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Special Volume:

Women and Hungary

Part II

Studies in Twentieth Century Politics, Education, History and Literature by:

Katalin Fábián, Mária Palasik
Andrea Pető, Ágnes Huszár Várdy
Agatha Schwartz, Katherine Gyékényesi Gatto

Plus review articles and book reviews

guest editor:
Agatha Schwartz

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Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXIX, Nos. 1-2 (2002)

Preface:

Another Contribution to Hungarian Women's Studies

Agatha Schwartz

The present volume, *Women and Hungary, Part II: Studies in Twentieth Century Politics, Education, History and Literature*, for the second time in the history of the *Hungarian Studies Review* presents essays that deal specifically with women's studies. Our 1999 volume, *Women and Hungary: Reclaiming Images and Histories*, was the first issue of our journal to feature articles about women in Hungarian history and society, politics, literature and the arts. In that regard, the focus of the present volume has remained the same. The main difference to the 1999 volume is that these essays relate to the 20th century only and that, in addition to the five full-length studies, the present volume includes two review articles as well.

The topics covered reflect the diversity of the discipline of women's studies. The contribution of scholars from within and outside Hungary, similarly to our previous volume, speaks for the fact that research on Hungarian women is an area that continues to expand and attracts more and more national and international attention — a very positive and welcome development of the post-communist era indeed. It also confirms the diversity of what the term "women and Hungary" implies, namely an entity that defies geographic and ethnic boundaries.[1]

Katalin Fábián examines the place and significance of women's groups in Hungary since 1989. Despite the rapid changes in Hungarian society since the end of communism, women's participation in politics has faced numerous obstacles due to various factors such as an atmosphere of anti-feminism and deeply entrenched ideas regarding gender roles, which have traditionally kept women out of the realm of politics. Women's groups have therefore entered into alternative political actions and new forms of engagement. In her study, Fábián includes the discussion of independent, party-affiliate and trade-union affiliated women's groups. For

some groups, maintaining a consistent profile has proven to be a challenge. She concludes that women's groups in Hungary most significantly promote themselves and their interests in the media, through modifying symbols, through educational activities and by providing social services. This gives women's groups an alternative political voice in Hungarian society. Although women's groups have only rarely assumed a direct role in electoral politics, their activism allowed women to enter the political arena through the "back door."

Mária Palasik presents a brief history on women's thorny road to technical higher education and the technological and scientific community in Hungary. Her study fills an important gap regarding the presence and contribution that Hungarian women have given to the advancement of science both in Hungary and in the world. Although, in her own words, the aim of her paper is not to attack the closely knit male scientific community, with the statistics that she presents, Palasik cleverly demonstrates the gender gap that still exists in the world of science and technology in Hungary today. She mentions some encouraging numbers that speak in favour of an increasing female presence among, for instance, students in engineering after 1998; however, women are still heavily underrepresented when it comes to the distribution of research grants, professorships, or representation on scientific committees and in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In 2000, out of the 303 OTKA (Hungarian Scientific Research Fund) grants, only 33 went to women; out of the 310 members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, only 10 were women and none came from technical fields. There are virtually no women in managerial positions and no academic research institute has had a female director. The author explains this sad state of affairs with the following factors: Hungarian women have been present in technological higher education only for the past 50 years or so; but what is even more important is the prevailing structure of the Hungarian family and its traditional role distribution which favours a support system for a faster career advancement for men yet maintains the double burden for women. The lack of household services contributes to this situation. In the last part of her paper, Palasik briefly outlines the history of the careers of some important Hungarian female scientists, among them Mária Telkes, pioneer in solar technology.

Andrea Pető bases her study mainly on archival material. She examines the time of the demographic policy known as the "Ratkó-era." The changes in Hungary's abortion laws came following the 1948 capture of political power by the Communists. As a part of the attempt to impose totalitarian rule, between 1947 and 1953, women's bodies also became the subject of state regulation. Abortion was not completely prohibited; rather, a committee examined any existing medical reasons that would make a woman a candidate for abortion. "Social reasons" were not acceptable, for in socialist Hungary no woman could claim that she was burdened by social or economic circumstances. Yet those who did not want children found a way to have an abortion, regulations notwithstanding. Pető examines the abortionist trials that were conducted in Hungary as of the autumn of 1952. Only in the case of rape was the woman considered a victim. The author concludes that the indirect target of the population growth campaign was the negation of the autonomy women had acquired during World War II. The campaign promoted women's subordination and thus the reinstatement of patriarchal rule. However, women still found their way out of this situation of imposed weakness and thereby asserted their power against state regulations and patriarchy.

Ágnes Huszár Várdy presents a little known topic in Hungarian history, namely the hardship of Hungarian women who were forcibly taken away to Soviet labour camps following the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1944. Research on the topic of Hungarians — women, men and even children who suffered a similar fate — has emerged only after 1989. Although the deportations affected mostly ethnic Germans from Hungary (similarly to other Central European countries), thousands of ethnic Hungarians were among those forcibly taken away from their homes. This policy was motivated by the concept of collective guilt. It is estimated that 600,000 Hungarians, both military and civilian, were serving in Soviet labour camps, some as late as 1951. This number includes ethnic minorities from Romania and Slovakia as well. About 1/3 of them never returned; they perished under the most inhumane conditions from cold, starvation, or illness and were buried in mass graves. Because no files were kept, the exact number of women involved is unknown. In some places, women, mostly between the ages of 16 and 20, comprised 60% of those deported. Even pregnant women were not spared. Várdy uses interviews with survivors from existing literature (such as the two

volumes by Ilona Szebeni and Valéria Kormos) to illustrate the suffering and hardship these women had to endure. Those who were repatriated, mostly after 1947, were scarred for life, both physically and mentally. They have not received any real compensation, only some ridiculously small amounts after 1989.

Agatha Schwartz analyzes the novel *Betévedt Európába* by a popular writer from the first half of the 20th century, Gizella Mollináry. This autobiographically inspired narrative offers a complex picture of the last decades of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy through the eyes of a multiply marginal and peripheric figure: Gizella is born in turn-of-the-century Budapest as the illegitimate daughter of a young Croatian woman who was seduced by an Italian doctor. Mollináry takes the reader on a fascinating trip which follows Gizella's thorny life: from rural Croatia, her mother's native land, to Budapest with its splendour and misery of the lower classes, composed of similar marginal characters from various ethnic groups; from Budapest to rural Hungary and to Berlin, then back to Budapest. In this novel, the city, Budapest and later Berlin, functions as the centre that offers the values and belief system for the periphery, the village. This binary opposition between the two manifests on multiple levels: geographic, social, linguistic, cultural as well as gender. However, as the narrative unfolds, this opposition shifts on multiple levels. Mollináry thus convincingly deconstructs the seeming dichotomy between the centre and the periphery, and proves the illusion of the exclusion of the periphery from the centre.

Katherine Gyékényesi Gatto, whose article on Ildikó Enyedi's film *My Twentieth Century* from our 1999 volume some of our readers might recall, reviews a more recent film, *Magic Hunter (A bávös vadász),* by the same Hungarian director. This film is another postmodern cinematographic achievement, a detective thriller set in Budapest of the 1990s, which incorporates folkloric elements and vignettes from the Second World War as well as of from medieval Hungary. Gatto defines Enyedi's cinematic style as a combination of lyrical elements with history and legend. The film uses the ancient legend of the pact with the devil through the story of Max, the hunter, who receives seven magic bullets. We are then invited into a play with our notions of time, space and cultural paradigms. Following a brief presentation of the scholarship on the film and through a re-capturing of the story, Gatto attempts a feminist

reading of what she sees as the key theme in the film, namely fate versus faith. In a world of chance, relativity and chaos, Enyedi's belief in miracles, brought about by a feminine divinity, triumphs.

Lee Congdon reviews two books that Kenneth McRobbie dedicated to the lives and work of Karl Polanyi and his wife Ilona Duczynska: *Humanity, Society and Commitment* (1994) and *Karl Polanyi in Vienna* (2000). McRobbie — poet, translator and historian — knew the Polanyis very well. In these two volumes, he collected essays on Polanyi and Duczynska. Congdon reviews the two volumes simultaneously in thematic and chronological order following the couple's biography and activism. He first introduces Ilona Duczynska and her development into a communist activist. This activism first earned her two years in prison, then led her to Vienna where she met Karl Polanyi, a First World War veteran recovering from illness and depression. He soon became her second husband. From Vienna, they emigrated to England. Congdon comments that both volumes lack an exploration of their life there. He outlines Polanyi's intellectual development and critics' attitude to his opposition to the market economy, a position Polanyi maintained in the US and later in Canada. The book *The Plough and the Pen* that the couple co-authored also earned them criticism for their failure to take a clear anti-Soviet stand following the 1956 uprising and its aftermath. Yet toward the end of their lives, both Karl and Ilona moved toward a more human and utopian idea of socialism, one that has never been implemented.

The above papers draw a fascinating panorama of 20th century Hungary from women's perspective. We hope that our readers will gain some new insights into women's place in and contribution to Hungarian history, society and culture that may also help them to understand better contemporary women and Hungary.

NOTES

The editor wishes to thank Professor Nándor Dreisziger for his help and support in compiling the present volume.

[1] On the situation of women in communist Hungary and the developments in women's studies in the past decade and a half, as well as on the term "women and Hungary" versus "Hungarian women" see the preface to the 1999 volume, "Women and Hungary: An Introduction" by Agatha Schwartz and Marlene Kadar.

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The Illusion of Inclusion: The Political Significance of Women's Groups in Hungary

Katalin Fábián

Women account for over half the population in Hungary, yet they continue to be politically under-represented. The women's groups, however, seem to be in a special position to alleviate this problem and are vital to Hungary's emerging participatory democracy. The rise of Hungarian women's groups, each with its own approach and agenda, provides an excellent opportunity to analyze the interactive process between organized women, the general public, and the democratizing state. Their myriad activities illustrate the ability of women to overcome some of the obstacles before them and to form groups that represent their interests in the democratic arena by using the media, manipulating symbols, and the provision of alternative social services.

Hungary has experienced rapid and far-reaching societal change since the end of communism around 1989. Women's groups have played an important role in this transformation. The return of freedom of association and the substantial decrease of state control over political activities at both the grassroots and national levels after 1989 have offered numerous favorable political opportunities for women. However, many obstacles remain present that limit women's meaningful involvement in politics beyond the now routine return to the ballot box. Women's active engagement in politics is greatly hindered in the ideological realm by a broadly shared sense of anti-feminism and, in the socio-economic realms, by the gender-specific social roles that make them the responsible party for child rearing. The groups that women form therefore become engaged in politics in alternative ways. In this article, I investigate whether the activities of women's groups in Hungary amount to significant political

change. I will explore this question by examining if and how their activities contribute to the establishment of an alternative form of politics.

In my research, I defined a women's group as any group that 1) declared itself as a group by and for women, 2) demonstrated activities in support of women, and 3) created some autonomy for itself. I included independent, party-affiliated, and trade union-affiliated women's groups in Hungary if they met these three criteria. As such, I included more groups than if I had followed what a strictly defined civil society entails; namely, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have no institutional links with potentially government-member political parties.

The first segment of this paper will deal with the rare occasions where women's groups decided to get involved with electoral politics. As the examples show, even in the electoral arena, women's groups often choose unconventional forms of political debut. The next segment of the paper describes how women's groups chose to enter into alternative fields of public engagement. In the Conclusion, I show how the groups create more substance to what would otherwise be only an illusion of inclusion in democratic politics in post-communist Hungary.

In Another Voice: the Activities of Women's Groups

The activities of women's groups up to 2002 have opened the door only slightly for women's representation in post-communist Hungary's political and cultural affairs. Women's groups in Hungary most significantly promote themselves and their interests in the media, through modifying symbols, and by providing social services. This approach gives women's groups diverse presence and an alternative political voice in Hungarian society. The need to maintain a consistent profile has proven to be too much of a challenge for some of the groups.

One characteristic that the Hungarian women's groups do share is their nearly universal commitment to the goal of redefining social problems. This particular and potent function of women's groups reveals how women can create political alternatives. As the examples here will show, the elements that constitute each field of activity are not fixed and the boundaries between them are crossed on occasion to enhance their impacts.

Women's organizations have demonstrated interest in and eagerness toward effecting change. Some women's groups directly and

outspokenly demand more chance to participate in public life. Most, however, negotiate this demand through actions. Whatever the means used, these groups have become "public nuisances." I argue that the opportunities these groups forge reveal a common political interest, namely that women's voice, in its diversity, be included in the political decision-making process. Women's activism in Hungary shows trends of direct engagement in politics by placing their issues on the political agenda through alternative means in the new democracy.[1] When women's groups bring up issues that they deem worthy of attention, they often focus on gender-specific needs and interests. Bringing up gender-related issues creates an environment with the possibilities to revise the usual political boundaries and to present a new conception of the relations between political (citizenship and partisanship), economic (labor market), domestic (family), cultural, and personal spheres. By voicing a multiplicity of issues, women's groups ultimately assist in breaking up a homogenized image of women in Hungarian politics and society.

The Rare Exceptions of Working within Mainstream Politics: Electoral Politics among Women's Groups

In Hungary, women's groups have only rarely assumed an independent role in electoral politics. Because elections carry enormous significance in a democracy, at least some women feel the need to participate as voters, organizers or candidates. However, with the exception of party-affiliated women's caucuses, most women's groups have pulled away as far as possible from the vicinity of electoral politics. Women's associations rarely endorse candidates in local or national elections, and their members run for office even more infrequently. Although many of the women's groups, especially women's caucuses of political parties, aim to increase the number of women's representatives in local and national legislatures, this goal is seldom a priority and even less frequently a reality. When women's groups have been affiliates of political parties, they are more likely to become part of the electoral process. But even this participation has been rather limited. As the representative of the *Független Kisgazdapárt Nöszövetsége* (Women's Alliance of the Independent Smallholders' Party) stated, they "accompany the [party's] candidate and distribute flyers."[2] Female electoral candidates have emerged mostly through the parties' ranks and rarely as a result of the efforts of women's groups.[3]

Only three Hungarian women's groups have developed an independent voice in electoral activities in the post-communist era. In comparison with their rather meager results, these groups' expectations may have been too ambitious. Two Roma (Gypsy) women's associations were formed after 1989 for the specific purpose of involving more Roma women in public life because they, as members of a long oppressed racial minority, have been doubly disadvantaged. The now-defunct *Magyarországi Cigányanyák Szövetsége* (Association of Gypsy Mothers in Hungary) selected a Roma woman candidate in 1994 and helped her enter local politics by mobilizing 2,000 Roma to vote in Debrecen.[4] The *Közéleti Cigánynök Egyesülete* (Association of Roma Women for Public Life) created a support and advocacy group for Gypsy women who had already gained public office. The third group to enter mainstream politics, the *Nöpárt* (Women's Party), was established in 2000. Many women's groups mistrusted the Women's Party because of its sudden appearance and isolation from other groups. Its leadership includes total newcomers to the democratic struggle for women's inclusion in public affairs, and, rather unusually, men accounted for two-thirds of the leadership. How much the Women's Party remained detached from the other women's groups was revealed in the second half of 2001 when, just a few months before the national elections, three representatives of the Women's Party decided to unite with the existing network of women's groups, but failed to establish any alliances.

Rather surprisingly, only three parliamentary parties incubated women's caucuses that established noteworthy voices in electoral politics. All three have been rather dutifully serving the party interest, but their interpretations of party ideology have offered creative disruptions in favor of what they see as women's interests.

First, the efforts of women representatives in the Alliance of Free Democrats (ADF) demonstrate the half-hearted efforts liberal parties provide for women's inclusion in the political process. Some of the ADF parliamentary representatives created a loose gathering of female supporters, and under the aegis of the "Gizella" lecture and discussion series in Budapest they tried to gather momentum for the party's electoral campaigns.[5] Without much enthusiasm, or faith in their cause, the same representatives also used their previously unsuccessful initiative, the Equal Rights bill (*Esélyegyenlöségi Törvényjavaslat*), in an attempt to gain the liberal female voters' support.[6] The lukewarm attempts of the ADF illustrate the half-hearted embrace of liberals toward women's representa-

tion. They fully recognize women's under-representation but, believing in the potential of liberal democracy, they cannot bring themselves to acknowledge, and especially to remedy, the patriarchic and structural disadvantages that women face in making their voice matter in a democracy.

The second women's party caucus to engage in electoral processes was the Hungarian Socialist Party (HSP). The caucus regained its confidence after having lost its footing when, ironically enough, the party was in power between 1994 and 1998. In 1998, with new, albeit still shaken and internally divided, leadership the women's caucus managed to make the party accept a 20 percent female candidate quota. While the logistics of implementing the quota were still unclear, its acceptance has carried a huge symbolic value and served as a sign of acceptance. The quota to increase minority and women's representation, however, remained a rather controversial measure in the post-communist environment because it reminded people of the meaningless but obligatory quotas of women's representation in the token communist legislatures.

The third, and most outstanding, example of a women's party caucus in electoral politics is the women's section in the Independent Smallholders' Party. Its peculiar character emerges from its ingenious choice to declare itself independent from the party and consequently to use all available channels to exploit the NGO status, including its notorious 2001 application to Parliament for financial assistance and receipt of (among other real estate) a shooting range. While the caucus leadership has remained deeply and personally interwoven with party leadership and headquartered in party premises for the amenities, the *Független Nöi Unió* (Independent Women's Union) was the only voice among women's groups that, without hesitation, represented the prohibition of abortion.

In contrast to this rather limited number of women's groups in electoral politics, an interest in politics in a broader sense has developed among the various women's associations. Across the political spectrum nearly all women's groups have made clear that they see women needing higher representation in various levels of legislature. Partly because of this acknowledgement and partly because of the availability of foreign funding, a new growth industry has emerged to train women to enter public life. The women's caucuses of parties (both right- and left-wing), the Association of Hungarian Women with its Nöi Akadémia (Women's Academy), and numerous other NGOs have tried to recruit female candidates by holding seminars about how to represent themselves in public.[7]

Such seminars and, especially, the recognition that women may need and want to enter formal politics can fulfill one basic requirement of a representative democracy: to field a few candidates from the largest minoritized group, namely, women. However, the immediate success rate of these training sessions was abysmally low for women candidates entering national politics. Often these newly minted electoral candidates applied their acquired speaking and managerial skills to advance their positions at work. At best, candidates satisfied their social calling by engaging in grassroots activities as a distant second choice, and through this channel they plan, if only tangentially and in the long run, to influence formal electoral politics.

In sum, on the basis of two extensive rounds of interviews with women's groups and participant observation in 1995 and then in 2001, it can be stated that very few of the women's groups and party caucuses focused on electoral activities. Women's groups in Hungary are much more likely to attempt to reach the general public and political decision-makers by developing alternative, innovative strategies to draw attention to their plight. Although the groups' ultimate aim may be for the policy-makers to change laws and to redirect resources, women often choose to mobilize third parties — the media, mass public, and cultural elites — to change perceptions and behaviors and to enhance their groups' impact.

The Media: Getting the Word Out

The media are obvious agents for disseminating information and for influencing public opinion on any issue. There is contradictory evidence about the relationship of women's groups to media. On the one hand, the number of articles dedicated to discussing women's lives has increased dramatically in the past two decades.[8] On the other hand, the content of these articles has projected a domesticated and over-sexualized image of contemporary Hungarian women. The conflicting images of the caring spouse/mother and the vamp have united to sustain the stereotypical images of women.

In an attempt to demonstrate the entrenchment of the superficial and unquestioned role of women depicted in the media, a study of an independent Hungarian media watchdog organization, the Nyilvánosság Klub (Public Opinion Club), analyzed for 4 months the daily newspapers and TV coverage in 1995. The study's author found an erosion of

women's representation in the media and parallel erosion of coverage of women's problems on television and in the daily newspapers.[9] In addition, the participants of a conference on women in the media (in Budapest in May 1995) claimed that women as producers and presenters of news were losing ground, an observation supported by other research.[10]

As a tool, the media can provide women's groups with the means to articulate their interests, channel their activities, engage in an alternative politics, document women's lives, gain public support, and create and encourage democratic communication and philosophies. Breaking the "sound barrier" is often the first task of women's groups. For example, pornography proliferated with the advent of free press in 1989 but a grassroots campaign against it between 1990 and 1992 brought to the surface Hungary's version of the "Guerrilla Girls."[11] Activists from feminist-affiliated groups put stickers over newsstand display windows to block pornographic magazine exhibits.[12] Although these actions did not directly target local governments, they did encourage many passers-by to express their opinions as well. Local governments eventually passed regulations requiring vendors to put pornographic publications in less visible places or in opaque bags. (Unfortunately, the implementation of this rule lapsed as interest in the issue gradually waned.)

The media also provide an alternative to engagement in traditional politics, according to a former manager of MONA (Magyarországi Nöi Alapitvány) (Hungarian Women's Foundation), a liberal-oriented research center. She said, "Women in Hungary engage in politics through media because no other outlet is available to them."[13] Using the media was especially attractive to those who wanted to be independent and raise a voice without relying on other organizations for political clout: for example, the Feminist Network (Feminista Hálózat). One of their activists explained why they chose the media as an alternative to influencing politics by other means:

> At the moment, this group [Feminist Network] is not ready for political action. And I see this as a problem. Whoever does not really have the capacity to express political views should not do it. We express our opinion through the media — and we had a lot of conflicts because of this.[14]

Women's groups in Hungary are keenly aware of the importance of public exposure and generally either use existing media or establish their own publications. Except for some groups with affiliations to

conservative branches of certain religions that shun the public spotlight,[15] most women's groups make every effort to attract local and national radio and television news coverage to gain more public support. For example, to raise people's consciousness about domestic violence and to enlist new volunteers, NaNE![16] mounted an extremely successful media campaign in 1994. In the course of that year, according to NaNE!, there were no fewer than 66 interviews and reports about them.[17]

Some groups have opted to establish their own channels of communication, and have become publishers themselves. Women's publications appear to spring from frustration over lack of access to major press organs and from the goal to reach a wider audience. Yet they tend to fail to broaden their audience because limited finances allow for only restricted circulation and any of them have a short life span. The problems of financial sustainability weighted down all of the first regular publications. A feminist-anarchist publication, *Tengerszem* (Mountain Lake), failed because its supporting group decided to select its target readers from fellow anarchist groups. Consequently, not enough money was generated to continue its publication. The *Amazon*, a more professionally oriented journal for women, received financial support from the Women's Electorate of the National Alliance of the Hungarian Trade Unions and a German social-democratic foundation. This publication could not find a broad audience either and the funding was first cut back then eliminated amidst the financial struggles of trade unions. There was also a semi-clandestine group that started up, with its own resources, a lesbian newsletter in 1995. Fear and financial barriers limited its audience and availability. Yet, although the group had never intended to reach many people, the newsletter continued to spread information through personal channels of distribution for quite some time. The only relative success story among women's groups' publications is Nöszemély (Female Person), published between 1991 and 2000. The editorial board, weathering major financial storms and personal conflicts, managed to raise money and publish Nöszemély for nearly ten years — it was a provocative voice in an otherwise nearly saturated information market of colorful, commercial women's magazines.

Since the success of journals of various women's groups turned out to be extremely precarious, others turned instead to book publications. There have been three publishing pioneers among women's groups who gained considerable attention for their books.

Navigating the waters of local politics rather skillfully, the *Veszpémi Nők Kerekasztala* (Veszprém Women's Roundtable) established some administrative support for its activities while intentionally avoiding party politics. The group resurrected a tradition of personal storytelling and reframed it in the new democratic era. Its call for village women to tell their life story was a meaningful, symbolic gesture to acknowledge the otherwise silenced achievements and sufferings of women toiling in remote settings. A selection of these heart-warming and heart-wrenching essays was published in 2000 with the title *Mi visszük át* (We Will Carry It Across),[18] referring to a famous line from the poet László Nagy. The volume demonstrated how much politics from the Holocaust to communist collectivization influenced women's lives and how much women changed politics in their own locale. The Women's Roundtable put the essays in a carved trunk, symbolizing a time capsule for future generations and placed it, during a locally broadcasted ceremony, in the Veszprém county library.

In the same county, but headquartered in Balatonfüred, the Nök a Balatonért (Women to Save Lake Balaton) won the national competition for "NGO of the year" in 2000. They very creatively integrated community activities with a commercial enterprise to further their aim of increasing awareness of the environmental problems and the cultural heritage of Lake Balaton. To increase general knowledge about the lake, they produced a board game about its geography in 1998, generated funds for a school textbook about the region's history, and published a CD of local folklore songs and a literary book about the lake in 2001. A quirky detail is that this women's group seemingly had the least interest in including women's voices in any of the above documentations. As a result, the authors and editors of the literary book are all men and the cover depicts a painting (by a male painter) of a natural scene of rain with sunshine over Lake Balaton. The title of the painting is *Veri az ördög a feleségét* (The Devil Is Beating His Wife), which is the unquestioned Hungarian axiom for this natural phenomenon. One wonders how the scene of unquestioned male (and devilish) privilege of physical violence against a spouse, even if merely on a semiotic level, did not raise at least an eyebrow in the women's group.

In contrast to the other two publications, the third book-publishing endeavor by a women's group explicitly and intentionally unleashed a previously taboo topic into the stream of public discourse.[19] *Labrisz*, the first lesbian NGO, put the theme of female homosexuality in a political

framework in 2000. In the first book of its series, "*Leszbikus Tér Erö*" (Lesbian Space Power), Hungarian activists describe their sense of oppression in a homophobic society and their skewed representation in media and politics. In "*Szembeszél*" (Counter-Wind, but also alluding to: Talk against or across) they offer to the public the literary contributions of lesbians both in Hungary and worldwide. Their most powerful and explicitly political statement in print, "Report on the Discrimination of Lesbians, Gay Men and Bisexuals in Hungary," (in English) reached members of the Hungarian and European Parliaments. It not only listed overtly discriminatory practices but also demonstrated the glaring legal difference of an age of consent of 21 years for homosexuals and 18 years for heterosexuals.

The use of media by women's groups also has the potential to encourage democratic communications and philosophies. Communications expert Donna Allen argues for the recognition of the importance of the alternative press and for an expansion of networks by restructuring the public communication system.[20] According to Allen, pioneering media women put forth a more inclusive, democratic communication philosophy. In the Hungarian reality, however, the few publications of women's groups have produced weak results. The fate of the first publications suggests that, although the journals and books can enhance the inclusion of women's voices in the broader political dialogues, problems with funding, continuity, and distribution make their deeper incorporation into the body politic difficult. With the notable exception of the "Report on the Discrimination of Lesbians, Gay Men and Bisexuals in Hungary," the publications of women's groups influenced political decision-makers only indirectly. Instead of putting forth a new communication philosophy as Allen suggested, women's groups tried to influence the general public. The groups' main aim was to inform the population about their existence, values, and activities. The problems of publishing, however, have kept reappearing as financial limitations due to the lack of philanthropy in Hungary, as well as lack of free time and experience on the part of the courageous few who started and struggled to maintain these publications.

In sum, the genre of all three journals by various women's groups was exceptional in providing some alternative to the glossy women's magazines. Especially thoughtful in using such alternatives was the Feminist Network's journal, in circulation for nearly a decade. When the journal market for such alternatives seemed to have closed, book publi-

cation created another opportunity to record and to raise the voice of women's groups.

Using Symbols, Manipulating Meaning

Women's groups tend to use and reinterpret symbols (e.g., the national flag, national and international holidays, historical monuments and well-known poetry) and, occasionally, engage in symbolic activities to communicate their values and interests.[21] I chose three ideologically distinct organizations among Hungarian women's groups to examine the use of symbols in creating new meanings. Women's groups applied various strategies to express their messages through symbols. They applied new twists on overused concepts or developed new symbols; in the latter they often merged new symbols with older traditions to minimize alienation.

One of the first actions of the Women's Alliance of the Independent Smallholders' Party was to dedicate their flag on a major national and Catholic holiday.

> Maybe it was our first decision to have a beautiful flag made. We dedicated and consecrated this flag on August 20, 1990, during a very special ceremony at Castle Hill in Budapest. The flag was dedicated during an ecumenical mass and a priest blessed the Women's Alliance's flag. We had invited representatives from the churches in Hungary to attend the ceremony.[22]

This group also put much emphasis on re-signifying holidays to include religious content along with a more conservative image of the family. "We meet on St. Nicholas' day and on Mother's Day. We keep Mother's Day instead of the International Women's Day, because for us Mother's Day is the really significant holiday."[23]

Rejecting both the conservative groups' efforts to use a religious holiday for International Women's Day (March 8) and the practice of giving obligatory speeches and flowers for women workers (the usual way to celebrate during the socialist era), the Feminist Network put much energy into making International Women's Day a meaningful celebration. In 1994, for example, it raised enough money to rent a movie theater to show contemporary movies with unconventional female roles at their

center. The celebration concluded in the evening with music by a female rock band (composed partially of Network members).

> On March 8, 1994 we had a Women's Day celebration at the movie theater Hunnia. This was a different event than the ones before. We showed some of the women's culture in the West, and we had quite a lot of press coverage. The celebration had an exemplary effect because it showed women that we can feel good in each other's company, and that we have creative energy; it also brought up questions like "How is it possible that women can do such things?"[24]

Also to commemorate the day, the Network went uncharacteristically entrepreneurial and sold purple T-shirts with an image of Boticelli's Venus rising from the sea, accompanied by a serious quote by the well-known Hungarian poet Attila József,[25] in which a child asks his mother to leave the wet clothes for someone else to take care of and spend time with him instead. The effect was hilarious.

Symbolic action by the *Munkáspárt Nöi Tagozata* (Women's Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party) included occasional meetings at the *Szoborpark* (Sculpture Park) in Budapest, which had been established as an area for statues of the communist era.[26] Among the statues celebrating the heroes of communism is one of Captain Steinmetz, an officer of the Red Army who served as a mediator between the Soviets and the Germans. The statue, which for 40 years was a landmark of Budapest's city borders, became the center of much controversy after 1989, when the cause of Steinmetz's death in 1945 was questioned: was he shot by withdrawing Nazi troops, as the official story told, or was he shot by the Soviets, his comrades? The controversy became one of the battles of historical interpretation, meaning and morality of the past 40 years. The Women's Committee of the Workers' Party expressed their views by choosing to meet numerous times in the park: "We went to Sculpture Park because we find the argument that a messenger was shot by his own army nonsense."[27]

The reinterpretation of symbols is easier and more potent in times of drastic social change. Women's groups leapt at the chance to create new meanings and thereby influenced their immediate and more distant political surroundings. The symbols that these three ideologically distant women's groups manipulated to bring across their message emerged from the volatile mix of pre-communist traditions and communist times. The

groups applied their own interpretations of customs like Mother's Day and International Women's Day, and connected the changes taking place in the political system to everyday life and private practices of commemoration and memory.

Alternative Social Services: Expanding Women's Space

Hungarian women's groups have created enlarged, or at least altered, public spaces where women were more welcome and able to participate effectively. In a romance with democracy, women's groups have accomplished this task through the provision of legal and psychological services, through charitable activities, and through networking and educational work.

Legal and Psychological Services

The multiplication of law-related projects among women's groups points to the significance of legal provisions for women. The Association of Hungarian Women, various women's sections of trade unions, and a few other service organizations, such as the now re-created *Nök Háza* (Women's House), started a free legal clinic. More often than not, because the women's groups could not pay a competitive wage for lawyers and had to rely on volunteer or low-fee lawyers, the services provided were not reliable in the long run. Even so, services were provided for a period of time and developed a new sense of direction for women's groups and government institutions to follow.

One notable legal project evolved from one of the weekly, hour-long, volunteer-based legal clinics. NaNE! expanded its legal services for battered women with the support of the Open Society Fund. Although the clinic still operates on temporary financial support, it now has paid employees. The professionalization of the project had the potential to provide more reliable and efficient services,[28] but, instead, it moved entirely away from feminist activism toward scholarly analysis. While also being engaged in anti-violence activism, NaNE! established links with the US-based East-West Women's Network, which helped NaNE! become part of an international comparative legal project focusing on women's rights. When this project expanded to the point where NaNE! could no longer manage alone, it looked for external funding and

cooperation and eventually handed the project over to the Central European University, where it became part of an academic endeavor, very uninterested in anything even vaguely reminiscent of feminist activism.

In addition to legal advice, women's groups also tried to provide short-term psychological counseling relating to unemployment and major family problems.

> We sent psychologists to the territories most affected by unemployment, partly to calm down the women, partly to prepare them for unemployment, so that they would not perceive unemployment as being without work, but as a time for preparing for a new occupation.[29]

These services stood on even shakier ground than did the legal services, given the tight financial resources of women's groups and the consequent need to focus on clearly productive programs. Because the effectiveness of psychological services was difficult to measure tangibly for efficiency or success, and because cultural practices discouraged their use,[30] those provided by women's groups disappeared even faster than the legal services.

The legal and especially the psychological services geared toward women's needs provided one, albeit narrow, bridge between the public/political and the private spheres. From these experiences emerged a body of empirical evidence that formed the basis for a few dedicated scholars' investigations into the nature of domestic violence in Hungary.[31] Supported by such scholarly treatises showing domestic violence as an unacknowledged and ignored epidemic that is not dealt with, a movement slowly formed to place the issue of domestic violence under public scrutiny and condemnation.

Charitable Activities

Private redistribution via charity plays a significant role in many women's groups. The first to do this were the Hungarian Association of Women and various women's sections of trade unions that redistributed goods. Trade unions routinely organized the distribution of cheaper goods for their own members: "We organized for our women to purchase cheap comforters, and then arranged low-priced potato and apple sales. These are small things, but they are important."[32] In contrast, women's groups

of conservative parties engaged in charity activities targeting Hungarian minorities living abroad:

> The welfare problems are so huge that we have to pay attention to them: both to the young and the elderly. We organized the collection of clothes for the Vajdaság [North-Western Serbia], the Ukraine and Transylvania. We started to collect food, clothes and medicine. The society demands such a stand from a woman, which has to be hers anyway, I believe. Our activities have especially concentrated on such activities in the past three years.[33]

Charity is an area of activism that is dreadfully apoliticized because it is here that women most often enter the public sphere without challenging the established order and its gender-based role expectations. Women ensconce themselves in an already femininized niche of care, such as relief services and social welfare. Involvement in charity is ignored even though it has been an outstanding achievement in women's activism. Women's activism in this regard is outstanding because it contradicts a missing tradition of philantrophy in Hungary.

The most amazing aspect of Hungarian women's engagement in charity is that unlike many of their Western counterparts, these women are very rarely free of major economic pressures and the need to make a living. Even though working full-time, women have opted to support each other through capillary methods of economic redistribution. Women's groups have become one of society's welfare agencies, even if on a relatively small scale. When the Hungarian economy emerged from its tailspin in the mid-1990s, women's groups became less devoted to charity activities. The ones that increased their focus in this regard aspired to replicate the status-gain associated with Western models of financially secure wives.

After the regime change in Hungary, women often became initiators of poverty relief. In this respect, women's organizations were a potential trap for their members. Acceptance of the dichotomous masculine/feminine world looms once more when women become players in the welfare arena. The distinctiveness of women being perceived as sensitive to personal welfare — a trait required in the functioning of the home — can be further replicated in politics. As long as the separate spheres remain the norm and women's groups' activities in welfare services are apoliticized and taken for granted, they imprison women in predetermined

roles. Even though charitable activities are within the public realm, they are not really seen as "political." These activities put emphasis on helping others rather than on criticism of larger economic and political aspects. Women's activism in redistribution needs to be viewed as it is — a political power — rather than as simply another duty to which women have to attend to.

Networking and Education

Women's networking, formal and informal information gathering, often converges in more established forms of educational activities. Women's groups create workshops for their own members and recruit through outreach efforts. Some of the women's groups in Hungary, such as NaNE! and the Feminist Network, have created new alternative forums through their networking activities. For example, the Feminist Network, in collaboration with the Feminist Section of the Hungarian Sociological Association, created a forum for ongoing public dialogue about issues they considered important to women in contemporary Hungary. They rented a small studio theater, "RS9" (named after its abbreviated address at the Rumbach Sebestyén street 9). Once a month women gathered to discuss controversial issues, ranging from pornography and the history of prostitution to the predecessors of women's associations. Although discussions at this venue halted in the winter of 2000, the organizers have since been trying to reestablish the encounters in other locations. Facing a dwindling audience, Irén, the organizer of RS9, teamed up with Éva, a feminist educator, to launch a biweekly radio program in the same format on a radio channel dedicated to civic initiatives in Budapest. These activists-cum-educators were instrumental in launching the *Nöi-Tan Kör* (Women's Studies Circle) in 2001 and finally received some stable funding from the Open Society Foundation. When looking into the details of such tasks, it becomes apparent how instrumental individual activists are in bringing a long series of struggles to fruition.

Other alternative and new spaces include local, national and international meetings and conferences, which provide opportunities for self-expression and establishment of connections for further organizing. These meetings are often highly inspirational and demonstrate the significance of women gathering in both public and private spheres. Speaking about the first roundtable of the Hungarian women's groups organized by MONA, one participant concluded:

> It was so fabulous. I am sitting right beside a woman from a conservative party, and we could put aside our ideological differences, as if there were none: we both agreed that we needed more day-care centers and better welfare for women.[34]

One outstanding example of a women's group expanding public exposure for women's groups was MONA's series of mini-conferences between 1993 and 1994. The meetings brought together the then-existing women's organizations, then convened the female mayors of the country, and later brought women in the media together to exchange opinions. Eventually, meetings were called before each of the national elections for all political parties to present their agendas on women.

Educational activities have been popular among many women's groups in Hungary. Opportunities in the form of lectures, conferences, and seminars were especially favored as means to expand the membership and to spread the values in which the women's groups believed. The themes of the meetings ranged from unemployment and how to find welfare benefits to health education. Education most often offered "soft" skills such as how to dress in the workplace or at a cocktail party but did not necessarily foster the "hard" skills that would empower women to take control of their careers and build self-sufficiency. The one exception in this regard was NaNE!'s continuing series of health-related discussions that routinely brought up and explored gender-specific forms of (often internalized) oppression, such as bulimia and hormone-replacement therapy.

However, no one dared to use the power of education to its fullest nor to approach controversial issues. Sex education was one of the few topics that went beyond the general level of educational activities that women's groups provided and it became the most conflict-ridden issue to emerge in relation to the different interpretations of women's social roles. A women's group in the city of Szeged tried to confront social stereotypes by bringing sex education classes to schools but found it difficult to break through the cultural barriers:

> We organized lectures on sex education in primary schools. Experts offered their assistance, but the idea was ours and we brought it to those schools where there was interest. But many schools did not dare to call us.[35]

Sex education turned out to be an especially volatile issue when activists raised this issue beyond the confines of one town. Labrisz, the association of lesbians, became embroiled in a national controversy in its attempt to teach sex education and implied tolerance toward homosexuals. The group's activists offered workshops to high schools. A news report in the city of Györ interpreted their effort as a veiled advertisement for homosexuality. The debate about whether lesbians could be allowed to teach in a high-school setting eventually reached the Parliament, and it ironically generated much more media exposure to the topic of discrimination against homosexuals and their rights than Labrisz ever hoped for. Much of this media coverage, however, was homophobic, and along with other groups involved in the efforts, Labrisz became the target of a witch-hunt.

Much less public controversy surrounded the conservative women's groups' educational efforts to create and promote an image of women in traditional caretaker and nurturer roles. For example, the leader and then parliamentary representative of the Women's Section of the Christian Democratic Party said:

> Our programs are entertaining as well. We invite famous people, such as the architect Imre Makovetz, which are times when we do not fit in a room for 500 people. ... We have organized competitions and training for housewives with great success. Mothers with small children came, and the older generation took care of the kids while the younger women started to cook and bake! We tried to be open and get close to all women.[36]

The educational efforts of conservative women's groups are often also accentuated by an emphasis on nationalism, namely, by visiting and maintaining contacts with areas in surrounding countries where Hungarians live as a minority.

The benefits of educational activities and networking are potentially exponential. However, there is relatively little empirical evidence to demonstrate its transformative character in Hungarian women's circles after over a decade. For instance, on only a few occasions did workshops and lectures lead to a substantive reconvening of the participants.[37] The reasons for this discrepancy between potential and actual outcome is at least threefold. First, women's inability to gather enough momentum to organize after a meeting originates partly from the often unidirectional

method of information transmission (lecturing), which disempowers the participants. The second major obstacle emerges from the lack of political opportunity of the political system to process the claims women's groups bring forth. Activists struggle to place women's concerns into broader public debates, a situation discussed by the representative of the *Liga* [League] of Trade Unions:

> I asked the presenters to discuss topics related to Labor Law that we could forward as suggestions emerging from the meeting to help female employees. Eventually we created a list of suggestions consisting of 11 points, but our trade union representatives could not get any one of these accepted at the tripartite meetings [Interest Mediation Council]. Finally, we suggested to our members to keep these suggestions in mind when writing collective agreements at the workplace.[38]

A third limitation on educational and networking activities lies in the relatively low risk of talking about things instead of doing something about them. As such, education becomes borderline territory between symbolic action and actions with immediate political significance.

Political Significance of the Activities of Women's Groups

With the advent of democracy in Hungary, equal opportunity supposedly opened the gates of politics to women. Yet the newly democratic society has celebrated and re-created the traditional foundation of separating the public and the private spheres and maintains, or even enhances conformity to, gender-based role divisions. Democratization in Hungary in this respect resembles many other countries' experience where women have been adversely affected by the process. As the third wave of democratization[39] sweeps the world it spreads the minimal requirements of democracy as the lowest common denominator. These minimal requirements, i.e., competitive elections, become the (extremely limited) foundation for democracy. This shallow implementation of democracy may justifiably be called politics without due process or "low-intensity" democracy.[40]

However, women and their groups in many parts of the world try to forge democracy from below. They have implicitly developed a "high-intensity" version of democracy that provides a much broader alternative to the minimalist form and establishes a reality out of this otherwise

illusory inclusion in a democracy. Confirmation of this ideal is found in the emergence and activities of women's groups all over Eastern Europe. By not being locked into what is traditionally defined as political, the actions of women's groups encourage the development of multiple avenues along which citizens can induce change.

* * *

This study showed how Hungarian women's groups create alternative forms of politics by using their own publications, by manipulating meanings through modifying national and international symbols, and by establishing alternative social services, such as legal and psychological counselling for women. As women's involvement in charity demonstrates, women themselves need to articulate more clearly that they aim their activities as political because the social environment needs to be shaken out of its routine dismissal of these activities as apolitical. Women's reluctance to move into formal political roles has been reflected by their delay in engaging more directly and aggressively in electoral politics. Without explicitly rejecting expectations toward women's appropriate sphere of activity, the activism of women's groups becomes a disguised entry into the political realm.

The disguised entry to politics spares many women's groups of charges of trespassing, but it also deprives them of recognition. Stripping away the ideological veneer from women's activism shows it to be an explicitly political activity. This conception of politics challenges the traditional bias that politics refers exclusively to elections and power struggles at the formal government level. For women to recognize themselves as political players and to make society acknowledge them as such are crucial steps that only a few Hungarian women's groups have taken. Women's groups need to claim their role in politics by overt statements and actions to recognize their own potential. All political agencies require a critical review of existing power relations and politicization of their activities.

By establishing explicitly women's groups, the activists have created a potential for political action. However, the form is not enough without the conscious and outspoken demand for recognition in the political sphere. Organizational activity needs to be made a form of political activity and therefore a locus of power. While the declared

purpose of women's groups can maintain a broad service orientation, political power considerations are not far from or foreign to this orientation. On the contrary, women need to be in politics, and they can pursue a politics of women as well, through special efforts and the creation of a sense of women's mission. But the call for a politics of women and by women has yet to grow roots among the activists of women's groups in Hungary. The call of women's groups establishes the basis for a structural, as well as cultural, de-genderizing of politics. Politicization creates not only the awareness of where power lies in the existing social order, it also develops strategies of modifying the very same social order. This is the important fabric that women's groups in Hungary started to pull and unravel in many directions.

NOTES

[1] Although numerous excellent case studies exist on the emergence of women's groups in the democratizing countries of East and Central Europe there is much less discussion about the impact of their activities. See Nahid Aslanbegui, ed., *Women in the Age of Economic Transformation: Gender Impact of Reforms in Post-Socialist and Developing Countries* (New York: Routledge, 1994); Marilyn Rueschemeyer, ed., *Women in the Politics of Postcommunist Eastern Europe* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1998); Chris Corrin, *Gender and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe* (Frank Cass Publishers, 1999); and, by the same author, "Gender Politics and Women's Political Participation in Hungary," *Hungarian Studies Review* 26 (1999): 9–38.

[2] Interview, April 1995, Women's Alliance of the Independent Smallholders' Party.

[3] Interviews, Spring 1995 and 2001, Women's Section of the Hungarian Socialist Party, Women's Section of the Hungarian Democratic Forum, Women's Section of the Christian Democratic Party.

[4] Interview, April 1995, Association of Gypsy Mothers in Hungary.

[5] The "Gizella" lecture series emerged with the intention to bring the liberal feminist ideas closer to party sympathizers. Although rather infrequent, the meetings helped to establish an open exchange between female representatives and the general population. The women MPs used the venue to advertise their legislative activities and gather popular support for their initiatives, while female audience members could raise issues and ask questions in this open forum.

[6] Participant observations, interviews with ADF party headquarters representatives, Budapest July 2001.

[7] "We prepared candidates for both the local and national elections" (Interview, February 1995, Hungarian Women's Union). "We consulted with the party about the rank of women on the party list." Interview, April 1995, Women's Section of the Hungarian Socialist Party.

[8] A comprehensive dataset of Hungarian media coverage (called PRESS-DOC, compiled by the Department of Information of the Parliament) indicates that the number of articles published in the daily press on the topic of women and their role in society has increased from around 30–40 in 1989 to approximately 350 articles in 1993 and has steadily increased since then.

[9] Éva Argejo, "Hímnem, nőnem: a medium nem semleges" [Male, female: the media are not neutral] *Magyar Hirlap,* February 28, 1995, p. 8.

[10] Mária Vásárhelyi, *Rendszerváltás alulnézetben* [Social system change observed from below] (Budapest: Pesti Szalon, 1995). According to female TV and radio reporters, the long-standing ideological battles over control of the Hungarian media did not interfere with the perpetuation of antifeminist propaganda. Interviews and participant observation, March 1995, conference organized by MONA (Magyarországi Nöi Alapitvány) (Hungarian Women's Foundation), a liberal-oriented research organization.

[11] In 1989, an anonymous group of art world feminists who used the name Guerrilla Girls, attacked and altered a famous nude painting on buses of Lower Manhattan. This action initiated a series of activities against the idealized female beauty, women's under-representation in arts and low pay, among other issues. See Guerrilla Girls, *Confessions of the Guerrilla Girls* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1995).

[12] Antonia Burrows quoted by Renne in Tanya Renne, ed., *Ana's Land: Sisterhood in Eastern Europe* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 116.

[13] Interview, May 1995, Feminist Network.

[14] Interview, May 1995, Feminist Network.

[15] My interviewee (December 1997, Secretariat of Equal Opportunity) referred to Jewish women's groups which, on some occasions and mostly out of fear of anti-Semitism, wanted to avoid advertising their events. Similar deference to media was however, noticeable with Protestant women's groups as well. See also István Székely and David Newbery, eds. *Hungary: an Economy in Transition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[16] The name of NaNE! is a play on words. While 'nane' means 'don't you/can't you' in Hungarian slang, it also represents an acronym of the organization's name in Hungarian: Nők a nőkért az erőszak ellen, which means: women with women against violence. As a women's group they dedicate themselves to help women who confront domestic abuse. NaNE! provides information over a tollfree hotline.

[17] "There were 66 interviews about NaNE! in 1995, but I have to note that 99 percent of the reporters who wrote about us were women." Interview, March 1995, NaNE!

[18] *Mi visszük át. Veszprém megyei asszonyok vallomásai az utókor számára* [We will carry it across: confessions of the women of Veszprém County for posterity] (Veszprém: Veszprémi Nők Kerekasztala Egyesület, Huszár Józsefné, Pro-Fi Print kft, 2000).

[19] The first contemporary lesbian novel, *Kecskerúzs* [Goatlipstick], exploded onto the cultural landscape upon its publication in 1997. See Vera Bozzi, "Roburban született regény" [Novel born in a robur] *Nőszemély* 7, 2 (1997): 15–17.

[20] Donna Allen, *Media without Democracy and What to Do About It* (Washington DC: Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, 1991), 29.

[21] Ernest E. Boesch, *Symbolic Action Theory and Cultural Psychology* (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1991).

[22] Interview, April 1995, Women's Alliance of the Independent Smallholders' Party.

[23] Interview, April 1995, Women's Alliance of the Independent Smallholders' Party.

[24] Interview, May 1995, Feminist Network.

[25] "Hagyja a dagadt ruhát másra."

[26] See *Lingua Franca* 2000 about the use of the Szoborpark in education.

[27] Interview, April 1995, Women's Committee of the Hungarian Workers' Party.

[28] Nilda Bullain, "The Non-Profit Sector in Hungary" unpublished paper, 1995.

[29] Interview, March 1995, Women's Section of the Autonomous Trade Union.

[30] "The general public did not need the psychological services, because it is not socially acceptable to complain" (Interview, March 1994, Ombudswoman Program and Women's House).

[31] Olga Tóth, *Erőszak a családban* [Violence in the Family] (Budapest: TARKI Társadalompolitikai Tanulmányok, 1999); Krisztina Morvai, *Terror a Családban: A feleségbantalmazás és a jog* [Terror in the family: wife abuse and the law] (Budapest: Kossuth Kiadó, 1998).

[32] Interview, March 1995, Women's Section of the Autonomous Trade Union.

[33] Interview, February 1995, Hungarian Women's Union.

[34] Interview, May 1995, Feminist Network.

[35] Interview, June 1995, Szeged Women's Club.

[36] Interview, February 1995, Women's Section of the Christian Democratic Party.

[37] As a representative of the Association of Hungarian Women said, "In the 1990s when the organization started information sessions, the small groups dispersed quickly because of lack of security and sense of mission," but they did

not give up; instead they focused their efforts more in gathering women with (political) educational purposes. The publications of this association were well-intended (such as a voting guide in 1994 and a translation of the UN declaration against discrimination of all kinds) but reached few people. The title of the voting publication was *Amit a választásról tudni kell* [What you need to know about the elections]. Interview, January 1995.

[38] Interview, April 1995, Women's Section of the League Trade Unions.

[39] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 1984).

[40] B. Gills *et al. Low Intensity Democracy: Political Power in the New World Order* (London: Pluto. 1993).

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Women in Technological Higher Education and in the Sciences in 20th Century Hungary[1]

Mária Palasik

As a professor at Budapest Technical University (Budapesti Műszaki Egyetem or BME; since 2000: Budapest University of Technology and Economics), I have always been interested in the representation of women teachers and students in technological higher education. As the largest technological university in Hungary, our institution has produced the highest number of experts, researchers and inventors in the country. My main research interest as a social scientist has been to examine how women could enter and gain experience and reputation in technology, a largely male-dominated field that only opened to Hungarian women in the 2nd half of the 20th century.

I would not like to raise high expectations concerning the number of Hungarian women working in the field of technology. Of all sciences, this is the field with the smallest number of female researchers: according to the statistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia or MTA), women have earned the fewest academic degrees in this field. I believe, however, that there are holes that need to be filled: results achieved by women in science have not always been registered in the history of science — as if women's performance had been left unnoticed. I would like to give the following example: the 700-page volume 1 of the 4-volume series entitled *Magyarország a 20. században* (Hungary in the 20th century), published by the Babits Kiadó of Szekszárd, presents our country's scientific and technological achievements, but it fails to mention several significant women scientists. The 102 portraits in the volume all represent men; among the 38 contributors of the book only 3 are women.[2]

The aim of this paper is, however, not to attack the male scientific community for its closed and exclusive structure, but rather to present women's achievements in selected areas, achievements that may have contributed to the destruction of overly narrow disciplinary boundaries. My primary purpose is therefore to provide a realistic picture of the Hungarian scientific community in the area of technology.

My research focuses on the following three areas:

1. First, I would like to analyse the history of the opening of technological higher education for women. I shall give an overview on how the proportion of men and women among teachers and students changed throughout the 20th century as well as how this proportion relates to the country's statistics in higher education.
2. Second, I will examine in what proportion women with technological degrees have become faculty members and members of research institutes, what their chances have been for attaining managerial positions, in what proportion they figure in scientific associations, on advisory boards deciding about professional scholarships, or among winners of these same scholarships. I will also point out those research institutes and faculties/departments where women's contributions have played a significant role.
3. In the appendix I plan to present the work of a few women scientists whose names have become famous in the 20th century.

Women in technological higher education

As one of the results of the development of civic societies, the first Faculty of Technology opened its doors to women in Switzerland in 1871. This milestone changed career opportunities for women: gradually, other universities in several European countries started to admit female students to the faculties of technology as well.

Following a royal decree proclaimed in 1895, women were admitted to certain Hungarian universities; however, the Technical University still remained closed to them as Emperor-King Francis Joseph opposed the idea of women studying in all disciplines: he only approved that the Faculties of Arts, Medicine and Pharmacy be open to women.[3] This meant that careers in law engineering still remained closed to women in Hungary, while more and more European countries opened their technological faculties to them.

As social pressure became stronger and stronger, more and more institutions in Hungary discussed this issue and lobbied for the opening of the remaining faculties for female students as well. On several occasions, the admission of female students was discussed by the Technical University's Board of Directors. For instance, in 1912 during a debate regarding new operating rules of the University they strictly opposed women's admission. At the same time, they permitted female students registered at the Department of Chemistry in the Faculty of Arts to attend lectures and laboratory practices as special students.[4] As a result, 32 women attended courses as special students in the academic year 1912-13, and 37 the

following year. We can thus conclude that female students have been present in technological education since this date.

At the end of World War I, thanks to the bourgeois-democratic regime that ruled Hungary till March of 1919, all faculties became open to women. For the first time in Hungarian history, women acquired the opportunity to become qualified engineers.[5] In the 2nd half of academic year 1918-19, women formerly registered as part-time students could register as full-time students.[6] There was no danger, however, of female students flooding into the Technical University: for this semester, only 10 new female students were admitted. Overall they represented 0.21% of the total number of students: four of them studied in the Department of Engineering, three in the Department of Architecture, one in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, and two in the Department of Economics.[7]

The return to power of Hungary's conservative establishment in the late summer of 1919 had a negative impact on women students at the Technical University. At the beginning of the fall semester of 1919, the rector of the University single-handedly decided to ban women from the Department of Chemical Engineering. New female students were not admitted to any department; however, apart from chemical engineering, female students who were already registered in the previous semester, were allowed to continue their studies in all other departments. This practice was confirmed by a decree issued on February 27, 1920 by István Haller, the minister of culture. In 1924, the Rector's Council approved of the admission of female students up to 5% of the total number of students in the Department of Architecture; this, however, only applied if there were not enough male applicants. Several professors objected to this ruling referring to women's weaker physical disposition; but many others argued the opposite: that women were indeed capable of acquiring the physical strength that the work of an architect required. On the other hand, both camps unanimously supported the opening of the Department of Economics for women "in the case that men do not fill all the available spaces."[8]

The admission rules of the Technical University and the practices that followed as a result were reinforced by another decree issued by the Minister of Culture in 1927. It allowed women to study economics and architecture, but with the limitations mentioned above.[9] However, even these limited opportunities were further restricted in 1934 by a confidential ministerial instruction: Bálint Hóman, the minister of culture, requested that the administration of the Technical University impede the admission of women in non-engineering departments as well.[10] He justified the decision with the need to improve the chances of new graduates on the job market.

This regulation was by no means the result of impulsive action. Rather, it was the consequence of deliberate government policy motivated by the political and economic developments of the 1920s and 30s. First of all, the post-war peace settlement, the Treaty of Trianon of June 1920, which reduced Hungary's territory to 1/3 of its previous size, had an indirect impact. The intelligentsia living in the lost territories moved to the "motherland," thereby creating an over-supply of engineers and other professional people in Hungary. Ten years later, the world economic crisis hit the country and caused an even higher rate of unemployment, especially among engineers. Behind the government's decisions to limit women's opportunities in technological careers we can thus see an implied intention not to let them take away "breadwinning jobs" from men who were still considered to be the heads of their families.

Despite these bans, as of the mid-30s the BME's Department of Chemical Engineering opened its doors to women. This decision was based on a precedent: Judit Pogány, the daughter of physicist and professor of the University, Béla Pogány, wrote a letter to the Ministry of Culture requesting to study in the Departments of Mechanical and Chemical Engineering. State secretary Kálmán Szily, who was also a professor at the University, approved the request with the proviso that both departments admit women in the first semester only up to 5% of the total number of students.[11] In 1936 the Department of Architecture requested that they be allowed to admit female students over the 5% limit. They justified the request with the fact that the limit only allowed the admission of one woman, and they would have liked to admit the daughters of two other university professors, namely Felicia Thier Szabó and Krisztina Mórocz. Another argument was that almost all their graduates were able to find a job, so these would-be female architects would not take away men's jobs. The state secretary complied with the request but handled it as a special case and did not lift the 5% limit.[12]

Until 1945 there was no fundamental change in this situation: the faculties of law, engineering, veterinary medicine and economics were still closed to women. The democratisation following the end of World War II brought about a turning point: in August 1946, the newly elected Hungarian parliament issued a law creating equal opportunities for women to study at universities and colleges. As a result, with the exception of the military and theological colleges, all institutions of higher education, including the Technical University, opened their doors to female students.[13]

This situation did not change when the Communist Party established control over Hungary in 1948. By the end of the 1940s, more and more women were taking advantage of the new opportunities to study at the Technical University. By the academic year 1954-55, 16% of the total

student enrolment had been made up of women. During the post-1957 Kádár-era, the proportion of female students was the highest in 1968-69 reaching 22.7%. The high proportion of women among university students in certain academic years was always a function of political developments. In the 1950s it was the consequence of the drive for the rapid industrialisation of new, "socialist" Hungary; in the 60s, of the so-called "new economic mechanism" introduced in 1968. Both of these experiments counted on women's employment in industry, and, as part of it, in engineering fields.

Both of these politically-motivated economic initiatives resulted in the establishment of new technological institutes of higher learning. In 1949, the Faculty for Heavy Industry opened in Miskolc, and in 1951 the Faculty of Chemistry in Veszprém. As of 1951, evening and correspondence classes were offered to workers, and following 1967, several technological colleges also started to operate.[14] It is also worth mentioning that most female students were graduating from departments of chemistry; after 1995, their proportion was exceeding the number of male students. The fact that most female researchers today can be found in the chemical fields, is probably due to this fact. We should also mention as an indirect contributing factor the fact that women's involvement in the study of chemistry had a long-standing tradition in Hungary: women could take courses in chemistry in the faculties of art as far back as 1895.[15]

After the political changes of 1989-1990, there was a temporary reduction in the number of female students in the applied sciences. This can be partly linked to the uncertainty caused by the elimination of engineering positions in large state-owned companies. Parents preferred traditional intellectual careers for their children, especially their daughters. However, by the mid-90s, it became evident that this trend was only transitional. Engineering as a profession and expertise had regained its lost prestige, and governmental policy bowed to social demands: enrolments were allowed to increase.

Since the regime change in 1989, a revolutionary change has occurred in Hungarian education: between 1990 and 1998, the number of students in higher education increased by more than two and a half-fold, and the number of female students grew by more than three-fold, thereby reaching a proportion of 54.3% relative to male students — the highest ever. This also means that women's earlier academic disadvantage had disappeared.[16] In 1994, in the age group of 60-64 only 10.1% of men had post-secondary degrees and 4.5% of women, whereas in the age group of 30-34, women's proportion was higher: 13.5% compared to 12.1% of men.[17] Not surprisingly, the total number of engineering students also increased, although the traditional proportion between male and female students did not change significantly. We have to mention, however, that

the absolute number of women in technological higher education has never been as high as since 1998, and that since 1966 — apart from a decline of 14.6% in 1989 — the percentage of female students has increased to over 23%.

It is also worth taking a look at the gender structure of teachers in technological higher education. In 1999, the proportion of female teachers roughly corresponded to the proportion of female students. However, one should take into consideration that statistical data do not distinguish between teachers who teach technological subjects and those who teach non-technological subjects. Thus the statistical picture is improved by teachers of physical education, languages, social sciences, economics, etc. since women have a greater presence here than in technological subjects.[18]

Table 1. Female students at Budapest Technical U., BME (1920-1950)[19]

Academic years	No. of female students	Percentage of women
1920/21–1929/30	4	0.2
1930/31–1939/40	97	4.4
1940/41–1949/50	346	9.9

Table 2. Gender structure of graduates at BME (1975-1995). Total number of male vs. female students.[20]

Faculty	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995
Civil Engineering	258/67	305/51	259/45	222/46	133/28
Mechanical Eng.	400/47	275/33	238/26	224/23	183/12
Architechture	147/26	157/64	116/24	103/24	109/23
Chemical Eng.	168/66	145/66	102/49	90/40	97/49
Eelctrical Eng.	542/42	520/36	404/23	408/9	424/6
Transportation Eng.	185/6	169/10	169/12	123/6	145/6

Table 3. Full-time students at universities/faculties of technology (1958-98)[21]

Year	Men	Women	Total	% of women
1958	5, 476	746	6, 222	11.9
1966	8, 703	2, 187	10, 890	25.1
1970	8, 241	2, 082	10, 323	20.1
1974	8, 399	2, 041	10, 440	19.5
1979	7, 941	1, 658	9, 599	17.2
1984	6, 943	1, 434	8, 377	17.1
1989	7, 482	1, 288	8, 770	14.6
1994	9, 410	2, 299	11, 709	19.6
1998	13, 933	4, 348	18, 281	23.7

Table 4. Total number of students in all post-secondary institutions (1958-98) (Full-time, evening and corresponding students in total.)[22]

Year	Men	Women	Total	Percentage of women
1937	10, 048	1, 699	11, 747	14.2
1950	24, 778	7, 723	32, 501	23.8
1955	37, 199	8, 232	45, 431	18.1
1960	29, 867	14, 718	44, 585	33.0
1965	57, 234	36, 723	93, 957	39.1
1970	46, 104	34, 432	80, 536	42.7
1975	55, 603	51, 952	107, 555	48.3
1980	50, 852	50, 314	101, 166	49.7
1985	46, 156	53, 188	99, 344	53.5
1990	50, 880	51, 507	102, 387	50.3
1995	82, 215	97, 350	179, 565	54.2
1998	118, 019	140, 296	258, 315	54.3

Table 5. Gender structure of teachers at BME (1966-2000)[23]

Year	Men	Women	Total	Share of women in %
1966	1,199	201	1,399	14
1970	1,298	249	1,547	16
1975	1,370	299	1,669	18
1980	1,497	192	1,689	11
1985	1,304	286	1,590	18
1990	1,263	302	1,565	19
1995	1,143	260	1,403	18
2000	963	233	1,196	19

Table 6. Gender structure of full-time teachers in technological higher education (1966-1999)[24]

Year	Men	Women	Total	The % of women
1966	1,616	271	1,887	14.4
1970	2,106	430	2,536	16.9
1975	2,712	676	3,388	20.0
1980	2,691	810	3,501	23.1
1985	2,672	888	3,560	24.9
1990	3,591	863	4,454	19.3
1995	2,455	729	3,184	22.8
1999	1,872	602	2,474	24.3

Women in technology and the sciences

Hungarian researchers can perform their research either in university departments or in scientific research institutions. The latter can be divided into two groups: those that are affiliated with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences or those that are connected to industrial enterprises. This system was established after 1949. Numerous new technological institutions were createded in the 1950s but they were staffed predominantly by men. This is understandable if we keep in mind that the first generations of female students only started to graduate from faculties of technology in those years. One must also mention the fact that, although

from the 50s onward the proportion of female students in universities, including technology, has been increasing continuously (with the exception of one or two years), women have been much less represented in scientific institutions than expected. In the mid-60s, women represented 20% of researchers, 22% in 1970, 26% in 1975, 27% in 1980[25] and 33% in 1998. Their participation by discipline varies, the highest being in the area of social sciences: 42% in 1982, 40% in 1998, while in technology it was 23% in 1982 (although much higher in chemistry, 44%) and still only 24% in 1998.[26] One must also mention the fact that, concerning absolute numbers, most women have always worked in technological research, simply due to the fact that technological research comprised 60-70% of all research positions.

When we examine the overall number of researchers in the 1980 and 90s, we can see that it has decreased significantly: from 37,230 persons in 1982, it has gone down to 23,547 in 1998, while the number of women decreased from 10,350 to 5,400.[27] Thus, between 1982 and 1998, proportional numbers show a slight increase to the advantage for women, but absolute numbers show a dramatic decrease in all areas, including technology. These data represent a change in gender proportions, i.e. the number of men working in scientific research has decreased considerably. Several developments contributed to this dramatic decrease in the number of researchers. Firstly, both in the universities and at the Academy of Sciences, severe downsizing took place following the regime change in 1989; secondly, the majority of research institutes connected to state-owned large companies were shut down. Furthermore, salaries of researchers remain very low to this day, and better remuneration in the private sector attracts men from these ivory towers of science — mostly men because women find the working hours and the intensity of effort required less compatible with family and household duties, i.e. with traditional female roles. It is a fairly new tendency in the private sector to open new research positions in electrical engineering and telecommunications. Naturally, women also work here, but so far we have no exact statistics.[28]

After 1949, a new system of academic degrees was introduced in Hungary. The awarding of academic degrees was taken away from universities and given to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. This new system was based on the Soviet rather than the European model: the title of Doctor of Sciences (D.Sc., equal to a second doctorate after the Ph.D.) and Candidate of Sciences (C.Sc., which would be equal to a Ph.D.) were introduced. After 1993, the post-communist regime gave universities back the right to award Ph.D. degrees.

In 2000, out of 310 regular members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences 10 were women, but none of them came from the technolo-

gical sciences. Only one woman, Klára Tóth (Mrs. Szepesváry), Professor of Chemistry at BME, has been elected corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. That took place in 1995.

In 1999, one-sixth of all C.Sc.s were women, while among D.Sc.s they represented fewer than one in ten. These ratios are even worse in the field of technology. If we look at the absolute numbers over the past 40 years, we can see that among university graduates the number of women in the technological field was lower than in any other academic discipline. Between 1962 and 1991 there were only two D.Sc.s whereas the number of C.Sc.s varied between 6 and 57; at the same time, the number of men earning academic degrees rose significantly. During the ten years of the post-communist era, we can observe some signs indicating a slow improvement. Between 1991 and 2000, the number of women earning technological degrees has slightly increased: the percentage of female D.Sc.s in technology rose from 1% to 5.2% and among C.Sc.s from 5.3% to 7.1%.[29] We have to mention, however, that from all academic disciplines, in technology the increase has been the lowest and it still remains well below the rate at which the number of men with degrees has grown. However, if we look at the number of women who in 2000 earned the title of D.Sc. (2, the same number as men in the same year), we may see some hope regarding women's academic advancement.

If we analyse the age differences among women and men with academic degrees in technology, we can say that both genders are mostly represented within the age group of 50-59. Yet if we compare the proportion of women and men under the age of 60, we can observe that the number of male C.Sc.s is the double of their female colleagues; between the age of 60-69 it is 12 times as high, and over the age of 70, 24 times. We can conclude that, compared to previous generations, women in the technological field now tend to earn their academic degrees at an earlier age. The average age for earning the degree of C.Sc. is around 50.

For Table 7, Gender structure of graduates with D.Sc. and C.Sc. (1962-2000), see p. 35.

Table 7. Gender structure of graduates with D.Sc. and C.Sc. (1962-2000)[30]

	D.Sc.			C.Sc.		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
1962	58	1	59	328	6	334
1967	76	2	78	467	7	474
1973	102	2	104	616	16	632
1980	157	2	159	777	28	805
1985	181	1	182	892	49	941
1991	207	2	209	1,008	57	1,065
2000	290	16	306	1,342	103	1,445

Table 8. Gender structure and division by academic field of graduates with D.Sc. and C.Sc. in absolute numbers in 1999.[31]

	D.Sc.			C.Sc.		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Science	792	76	868	2,504	554	3,058
Technology	288	14	302	1,349	106	1,455
Medicine	465	57	522	1,965	429	2,394
Agriculture	158	6	164	902	183	1,085
Social Sciences	590	80	670	3,566	937	4,503
Total	2,293	233	2,526	10,286	2,209	12,495

Table 9. Gender structure and division by academic field of graduates with D.Sc. and C.Sc. in percentages in 1999.[32]

	D.Sc.			C.Sc.		
Academic field	Men	Women	Total (in numbers)	Men	Women	Total (in numbers)
Science	91.3	8.7	868	81.9	18.1	3,058
Technology	95.4	4.6	302	92.8	7.2	1,455
Medicine	89.1	10.9	522	82.1	17.9	2,394
Agriculture	96.4	3.6	164	83.2	16.8	1,085
Social Science	88.1	11.9	670	79.2	20.8	4,503
Total	90.78	9.22	2,526	82.33	17.67	12,495

Table 10. Age structure and gender of scientists with earned D.Sc. and C.Sc. degrees in 1999.[33]

Age group	Male D.Sc.s	Feamle D.Sc.s	Male C.Sc.s	Female C.Sc.s
Under 39	2	0	84	8
40 to 49	13	1	177	16
50 to 59	68	2	412	40
60 to 69	74	7	338	28
Above 70	130	4	338	14

Since the early 60s, there have been virtually no women in managerial positions at technological research institutes. No academic research institute has had a woman director either;[34] however, in industrial research and development institutes we can find women directors. In the

70s, Mrs. József Kurucz was director of the Research Institute of the Company for Plant Oil and Detergent Production, Erika Takács of the Institute of the Company for the Development of Electrical Equipment and Appliances, and Mrs. Endre Szenes followed by Mrs. József Sós Mária Gazdag of the Research Institute of the Canned Foods and Paprika Industry; the latter has been general manager since 1993. Apart from them, we can find no woman directors or managers in any other technological research institutes in Hungary.

The situation was not any better in the National Council for Technological Development (OMFB), which coordinates technological research and development. Between 1962 and 1973, its board of directors, which consisted of 50 members, included not a single woman. In 1980 however, out of 58 members 3 were women: Mrs. Ernő Kardos, director of the Canned Foods Factory of Békéscsaba, Mrs. Rezső Weissböck, director of the Carpet Factory of Sopron, and Mrs. Ferenc Nyitrai, president of the Central Statistical Bureau (Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, or KSH). But in 1985, the board became a homogeneous male group again.[35]

Several professional organizations operate in the field of technology. The most prominent among them is MTESZ, the Federation of Technological Associations, founded in 1984. It integrates 40 member organizations with a total of almost 100,000 members. If we examine the membership from the aspect of gender structure, we can see that between 1985 and 1995 12-17% were women. At the same time, when looking at the member organizations, the picture shows more variety. Representation rates of women in these organizations are the following: women compose 46% of the Hungarian Chemistry Society, 45% of the Hungarian Biochemistry Society, 37% of the Hungarian Electrical Engineering Society, 42% of the Meteorology Society, 59% of the Hungarian Textile Industry Society, 38% of the Hungarian Society of Food Industry, and 31% of the Society of Telecommunications. However, these are rather exceptions, given that the average representation of women in the majority of scientific associations is merely 3 to 6%.[36]

The OTKA, the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund, established in 1986, is one of the most prominent foundations that support research in Hungary. When analysing applications for research grants between 1990 and 2000, we can see that 20-25% of the applicants were women. However, the research fields show significant fluctuations: 26-38% of the applications by women came from scholars in the social sciences, 20-26% from those in the life sciences, while only 13-18% came from people in the technical sciences and technology. The percentage of women among the successful applicants was the following: 58 women out of 713 grants in 1991, 93 out of 707 in 1995, and 33 out of 303 in 2000.

Women are equally under-represented on OTKA's decision-making committees. In the Department of Science and Technology, which is important for our analysis, in 1991 only 2 out of the 30 committee members were women, in 1996 there was 1 woman out of 34, and 1 out of 30 in 2000, namely Klára Tóth, president of the committee. Thus in the decision-making body, the percentage of women does not even reach the percentage of women among applicants or successful applicants.[37]

If we raise the question why so few women can be found in technology, the first explanation may be that the faculties of technology were open to women later; thus they have had barely 50 years to conquer this professional field. My opinion is that the situation is not as bad as it may seem to be. The number of women in technological research is almost the same as in engineering. So if a woman decides to enter and graduate from a faculty of technology and later chooses research as her career, this seems to be a fairly smooth path and a reachable goal. What we need to ask is rather why female researchers lag behind the promotion rate of their male colleagues. Why can't they keep up the percentage that they represent in the field from graduates to institution directors, applicants, winning applicants, and members of decision-making bodies? Why does their career advance slower than men's? Do they lack ambition? Or is the impact of social norms, which consider professional success a duty of men still that strong? Presumably all of the above is true. Our society is basically man-centred. Women may work, research, publish, even defend a thesis — all of which depends on individual ambition — but circumstances are not very supportive of women's careers and men are also reluctant to accept female managers. But I think that the main reason behind this situation lies elsewhere.

Recent statistical and sociological surveys show that women's scientific careers are impeded by traditional feminine roles: a woman still cannot leave her mothering and household duties as easily to other members of the family as a man can. Men can count on family support more easily than women. Keeping the family together has always been women's duty, and the management of a household is not made any easier by social circumstances. Furthermore, researchers and professors do not earn salaries that would enable them to afford the services to ease household chores and the care for the family.

If we look at the family conditions of women and men with academic degrees, we find as the most characteristic fact that 90% of men are married and very few are divorced or bachelors. The family as a secure background seems to be an indispensable condition for men in a scientific career. 15% of women in scientific careers are not married, but this percentage is even worse in younger generations: almost one quarter of women under 40 have not been married. Within the overall population,

this percentage is 5 and 9% respectively; thus we can definitely make a connection between these numbers and scientific careers. Female researchers have even fewer children than women with academic degrees in general: 34.5% of women with academic degrees do not have any children compared to 40.6% of female researchers.[38] Marriages of female scientists show more conflicts as well: over the age of 50, there are considerably more divorced women scientists than in the rest of the female population. Thus two paths seem to be open for women with scientific ambitions: either they start their career young and give up traditional feminine roles — motherhood and marriage — or they wait until their children grow up and then start a scientific career around the age of 40.[39]

If we take a look at research institutes in 20th century Hungary, we can find women researchers in research projects which combine fundamental and applied research only erratically in the 50s, but since the 60s almost regularly. Without attempting to list all examples, I would like to mention only the most successful ones.[40]

György Békésy, Nobel-prize winner in 1961, had started his research in electro-acoustics at the Experimental Laboratory of the Hungarian Post Office. He later researched the causes leading to hearing loss and methods for its cure. Békésy left Hungary in 1946, while several members of his research group followed suit in 1956. One remaining member, Judit Brebovszky then took leadership of the group, and it regained its former strength. In the same institute, young researchers gathered to form a group for the research of light technology and the development of light transmission systems. One of these young researchers was Edit Márkus. The institute is one of the most important Hungarian centres for modern light technology based information services.

In the 1970s, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences' Research Laboratory of Crystal Physics was established. It is here that Katalin Polgár succeeded in creating a crystal ($LiNbO_3$) with numerous application possibilities (conductor of surface waves, duplicator of frequency, acoustic-optical transformer, etc.). Jenő Gyimesi and Mrs. Róbert Schiller, researchers who came from the Tungsram Factory, developed in the 80s a series of laboratory level semi-conductors at KFKI, the Central Physics Research Institute. During the same period, Judit Pfeiffer (Mrs. Rónai) was member of a research group at MTA's Technological Physics Research Institute; this group conducted research on semi-conductors and tools, which was recognized internationally. In the area of research in semi-conductors, one important institute, other than state-owned research institutes and laboratories, is Mikrovákuum Ltd.. Under the leadership of István Szendrő and Katalin Erdélyi, this company has established a

significant background of international cooperation and it works primarily with nuclear sensors and biosensors.

Among industry-related results and inventions, we have to mention Magdolna Pauer's iron-oxide mask developed at the Egyesült Izzó factory and the polishing procedure developed by Rózsa Magdolna Mühlrad (Mrs. Pál).

Women's participation in research at university departments is also notable. At the General Analytic Department of BME, managed by Ernő Pungor, Klára Tóth and her colleagues developed a wide spectrum of ion-selective electrodes. This research group also had a pioneering role in the research of analytical measurement techniques of solutions. We can also find female researchers at BME's Institute of Nuclear Technology; the most noteworthy results have been in the field of neutron-activation analysis by Nóra Vajda, Zsuzsa Molnár and Márta Balla. In the 80s and 90s, Professor Márta Kovács (Mrs. Kurutz) is one of the most prominent names in research in mechanics. The researches of Erzsébet Kocsis (Mrs. Filemon) are considered outstanding in the field of machine elements and structure, and the name of Klára Gerőfy is famous for the development of a procedure for the correction of colour-blindness. All these researchers are active or retired professors of BME.

Speaking of BME, women economists were the first to earn doctoral degrees in 1930. The first female professor in the faculty was also an economist, Beatrix Gáll (Mrs. Takaró). For women engineers, however, it was much more difficult to advance in their academic career. If we consider the fact that the first woman earned a degree in engineering back in 1920, the first woman became professor relatively late, only in 1967: it was Jolán Zemplén, who was also the first professor of physics in Hungary. The first female head of department was nominated in 1951; however, this also happened at the Department of Industrial Economics, not in an engineering department. Until the beginning of the 1990s, women could be departmental chairs mainly in the areas of pedagogy, ideology or philosophy. The only exception to this "rule" was Jolán Zemplén, who chaired the Department of Experimental Physics between 1967 and 1974. (She was the daughter of Győző Zemplén who was a famous professor of physics at BME — women who had a male relative in the faculty had a better chance to earn a degree or build a career here.) As of 1992, the Department of Transportation Systems has a woman chair, Dr. Éva Gilicze (Mrs. Köves); as of 1994, the Department of Transportation Economics, in the person of Dr. Katalin Jankura (Mrs. László Tánczos); as of 1995, the Department of Construction Finishing (Dr. Judit Gyulai), and as of 1996, the Department of Truss Mechanics in the person of the above-mentioned Dr. Kovács. In the history of the university, there has been only one woman dean: since 1997, the dean of

the Faculty of Transportation Engineering has been the above-mantioned Dr. Gilicze.

During the communist regime, the highest award for the recognition of scientific research and technological development was the Állami Díj (State Prize). In 1900, it was replaced by the Széchenyi Prize. Three women professors at BME have been awarded the Széchenyi Prize: Drs. Tánczos and Gilicze in 1998, and the above-mentioned Dr. Tóth in 2000.

In conclusion we can say that in 20th century Hungary, science, especially technology, had offered career possibilities mainly for men. Nevertheless, women scientists cannot and should not be forgotten and "omitted" from the history of Hungarian science.[41] In today's Hungary, improving the conditions for women's career building seems to be a matter of science policy or even of politics. The prospects of joining the EU raises hopes for positive changes, as one of the goals for EU member states is to insure the same ratio of research positions for women that they have among university graduates. But political will in itself may not be sufficient as what is needed is a fundamental change in public attitudes to this problem — which may not happen for some time, possibly for decades.

Appendix

Portraits of a few women scientists in the 20th century

First I would like to introduce two women scientists whose lives were seriously affected by the 20th century. They both had to leave Hungary and settle in two distant places: Irén Götz went to the Soviet Union, Mária Telkes to the USA.

Irén Götz was the first woman university professor in Hungary; she researched radioactivity.[42] She was born in 1889 and entered university (the Department of Philosophy of the Faculty of Science) in Budapest in 1907 (at the time, this department provided scientific education, as well as courses in the arts). Götz studied mathematics, physics, chemistry and philosophy. In 1910, she chose the topic of her thesis and did her research under the supervision of Gyula Weszelszky, who was the director of the first laboratory of radiology in Hungary and was a well-recognized expert in the field. Götz had to develop a measuring method, which would support researchers dealing with radioactive emission. After her successful defence, she went to Paris and continued her work at Marie Curie's institute. Together with a Polish colleague, she analysed the radioactivity

in products created during the disintegration of radium; the results were published in scientific journals.[43] Due to an illness, Götz had to interrupt her stay in Paris. After her recovery she changed her research area altogether: she started to work for the Experimental Station of Life Sciences and Fodder. She continued to perform scientific research and to publish in scientific journals. In 1919, during the rule of the Republic of Councils (Tanácsköztársaság) in Hungary, as a recognition for her work, she was nominated professor of modern theoretical chemistry at Budapest University. After the demise of the communist regime, she was imprisoned. In 1928, after her release, she emigrated to the Soviet Union. There she eventually became a victim of Stalin's purges and was imprisoned again. In an almost miraculous way, she succeeded to get out of prison but died shortly thereafter of typhoid fever which she had contracted while in captivity.

Her life and work are a good examples of women's better chances to develop a scientific career in new scientific fields, which, unlike the classical sciences, were not dominated by men. Radioactivity and modern chemistry were considered to be such new scientific fields at the time, and provided an excellent opportunity for women who were entering scientific research worldwide.[44]

The career of Mária Telkes, one of the pioneers in solar technology, is less known in Hungary. She was born in Budapest in 1900.[45] After earning a degree in physics at Budapest University, she became an assistant in the department of famous professor István Rybár. With the help of her uncle, Ernő Ludvig, the Hungarian Consul in Cleveland at that time, she went to the USA in 1924 and started to work at the clinical biophysical laboratory of Cleveland. During her research on the measurement of infrared radiation of the cerebrum, she discovered the electronic camera. In 1934, *The New York Times*, *Cleveland Press* and *Detroit Press* published a list of the 11 most successful and interesting American women; it included the name of Mária Telkes.[46] After 1939, she taught at the Massetusetts Institute of Technology while researching the use of solar energy; the first solar heated experimental house in Dover, for example, was built based on her plans. During this research, she constructed a solar energy powered distillation equipment that transfers sea water into drinking water. She is credited with another discovery, namely the solution to how to store cold, which opened a whole new chapter in the history of air conditioning. She was active and creative until her old age. She created another new possibility of storing cold (USA patent # 4.954.298/1990) when she was 90 years old. This great scientist, academic and holder of numerous international awards, was also a consultant to large industrial companies. She re-settled in her native Hungary at the age of 95 shortly before her death in 1995.

Márta Déri (1918-2000)[47] represented women in technology along with another colleague for nearly half a century: she became a C.Sc. in 1953, and a D.Sc. in 1963. She had earned her degree in chemistry at Pázmány Péter University in 1939. After a short period of working as a professor's assistant, in 1941 she became an engineer at a special ceramic plant at Nagybátony-Újlak Industrial Works of Kőbánya Ceramic Factory. Between 1945 and 1950, she was manager of the plant. From 1950 to 1961 she was associate professor, first at the Department of Electrochemistry then at the Department of Chemical Technology of the Faculty of Technology in Budapest. After the foundation of the Faculty of Chemistry in Veszprém, she became a professor at the Department of Silicate Chemistry and Technology until 1983, and later professor emerita of the faculty.

Her research areas were the experimentation with high frequency ceramic insulators and structural analysis of ceramic dielectrics and semiconductors. In Hungary, she was the first to study the production of ceramic semi-conductors, and she discovered the technology of titan-oxide based rectifiers. Based on her research results of ceramic insulators, the Kőbánya Ceramic Factory started to produce condensers with a high dielectric constant.[48]

Her contemporary, Klára Gerőfy was born in 1939. She earned her degree from BME's Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, in the foeld of heat power engineering in 1962, then she earned another degree in precision engineering and became C.Sc. of technology in 1992. She started her career as a plant engineer at the Ózd Metallurgical Factory, then taught engineering at the Industrial High School of Ózd. After 1969 she taught at BME's Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Department of Precision Mechanics-Optics, and became associate professor in 1993. Her research focuses on the theoretical aspects of human perception of colour and colour-blindness and the application of the so-called moiré-phenomenon in robotics. Among her patents, one should mention the procedure for correcting colour-blindness (1993), and the measuring of the level of human colour-blindness (1994). She has also played a significant role in the development of new optical (colour-measuring) tools, such as the hand tool for measuring distance, colour-mixing anomaloscope, etc.[49]

Zsuzsanna Széll (Mrs. Adlovits) was born in 1940 and was the first woman to earn a degree in welding engineering following her already acquired degree in mechanical engineering from the Faculty of Heavy Industry in Miskolc. In 1986, she became C.Sc. of technology. She started to work as a production technology engineer at the Aprilis 4 Machine Factory, then became research engineer at the Department of Technological Development of the Láng Machine Factory (1965-76); at the Kazan Factory Unit in Kazan, U.S.S.R.) she was an independent welding engi-

neer (1976-79), chief welding engineer (1979-84), and the manager of the Department for Welding Control and Development (1984-1990). From 1990 to 1996 she was manager of ABB Power Generation Ltd. She focuses on the development of welding technologies and of the welding of nuclear plant equipment.[50]

Mária Gazdag (Mrs. Sós) was born in 1944 and represents the younger generation. She earned a degree in chemical engineering at Krasnodar Faculty of Technology in 1969, then a diploma in organizational engineering at Gödöllő Faculty of Agriculture (GATE) in 1980. She earned her doctorate from GATE in 1986 — she received her C.Sc. in technology in Odessa (Ukrainian SSR) in 1983. She worked for the Research Institute of the Canned Foods and Paprika Factory from 1969. She became one of the Factory's directors in 1986 and general director in 1993. She is associate professor at the Department of Canned Foods Technology of the University of Horticulture and Food Industry as well as at BME's Faculty of Chemistry, Department of Biochemistry and Food Technology. Her research focuses on the analysis of additives in canned foods and related environmental, sewage water management and quality management issues.[51]

Last but not least I would like to describe the work of the woman who is considered to be the most successful scientist in the area of technological sciences. Chemist Klára Tóth was born in 1939, and has been a corresponding member of MTA. She was associate professor at BME's Faculty of General and Analytical Chemistry after 1968. She became full professor in 1991. Her research areas include ion-selective membrane electrodes and potentiometric sweeping electro-chemical microscopy. Besides her teaching and research activities, she is also active as a member of several committees in MTA as well as president of OTKA's Section of Science.

NOTES

[1] This project was supported by Hungary's Foundation of National Scientific Research, research grant no. 035193, for 2001-2004.

[2] See George [György] Marx, *The Voice of the Martians: Hungarian scientists who shaped the 20th century in the West* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2001), originally published in Hungarian with the title *A marslakók érkezése. Magyar tudósok akik nyugaton alakitottak a 20. század történelmét* [The arrival of the Martians: Hungarian scientists who shaped the history of the 20th century in the West] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2000). The chapter entitled "Portraits of 20 Researchers," which have become prominent both in Hungary and abroad, mentions only men, while the 52 biographies in the chapter entitled "Dictionary of the Martians" includes only one woman, the economist Marina Whitman-

Neumann, daughter of Janos Neumann, member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

[3] See Nagyné, Szegvári Katalin and Andor Ladányi, *A nők az egyetemeken I. Küzdelmek a nők egyetemi tanulmányaiért* [Women at universities I. The fight for women's university education] (Budapest: Felsőoktatástörténeti tanulmányok, 1996), p. 27.

[4] Archives of Budapest University of Technology, University Council meeting minutes, March 12 and June 10, 1910.

[5] VKM decree No. 206626/1918 December 7, 1918. Besides BME, the University of Law also opened its doors to women.

[6] The chemical engineering department requested a delay of one semester due to a limited number of laboratory places.

[7] Three of them obtained degrees: Eszter Pécsi in the Department of Engineering in 1920, Marianne Sternberg in the Department of Architecture in 1924, and Vilma Mahrer in the Department of Mechanical Engineering in 1925. Cf. Éva Vámos, "A nők műszaki és termeszettudományos oktatása" [Women's higher education in technology and science], in: *Szerep és alkotás. Női szerepek a társadalomban és az alkotóművészetekben* [Role and creation: Women's roles in society and in the creative arts] ed. Beáta Nagy and Margit S. Sárdi (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1997), p. 210.

[8] BME Lt. unit I. 3/a. Minutes of the University Council meeting, March 14, 1924.

[9] VKM decree No. 63.000/1927 on the issue of regulating women's admission to the Universities of Science, the University of Technology and its Faculty of Economics. Official Bulletin, September 1, 1927.

[10] BME Lt. unit 4/c, volume 19, article 817: Decrees on women's admission (1927-42).

[11] *Ibid.* The date of the request of Judit Pogány is August 30, 1935, the date of the response of the ministry is September 2, 1935.

[12] *Ibid.* The request was signed by the dean of the Department of Architecture on September 17, 1936. Cf. Éva KatalinVámos, "Women's Opportunities of Studying and Practising in Hungary from 1895 to 1968," *Technikatörténeti Szemle*, XXIII (1997-98), 108.

[13] 1946, Act XXII. Printed in: *Magyar Törvénytár* [Hungarian Collection of Laws] (Budapest, 1946), pp. 96-97.

[14] The following technological colleges were founded at this time: the Banki Donát College of Mechanical Engineering, the Kandó Kálmán College of Technology, the College of Light Industry, Ybl Miklós College of Architecture, all in Budapest; the College of Food Industry in Szeged, the College of Mechanical Engineering and Automation in Kecskemét, and the College of Transportation and Telecommunication in Győr.

[15] Mária Palasik, "Women at the Technical University of Budapest in the 20th Century," in *Wie Naturlich Ist Geschlecht? Gender und die Konstruktion von Nature und Technik*, ed. Ursula Pasero and Anja Gottburgsen (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2002), pp. 167-77.

[16] On the antecedents see Ildikó Hrubos, "Férfiak és nők iskolai végzettsége és szakképzettsége" [Qualification and degrees of men and women], in:

Férfiuralom [The rule of the patriarchy] ed. Miklós Hadas (Budapest: Replika Kör, 1994), pp. 196-208.

[17] Róbert Angelusz, Erzsébet Bukodi, *et al.*, *A tudományos fokozattal rendelkezők anyagi viszonyai, családi háttere és mobilitása, 1997* [Material relations, family background and mobility of persons with academic degrees, 1997] (Budapest: KSH, 1998), p. 6.

[18] In 1990, 33% of teachers in higher education were women, and in 1998, 37.7%. However, this percentage is not reflected in the academic titles: in 1998, women represented only 13.4% of full professors, 29.5% were associate professors, 40.9% assistant professors, and 46. 6% teaching assistants.

[19] Source of statistical data: Károly Heberger, ed., *A Műegyetem története 1782-1967* [History of the Technical University 1782-1967] (Budapest, 1979), volume VIII, p. 1745. In the 1930s, from among the 97 students indicated by the data, 90 were taking economics.

[20] Source of statistical data: *A Budapesti Műszaki Egyetem élete a számok tükrében, 1945-1975* [The life of the Faculty of Technology in Budapest as reflected in numbers, 1945-1975] (Budapest: BME Műszaki Főigazgatóság, 1976); Heberger 1979, volume VIII, pp. 1756f. *A Budapesti Műszaki Egyetem Évkönyve, 1975–1996* [The yearbook of the Faculty of Technology in Budapest 1975-1996]; *Statisztikai Tájékoztató. Felsőoktatás (1958/59–1998/99)* [Statistical Bulletin. Higher education (1958/59–1998/99)] (Budapest: Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, 1999).

[21] *Statisztikai Tájékoztató. Felsőoktatás (1958/59–1998/99).*

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] *A Budapesti Mőszaki Egyetem élete a számok tükrében, cit.*; *A Budapesti Muszaki Egyetem Évkönyve, 1975-1996*; *cit.*; *A Budapesti Műszaki és Gazdaságtudományi Egyetem Információs Központjának adatszolgáltatása, 2000* [Statistical service of the Information Centre of BME, 2000].

[24] *Statisztikai Tájékoztató. Felsőoktatás (1958/59–1998/99).*

[25] Pál Tamás, "Kutatónők a magyar tudományban" [Women researchers in Hungarian sciences], *Magyar Tudomány*, 1-2 (1984), 148.

[26] Rescarchers work in the university, academic and private spheres. 1982 data: Tamás, see above; 1998 data in: Ildiko Hrubos, ed., *Women in scientific careers. Report on the activities conncted with the question "Women and Science,"* an unpublished research report completed in 2000, p. 3.

[27] This means that at the end of the 90s there were hardly any more women working in scientific research than in 1970, when their number was 5,161, according to statistics. 2,048 among them worked in the technological sciences. *Tudományos kutatás, 1970* [Scientific research] (Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, 1972), no. 21, p. 58.

[28] The development team of Kapsch is led by Andrea Nagy, for example.

[29] The data are from December 31, 2000 and are provided by the Information Center of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

[30] *MTA Almanach, 1962-1985* [Almanach of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1962-1985] (Budapest, 1990).

[31] Data provided to me by Ágnes Haraszthy. See also Ágnes Haraszthy, "Equal Opportunities for Women? Women in Science in Hungary," in: *Women in*

Science: Token women or gender equality? ed. Veronica-Stolte Heiskanen (Oxford: Berg, 1993), pp. 193-98.

[32] Based on data provided by Haraszthy.

[33] Based on data provided by Haraszthy.

[34] In the natural scieneces, we can find several examples: the Research Laboratory for Biophysics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences had a woman director for over a decade and so did the Academy's Research Institute for Ecology and Botanics (based in Vácrátót). The former was biologist Dr. Györgyi Rontó, university professor; the latter, Edit Láng (Mrs. Kovács), C.Sc. (in biology).

[35] *Almanach of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1962-1985*, ed. Eszter Gerencsér (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1991).

[36] Hrubos, *Women in scientific careers,* p. 5., as well as research data provided by Éva Vámos, director general of the Hungarian Museum of Technology.

[37] Hrubos, *Women in scientific careers*, p. 5; and data provided by of Zsuzsa Gilyen (OTKA).

[38] Tamás, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

[39] A tudományos fokozattal rendelkezők anyagi viszonyai, családi háttere és mobilitása, 1997. [Financial condition, family background and mobility of persons with academic degrees], prepared by Róbert Angelusz, Erzsébet Bukodi, *et al.* (Budapest: KSH, 1998), p. 7.

[40] My account of research institutes is based on the following source: *Magyarország a 20. században*, [Hungary in the 20th century] editor-in-chief István Kollega Tarsoly, IV/1 (Szekszárd, 1999).

[41] What follows is based on Imre Hronszky, "Nők a tudomány és a technika történetében" [Women in the history of science and technology], in: *Asszonysorsok a 20. században*, ed. Margit Balogh and Katalin S. Nagy (Budapest: BME Szociológia és Kommunikácio Tanszék és Szociális és Családvedélmi Minisztérium Nőképviseleti Titkarsága, 2000) p. 11-25; and Péter Faragó, "Nők a tudományban" [Women in science], *ibid.*, p. 25-35.

[42] On Irén Götz's work in more detail see Gábor Palló, "A radioaktivitás egyik korai kutatója: Götz Irén" [Irén Götz: An early researcher of radioactivity], *Asszonysorsok a 20. században*, pp. 53-61.

[43] See, for example, J. Danys and I. Götz, "Sur les rayons de la radioactivité inductive a évolution lente," *Le Radium* 9 (1912).

[44] Famous names other than Marie Curie would include Nobel-laureate Irene Curie, and later, Lise Meitner.

[45] On the work of Mária Telkes see: János Pap, "A napenergia magyar tudosnője, a szolártechnika nagyja: Telkes Mária" [Mária Telkes, the great Hungarian woman scientist of solar energy], *Asszonysorsok a 20. században*, pp. 78-85.

[46] Her first American award, however, was not for scientific results but for saving a life: in 1927 she rescued a child from a burning house.

[47] The information on Márta Déri and the remaining scientists was kindly provided to me by Péter Kozák, the editor of *Révai Új Lexikona.*

[48] Her publications include *Untersuchungen über seignette-elektrische Mischtitanate* (Periodica Polytechnica Chemical Engineering, 1960); (with Ernő Zöld) *Kémia. Kémiai technológia. Egyetemi jegyzet* [Chemistry. Chemical technology. University textbook] (Budapest, 1961); *Összefüggések titanoxid tartalmú polikristályos félvezetők és dielektrikumok szerkezete és villamos tulajdonságai között. Doktori értekezés* [Connections between the structure and electric characteristics of polycrystal semiconductors and dielectrics containing titan-oxide] Doctoral thesis, Budapest, 1962; *Seignette-elektromos kerámiai anyagok* [Seignetteclectric chemical materials] (Budapest, 1963); *Ferroelectric Ceramics* (Budapest, 1966).

[49] On Klara Gerőfy's research see: "A színkülönbség mérése" [Measurement of colour difference] *Finommechanika-Mikrotechnika* (1982); "Measurement of Distortion Using the Moirè-method," with György Ábrahám, *Experimentelle Technik der Physik*, (1988); "The Fourth Colour Filter of Tristimulus Colorimetrical Instruments," *Periodica Polytechnica* (1989); "A torzítás hatása a projekcios 3D moirè-mérőrendszerek pontosságára" [The effect of distorsion on the exactness of 3D Moire measuring systems], *Kép- és Hangtechnika* (1990).

[50] On Zsuzsanna Szél's inventions see: "Nyomottvizes atomerőművek primerköri berendezésének anyagvizsgalata" [Material cxamination of primer circle equipment of pressed water nuclear plants] with Ferenc Gillemot, *Energia és Atomtechnika* (1973); "Szalagelektródás plottírozás ausztenites króm-nikkel acéllal és különleges nikkel bázisú nem vasfémekkel" [Ribbon-electroded plotting with austenite chrome-nickel steel and special nickel based noniron metals] *Láng Műszaki Közlemények* (1975); "A varratalak hatása a hegesztés utáni maradó feszültségekre nagymeretű tartályok körvarrataiban" [The effect of seam shape on tension after welding in circle seams of large containers], *Gép* (1985); "Növelt szilárdágu acélból készült nyomástartó edények hegesztési varrataban visszamaradó feszültségek meghatározása" [Determination of tension remaining in welding seams of containers made of steel of increased solidity], C.Sc. thesis, Budapest, 1985.

[51] On Mária Gazdag's research see: "Az almatermesztés, tárolás és feldolgozás kérdései" [Issues of apple cultivation, storing and processing], co-author, Mihály Tóth, *Konzerv- és Paprikaipar* (1975); "Csökkentett cukortartalmú konzervipari termékek előállitási lehetőségei" [Production possibilities of canned products with decreased sugar content], with Katalin Monigl, *Konzerv- és Paprikaipar Különszám* (1975); "Enzimek alkalmazása gyümölcs- és zöldséglevek előállításánál [Use of enzyms during the production of fruit and vegetable juices], with Kornelia Musulin, *Konzerv- és Paprikaipar* (1978); "A konzervipar vízgazdálkodása és szennyvizhelyzete" [Water and sewage effluent management in the canned foods industry], with Ildikó Toókos, *Konzerv- és Paprikaipar* (1978); Pektinkészítmények konzervipari almahulladékből történő előállitási technologiájának korszerűsitése [Modernization of production technology of pectine products from apple waste in the canned foods industry], C.Sc. Thesis written in Russian Odessa, 1983; as well as the book: *Minősegügy az élelmiszeriparban* [Qualitiy issues in the food industry] (Budapest, 1995).

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Women's Rights in Stalinist Hungary: The Abortion Trials of 1952-53

Andrea Pető

[Translated from the Hungarian by Éva Kossuth]

"The gravid state is an intimate matter" — one gynaecology specialist exclaimed during a debate in 1949 over possible new regulatory measures respecting pregnancy-termination.[1] In the mind of Hungary's public, the time of the demographic policy known as the "Ratkó-era" was synonymous with the most brutal interference in the "intimacy" of pregnancy.

This question is an important one in the larger context of post-1945 Hungarian history. After the collapse of the Nazi and Hungarian war efforts in the Carpathian Basin in the spring of 1945, all of Hungary came under occupation by the Red Army. The country's reconstruction — and the democratization of its politics — was undertaken precisely at a time when arrangements were being made for the long-term stay of this occupation force in the region. At the same time, political power in Hungary began to pass more and more into the hands of the recently re-organized Communist Party, while the Social Democratic Party — with its rather different values and historical experience — was being relegated to the sidelines, often through the behind-the-scenes machinations of the Soviet occupation apparatus. The process gained momentum in 1947. After the international organization of Communist parties (the Comintern, which had been disbanded — to foster Allied unity — during the war) was reestablished under the new name Communist Information Bureau or Cominform, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin instructed his Hungarian followers to accelerate the process of gaining total control over their country's affairs. This became possible with the victory of the Leftist Bloc in the hotly contested 1947 elections. The left wing of the Social Democratic Party was forced to merge into the Communist Party, which was

renamed as the Hungarian Workers' Party (HWP). The HWP next embarked on the elimination of all other political parties and the establishment of a totalitarian political system. As a part of this attempt at imposing totalitarian rule, women's bodies also became the subject of state — or, more precisely, party — regulation.

The attempt to establish, with relentless speed, a totalitarian political system in the country, failed; and in June, 1953 the HWP had to beat a partial retreat from its radical agenda: it appointed the "moderate" Imre Nagy as Prime Minister and introduced a more modest program, the so-called "New Course," of building socialism. This article describes one aspect of the failure of the Hungarian Communists' attempt to impose a totalitarian regulatory system in Hungary between 1947 and 1953.

* * *

In Hungary as elsewhere, the termination of pregnancy has always been a political issue, for it touches upon one of the most fundamental aspects of human rights: has the woman the right to be in control of her own body, i.e., is she considered a responsible citizen? According to certain people, in this matter there definitely is a need for the overseeing or controlling role by the state and its various institutions. The utilization and control of the female body as the most productive tool in the human reproductive process became a political target at the end of the 19th century. At that time there began a more widespread medical knowledge about the mechanics of conception and contraception. Abortion, however, remained for a long time the most widespread means of contraception, used on a broader social scale than most other contraceptive methods. The forming of policy concerning the family became a matter for the state only at the end of the 19th Century. Since that time, women's reproductive ability has been controlled by all political regimes concerned about the decrease in population.[2] Since the 1970s, writers on women's history placed special emphasis on the disclosure of the historical antecedents of contraception, since a woman's free will over her body was one of the main demands in the social battle for women's equality. This gave ground for the historical analysis of the policies and practices of reproduction control in Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, Stalinist USSR and, for example, in Communist Romania.[3]

For the historical examination of the question in Hungary, we first have to scrutinize the source material at our disposal. To the parliamentary debates regarding its regulations and to the analysis of newspaper articles on the subject we can add the debates carried on by members of the medical profession, as well as the analysis of the exceptionally unreliable statistical data available on the abortion question. "Oral history," i.e. personal interviews about these experiences, could provide a more complete picture. However, research into the history of women with regard to birth control is only now beginning in Hungary. The subject is very timely, as we are daily confronted with newspaper articles in Hungary today about mothers who killed their infants, or about the loose morals of the abortion seekers. In this study I attempt to demonstrate how the "intimate relationship" mentioned at the beginning with regards to pregnancy, developed in 1952. Hereinafter I will examine the changing dimensions of this intimate relationship between mothers and fetuses, men and women, as well as women and physicians.

A short history of the legal control of abortions

In Hungary, the termination of pregnancy had been prohibited by paragraphs 285 and 286 of Statute No. V of 1878; however, by a 1933 High Court decision, justifiable medical interference in pregnancies ceased to be a criminal offence.[4] Gynaecologists in private clinics and offices performed these surgeries for which there was a demand among the more affluent. At the same time, in rural areas people carried on with the centuries-old abortion techniques. The change in law regulating termination was the result of the high number of rape cases committed by soldiers of the Soviet Army in 1945.[5] At the time the government made abortions permissible at health care facilities free of charge, if authorized by a medical officer. During this revamping of the abortion laws, in order to prevent unavoidable emotional outbursts in the domestic political arena, Hungary's rulers deliberately created a judicial uncertainty about the issue. The communist-dominated Ministry of Health did not want to exacerbate the daily conflicts in the ranks of the country's coalition government with a new issue; instead, the matter was regulated through direct ministerial orders. In this way confrontation was avoided between the Social Democratic Party whose members supported unrestricted access

to abortion, and the members of the Smallholders' Party who demanded strict regulations on religious, or rather, pro-life grounds.

The changes in Hungary's abortion laws came in the wake of the 1948 capture of political power by the Communists. What followed was the adoption of the Soviet model which had forbidden abortions in 1936.[6] The Hungarian health administration decided concurrently with the other Eastern European Peoples' Democracies in favour of regulating the termination of pregnancy. A Hungarian Health Ministry directive issued in the summer of 1952, proclaimed in force on August 1, amended the "permissive" legislation of the post-1945 period. Its new feature was that it set the limit of termination of pregnancy at 28 weeks; furthermore, the termination had to be approved by a two-level committee. Abortion therefore was not prohibited; rather, a committee examined the medical reasons necessary for its implementation, with a long list of requirements attached. The "social reason" — with which the request for abortion could be been justified — was missing, for, according to the authors of the legislation, in the "dynamically developing socialist Hungary" no woman could claim that she was burdened by social or economic circumstances. The public referred to these times as the Ratkó-era, although Anna Ratkó headed the Ministry "only" until April 3, 1953. However, the "era" itself lasted until the summer of 1953, when Imre Nagy relaxed the regulations against abortionists.

As of January 1, 1954, abortion for reasons of social difficulties was permitted. It becomes clear from the study of the number of births that, due to the changing political climate, those who became pregnant in the summer and fall of 1952, would not have been able to apply for abortion. (see Table 1 of the Appendix) What also becomes evident from the Table is that desire to have or not to have children was independent of regulation — those who did not want families found the way to have an abortion, regulation notwithstanding. The growing number of registered operative abortions shows that abortions performed in the so-called "grey zones" decreased. When abortions carried out by midwives and quacks became risky, they induced the abortion at home; the process was then completed in a hospital. An abortionist formerly practicing in the grey zone had to face the fact that the already existing prohibition regulation was now enforced with a brutality typical of the communist police force (see Table 2). Therefore, it seemed more expedient to operate within the framework provided by the health authorities (see Table 3).

The knowledge about female fertility was primarily "women's knowledge:" the family, the female members of the relatives passed on the knowledge (and/or misconceptions) to the female members of the younger generation. Before the inception of institutional obstetrical care, assisting at birth was also a specifically female expertise, for few women could afford the services of a doctor. The state, during a population growth campaign, in 1952 removed information regarding reproduction from the sphere of the family and relatives, made it into a privilege of male gynaecologists, and, as a means of public control, institutionalized it. Concurrently with the gradual development of national health care institutions, the country began to approach European health norms.

The new law strikes at the abortionists

The first abortionist show trials were conducted in Hungary in the autumn of 1952.[7] These public trials set the tone and laid down the vocabulary for a later nation-wide police action. The vocabulary and rules of the subsequently peaking population growth campaign were also developed during these trials. The *Szabad Nép* [Free Nation] newspaper reported in its September 4, 1952 issue on the first trial and on the exceptionally severe sentences handed down in the case of the abortionist doctors: they each received a six-month jail sentence, a 10,000 Ft. fine, and were stripped of their medical licence for life. The three women on whom the above two performed the abortions, each got a one-year jail sentence. The trial received especially wide publicity, since the accused gynaecology specialists performed the surgeries in their licensed private offices. Furthermore, one of the doctors was Chief-of-Staff at an obstetrics clinic. The doctors performed the operations with a curette under sterile conditions and with the utmost medical skill and responsibility. The accused women were highly educated and of stable family backgrounds.

The subjects of another case before the courts at the same time were a final-year medical student and a quack doctor practicing with a false medical license. They gave the patients — uneducated women from unstable backgrounds — an injection into the womb. It started the abortion; however, it also considerably imperiled the women's health and their future ability to conceive. In this case the abettors, the men who sired the infants, were also sentenced. The harsh sentences handed down were in direct proportion to the seriousness of the crime: the two accused

injected a 6- or 7-month pregnant woman for several days until the birth process started, then strangled the live infant and buried it. Several similar cases were brought up at the trial, where aborted fetuses were either placed in shoeboxes, or wrapped in sheets and buried at various city locations.

Concurrently with these trials a systematic war was being waged against "folk" abortion techniques practiced since earlier times. The second source group analyzed in this study illustrates the techniques practiced in the provinces at the time when the war against abortion reached its peak. The county courts, in the interest of "eradicating abortion," conducted study sessions with the police physician, the police detective and the county's public medical instructor in attendance. The investigators studied the district's reproduction situation: how many physicians, midwives, births and abortions fell on a given number of inhabitants. The towns that showed the highest number of abortions were studied separately. The authorities created so-called "abortion maps," showing the number of abortions in each location. From the results they could see what tools were used for abortions (goose feather, bicycle spoke, jumping off a high fence, etc.) and who, in a given rural community, resorted to such risky procedures.[8] The parallel actions of the health and police departments impacted the lives of several thousand women, whose histories have not yet been told.

The knowledge of women respecting the health aspects of conception

Since menses signifies normalcy for the female body, women defended themselves against possible pregnancy by inducing bleeding to produce the desired miscarriage. Based on the level of medical knowledge of a given era, bleeding occurring during pregnancy was interpreted as a sign of miscarriage. Most illegal abortion techniques were based on such knowledge, where they created a bleeding wound in the womb with a pointed instrument. We also know from ethnographic books that the roots of the hollyhock and zonera plants which, when boiled, provide a rubber-like substance, were used for the termination of pregnancy for centuries without causing complications. However, midwives were still employing cruder instruments, such as knitting needle and bicycle spoke. In cases where bleeding was induced in this manner, the physician — for both health and legal reasons — had to perform a termination of pregnancy, in

statistical jargon, due to "incomplete pregnancy," in a safe health facility. The low-level medical knowledge of Hungarian country folk is evidenced by a performance staged in a village against abortion, conducted in the framework of *Free Land Winter Evenings* events, where it emerged that the women present believed that "in one- two- or three-month pregnancies only blood is lost, there is no fetus as yet."[9]

At the two abortion trials it emerged from the testimonies of the 19 women defendants that they knew about the connection between pregnancy and the absence of menses; their knowledge of contraception however, was rudimentary. Of the 19 women questioned, not one mentioned that she did anything to prevent the pregnancy. The appearance of vulcanized rubber could have made condoms and vaginal suppositories available to a large segment of the population; however, the Government prevented the marketing of contraceptives. These devices were already available before the Second World War — however, their display in pharmacy windows, thus their popularization, could not even come into question. The Interior Ministry in a confidential Memorandum notified all medical officers that pharmacists and drug store owners "have to remove all signs advertising the said articles from their shop windows or from other conspicuous places."[10] Contraceptives were dispensed by virtue of Regulation 3.180/32/1949 through medical prescriptions pursuant to the instructions of the Országos Közegészségügyi Tanács [National Health Council], according to which contraceptives could only be used in cases where the mother's health required it,[11] for instance, in case the woman contracted a disease during pregnancy that could endanger her health.

In the doctor-trial, if a woman visited the gynaecologist because of a missed monthly period, the court interpreted it in every instance as a confirmed pregnancy — although the missed period could have had other causes (ovaritis, tumour, menopause). It appeared from the women' testimony — revealed during a series of interrogations — that they were at a loss as to what could have caused the missed period; they didn't really know the reason for it. It was felt within the country's social security apparatus that the women were handled in a callous manner. However, since the majority of them were not eligible for social health care assistance for political reasons, there was no other recourse for them than to seek the services of private practitioners. Only a private physician could remedy their gynaecological problems. Those women who were de facto pregnant, knew that the sooner they saw a doctor with an unwanted pregnancy, the easier the surgical procedure would be. This was the

reason why physicians performed dilatation and curettage in cases where the woman was late only by 5-7 days, although one admitted at the trial that pregnancy can not be established with certainty at such an early stage. The doctor justified the surgical intervention by stating that the patient was "nervous" and a postponement would have made her even more nervous.

In the "quack doctors" case the women were convinced that a missed period could only mean pregnancy. One also referred to the shame she felt at the police station: "I was ashamed to tell [the police] that I went not for the termination of the pregnancy but because of the bleeding." Even the thirty-eight-year-old woman, who kept on insisting that she could not be pregnant as she didn't have a sex life, was persuaded by the quacks about the necessity of the interference. According to the woman: "something had to be removed from me, although in my mind I knew that I was not pregnant." As one of the defendants put it: "he told me that I was pregnant; for me the main thing was to get my period as soon as possible" — in other words, to reestablish the status quo. The quacks were sought out to "start the bleeding," which was achieved by injecting glucose and glanduitrin into the womb. The women who turned to the quacks were 2-3 months pregnant. The more advanced the pregnancy, the more dangerous the injection; the police called it the "G-method" intervention, as it also appears in the indictment after the name of the principal defendant. One woman in the 4th month of pregnancy hemorrhaged so severely that one of the quacks called an ambulance to save the woman's life — by which act he delivered himself, his partner, and his assistants into the hands of the police.

It was typical of the female defendants in both cases that they blindly trusted the persons they thought to be physicians. If the quack decided by looking at the women that "they will have a difficult pregnancy" — as it happened several times in both cases — it was enough for the women to take on the risk of terminating the pregnancy in their fear of later difficulties and the pain involved. These uneducated women of unstable backgrounds believed in the miraculous faculties of the "injection." One woman sought out the quacks only because she "didn't feel very well" and expected a relief for her cramps. The women expected a relief for all their health problems from these injections of unknown substances.

During the "population growth" campaign, the task fell to the gynaecologists to popularize all health-related issues concerning abortion

that would serve the purposes of the campaign. With the prohibition of abortion, the authorities focused attention on its harmful health and societal effects as a method of birth control. At the same time, no other form of birth control was available until the 810-9/1953 directive, when the word "prevention" found its way into the dictionary of the medically more enlightened. The new era was signalled by directive 105/1956 of the Ministry of Health when the *Timodon anticoncipiens* pill came to be sold without prescription.[12] However, from April of 1957 on, following the unsuccessful revolution of the fall of 1956, the government stopped supporting the country's social security institutions in their drive for the use of contraceptives.

The female responsibility

The woman, as the carrier of the fetus, bears the responsibility meted out to her by the respective society.[13] Pregnant women, if married, stated during testimony that they shared the responsibility of the decision to conceive with their husbands. This was the way they attempted to lessen their own *moral responsibility.* That this was not only a defense tactic employed in court is proved best by the fact that the husbands accompanied their wives to the doctor's office. In the quack doctors' case the husbands played no role; but the lovers, charged with aiding and abetting, were sentenced. The court held that the man who deserted the woman with whom he established a sexual relationship and made her pregnant, did not commit a crime. On the other hand, the man who considered desertion to be an "immoral act," "leaving a woman in trouble" and, in the interest of maintaining their relationship, encouraged the woman to have the prohibited operation, was held guilty. The active, collaborating man — i.e. the one who found out where to turn in such cases, accompanied the woman and waited until the operation was over — was severely punished. The woman, a victim of abetting, came under lighter judicial consideration than the woman who came to the decision on her own to have the illegal abortion. To use the argument that she was the weaker sex and at the mercy of others sometimes proved successful in obtaining a lighter sentence from the court. Beside their sex partners, the women also discussed the matter with relatives. According to the court registers, the acceptance or termination of pregnancy was a usual topic of conversation: "One of my relatives warned me that if I am delicate, I

should not carry the pregnancy to full term" — confessed one of the women.

The abortion cases put an end to the notion that pregnancy is the sole responsibility of the woman, for the abettors as well as the executors of the procedure were severely punished, provided the courts managed to shed light on their identities. The state wedged itself between the woman and the medical expert by issuing abortion permits only after thorough bureaucratic inquiry by the appropriate abortion committee. If the woman, not wanting to continue the pregnancy, chose the illegal way, i.e. chose to circumvent the law, her responsibility in the decision was considered greater. Most illegally performed interference only started the abortion; a specialist later completed it at a health facility. According to records from rural areas, if the doctor began to harbour suspicion that nature was helped along, the woman usually claimed that she manipulated her own body. This way she assumed full responsibility. The law did not punish self-destructive and self-mutilating women. The fetus is part of a woman's body, and self-mutilation is not a criminal offence. Therefore the law did not come down as hard on the self-mutilating woman than on the abortionist. The High Court of Justice made the provisions of the penal code respecting self-aborting women more stringent by a ruling dated November 26, 1952: now the woman, who manipulated her own body received a jail sentence. However, this was reduced to a fine by a ruling dated December 17, 1952. The penalty for women therefore was in effect for barely a month.

In the Hungary of the times, a woman, on conceiving, had to make a decision not only about the fate of her infant, but also about her own subsequent situation in her community. In rural areas the woman, in order to avoid gossip, more often than not, chose to have the baby, rather than appear before an abortion committee composed of members of the local community. It was the sign of the woman's independence to be aware of her special interests in the face of official authority and, based on this, to make her own decision. At the same time, the use of questionable abortion techniques could imperil the woman's health and her future ability to conceive. The propaganda campaign was founded on this maxim, maintaining that even the most professionally performed abortion could imperil the woman's life, body and health, therefore every conceived child had to be born.

The women displayed different attitudes during the proceedings, extracting themselves from the burden of responsibility differently. The

defendants and the witnesses in the doctor trial changed their testimonies forced from them at the police station. "I can't remember any more what I confessed at the police station, I was so nervous." Nervousness is a well-known stereotypical female reaction to an unknown situation. The other excuse was fear with which women justified why they changed an earlier testimony. "I was very frightened" — said one of them, or "I felt very ill." These were the two arguments the defendant used. Amnesia caused by excitement, fear and illness was a legal remedy used by well-paid lawyers. "At the police station I said yes to everything" — asserted one of the defendants similarly to others, supporting the show-trial character of the case. A woman taken to the police station at 4:30 a.m. in the morning presented the following argument at the advice of her lawyer: "there are many mistakes in the police record." As a matter of fact, they crossed out by hand the part that recounted the operation with suspicious detail and medical accuracy, the medical instruments used, the pattern of the sofa in the waiting room, and the amount of money agreed upon, putting it all in the mouth of one of the defendants charged with misdemeanour. There was only one woman who did not refer to her emotional state: the one that was probably sent to the doctors' office by the police to help in the arrest of the gynaecologists.

The other defense technique was total denial: she carried a sum equalling a small fortune around with her in July, because she wanted to "buy a winter coat." It is not altogether surprising that the court found it somewhat spurious. When no amount of denial worked, the victims pleaded that "please don't punish me, I would like to work" — the last resort therefore being a desire to take part in the productive work of Socialism. Even when the old family friend, the doctor performing the procedure admitted to three consecutive abortions, the accused woman claimed that she is as good as married, therefore attained quasi-respectability in society, in other words, impunity. As the family acquired an important role in court as a model for respectability, the defendants were eager to speak of an established couple-relationship, even when it was evident that there was none.

Another type of feminine defense was to cite the husband's authority: "I went where my husband took me." If the husband judged it to be proper, then there was nothing objectionable about it. At the same time, in the quack-case, lacking a decision-making husband, the defendant used the defense that she didn't know what she was doing. "I am a simple village woman, didn't know what great sin I was committing." The reason

for her ignorance was that she is from the country, lived in a village for a long time and wasn't familiar with city ways. "I didn't know this was such a great sin" — confessed another. Somewhat more artful was the argument presented by another woman, who explained her action on legal grounds: "I knew nothing of legal matters." In her case there is no mention whatsoever of morals or consciousness of guilt in the religious sense, only of ignorance of the law.

The *causative responsibility* of the woman, i.e. that she alone is responsible for the pregnancy, was a moral question. If the pregnancy was proven to be the result of rape, then the woman was considered a victim. All other pregnancies — according to the terminology of the population growth campaign — were "appropriate" pregnancies, be it that of an unwed mother or the result of an extramarital relationship. In the quack doctor's case the women seeking abortion became pregnant in the first sexual relationship. For the women this sexual relationship meant an emotional bond as well. For this reason she assented to the abortion arranged by the man. At the same trial the man said he would gladly marry her, but lacked the financial means necessary for it. The woman, albeit with sadness, but nevertheless familiar with the values of the prevailing legal mechanism, confessed — not without risk — that following the abortion "she saw the man less frequently." The number of abortions resulting from sexual relationships without the promise of marriage was greater than that of married women with children. Hospitals, in accordance with the regulations, did not even report abortions performed on married women, as marriage ascertained the control of the husband. The abortions performed on unmarried women deserved special attention from the police in the hope of uncovering suspicious circumstances. The unmarried but pregnant women usually claimed a "social reason," such as unsatisfactory housing conditions. In the court register, these abortions were documented as the unanimous decisions of married couples.

There was no mention of *parental responsibility* in the course of the trials. With the acceptance of motherhood, the woman made the long-term decision about her capabilities in fulfilling the requirements of her parental responsibilities. However, this question did not arise in 1952. When the women were recounting their motivations that led to the abortion, they mentioned mainly their own, short-term interests. This manner of reasoning was classified as "egotistic," and was the one that officialdom was especially sensitive about in their efforts to "protect the

Hungarian people," which received ample press coverage in connection with the well-publicized court cases. For surely, socialism "is so advanced" that a whole institutional network awaits the newborn: from state-run nurseries to adoption, everything is provided so that the country's new citizen could consider him/herself looked after, therefore the need for personal judgment with respect to the control of female fertility became unnecessary.

The concealed safety net: who knew what to do and where to turn?

Knowledge about the female body, besides the circle of friends and family, also had its origins in the respective community. Community awareness played an especially important role in poorer peasant communities, where there was neither hospital nor doctor close by. Knowledge about female fertility gained in value, for appearance before the abortion committee would have been a public admission of "shame" and "sin," something pregnant women wanted to avoid at all cost.

The most important criterion for midwives, who played a key-role in the population growth campaign, was "reliability." The midwives possessed the knowledge about hygiene and the means with which to avoid the controlling authority.[14]

Women discovering an unwanted pregnancy first looked for help in the immediate family circle. In the doctor-trial the women were either patients of the gynaecologist's practice, or came from his wider circle of clientele. In the case where they were, in fact, performing a prohibited surgery, one of the doctors defended himself by saying that he had been known to the woman's family for a long time. There was only one witness who walked in from the street when she noticed the doctor's sign on the Pozsonyi street house; it can be deduced from her statement however, that she was the agent who brought the whole matter to the attention of the police.

Folk abortion techniques were not held to be dangerous even by the scrutiny of the Public Prosecutor's office; they did not leave any trace, and as such were difficult for the police to identify. "Abortion methods form a tradition that were passed from village to village, neighbour to neighbour, family to family. Charlatans, midwives and witch doctors all acquired great facility and expertise with the result that they were able to perform an abortion without any visible sign, or danger" — reads the

report of the Public Prosecutor's Office.[15] Even if the courts convicted the local abortionist, after the amnesty "[the abortionist] soon returned to his/her former location where, among familiar surroundings, he/she was able to continue to practice."[16]

In the quack doctors' case too, "social acquaintance" status was important; but the female co-worker or the wife of the district medical officer also knew the desired address, even if there was no brass plate with the doctor's name on the front door. The local doctor in Tatabánya similarly provided the address of a doctor in Budapest, where the woman could "perhaps" look after the matter. That doctor then referred her to another doctor. When someone new came into the office, the most important question asked was who sent the patient, who recommended the address. Such connection network was also true in the doctor-trial between the two accused, albeit not on the same level, for one was "beholden" to the other and was not in the position to refuse "women in trouble" sent to him by his senior colleague higher up on the professional ladder.

Locations where abortions were performed could become quite well known after a few enquiries, be it the place of a "witch," a quack, or the office of a successful physician. One had only to inquire about it among one's circle of acquaintances, hoping that no one would report it to the police. During the war against abortion, the authorities tried to discover in the countryside the identity of those to whom the "women in trouble" turned. For this purpose they used the so-called abortion maps, where they marked with a dot the locations where a high number of abortions occurred, supposing that the pregnant woman would only go to someone she knew, i.e. to a person who lived in the neighbourhood. Thus the thickening of the dots would indicate an abortionist. However, the hitherto well-working network of community solidarity was not prepared for the eventuality of a police raid, in which case they really would have to forego the presence of the local "witch."

Solidarity within society was able to function — and did function — even in the face of ever increasing police vigilance. Solidarity between the women and their helpers developed in spite of the prohibition of abortion. Even the police did not deploy the best of their force in the war against abortionists; they were content with the occasionally dilettante reports of police constables. The women protested with massive signature-collecting campaigns against the unjustified hunt for scapegoats even during the most stringent police terror. Even the Democratic Federation of

Hungarian Women [Magyar Nők Demokratikus Szövetsége or MNDSZ] intervened against the sentencing of a midwife in Nyiregyháza, the woman being the only midwife in the district.[17] Next to the midwives, centrally controlled intervention affected the gynaecologists most, for even the shadow of suspicion could imperil their professional reputation. The doctors' professional competency was seriously threatened by the ignorant interference on the part of the courts. "In some cases they started legal proceedings against doctors who injected pregnant women either with vitamin B or Arzotomin." Consequently, the doctors didn't dare touch even women who were genuinely in danger of a miscarriage, for they would have been blamed whatever the outcome.[18] Not surprisingly, many failed to report it when a woman came for a diagnosis of pregnancy, then, soon after the confirmation of pregnancy, appeared bleeding amidst suspicious circumstances; instead, they reported the case to the statisticians as a miscarriage. The best defense was not to ask unnecessary questions on admission of the patient, but record only the minimally required information. The doctors employed a stereotypical way of keeping medical records; this way these could not be used in the course of prosecution. "The doctors at the Pécs and Mohács hospitals refrained from detailed questioning of the patients, because it was perceived as interrogation and third-degree questioning."[19] A possible defense tactic for the aborting woman was to register under a false name in the hospital, although it carried some risks.[20] Aborting women were unwilling to discuss who or what started the miscarriage. Silence protected the midwife, because if she managed to outwit the vigilance of the authorities, it meant the freedom of choice for other "women in trouble" later. The self-mutilating woman was not punished as severely as the abortionist, therefore silence carried less risk.

The legal system did not function too efficiently; therefore, in drawn-out court cases, the defendant had a greater opportunity for — in legal jargon — "collusion." The women were presented in the propaganda literature of the population growth campaign as passive and desperate. In spite of this, in most of the cases the woman alone made the difficult decision to have a secret abortion. These women behaved bravely in the face of officialdom and did not reveal the name of the abortionist. No one could escape the humiliating questioning, however.[21] But the axiom "who gains time gains life" proved true, for the Ministry of Justice, while in their circulars continuously instructed the courts how to proceed against abortionists, gradually eased up, as of 1953, on their initially unbending

severity. In the end, they gave amnesty to the hundreds of abortionists who fell victim to the abortion show-trials and, according to a directive, as of the summer of 1953 "no further actions were to be initiated."

The termination practitioners: the abortionists

During the inquiries, judicial reports often referred to those providing abortion as "Gypsy women." The hysteria was permeated with a strong anti-Gypsy sentiment, where the abortionist murders — nay, assassinates the most defenceless human being, the fetus. According to the population growth campaign literature, only a Gypsy is capable of committing such heinous an act with premeditation, for material gain and without professional knowledge. We also get an exact, but folklore-type descriptions of the abortionist "who is known to the wife of the cartwright-master, who lives in the half-finished house next to the church."[22] From the report one can deduce the logic of the investigation: there is no abortion performed in the area not because they eliminated the former abortionist, but because they haven't yet unmasked the new one. And until a "new enterprising person surfaces in the area," there will be no abortions.[23]

The quack doctors' trial also fits into this line of reasoning. One, a medical student in the final year of his medical studies, the other a quack, misled the women who gave them their trust. According to the charge, they did not treat the women in a professional manner, which was in fact, true. In the doctors' case this is also an important charge, for they demanded large sums of money from the women in the hope of financial gain. In the 1952 court cases the concept of "professionalism" did not relate to operative pregnancy termination: according to state and police definition, this type of operation could not be termed "professional."

Rural abortionists, quacks and physicians all admitted at the trials that they considered pregnancy termination a lucrative source of income. Abortion, the only fertility regulating tool before the advent of contraception — practiced with centuries-old routine by abortionists — became the logical target of the anti-abortion campaign. It was always and everywhere forbidden to perform an abortion in the home; however, the communist police force took up the fight against it with considerably more efficient results. Consequently, the attack led by the pro-abortionists hit the unprepared hospital systems.

The quacks took advantage of the market demand created by the prevalent political situation. According to the admission of one, they performed abortions on women who were not even pregnant, purely for material gain. The *genius loci* here was the defendant, who acquired a medical license in a devious way, and received his "professional knowledge" from the medical student. They performed the abortions in homes on plastic sheets. The medical student at least had the conscience to call an ambulance when it became evident that the unprofessionally injected woman in the fourth month of pregnancy would die of hemorrhage.

In the doctor-trial two doctors with different backgrounds ended up on the stand. They worked together as partners and sent each other patients. One of them attained his position as Chief of an obstetrics clinic by going through the traditional educational system. It was not only his background that brought upon him the notice of the example setters. He must have had a lucrative practice if, in 1952, he could afford a car — which also caught the attention of the authorities. At the police inquiry he tried to explain, not too convincingly, his need to augment his income by performing abortions in order to support an "over-sized household." He later attempted to explain away this ill-considered statement at the public trial; however, without doubt, he fitted into the stereotype of the "unconscionable doctor, taking lives for material gain." The doctor kept records, and as a defense he claimed that because filing cards necessary for record-keeping were a short-supply item, he made notes of the particulars on the back of a prescription form. This contained all data pertaining to the women who came to him with a gynaecological complaint. The police found this document despite the desperate efforts of the doctor to "get rid of his notes" (to eat them — A. P.). On the strength of this document, they took his earlier patients into police custody. In his private office his wife assisted him at the examinations and operations.

The life of the other doctor convicted in the doctor-trial turned out to be more adventurous. He came from an affluent, upper class Jewish family. In 1919 he had participated in the Republic of Council as a Red Army soldier. As a consequence, after the defeat of Hungary's first Soviet experiment, he was able to continue his medical studies only later, and only at provincial universities. During World War II, he served as a labour conscript in the army of Regent Miklós Horthy. Then, after the liberation of Hungary in 1945, he finally managed to establish a successful medical practice. His main sin was having treated female

patients without being a qualified specialist in gynaecology. The other reason why he proved to be an ideal victim was that in his private practice he did not keep records. This was no doubt stated by the key-witness in the case, who "accidentally" happened to walk into the man's Pozsonyi street office from the street. As the doctor stated at the trial: "I haven't kept any records since the war." Actually, record keeping was not compulsory; but doctors in private practice nevertheless kept records for self-protection. But the court physician at the trial indignantly stated: "As a rule, such records don't usually come to light except when seized in a police raid." The many people passing through the busy office and the lack of documentation helped to establish the nature of the indictment, as it made it difficult to follow the true development of the treatment. What really happened in the course of the examinations and treatments we don't really know, as so many different descriptions survived in any given case. However, it is noteworthy how people changed their stories in court. In the course of the trial so many different stories were heard — that of the police, the versions of the defense, not to mention the versions presented by the defendant — that it was difficult even to reconstruct whether or not the women found guilty of having an illegal abortion were pregnant in the first place. Against the doctor in the case however, there were already two previous proceedings for illegal abortion. But, as he stated in his deposition: "they were based on error." He was not only an ideal target in this trial because of his origins, his chaotic medical records and his past, but also because he "violated the [Government's] planned foreign exchange policy." He concealed in the back of a hairbrush — now kept as a memento — a 20 US Dollar banknote, which he voluntarily handed over to the police detectives inquiring after the whereabouts of his Napoleon gold coins. Although the place of concealment escaped the notice of the guards in the internment camp, it is improbable that at his home the detectives would have been able to discover it without his help. He could not have known that the pre-war Dollar banknote should have been offered to the National Bank for sale. With this, as well as with the two 10 Ruble coins he accepted from Soviet soldiers for treatment (which were recalled from circulation in 1947), he fitted well into the role of the secret abortionist: killer of healthy fetuses for material gain, at the same time a wheeler-dealer in foreign currency and gold.

The two doctors reacted to the police investigation differently. According to police records, the doctor with the lesser problems and a more numerous family to support attempted to smuggle into jail ampoules

of morphine and domatrin along with the necessary syringes, concealed in his socks. In his jail cell he became a nervous wreck, complained at the trial that the investigators "demonstrated a threatening attitude." He was in an unfamiliar situation and, on top of it, his cellmates threatened him with physical violence. Consequently "I confessed to everything, even to what I had not done" — he stated at the trial, where he changed his testimony from the one he had given at police headquarters.

His colleague with the unstable past, who owed a lot to his partner, gave an unnecessarily detailed confession as to how many abortions he performed and when: between January and April of 1952, two per week; in the first week of June five, in the second week seven; in the second week of May four, in the third week five; and in the past two-three weeks, two or three: altogether twenty-two. But at the trial, to his misfortune, the midwife assisting him at the operations told of 70-80 illegal abortions. In the final judgment the doctor was convicted for two "proven" abortions. At the public trial, where he attempted to turn its public nature to his advantage as if it could secure some form of justice for a defendant, the doctor stressed that although he had been performing abortions since November of 1951, he had not performed such operations since August of 1952; and the new system came into effect on April 11, 1952. The doctor tried to defend himself at the trial by stating that he asked women high fees for performing the abortions in order to discourage those requesting it. However, if a particular woman's social circumstance required it, he was ready to reduce the price. The doctor blamed his bad memory for names on the shell shock he had suffered from explosions during the war, and was unwilling to name more of his patients. This way only those came to the notice of the police who were discovered by them. The private clinic kept its secrets, solidarity was working.

At the time, all surgical interference of a gynaecological nature counted as illegal in the eyes of the police. The two doctors presented the same line of defense: they referred to the fact that not all abortions they performed were illegal. Actually, there was a period, after 1945 to be exact, when abortion had been legal. Naturally, abortions performed at private clinics for remuneration were not legal even then. However, a permit issued by the district medical officer in the face of rape committed by Soviet soldiers far and wide at the time, would have lent legality to the interventions. The departments set up for this very purpose, if asked, would have approved abortions performed by doctors — stated the

defendants. The doctors also stated that they could be charged only with negligent treatment, but not with illegal abortion. But in fact, it was truly an unforgivable irresponsibility to circumvent legality and perform an abortion on a woman who was suffering from a heart condition and, notwithstanding her illness, was driving a 3-ton transport truck because she was unable to secure other employment due to her upper middle class background; or on another pregnant woman suffering from diabetes and thyroid problems. The two defendant doctors referred to their breadwinner status, and produced several relatives as well, in need of support. They also deposited with the court letters written by their superiors, and a hand-written note by a person of unfortunate circumstance living in the same building, all stating that the doctors supported them. The defense duly used these as proof against the charge of greed. In the absence of medical notes, the doctors presented the argument that not every woman who consulted them was pregnant; some only had gynaecological problems. Both proudly defended their professional integrity: "I didn't perform the operation to make money" — one confidently declared — and with that, he drew the line between the irresponsible abortionist and the responsible specialist, albeit a negligent record-keeper.

The Chief of a clinic, who earlier hid in the grey zone and who, as yet, did not get involved with the law, but in the end was convicted on 11 counts of illegal abortions, did not give up the fight. He hired a well-known lawyer and lodged an appeal. Even before the expiration of the suspension of his license (August 10, 1955), from May 1, 1955 onward, he filled a responsible position at the János Hospital in Budapest. He didn't lose any time in securing a supportive letter from his superior, which he attached to the appeal. On the strength of it, he was acquitted on September 5, 1955. When, during September 1957, the police went to look for him, they didn't find him at his home, for by that time he had legally left the country for the West.

Both doctors claimed that their patients demanded to know "why did I do it for others and why wouldn't I do it for them" — which proved that the patients knew they were knocking on the right door. The ones in trouble knew the address of those who performed abortions and didn't keep too many administrative records. "I knew one had to report such operations, but I neglected to do so" — confessed one of the doctors. He, therefore, admitted to negligent administrative practices. At police headquarters he, confessed: "in almost all the cases I consented to it (i.e. to the abortions) at the insistence of the patients." The environment of the

private office stood in harsh contrast to that of the state-run clinics. In the private office the relationship between the patient and the doctor was more personal and the former could count on the sympathy of the latter, even though the doctor would warn the patient that the surgical intervention was an illegal act. There was a relationship of trust between those who performed the abortion and the ones seeking it, for both parties were aware of the risks involved.

The Sentences

On July 14, 1952, the accused in the doctor-trial were given — with a clear educative intent — maximum sentences. In April of 1954, the courts mitigated the sentences: confinement was reduced from 7 years and 6 months, to 4 years and 6 months; the 10,000 Ft. fine was later waived, for the court held that there was not enough material gain involved to justify it. The suspension of the medical licenses for life was amended to one year, as the act committed did not pose a real danger to society. At the same time, the cases served as proof that abortion was a threat to society. In April 1954, the court amended the sentences with the following reasoning: "The accused committed, or attempted to commit the abortions they are charged with during the period when the sentencing policy, fundamentally stricter than the previous one, was not yet in place, or more widely known. In the mind of the accused there still lived an assessment of the previous, considerably milder sentencing practice of the judiciary. Therefore, it is evident that its moderating influence had reduced its effectiveness." The example used is not legal, as the judgment handed down in the above charge was, in fact, only changed on the strength of the case currently before the court. All the factors that were ignored at the previous trial — lack of criminal record, excellent professional standing and responsible family life — two years later became mitigating circumstances.

In the case of the two defendants, the one-year jail terms were amended to 6-month suspended sentences. The responsibility was now borne by the two doctors alone, because the women "could have believed" — read the judgment — that the pregnancy was endangering their life. The women once again became "defenceless and deceived" in legal terminology. The doctors, whose task should have been to "do everything in the interest of the birth of a healthy, vital generation," were not

to the sewers." The third woman by this time had served her jail sentence. The mitigating circumstance in both cases is worthy of note: one is a "working woman who, in the meantime, had married and now leads a proper family life;" the other is "an obviously seriously ill, distressed woman."

At the review of their sentences, the quack doctors, originally charged with abortion, received a more severe sentence for infanticide. The two men, who earlier did not receive suspended jail sentences for "aiding and abetting," now received such sentences. In the case of the 18-year-old truant girl, jailed for 4 months — which was meant to serve as a lesson — the court withheld judgment holding, that in the meantime she became a trustworthy member of the Student Youth Federation (Hungary's communist youth organization [Demokratikus Ifjusági Szövetség or DISZ]) and, in any event, at the time she acted "on the advice of others." It carried weight in the argument of the suspension of the sentences that one of the women almost died as a result of the operation, which, in view of the court, was punishment enough. With respect of the others, they now "relate well to their jobs," therefore deserve the mercy of the Court of the Peoples' Republic as "misguided workers." As to what means of contraceptive methods the women employed during their lives and with what success we have no information.

Conclusions

In Hungary in 1952-53, in their attempt to control female fertility, the judicial forums were collecting data and mapped out social practices respecting female fertility. Founded on their fear of a decline in the population growth and on their boundless faith in communism, they defined a norm for fertility practices (every conceived child had to be born, and the women who had a sex life had to have a husband). Those who did not follow this norm had to confess their sins in public. The well-publicized abortion cases and police actions served the same purpose: to control the reproduction process and the medical information connected with it. The judicial system especially sanctioned the woman living outside a family unit, who made decisions in an independent, autonomous manner and earned the acceptance of society; but it supported the woman who displayed an attitude of weakness, and therefore could be categorized as the defenceless type complaining of having been deceived.

The reinstatement of the patriarchal respect owed to the man/husband, weakened during World War II, was assisted by a national policy that supported the subordination of women by forcing them into a weak victim-position.[24] In a "matriarchy born out of necessity" — as the war years and the period following it had been called — the typical woman was the independent one, capable of making decisions in emergency situations, which traditionally had been the exclusive privilege of men. The indirect target of the population growth campaign was the liquidation of this autonomous status of women.

The exclusively institutionalized regulation of female fertility failed in less than a year. It failed due to a manipulative judiciary system and its — in some cases still employable — regulations, although in ruins, but nevertheless guaranteeing a semblance of legality. And it failed because of human, female solidarity, which sprang into action out of necessity and as a result of oppression.[25] Ultimately the woman decides about the regulation of her fertility; and whether she recognizes the existence and the importance of this decision, is the fundamental question of women's independence. After 1954, the recognition of the intimacy of gravidity was restored; however, this recognition also served as a blueprint for interference for various succeeding state aspirations and ideologies.[26]

NOTES

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[1] A comment by Professor Pál Kiss, minutes of the Jan. 17, 1949 meeting of the Országos Egészségügyi Tanács (National Health Council). Documents of the National Health Council, XIX-C-9, 15, d. 24. Magyar Országos Levéltár (National Archives of Hungary, hereafter NAH), Budapest.

[2] Gábor Gyáni, "The Family as Fiction. Scholarly Discourse in the Kádár Era," in *Construction. Reconstruction*, ed. Andrea Pető and Béla Rásky

(Budapest: Central European University, Program on Gender and Culture, 1999), 93-103.

[3] Gisela Bock, "Racism and Sexism in Nazi Germany: Motherhood, Compulsory Sterilization and the State," in *Different Voices. Women and the Holocaust,* ed. Carol Ritter and John K. Roth (New York: Paragon House, 1993), 162-186; Victoria DeGrazia, *How Fascism Ruled Women.* (Berkerly: University of California Press, 1992); Christopher Williams, "Abortion and Women's Health in Russia and the Soviet Union Successor States," in *Women in Russia and Ukraine*, ed. Rosalind Marsh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 131-56; Gail Kligman, "The Politics of Reproduction in Caucescus's Romania: A Case Study in Political Culture," *East European Politics and Societies* 6(3) (1992), 364-418.

[4] György Németh, "Volt-e Ratkó törvény?" [Was there a Ratkó-law?] *Társadalmi Szemle* 12 (35) (1992), 81-90.

[5] Andrea Pető, "Átvonuló hadsereg, maradandó trauma. Az 1945-ös budapesti nemi erőszak esetek emlékezete" [Transiting Army, Lasting Trauma. Memories of Rape Cases in Budapest in 1945], *Történelmi Szemle* 1-2 (41) (1999), 85-107.

[6] It would deserve a special study how the respective Hungarian officials attempted to conceal the 1955 Soviet abortion-liberalization. At first they were refuting even its mere existence. Later, putting forward the extraordinary nature of the Hungarian situation as an argument, they attempted to exempt Hungary from the directive; in the end however, the "good example" could not help but have an influence on the arguments of the legislators.

[7] The material of the two cases can be found in: Dr. L. M. *et al.*, XXXV. 6.b. 3632/1952; and G. I. *et al.*, XXV. 6.b. 4897/1952. Both are in the Records of the Ministry of Justice, Budapest Archives.

[8] The Pécs-Baranya county investigation was conducted between the 16th and 18th of February, 1953. The text is published in Németh, "Volt-e Ratkó törvény?" 84-89.

[9] Ibid., 86.

[10] Notes of director Dr. István Lovrekovich of the Győr County Archives, June 9, 1944. Records of the Royal Hungarian Interior Ministry, Győr County Archives.

[11] XIX-C-9 15. d. Minutes of January 3, 1949. Records of the Ministry of Health, Magyar Országos Levéltár [Hungarian National Archives] (hereafter MOL).

[12] Circular from Dr. Imre Loránt, Department Head, to the City Chief Medical Officer of the Capital and to the County Chief Medical Officer, January 14, 1956. Records of the Ministry of Health. MOL.

[13] On the subject of the "fourfold female responsibility" see Catriona Mackenzie, "Abortion and Embodiment," in *Troubled Bodies. Critical*

Prespectives on Postmodernism, Medical Ethics, and the Body, ed. Paul A. Komesaroff, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1995), 38-62.

[14] On the history of midwifery to 1950 see Zita Deák, *A bába a magyarországi népi társadalomban (18. század vége – 20. század közepe)* [The Midwife in Hungarian Folk Society. (End of the 18th Century to the middle of the 20th Century)] (Budapest: Centrál Európa Alapítvány, 1996).

[15] The Pécs-Baranya county investigation, February 16 to 18, 1953. The text is published in Németh, "Volt-e Ratkó törvény?" 87.

[16] Minutes of the Meeting of the Public Prosecutor's Office, 6 March 1954, Records of the Interior Ministry, Győr County Archives.

[17] Documents of the Ministry of Health, Collection XX-10-B, *loc. cit.* 4d., doc. no. 9863, p. 11.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[21] Mrs. P.G., a nurse in the Sopron County Hospital, at one point moved heavy iron beds and, as a result, miscarried. This happened on April 18, 1955; the Sopron County Court ordered the case closed on May 28th. In another case they "unmasked" someone on September 6, 1952 for self-induced abortion and she was questioned on January 3, 1953 (quoted in Németh, "Volt-e Ratkó törvény?" 88)

[22] Notes of the Public Prosecutor's Office, Győr County Archives.

[23] Report of Health Team Leader Dr. Mátyás Tálas, October 2, 1952. 814-15-1/1952. Győr County Archives.

[24] Andrea Pető, "Memory Unchanged. Redefinition of identities in Post-WWII Hungary," in *CEU History Department Yearbook 1997-98,* 135–153.

[25] James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance — Hidden Transcripts (*New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

[26] Andrea Pető, "'A demokráciában nincsen k.' avagy az ellenőrizetlen szexualitás a hidegháború görbe tükrében" ["There are no whores in a democracy" — or unsupervised sexuality in the concave mirror of the Cold War] *Sympozion (*Novi Sad) (1998): 46-53.

Appendix of Tables.

Table 1 Live births in Hungary (per month, 1951-1955)

	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
January	16,722	14,590	16,174	18,052	18,050
February	15,868	14,817	15,593	16,728	17,023
March	17,268	10,179	**18,275**	19,501	19,889
April	15,671	15,609	17,216	19,152	18,969
May	16,497	15,288	17,791	20,344	19,481
June	15,548	14,588	17,087	18,850	·17,367
July	16,736	16,042	18,683	20,148	17,867
August	16,951	16,283	18,594	20,106	18,079
Sept.	16,657	16,781	19,192	19,016	17,590
October	15,329	16,124	17,265	17,863	16,736
Nov.	13,383	14,865	15,282	16,619	14,900
Dec.	13,714	14,654	15,774	17,068	14,478
Total	190,645	185,820	206,926	223,347	210,430

Data provided by György Németh, based on Ministry of Health statistics. The figure in bold represents the first occasion that the number of live births was influenced by the earlier introduction of the regulations limiting abortions.

Table 2 Individuals accused of and sentenced for performing abortions, 1938-1955.

Year Sentenced	No. of accused	No. of convicted
1938	not available	522
1950	764	447
1951	1,025	768
1952	1,383	911
1953	1,834	1,568
1954	797	506
1955	785	476

Data based on statistics compiled by the Office of the Chief Prosecutor of Hungary, NAH, XX-10.

Table 3. The number of known incomplete pregnancies in Hungary, 1950-1955.

Year	Abortions	Miscarriages	Total
1950	n.a.	n.a.	36,000
1951	1,687	36,115	37,800
1952	1,717	43,096	44,813
1953	2,777	39,944	42,721
1954	16,281	42,029	58,310
1955	35,598	43,102	78,500

Data based on statistics compiled by the Office of the Chief Prosecutor of Hungary, NAH, XX-10.

Table 4. The live births and mothers' mortality rates compared, 1938-1955.

Year	No. of live births	Mortality among mothers
1938	182,206	n.a.
1950	196,000	100
1951	190,605	81
1952	186,000	87
1953	207,000	57
1954	223,430	59
1955	210,430	49

Data based on statistics compiled by the Office of the Chief Prosecutor of Hungary, NAH, XX-10.

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Forgotten Victims of World War II: Hungarian Women in Soviet Forced Labour Camps

Ágnes Huszár Várdy

The countless number of lives lost during World War II, and the displacement of millions from their native lands are among the most tragic events in the history of the twentieth century. In fact, according to experts, the past century proved to be the most violent and the bloodiest one hundred years in human history. This has been convincingly substantiated by scholars, researchers, and journalists who have published scores of books and articles about civilian and military victims of both world wars.[1] Special emphasis has been put on victims of the Second World War, especially Hitler's crusade against the Jewish population in the countries occupied by the Third Reich. The concerted efforts of Jews to inform the general public about the horrors of the Jewish Holocaust has been especially successful and has led to widespread knowledge about these events among practically all the nations of the world.[2]

This does not hold true for most other ethnic groups and nationalities whose lives were adversely affected by World War II. Millions of non-Jews were forced to endure previously unheard of deprivation and hardship, before, during, and after the War. Compared to the Jewish Holocaust, historical research has paid little attention to the lot of other victimized groups. Proportionately little has been written about them, and as a result, these events have failed to become common knowledge. The fate of those who fled their native lands in Eastern and Central Europe in fear of the invading Soviet Army, and later settled in Western Europe, or immigrated to North or South America, has not been adequately researched. Not much is known about the victims of forced population expulsions and ethnic cleansing, such as the sixteen million

Germans who had been expelled from Poland and Czechoslovakia (from former East and West Prussia, Pomerania, Silesia and the Sudetenland). In the same vein, with the exception of Hungarian scholars, the general public is not aware of the retribution suffered by about 120,000 ethnic Hungarians who were driven across the Danube from Slovakia to Hungary as a consequence of the Beneš Decrees.[3] Furthermore, knowledge about Stalin's extermination of close to fifty million of his own compatriots, including Russians and many other ethnic groups and nationalities is limited. His victims included Poles, Ukrainians, members of the Baltic nations, Crimean Tatars, and many others who were exterminated by the millions.[4] Yet, knowledge about their fate is not widespread, at least not to the extent information is available about the horrors of the Jewish Holocaust. It is evident that the above-mentioned victims of war and prejudice, misery and extermination, have not enjoyed the same degree of interest of experts, researchers, and journalists. As a result, a gigantic gap of ignorance and misinformation exists regarding these shocking events both among the European as well as the American public.

The lives and fate of foreign victims of Soviet forced labour camps also falls into this little known category. This also applies to the educated classes of Western Europe and North America who simply assume that only POW's and members of the armed forces of the defeated nations were deported to the Soviet Union after World War II. This could not be further from the truth. In the case of Hungary, it was only after the demise of communism in 1989-1990 that researchers, journalists, and political leaders could begin to focus on the fate of the several hundred-thousand Hungarian civilians, including innocent women and children, who were deported to forced labour camps after the Soviet invasion of Hungary in September 1944.

It is virtually impossible to uncover every fact and detail about these deportations, but the publication of several studies — based on memoirs, diaries, and interviews of survivors — provides a vast amount of information and contributes substantially to our knowledge of these tragic events.[5] These include published works by Tamás Stark, György Dupka, Péter Rózsa, János Rózsás, Zoltán Szente, Mihály Herczeg, and Zsolt Csalog, the memoirs of Imre Badzey and Mrs. Sándor Mészáros, and the documentary films of Sándor Sára and the Gulyás brothers.[6] Two volumes of interviews collected by Ilona Szebeni and Valéria Kormos authentically illustrate and give credence to the fate of innocent men and women.[7] These include young girls and boys, who were forcibly taken to

the Soviet Gulag, to work from three to five years under the most primitive and excruciating circumstances. In spite of the attention given to these catastrophic events since the early 1990's, it will take many more years before most of the facts will be uncovered. It will probably take even more years before the general population will be properly informed, and elementary and secondary level textbooks will do justice to this tragic segment of Hungarian history.

In order to gain a clear understanding of the deportation of hundreds of thousands it is necessary to examine briefly the nature of Soviet policy toward Hungary after World War II. Since Hungary was at war with the Soviet Union, POW's and abducted civilians were treated somewhat differently from deportees of other occupied territories such as Poland and Czechoslovakia. Soviet view toward Hungary was made known already in June of 1943, by V.M. Molotov, the future Soviet foreign minister, in a letter to A.C. Kerr, the British Ambassador to Moscow. He wrote that because Hungary provided armed support to Germany, not only the government, but the entire Hungarian nation must be held responsible[8] In December of the same year, Molotov repeated this view when he reacted to Edward Beneš's anti-Hungarian invective. He emphasized that no matter what, "the Hungarians must be punished."[9]

The status of deportations in Hungary was not affected by the armistice, as it was in Slovakia. In December of 1944, the Soviet High Command, in a decree signed by Joseph Stalin and directed to the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Ukrainian Fronts, proclaimed that all German males between the ages of 17 and 45, and all German females between the ages of 18 and 30 must be deported.[10] These deportations were to be carried out on the territories of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. Although the major targets of the above proclamation were the ethnic Germans in the above states, in reality it struck a heavy blow against other nationality groups as well, but especially the Hungarians. If the quote could not be filled with Germans and with Hungarians with German surnames, they took any Hungarian off the streets, even if they "did not speak a single word of German."[11]

Soviet policy toward Hungarians was motivated by the concept of collective responsibility and collective retribution.[12] Consequently, unsuspecting civilians suffered the same fate as the Hungarian POW's, or those who believed Soviet propaganda, and in the hope of quick release, surrendered to enemy forces. Civilians were transported to the same network of forced labour camps, and had to endure the same dreadful circumstances

as the military personnel. The Association of Hungarian Veterans, an emigre organization based in Germany in the post-war years, found that as late as 1951, there were still 3,500 forced labour camps in the Soviet Union that incarcerated Hungarians, as well as other nationals such as Germans, Poles, Romanians, Japanese, Spaniards, Finns, Chinese, Ukrainians and many others.[13]

It has been estimated that over 600,000 Hungarians — both military and civilian — were abducted by the Red Army to work in coal and lead mines, railway and road construction projects, as well as on collective farms.[14] According to eyewitness accounts and contemporary official documents, civilians were generally arrested in two waves.[15]

The first wave of deportations took place primarily in northeastern Hungary, from regions that were in the path of the invading Soviet Army. There is no accurate record on the actual number of civilians who were deported during this time, but we know that the first wave of arrests usually took place a few days after the Soviet occupation of a given settlement. The arrests were executed with the help of Hungarian collaborators popularly called "policáj." The Soviet Army rounded up civilians under the pretence of asking young able-bodied men and women to participate in short cleanup operations popularly dubbed "malenkij robot" or "little work."[16] Unsuspecting civilians were told to assemble in schools, movie theatres, and public buildings so as to perform a few days or weeks of communal work. However, they were not permitted to return home after the work was done. Rather, they were forced to walk twenty, thirty, or even fifty kilometres to reception centres in such cities as Debrecen, Miskolc and Szerencs. From there, they were hoarded into cattle cars, with between forty to sixty people to a wagon, and taken to one of the Soviet forced labour camps in the Trans-Ural Region.

The second wave of mass internments began in January 1945, when all of Hungary was affected. Memoirs and contemporary documents reveal that the deportations of civilians were carried out on the basis of quotas and lists set by the Soviet Secret Police, known as the NKVD, short for the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. The Secret Police controlled and administered all the forced labour camps in the Soviet Union. Since the local organs of the NKVD had to fulfil the numerical quotas, the collection process extended — as was mentioned above — beyond the ethnic Germans to Hungarians with German names, and to whoever happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time.[17]

The random nature of deportations is aptly illustrated by the recollections of one of the deportees who related an incident that occurred during her long journey to the Soviet Union:

> I witnessed a dreadful incident near a train station. We did not reach the village yet and our train was standing at a railroad crossing. A farm wagon pulled by two horses, transporting tobacco leaves stood on the other side of the rail gate, waiting to cross. The driver must have been about thirty-six or thirty-eight, his son about thirteen or fourteen. A Soviet soldier ran over to them, yanked them both off the wagon, and shoved them into one of the cattle cars. It was terrible to listen to the hysterical cries of the man who screamed, 'Take me anywhere you want, I don't care, but let the boy go so that he can drive the wagon home. My wife will never know what happened to us.' They [the Russian soldiers] did not listen. They took them anyway. The train started, and as I looked back as long as I could, I saw the two horses standing there stock still, without their master. They did not move at all. The wife would have to wait in vain. Except for us, there were no other eyewitnesses.[18]

The compilation of lists of designated deportees was assigned to the authorities of each locality. These lists were partially drawn up on the basis of registration certificates, but were also motivated by personal likes and dislikes. As a result, ethnic Hungarians in Romania and Slovakia were routinely selected for deportation by Romanian and Slovak authorities just because they happened to be Hungarians. It also happened that in Hungary itself, in a given village with a pure Hungarian population, lists were compiled by the local authorities purely on the basis of personal preferences, motivated by revenge and jealousy.[19]

The whole process of deportation is unclear even today. For example, in some regions only able-bodied males were mobilized and deported, while in dozens of other villages authorities concentrated on the deportation of women only. In still other settlements, members of the Soviet Army simply took anyone to fill the quotas.

There were thousands of young women among the deportees. Their exact number is unknown, for many perished either on their way to the Soviet Union or as a result of the inhuman working conditions in the camps. The ratio of men and women internees varied from region to region. It is known, however, that from among those who were deported

from the Upper Tisza Region, 60% were women. Most of them were between the ages of 16 and 20, and since legally they were still not adults, their deportation also violated the laws on the protection of minors. In this region, 42% of the women deportees were between 20 and 30 years, while 5% were between the ages of 30 and 40. Women over forty were generally not considered for deportation.[20]

In most settlements, young, healthy, and able-bodied girls and women were put on the lists and were deported along with young boys, young men, and men in their forties. To fill the quotas, Soviet soldiers and their accomplices arrested and deported anyone who fit the age categories, irrelevant of family status. Survivors told of women three, four or five months pregnant being dragged out of their beds and taken to the gathering places. They did not receive any special treatment, and were forced to march along with the other detainees twenty to fifty kilometres to the reception canters. At the time of their arrest, the majority were forced to leave without proper clothing and food supplies, and even if they were permitted to take along some food, it could serve only as a temporary solution to their minimum daily sustenance. Their clothing and footwear proved to be totally inadequate for the extreme weather conditions of the Siberian winters. As a result, after years or at times only months of excruciating hard labour, thousands perished by freezing to death.

Ilona Vinnai (Vojto Ferencné), a young, newly-married woman in the village of Gavavencsellő in Szabolcs County, Northeastern Hungary, is a typical example of the countless young women who had to endure forced labour in the Soviet Union.[21] Seized in January of 1945, she survived three years of harsh labour on a collective farm and in the coal mines under horrendous circumstances. Like many young women in her village, she happened to be on the list of internees, but refused to assemble at the beckoning of the village drummer. Hungarian collaborators, the "policáj" quickly found, seized, and escorted her to the school where other detainees were held. She remembered how these "policáj" were often worse than the members of the Soviet occupational forces. They showed no mercy, were eager to search the homes of the villagers, and even pulled people from under their beds where they were hiding. Ilona Vinnai painted a vivid picture of the hardships in these camps:

> In the winter we suffered from –40, –45 Centigrade temperatures, while during the summer we had to endure the scorching

> rays of the sun. We could barely move our limbs. In the winter tears froze on our cheeks; we cried from the cold and the pain. During the summer we fainted from the intense heat. But who paid any attention to this? There, they did not diagnose illness as they do back home. A person without fever was considered sick only after he or she collapsed. Our physical strength was waning, and because of uncertainty, fear, and constant dread, our spiritual strength likewise.[22]

She recalled the agony survivors suffered when their fellow workers perished one after the other, especially those who lost their fathers, sisters, brothers or husbands. Ilona continued: "But we never abandoned faith in God. When our despair was greatest, we turned to Him, and we continued to believe from one hour to the next that our captivity will end, and that we will see our loved ones again."[23]

Living conditions in the forced labour camps were inhuman. Proper nourishment was nonexistent, watery cabbage soup or something similar, and black bread made up their daily food. The bread was often so coarse that the prisoners suffered constant severe stomach pains. Those who worked on collective farms learned to smuggle vegetables for themselves and their fellow deportees. In most of the camps, upon their arrival, the detainees lived in underground bunkers. And even later, when housed in barracks, they had to sleep on bare wooden planks. They were plagued by lice and cockroaches. Although medical care was provided at least symbolically by doctors who were prisoners themselves, there were no drugs or medications available for treatment. Thousands died in accidents suffered at the workplace, but the majority of deaths were the result of infections and diseases. Malaria, typhus and diarrhea were running rampant, and because of the lack of medical treatment and adequate nourishment, prisoners easily succumbed. In addition, the internees were constantly mistreated, pushed, kicked, and shoved around, and endlessly screamed at. The guards and camp administrators forced them to work even on Sundays, notwithstanding the fact that one day of the week was designated as a day of rest.

The working conditions in the mines were horrendous and completely unsafe. Margit Krechl, a native of the village of Sajóbabony, was deported at the age of sixteen, along with her younger sister and older brother. Her story is similar to the thousands of unsuspecting young girls who suffered similar fates.[24] As was customary, the Krechl siblings were asked to assemble at the school for questioning. Their trusting

father, a blacksmith, who had not even been drafted into the Hungarian army because of poor health, urged his children to obey the authorities. The family was told that the Soviet liberators needed some help, and that the children would be allowed to return home in a few weeks. The three siblings walked eighteen kilometres to the gathering centre in Miskolc. Once they reached their destination, their fate was sealed. "No one said a word to us," Margit Krechl recalled. "They were screaming at us left and right, as they drove us into the cattle cars. There must have been thousands like us."[25] The train took them to the Donets Valley in the Ukraine, to a village called Voroshilovka, where they were incarcerated and forced to do heavy labour in the nearby mines.

Working in the mines was like hell being unleashed upon them. This hell affected the internees mentally, psychologically, as well as physically. Even decades after her repatriation, Margit Krechl still has deep scars on her head and legs. "You know, these are the permanent marks caused by the mine that collapsed on top of us," she explained.

> They were even stingy with the proper timbering of the shafts. We had to worm our way through narrow corridors, crawling on all fours, like moles. My task was to shovel the coal into the mine car below. Many perished when the mine caved in. Only those young people survived who had enough lifeblood in them to crawl to the surface. Even today (in the late 1990's) I have nightmares of having to crawl in the dark, while something is constantly pulling me back.[26]

Since most camps were surrounded by double or triple wire fences, and closely scrutinized by guards perched in watch towers, escape from the camps was virtually impossible. Those who were caught were severely punished and tortured. Mária Melik, one of the young women who was abducted from Rakamaz in Northeastern Hungary, related that one of the cruellest punishments for the escapees consisted of lowering them into a bunker enclosed by concrete walls, and filling the bunker with ice cold water. The detainees were forced to stay in the bunker until they froze to death.[27]

The prisoners were subjected to constant chaos, uncertainty, and disarray. Having been transported enormous distances on seemingly endless roads, being dragged from one labour camp to another, and not knowing whether they would ever be released, frightened even the most courageous young men, let alone young girls. But seventeen year old

Gizella Csatlós of Balkány, Szabolcs County, thought she had no other choice but to escape.[28] This is part of her story in her own words:

> We have been outside only for a few days, the winter weather was becoming milder. As the snow began to melt, on our way to and from work, only a couple of meters from us, we saw the arms and legs of the dead sticking out from the earth. In the evenings in the barracks everyone was whispering that we should try to escape. People usually set out in pairs. My cousin said we should go too, but the guards were already bringing back prisoners who had been caught. There were even some who surrendered voluntarily because they got lost and simply circled around on the immense prairie. We were forced to watch the punishment they received. They had to strip practically naked, and were beaten until they collapsed, unconscious.[29]

Gizella and her cousin decided to escape nonetheless. She continued her story:

> We were scared to death of the punishment, but I was plagued by an even stronger emotion. It wasn't even fear, but horror. It happened that next to me on the berth a girl from my village, Margit Krakomperger, was dying. She was exactly seventeen years old like me. I kept telling myself: 'This is certain death, I don't want to end up like she did. My cousin was very encouraging; he claimed that he could make his way by following the stars.[30]

After months of vicissitudes, narrow escapes and hardships, while passing through several clearing camps in Odessa, Kishinev, Chernovitz, they reached the largest reception camp in a place called Bedyichev, which was the gathering place of those who were to be repatriated. Unrecognized as escapees from another camp, in early September 1945, they were told to gather their meagre belongings and to go to the railroad station the next morning because they will be going home.

> In a week we arrived in Máramarossziget [a former Hungarian city in Romania]. We were sobbing and laughing at the same time. We kissed the ground in joy. Apparently ours was the first train that brought back deportees from Russia. This was

> probably true, because other unfortunate prisoners did not receive the kind of treatment and supplies we received. We were given canned foods, fruit, and candy. At the border a local leader even made a speech, but was cut short. Within moments a huge crowd descended on the station. Where did you come from? Who are you? Did you meet my son, my daughter, my father? Everyone was searching for his/her loved ones. But we had to reembark, because Budapest was designated as our final destination.[31]

Their train passed through Gizella's native village, where someone from the crowd yelled that her cousin had jumped off the train at Bodrogszegi, and he was already safe at home in Balkány. Gizella felt betrayed and abandoned because she feared that she would be deceived again, and then transported somewhere else. But her cousin notified Gizella's mother that she was on Hungarian soil. Her mother immediately took the next train to Budapest. When she spotted her daughter at the train station she was so shocked by her changed appearance that she fainted, even though Gizella had endured only seven months of forced labour. Compared to the other deportees who had been detained for three to five years, her internment was relatively short because of her successful escape. Those who were forced to stay longer, were in much worse shape than she was.

When Gizella and her mother returned to Balkány, a large crowd assembled in front of their house. Everyone was looking for news about their loved ones. Gizella was frightened. "What should she tell them? That their relatives are treated like beasts? That many of them had perished?"[32] Gizella recalled: "I just uttered a few sentences about where they were, and that they were working in coal mines. The rest they could read from my eyes."[33]

Few were as fortunate as Gizella Csatlós and a select few who succeeded in escaping from the camps. There are no reliable statistics regarding the exact number of Hungarian civilians and military personnel who were incarcerated and eventually permitted to return home. Official records were not always kept, and when the prisoners died of starvation, disease, freezing temperatures, or in an accident at the workplace, they were simply shoved into mass graves without their names being recorded. Of the 600,000 deportees, approximately one third — 200,000 men, women and children never made it back.[34] They died a miserable death under the most excruciating and inhuman conditions imaginable.

Mass repatriation from the forced labour camps back to Hungary began in the autumn of 1947. Those who survived were marked for life, physically, psychologically, and spiritually. Many had lost limbs, contracted incurable diseases, or suffered serious injuries that plagued them for life. The reigning communist regime warned them to keep quiet and threatened them with retaliation from the moment they reached the Hungarian border. They could not count on anyone to appreciate their plight, and the local and state governments repeatedly rejected their requests for financial assistance. They received no help for further training, or for the completion of their studies, and the seriously ill and disabled were denied sick benefits and disability allowance. They were given no compensation for their financial losses, and if they were, the sums were minimal. In Debrecen, for example, deportees were given 5 forints, and later 20 forints as final reparation.[35]

The dreadful effects of these deportations affected not only the internees themselves, but also their loved ones who had been left behind. Wives who lost their husbands received no pensions without producing death certificates. But these were often nonexistent because camp administrators failed to keep records of the dead. Mrs. Gyula Keky, who did everything humanly possible to free her husband and son, begging authorities in Debrecen and elsewhere, eventually had to resettle in the town of Fót because her house in her native village was confiscated. Her forty-two year old husband and seventeen-year old son were deported from their native town of Hajdúböszörmény in October 1944, and she never heard of them again.[36]

Her words, over four decades later, at the age of 85, when she was interviewed by Ilona Szebeni, describe poignantly these tragic events that touched the lives of so many blameless, unsuspecting civilians: "Why did they take them? Why? My God, but why? They were innocent! Innocent! It was a terribly cruel world in those days. Why did they do this to us? It's horrible, horrible, even today."[37]

It is hoped that with time, as historical research makes greater effort to shed light on these injustices that befell humankind in the twentieth century, the deportation and internment of innocent Hungarian men, women, and children to Soviet forced labour camps will also receive the attention it deserves.[38] This is a precondition for this terrible tragedy to become better known throughout the world.

NOTES

This slightly different version of this study will appear in the forthcoming book: *Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, ed. S. B. Vardy, H. Tooley, and A. H. Vardy (New York: East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, 2003), ca. 850 pages.

[1] For an excellent summary of this mass cruelty see Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 2001).

[2] One of the best standard works (among many hundreds) on the Jewish Holocaust is still Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jewry* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961). See also the highly regarded work on the largest death camp, Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt, *Auschwitz: 1270 to the Present* (New York, 1996). On the Hungarian aspects of the Jewish Holocaust, see Randolph L. Braham's massive synthesis, *The Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary*, 2 vols. (New York, 1981); and *The Holocaust in Hungary Forty Years Later*, ed. Randolph L. Braham and Béla Vagó (New York, 1985). A classic Hungarian-language summary is Jenő Lévai, *Zsidósors Magyarországon* [Jewish Fate in Hungary] (Budapest, 1948). See also the documentary collection: *Vádirat a nácizmus ellen. Dokumentumok a magyarországi zsidóüldözések történetéhez* [Indictment of Nazism. Documents on the history of the persecution of the Jews in Hungary], ed. Ilona Benoschofsky and Elek Karsai, 3 vols. (Budapest, 1958–1967).

[3] On the Beneš Decrees, as they relate to the Hungarians, see Róbert Barta, "The Hungarian-Slovak Population Exchange and Forced Resettlement in 1947," and Edward Chaszar, "Ethnic Cleansing in Slovakia: The Plight of the Hungarian Minority," in *Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, ed. S. B. Vardy, H. Tooley, and A. H. Vardy (New York: East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, 2003), c. 850 pp. (in press). A list of the Beneš Decrees is also to be found in the Appendix of this volume. According to Barta, originally 73,187 Hungarians were slated for expulsion on the basis of the parity list. An additional 106,398 were to be expelled as "major war criminals" and 1,927 as "minor war criminals." Had this been implemented a total of 181,512 would have been expelled. But the Czechoslovak government was not satisfied even with these numbers. It turned to the Peace Conference and demanded approval for expulsion of an additional 200,000 Hungarians. These goals, however, were not permitted to be implemented, and thus by April 10, 1948, only 68,407 Hungarians were officially resettled in Hungary. Continued illegal expulsions, however, almost doubled this number, for according to the Hungarian census of 1949 at least 119,000 of these expellees were living in Hungary. Cf.

Ignác Romsics, *Magyarország története a XX. században* [Hungary's history in the Twentieth Century] (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 1999), 302.

[4] See the relevant studies by Alexander Prusin on the Poles, and Brian Blyn Williams on the Crimean Tatars, in Vardy-Tooley-Vardy, *Ethnic Cleansing*.

[5] According to Tamás Stark, since the collapse of the communist regime in 1989-1990, about two dozen memoirs and collection of memoirs have appeared in print. See Tamás Stark, "Magyarok szovjet kényszermunkatáborokban" [Hungarians in Soviet forced labour camps], in *Kortárs*, vol. 46, nos. 2–3 (February-March 2002), 70.

[6] These volumes are: Tamás Stark, *Magyarország második világháború emberveszteségе* [Hungary's population loss during World War II] (Budapest, 1989); Péter Rózsa, *Ha Túléled, halgass!* [If you survive, be quiet!] (Budapest, 1989); János Rózsás, *Keserű ifjúság* [Bitter youth], 2 vol. (Budapest, 1989); Zoltán Szente, *Magyarok a Gulag-szigeteken* [Hungarians on the Gulag Archipelago] (Szeged, 1989); Mihály Herczeg, ed. *A vásárhelyi leventék háborús kálváriája* [The wartime travails of the Leventes (paramilitary youth) from Vásárhely] (Szeged, 1990); György Dupka and Alekszei Korszun, *A "Malenkij Robot" dokumentumokban* [Malenkij Robot/Little Work in Documents] (Budapest, 1997); Mészáros Sándorné, *Elrabolt éveim a Gulágon* [My stolen years on the Gulag] (Ungvár-Budapest, 2000); Illés Zsunyi, *Nehéz idők* [Difficult times] (Budapest, 2001); Zsolt Csalog, *M. Lajos, 42 éves* [Lajos M., 42 years old] (Budapest, n.d.); Imre Badzey, ed., *A haláltáborból: Badzey Pál szolyvai lágernaplója* [From the death camp: Pál Badzey's Szolyva camp diary] (Budapest-Ungvár, n.d.). On the documentary films, see Tamás Stark, "Ethnic Cleansing and Collective Punishment," in Vardy-Toopley-Vardy, *Ethnic Cleansing*.

[7] The volumes in question are: Ilona Szebeni, ed. *Merre van a magyar hazám? Kényszermunkán a Szovjetunióban, 1944–1949* [Where is my Homeland? Forced labour in the Soviet Union, 1944–1949] (Budapest, 1991); Valéria Kormos, ed. *A végtelen foglyai: Magyar nők szovjet rabságban, 1945–1947* [Prisoners forever: Hungarian women in Soviet captivity, 1945–1947] (Budapest, 2001).

[8] See Gyula Juhász, ed., *Brit-magyar tárgyalások 1943-ban* [British-Hungarian Negotiations in 1943] (Budapest, 1989), 158.

[9] Péter Gosztonyi, *Háború van, háború!* [There is war, There is war!] (Budapest, 1989), 26. See also Tamás Stark in "Ethnic Cleansing and Collective Punishment," in Vardy-Tooley-Vardy, *Ethnic Cleansing*.

[10] Dupka and Korszun, *A "Malenkij Robot" dokumentumokban*, 33–34.

[11] This process of collecting people for forced labour is described in detail in the documentary collection *Moszkvának jelentjük. Titkos dokumentumok* [We Report To Moscow. Secret Documents], ed. Miklós Kun and Lajos Izsák (Budapest, 1994), 35 ff.

[12] On the brutal treatment of civilians by the "liberating" Soviet Armed Forces, see Cecil D. Eby, *Hungary at War: Civilians and Soldiers in World War*

II (University Park, PA, 1998), 229–323 (for the treatment and abuse of women specifically, see pp. 249–281); also, Andrea Pető, "Átvonuló hadsereg, maradandó trauma. Az 1945-ös budapesti nemi erőszak esetek emlékezete" [Transiting army, lasting trauma. Memories of rape cases in Budapest in 1945], *Történelmi Szemle* 1-2 (41): 85–107.

[13] For a list of 3500 prisoner of war and slave labor camps in postwar Soviet Union, see *Fehér könyv a Szovjetunióba elhurcolt hadifoglyok és polgári deportáltak helyzetéről* [White Book on the condition of POW's and civil deportees in the Soviet Union] (Bad Worishofen: Germany, 1950), 67–100. Also included is a location map of these camps.

[14] This was the estimate of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in 1946. But because this figure does not include those Hungarians who had been taken from Romanian-controlled Transylvania, and newly Soviet-controlled Carpatho-Ruthenia [Sub-Carpathia], the actual figure may be significantly higher. Cf. Tamás Stark's assessment in "Magyarok szovjet kényszermunkatáborokban," 75–76; and in Szebeni, *Merre van a magyar hazám?* 302–310.

[15] This is discussed by Tamás Stark in his "Magyarok szovjet kényszermunkatáborokban," 72–73.

[16] On this topic, see the already cited work, Dupka-Korszun, A "Malenkij Robot" dokumentumokban.

[17] See note #11 above, and Stark, "Magyarok szovjet kényszermunkatáborokban," 72–73.

[18] Ilona Vinnai (Vojto Ferencné), in Szebeni, *Merre van a magyar hazám?*, 137–141, the quotation is from p. 138.

[19] See Ilona Szebeni's introductory essay to her documentary compilation, *Merre van a magyar hazám?*, 9–10.

[20] *Ibid.*, 13.

[21] Ilona Vinnai, in Szebeni, *Merre van a magyar hazám?* 137–141.

[22] *Ibid.*, 139.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] Reminiscences of Margit Krechl (Kurti Sándorné), in Valéria Kormos, *A végtelen foglyai*, 7–12. See note #7 above.

[25] *Ibid.*, 7.

[26] *Ibid.*, 7–8.

[27] Reminiscences of Mária Melik (Tilki Jánosné) in Kormos, *A végtelen foglyai*, 33–39.

[28] Reminiscences of Gizella Csatlós (Réti Béláné) in Kormos, *A végtelen foglyai*, 19–26.

[29] *Ibid.*, 19.

[30] *Ibid.* 20.

[31] *Ibid.*, 23.

[32] *Ibid.*, 24.

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] This estimate by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office is cited by Tamás Stark in Szebeni, *Merre van a magyar hazám?*, 310.

[35] See Ilona Szebeni's introductory essay in her book *Merre van a magyar hazám?*, 14. Five Hungarian *forints* in 1947 were worth less than one U.S. dollar. For more details about the treatment of survivors of the camps by Hungary's communist government, see Kormos, *A végtelen foglyai*, 45–53.

[36] The reminiscences of Keky Gyuláné are recorded *ibid.*, 16–22.

[37] *Ibid.*, 16.

[38] To date, no adequate compensation has been offered to the victims of these deportations by any government. Hungary's post-1989 regime at one point had added 500 forints (a franction of a dollar) to the monthly pension payments of the survivors of the Soviet camps. Many of the people involved, however, had problems documenting their experiences, others were swindled out of the money by "agents" they hired to do the documenting.

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The Centre and the Periphery in Gizella Mollináry's Novel *Betévedt Európába*

Agatha Schwartz

The name of Gizella Mollináry barely sounds familiar to today's readers. And yet she was a fine poet of the first half of the 20th century whose excellence was recognized by renowned critics such as Antal Szerb and Ignotus.[1] She was also the author of an autobiographically inspired bestseller, *Betévedt Európába* [Lost in Europe], a novel which first appeared in 1941 and subsequently had eighteen editions.[2] Later, Mollináry wrote four sequels: *Betelt a föld hamissággal* [The Earth has Become Saturated With Falsehoods], *Meddő szüret után* [After a Barren Harvest], *Vádoltuk egymást* [We Accused Each Other], and *Az Isten hallgat* [God Is Silent]. Because the author openly declared her anti-German sentiments during the intolerant times of World War II, in 1944, after the Nazi occupation of Hungary, she was arrested and tortured by the Gestapo. *Betévedt Európába* was thereupon put on the list of forbidden books. According to Klára Széles it remains, however, an open question why, after 1945, this novel continued to figure on the list of undesirable literature until its re-publication in the 80s.[3] It certainly presents a rather unusual image of the last decades of the Austro–Hungarian monarchy and sheds an unflattering light on it from the perspective of a multiply marginal, peripheral figure: Gizella, the illegitimate daughter of a young Croatian woman. Hence the meaning of the title, *betévedt*, "having entered a place by chance," needs to be taken literally in more than one sense. Using Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of dialogism and its application in feminist criticism, I would like to demonstrate how, and on what levels the "centre" and the "periphery" enter into a dialogic relationship in this text thus endowing it with a particular kind of heteroglossia.[4]

Edward Shils defines the centre as the "centre of the order of symbols, of values and beliefs which govern the society;" therefore it

offers a value system for the periphery.[5] In *Betévedt Európába*, the centre and the periphery at first function as binary oppositions on multiple levels: the periphery stands for the village (geographical level), its innocence and purity (moral level), the peasants (social level), the Slavic world of Croatia (linguistic and cultural level), and the woman, the mother (gender roles). The centre represents the opposites: the city (Budapest, with its false luminosity, the gentlefolks (*urak*), Hungarian (the language that is initially foreign to Gizella's mother), and the man, the father. The centre normally offers a valid value system for the periphery; yet in this novel the centre's value system is at first deconstructed and shown as invalid because of its hypocrisy toward the seduced young woman and her illegitimate child. Bakhtin's term of dialogism denies the possibility of binary systems that mutually exclude or silence each other, or, to quote Dale Bauer: "No voice can resist the other voices which influence it; no voice can be purely 'monologic'."[6] If we apply the notion of dialogism to Mollináry's novel, we can see the shifting of what initially seemed a binary opposition to the level of a "fruitful interaction between potential dichotomies."[7] However, the reader has to be aware at the same time of the fact that this interplay of voices in a text is not free of power relations and domination which "determine that some voices survive and others die out."[8] These power relations in Mollináry's text and their shifting gender paradigm will become apparent particularly in relation to language and the power of writing.

The periphery and the centre are introduced in the novel simultaneously on the geographic, cultural, social, moral, and gender levels: Gizella's[9] mother Tinka, a young, innocent and uneducated girl from a small Croatian town is seduced by an Italian doctor whose train stops at the station on its way to the capital, Budapest. The brief encounter is not without consequence: in her naivety and her longing to escape from a peripheral existence, Tinka leaves her family in order to find the father of her child in Budapest. She leaves in her legitimate conviction that he will marry her. The centre, Budapest, is just about to celebrate the millennium in glaring opulence while the peripheral characters of the Danubian monarchy — Croats, Serbs, Slovaks, Gypsies, all sharing some darkness in their stories — gather around Tinka's bed at the Rókus hospital where Gizella will be born. However, the line dividing the centre and the periphery virtually disappears and the two spheres overlap as the narrator critically points at their shared moral hypocrisy: both the father of her child and her family in Croatia reject Tinka as she advances

in pregnancy. Gradually, the gender dichotomy also starts losing its oppositional force. At this point, it is still the father who, as the representative of the male sex, is presented as immoral and irresponsible since, after having kept Tinka in a state of insecurity, he goes off to marry a rich girl in order to advance faster in his career. The narrator continues to take side with the woman, the mother who is shown as an innocent victim of circumstances:

> When a woman goes downhill, she always ends up deeper than a man. So they say, the parasites of morality. And it is appealing since it sounds almost true. But nobody asks how many strong arms have been necessary to push a woman down into the abyss. And how many cowardly lies have these very same strong men used. (Mollináry 38)

At the age of four, Gizella pays her only visit to her father. She is brutally rejected by him: he kicks her. After this incident, the narrator's siding with the mother becomes absolute and the gender dichotomy seems to be firmly established. However, while the little girl lives in the house of her godparents in Pest, the woman-man dichotomy with its initial preference for female qualities turns around in favour of the man: it is the godmother who mistreats the child and the godfather who defends her, is fond of her, and accepts her as his substitute child. In terms of gender, for the moment the centre and the periphery do not stand opposed to each other any longer. As more women characters enter the scene of the centre (Budapest), the dichotomy woman-honesty-innocence versus man-dishonesty-corruption is getting blurred: Gizella experiences hatred and rejection from another woman for being an illegitimate child, whereas she is accorded sympathy and affection by several men for the very same reason.

The relationship between the centre and the periphery shifts also in geographic and linguistic terms when Tinka takes Gizella to Berlin and abandons her there at the railway station. Suddenly the language that was still foreign to her mother, Hungarian, turns out to be Gizella's only tongue. Faced with Berlin's foreign culture, Hungary and Budapest for a short moment become those peripheral places for the daughter where she thinks she belongs, although her Croatian mother always felt unwelcome and a stranger there. But after Hungarian officers who take her back on the train to Hungary brutally insult her regarding both her illegitimate status and her mother, Gizella looks back with nostalgia at her short stay in Berlin, where she was taken care of at an orphanage: "I thought that

they didn't love me because I was a stranger. But — if they didn't love me and could still be this good to me — how would they be if they were Hungarian or if I were like them?... One day, when I'll be a big girl!..." (64) The centre moves here from Budapest to Berlin, then back to Budapest, a process that will repeat itself with various locations throughout Gizella's story.

In the next episode, Hungarian officials take Gizella to her mother's native Croatia, that place of eternal nostalgia for the mother. For Gizella, Croatia presents itself in a way very different from its initially peripheral purity that her mother remembered. Not only does she not understand the language but her relatives deny any connection with her. They do not let her step over their threshold and set the dog on her: "This new world that I had built in my fantasy based on my mother's fragmented and nostalgic tales sank right in front of my eyes, before I could even step onto its grounds, with its unfenced courtyards, closed gates, and its dogs set on me." (90)

The child is taken back to Budapest to an orphanage, which, unlike the one in Berlin, she abhors for its inedible food and its severe treatment of children by the nuns. She subsequently undergoes several experiences where the different voices of the centre and the periphery become further intertwined. They merge more and more in Gizella herself who increasingly turns out to be a product of both the periphery and the centre. The first stage of this process takes place when five-year-old Gizella learns how to lie (initially a centre-value) in order to survive during the hardships of serving as a goose-herd on a farm where she is sent by the orphanage. This is when it suddenly dawns on her that she is neither a peasant nor gentlefolk: "I am neither the one nor the other." (96)

The next episode brings about an important turn in Gizella's life: the orphanage finds a family that wants to adopt her. Although they are people from the Hungarian periphery, peasants from the Szolnok area, they introduce a new voice into the novel's heteroglossia: the voice of rural, Calvinist Hungary. The value system this voice stands for is, in some aspects, similar to the peripheral world Gizella's mother came from. Even though Tinka, on the one hand, wanted to escape from this world it in order to become a gentlewoman, she kept longing for certain of its qualities: honesty, morality, and hard work above all. Gizella feels very close to her prospective foster-parents' frugal lifestyle, their straightforwardness and lack of submissiveness which greatly differs from the hypocrisy she had experienced both in Pest and in Croatia. She reaches

the point that she wants to become a Calvinist Hungarian. This process is interrupted when her mother suddenly shows up in order to take her back to Pest, the centre, that "abominable city" (133), as Gizella now refers to it. However, her identification with the Hungarian periphery remains incomplete even after a third attempt by the orphanage to find her a foster-home. She talks to the wind with the following words: "Hey you! Where do you come from? From where we are, from Croatia?" (217) This time, at the age of eight, she willingly leaves her new foster home by choosing a peripheral life in Pest with her mother, her little brother, and her mother's new partner and his children. She does so despite the premonition that her mother will treat her badly, and that she will have to be the one to look after her siblings and take care of the household while her mother prefers to be preoccupied with maintaining the appearance of an elegant lady who despises work.

The apartment building on Gát street, where the family lives, and which the narrator herself names "a product of the periphery" (261), is populated by different non-Magyar nationalities from all parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire: Czechs, Germans (the so-called Swabians), Slovaks, Jews, Gypsies. Their mentalities are revealed to the reader from Gizella's perspective. There are also Magyars among the tenants who are peripheral in the big city by their lower social status. A new social class with its ideology[10] enters the novel's heteroglossia: the working class that Gizella's stepfather, Molnár, a carpenter, belongs to. Gizella accepts this new existence in poverty, not without bitterness at the beginning, for several reasons: the main one being that it dissolves the dichotomy peasant-gentlefolk (physical labour versus disdain of such work). At the same time, the concept of manual labour and the logic of capitalism are introduced with the possibility of turning the results of such labour into profit, as Molnár is trying to save money to become independent and open his own workshop.

With the introduction of this social aspect, the gender dichotomy will become even more apparent. Gizella's longing for a father whom she never had, and whom she will partly find in Molnár, reveals itself as the projection of her desire to be a part of men's world — to belong to the centre dominated by men — and to assume the roles assigned to them but denied to women. As she is repeatedly told that it is a pity she was not born a boy because she is as intelligent as boys are supposed and expected to be, she starts building up an intellectual identification with men.

Already in Abony, her last foster-home before going back to Pest, while reading some romances, she sided with the male characters:

> But as much as I was taken by the male heros' daring and hazardous adventures, I was just as much angry at the countesses and princesses. All they could say during a rendezvous at the family tomb in a stormy night was that they were carrying a child under their heart... — They aren't any better than my mother! — I said as I threw the book at such phrases into the grass. (220)

Although she does not cease loving her mother and, paradoxically, looking after her better than her mother ever did it for her, Gizella increasingly identifies with Molnár and his value system, and distances herself from that of her mother. It is Molnár who encourages her to learn and who insists on her education, an idea Gizella's mother always opposed with her philosophy that a woman does not need any education since it suffices for her to be beautiful. At that point, Gizella tells her mother that she is a stupid *rác*,[11] but that she herself is Hungarian. This way, she declares herself a person of the centre along with Molnár, the man, the father, and detaches herself from the periphery, the mother.

The education issue also raises the dream about emigrating to America, a dream that will eventually become impossible to realize due to Molnár's death brought about by tuberculosis. Gizella is attracted to this image of a new centre for several reasons: for one, it represents the possibility of a third option, a society beyond the dichotomies she experienced during her childhood, beyond the fixed hierarchies and divisions into rich and poor, gentlefolk and peasant, centre and periphery, still so apparent in *fin-de-siècle* Austria-Hungary: "America is the place where everybody is equal. There aren't any lords or peasants, no legitimate or illegitimate children. There are only smart people and stupid people. They don't ask you what you were before but rather watch you to see what you will become." (Mollináry II 162) The dream of a society of equal opportunities, where "even the factory worker wears a top hat and tail coat in the evening" (II 221), brings in, though only marginally and towards the end of the novel, the voice of another discourse, the voice of socialism, which Gizella starts to sympathize with.[12] For Gizella, the idealized image of America stands, first and foremost, for the eradication of those seemingly unchangeable gender patterns she has observed around herself. America indicates the possibility of another world where women

are granted the same opportunities as men, the same freedom of choice and of decision-making over their lives: "Could I have only helped gluing and varnishing downstairs in the good, warm workshop. But we were not in America where the girls also could learn professions." (II 170) Molnár and Gizella are dreaming together about America while their relationship for moments verges on incest; thus Gizella, although not consciously, distances herself further from the mother and gets ever closer to a longed-for father. Her learning how to read and write can be interpreted along the same lines.

For Gizella, a major and lasting ambition of her unhappy childhood was to acquire the ability to read and write: "And I was stubbornly longing for the letters. Everything got a significance this way and obscure things became solved. I could learn everything and carve it into my memory. I believed that I was collecting weapons for a victory over my life." (225) Her initial desire to learn how to read and write originated in her yearning for the *father*. As a child, she wanted to be able to write a letter to her biological father, the doctor. At the time, she believed that such a letter could change her and her mother's life, but she never wrote the letter. This identification of the power of writing with the father-figure, the man, reveals the gender structure associated with the power of education still dominant in *fin-de-siècle* Europe. Men, who were in possession of knowledge, were given better positions in society than women who often, especially in rural communities, did not even know how to read and write: "When I become a big girl, I will know how to write. It is true that neither my mother nor aunt Anka nor my grandmother knew it... only the boys. The men who become kings, priests, judges, and doctors all know how to write. Why wasn't I born a boy?... Because only a boy is the real child." (146)

If we go back to Shils's definition that the centre stands for the order of symbols, we can say that for Gizella the search for the centre converts into her desire to literally inscribe herself into the symbolic order, the language of the Father. According to Jacques Lacan, the entering of the symbolic order, represented through language, is mediated by the father, not by the mother who keeps the child at the level of an oedipal, symbiotic relationship. Thus the process of acquiring the language, which in Gizella's case stands for the acquiring of the power of writing, means the exclusion of the mother and the affirmation, through language, of the patriarchal social structure.[13] Gizella's process of emancipation thus can be understood as her coming to writing which, paradoxi-

cally, becomes an affirmation of the world and of the word of the father, for: "He is our father, our head." (II 81)

The poem that she writes at the age of nine entitled "Az élet" (Life) shows this yearning for the father and his giving him preference over the mother:

> Above everything, I would like
> To have a father,
> But not even the cattle know
> Who their father is. (II 104ff)

There is, however, another significant aspect to the fact that Gizella writes poetry. Julia Kristeva, a follower but at the same time an "overcomer" of Lacan, applied Lacan's psychoanalytical theory to literature by distinguishing between the *symbolic* and the *semiotic*.[14] Whereas the symbolic stands for the language in its everyday, communicative use, the semiotic, that trace of a pre-oedipal language, is expressed in poetry because poetry deconstructs the symbolic structure of language. The semiotic is an articulation of basic energies whereas the symbolic sets fixed meanings in which the primary quality of language has been lost. In poetry, this primary quality of language is touched upon through the use of rhythm, rhyme etc. Thus Gizella, by using the power of writing for the writing of poetry, manages to deconstruct the symbolic, the word of the father, the centre itself. This poetic use of language is opposed to its commercial use; however, Gizella also applies the latter in order to make money when her family is in a dire financial situation, when she has to replace the absent father, Molnár, who spends some time in prison for fraud. She writes letters for lovers in which she uses ready-made phrases she has learned from reading romances, such as "my passionately desired Erzsike!," "your Károly who craves you with an unquenchable thirst," "your lover who will remain faithful even beyond death," and the like. (II 127)

The birth of her first poem raises the question of the conditions of writing for women through history. Gizella escapes from home where she not only has to share a limited space with her three siblings but also look after them and her sick mother in Molnár's absence. She simply runs away for several days into the solitude of nature without any obvious reason, in order to find what Virginia Woolf called "a room of one's own," that place of peace and quiet so necessary for the creative process most women have lacked over the centuries.[15] It is only in this isolated place, in this symbolic "room of her own" in the middle of the forest that

Gizella manages to compose her first poem. And it is interesting that Gizella's coming to writing occurs in this place so abundant with ancient feminine symbolism, such as the earth and the water, the trees. She digs herself a little bed in the earth and she lies there, warmed by the sun, during the daytime whereas at night she climbs up the tree just next to her earthy "nest" in order to feel physically safer. Her coming to writing thus becomes an emancipatory process on two levels: not only does she manage to create a linguistic form, the verse, that is able to deconstruct the language of the centre, of the father with that very same language, but she also indirectly formulates, in this very process, the conditions of writing that women of her (and unfortunately not only her) time lacked so badly.[16] The periphery, woman, meets here the centre, man, by claiming for herself the same power and, at the same time, deconstructing this power by the means of its most powerful device, language.

We have seen the shifting relationship between the periphery and the centre in the novel *Betévedt Európába* in connection to gender and the power structures associated with it. It has been suggested that the different voices in the text coming from the centre and the periphery are linked in a dialogic process but that, nevertheless, some voices remain dominant. The position of dominant voices was mostly revealed through the characters in possession of the power of writing, i.e. the male characters. Gizella is the only one among the female characters who manages to break through this power scheme not only by acquiring the power of writing but also by deconstructing the dominant linguistic structures of the "language of the Father," by turning language into poetry. This way she opens "a room of her own," a space for her femininity yet an empowered one. To conclude with Dale Bauer, the power relation of voices that form the novel's heteroglossia is best revealed through Gizella's process of coming to writing.

NOTES

All translations from the Hungarian original are by me (A. S).

[1] Klára Széles, "Mollináry Gizella," in Klára Széles, *Hálás utókor?* [Grateful posterity?] (Miskolc: Felső-magyarország kiadó, 2000), 93–97.

[2] In the text, I will provide page references to the new edition, Mollináry Gizella, *Betévedt Európába*, 2 volumes (Budapest: Garabonciás, n.d.).

[3] Klára Széles, "Irodalmi hiánypótlás" [Filling a gap in the literature], *Tiszatáj* (Sept. 1991): 33–35.

[4] Bakhtin defines heteroglossia as follows: "The novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of objects and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the social diversity of speech types [*raznorečie*] and by the differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions. Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia [*raznorečie*] can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships [always more or less dialogized]." In Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 263.

[5] Edward Shils, *Center and Periphery: Essays in Macrosociology* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 3.

[6] Dale Bauer, *Feminist Dialogics: A Theory of Failed Community* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1988), 166.

[7] Joanne Frye, *Living Stories, Telling Lives* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1986), 12.

[8] Clive Thomson, "Mikhail Bakhtin and Contemporary Anglo–American Feminist Theory," in *Critical Studies: The Bakhtin Circle Today* 1.2 (1989): 151.

[9] The use of the same first name for the character, narrator, and author clearly establishes what Robert Lejeune has named "*le pacte autobiographique*;" therefore we can talk about a downright autobiography on the formal level.

[10] I use the term "ideology" in the meaning that Bakhtin conferred to it, namely as the corpus of different voices one has interiorized as her or his own. According to Bakhtin, there is practically no possibility of a purely individual discourse: "The ideological becoming of a human being, in this view, is the process of selectively assimilating the words of others." (Bakhtin, 341).

[11] A derogatory expression used mainly for Serbians but also for other South Slavic people like the Croatians.

[12] Mollináry herself was an active socialist, one more reason for her mistreatment during World War II.

[13] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits I* (Paris: Seuil, 1966).

[14] Julia Kristeva, *La révolution du language poétique* (Paris: Seuil, 1974).

[15] Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (New York, San Diego, London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1929).

[16] Irmtraud Morgner, a contemporary woman writer from the ex-GDR formulated this problem of writing that still existed for women in her country by establishing what she calls the poetics of the montage–novel (*Montageroman*). The majority of women, due to their everyday drudgery of housework, care for the husband and children etc., are exposed to a constant interruption of everything they may want to do for themselves. Therefore they lack a continuous time-span so necessary for writing. For these facts, Morgner maintained that the only possible form of writing for women was a collage of texts of different genres and length. Morgner applied her poetics in her novels.

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a film review

Faith vs. Fate: Ildikó Enyedi's *Magic Hunter*

Katherine Gyékényesi Gatto

Magic Hunter. Directed by Ildikó Enyedi. Perf. Gary Kemp, Sadie Frost, Alexander Kaidanovsky. Alliance International, 1994.

The controversial and original Hungarian film director Ildikó Enyedi, in this her follow-up feature to the baroque feminist *My Twentieth Century* (1989), tantalizes and challenges us once again in *Magic Hunter*, a fable-like recreation of the Faustian legend that plays with our notions of time, space, and cultural paradigms.[1] In so doing, Enyedi unfolds the Hungarian folk and religious myths that are central to her *Weltanschauung*, and reveals her essential optimism and belief in miracles, especially those wrought by women in a world of relativity, chance, and chaos.

The film can be read on several levels as a "hopelessly pretentious meditation on the Weber opera *Der Freischütz*,"[2] or how a child's power of imagination can save adults from danger,[3] as a philosophical thriller,[4] as a capricious and intense exploration of the notion of time,[5] as a freewheeling miracle play,[6] as a contemporary cop story, or as an "emotional thriller built on a curious foundation of history, culture, and fantasy."[7] I read it as a feminist, artistic meditation on the notion of faith vs. fate, or providence vs. chance, with a detour into the examination of the nature of evil.

Art in the form of opera, storytelling, and painting (and of course the film itself), provides the framing, and mirror in the sense of *mimesis*, to the story of a police sharpshooter's fall and redemption. The film

begins with the slow, deep, and foreboding voiceover of a Satanic figure rhythmically counting magical numbers in German, among them the number seven. On the screen we see a mother narrating a story to her daughter about the devil, while sitting in the basement of what apparently is the Budapest Opera House during World War II with bombs falling all around them. The story involves a man, named Max, who is an excellent hunter, and who makes a pact with the devil, and in exchange receives seven magical bullets which will always hit their target. What the man does not know is that the seventh bullet will hit the target of the devil's choosing.

As a sequence of shots depicts scenes of destruction, warplanes bombing Budapest, volcanic eruptions, fires, and as the background music works up to a crescendo, the mother denounces all human and natural catastrophes as evil and works of the devil.[8] As she ends her narrative, her pearl necklace breaks, and one of the pearls falls into a storm sewer and rolls through it until it is plucked from its mouth by a bird at the other end, who is in the telescopic eye of a rifle. The sewer or tunnel through which the pearl has passed, as we shall see in other segments of the film, serves to link different times and spaces. Once again we hear the earlier voiceover chanting its black magic as we learn that it is a police sharpshooter in the woods outside Budapest, who is aiming his gun at the bird, then at a rabbit, then at a caterpillar, and finally at the abductor of a young woman, who is seen restraining her on the ground. After several tense moments the sharpshooter is given permission to fire at will, but miserably fails at his attempt for at the last moment, the abductor moves the girl into the line of fire, and instead of hitting him the policeman accidentally shoots the girl. In the next instant we see a portrait of the Virgin Mary in a church, with a rabbit hiding under her robe near her feet. It is in the juxtaposition of these two scenes that Enyedi introduces the underlying philosophical conundrum of her film: fate, chance, or accident versus faith, providence, and miracles. This same painting of the Virgin will come to life several times during the course of the film: first to explain its provenance in the Middle Ages; and second, to become the means by which providence in the form of the Virgin intervenes in this film's human history in an action deemed miraculous by all scientific accounts.

William G. Pollard in his book entitled, *Chance and Providence, God's Action in a World Governed by Scientific Law*, examines the tensions between two world views: namely, the traditional Judeo-Christian

understanding of God, man, and nature, and the insights and understandings of modern science, with the ultimate goal of reconciling the two. In his discussion of the laws of nature which he sees predominantly as statistical and unchanging in character, he argues for allowing alternatives.[9] One of his illustrations involves ballistics which has been used as an example of classical mechanics. Pollard posits the notion that in reality no ballistic missile ever behaves with the expected precision and fixed determination of path, but that a number of factors can dramatically influence and change a bullet's trajectory: the shape of the bullet, the accurate rifling of the barrel of the gun, the interaction of the bullet with the air it passes through, the turbulence of the air, and so on.[10] In this same vein, according to Pollard, "divine providence may operate in the shaping of events within the framework provided for them by the laws of the natural world."[11]

It is curious that Enyedi would employ the ballistics metaphor of the police sharpshooter whose bullet finds the wrong target to introduce her own inner conflict in coming to terms with the larger question of accident and destiny in human history. With the soundtrack of the opera's male chorus functioning as the chorus in a Greek tragedy, the policeman, who in real life is also named Max (Gary Kemp), is seen returning to a 90s Budapest, to the comfort of his family, which consists of his wife Eva (Sadie Frost), and his daughter Lili (Alexandra Wasscher), the same two characters from the introductory framing scene. Running parallel and interwoven with the sequences depicting Max's life in Budapest are a series of flashbacks evoking the Hungarian medieval past. These are presented as if they are imagined by Lili, Max's innocent young daughter as she gazes into the trees outside her window at night, or as she digs into a mound of dirt on the playground. Enyedi, through transitory lyrical images of nature such as acorns, trees, waters, wild horses, flying geese, subtlety conveys the passage of time and the metamorphoses of nature until we are in the presence of missionaries preaching and trying to convert the Hungarian pagan throngs from tree-worship to Christianity. I interpret these medieval scenes, of which this is the first, as Enyedi's depiction of the long tradition of Christian faith and belief in divine providence that has played a major role in Hungary's national identity and history.[12]

In the vein of real life imitating art, and art imitating real life, after the botched shooting, Max too is offered seven magical bullets from his colleague Kaspar (Peter Vallai), bullets which never miss their mark.

Of course Max does not know that we intuit that the diabolical Kaspar has some repayment in mind which is to be extracted when the last bullet is fired, when he says to Max, "I know you'll pay me back some day." Another folkloric medieval segment follows Max's acceptance of the magical bullets that mirrors Kaspar's attempt to acquire Max's soul. The medieval Mephistopheles, also played by the same actor as Kaspar, however, is the comical figure of Hungarian folktales, who is regularly trounced even by the poorest peasant. He is ridiculed by the villagers and eventually outwitted by a young man, who looks like Max, and who is able to trick the devil into accepting the soul of a snail instead of a human as payment for a new bridge.

After Max passes his marksmanship test at the police academy with the magical bullets and reestablishes his credibility, he receives his gun back and is given his next assignment — to keep under protective surveillance a visiting Russian chess champion, Maxim (Alexander Kaidanovsky), who has been threatened by assassins.[13] Enyedi's metaphoric use of chess and the chess master in her attempts to shed light on life as a game of faith vs. fate should also not escape our attention. The most important symbol of faith and divine providence in the movie, the image of the Virgin Mary is now reentered in another sequence of medieval times. We see the earlier villagers participating in a pilgrimage carrying the painting of the Virgin which we glimpsed at the beginning of the film.

A number of subsequent scenes show the chess master engaged in multiple games with individual opponents alternately observed by Eva, Lili and Max in the viewers' gallery. Earlier, Maxim had met Max's wife and daughter in the park in a chance encounter. Again a projectile had gone astray; this time it was the ball of Max's daughter Lili that hit Maxim in the head. Maxim graciously accepted Eva's apology, and this initial meeting led to a series of meetings between the two, which caused a lot of tension in Eva's marriage, since Max had been secretly observing them. At this point we are once again sent flying back to medieval times through a sewer and are privy to a humorous discussion of two monks concerning the Virgin Mary, one of whom was blinded in one eye after he gazed upon her, as well as images and a musical soundtrack that evoke the Turkish occupation of Hungary.[14]

Suddenly, we are back in the film's framing scene of the basement of the Budapest Opera House, and we hear the mother telling her daughter another story, this time about the Virgin Mary of the painting, and

how she miraculously saved a little rabbit from being torn apart by three dogs.

As Max continues his surveillance assignment, and before the relationship between Maxim and Eva can evolve into an affair, Max confronts Maxim in their apartment where Eva and he have invited him for coffee, and reveals to him that he has been watching his every move, and is there to protect him from an attempt on his life. At the same time, he is letting Maxim know that he knows about his and Eva's casual meetings, and will not tolerate their burgeoning relationship any longer. Both men exit the apartment assumedly to carry on their duties leaving an upset Eva behind. Thus, the chess master Maxim, on another level, also represents a threat to Max, and puts Max in danger of losing his wife and daughter which is akin to the danger of his losing his soul to the devil. Just as the suspense is mounting through a series of shots in which we believe Max has sighted Maxim's assassins, we see Kaspar in a telephone conversation directing Eva to where Max is on assignment. In the background we hear once again the diabolic voice counting in German as Max on a Budapest street is locating the assassin in his viewfinder and getting ready to shoot Maxim's would-be assailant. He fires his gun, but does not know that this last bullet is intended for Eva, for Eva is to pay her husband's debt to the devil with her soul. As the bullet is about to hit Eva in the chest, who in the meantime has come to find Max, the Virgin Mary from the painting in the Church which was constructed on the site of the original miracle which led to the people's (the Hungarians') conversion to Christianity, comes to life and runs through traffic down the street in a desperate attempt to stop the bullet and save Eva's life. This is the climax of the film which I believe represents Enyedi's ultimate philosophical questioning concerning the nature of providence, chance, and evil. How can God allow this innocent woman to be accidentally killed by her husband, just as he allowed Max earlier to shoot the innocent abducted girl Lina (Ildikó Tóth) instead of the criminal, although she ultimately did recover from her wound? (We know this from another scene in which Lina accidentally encounters Max in a coffee shop and like Jesus to a doubting Thomas shows him her wound.) How did it come to happen that Eva was there in the way of the bullet, exactly at the moment that Max was firing his gun? What is the nature of the evil that directed Max's last bullet toward Eva's heart in order to claim her soul for his own? Is God punishing Max, like he did Faust, and trying to teach him a lesson for his hubris? "God' s policy decision to permit gratuitous moral

and natural evil means that God takes the risk that his project may not go exactly as he would like in every detail," states John Sanders in *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence.*[15] Yet, Sanders argues that God continues to work to redeem the evil situation through the suffering and the miracle of resurrection of Jesus Christ. "God is not yet finished, and as long as God is working there is hope that the future will be different from what we presently experience."[16] I purport that Enyedi shares this view, but believes that woman, or a feminized God is working to counteract the chaos and suffering created by men. Indeed, Enyedi's theodicy or account of reasons why God might allow evil to happen concur with Richard Swinburne's view in that God could not achieve some of his good purposes except by means of a delay before they are achieved, and these and other good purposes except by means of allowing evil to occur.[17] Furthermore, it seems Enyedi believes that the nature of Max's acceptance of Kaspar's evil offer was like St. Augustine said, a perversion of his will which was wicked towards the lowest things and away from the supreme Substance, the God which you are.[18]

In the next scene we are back in the Opera House with Eva, Max, and Lili in the audience watching and listening to Weber's opera. Sirens go off and they are forced once again into the bombshelter. Lili asks, "What will happen now?" Eva responds, "I don't know. I'm going to tell you a story." As Eva continues to narrate we are once again back on the street with the Virgin Mary running towards Eva, only this time she has turned into Lili, who catches the bullet just as it is about to pierce her mother's heart. Our last image of the Virgin Mary is that of Lili's little girl face with a blue veil draped on her head. Embodied in the Virgin Mary, a feminized providence and symbol of faith, Lili has miraculously saved her mother's life and conquered the evil forces of fate.

This complex, non-linear film weaves four different threads together: the artistic use of framing including a mother telling stories to her daughter with the mimetic representation of Weber's opera on stage, a 90s detective thriller about a sharpshooter policeman in Budapest and his family, vignettes of medieval Hungary with Christian and droll, folkloric elements focused on the devil and the Virgin Mary, Hungary's patroness,[19] and finally lyrical transitional passages of nature imagery. It is a miracle in itself that Enyedi is able to maintain a semblance of a narrative given all the balls she has to juggle at once. In a cinematic style that combines realism with lyricism, legend and history, panorama and minutiae, Enyedi examines the theme of faith vs. fate and its relationship to evil, Hungary's

historical past and its relationship with the present, the interconnectedness of contemporary events, and in a gigantic optimistic leap of faith places her trust in feminist miracles and the ability of good to overcome evil.

NOTES

[1] Ildikó Enyedi was born in Budapest in 1955. She received a B.A. in economics after which she pursued film studies at the Academy of Film and Theatre in Budapest in 1980-84. Her filmography includes *Rózsalovag* (a documentary, 1981), *Az én XX. századom* (1989), *Bűvös vadász* (1994), and *Tamás és Juli* (1998). By utilizing the Faust theme, Enyedi is following in the footsteps of her countryman, István Szabó, who based his 1981 film, *Mephisto*, on the same premise.

[2] Stephen Holden, "'Hunter' fairy tale needs to bite the bullet," *The Plain Dealer*, Friday, November 15, 1996, E 9.

[3] Pamela Cuthbert, "Hunter of the Imagination," *Onscreen*, June 27, 1996. <http://www.eye.net/Arts/Movies/Onscreen/1996/osO627c.html>

[4] Louise Lagerström, "*Magic Hunter* by Ildikó Enyedi: Commentary," <http://www.filmfestivalen.se/1994/Magichunter.html>

[5] Peter Keough, "*Magic Hunter* is a smartly aimed modern Faust, "July 18, 1996. <http://bostonphoenix.com/altl/archive/movies/reviews/0718-9/MAGIC HUNTER.html>

[6] F. X. Feeney, "The Magic of Fate Coincidence," *Movie Reviews Archive*, July 19, 1996. <http://www.mrshowbiz.com/reviews/moviereviews/ movies/magichunter.html>

[7] Liz Braun, "Hunter has own magic," *Toronto Sun*, Saturday, June 29, 1996. <http://www.canoe.ca/JamMoviesReviewsM/magic_hunter.html>

[8] Upon hearing the devil's German monologue, seeing the scenes of destruction, as well as hearing the bombs falling near the Opera House, one cannot help but think of the massive destruction of Budapest during the last months of World War II by the fierce fighting between Axis (German-Hungarian) and Soviet troops.

[9] William G. Pollard, *Chance and Providence God's Action in a World Governed by Scientific Law* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 57.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 59.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[12] Further evidence is found in Hungary's national anthem, which is a prayer asking God to bless the Hungarians, and to brandish his defending sword on their behalf.

[13] It is interesting to probe the meaning of the presence of a Russian chess master in the liberated Hungary of the 90s especially in relationship to the

film's earlier references to German occupation and German-speaking diabolical symbols, perhaps pointing to Hungary's tragic history in the twentieth century as opposed to the film's medieval scenes depicting Hungary's conversion to Christianity. Likewise, it is curious to note Eva's ability to speak Russian, a language that was required study in Hungary until the fall of communism, but a requirement consciously ignored and despised by many Hungarians, because of its symbolic connotations. For a recent overview of Hungarian history see the 2001 volume of our journal entitled *Hungary: 1001-2001, A Millennial Retrospection,* especially the essay by N. F. Dreisziger, "Thousand Years of Hungarian Survival" (vol. XXVIII, 2001), pp. 1-72. Also, *A History of Hungary*, eds. Peter F. Sugar, Péter Hanák, and Tibor Frank (Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana: Indiana UP, 1990).

[14] The Turks defeated the Hungarian armies of Lajos [Louis] II in the battle of Mohács in southern Hungary in 1526 and in 1541 captured the country's capital, Buda. They remained rulers of the central portion of Hungary for approximately one hundred fifty years. See Géza Pálffy, "The Impact of the Ottoman Rule on Hungary," in *Hungary: 1001-2001,*" *cit.*, pp. 109-32. For another account, see C. A. Macartney' s *Hungary, A Short History* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1962), pp. 65-95.

[15] John Sanders, *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1998), p. 265.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 268.

[17] Richard Swinburne, *Providence and the Problem of Evil* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. x.

[18] James Walsh, S.J., and P.G. Walsh, eds. *Message of the Fathers of the Church: Divine Providence & Human Suffering* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1985), p. 30.

[19] The fervent religious nature of the Hungarian national anthem is closely matched by the popularity of Hungary's favorite hymn to the Virgin Mary, "Boldog Asszony Anyánk, Régi Nagy Patronánk" (Our Mother Blessed Lady, Great Patroness of Old).

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a review article

Ilona and Karl

Lee Congdon

Kenneth McRobbie, ed. *Humanity, Society and Commitment: On Karl Polanyi* [Cited as *HSC*] (Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1994). x + 178 pages.

Kenneth McRobbie and Kari Polanyi Levitt, eds. *Karl Polanyi in Vienna: The Contemporary Significance of "The Great Transformation"* [Cited as *KPV*] (Montréal: Black Rose Books, 2000). ix + 346 pages.

"At the heart of the matter," an aging Karl Polanyi wrote of *Hamlet*, "there is the inaction which the hero can neither justify nor account for."[1] For years he had associated his own propensity for inaction with that of the melancholy Dane. Why, he had asked himself, had he shied away from revolutionary means to advance the cause of socialism, the secular religion to which he had surrendered his life. In print and private correspondence, he had repented repeatedly, almost compulsively, for his failure, when young, to turn the Galileo Circle in a more militant direction. As the radical youth movement's first president, he felt responsible for its political quietism, its strictly cultural orientation (*KPV*, pp. 308-309, 314 note 13).

Polanyi might not have had to bear such a heavy burden of guilt had he not married Ilona Duczynska, whom her biographer György Dalos has called "the lover of action."[2] Kari Polanyi Levitt, the Polanyis' daughter, is not the only contributor to the books under review, proceedings of conferences organized by the Karl Polanyi Institute of Political Economy, to insist upon the powerful influence that her mother exerted

ings of conferences organized by the Karl Polanyi Institute of Political Economy, to insist upon the powerful influence that her mother exerted on her father. An entire section of *Karl Polanyi in Vienna* is devoted to the ideological and political union that those very different people struggled for years to achieve.

More than a decade younger than Polanyi, Duczynska was born to a Hungarian mother and a ne'er-do-well railroad official of noble Polish descent. In 1904, when she was seven, her father emigrated to the United States, where he died under mysterious circumstances. That loss was to mark her for life. Though well cared for, her mother and she were treated as poor relations, in part because the Békássy family belonged to the gentry and had opposed their daughter's marriage. This experience of humiliation and loneliness was soon transmuted into a hatred of the upper classes and a combative temperament. By the age of ten, Duczynska knew that she would always stand "against the world."[3]

She might have succumbed to bitterness and despair had she not been introduced to Ervin Szabó, the unorthodox socialist and moral revolutionary. "His Nietzsche-like head," she later recalled, "resembled that of my father, as did his rebellious spirit and his idealistic anarchism."[4] These words appear in a memoir of Szabó — written in 1978, the year of her death — to which she gave the title "The Unhappy Lover of Action." "Unhappy" because he had not been able to decide whether to be a scholar or a political activist. To some extent he was both, and thus he combined in himself Polanyi's reserve and Duczynska's passion.

During the Great War, that passion prompted Duczynska to formulate a plan to end the slaughter; having read of Friedrich Adler's assassination of Karl von Stürgkh, the Austrian prime minister, she resolved to rid the world of István Tisza. Before she could do so, however, the Hungarian prime minister resigned. Crestfallen, Duczynska had to content herself with the distribution of antiwar leaflets, an attempt to undermine the morale of men in uniform that brought her a two-year prison sentence.

Set free when Count Michael Károlyi came to power near war's end, she served Béla Kun's Soviet Republic and, after its fall, made a pilgrimage to Lenin's Russia before undertaking a mission to Vienna for the Hungarian Communist Party. There she met Polanyi, a war veteran who was recovering from illness and depression; that he was also Ervin Szabó's cousin could not have been a matter of indifference to her, especially because Szabó had died in 1918. In any event, as soon as her

divorce from antiwar comrade Tivadar Sugár became final, she and Karl exchanged vows.

Kenneth McRobbie, a historian, poet, and translator who knew the Polanyis well, provides a brief but useful account of the couple's years in Vienna (*KPV*, pp. 255-64). While Karl eked out a living as a staff writer for *Der Österreichische Volkswirt*, Ilona, who had been expelled from the Hungarian Communist Party for daring to criticize it, looked for activist opportunities, finding one in the aftermath of Austria's civil war of 1934. Assuming the name "Anna Novotny," she edited the *Schutzbund* publication *Der Sprecher* and arranged illegal radio broadcasts. She was in her element, as Barbara Striker, who married into the Polanyi family and conspired with Ilona, makes clear in her interesting memoir (*KPV*, pp. 272-74). She refused, therefore, to join Karl in England, where he had gone in search of work when, in 1933, the *Volkswirt* informed him that it could no longer pay his salary. Only in 1936, following a bout with tuberculosis, did Ilona too cross the English Channel.

None of the contributors to these volumes has a critical word for Ilona, but Aurel Kolnai, a frequent visitor at the Polanyis' Vorgartenstrasse flat who became an outstanding political and moral philosopher, described her as "the most impressive and inexorable revolutionary fanatic I have ever met."[5] In England, that fanaticism helped push Karl further to the left. Neither of these volumes is devoted to the Polanyis' life in their new place of exile, but Marguerite Mendell, co-founder of the Karl Polanyi Institute, does write of Karl's work with the Workers' Education Association (W.E.A.). Looking back on that experience, Karl wrote that he "was never political; I was born to teach" (*HSC*, p. 25).

That was an accurate, but misleading self-description. Karl was indeed born to teach and he was not political in the narrow sense; he participated only — and briefly — in Oszkár Jászi's pre-World-War-I National Citizens' Radical Party. But he was not a-political. Mendell entitles her essay "Karl Polanyi and Socialist Education," and although she insists that Karl was never a propagandist, she praises him for viewing adult education "as *agency* for the transition to socialism" (*HSC*, p. 33; her italics). For Karl, "action" had come to mean agitation for socialism, or if one prefers terms employed by Georg Lukács, a friend of his youth, raising the class consciousness of the proletariat.

Mention of Lukács is not out of place, because Karl had, by the early 1930s, become increasingly pro-communist, and hence pro-Soviet. He joined England's fellow-travelling Christian Left and co-edited

Christianity and the Social Revolution, a volume that attempted to prove that Christianity, rightly understood, was communism. Of this volume and Karl's new enthusiasm for communism, the Hungarian sociologist Endre Nagy alone has something to say. In a careful analysis of the alienation that characterized relations between Karl and his younger brother Michael, the brilliant polymath, Nagy documents Karl's waning interest in guild socialism and embrace of Stalin's Five Year Plan, and of "socialism in one country."

Although he describes Karl's 1939 essay "Russia and the Crisis" as a "brilliant interpretation of the history of Soviet Russia in relation to the cause of socialism," Nagy adds that it also marked "the low-point of Karl Polanyi's career" (*HSC*, p. 98). Of the Purge Trials, for example, Karl delivered himself of this judgment:

> Many people actually believed that the Trials were a frame-up, and they indulged in fantastic explanations of them. To some they seemed to show the workings of a bloodthirsty tyranny; to others they were a result of Stalin's inordinate personal ambition; and to others again they appeared to be "witch trials" in which wretched innocents had been hypnotized into confessing imaginary crimes (cited by Nagy, *HSC*, p. 99).

As Nagy rightly observes, it was ill-considered statements of this kind that so incensed Michael, who after initially reserving judgment had formed a highly critical opinion of the Soviet "experiment." Nor can there be any doubt that Michael held Ilona responsible for his brother's apologies for tyranny. As Nagy points out, Michael's wife Magda "was disgusted by Ilona Duczynska's revolutionary activism" (*HSC*, p. 97). To his credit, Karl made sincere efforts to preserve a family, if not an intellectual, connection with his brother. His success, however, remained limited; the late Edward Shils, who knew Michael Polanyi well, could not recall a single occasion when Michael so much as mentioned Karl.[6]

Their widely differing assessments of Soviet Russia being what they were, Michael took strong issue with *The Great Transformation* (1944), the famous work in which Karl pronounced anathema on market economy. Much is made of that work in these essay collections, but readers are likely to come away with the mistaken impression that the title refers to the transformation *to* market economy. It is true that Karl devoted much space to his critique of that economy and of so-called "economic man," but the transformation in question was that to socialism.

For understandable reasons, no contributor to these celebratory volumes calls attention to Karl's praise of Stalin's economic program as the most inspiring example of a "planned" economy. For him the NEP was at best a half measure; only during the 1930s did Russia emerge "as the representative of a new system which could replace market economy."[7] One is not surprised by the book's dedication: "To my beloved wife Ilona Duczynska I dedicate this book which owes all to her help and criticism."

Of course, Karl's admiration for a bankrupt and merciless economic system does not necessarily mean that his thesis concerning market and planned economies was mistaken, and much of *Karl Polanyi in Vienna* is devoted to "the contemporary significance of *The Great Transformation*." In the wake of communism's collapse and the revelations of the past decade, however, only the most charitable will be able to take these collectivist essays seriously. As an example of their tone and remoteness from reality, I offer this observation from the pen of J. A. Kregel of the University of Bologna's Department of Economics: "However one might want to call the Soviet Union, it was a system in which the economy was embedded in a network of socio-economic relations, in which a variety of other incentives were substituted for the profit motive" (*KPV*, p. 114). Kregel does not say what other incentives he has in mind.

In the same year that *The Great Transformation* appeared, their publishers released Friedrich Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* and Wilhelm Röpke's *Civitas Humana*. Both books attacked socialist collectivism and defended market economy on economic as well as moral grounds; both shared Polanyi's opposition to a completely "self-regulating" market and his awareness of the need to aid the destitute; and both have been vindicated. More important in the present context, Michael Polanyi's economic views, set forth in his brilliant performance of 1945, *Full Employment and Free Trade*, have proven superior to Karl's. Although he borrowed from Hayek, Röpke, and John Maynard Keynes, Michael presented a highly original case for market economy that did not ignore "safety net" considerations.[8]

With the advantage of hindsight, Robert Skidelsky has recently provided a thoughtful, if excessively optimistic, analysis of "the economic and political consequences of the end of communism." In *The Road from Serfdom*, Keynes's acclaimed biographer chronicles the rise of collectivist theory and practice, with particular reference to the era of the world wars. If, as many collectivists asked, the state could organize society for war, why could it not do the same in times of peace? The answer, according

to Skidelsky, is obvious: "in war there is a clear priority and a general will to achieve it. In peace there is no priority, only preferences."[9]

Like Michael Polanyi, Skidelsky is a conservative Keynesian, and the case he makes for a market economy with enough state intervention to ensure competition and protect the truly destitute is a compelling one. Moreover, it sheds light on Karl Polanyi's problem: whatever his intent, his advocacy of a planned economy was inevitably a brief for massive state coercion on behalf of one segment of the population and for the destruction of that freedom which, in his better moments, he so cherished.

Blind to the implications of his position, Karl continued the attack on market economy in the United States, where in 1947 he began to lecture at Columbia University, and Canada, where he and Ilona established a new home. For Ilona, who was denied a U.S. residence permit because of her communist past, Canada offered limited opportunities for political action. Her political union with her husband was, however, strengthened in 1956. "Our *Weltanschauung*," she later recalled, "and our activities, in which for several decades we had known mutual understanding while not following identical paths, eventually merged following the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956" (*KPV*, p. 312). After reading Khrushchev's speech denouncing Stalin, they achieved a oneness in theory and practice that they had not previously known. Together they had arrived at reform communism and the belief that they had been called to preach the revised gospel.

When, later that fall, Hungarians took up arms, they felt an almost religious exhilaration, for as McRobbie points out, they interpreted the Revolution as "a blow struck *for* socialism" (*HSC*, p. 51; his italics). Of one mind at last, they conceived the idea of a book that would introduce an English-reading public to some of the best work by Hungarian Populists — radical spokesmen for the peasantry — and reform communists. After a long and difficult search, they secured a publisher for *The Plough and the Pen: Writings from Hungary 1930-1956*; it appeared in 1963, the year before Karl succumbed to cancer.

The Polanyis characterized their "book of homage" as "the fruit of [our] several pasts and [our] long converging lives."[10] They dedicated it to the memory of Endre Havas, the model for Peter Slavek in Arthur Koestler's novel, *Arrival and Departure*. They had met Havas in wartime London where he was acting as Michael Károlyi's secretary and confidant. In 1949 he returned to Hungary in the knowledge that, having lived in the West, he might come under Stalinist suspicion. But as he told Károlyi:

"If I am purged it is I who will be in the wrong. I will die with the cry of the Jacobins on my lips: '*Vive la République!*' and add my own '*Vive le Communisme!*'"[11]

He would have his chance; Hungarian police took him into custody and subjected him to merciless torture. Paul Ignotus, who occupied a nearby cell, recalled that "they dragged him about and played football with his body. He was left lying in his excrement for days."[12] The Polanyis were horrified by their friend's murder, but they could still describe the police state responsible for it as "socialism's work-in-progress."[13] And as McRobbie, who collaborated on the book, admits, they omitted all mention of Soviet suppression of the Revolution (*HSC*, p. 53), referring only to "the catastrophe."[14]

At the same time, they enthused over the postwar expropriation of the country's large landowners, made possible by "the Red Army's victorious advance."[15] It was the land reform, they maintained, that prompted the Populists to draw nearer to the communists, a marriage on the left that survived the stress of Stalinism to emerge stronger in 1956. Indeed, "the interplay of Populist thought with the humanist aspect of Marxism [allegedly represented by Lukács] resulted in a drive for party reform and the vision of a Hungary socialist in her own right."[16]

In the same year that *The Plough and the Pen* appeared, the government of János Kádár invited the Polanyis to Budapest and, after Karl's death, decorated Ilona. Had she and Karl found in post-revolutionary Hungary the land of their dreams? The answer is no, for as the distinguished historian György Litván sagely observes, "she [Ilona] felt at home only in opposition, in the role of militant revolutionary, not of victor" (*KPV*, p. 287). She used the occasion of her recognition to explain why: "I am a believer in a socialism with a more human face, which lies beyond the socialism that has come into existence historically" (*HSC*, p. 262).

No existing socialism could ever quell Ilona's rebellious spirit, because it was the struggle itself that gave meaning to her life. And if Karl possessed a less restless spirit, he too conceived of socialism as a Platonic Form. In a letter he wrote a few days before he died, he observed that "the heart of the socialist nation is the people, where collective existence is the enjoyment of a community of culture. I myself have never lived in such a society" (*HSC*, p. 131). In their commitment to a socialism that would never exist and thus never have to answer for its conduct, Ilona and Karl had truly become one.

NOTES

[1] Karl Polanyi, "Hamlet," *The Yale Review*, XLIII, 3 (1954), 337.

[2] See György Dalos, *A cselekvés szerelmese* (Budapest: Kossuth Konyvkiadó, 1984).

[3] Ilona Duczynska, "Korán reggel," *Új Irás*, XIII, 3 (1973), 13. See also Lee Congdon, *Exile and Social Thouqht: Hunqarian Intellectuals in Germany and Austria, 1919-1933* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 19.

[4] Ilona Duczynska, "A cselekvés boldogtalan szerelmese: Néhany adalekom Szabó Ervin emlékéhez," *Valóság*, XXI, 5 (1978), 12.

[5] Aurel Kolnai, *Political Memoirs*, ed. Francesca Murphy (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 1999), p. 46.

[6] Conversation with Professor Edward Shils; Chicago, 1991.

[7] Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957 [1944]), p. 247.

[8] See Michael Polanyi, *Full Employment and Free Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945), and Lee Congdon, "Between Brothers: Karl and Michael Polanyi on Fascism and Communism," *Tradition and Discovery*, XXIV, 2 (1997-98), 7-13.

[9] Robert Skidelsky, *The Road from Serfdom: The Economic and Political Consequences of the End of Communism* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), p. 47.

[10] Ilona Duczynska and Karl Polanyi, eds., *The Plouqh and the Pen: Writings from Hunqary 1930-1956* (London: Peter Owen, 1963), p. 15.

[11] Michael Károlyi, *Faith Without Illusion: Memoirs*, trans. Catherine Karolyi (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1957), p. 350.

[12] Paul Ignotus, *Political Prisoner* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 132.

[13] Duczynska and Polanyi, eds., *The Plouqh and the Pen*, p. 13.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

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other review articles*

Rare Hungarian Books and Maps

Enikő Molnár Basa

A Canadian Collection of Hungarica, formed, catalogued and annotated by J. Eugene Horvath. 2 vols.: *Books, 1494–1819*, and *Maps & City Views, 1493–1817.* Vancouver: Don Atkins, Benwell Atkins, Ltd., 2001. $65.00 (US). Distributed by John King: ‹www.abebooks.com› e-mail address: antbook@aol.com

J. Eugene Horvath has published a catalogue of his collection of Hungarica which is much more than a guide to that collection. As he notes in the "Apologia," "it may be the first [work] to provide the English-speaking public with access to information on the cultural history of Hungary such as can be conveyed in an annotated bibliography." The work is truly comprehensive and in its descriptions gives a wealth of cultural detail. The collection it covers is itself an impressive one documenting Hungarian history and culture throughout the early modern era with books from 1494 to 1819 and maps from 1493 to 1817. Scholars would take great pleasure in looking through the collection with the catalogue as a guide, and would no doubt find interesting details in the observations of western authors on Hungary, in the choice of pictures and portraits, maybe even in the selection of a particular event or geographical location for treatment. It is even fun just to read the catalogue, and it seems clear that this collection deserves to be kept together. It has been a labour of love, and the collection has been very purposeful.

The collector's intent is made clear in the "Apologia" but it also emerges from the other preliminary matter. The catalogue is preceded by

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* Women reviewing books not necessarily related to the subject of "Women and Hungary."

"Notes to the Reader" which give useful information on interpreting the entries and places the period covered in historical perspective. Thus, the area of "Historical Hungary" and the role of Transylvania, indispensable to the understanding of work published through the early 19th century, is explained. Western cartographers, Horvath points out, often continued to depict the Hungarian crown lands as Hungary, even if the Austrian administration did not honour this distinction. Complementing the useful preliminary notes is back matter that makes the catalogue even more useful. A guide to place names gives the Hungarian, Latin, and German names for proper historical reference as well as the present name and country to enable geographical identification. This is followed by a bibliography of reference works consulted in the preparation of the annotation. Almost 150 of these are from the author's own library and give background information on the works themselves, the authors, and the subject matter. A classified index allows for a quick overview of the subject matter. Not surprisingly, history and religion have the most entries (144 and 86 respectively) but there are entries on law, literature, science, travel, geography, dictionaries, encyclopedias, maps and atlases. The historical name index lists persons, places, associations and publications mentioned in the entries. A separate "Index of Provenance" allows the reader to trace the history of the physical book itself.

The second volume, *Maps and City Views 1493–1817* is organized along the same pattern as volume one, *Books 1494–1819.* A bibliography and index of historical names provide the back matter, but the guide to place names is appropriately moved to the introductory part of the work. The notes place special emphasis on the vagaries of mapping during the Turkish times when Western cartographers, lacking reliable new information, continued to represent the country according to pre-1526 descriptions. The courses of the Danube and Tisza, for example, were not corrected by cartographers until the early 18th century. Regardless of administrative divisions, all of historical Hungary continued to be included in descriptions of the country. Very useful for interpretation are six schematic maps that represent the area as it was under Roman rule, i.e. the provinces of Pannonia and Dacia, and the political outlines of Hungary at significant times in its history: from 1000 to 1526; 1541 to ca. 1700; ca. 1700 to 1867; 1867 to 1920; 1920 to the present. Major cities and regions are marked which allow the reader to superimpose modern geographical features on the ancient maps.

The notes in the *Book* entries are particularly valuable. The title page and front matter is elaborated on, with dedications, introductory matter, and handwritten annotations or bookplates also noted. Brief entries on the authors, editors, and publishers give biographical details

and information on their other works or oeuvre, and patrons and persons mentioned in the dedications are also identified. Each work is described in detail. For example, the 1572 edition of Werbőczi's *Tripartitum* made by János Zsámboki identifies the physical piece, its author and editor, and gives a history of the work itself:

> The *Tripartitum* of István Werbőczi (1458–1541) is a codification of the feudal laws of Hungary. Werbőczi tabled his proposal in the diet of 1514 (the Hungarian Parliament of that time). It was accepted and signed, but not sealed, and therefore it never became law because the highest aristocracy of the land would not accept the mild restrictions that some of the proposed laws placed upon it. In spite of this, it was considered to be the basis of law in Hungary for over 300 years.
>
> Werbőczi was elected Palatine in 1525, but the same oligarchy which prevented the *Tripartitum* from becoming law also contested his election, and forced him to resign. Werbőczi withdrew to his estate at Dobrony in Northern Hungary, which saved his life because most of his opponents, and his lifework, perished in the battle of Mohács less than a year later, in 1526. Since its first printing in 1517 in Vienna, Werbőczi's monumental work has gone into over 50 editions during the last 480 years. This seems to be the fourth edition (16).

The note also includes a detailed description of the manuscript pages bound with the work which seem to update these laws. A brief entry on the printer, including significant other works published by him, places the entry in the context of contemporary publishing.

Similarly, as much detail as possible is given for the first entry, a collection of sermons by Michael de Ungaria, published in Strasbourg in 1494. The 14 sermons were first published in 1480 but reprinted several times because of their popularity. While little is known of the monk who wrote them, he, like Pelbartus de Themeswar (Temesvári Pelbárt, 1437[?]-1505, whose works are represented in nos. 2a–2b; 3–5) wrote in Latin for an international audience. Pelbárt, on the other hand, is "considered to be the first Hungarian writer of international reputation." Many of his sermons contain "thinly veiled critical allusions to the humanist atmosphere at the court of King Matthias I Corvinus, which he vehemently, if not openly, opposed," notes Horvath (3).

Another interesting entry is no. 32, Elias Wideman's *Clarissimorum Hungariae Heroum Icones*. The notes list all 100 of the "loyal pro-Habsburg ('*labanc*') Hungarian aristocracy and clergy in mid-seventeenth century" (43). Characteristic of the notes is the seemingly minor detail

Horvath points out: the names in the list are given in the Hungarian order (family name first, given name second) whereas the engravings have them in the Western order, "indicating perhaps that as a collection the volume was meant for the Hungarian rather than the Austrian market" (44). Much interesting detail is also included in the discussion of how and when Wideman made the portraits. It is such details that makes the reading of this catalogue informative and great fun.

While the majority of entries are historical, some of the others yield data of interest on what life was like during these centuries in Hungary. Number 137, for example, the *Letters of the Right Honourable Lady M---y W----y M-----e* contains four letters on Hungary with observations on history as well as the life and fashions of Győr, Komárom, Eszék, and Buda in 1718. Number 199, József Csapó's *Uj Füves és Virágos Magyar Kert*, 1792, lists over a thousand medicinal herbs, greatly increasing the 417 contained in the first edition of 1775. Included are interesting details on the author who studied in Germany and Switzerland and became the Chief Medical Officer of Debrecen around 1767. Csapó was also the author of the first Hungarian-language book on pediatrics. There is also a "*Limitatio*" included in the collection, which is a publication that lists the regulations governing the sale of various merchandise: *Az Áros Emberek, Kalmárok és Posztó-Metöknek Limitatiojuk* from Gyulafehérvár in 1642 (no. 28). As a compliment to the interest of J. Eugene Horvath's wife (the art historian and author Mária H. Krisztinkovich) in Haban pottery, the illustration reproduced in this connection is of this work's section on potters and of the rules listed in this *Limitatio* that pertain specifically to the Anabaptist potters. Horvath quotes from these pages to give the reader a glimpse into the art and work of the Anababtists of seventeenth century Transylvania.

Each entry is illustrated by the reproduction of the title page, cover, an illustration or a page of text which allows the reader to get a feel of the volumes themselves. Occasionally, the provenance of a work is also interesting, and the illustrations might focus on that. Volume IX of the work: *Theatrum Europaeum*, or *Irenico-Polemographiae* ... (no. 42), which is a history of the Turkish wars from 1660 to 1666 published in Frankfurt, 1672, carries such an inscription. Horvath notes: "Rubberstamp on recto of first free endpaper: 'Cette pièce provient des collections personelles d'Adolf HITLER au Berghof. Berchtesgaden 4–5–1945. Pour authentification:' and a round stamp with the cross of Lorraine within an outline of France at the centre, inscribed: 'DEUXIÈME DIVISON BLINDÉE* G5*' and signed by N. Brillon [?]" (60). So this piece had been in the possession of Hitler and was inventoried by the French when they occupied the Berghof.

The volume, *Maps and City Views*, is even more a work independent of the matter it catalogues, valuable as that collection is. Because of the nature of maps and pictures of cities and fortresses, the reproduction is always of the whole original piece. The famous 1493 woodcut of Buda by Michael Wolgemuth and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff opens the volume; the last item is a map of *Hungary, Transylvania, and the Surrounding Countries* by János Lipszky, published in Edinburgh, 1817. It is a folding map of a larger one by Lipszky but even on the picture reproduced in the catalogue the detail of the rivers, counties and cities can be made out. The illustrations, as in the *Books* volume, go beyond merely adding to an entry: p. viii of the introduction reproduces a detail from the 1528 Lazarus map of Hungary showing the first graphic descriptions of the battle of Mohács. Here, too, the "Notes" and "Descriptions" give fascinating detail. For example, in connection with the Buda engraving Horvath writes:

> First edition, dated 12 July 1493. Most of the woodcuts in the Nuremberg Chronicle are attributed to either Michael Wolgemuth, master-teacher of young Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), or Wilhelm Pleydenwurff, his stepson; the general consensus is that both painters cooperated on the artistic representation of Buda... Wolgemuth probably visited King Matthias Corvinus's court at Buda before 1470; later, back in Nuremberg, the two artists may have tried to recreate his recollections as realistically as possible. This theory is underlined by the fact that the engraving lacks linear perspective which would enable the buildings in the composition to be seen in relation to each other (Rózsa). There are also those who would like to see the young Dürer handing over to Wolgemuth, his Hungarian father's drawing of Buda, and the Master ordering his pupil to make a woodcut of the sketch of the older Dürer (Jajczay). It is certain, however, that the original drawing must have been made prior to 1470 when the spire of the Matthias Church was not yet finished, as the spire is portrayed incomplete in the woodcut (1).

Different kind of detail is provided in other maps. The 1552 map of Hungary and the Balkans by Joannes Honterus includes in the "Description" the identification with the modern Hungarian names of the towns shown on the map under their Latin names — useful for the more casual observer not conversant with the Latin.

In addition to the early engraving of Buda, the cityscapes present many cities in Hungary. These are from various times in the two centuries or so covered in the work, and range from military accuracy to more

fanciful portrayals. There are several portraits of Buda and Pest, but also of Nagyvárad, Sárospatak, Kassa, Győr, etc. Some of these contain valuable historical data which is generally singled out in the notes by Horvath. For example, Georg Hoefnagel, Georg Braun and Frans Hogenberg's map of Varadinum (Nagyvárad) from 1617, as Horvath points out, presents social and historical data. The city of Szatmár is seen in the distance, an inn and the Italian suburb outside the city walls, the Venetian suburb just outside the central fortress, and, most importantly, the legend "Statua Regis equestris, et tres statuae pedestres ex aere fusili." This reference to an equestrian statue of St. Ladislaus in front of the cathedral is the only pictorial reference to this statue by the Kolozsvári brothers destroyed by the Turks (34).

It is interesting to study the pictures and finally come upon the 1741 and 1743 engravings of Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli where the course of the Danube river is correctly shown with the characteristic bend at Vác and again beyond Eszék. As Horvath comments: "The maps of Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli (1658–1730) and Johann Christoph Müller (1673–1742) succeeded in correcting the courses of the Hungarian rivers, especially those of the Danube and the Tisza which had been inaccurately depicted for over 200 years" (103).

Almost anywhere one opens the books, a wealth of information can be found. As a cultural history, the work should be sampled as one is lead from topic to topic by the references or attracted by an illustration. It might yield some of the pleasure of browsing the actual collection. This is not a work that should be read cover to cover (though it can be); rather it should be one that the reader returns to again and again. While a companion to what must be a great collection, it can stand in its own right as a cultural record of a little over two centuries of Hungarian history at a time of turmoil. It also shows the way values were preserved and the stage set for the Hungarian National Revival which began in the 1820's and culminated with the Revolution and War of Independence, 1848–1849.

A Canadian Collection of Hungarica is a welcome and much-appreciated English-language contribution to the study of Hungarian cultural history. While it is hoped that the collection itself remains intact, allowing the student of history to consult it with the benefit of this excellent guide, the catalogue can stand on its own as a repository of historical and cultural data. Another volume on the art and bibliographic collections of Jenő Horvath and Mária H. Krisztinkovich that has been published is *An Annotated Hutterite Bibliography*. This volume, too, provides much useful information and this reviewer is looking forward to writing about it in the near future.

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Once More About the Origins

Éva Kossuth

László Götz. *Keleten kél a nap* [The sun rises in the east]. Budapest: Püski Kiadó, 1994. 2 vols. 1107 [8] pp., 8 maps. Indices. ISBN 963 8256 30 3; 963 8256 31 1.

A review of this two-volume work on the ancient history of Asia Minor and its cultural and linguistic influence on later cultures, is long overdue. The two volumes are divided into five books. The first four appeared as separate works between 1981 and 1992, under the following titles: 1. *Az elő-ázsiai ősnyelv felé* [Towards the prehistoric language of Asia Minor]; 2. *Kettős mértekkel (a magyar őstörténetkutatás módszereri és eredményei)* [About the double standard of the methods employed in Hungarian ancient historical research and its results]; 3. *Boncold csak nyelvész! (a finnugor nyelvtudomány módszerei és eredményei)* [Dissect it, linguist! The linguistic methods of Finno-Ugric language research and their results]; 4. *A szumér kérdés (régészeti, etnogenetikai, nyelvfejlődési és kutatástörténeti elemzés)* [The Sumerian Question: an analysis of the history of archeological, ethno-genetic and language development research]. Book 5: *Az uráli finnugor nyelvek genetikus nyelvcsaládi elméletének ellentmondásairól* [On the contradictions of a genetic Uralic Finno-Ugric language family theory], was published in 1994, two years after the author's death, as part of the present two-volume work. Volume two contains two Indices: an Index of Names; and a rather sketchy Subject Index, which can be irritating to use. The Foreword is by the eminent Hungarian archeologist and scholar, the late Gyula László.

Dr. László Götz (1934–1992) left Hungary during the 1956 Revolution, as a 5th-year medical student. Lacking any knowledge of German, he wrote part of his medical school entrance examination at the

University of Vienna, in Latin. He began to take an interest in ancient history in the early 1960s, when he read in the newspaper that a Sumerian ship was excavated in the Southern Ural region in the then Soviet Union. It immediately caught his interest, for he recognized the possibility of an historical connection between the proto-Hungarians and the Sumerians. To broaden his knowledge on the subject, he took a number of courses in ancient history at the University of Vienna. He was also influenced and encouraged by the writings, findings and conclusions of his friend and mentor, Gyula László. Götz's monumental work is a vast storehouse of facts and references. The number of source materials cited in it exceeds 600.

The main thrust of the work is the explanation of the Neolithic and bronze-age cultures; the development of Asia Minor (Syria, Palestine, Anatolia, and Northern Mesopotamia, i. e. the "Fertile Crescent") and of Southern Mesopotamia with its cultural and ethno-genetic influences on Western Eurasia. Götz emphasizes the fact that between 4000 and 2000 B.C., the Sumerian language was the "lingua franca" of the whole Western Eurasian region, playing a determining cultural and linguistic role in the development of South-Eastern, Central and Western Europe, Asia, as well as the Caucasus, Pontus and the Volga-Ural regions, the effects of which Götz summarizes as follows:

> ...archaeologically demonstrable and proven Sumerian migrations and colonization make the Sumerian language indispensable not only for Sumerian-Hungarian-Finn Ugric, but also for Indo-European language research. In other words — and this should be kept in mind — we are not suggesting here an exclusively Sumerian-Hungarian linguistic or ethnic relationship, but a much more far-reaching linguistic phenomenon. Notably, that to this day, we are able to find striking linguistic similarities with the Sumerian in almost all the languages of Western Eurasia. Given our present archeological and historical knowledge, this phenomenon can be attributed to and explained only by the existence of a regional language koine or "lingua franca" in Asia Minor during the Neolithic and early bronze ages. Massive elements of this common language were carried to the southern regions of Western Eurasia and Europe by agricultural migrants, and later by metal-seeking and -working colonizers. With the passage of time, the indigenous hunter-gatherer populations distorted and "pidginized" the language of the new settlers, adapting it to their own language systems and

> phonetic structures. The language got divided first into dialects, and later into separate, individual languages (p. 11; my translation, É.K.).

Götz terms this linguistic development "regional language adjustment."

Based on these findings, in the first book Götz sharply criticizes the outdated "laws of phonetic change" or "development" theory, first espoused by the German linguist, Jakob Grimm, in the 19th century, on which Finno-Ugric linguistics is still based. According to Grimm and his followers, the Indo-European languages originated from a common proto-Indo-European-Arian language about 6000 years ago. Later this language divided into dialects, in which a systematic, chronological "phonetic development" took place. From this developed the theory that, if there was a common proto-Indo-European-Arian language family, then there must have been a common proto-Indo-European-Arian "homeland" as well. This led to all kinds of grandiose cultural and racial deductions and speculations, culminating in Hitler's Arian superiority theory. Götz deals with the matter in length and in depth, and forcefully argues with the help of comparative tables that such changes could have occurred only *concurrently* and have existed *independently* within the individual languages. As they did not, according to Götz the "law of phonetic change" is unsuitable for the establishment of linguistic chronology and development. He also demonstrates that this principle fails at times even within the Indo-European languages, a phenomenon already noted by some German linguists, such as F. Altheim. For instance, phonetic changes do not occur consistently in the *same* words in *all* the languages, but crop up now here, now there. (The same is true of the Finno-Ugric languages.) At other times, there is no phonetic change or "development" at all, the words all start with the same consonant, e. g. in the word "have": HAB-en (German), HAB-en (Old High German), HABB-an (Old English), HAF-a (Old Scandinavian), HAB-an (Gothic), and HAB-ere (Latin).

What follows from all this is that as it is impossible to prove the existence of a proto-Indo-European-Arian language "family" and "homeland" based on linguistic deductions, it is equally impossible to prove that there ever existed a cohesive proto-Uralic Finno-Ugric linguistic family or homeland 6000 years ago(!), as claimed by many Hungarian historians. Not to mention the fact that the oldest extant Finno-Ugric language relic, the Hungarian, is barely a thousand years old. The Indo-Europeans at

least have much older written languages, such as Greek, Latin and Sanskrit, to fall back on.

Götz's second book deals with the methods employed by Hungarian researchers of the Finno-Ugric persuasion. Götz vigorously attacks various leading contemporary Hungarian historians and linguists (for which he is criticized by Gyula László himself) for their one-sided, outdated theories, not taking — or not wanting to take notice of — or simply ignoring the results of linguistic and archeological research of the past 50-60 years. He points out that this is true also of Hungarian universities, and especially of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences that still holds on to the Finno-Ugric theory with grim determination.

The third book is again taken up with the discussion of Finno-Ugric language research methods and results, analyzing and criticizing their hypothetical theories presented as "indisputably proven facts." He is especially irritated by the practice of showing the Hungarians as a primitive, barbaric horde who had almost no language to speak of at the time of their appearance in the Carpathian Basin, but "took over" or "borrowed" most of their words from the Iranians, the Turkic Chuwash and the Slavs, and "learned" culture from the "educated and cultured" West. As Gyula László once remarked: "We must have been the beggars among the nations!"

The fourth book, "The Sumerian Question" is devoted almost entirely to the archeological, linguistic and ethno-genetic analysis of the great Sumerian culture, with special emphasis on its cultural and linguistic impact that reached out for thousands of miles in all directions and had left its demonstrable mark on the Hungarian language as well. Gyula László in his Foreword makes the point that Götz's findings and theories can no longer be ignored by the Hungarian scientific community, but should be considered for serious study and academic discussion.

The exhaustive first chapter of the fifth book discusses the origins of the ancient cultures. Gyula László considered this chapter so important that he suggested that it should be taught in the schools. Part of the chapter deals with the pros and cons of the accuracy of C14 dating, pointing out the many erroneous conclusions reached by misinterpreting the readings.

The third chapter of the fifth book is devoted to the newest findings in the field of Hungarian historical research. Götz sees the beginnings of the proto-Hungarians and their language in the homogenous Andronovo-culture that existed from 1700 BC on, occupying the huge

area stretching from the Altai region to the Urals, and from the Ob-Irtis--Tobol region to Kazakhstan, where its language must have served as the common language between the diverse ethnic groups. After its disintegration around 1000-900 BC, the different tribes and groups parted and became independent, creating their own cultures and dialects. One of these dialects must have played an important role in the development of the proto-Turkic languages, as well in the development of the proto-Hungarian language through "regional language adjustment."

Götz sees the approach of Eurasian cultural and linguistic influence towards the Hungarian in four stages. In the first stage, one can only dimly make out its Mesopotamian origins in the Caucasus region and in Asia. In the second stage, one can definitely detect the influence of the Andronovo-culture. The third stage is the period of the development of the great steppe-cultures at the turn of the 2/1 millennia, which can be identified as Khimer-Scythian and Sarmatian. During this time they come in contact with the proto-Hungarians, influencing their language and culture. This is the time when the Hungarian language must have left its mark on the languages of the Finn tribes, as evidenced by the many lexical similarities between the Hungarian and these languages, especially the Cheremiss. This would reverse the present theory according to which Hungarian "derived" from the Vogul, Ostyak, and other Finno-Ugric languages. The last phase of the above development probably took place in the Middle Volga–Kama region, where Brother Julianus found a Hungarian-speaking group as late as the middle of the 13th century AD.

Götz's work is an all-encompassing study of the ancient southern cultures, which left their indelible mark on all subsequent cultures and languages, including the Hungarian. It is to be hoped that the time is not far off, when the Hungarian scientific community finally takes notice, and recognizes the importance of the findings and theories contained therein.

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Hungarian Connections to Britain and America

Alice Freifeld

Tibor Frank. *Ethnicity, Propaganda, Myth-Making; Studies on Hungarian Connections to Britain and America, 1848-1945.* Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1999. 391 pages, ill., map.

Tibor Frank is keenly aware of the distortions in Hungarian intellectual life and statecraft caused by agents and ideologues. He completed his doctorate in English studies in 1976 when English-language skills were still a rare commodity in Hungary.[1] At the time there were no American bagel shops in Budapest, few English-speaking tourists, and contacts with the West fluctuated between the wariness of the Cold War and the possibilities of detente. Frank's *Ethnicity, Propaganda, Myth-Making* includes twenty-two articles published over a twenty-year period between the late 1970s and the late 1990s. The essays document the dramatic journey of a generation of Hungarian scholars that began its struggle against a communist provincialism and now seeks contact points for a dialogue across the Atlantic. Frank, with his exceptionally adept English-language skills, was among the first to "bridge" the nuances of both American/British and Hungarian historiography. The three sections of this volume reflect the author's intellectual odyssey. Frank chronicles a century of Hungarian historiographical upheavals: imperial (Habsburg), rightist, fascist, Stalinist, de-Stalinist and post-Communist. Attempts to distort knowledge in the service of a political agenda were faced already in the first half of the nineteenth century when Magyar patriots, according to Frank, found themselves "in awkward historical situations where they had to wear masks, hide behind dubious political forces to preserve their effectiveness, go into emigration, internal or external, or meet tragic death" (9).

The last and shortest section of Frank's book is a series of essays published between 1979 and 1984 when the limits of goulash communism on intellectual life were being tested. Writing at this time, Frank tweaked Marxist orthodoxy by exploring the hostility between Marx and Kossuth, thereby challenging the Kossuth cult of the Kádár era.[2] He depicts both of these "icons" as human, all-too human. He also poked fun at the

legend that Kossuth learned English solely by reading Shakespeare. Kossuth, Frank insisted, wrapped himself in a politically convenient Shakespearean guise — even if he did translate five scenes from *Macbeth*. In Frank's examination of the counter-revolutionary 1850s, he unveils a tawdry world where the Habsburg secret service spread disinformation to discredit the Kossuth emigration, while the émigrés finished the job by their back-biting and constant quarrelling among themselves.

Frank's volume includes two essays from his biographical work on Gustav Zerffi, a police agent of the post-1849 repressive Bach period, who had insinuated himself with the émigrés.[3] These studies trace the career of this secret agent and build an indictment of the practices of agents and propagandists. Frank shows that Metternichean censorship, unlike the censorship of the Bach period, had been quite openly practiced, and that, in typical Austrian fashion, it was rigorous in its standards but lax in its enforcement. Frank's impatience with unprincipled sleuths, state-influenced propaganda, and less-than-accurate historians, journalists, and memorialists of this earlier era, captures his and his compatriots' growing disgust with the decaying state apparatus of the late-Kádár period.

While the image of the Hungarian revolutionary was championed after the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848/49, the Hungarian immigrant received a cool reception in the United States later in the century. The book's most recent and largest section (almost half of the text) smartly recasts the Hungarian nationalities problem of the Dualist period into a study of emigration from Hungary to the United States. It reflects the author's years teaching at the University of California, Santa Barbara and UCLA, between 1987 and 1991. With maps and statistics Frank establishes that emigration from Hungary was disproportionately a flow of minorities, particularly disadvantaged Slovaks. Frank writes with sensitivity about the "emigration psychosis" and the travails experienced by newcomers to the USA in fitting into an American society increasingly ambivalent about the "new immigrants." In his investigation of the high suicide rates of Austro-Hungarian returnees, Frank examined psychiatric cases, which he found collected in the archives of the Hungarian Institute of Mental Health. Here, as elsewhere, Frank is extremely resourceful in tapping new, hitherto unused, sources.

Hungarian historiography still operates in the shadows of R.W. Seton-Watson's condemnation of Hungarian pre-World War I minority policies.[4] Frank places these policies of "forced Magyarization" into a new perspective by casting them into a wider context, one that includes resurgent American nativism. The rise of anthropology in the late nineteenth century in Austria-Hungary and the United States accentuated the monitoring and labelling of "new immigrants" and minorities. Although

many migrated from Hungary to retain their minority ethnic identities, "unassimilating immigrants remained unwanted aliens in both worlds for considerable periods of time." (8) Anthropologist Franz Boaz sought to calm U.S. immigration authorities who nervously supervised the quality of the "American race" with an anthropological survey of the *Changes in Bodily Form of Descendant of Immigrants.* This anthropometric study of the children of Hungarian-Americans claimed that immigrants "approach the qualities of a new, common American stock as early as in the second generation." (36) Frank underscores the fantasy of craniology and the paranoia motivating U.S. government surveillance of the Austro-Hungarian emigration between 1891 and 1907.

America's anxiety-ridden nativism culminated in the restrictive immigration laws of 1924. Frank reconstructs the American-Hungarian relationship in a comparative fashion in which American preoccupations at times crowd out Hungarian concerns. In dealing with these issues, Frank most often, adopts Western historiographical questions to a Hungarian context and subjects them to the rigors of his own archival findings in new or hitherto overlooked sources.

The book's middle section, dealing with "the politics of propaganda," contains three essays on mid-nineteenth century Hungary and six on Horthyite Hungary. Here, Frank turns to the ambivalence and contradiction of cultural middlemen. He begins with the troubled, nascent nationalism of a Metternichean censor caught between two worlds, and ends with the twentieth-century subject of U.S. Minister John F. Montgomery's admiration and postwar apologia for Admiral Horthy. While historians often use travelogues to illustrate the arrogance of great power observers, Frank uses this "unlikely friendship" to show how diplomats frequently become the mouthpiece of the new friends they make during their foreign assignments. The resulting "factual non-fiction," Frank contends, "can be more biased or subjective than a work of fiction." (251)

The articles on the interwar period are the least satisfying in the volume. Several overlap and could have been consolidated. They are not yet free of the hasty rehabilitation of the Horthy era in the Antal years, with imagology, so important to the rest of the volume, less rigorously examined here. These articles do underscore the fluctuating and transient nature of American Magyarophobia/ Magyarophilia as well as the rocky romance of Hungarians with the English-speaking world.

In this part of the book a series of essays examine the publicistic outreach of *The Hungary Quarterly*, the fate of its converted Jewish editor József Balogh, and the abortive effort to produce a canonical *Hungarian History* in English during the opening stages of World War II. Frank pays tribute to Balogh, who was "killed by the Nazis, or their Hungarian

friends.... He met the death of a war hero." (275) Balogh was, however, also a victim of interwar illusions and a practitioner of half-measures that took few intellectual risks, shunned new authors or methods, and banked instead on well-known names.[5] After reading these articles, one wonders whether either Balogh' and his associates' lamentations over the dismemberment of Greater Hungary, or the new project of asserting Hungary's cultural superiority over her neighbours, could find sympathetic audiences outside Hungary proper.

In the volume under review here, Frank shows himself to be a master of the short, pungent essay, an average of seventeen pages per item in a volume with 380 pages of text. Some are extended notes, commentaries on discovered documents and letters; while others are more extensive and elaborate. Each essay typically confronts the reader with some striking new information or source that is shown to enliven an important, if often apparently stale, question. The method often serves as the message: archival investigation is the antidote to contemporary myth-making and a shrunken nationalist canon. Reading Frank stimulates one to think of untapped archival sources from which essays could be written. They were published in an English admirable for its clarity, effectiveness and vigour.

NOTES

[1] Tibor Frank, "The British image of Hungary 1865/1870," Ph.D. dissertation, Budapest: Loránd Eötvös University, Dept. of English, 1976.

[2] Tibor Frank, *Marx és Kossuth* (Budapest: Magvető, 1985).

[3] Tibor Frank, *From Habsburg agent to Victorian scholar: G.G. Zerffi, 1820-1892* (Boulder, Colo.: Social Science Monographs; Highland Lakes, N.J.: Atlantic Research and Publications, 2000).

[4] R.W. Seton-Watson (1879-1951), in a series of publicistic works, but especially in his *Racial Problems in Hungary* (1908), denounced Hungary's governments for "oppressing" the country's nationalities and imposing forced Magyarization on them. His efforts in this direction contributed heavily to the decline of the favourable image of Hungary in Western, particularly British, eyes. On this subject see Géza Jeszenszky, *Az elvesztett presztízs: Magyarország megítélésének megváltozása Nagy-Britanniában (1894-1918)* [The lost prestige: the transformation of Hungary's image in Great Britain (1894-1918)] (Budapest: Magvető, 1986).

[5] Tibor Frank, *Discussing Hitler: Advisers of U.S. diplomacy in Central Europe, 1934-1941* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2003); *Tanulmányok a Magyar Rádió történetéből: 1925-1945* [Studies in the History of Hungarian Radio] (Budapest: Tömegkommunikációs Kutatóközpont, 1975); *Genius in exile: Professional immigration from interwar Hungary to the United States* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999).

Short reviews of books by and/or about women

Andrea Pető. *Rajk Júlia* [Júlia Rajk] Feminizmus és történelem sorozat [Feminism and history series]. Budapest: Balassi, 2001. 274 pages.

This interesting and highly readable book is more than a biography of Júlia Rajk. It is a description of a bygone era, a part of the last century, and of people usually refereed to as "communists." The author's goal was not to produce a different, a "feminist" biography, but to gain an understanding of the hero of her story — who happens to be a woman. In fact, Júlia Rajk was "a woman" even though she had lived in a man-centred world where men, even her husband, looked upon her as "only a woman." For a long time, even she believed that this was the order of the universe.

Júlia Rajk's story as a political activist began when, in 1949, she was locked up (she would serve five years), incarcerated along with a group of women of different beliefs and backgrounds. She felt being left alone. Soon she would be left alone even more, with her young son and the memory of her husband László Rajk — who became the victim of communist Hungary's first great show-trials. From this time on, Júlia would carry with her this memory and cultivate it in all her actions. A lonely, towering figure of a woman dressed in black, accompanied by her child, would be the image that would be ingrained in Hungarian national consciousness, particularly at that famous funeral in early October, 1956, when her husband and his associates were re-buried publicly, years after their executions for "crimes" against the socialist state.

The main theme of Pető's book is that the Soviet leaders of the time and their Hungarian underlings were innately incapable admitting their misdeeds and revealing who had been their victims. They even tried to force Júlia to abandon her married name, in order to make sure that that name would be erased from public memory. The real story of Júlia Rajk's life was her struggle to retain her name. This quest involved her in litigations, all of which called for those responsible for the wrongs inflicted admitting to misdeeds and injustices. The result of all this was that when the Revolution of 1956 was crushed by Soviet troops in early November, Júlia (who had otherwise not taken part in the uprising) sought refuge, along with a few of the revolution's leaders, in the Yugoslav Embassy. In the end they were deported to Romania.

Júlia Rajk's quest to right the wrongs committed against her husband and to redeem the Rajk name accompanied her for the rest of her life. This quest

would prompt her to come to the defence of the radical leftist writer Miklós Haraszti when he was accused of inciting the workers of Hungary against the state in the mid-1970s. The same quest would induce her to establish a home for stray dogs. She remained a sort of a communist to the end of her life.

Few written sources had survived about Júlia Rajk. Some that had existed, were destroyed by those who wanted to leave no evidence. But very few were created about her in the first place — she was a woman. In fact, she had spent much of her life typing men's documents — about men. Andrea Pető has located all the written sources that had survived about Júlia Rajk and she interviewed everyone who had known her. She asked everything a woman would want to know about another woman. She inquired about even matters that writers of political biographies might consider trivial. In fact, she insisted on inquiring about such matters. The result is a real book about a real individual.

János M. Rainer
The 1956 Institute, Budapest

[adopted from the Hungarian, from http://www.es.hu/old/0142/index.htm by Nándor Dreisziger]

Editor's note: László Rajk (1909-49), a high-ranking Communist Party official and Minister of the Interior between 1946 and 1948, was one of the chief architects of the totalitarian one-party state in Hungary. In May 1949 he was arrested on trumped-up charges of being a Titoist spy, was found guilty along with many "co-conspirators," and was executed. In 1956, during Nikita Khrushchev's de-Stalinization campaign, he and some of his associates were partly rehabilitated. On 6 October they were re-buried in a public funeral attended by a crowd of one hundred thousand. The event is seen by some as the opening salvo of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

Daisy Chorin (Mrs. R. Strasser) and András D. Bán. *Az Andrássy úttól a Park Avenue-ig: Fejezetek Chorin Ferenc életéből (1879-1964)* [From Andrássy Boulevard to Park Avenue; Chapters from the life of Ferenc Chorin (1879-1964)]. Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 1999. ISBN 963 379 7179.

Introduced by Otto Habsburg, this book is compiled as a memorial to an extraordinary human being and an outstanding citizen of Hungary who had done unique service to his country all his life, but especially during the interwar years.

The book is made up of two parts. The first part is a short biography of Ferenc Chorin. Ferenc had an exceptional childhood and upbringing and came from a family of high moral and intellectual standards. His great-great grandfather had been the chief rabbi of Arad [now under Romanian rule] who through

his writing, in the Hebrew language, fought for the emancipation of the Jewish people. His son became a doctor, who in turn had two sons, one of them becoming also a doctor, while the other, Ferenc senior (1842-1925), studied law. Ferenc was a versatile man with a practical turn of mind who possessed great knowledge of law, economics and politics.

This book is about Ferenc's son, Ferenc junior, Daisy Chorin's father. He was born in 1879 in Budapest. He studied at a special secondary school and took law at university. All through his years of studying, his results were the best. He obtained his doctorate in 1901 receiving the "royal ring" personally from Ferenc Joseph, a special honour bestowed by the Emperor-King on university graduates who finished with outstanding results. All his life he was proud of that event. In May 30, 1919 Chorin converted to Roman Catholicism — thereby widening his circle of friends by members of Hungary's Roman Catholic clergy. At the end of 1919 he was appointed by Hungary's government as economic advisor to the Hungarian Peace Delegation sent to the negotiations concluding the First World War. He married in 1921, had two daughters and a son. He was very bright, had a great sense of humour, and was interested in everything — at one point he had studied economics in Berlin. In addition to his native Hungarian, Chorin spoke German, French and Latin — all fluently. For example, at the World Eucharistic Congress of 1928, he made the introductory speech — in Latin, without notes. In the legal field his interest and specialty was law regulating manufacturing and related economic activities.

In 1906 Chorin became one of the directors of the Salgótarjáni Kőszénbánya Rt. [Coal Mine of Salgótarján], the largest coal-mining company in Hungary. In that capacity, he worked towards improving production in the mine. He also undertook the role of a director for firms connected to the coal company, such as glass, cement, brick, and so on. After the death of his father in 1925, he became the CEO of the Salgótarjáni Kőszénbánya Rt.

In 1922 he formed the Hungarian Employment Centre and was its president until 1933. The centre's mandate was the securing of undisturbed flow of production in manufacturing, the regulation of workers' pay, and dealing with questions relating to social security and the companies' social responsibilities towards their employees. In 1926 he became vice-president of Hungary's Manufacturers' Federation, and two years later he was appointed by Regent Miklós Horthy to the Upper House of Parliament. And, because he enjoyed the respect and the Regent's trust in all economic questions, later he was made "Privy Counselor to his Excellency." His contacts and friendships were wide-ranging: among his friends were the President of the Hungarian General Credit Bank, the Papal Legate to Hungary, the British Minister to Hungary, as well as numerous Hungarian politicians.

After the Nazi occupation of Hungary in March of 1944, he and his family had to flee the country, abandoning their wealth to the Nazi-controlled

government of Hungary. After a two-years' stay in Portugal as refugees, he and his family immigrated to the United States where they settled in New York. Although not young any more, Chorin managed to establish a new and successful life for himself and his family in his new homeland, and continued his philanthropic activities — which had been an essential part of his earlier life (never obvious because of his modesty) even in Hungary.

The second and larger part of the book is a collection of his speeches which reveal his brilliant mind and clear insight into all aspects of the economy. Especially moving is the speech in which he expresses his growing concern over the laws enacted in Hungary on the eve of World War II, putting tighter and tighter control on the freedom of Jews — and, of course, the negative impact of these laws on the whole country's economy. This part of the book also contains correspondence both sent and received, as well as contemporary commentaries on his work. The latter illustrate the affection and high regard for him of his friends, and of those whose lives he had touched.

This book is a source of most interesting and valuable information; reading it is a pleasure and an inspiration in every sense. An English language edition of this book is in preparation.

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

A native of Hungary, KATALIN FÁBIÁN earned her doctorate in Political Science from Syracuse University and is now an Assistant Professor at Lafayette College, in Easton, Pennsylvania. Her main research interests focus on the deficits of the democratization process in post-communist Europe and the global interactions of advocacy networks and social movements. Her most recent research was made possible by Hungary's Collegium Budapest and the Ford Foundation scholarship at the Women's Studies Center of Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts.

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ANDREA PETŐ studied history and sociology and earned a doctorate in contemporary history from Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) of Budapest. She has done research in Oxford, Freiburg, Vienna, Toronto and, most recently, at the European University Institute (Florence, Italy), where she was a Jean Monnet Fellow. She has lectured on post-1945 Central European history and gender history at various institutions of higher learning in Vienna, Ljubljana, Utrecht and elsewhere. From 1991 to 2000,

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