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Richard Aczel: In the Wake of Enlightenment: The Birth of Modern Hungarian Literature

Ambrus Miskolczy: Paradoxes of and about Nicolae Iorga

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IN THE WAKE OF ENLIGHTENMENT: THE BIRTH OF MODERN HUNGARIAN LITERATURE

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Modern Hungarian literature was born of, and continues to embody, a fascinating fusion of broadly European and distinctively national characteristics and aspirations. To appreciate the ambivalent identity of Hungarian literature in perhaps the most formative period of its historical development (1772-1848), it is essential to examine the complex cultural historical context in which the national literature came to consciousness.

In the last century Ferenc Toldy traced the origins of Hungarian literary modernity back to the year 1772 -which saw the publication of four important works by György Bessenyei - and this date has been broadly accepted ever since by literary historians as a working point of departure. Linked to this periodization is a conventional perception of modern Hungarian literature as a child of the Enlightenment. Thus, according to the multi-volume *A magyar irodalom története* put out by the Hungarian Academy: "Művelődés- és irodalomtörténetünk első, tudatosan világi eszmei mozgalma a felvilágosodás volt [...] Bessenyei György felléptével 1772-ben indul meg a magyar felvilágosodás." (Vol. III, pp. 11-12, Budapest, 1965) The value of all such epoch-making dates is inevitably questionable, and resides above all in the type of historical understanding they render possible. If 1772 is, on this basis, as good a starting point as any, its equation with the concept of a Hungarian "Enlightenment" is considerably more problematic.

There are two key reasons for treating the conventional characterization of the period 1772-1795 in Hungarian literature as a "belated" age of Enlightenment with caution. The first concerns the content of the concept itself. While one cannot, in Edmund Burke's phrase, with a single term draw up an indictment against a whole century, there are certain social and intellectual constituents without which any working concept of the Enlightenment is meaningless. These would have to include a commitment to empiricism in scientific method, rationalism in the characterization of nature, universalism in the description of human nature, cosmopolitanism in intellectual formation and matters of taste, and a fundamental rejection

of the values and "superstitions" of the *ancien régime*. While there were undoubtedly isolated figures in late eighteenth-century Hungary whose concerns and aspirations shared much in common with the values of the West European Enlightenment, their achievements and influence do not provide a representative basis for a comprehensive and coherent reading of the period in Hungarian letters.

The case of Bessenyei is particularly illuminating here. His work increasingly reveals closer parallels with the cultural relativism and interest in national specificity of Herder, than with the intellectual universalism embodied in Voltaire's ideal of the *citoyen du monde*. Significantly, 1772 remains a crucial date for our understanding of just such a contrast. In this year Bessenyei published the first version of his *Az embernek próbája*, a highly revealing and ideologically charged *misreading* of Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*, a classic compendium of some of the central aphorisms of the Enlightenment. The essential discontinuity between the two works is already anticipated by Bessenyei's title: for, in sharp contrast to the pragmatic optimism of Pope, Bessenyei will go on to describe human existence as an ultimately hopeless "trial" (*próba*), and closes with the distinctly counter-Enlightenment claim that: "tsak tudatlanság zúg az emberekbe." Indeed Bessenyei's whole career seems to characterize in microcosm the Hungarian encounter with, and relatively rapid retreat from, the cosmopolitanism and rationalism of the West European Enlightenment. Initially attracted by the ratio-empiricism of Voltaire, Bessenyei becomes increasingly preoccupied with questions of national language, identity and specificity, and ends his days, as the "bihari remete", deeply suspicious of the value of enlightened thought. As Kirakedes, Bessenyei's "noble savage" in his last major literary work, *Tarimenes utazása* (1804), says to Trezeni, the ruler of an "enlightened" state (with obvious echoes of Maria Theresa): "Oly igaz az, hogy mentül tanultabb, bölcsőbb az ember, annál kevesebb vígsággal élhet; ellenben mentül oktanabb, annál több örömök közt lakozik." The same disaffection with the Enlightenment's faith in human reason can be traced in the work of countless of Bessenyei's contemporaries.

The second problem with the designation "Hungarian Enlightenment" in connection with the period 1772-1795 is a historical one. By the end of the eighteenth century most of the important work of the Enlightenment had already been done, and Kant's famous phrasing of the question "Was ist Aufklärung" in 1784 is already at least partly retrospective. By the end of the century most of the key tenets and values of the Enlightenment were in crisis and a new intellectual moment and cultural sensibility was emerging. The Rousseau of *Émile* and *Les confessions* is no longer the confident *philosophe* of

the first and second Discourses, and the classical ideals of Pope and Voltaire are being displaced as literary models by "sentimental" works like Richardson's *Pamela*, Young's *Night Thoughts* and Goethe's *Werther*. There is a shift of focus from the head to the heart, from reason to feeling, reflected in Rousseau's famous statement from the *Lettres Morales*: "To exist for us is to feel; and our sensibility is incontestably anterior to our reason." In addition to this, the last third of the eighteenth century also witnesses a growing recognition of the importance of national character and traditions, which also finds expression in Rousseau's later writings, such as his *Considerations on the Government of Poland* (1770-71). Thus it is the crisis of the Enlightenment, rather than the Age of Reason itself, which forms the cultural-historical context in which Hungarian literature comes of age as a modern, self-conscious discourse. Indeed, far from seeking belatedly to rehearse the old arguments of the Enlightenment, the aspirations of the Hungarian *literati* prove to be remarkably in tune with the preoccupations of the new moment.

Historians of culture continue to debate the character, periodization and conceptual definition of this new cultural moment at the end of the eighteenth century. The terms of definition most commonly used - *Sturm und Drang*, "Age of Sensibility" and, more notoriously, "Pre-romanticism" - have, for a variety of reasons, all proved problematic. *Sturm und Drang* is too limited in local and historical focus to identify the continuities (across national boundaries) between writers as diverse as Sterne, Prévost, Goethe and Kármán; while "sensibility" - clearly a key term in the lexicon of the new age - remains too broad: what is, after all, at stake is a particular, and supposedly "new", kind of sensibility. The difficulty with "pre-romanticism", on the other hand, stems largely from the teleology it inevitably imposes by reading the second half of the eighteenth century through the achievements of the first half of the nineteenth. Perhaps the most productive characterization of the period is a contemporary one: Schiller's definition in *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (1795) of his own age as *sentimental* in contrast to the essential *naivety* of the ancients.

Schiller describes the "sentimentality" of the modern writer in terms of an alienation from nature, society, and the objects of his own discourse. While the Enlightenment had seen no tension between the workings of human reason and rational nature, between the interests of the individual and society, by the end of the eighteenth century man and nature, self and society, subject and object would increasingly be perceived as irreconcilable oppositions. This is the dilemma faced by Schiller's modern, sentimental poet. The sentimental poet's "feeling for nature is like that of a sick man for health." He is unhappy in his experience of humanity and "has no more urgent interest than to flee out of

it"; sentimental poetry marks "the birth of isolation." The sentimental poet is still further alienated from the world around him in that his mind "can suffer no impression without at the same time observing its own operation and what it contains, without placing it opposite and outside of itself by means of reflection."

For Schiller, the dilemma of the sentimental poet is essentially a *modern* dilemma: and it is precisely the modernity of the phenomenon Schiller describes which makes the sentimental, as a configuration of literary and cultural *topoi*, so pertinent to an awakening national literature keen to emulate and assimilate the latest achievements of European culture. This is particularly evident in the translation projects of the young Kazinczy. Kazinczy begins with Gessner's *Idyllen*, which Schiller, in *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, had cited as an example of sentimental idyll. He then turns to J. M. Miller's *Siegwart*, again given special mention by Schiller as an example of sentimental elegy, and also translates various texts by Wieland, whom Schiller cites in the context of sentimental satire, praising him for his "seriousness of feeling" in contrast to the excess of "intellect" Schiller finds in Voltaire. Kazinczy had also intended to translate Goethe's *Werther*, considered by Schiller to be the one text in which "everything which gives nourishment to the sentimental character is concentrated", and, as Kazinczy himself states in his preface to *Bácsmegeyey*, it was only circumstance that forced him to translate Kayser's *Roman in dem Geschmack der Leiden Werthers* instead.

The significance of Schiller's concept of the sentimental for late eighteenth-century Hungarian literature is not, however, above all a matter of literary influence. For Schiller describes a cultural moment of which Hungarian literature is already an active part. The literary *topoi*, which Schiller's notion of alienated "sentimentality" seeks to understand, are all widely represented in Hungarian literature in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Thus the cult of solitude, born of the sentimental subject's sense of isolation, finds expression most famously in the poetry of Csokonai, but also, among countless others, in the work of Kármán and the later Bessenyei. The sentimental projection of the alienated self onto the objects of nature is a major characteristic of the poetry of not only Ányos and Dayka, but also the "classical" Révai. Furthermore, the sentimental alienation of subject from object, of the poetic self from the world he can never approximate, is also reflected in Kazinczy's preoccupation with style as a virtue in itself, over and above the objects of literary representation. Alienated from the natural and social world, the sentimental writer's experience of reality is always through the world of signs. Thus Werther's love for Lotte is mediated textually rather than sexually through the ecstasy the couple share in reading Klopstock, Gessner and Ossian. The most critical moment in the relationship

between Fanni and Józsi T. in Kármán's *Fanni hagyományai* is mediated through Józsi's reading of Gessner.

Poets "will either *be* nature, or they will *look for* lost nature" (Schiller). In the first case their poetry will be "naive", in the second "sentimental". The modern poet may try to overcome his sense of alienation by attempting to restore the "lost" and naive harmony enjoyed by the ancients with their "simple" and "natural" world, but this itself is an inherently sentimental impulse. The sentimental dilemma and the quest for its naive resolution are, as Schiller so persuasively argues, two sides of the same "modern" coin. Concomitant with the sentimental cults of solitude and subjectivity in late eighteenth-century Hungarian literature we can identify the inception of a search for a more "naive" sense of community and authenticity which was to prove particularly formative for the subsequent development of the national literature. The literary object of this search is probably best described by Herder's concept of *Naturpoesie*, although it must be remembered that Herder's influence in late eighteenth-century Hungary was highly mediated. For Herder, *Naturpoesie* embodies an organic unity with the poet's immediate community and national traditions, lost to the modern *Kunstpoe*t who is the product not of an organic, but an imitative culture, devoid of its own coherent and collective identity. In Hungary, especially after the centralizing and Germanizing reforms of Joseph II, the pursuit of such an identity would become one of the key cultural and political preoccupations of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In Hungarian literature it finds expression above all in three forms of "naive" recovery. First, we can observe it in the attempt to retrieve the lost or forgotten glories of the national past in order to foster a sense of collective historical purpose. Such efforts range from Bessenyei's historical tragedies, through Ádám Horváth's *Hunnias*, the epic "Conquest" fragments of Csokonai, Ráday and Virág, to the cult of "Mohács" poetry in the 1790s. Second, we can discern the pursuit of identity in the attempt to recover and cultivate national traditions and customs as a source of shared, common values. These undertakings run from Orczy's *A bugaczi csárdának tiszteletére* to Gvadányi's *Falusi nótárius*. Third, we can discover it in the attempt to restore a lost language of naturalness, simplicity and immediacy as opposed to the imitative, modern language of refinement (*fentebb stíl*) championed by the likes of Kazinczy. This language is increasingly modelled on the living example of Hungarian folk poetry, as an equation of the "authentically" national with the *völkisch* ("népi") becomes one of the key constituents of the national-cultural self-definition. From Révai's call for the collection of ancient and folk poetry in 1782 to Kölcsey's famous association of the national and the popular in *Nemzeti hagyományok* (1826),

the naive identification with the idiom and values of folk culture would lay the major foundations of a cultural populism that is still very much alive today.

Evidence of a renewed interest in ancient and folk poetry can be found throughout Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century, from Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* to Herder's *Stimmen der Völker* and the widespread cult of Ossian. In English literature Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* of 1797 are perhaps the supreme artistic achievement of a (in Schiller's sense) "naive" preoccupation with "rustic life" and the "language really spoken by men." Where the literary populism (irodalmi népiesség) of the Hungarian late eighteenth century and Age of Reform differs from the Wordsworthian project is in its conflation of the concepts of "naive" and "native". When Wordsworth, in his famous Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, relates his interest in "humble and rustic life" to a desire to reveal "the primary laws of our nature", his use of the first-person plural evokes not a national, but a *universal* human community. For Wordsworth, the poet is not a bard addressing his nation, but "a man speaking to men". The Hungarian interest in folk culture - especially in the first four decades of the nineteenth century - is more exclusively related to the revelation and cultivation of distinctively *national* values and identity. This is particularly clear in the work Ferenc Kölcsey who could claim in 1826 that "a való nemzeti poézis eredeti szikráját a köznépi dalokban kell nyomozni."

Kölcsey's own literary development provides an interesting illustration of the close relationship of naive and sentimental initiatives in Hungarian literature during this formative period in its history. While Kölcsey's earliest odes show the unmistakable influence of Csokonai, between 1808 and 1818 he falls under the markedly sentimental influence of Kazinczy. Kölcsey himself would state in retrospect that "1808-ban és 1809-ben sentimental-lyrisch voltam" and much of his best poetry of the 1810s continues to draw upon the lexis of Young and the tone and disposition of Ányos and Dayka. Kazinczy's values also inform many of Kölcsey's critical evaluations during this period, such as his admiration for "az új századok manierját [...] a sentimentalismust" and his dismissal in 1815 of János Földi's claim that "A köznépe az igaz magyarság, az idegennel nem egyveleges magyarság." The remarkable shift in Kölcsey's position after 1818 is largely the product of changing political considerations and the poet's crucial identification with, and contribution to, the political aspirations of the Age of Reform: the transformation of the feudal *natio Hungarica* into a modern nation state capable of representing the interests of all its citizens. In this context the ideals of literary populism represented a potential cultural basis for a common national identity extending beyond the boundaries of private property and social class. The task of the true Hungarian patriot, Kölcsey will argue, is to ensure "hogy az adózó nép

nagy tömege egyszer már a polgári alkotmányba belépjen." This liberal projection of national unity finds its most articulate and influential *cultural* expression in Kölcsey's most significant contribution to the discursive prose of the Age of Reform, *Nemzeti hagyományok* (1826). Here the influence is no longer that of the "sentimental" Kazinczy, but almost entirely of the "naive" Herder. In one important sense *Nemzeti hagyományok* actually goes a good way beyond Herder - for whom there had been no "Favoritenvolk" - in its insistence on the detrimental effect of foreign influences on the formation of the national character. Even the "heroic" age of the fifteenth century Hunyadis is criticised on this basis: "Fájdalom, mi már akkor is idegen befolyásnak adtunk helyet." The same attitude to foreign cultural influences, together with the association of folk and national literature, will resurface in the work of the next major theories of Hungarian literary populism, János Erdélyi.

By the 1840s, literary populism had triumphed as the most influential cultural ideology in Hungary. Its most accomplished poetic representative was, without doubt, Sándor Petőfi. Petőfi represents the epitome in Hungarian literature of Schiller's naive genius. He speaks the language of a community in which he appears entirely at home, and his diction is effortless and natural. Schiller claimed of the naive poet that he "is the Creation, and the Creation is He"; with Petőfi too it is almost impossible to mark the boundary between poetry and biography, art and life. It is as if, for Petőfi, all experience is inherently poetic, and poetry little more than the form and medium of experience. Unlike Schiller's sentimental poet whose work involves "the elevation of reality to the ideal", the naive poet is concerned with "the most complete imitation of the real." This imitation could be hardly more complete than in Petőfi's poetic descriptions of natural scenes. His nature poems are devoid of Romantic pantheism and have little in common with either the sentimental subjectivization of nature characteristic of Ányos and Dayka, nor the visionary and metaphorical transformation of nature we find in Vörösmarty. Both of these latter gestures are products of the alienation of subject from object, man from nature, which finds little expression in Petőfi's verse. In contrast with the folksong imitations of the *Aurora* circle in the 1830s, there is nothing "folkloristic" about Petőfi's identification with the common people and their culture. Petőfi does not collect folksongs as an outsider, but "inhabits" and extends their idiom from within. The work of Petőfi together with the early poetry of Arany represented the realization of the aspirations of Kölcsey and Erdélyi towards a new species of *national* poetry, which would both incorporate and further develop existing folk traditions.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the achievements of Petőfi and Arany in the populist vein had already achieved canonical status. Pál Gyulai, who

dominated Hungarian criticism for most of the second half of the century, coined the term "popular national" (*nép-nemzeti*) to denote what he saw as the most authentic, characteristic and desirable direction for the national literature, as evidenced in at least one aspect of the two poets he most admired. Offering its particular version of the past and standards of judgement and interpretation, the *nép-nemzeti* ideal has survived into our own century as both a descriptive and prescriptive tradition. Like all traditions it is the product of selection, exclusion and omission. Certain aspects of even its paradigmatic models have at times suffered neglect. These include Petőfi's remarkable *Felhők* cycle, which Gyulai dismissed as "dagályos", and the more experimental and ironical initiatives of Arany (from *Az elveszett alkotmány* to the great lyrics of the post-revolutionary period), which have little to do with populism and arguably represent the poet's most challenging and accomplished achievements.

Still more questionable, however, are the literary historical assumptions of the popular-national tradition concerning the character and significance of Hungarian romanticism. "A romantizmushoz [...] megkívántatik a hazaiság, népiesség mint annak első alapja és anyaga, melyből ahhoz-ahhoz képest kifejlődjék a nemzeti költészet a különböző népek jelleme és idoma szerint s a kor lelkének ihletése után." János Erdélyi's characterization of Romanticism (*Valami a romantizmusról*, 1847) laid the foundations of one crucial literary historical truism that has survived into our own time. Thus since the first extensive study of Hungarian Romanticism, Gyula Farkas's *A magyar romantika* (1930), it has generally been maintained that the first phase of Romanticism in Hungary is characterized by national historicism, while the second involves the politically motivated "discovery" of folk poetry. István Sőtér would even argue that "the special relationship with folk poetry can be regarded as the most significant mark of romanticism" (*The Dilemma of Literary Science*, 1973). In this way the concept of Romanticism has more often than not been subsumed under the broader literary category of the popular-national or national-classicist tradition, in a manner of which Erdélyi would almost certainly have approved.

Such an unequivocal equation of Romanticism with literary populism remains, however, highly problematic. While it is true that many Romantic poets throughout Europe took a serious interest in folk culture, it cannot be claimed that it is primarily the assimilation of an already given literary code or world of discourse that defines the "Romanticism" of their poetry. It is hard to conceive of a notion of the Romantic that does not highlight as one of its key, determining constituents the central role of the *individual, creative imagination*, inherently incompatible with the collective emphases of populism.

René Wellek's famous formulation of the three fundamental characteristics of European Romanticism continues to provide a valuable starting point for any properly comparative discussion: "imagination for the view of poetry, nature for the view of the world, and symbol and myth for poetic style." It is, of course, legitimate and important to identify local differences in the development of Romanticism in individual national cultures, but the supra-national context in which Romanticism was born and in which its theoretical legacy has developed since the end of the eighteenth century should never be lost sight of. As Mihály Szegegy-Maszák has argued: "lehetne azzal érvelni, hogy nemzeti romantikánknak főleg olyan jellegzetességei vannak, amelyek megkülönböztetik más romantikáktól - ez azonban fölöslegessé tenné magának a fogalomnak a használatát." This is not to deny that there is an important Romantic tradition in Hungarian literature, but rather to suggest that this tradition and the historical continuities it embodies have tended to be misread, when not altogether overlooked, within the popular-national approach to Hungarian literary history.

These continuities become more perceptible when one restores a comparative context to the analysis of Hungarian Romanticism. Wellek's identification of his three characteristics as "part of the great endeavour to overcome the split between subject and object, the self and the world" in itself suggests a link between Romanticism and the concept of the sentimental outlined above. A particularly revealing articulation of both the continuities and differences between the sentimental and the Romantic moments is József Teleki's pioneering essay of 1818, *A régi és az új költés különbségeiről*. While Teleki's depiction of ancient poetry in terms of "egyszerűség" and "természetesség" draws directly on Schiller's concept of the naive, his treatment of modern poetry adds to Schiller's account a consciously Romantic appreciation of the poetic imagination. Where the poetry of the ancients had described "amit láttak, tapasztaltak, éreztek", the moderns, with whom Teleki associates his own age, "magunknak először egy új, a jelenvalótól egészen különböző költői világot formálunk, s azt adjuk elő, amit abban látnánk, tapasztalnánk, éreznénk." Teleki agrees with Schiller in arguing that the mode of ancient poetry was "tárgyas (objektív)" while that of the moderns is "személyes (szubjektív)", but goes on to insist that the modern, Romantic poet transcends his sentimental alienation from the object world through the power of imagination.

Teleki's incisive account of the interconnections between the sentimental and the Romantic helps us to appreciate the crucial role of Ádám Horváth, Csokonai, and Berzsenyi as leading founders of Romantic theory and practice in Hungary. Horvath's neglected *Psychologia* (1792) contains a remarkable discussion of the concept of imagination, which clearly anticipates

the Romantic usage of that term, while a Romantic attitude to the imagination is also undoubtedly identifiable in the poetry of Csokonai (who celebrated Horváth's *Psychologia* in an ode to its author of 1792) and in Berzsenyi's profoundly original *Poétái harmonistika*. In spite of the manifest classicism of his prosody, Berzsenyi's highly individual and often visionary use of metaphor in his own poetry also points clearly towards Romanticism, and a poem like *A közelítő tél* finds its proper place among the great Autumn poems of the Romantics, such as Keats's *Ode to Autumn*, Lamartine's *L'Autome*, and Eichendorff's *Herbstweh*.

The nature of Berzsenyi's reputation in Hungarian literary history was for most of the nineteenth century determined by the failure of his critics to appreciate the Romantic metaphoricality of his finest verse. Kölcsey, who would go on to attack the "irrationalism" of Romantic philosophy in his essays on mesmerism and animal magnetism, saw in Berzsenyi's "exaltait képzelődésnek exált képei" little more than turgid affectation working against meaning. While Erdélyi, writing from a more fully elaborated popular-national position, suggests that Berzsenyi's "festő költészete" is largely the product of regrettable German influence. Arany too would censure Berzsenyi's "dagályosság", and in the criticism of Gyulai and Riedl Berzsenyi's work occupies the disturbing space of a conspicuous silence. It is only with János Horváth's penetrating study of 1924, *Egy fejezet a magyar irodalom ízlés történetéből: Berzsenyi Dániel*, that Berzsenyi first receives serious critical attention - and, what is more, as an essentially *Romantic poet* - from a champion of Hungarian "national-classicism".

The one Hungarian poet in the first half of the nineteenth century who was able fully to appreciate and indeed build upon Berzsenyi's achievement was Mihály Vörösmarty. Vörösmarty is Hungary's greatest Romantic poet in the fully European sense of that term. A Romantic concept of imagination already informs his early epics *Tündérvölgy* and the unfinished *Délsziget*. Both of which anticipate the essentially tragic vision of the ungratifiable nature of human desire in Vörösmarty's mature verse. The source of this tragic vision lies in precisely the sense of the incommensurability of subject and object, self and world, which Wellek sees as not only the central torment of, but also the crucial challenge to, the Romantic imagination. In his great lyrics, *Előszó* and *A vén cigány*, for example, the poet's rich and highly individual metaphors serve less as substitutes for a set of finally retrievable objects than as the contours of a new poetic world. For all the individuality of its mode of expression, however, Vörösmarty's tragic vision repeatedly transcends the boundaries of the personal. In poems like *Gondolatok a könyvtárban* (1844), and *Az emberek* (1846), tragedy is expressed in universal human terms, while

in *Csongor és Tünde* (1831) and *Előszó* (1850) it is projected onto a superhuman, almost cosmic level.

Vörösmarty enjoyed a high reputation in his own lifetime, but himself complained that his verse was more widely praised than read. Celebrated as the author of the first major epic on the Hungarian Conquest, *Zalán futása* (1825), he had already fallen into poverty by the 1840s, unable to find a wide readership for his work. "Verseimmel úgy bánik a közönség," he complained in 1845, "mint a vízzel: dicséri s bort iszik helyette." This paradox was often to be reproduced in Vörösmarty's subsequent reception in Hungarian literary history. Gyulai, for example, saw Vörösmarty's importance in the degree to which he supposedly paved the way for the real architects of the popular-national tradition, Arany and Petőfi. At the same time he objected to what he saw as the "dagályosság" of a Romantic masterpiece like *A vén cigány*.

One might be tempted to conclude that "dagályosság" served the emerging popular-national disposition in the nineteenth century as a kind of all purpose term of anti-Romantic criticism, and that its ultimate referent is any deviation from what was perceived to be the authentic lexis and idiom of "the people" (*a nép*). Both the cultural ideology it serves, however, and the literary discourse it rejects, can certainly be seen as products of, and responses to, the same intellectual crisis identified by Schiller in his *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, which affected most of the cultures of Europe at the end of the eighteenth century, and from which modern Hungarian literature itself was born.