rate of Gypsies is twice as high as that of non-Gypsies.²⁶ The other factor feeding racial hostility toward Gypsies can be found in the Gypsy-oriented welfare policies of the governments. Indeed, Gypsies are in an ever-increasing magnitude welfare recipients (free housing, clothing, school supplies, low-interest loans, etc.) which fosters resentment against them on the part of the poverty-stricken portion of Hungary's non-Gypsy population.

The integration of Gypsies into Hungarian society was also hindered by the fact that Gypsy tribes are endogamous and, therefore, intermarriage is practically a non-existent phenomenon in their society. Moreover, the white partner in the mixed marriage was often considered a Gypsy by non-Gypsies. Consequently, mixed marriage as a means to promote the integration process has not been a viable option.

Although there had been tremendous changes in the positive direction, Gypsydom in Hungary from 1945 to the early eighties had failed to produce its own leadership, and Gypsy participation in public life was negligible. Their educated and other middle-class individuals and families constituted a thin stratum many of whose members disavowed their Gypsy extraction. All these facts in one way or another tend to aggravate racial animosities. In the sixties and the seventies, the situation of Hungary's Gypsies had constantly been in a process of change, undeniably for the better, especially if it is compared with wartime and pre-1945 conditions. But the "Gypsy issue" was by no means solved, and the principles and methods applied still represented an inadequate, partial treatment of the problem.

Notes

*Editors' comment: this paper is an abbreviated version of a study dealing with the Gypsy question in Hungary and Czechoslovakia from 1945 to the early 1980s. In a future issue of our journal we expect to publish another paper on the Gypsies of Hungary which will deal mainly with important recent developments (including the growth of Gypsy separatism) concerning the Gypsy problem in Hungary.

1. Bart McDowell, *Gypsies, Wanderers of the World* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1970), p. 83.
2. Eva Davidova, *Bez kolib a siatrov* (Kosice, 1965), pp. 19-21; and Hóman-Szekfű, *Magyar történet* (1943), p. 523.
3. Antal Hermann, Jr., *A temesmegyei cigányok* (Temesvár, 1913), p. 14.
4. In 1927, for example, the parliament of Czechoslovakia enacted a law which forbade their wandering but the country's authorities never implemented it. Davidova, p. 43.
5. (Mrs.) I. Kozák, "Historians and Witnesses; A Symposium," *The New Hungarian Quarterly* XXX, no. 96 (Winter 1984), p. 90; and B. Sabacka, *Problematika cikanskeho obyvatelstva* (Brno, 1970), p. 2.
6. Zsolt Csalog, *Kilenc cigány* (Budapest, 1976), p. 1
7. Miklós Gerencsér, "Egyenjogu állampolgárok," *Népszabadság* XXXVI (January 1978), p. 5.
8. (Mrs.) István Kozák, "Még egyszer a borsodi cigányokról," *Népszabadság* XLIII (June 1985), p. 8.
9. Gerencsér, p. 5.
10. Kozák in *Népszabadság*, p. 8.
11. Zsolt Csalog, "Etnikum? Faj? Réteg? *Világosság* XIV, no. 1 (January 1973), pp. 38-41.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
14. István Tauber and Katalin Vég, "A cigányok bünözésének néhány összefüggése," *Magyar Jog* 29, no. 8 (August 1982), p. 694.
15. Péter János Sós, "Utolérni," *Magyar Hírek* XXX, no. 9 (May 1977), p. 45.
16. István Hooz, *A cigány és nem cigány anyákról, valamint újszülötteik közötti fontosabb különbségekről* (Budapest, 1973).
17. Tauber and Vég, p. 694.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Csalog, *Kilenc cigány*, p. 238.
20. László Szegő, "Babonáság és vallás a magyarországi cigányoknál," *Világosság* XIV, no. 1 (January 1973), pp. 44-48.
21. László Siklós, "Cigányok a társadalom szorításában," in *Írószemmel*, ed. György Nemes (Budapest, 1973), pp. 257-58.
22. Tauber and Vég, p. 694.
23. Siklós, pp. 260-63.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 255.
25. See the No. 1016/VII.12 of 1972 Decree issued by the Council of Ministers on further tasks in conjunction with the improvement of the position of the Gypsy population, in *Magyar Közlöny*, no. 47 (July 1972), pp. 633-34.
26. Tauber and Vég, pp. 692-701.

REVIEW ARTICLE

István Tisza: Villain or Tragic Hero? Reassessments in Hungary – Verdict in the U.S.

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István Diószegi, *A magyar külpolitika útjai* [The paths of Hungarian foreign policy]. Budapest: Gondolat Könyvkiadó, 1984.

Gábor Kemény G. (coll. and ed.), *Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez Magyarországon a dualizmus korában* [Documents on the history of the nationality question in Hungary in the age of dualism]. Vol. VI. 1913–1914. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1985. x, 341 pp.

József Galántai, *A Habsburg-monarchia alkonya. Osztrák–magyar dualizmus, 1867–1918* [The twilight of the Habsburg Monarchy. Austro-Hungarian dualism, 1867–1918] Budapest: Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1985, 390 pp.

Ferenc Pölöskei, *Tisza István*. Budapest: Gondolat Könyvkiadó. 1985. 281 pp.

Gabor Vermes, *István Tisza. The Liberal Vision and Conservative Statecraft of a Magyar Nationalist*. New York: East European Monographs. Distributed by Columbia University Press, 1985. ix, 627 pp.

István Tisza was twice Prime Minister of Hungary and was the most influential statesman of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy between 1913 and 1917. Highly respected and admired by some, he was feared and hated by many of his contemporaries. Not only the

Emperor-King Francis Joseph, but also Kaiser William of Germany considered Tisza as the man sent by Providence to save the tottering Habsburg Monarchy. This belief was shared by a group of devoted followers in Hungary, and by some even in Austria. On the other hand, those who did not come under the spell of this robust personality saw Tisza as a new Anti-Christ, the servile arm of "Vienna" and the Habsburgs, an arch-reactionary landlord; and the poet Ady's epithets "firebrand," "the wild crazy man from Geszt" became firmly imprinted in the minds of generations of Hungarians. Although in the eyes of many, the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Trianon Peace Treaty meted out to Hungary vindicated most of Tisza's policies, and a kind of cult emerged around his figure in interwar Hungary. After 1945 the verdict delivered by Tisza's opponents was revived, and not only Stalinists but many of their victims, too, regarded Tisza as an arch-conservative, a callous defender of an unjust system, a warmonger personally responsible for the outbreak of the First World War and for Hungarian participation in it. In Western Europe opinions about Tisza were similarly divided, but after 1914 the critical view got the upper hand and Tisza was called one of "the men who floundered into the war."¹ Furthermore, he was included among the greatest war criminals of 1914-18.² According to one widely known work, the Hungarian Prime Minister "surpassed even his father's dictatorial position" in keeping both the "nationalities" and "the Magyar masses excluded from political life."³ An Italian historian called him "stubborn and brutal" in defending "the supremacy which the Magyar historical classes had managed to maintain for many centuries."⁴ The balanced comments of the American Arthur J. May were rather exceptional.⁵

The emancipation of Hungarian history writing from the vulgar, Stalinist version of Marxism was bound to lead to a more serious and objective study of Tisza's character and historical role. This was not easy because at first Tisza's one-time political opponents, radicals like Oszkár Jászi, the Social Democrats and Mihály Károlyi had to be rehabilitated. When these people were given fair (occasionally, as in the case of Károlyi, too generous) treatment after decades of abuse, it was not the occasion to revise Tisza's portrayal, no matter how fine the scholars dealing with Károlyi and his allies were. Péter Hanák, however, in a brilliant chapter representing the great transformation in Hungarian historiography, offered a character sketch which can probably be accepted by admirers and foes of Tisza alike.⁷ The collection and publication of the major documents on the treatment of the non-Hungarian national minorities of Hungary made it clear that Tisza could not be put in the same category

as the exponents of national chauvinism, so vociferous around the turn of the century.⁸ Ferenc Pölöskei, after studying the political history of the last decade of Austria-Hungary, began to point out that Tisza served the interests of the ruling classes better than his nationalist opponents, and that he was far-sighted enough to attempt some compromises with the non-Hungarians, notably the Rumanians.⁹ Another noted historian, József Galántai, wrote extensively on the war years, using both Hungarian and foreign sources. He unearthed many details about Tisza's impact on Hungarian (and European) history, but refrained from offering an overall judgment on the controversial statesman.¹⁰ The same can be said of István Diószegi, whose exemplary studies of Austro-Hungarian foreign policy contained much on Tisza's role in policy-making, without explicitly challenging the one-sided traditional accounts.¹¹ Still, the findings of both authors proved invaluable in judging Tisza by the facts; their opinion on some crucial issues of Tisza's political life will be mentioned below. Since all the above authors (Hanák, Pölöskei, Diószegi and Galántai) wrote chapters for volume seven of the massive ten-volume history of Hungary, this "definitive account" or "authorized version" is also mostly free of extreme language and traditional bias in connection with Tisza and his times.

Understandably it was a difficult task for people professing radical or some type of socialist convictions to show much understanding towards a Hungarian count and landlord who opposed the introduction of universal suffrage in the belief that it might prepare the ground for a socialist revolution. Some felt there was no need for any substantial revision concerning Tisza. István Király, an influential and for some time even popular professor of literature, in his massive studies on Ady, upheld the simplistic image: Tisza was defending "the utterly obsolete, great estate and haute bourgeois reaction," his second premiership in 1913 was "the victory of counter-revolution," in the July 1914 crisis he bent under German pressure, and as a man he was "haughty, arrogant, a born insolent, an insensitive oligarch."¹² Another literary historian, Béla G. Németh, was more sophisticated, but still unable to break some taboos. While admitting Tisza's "willpower, determination... hard discipline in work, moderate lifestyle, fairness in financial matters... subjective moral values," Németh saw him as a radical Old Conservative, whose narrow Hungarian gentry horizon made him unable to realize "the hopelessly antiquated and doomed nature of the existing structure."¹³ How deep-rooted the highly negative Tisza portrait became can be seen by the fact that in a recent issue of *Irodalmi Ujság* (published in Paris), a poem by George Faludy (the highly respected

exiled poet who lives in Canada) put Tisza in the same category with Horthy, Rákosi and Kádár (themselves strange bedfellows), while G.M. Tamás, a learned political scientist and essayist, widely regarded as one of the best minds of the Hungarian “democratic opposition,” described Tisza as a romantic anti-capitalist, an early embodiment of modern right-wing radicalism.

As part of a series of paperbacks devoted to Hungarian “popular” history (*Magyar História*), Pölöskei wrote a short but well-illustrated biography of Tisza, which tried to bridge the abyss between the two extreme judgments.¹⁴ In his general remarks Pölöskei repeated such traditional charges as “a statesman bent on containing progress,” (p. 8.) whose purpose was “the liquidation of the liberal features of the 1867 arrangement,” (p. 133.) and whose legislation, consolidating the power of the state, prepared the ground for the legal system of the postwar counter-revolutionary regime (p. 185). However, the extensive quotations from Tisza’s speeches (delivered mainly in the House of Representatives), indisputably show another side of the statesman: an unmistakably liberal attitude in dealing with a large number of issues, forceful reasoning based on an impressive command of facts and laws, serious efforts to promote social welfare (mainly among the industrial workers), determination to uphold and expand cultural and educational freedom and pluralism (parallel with a concern over the dominating influence of German culture), and a willingness to meet the cultural (and to a limited degree even the political) demands of the non-Hungarian minorities, most notably the Rumanians. Pölöskei supplies convincing statistics on how Rumanian church schools prospered under Tisza: well over two thousand elementary and ten secondary schools as well as seven seminaries (theological colleges) were recipients of substantial financial support from the state (pp. 69–70). The author, however, deems these concessions to be the products of foreign policy considerations, which is an over-simplification. The general tendency of the book is to present Tisza in a more favourable light (mainly through his own words and actions), without giving him credit for his more liberal policies and without explicitly revising the traditional image. Pölöskei was definitely selective in using some of the evidence: he gave a one-sided account of Tisza’s family background, and in the chapter on the relation between Tisza and Ady, he was silent about the latter’s (and Jászi’s) earlier admiration for the young politician who was seen as the champion of a liberal revival in the government party. The rather perfunctory treatment given to the war period was also unfortunate because in many ways those were Tisza’s finest years, a time when he was at the height of his prestige and power.

Tisza was the only Hungarian who played a truly significant, “history-making” role in European politics in this century, and even if he had not been such a complex man, he would clearly have deserved a more substantial biography than Pölöskei’s short version. In fact such a work appeared only a few weeks later, but in English and in the United States. The massive volume of Vermes, the result of years of meticulous research and thinking, is based on all available evidence provided by Hungarian and foreign archives (ranging from letters deposited with the Hungarian Calvinist Church to foreign ministry documents found in Vienna, Berlin, London and Washington, and sources in the Hoover Institute at Stanford) as well as on hundreds of published works and periodicals. There is no doubt that Vermes has produced a very authoritative account of Tisza’s life, but how far has he succeeded in evaluating and judging this hotly debated personality?

This reviewer has no doubt that Vermes succeeded in a major revision of the portrait of Tisza: the prevailing black and the occasional white are replaced by the vivid colours of reality. Not that the author was simply indulging in the fashionable art of revisionism. Vermes is a traditional historian, who collected far more evidence than he could dream of putting into print, who thought more than twice about each statement and whose conclusions sound almost irrefutable.

Since the book was written mainly for non-Hungarian readers, it was necessary to devote considerable space to the presentation and explanation of the history of Hungary from 1867 to 1918. Vermes went far beyond giving only the necessary facts: his remarks and conclusions—usually very sound and convincing, occasionally provoking—are the results of decades of study and thinking on the strange course of Hungarian history. He hit upon what he called the basic Hungarian dilemma: Hungarians rightly perceived that their position was extremely precarious. They had only a relative (less than fifty per cent) majority over the Croats, Rumanians, Germans, Slovaks, Serbs and Rusyns populating the historic state, which was next to two German and one Slavic great power as well as surrounded by two small nations, Serbia and Rumania, both eager to increase their territory at the expense of Hungary. The awareness of these threats might have made the creation of a centralized, even a dictatorial state an almost logical answer, but the widely professed traditions of Hungary (the genuinely liberal Age of Reforms and the 1848 April Laws) prohibited such a course. Yet completely liberal policies (inevitably leading towards full democracy) involved the danger of accepting the partition of the historic territory along eth-

nic lines. The solution was to be a unique “liberal nationalism” or “national liberalism,” a determination to maintain the supremacy of the Hungarian element without using real repression, which was best represented by father and son, Kálmán and István Tisza. Proving the liberal elements of the latter’s policies as well as illustrating the shortcomings of this liberalism is the major achievement of Vermes.

Tisza was no dictator. He never dreamed of using power in an unlawful way, curtailing the personal freedom or material well-being of his many political opponents. (The attempted modification of the standing orders of the House in 1904 and the forceful ejection of unruly elements from Parliament in 1912 can be regarded as infringements of the existing laws in order to enforce the rule of the majority. Vermes neither condones nor condemns them.) Whereas Tisza’s liberalism is evident in his theoretical beliefs and doctrines (e.g., in the issue of the separation of Church and State, or in the internal matters of his own Calvinist Church), and some of his unenlightened agricultural policies can be explained by the narrow observance of *laissez faire*, his stubborn opposition to any substantial expansion of voting rights, his belief that rural unrest (including that of non-Hungarians) was the result of unscrupulous agitators and could be dealt with by police measures, was certainly conservative behaviour. The subtitle of Vermes’ book is, therefore, a direct hit. But most of these conservative policies were in fact the result of consideration for the national interest and were meant to serve the maintenance of the Compromise and of the hegemony of the Hungarians in Hungary.

The most novel (and probably the most controversial) chapter of the biography (“The Clash of Ideas”) shows how traditional liberalism (often called Old Liberalism, or conservative liberalism), represented mainly by the pro-Compromise (“67-er”) government party, was on a collision course with the young, radical progressives of the journal, *Huszadik Század* (Twentieth Century), and of the Society for the Social Sciences. This reviewer accepts Vermes’s thesis that the two groups had far more in common than they—and posterity—realized: philosophically they had the same roots, they were equally in favour of capitalist progress, industrialization and urbanization. They differed on the pace and depth of the social and political consequences they deemed desirable, and the momentum and rhetoric of their conflict, augmented by the generation gap, led to an apparently irreparable and lifelong struggle. Although both Tisza’s followers and their “progressive opponents had a mutually shared belief and interest in preserving freedom against extremists,

both on the Right and on the Left,” this was not realized, and “at the end there could be no peace or even a workable truce between those who wished to give history a push and those who allowed for only small changes within a controlled social and political environment.” (p. 177)

The volume’s other central theme is Tisza’s nationalism, in contemporary parlance—whether he was a tool of “Vienna” (i.e., the Habsburg establishment), or the truest Hungarian patriot. Vermes very convincingly shows that István Tisza saw far more clearly the internal and external dangers facing Hungarians than most of his contemporaries, but he thought that they could be successfully countered by maintaining the Austrian connection (“dualism”) and showing national unity. When both were threatened by the Party of Independence (which, incidentally, did not call for complete national independence, only for a looser connection with Austria), Tisza quoted Kossuth’s plan for a confederation of Danubian nations as proof that the Hungarians were not strong enough to preserve real independence if they stood completely alone. (For the same reason Tisza was a firm supporter of the Dual Alliance with Germany, although his political and cultural sympathies lay with the English.) Tisza felt it was his mission to save the unity of the nation from the impact of the programs which undermined it: narrow-minded chauvinism, radicalism, socialism and the separatist dreams of Rumanians and Serbs, but only by legal means, mainly in Parliament and in public debate. He was also ready to fight for the rights of Hungarians embodied in the law, especially in the letter and spirit of the Compromise of 1867, and worked for the expansion of these rights so that Hungary could achieve real parity with the Austrian half of the Monarchy. While he was always mindful of the prerogatives and feelings of Francis Joseph, he was determined to oppose the absolutist ambitions of the military and of the Heir Apparent, Francis Ferdinand, who, in turn, considered him the most dangerous of all Hungarians, a new Prince Rákóczi.

Vermes pays due attention to what is little known, that Tisza was perhaps the most tolerant member of the Hungarian political establishment on the issue of national minorities. Not that he was ready to go as far as Mocsáry or Jászi in meeting the political demands of the non-Hungarian leaders, but he offered them substantial cultural and educational concessions. The most recent Hungarian documentary collection shows that these were quite far-reaching by contemporary (not to mention present-day East European) standards, and the promises were matched by deeds such as the introduction of minority languages into the state schools, or supporting the prin-

ciple that minorities are entitled not only to equal rights but to some extra rights.¹⁵ In 1913 and 1914 Tisza made repeated efforts to come to an understanding with the Rumanian National Party. Vermes suggests that failure to do so might have been due to the advice of Archduke Francis Ferdinand. Recent research by Z. Szász has proved that beyond doubt.¹⁶

Well over half of Vermes's book deals with the last six years of Tisza's life. Some may find this proportion unwarranted, but if one considers what an important role the Hungarian Prime Minister played during this period both in Hungary and in Europe, or what a large amount of published and unpublished, but relatively little-used, sources are available, one is inclined to approve such extensive coverage. Tisza used his constitutional right to influence foreign policy; this was not too difficult with the nonchalant foreign minister, Berchtold, and was quite necessary after the Balkan Wars. Galántai thinks that Tisza's course, launched in 1913 and followed through the July crisis of 1914, which proposed building up Bulgaria as the cornerstone of the Monarchy's Balkan policy, was not a bad one from the point of view of preserving peace, at least for several years.¹⁷ Diószegi, on the other hand, called attention to another, seldom noticed element: from 1913 Tisza's major effort was to bring about a *rapprochement* with Russia as the best guarantee against the irredentist ambitions of Serbia and Rumania.¹⁸ In contrast Vermes, perhaps lending too much importance to Tisza's March 1914 memorandum, considers the Bulgarian proposal and the concomitant arguments addressed to Emperor William on a diabolical *entente* plan to encircle Germany, as "motivated by self-defense but aggressive in its potential consequences." (pp. 212-214)

The differences between these three authors extend to their explanation of Tisza's behaviour in July 1914. Why did he abandon his opposition to the war? Galántai ascribed the greatest importance to Tisza's concern for Transylvania and to the guarantees supplied by Germany that, in case of a wider conflict, Rumania would stay neutral and, further, that Germany was ready to adopt Tisza's proposal about bringing Bulgaria into the Triple Alliance.¹⁹ Vermes is more inclined to accept the conventional view, notably that Tisza's volte-face was caused not so much by direct German pressure but by his realization that lack of action may endanger future German support in the Balkans, if not the German alliance itself, and also damage his own reputation as the man on whom one could build a consistent policy. So he accepted the possibility of war, with a heavy heart and not unaware of the high risks involved (217-235). Diószegi's most recent explanation adds a more unorthodox and

not unconvincing element. It was neither German pressure nor assurance that prevailed over Tisza's reluctance. The Hungarian Prime Minister had two internal factors to consider: the attitude of the Hungarian Parliament and that of the Monarch. Hungarian public opinion—like public opinion in other countries—was in favour of war in 1914. When Tisza, after repeated attempts, failed to change Francis Joseph's conclusion that the only solution to the Southern Slav menace was war, he had no choice but to resign or to devote all his energies to the war effort.²⁰

Tisza's handling of the Hungarian war effort was remarkable. His sense of mission was stronger than ever, he felt he had to deal with all major and minor issues himself, whether they concerned the alliance with Germany, negotiating with Italy and Rumania, wrangling with Austria over constitutional questions and the food supply, or looking after the families of soldiers on the front. Special Hungarian interests appeared to weigh on him more heavily than ever, but he continued to believe that their safeguarding served also the best interests of the whole Monarchy. That is why he was so rigidly opposed to any constitutional changes that threatened the dualist structure, whether uniting the Poles under the Habsburgs, adopting the program of a Greater Croatia, or allowing regional autonomy. His major concern was to maintain internal stability and cohesion, and when that became increasingly difficult, he could think of no other course than resistance to bending under popular pressure. When at the end of the war Charles tried to save his Empire by federalizing the much weakened Austria, Tisza finally endorsed the platform of his parliamentary opponents (personal union) since he was unable to think in new terms, more in line with the new realities.

In the chapters on the war period, Vermes shows that he is not only able to offer interpretations that rise above the earlier debates, but can use his many primary sources to create an impressive new conception of his subject. Tisza's wartime foreign policy has hardly been studied, and the fact that he had made sincere and serious efforts to restore peace must come as a surprise to most readers. As far as war aims are concerned, he was the most moderate of all the leading politicians of the Central Powers. His critics would say that this was so only because he wanted to save historic Hungary. It was not only his personal tragedy that when the Entente was at last ready to negotiate with Austria-Hungary, at the very beginning of 1918, he was already out of office. He—unlike Károlyi, the man of faith *and* illusions—was aware of the plans to carve up Hungary, and since he could not accept peace on such conditions he saw no alternative but putting all his hope in the strength of the German army. Tisza

was never good in reacting to unpalatable situations. When he admitted that the war was lost his whole utopian vision of a strong, stable and traditional Hungary collapsed. The unknown assassins' bullet killed a man who was already paralysed in spirit.

The long gestation of Vermes's work may explain why factual mistakes are virtually absent. Naturally many questions can be raised about its proportions, some of the interpretations or epithets, the inclusion or omission of some details. A few examples: Vermes did not mention that the 1905 elections were exceptionally fair (which must have contributed to the defeat of the government), and that it was a personal victory for Tisza: he defeated his great rival, the younger Andrásy, in Deák's one-time Pest seat. It is unlikely that Jászi would have agreed to be called "the Jewish sociologist," (p. 154), and Mihály Réz, respected by many contemporary social scientist (e.g., Bódog Somló), was perhaps not the representative of "the secular extreme Right." (p. 169) Vermes found (or ventured to say) very little on the human side of Tisza. This was unavoidable given the reserved, almost shy nature of the man, whose private life has remained a secret (speculations about his affairs with women and visits to brothels are probably completely unfounded). Moreover, there is some evidence which runs contrary to the widespread view about the coldness and lack of human feeling in this Puritan: in close family and friendly circles his inner warmth penetrated his shield. If Vermes had seen the British Consul-General's reports from Budapest he would have found much sympathy with "the sheer anchor" of the Monarchy: praise of his controversial steps regulating Parliament, appreciation of his 1910 Arad speech (which paid eloquent homage to the martyrs without hurting the dynasty) and understanding for his opposition to universal suffrage. Later, however, the anti-German group in the Foreign Office drew a different picture: Clerk, Vansittart, and especially Crowe, denigrated the Hungarian Prime Minister in numerous minutes. Tisza's close German connections usually hid his British sympathies. It is telling that when *The Economist* criticized the 1913 Suffrage Bill and compared its results to England in the 18th century, Tisza, then the Speaker of the House of Representatives, answered in a letter which pointed out that in 1910 the proportion of voters (6.5 per cent) was considerably higher than in the United Kingdom before 1867, "scarcely less than the ratio of English electors from 1868 to 1885 (about 7 per cent), and that the Reform Bill recently passed in our Parliament will have the probable result of bringing the number of electors very near to two millions (21 per cent). Don't you think this is a fair dose of democracy in a country so much behind England con-

cerning the culture and welfare of the lower classes?"²¹ Vermes is correct in pointing out that Tisza's attitude to "the lower classes" was largely that of the kind, parochial landlord of Geszt toward his honest, industrious, but uneducated peasants. It is less clear what Tisza's feelings were towards the bulk of the bourgeois element. How closely did he control or influence *Az Ujság*, their popular, liberal daily?

In an earlier article, Vermes quoted Aristotle's description of the tragic hero, whose "misfortune is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some error of judgment or frailty."²² Vermes sees Tisza's tragedy not in the assassination of the by then lonely and much-cursed political leader on October 31, 1918, in the hour of collapse and revolution, but in Tisza's stubborn determination to uphold and further aims that, in the long run, proved unattainable. Tisza tried to increase the strength and influence of Hungary over Austria, and also *vis-à-vis* Francis Ferdinand, the Austro-German nationalists, the Social Democrats, the Christian Socials, as well as all the Slavs of the Monarchy. Tisza wanted to see an industrialized, technologically advanced and prosperous Hungary, where social peace prevailed because the rapidly growing working class, the agrarian masses, the *nouveau riche* and the non-Hungarian national minorities accepted their current position and even their limited perspective. He was sincerely determined to uphold the liberal traditions of Hungary: political freedom and a constitutional, parliamentary government, while maintaining the political and economic hegemony of the traditional leading elements (the aristocracy, the landed and the landless nobility, the deferential upper middle class), who all share a common mentality and value system.

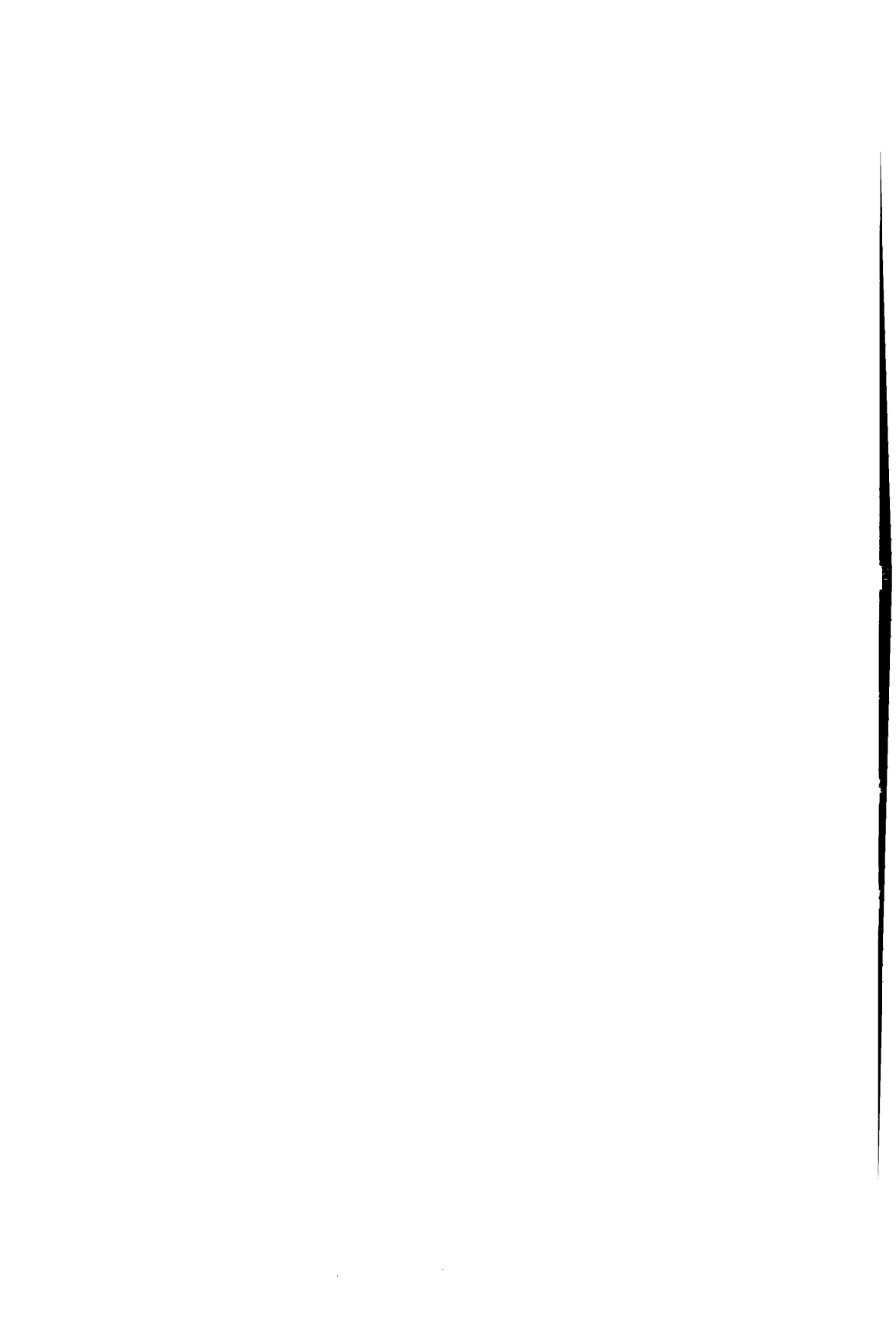
All that was clearly too much, even for a man of Tisza's strength, but the pursuit of such impossible aims may sound more quixotic than tragic. Nevertheless, Tisza's figure does not really recall Cervantes's hero. He was sufficiently realistic to know that for his aims it was essential to conserve the narrow franchise, the highly uneven distribution of land and wealth, and a system of government where the vast majority of citizens had little say in the decisions affecting them. But all that was not based on a conservative political philosophy, only on the realization of the foreseeable and probable consequences of political democratization. Thus Tisza, in his Hungarian patriotism, felt he had to fight these unwelcome eventualities. So Tisza was perhaps a noble character and a man of good will with unrealistic and both politically and morally questionable aims. To add to the tragic strain: his conviction in the correctness of his own views and actions stood in marked contrast to his repeated failures

to command a majority for his policies, and, in addition, he was notorious for his inflexibility even in dealing with his own class. As a devout Calvinist he believed that Providence had selected him to fulfill a mission, and it was his duty to face all obstacles. For some time he appeared to have prevailed, and between 1913 and 1916 he and Hungary wielded political influence unmatched since the fifteenth century. But finally Tisza had to see that Fate turned against him and the distant events of the world war led to the collapse of the whole structure, crushing this modern Samson. What might be called his final tragedy is that despite having had many enthusiastic and passionate supporters (certainly not all opportunists), history failed to justify him, and posterity has been harsh to him. Now Gabor Vermes, in this massive and convincing work, does not acquit Tisza, but gives him justice.

Notes

1. Sir Lewis Namier, *Vanished Supremacies. Essays on European History* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1958). Penguin ed., 1962, pp. 115–20.
2. Prompted by Wickham Steed and R.W. Seton-Watson, *entente* opinion held that Tisza and his Hungary were primarily responsible for the outbreak of World War I. See esp. R.W. Seton-Watson, *German, Slav and Magyar* (London, 1916), and the two men's numerous signed and unsigned articles in *The Contemporary Review*, *The Edinburgh Review*, and extensively in *The New Europe*. Cf. Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe. R.W. Seton-Watson and the Last Years of Austria-Hungary* (London: Methuen, 1981).
3. A.J.P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809–1918* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1948), Penguin ed. 1964. p. 239.
4. Leo Valiani, *The End of Austria-Hungary* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973) p. 39. The list of non-Hungarian authors critical or extremely critical of Tisza includes most of the recognized experts on twentieth-century Austria-Hungary.
5. Arthur J. May, *The Hapsburg Monarchy, 1867–1914* (New York: Norton, 1968), pp. 353–54.
6. While Ferenc Mucsi and György Litván in their numerous writings on early 20th century Hungary were rather taciturn on Tisza, the biographer of Károlyi used very harsh words on him: caesaromaniac, warmonger, intoxicated with power, obsessed. Tibor Hajdu, *Károlyi Mihály. Politikai életrajz* [Mihály Károlyi. A political biography] (Budapest: Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1978), pp. 42, 71, 105, etc.
7. E. Molnár, E. Pamlényi and Gy. Székely (eds.) *Magyarország története* (Budapest: Gondolat Könyvkiadó, 1964), pp. 159–60.
8. Zoltán Szász, "A román kérdés Tisza István első kormányának politikájában" [The Rumanian question in the policy of István Tisza's first government], *Történelmi Szemle* (1968), Vol. 11, no. 3. Gábor Kemény G. (coll. and ed.), *Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez Magyarországon a dualizmus korában* [Documents on the history of the nationality question in Hungary in the age of dualism] Vol. V, 1906–1913 (Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1971). See esp. docs. 62, 72, 77, 86, 110, 122, 133.

9. Ferenc Pölöskei, *Kormányzati politika és parlamenti ellenzék, 1910–1914* [Government policy and parliamentary opposition] (Budapest: Akadémiai Könyvkiadó, 1970). *Idem*, "István Tisza's policy toward the Romanian nationalities [sic!] on the eve of World War I," *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* (1972), Vol. 18, nos. 3–4.
10. József Galántai, *Magyarország az első világháborúban, 1914–1918* [Hungary in World War I] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974); *idem*, *Az első világháború* [The First World War] (Budapest: Gondolat Könyvkiadó, 1980); *idem*, *A Habsburg-monarchia alkonya* [The twilight of the Habsburg Monarchy] (Budapest: Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1985).
11. István Diószegi, *Hazánk és Európa* [Hungary and Europe] (Budapest: Gondolat Könyvkiadó, 1970); *idem*, *Hungarians in the Ballhausplatz. Studies in the Austro-Hungarian common foreign policy* (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1983); *idem*, *A magyar külpolitika útjai* [The paths of Hungarian foreign policy] (Budapest: Gondolat Könyvkiadó, 1984).
12. István Király, *Intés az őrzőkhöz. Ady Endre költészete az első világháború éveiben* [Warning to those on guard. The poetry of Endre Ady in the years of the first world war] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1982), Vol. 1, pp. 30, 51; Vol. 2, pp. 142, 339.
13. Béla G. Németh, "Herczeg Ferenc és Tisza István," *História* (1985), no. 3, p. 25.
14. Ferenc Pölöskei, *Tisza István* (Budapest: Gondolat Könyvkiadó, 1985), p. 281.
15. *Iratok*, Vol. VI., esp. documents 1 and 26.
16. Zoltán Szász (ed.), *Erdély története. Harmadik kötet, 1830-tól napjainkig* [History of Transylvania. Vol. 3: From 1830 to our days] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986), pp. 1681–87. Keith Hitchins did not draw this conclusion yet, "The nationality problem in Hungary: István Tisza and the Rumanian National Party," *The Journal of Modern History*, (1981), Vol. 53, no. 4. 619–51.
17. Galántai, *A Habsburg-monarchia alkonya*, pp. 286–87.
18. Diószegi, "Tisza István és a világháború," in *A magyar külpolitika útjai*, pp. 280–282.
19. Galántai, *A Habsburg-monarchia alkonya*, pp. 289–94.
20. Diószegi, "Tisza István és a világháború," pp. 284–87.
21. *The Economist*, 24 May 1913, pp. 1293–94. Tisza's letter was a response to a report which called the reform "an autocratic arrangement for giving unlimited power to the social tyrants of Hungary" (March 8, p. 583), and to the May 3 leader, which praised the democratic franchise of Austria.
22. Gábor Vermes, "Leap into the Dark: the Issue of Suffrage in Hungary during World War I," in *The Habsburg Empire in World War I* ed. by Kann, Kiraly and Fichtner (Boulder: East European Quarterly, distributed by Columbia University Press, New York, 1977), p. 42.



Book Reviews

Georg Stadtmüller, *Begegnung mit Ungarns Geschichte. Rückblick auf ein halbes Jahrhundert* (München: Rudolf Trofenik, 1984). Pp. 67 plus Index.

At first glance, this slender volume appears unorganized and fragmented. Two dozen chapters, some only one page each, record the personal experiences and reveal the intimate thoughts of Georg Stadtmüller, a noted German-born expert of Hungarian history. These reminiscences span the past fifty years, and include incidents in the author's homeland and eastern Europe. The topics are diffuse. One chapter features an encounter with Cardinal Mindszenty in Vienna, whereas several others explore conversations with famous Hungarian, Austrian, and German specialists in Hungarian studies. Stadtmüller also discusses the events of his youth, his professional training and career development, as well as his adventures during World War II and after. A few chapters offer brief insights into specialized problems in Hungarian and central European history. Read singly, each chapter merely whets the reader's appetite for more information. Considered jointly, however, the chapters coalesce into a leitmotif characterizing Stadtmüller as a sensitive human being and competent scholar.

A four-chapter unit forms the most interesting part of the book. Stadtmüller shares his impressions as a student and scholar caught in the meshes of the Third Reich's higher education bureaucracy. In the late 1930s, Stadtmüller became the unwitting victim of an invidious plot, hatched, he believes, by one or more envious colleagues who coveted his academic position. These antagonists never levelled explicit charges, but managed to remain anonymous, while weak-spined National Socialist university officials did nothing. His friends advised against confrontation as being counterproductive, possibly

dangerous. However, Stadtmüller intimates, had he joined the National Socialist Party, these difficulties would have disappeared. Failure to conform, however, eventually resulted in dismissal and conscription into the armed forces, where Stadtmüller spent an eventful two-year tour of duty as interpreter-translator in partisan-ridden Yugoslavia. The author's account of the German army's precipitate flight from the country near war's end has all the elements of a latter-day Odyssey. These experiences might have been expanded into a separate book.

In other chapters, Stadtmüller comments urbane and objectively on a multitude of individuals, situations, and ideas, nearly all of them relating to Hungary. Unlike many contemporaries, Stadtmüller recognized the importance of Hungary as east-central Europe's cultural centre, notwithstanding the ravages of World War I that terminated Hungary's effectiveness as a political power. He recapitulates popular sentiments in 1938 Austria, where people of all political persuasions supported *Anschluss* with Germany. This contradicts the still prevalent but erroneous notion of Austria as a Nazi rape victim. During a 1938 stay in Budapest, however, Stadtmüller discovered that most Magyars classified the Third Reich as a menace to the survival of their country. At that time, Stadtmüller questioned the Hungarian-born cultural historian Julius von Farkas, who dreaded not only the Germans, but Hungary's other neighbours. All of them apparently wished to see Magyar influence entirely disappear.

Stadtmüller's chapters drawn from the annals of Hungarian history are not as interesting as the rest of the book. Most readers would wish to learn far more concerning "Silesia and Hungary during the Turkish Wars," or "Silesia under Bohemian and Hungarian Rule," than the cursory treatment can possibly provide. Moreover, the author offers no rationale for having chosen these topics. However, this is a minor complaint. Whatever the reader's preferences might be, this modest book contains ample material to attract the attention of most area specialists and laymen.

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Valev Uibopuu. *Meie Ja Meie Hoimud. Peatukke Soomegrilaste Minevikust Ja Olevikust* [We and Our Kin-People. Chapters on the Past and Present of the Finno-Ugrians]. Lund, Sweden: Eesti Kirjanike Kooperatiiv, 1984. Pp. 203; 89 maps and diagrams; extensive bibliography.

Approximately twenty-five million people in the world speak Uralic languages, most of them Finno-Ugric. Dispersed geographically from Western Siberia (Ostyaks and Voguls) to the shores of the Baltic Sea (Finns, Estonians, remnants of Livs), and from the tip of Scandinavia (Lapps) to the Danubian basin (Hungarians), this diverse group of peoples has rarely been covered by a single monograph. Uibopuu is to be congratulated for filling this void with substantial skill. The volume under review is certain to serve as a key reference work for some time, even though its publication in Estonian will likely limit its general use.

Uibopuu, who was born in 1913 in Vana-Antsla, Estonia, and earned his doctorate in Finno-Ugric languages at the University of Lund in 1970, served as lecturer and docent there from 1971 to 1981. Although he has published a number of scholarly articles and monographic works, Uibopuu is perhaps better known as a literary figure. His career as a creative writer began as early as 1936, and by the time the present treatise appeared, he had produced at least six volumes of short stories, seven novels, two children's books, and countless reviews and popular essays. His works have been translated thus far into Finnish, Swedish and Latvian.

The volume in question has already been reviewed thoroughly by language specialists (see, for example, *Mana*, no. 54, 1986). The objective here is to offer insight for the general reader, the Finno-Ugric area specialist. Indeed, Uibopuu notes that the search for "roots" is an important contemporary phenomenon, but one which must intellectually transcend an individual's personal quest. Ancestry must, in the end, be perceived and therefore pursued at the collective level. He believes that language serves as a useful point of departure to this end for the scholar because language is the key element in most national identities. It is further evident from the work that Uibopuu feels that language alone is insufficient to provide the definitive answer to the origins of people.

The book is organized into three main parts, as follows. Part I presents an overview of general language studies and classificatory schemes. There is also an overview of the emergence and development of Finno-Ugric language studies.

Part II offers an excellent discussion of the difficulties of the search for a common Uralic (Finno-Ugric plus Samoyed) ancestral area, a topic which has attracted quite a bit of scholarly attention and popular fancy from the early 19th century onward, including attempts to link the Uralic and Altaic language families. Uibopuu not only reviews these pursuits critically, but he supplements existing linguistically based conjectures with evidence drawn from ethnography, and even genetic studies. The significance of this broad-based approach lies in the fact that while the Finno-Ugric languages are related to each other, these languages are spoken by peoples who evidence tremendous diversity as to physiology, material, spiritual and social culture, civilizational influences, and general history. The various peoples are, in summary, as widely different from each other as the distances in their geographical dispersion.

Uibopuu himself appears, in the light of the multitude of evidence, to share the conclusion of the Finnish scholar Erkki Itkonen that the search for a geographically narrowly defined ancestral territory is an illusive task, even a misdirected one. Rather, the evidence suggests that the Finno-Ugrians have been spread across the northern Eurasian landmass from the Baltic to Siberia for thousands of years, with the exception of the Hungarians, who migrated to their present homeland "only" a millennium ago. In any case, their dispersion appears as old as the period marked by the retreat of the last ice age. In part, their territorial base was sliced in half by the much later eastward and northward spread of the eastern Slavic tribes, some of whom subsequently came to be known as Russians.

The third and longest part of the book devotes a separate section to each of the Uralic language groups from Lapp to Samoyed. Each of these sections contains historical, demographic, and geographic overviews, as well as a discussion of the language and its related literature. There is no other recent work from which so much summary information might be gleaned on the Finno-Ugric nationalities.

Although the work is clearly descriptive rather than analytic, in a brief conclusion Uibopuu does offer several general points. He asserts, first of all, that "it is time to end the description of the Finno-Ugric peoples as if they were ethnographic elements left over from the previous century" (p.273). Second, "It is also time to end the search for the ancestry, relationships and primordial home of these peoples on the basis of romantic and incomplete concepts... It must be recognized that linguistic relationships and racial relationships need not be mutually inclusive" (p. 273).

And third, “it is time to end the exaggerated emphasis of the smallness of these peoples... Among the 62 language groups in Europe, Hungarian is in 12th place [in the number of speakers], Finnish in 20th, Mordvian in 30th, Estonian in 36th, Votyak in 39th... place. In comparison, it should be emphasized that Icelandic, with its 210,000 speakers (in 1972) is in 48th place among European languages” (p. 274).

At the same time, Uibopuu takes note of the fact that irrespective of the question of size, the circumstance of the Finno-Ugrians is rather serious, and in some cases even somber, foremost due to the encroachments and pressures of the Russians over the past few centuries. The point is perhaps best illustrated in the case of the Mordvians. Several Finno-Ugric language groups have disappeared completely in modern history, and several others are nearing extinction. Among the existing 19 Uralic peoples, only the Hungarians, Finns and Estonians have successfully developed a high culture in the native tongue. They are also the only ones to have preserved or achieved national sovereignty in modern times.

In general, Uibopuu to his credit has made use of a very wide range of current studies from around the world. His expertise is evident throughout. The 89 maps and diagrams make the discussion more comprehensible. Yet these have been extracted from a number of interdisciplinary sources in at least six languages, and this makes their perusal a bit cumbersome, especially as to place names and legends. Nevertheless, it will take some time for anyone to surpass the quality of this volume as a comprehensive guide to the Finno-Ugric peoples.

Tõnu Parming
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Obituaries

Dieter P. Lotze was born in 1933 in Hannover, Germany. He studied German and English Philology and Comparative Literature at Berlin Free University and Innsbruck University. His doctoral dissertation dealt with Imre Madách and the German world of letters. Since the early 1960s he, along with his Hungarian-born wife Barbara, had taught at Allegheny College, in Meadville Pennsylvania. Dieter Lotze had published numerous scholarly studies, including books on Wilhelm Busch and Imre Madách (both published by Twayne Publishers). He contributed articles to our journal in 1979 and in 1984. Professor Lotze died after lengthy illness.

Michael Sozan was born in 1938 in Hungary. He arrived in the United States after escaping from his homeland in 1956. He studied at New York's Union College, and at the University of Syracuse, where he earned his doctorate in 1972. Later he became a professor of anthropology at Slippery Rock University (Pennsylvania). Dr. Sozan was the author of numerous studies, many of them dealing with the Hungarian minority in Austria. During the last months of his life he was revising a paper for publication in our journal. The paper remained unfinished.

Ferenc A. Váli (1905–1984) was raised in Hungary. He received his first doctorate from the University of Budapest in 1927, and his second from the University of London five years later. Before the Second World War he was a university teacher, after the war he entered government service. In 1951 he was imprisoned on political charges. He was released in 1956, escaped, and came to the United States. Later he became Professor of International Relations at the University of Massachusetts, in Amherst. Professor Váli was an expert on international and minority law and published numerous articles and books on these and other subjects. One of his studies appeared in the 1976 volume of our journal.

