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Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies

special issue:

**HUNGARIAN POETRY AND THE
ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD:
A TRIBUTE TO
WATSON KIRKCONNELL**

essays, reviews and verse

translations by

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Thomas R. Mark
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Timothy Kachinske
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NANDOR DREISZIGER received his post-graduate education in the University of Toronto's Department of History and Centre for Russian and East European Studies. His articles on Canadian and Hungarian topics have appeared in three collections of papers and nine scholarly periodicals including the *Journal of Modern History* and the Canadian Historical Association's *Historical Papers*. During the past few years Dr. Dreisziger has taught at the Royal Military College of Canada, has

(continued on page 222)

Editor's Foreword

It is difficult to decide in what way appropriate tribute can be paid to a departed mentor, in this case our journal's Honorary Editor. We could have planned the publishing of a book of essays, a kind of belated Festschrift, as an expression of our last respects and sorrow. But such an ambitious undertaking would have involved years of preparations and could have strained our meagre financial resources. As an alternative we chose to dedicate one of the Review's issues to Watson Kirkconnell's memory, and fill it mainly with essays and reviews fitting for the occasion. Accordingly, in the first part of this issue we feature studies on subjects that had been dear to Kirkconnell in his lifetime: Hungarian poetry and verse translation. The exception is the first article which examines the historical significance of Kirkconnell's literary and other-than-literary activities as far as Canadians of Hungarian background are concerned.

In Part II of this issue we are proud to offer a taste of Kirkconnell's verse translation from Hungarian. Our sample is taken from his rendering of János Arany's epic poem, Toldi, into English. The poem celebrates the exploits of Miklós [Nicholas] Toldi, a Hungarian lad of legendary strength, during the middle ages. A complete version of Kirkconnell's translation of Toldi will be published separately by the Hungarian Readers' Service as soon as circumstances permit.

The third part of this special issue contains book reviews in the various fields of Hungarian studies. Although most of them do not relate to the realm of poetry or literature, it was thought best to print them in this volume rather than in the spring issue of 1978.

Many people have worked hard to make the appearance of this special issue possible. Drs. E. M. Basa, Joseph St. Clair and Stephen Scheer, as well as Mr. Maxim Táborny have each helped with the adjudication of one or two of the manuscripts. Professor Thomas Spira spared much of his valuable time to do most of the copy editing. Mrs. Hope Kirkconnell has sent us pictures of her late husband. Janet Kirkconnell supplied us with the manuscript of her late father's rendition of Toldi. Dr. F. Harszar has performed many of the innumerable chores involved in getting this volume on our subscribers' desks. To each of them we extend our thanks.

We also wish to acknowledge the offer of financial support which has been received from the Hungarian Helicon Society of Toronto, and the "matching grant" which has been provided by Ontario's Department of Culture and Recreation.

Kingston, October 1977

NFD

Watson Kirkconnell: Translator of Hungarian Poetry and a Friend of Hungarian-Canadians

N. F. Dreisziger

Friends of Small Nations

One of history's lessons is that, without outside help, small nations and weak minorities often become the victims of international or national political conflicts as the Second World War amply illustrates. Contrary to common belief, the victimization of defenceless groups has not been confined to totalitarian states; often democratic societies are also guilty. Even the history of Canada, one of the world's most peaceful countries, contains examples of unprovoked acts against minorities. One has only to recall the treatment of British Columbia's Japanese residents during World War II.

In the history of mankind the sufferings of small nations and minority groups have been prevented or diminished through help coming from one or more of the great powers. At other times, influential individuals have come to their aid. True, most of the time help was contingent on economic or political concessions. Occasionally, however, aid had no strings attached. That influential statesmen, publicists and academics have been able to do a great deal for small nations and minorities, has been demonstrated many times in history. Two British publicists, R.W. Seton-Watson and H.W. Steed, for example, effectively promoted the cause of Czech independence during the closing years of the First World War. Hungary too, has had such influential sympathizers abroad. One of these was the English newspaper magnate, Lord Rothermere. Another was Professor C.A. Macartney, the Oxford historian and the author of several books on Hungarian history. It is less commonly known in the world, and not even in Canada, that Hungarians, especially Hungarian-Canadians, also had a Canadian friend: Watson Kirkconnell, teacher, scholar, poet and publicist who until his recent death lived in retirement in the quiet university town of Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

Kirkconnell's work in the field of verse translation from the Hun-

garian is generally known by the educated public in Canada and abroad. What is much less known is the fact that his activities in connection with things Hungarian transcended the realm of poetry and literature and had political as well as social significance. His non-literary contribution to the Magyar cause has not been the highly visible variety. Whereas Seton-Watson's and Steed's pro-Czech efforts helped in the creation of Czechoslovakia, no such cataclysmic events resulted from Kirkconnell's work on behalf of Hungarians. But this should not detract from the significance of his work. Since his accomplishments cannot be appreciated without an understanding of the general Canadian context and the development of the Hungarian community in Canada, it is to these themes we must turn.

A Young Nation

The Canada of Kirkconnell's early years was a young, developing nation, characterized above all by a growing spirit of nationalism. Although Canada was bi-national, French and English having co-existed here for many generations, Canadian nationalism was not one that transcended ethnic and cultural differences. In fact, it may be said that two distinct nationalisms existed in Canada at the time, one among English-speaking Canadians, and a different one among French-speaking Canadians. This left no room for Canadians whose background was neither English nor French. One prominent English-Canadian, Principal George M. Grant of Queen's University, remarked at the time that "in order to be Canadian an inhabitant of the country had to be 'British';"¹ while the chief spokesman for French Canada at the time, Henri Bourassa, complained that it was never the intention of the founders of Canadian Confederation to turn this "partly French and partly English country" into a land of refuge for the "scum of all nations."² The "British" nationalism of English-speaking Canadians, the "bicultural" national vision of Bourassa and his followers, and the Quebec-centered parochialism of other French-Canadians left little room for the masses of immigrants that were arriving to Canada from central and eastern Europe.

But the immigrants kept coming. Over-population, economic problems, and social pressures forced them to leave their native lands and seek new opportunities in what was the last great frontier of agricultural settlement in the New World: the Canadian prairies. Foresighted statesmen in Ottawa, such as Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior from 1896 to 1905, welcomed east and central European agriculturalists as

the best possible settlers who would in time create prosperous farms out of the prairie wilderness.

The appearance in the Canadian West of large groups of strangely dressed people with stranger names, speaking unintelligible languages and following alien traditions, alarmed many English Canadians, just as their influx alarmed Bourassa. Was Western Canada destined to be dominated by people incapable of adjusting to Canadian traditions and developing loyalty to Canadian institutions and government? Such fears, expressions of nativistic antagonisms towards the immigrants, were rampant in the Canadian West. The First World War, a conflict which raised human emotions to unprecedented heights, served to reinforce these hatreds, especially toward immigrants who came from the lands of the Central Powers. During the war, these newcomers were designated as "enemy aliens". Because Austria-Hungary was one of the principal Central Powers, Hungarian-Canadians fell into this category.

The hatreds caused by the war were still not forgotten when Canada plunged into one of the worst crises of its domestic history, the Great Depression. Starting in 1929, the crash caused unparalleled hardships for most Canadians. During the worst years of the economic crisis one out of every four adults was unemployed. Thousands of worried men wended their way through the country, going from factory to factory, mine to mine, seeking non-existent jobs. Prairie farmers were also badly hurt. The price of farm products hit all time lows. In 1932, wheat sold for only 32 cents a bushel, its lowest price in centuries.³ The drop in farm income was aggravated by a series of natural disasters. For many years, severe drought plagued the southern portions of Alberta and Saskatchewan, causing not only near-total crop failures, but also and more importantly, soil erosion. The drought, the soil erosion and other natural calamities such as grasshoppers caused nine successive years of almost total crop failures in some areas of the prairies.⁴ The chronic and nation-wide unemployment, the collapse of the West's farm economy, resulted in a bitter competition for jobs and all means of income, a struggle in which newcomers often ended up as losers.

The Depression was hardly over when the Second World War began. The emotional strain of the conflict rekindled some of the prejudices built up during the First World War. Hungary again found herself in the camp at war with Canada. Nevertheless, during this war the lot of Hungarian-Canadians was better than it had been during 1914-18. The Second World War was followed by the Cold War. Fortunately, the domestic situation, while not free from economic recessions accompanied by unemployment, brought much greater economic security for

the vast majority of Canadians. The postwar decades also witnessed the gradual decline of nativistic antagonisms against immigrant ethnic groups. At long last, "New Canadians" could enjoy a greater share of the wealth, and a greater degree of security that their new homeland had to offer.

The Magyars in Canada

The first small groups of Hungarians arrived in Canada in the second half of the 1880's, but it was not until the turn of the century that they began to migrate to this country in significant numbers. According to the very unreliable statistics of the 1911 census, there were 11,648 of them in Canada that year.⁵ The First World War stopped their influx, but the gates were opened again during the 1920's. Between 1924 and 1930, a veritable flood of Magyars came to Canada, especially to the prairie provinces, driven by a mixture of political and economic considerations. Following the Great War, the peacemakers dismembered historic Hungary. The economic situation of truncated Hungary was very weak. She had some industries but very little in the way of mineral and energy resources; and she had much agricultural land but few markets for produce. But worst off were those Magyars whose homes were transferred to the successor states: Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and an enlarged Romania. Hungary could absorb only a few of these unfortunate Magyars. The United States, the traditional recipient of Hungarian immigrants prior to 1914, virtually closed its gates to East European migration after the war. Canada remained one of the few countries to admit Hungarians.

The victims of the postwar dislocations in central Eastern Europe began arriving in Canada in the mid-1920's. Although many of these newcomers were really political refugees, they were not admitted as such. They came as agricultural labourers, even though some of them had been craftsmen, landowners and members of the professions. Along with these refugees from the successor states came many poor peasants and landless farm workers who left impoverished Hungary mainly for economic reasons.

During the Great Depression, Canada's gates were once more shut to large-scale immigration; but return to normalcy after the Second World War meant that the country could again admit a great number of immigrants. In this period Hungarians came in two distinct waves. At the end of the 1940's, the so-called "displaced persons" arrived. They were political exiles of the war and of its immediate aftermath. Less

than a decade later they were followed by the "refugees," the participants and victims of the 1956 anti-Communist uprising in Hungary. Their arrival swelled the number of Hungarians in Canada to 126,220 by the time of the 1961 census.

The Struggle for Survival

Until recently, the lot of Canada's Hungarian immigrants had been difficult. The early settlers had endured many hardships and deprivations before getting their homesteads established. Although after many years of hard work in an inhospitable climate many of them had achieved freedom from material want, they suffered continued spiritual, cultural and social deprivation. Except for the fortunate few who had settled in fairly compact Hungarian colonies, the majority continued to live in the isolation of their prairie farmsteads, far removed from centres of ethnic cultural and religious life.

The condition of the Hungarian worker was probably even less enviable. A labourer was buffeted from one lumber camp to another, or from one mine to the next. In times of unemployment he was often entirely without income. Unless he settled in a city, he could hardly maintain any meaningful contacts with Hungarian religious or social organizations.

The Depression exacerbated the situation of both immigrant farmers and workers. The former lost most of their income, the latter sooner or later forfeited their jobs. True, the farmer would not starve, unless he defaulted on his debts; but the labourer was confronted with the grim task of feeding himself and his family without any income. To add to the newcomer's predicament, recent arrivals who went on relief risked deportation. Not until the war years and the postwar period did the economic situation of Hungarian-Canadians improve markedly. The return of normal climate and prosperity to the prairie farms brought relief for the agriculturalist, while the growth of employment in the cities ended the labourer's plight. The rapid growth of Canadian manufacturing also meant that an increasing number of Hungarian-Canadians could settle in urban centres. There, because of greater concentration, they often had their social, cultural and religious needs satisfied as well.

Discrimination

The struggle for the daily loaf of bread was not the only problem

confronting Hungarian-Canadians. The nativistic feelings of English and French Canadians, their suspicions toward certain immigrants, was a fact which no Magyar immigrant to this country could escape. Worse still, these antagonisms were often transmuted into outright discrimination. As has been mentioned, during the First World War immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe were classified as "enemy aliens" and were denied the right to vote in federal elections. In the 1920's Hungarians were placed in the "non-preferred" category by immigration authorities. While some Hungarians were victims of official discrimination, others were plagued by sheer ignorance about ethnic groups. In 1937, for example, an insurance company refused to provide fire-damage coverage to Hungarian farmers. Apparently, the officials of the firm had confused Hungarians with Doukhobors whose incendiary habits were public knowledge.⁶

Discrimination by governments and private companies may have hurt the immigrant's pride and pocketbook, but it probably did not have a very damaging effect on his psyche. For many newcomers, the experience of being mistreated by bureaucrats and employers was not entirely new. Hungarians from the successor states had already been subjected to similar if not worse treatment. Those directly from Hungary were often also acquainted with discrimination. As impoverished peasants or landless labourers they had been at the bottom of their former country's social ladder. What most Hungarian immigrants had not tasted before, and what was a new and discouraging experience for them in Canada, was what might be termed personal discrimination: rejection by co-workers, and neighbours, by people of their own social rank and educational achievement. Such treatment, however infrequent it might have been, was a bitter pill to swallow for most Hungarian-Canadians.

If discrimination was a discouraging experience for the adult immigrant, it was even worse for his children. Born in Canada, these "hyphenated Canadians" grew up assuming that they would be treated as equals. Their disappointment was all the keener when they discovered that, no matter how emphatically they rejected their parents' values and habits, they were not accepted as full-fledged Canadians. The frustrations of a second-generation Hungarian yearning for acceptance into Canadian society are skillfully depicted in John Marlyn's novel *Under the Ribs of Death*. The novel's hero, Sándor Hunyadi, has one aim in life: to become "Alex Hunter," an English-Canadian businessman. His rejections no doubt resemble those that many Hungarian-Canadians had experienced in striving for social and economic betterment.

Sociologists have yet to explain satisfactorily the causes of discrimination toward Hungarians and other Canadian immigrant ethnic groups.⁷ Undoubtedly, fears generated by the influx of masses of immigrants with strange mores and customs, the rivalry for material advancement, the passions generated by two world wars, have probably been the most important ones. But there were, it seems, other factors as well. These were the beliefs, widely held in Canada during the first half of this century, that some immigrant groups lacked culture and were incapable of developing loyalty to Canada.

The first of these beliefs, that central and eastern European immigrants were uncultured, was held by Bourassa who maintained that newcomers to the Canadian West were the "scum of all nations." The ability of immigrant-dominated Western Canada to remain loyal to Canadian traditions and ideals was doubted by no less a person than the noted teacher, writer, and humorist, Stephen Leacock. In his essay "Canada and the Immigration Problem," Leacock expressed the fear that a Canadian West "of whose inhabitants vast masses stand in no hereditary relation to the history of Canada. . ." may lack the "restraining influence experienced by the existence of a common history. . ." to keep it in Confederation.⁸ The belief that immigrants often espoused radical ideologies was publicly endorsed in Section 98 of the Canadian Criminal Code, which provided for the deportation of newcomers *suspected* of radical affiliations and activities.

Canada's immigrants in general, and Canadian-Hungarians in particular, could do little to dispel the largely erroneous views of native Canadians about them. The masses of underprivileged and often poorly educated peasants that had flocked to the Canadian West from the 1880's to the late 1920's were incapable of generating a cultural life the calibre of which would have impressed the Canadian public. The few intellectuals among New Canadians who managed to come to Canada in spite of the government's "farmers only" admission policy were pre-occupied with eking out a meagre living and, when they had time to write, they did so in their own language. Their works remained unknown to most Canadians.

Immigrants also had difficulty disproving their alleged potential disloyalty to Canada. Public declarations of fidelity convinced very few people. Not until the Second World War did Hungarian-Canadians demonstrate their "Canadian" patriotism by enlisting in the Armed Forces in large numbers. But even this failed to convince the more suspicious. Accusations of radicalism were also difficult to refute especially since, during the Depression, a number of bitter and frus-

trated immigrants had become converts to radical ideologies. Their activities were more likely to attract the attention of the English language press than the work and views of the majority of immigrants who were satisfied with the Canadian system of government.

The immigrants' greatest problem was that their self-assessment as a cultured, loyal, and moderate group was not shared by the Canadian public. The newcomer's boasts about the greatness of his own cultural heritage could easily be misinterpreted as mere bragging and his insistence that he loved his adopted land, not taken at face value. Canadians had to be convinced by fellow Canadians whose impartiality could not be questioned. Fortunately for New Canadians in general and Hungarian-Canadians in particular, a few Canadian individuals were willing to undertake this task. Perhaps the most notable among them was Watson Kirkconnell.

Watson Kirkconnell

Kirkconnell was born in the town of Port Hope, Ontario, in 1895. His mother, in Kirkconnell's own words, had a "highly diversified ancestry," whereas his father descended from an ethnic group noted for giving so many distinguished sons and daughters to Canada: the Scottish. An industrious student with a gift for languages and mathematics, the young Kirkconnell completed his high school education in Lindsay, Ontario. In 1913 he entered Queen's University in Kingston earning his B.A. and M.A. degrees in Classics. Following three years of war service and a prolonged illness, Kirkconnell entered Oxford University to earn a degree in Economics as preparation for a career in journalism.⁹ But a journalist he did not become. In 1922 he accepted a teaching post in Winnipeg's Wesley College. The appointment turned out to be the beginning of a distinguished academic career, which included a stint as Head of Wesley College's Department of Classics (1939 to 1940), as Professor of English and Department Head at McMaster University in Hamilton (1940 to 1948), and, finally, as President of Acadia University (1948 to 1964).

What brought Kirkconnell in touch with several New Canadian groups was his passion for verse translation. He developed this predilection rather late in his youth. His talent for languages and English versification had been evident in primary school. He combined the two talents for the first time during his stay at Queen's University, when he was given a class assignment to translate Latin verse into English prose. In his memoirs, Kirkconnell relates that he accomplished the task in

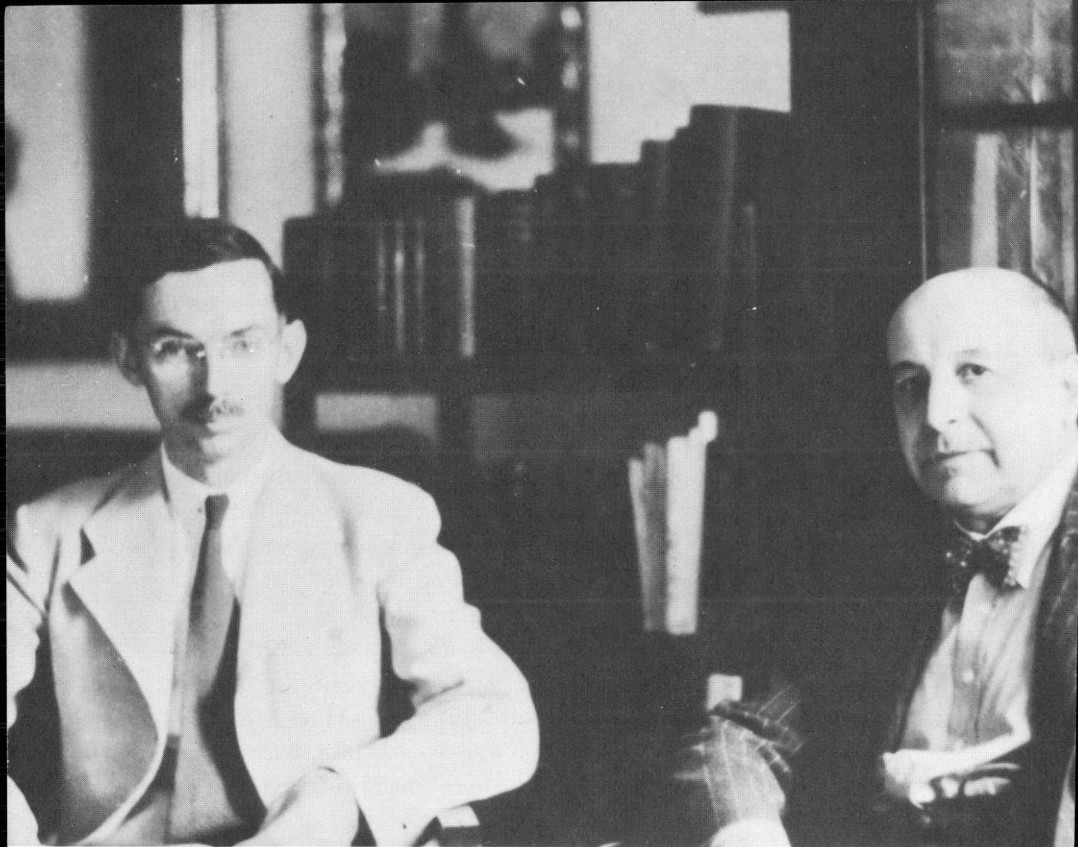
fifteen minutes, and spent the rest of the hour versifying the translation. He found that the "metre flowed" from his pen "almost as freely as prose."¹⁰ But this incident did not inspire a systematic effort at verse translation. It was only during the second half of the 1920's that he became involved in translating European verse into English and developed intimate ties with Canadians of European background. Kirkconnell's first encounter with New Canadians came in 1922, when on his return voyage from England he found himself surrounded by immigrants from many parts of Europe. Scattered throughout this large group, comprising mainly agricultural workers, Kirkconnell found several well-educated refugees from Eastern Europe's civil wars and revolutions.¹¹ He was apparently impressed and took an interest in them but after arriving in Canada lost contact with them.

In September of the same year, Kirkconnell began his teaching career in Winnipeg. During his first three years in this busy centre of immigrant life, the young university teacher did not develop close contacts with New Canadians. What led to Kirkconnell's life-long friendship with Canada's European immigrants was involvement in verse translation.

Kirkconnell turned to this type of scholarly activity for solace when his wife died after giving birth to twin sons. In the lonely, long months that followed, Kirkconnell made plans for translating samples of Europe's best poetry into English "as a memorial" to his departed wife.¹² This was a monumental plan, beset by many difficulties, not the least of which was the lack of suitable grammar books and dictionaries. Kirkconnell was also saddled with incredulous publishers who at first refused to believe that anyone could master scores of foreign languages, and translate the poetry of numerous European nations. Only after internationally recognized experts of European linguistics ascertained the quality of Kirkconnell's translations was a publisher found. Kirkconnell's first volume of verse translation, *European Elegies*, appeared in 1928.

A Philosophy of Ethnic Relations

At first, verse translating served Kirkconnell only one purpose: it helped to "deaden the pain of great bereavement."¹³ But soon the task assumed greater significance. As he expressed it in his memoirs: "it opened doors for me into new worlds of imaginative experience."¹⁴ It also launched Kirkconnell's career as a verse translator. This activity gained him new acquaintances, initially mainly among the academic



and literary elite in several European countries. But in time, it also led to his close and life-long association with New Canadians, and among them, Hungarians.

Kirkconnell was first attracted to the Icelandic community of Manitoba. Two of his Wesley College friends, Skuli Johnson and Olafur Anderson, were Canadian-Icelanders; so were many of Kirkconnell's students. The College library was well stocked with books on Icelandic grammar, poetry and literature. It is not surprising that the first volume in Kirkconnell's projected series of translations from the national poetries of European peoples was the *North American Book of Icelandic Verse* (New York: Carrier and Iles, 1930). "My anthology," wrote Kirkconnell many years later, "proved to be a key to the hearts of the Canadian Icelanders."¹⁵

Closer links with the world of immigrant ethnics wrought a change in Kirkconnell's approach to popularizing the European cultural achievement. His first work in the field of verse translation, *European Elegies*, had a potential to serve the interests of Canadians of European background, but this had not been Kirkconnell's original purpose. The young scholar's subsequent publications had different motives. In his next general work, *The European Heritage* (London and Toronto: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1930), Kirkconnell deliberately set out to combat ignorance, the "mother of intolerance," as he put it in the volume's preface. He wrote further:

Saxon and Slav, Norseman and Celt, all have gifts that have been proved great in the annals of civilization; but sincere co-operation, whether in the New World or in the Old, becomes humanly possible only as men realize the worth of their fellow men.¹⁶

The volume, some two hundred pages of appreciative comments about the cultural achievements of European nations, undoubtedly generated a warm respect for European cultures in the hearts of his readers. Such sentiments were bound to benefit Canada's European immigrants.

In addition to writing a survey of European history, Kirkconnell began publicising the works of New Canadian poets.¹⁷ His most substantial publication dealing with this poetry was *Canadian Overtones* (Winnipeg: Columbia Press, 1935), an anthology of verse translated

Illustrations on the opposite page, top: Kirkconnell and Tivadar Edl in Budapest, 1938. Bottom: Watson and Hope Kirkconnell in their Wolfville, Nova Scotia home, ca. 1976.

from the "Canadian poetry" of Icelandic, Swedish, Norwegian, Hungarian, Italian, Greek and Ukrainian poets. The preface identified Kirkconnell's purpose: to "reveal to English-speaking Canadians a transient but intensely significant phase" of Canada's national literature. Then he stunned his readers by stating that, during the past three decades, the published poetry of New Canadians had exceeded in bulk "all Canadian poetry published in French; while in Western Canada . . . this unknown poetry has surpassed that of Anglo-Canadians both in quantity and in quality."¹⁸ Kirkconnell also used the preface to explain his own views on ethnic-native relations. He observed that Canadian attitudes toward immigrants had passed through two "ignorant and discreditable phases." At first many Canadians considered immigrants as "European coolies", who were good only for back-breaking work that no one else wanted to perform. Later, Canadians showed a patronizing interest in the newcomers' folk-costumes and folk-dances, aspects of their culture which were no more than "picturesque incidentals which have about as much vital share in their lives as the kilt and the Highland fling have in that of the average Scotch-Canadian." Kirkconnell hoped that by knowing of New Canadian poetry, the native-born would develop a "third and much truer attitude" towards these people as "beings breathing thoughtful breath."¹⁹

In the preface to *Canadian Overtones* Kirkconnell revealed, for the first time, his concept of a Canadian multi-ethnic identity. New Canadian poetry would help to develop in future generations of Canadians a "Canadianism nourished by pride in the individual's racial past." A person with an awareness of his ancestry and pride in his forebears' achievements was a better citizen of his country. "As a Canadian, he is not poorer but richer because he realizes his place in a notable stream of human relationship down through the centuries."²⁰ Kirkconnell had only contempt for the person who denied his ancestry. He who claimed to be "one hundred per cent" Canadian "is commonly one who has deliberately suppressed an alien origin in order to keep the material benefits of a well-advertized loyalty." There was no chance of "noble spiritual issues from such a prostituted patriotism." It was regrettable that this type of behaviour was encouraged by the "ignorant assumption" of many English-Canadians that an alien origin was the "mark of inferiority." "He who thinks thus," Kirkconnell continued, "is a mental hooligan."²¹

Kirkconnell realized that the development of a general Canadian multi-ethnic awareness could only come through a change in public

attitudes to immigrant minority cultures. This change could be achieved only with the help of civic and educational institutions:

Our national holidays might well be given over to such pageantry (including, perhaps festivals of drama, poetry, and music) as would emphasize the co-operative existence of the distinct racial groups in our population. Our schools might give ample recognition to their history and culture. Our universities might foster their languages and literatures. . . .²²

He also believed that the state had a responsibility in preserving the "full potentialities of our several peoples."²³ In expressing this view, Kirkconnell anticipated by some four decades the concept of government-supported multicultural programmes.

The Hungarians of Winnipeg

By the time Kirkconnell developed these basic ideas about ethnic-native relations and a multicultural Canadian identity, he was in increasingly close contact with the Hungarian community in Canada, particularly with the growing and important Hungarian colony in Winnipeg. During the 1920's Winnipeg, that growing, polyglot prairie metropolis, was the largest centre of Canada's "new immigration". It was here that the masses of freshly arrived immigrants rested before setting out for their homesteads on the edge of Canada's ever expanding frontier of agricultural settlement. But while the newcomers were moving toward the fringes of the prairies, other immigrants were making their way to the city: disappointed farmers, labourers, craftsmen and merchants who had somehow entered Canada despite Ottawa's restrictions on non-agricultural immigrants.

By the time Kirkconnell's professional career had begun, Winnipeg was the busiest urban centre for Canada's Hungarian community. Magyar immigrants had started to settle in the city at the turn of the century. During the next two decades their numbers increased. By the mid-1920's they had a few organizations of their own, including a Presbyterian congregation, a Roman Catholic parish, and a sick-benefit insurance society. Other clubs, serving social and recreational purposes, would spring up a few years later. This community soon became one of the most influential in Canada and produced what may be called Canada's Hungarian elite. Steamship and railway ticket agents, priests and ministers as well as other members of the very small New Canadian middle class frequented the city and settled there as circumstances permitted. Even more important, from the point of view of the Hun-

garian community of Western Canada, was the establishment of a permanent weekly newspaper, the *Kanadai Magyar Újság* (*Canadian Hungarian News*).²⁴ Toward the end of the decade, the Royal Hungarian Consulate opened in the city. These events established Winnipeg as the undisputed centre for the intellectual and political life of Canada's Hungarian community.

Translating Hungarian Poetry

The development of cultural and intellectual life within Winnipeg's Hungarian community and Professor Kirkconnell's work in verse translation made contact between the young scholar and the city's Hungarian elite inevitable. Indeed, it was Kirkconnell's prolific activities in this field that attracted the attention of Béla Báchkai Payerle of the *Canadian Hungarian News*. Having read Kirkconnell's translations from Magyar in *European Elegies*, Payerle encouraged Kirkconnell to publish a separate volume of verse translation from Hungarian. Payerle would assist with deciphering the original Magyar text. In 1930 this venture resulted in a manuscript entitled "North American Book of Magyar Verse."²⁵ Since the Depression brought many publishers to near ruin or bankruptcy, the volume's publication became impossible for the time being. Installments were printed in the *Canadian Hungarian News*, and later in Payerle's English-language magazine, the *Young Magyar-American*. A small anthology of poems was published as "A Magyar Miscellany" in the prestigious, London based, learned journal, the *Slavonic and East European Review*. Little is known about the reactions of Hungarian-Canadians to Kirkconnell's translations, but the response from Hungary was positive. Congratulatory letters came from poets and scholars, and in 1932 one of the Hungarian learned societies, the Petőfi Társaság, elected Kirkconnell to honorary membership.²⁶

Meanwhile, the obstacles blocking more ambitious publication schemes were being slowly overcome. In 1932 Lord Rothermere, the English newspaper publisher, visited Winnipeg and contributed \$200 to defray the cost of printing Kirkconnell's collection of Magyar poetry. The Hungarian government advanced \$500 for 500 copies intended for distribution in Hungary. The Hungarian Consul in Winnipeg, István J. Schebeck (Petényi) also made a cash contribution. The noted Hungarian writer, Ferenc Herczeg, lent his prestige by writing the introduction. Payerle did the typesetting with his own hands, gratis. In January 1933, *The Magyar Muse* at last became available.²⁷

During the next several years, additional translations from Magyar poetry followed. Work was started on the expansion of *The Magyar Muse* into a two-volume manuscript, intended for a new, enlarged edition. A translation of János Arany's epic, *The Death of King Buda*, was published in 1936 with the help of the Cleveland-based Benjamin Franklin Bibliographical Society, an organization dedicated to publishing books on Hungarian subjects. The translation of Arany's epic was followed by a work on Hungarian grammar, *Primer of Hungarian*, published in installments in Payerle's *Young Magyar-American*. Then came still more studies and translations, published from time to time in the *Slavonic and East European Review*, and elsewhere.²⁸

In 1936 Kirkconnell helped in the launching of the *Hungarian Quarterly*. The journal was the brain-child of Count István Bethlen, one of Hungary's elder statesmen. Its primary purpose was to offer the British and North American reading public a journal which would convey information on Hungary's cultural life, political problems, and aspirations. Kirkconnell was one of the journal's first contributors. His article, "Hungary's Linguistic Isolation," expressed the hope that the periodical would serve as an "open window," through which the world could "gaze into Hungary's lonely tower of linguistic isolation" and see there "the vital personality of a gifted people."²⁹

With the blessing and financial backing of individuals and institutions in Hungary, the *Hungarian Quarterly* prospered for several years. The Second World War saw its demise. Since then, attempts to revive it have failed primarily because of the lack of adequate financial resources. Although more than a generation has passed since the original *Hungarian Quarterly* folded, it has yet to be replaced by another periodical of the same scope and quality, and dedicated to similar ideals.³⁰

During and after the Second World War new concerns, additional duties and changed circumstances prevented Kirkconnell from devoting as much time and effort to verse translation from Hungarian as before. His work continued, but more sporadically. In 1947, an anthology, "Little Treasury of Hungarian Verse," appeared, followed more than a decade later by translations of the Premonstratensian canon László Mécs's poetry. Next came an anthology of the "freedom fighter" poetry of "Tibor Tollas" and others. But systematic work in this field could not be undertaken until after Kirkconnell's resignation from the Presidency of Acadia University in 1964. In 1967, he completed one of his old projects, a translation of Arany's *Toldi*. He also started work on still another, more complete anthology of Magyar verse. Next fol-

lowed translations from other, more recent Hungarian poets, such as Dezső Kosztolányi, Lajos Kassák, Milán Füst, József Erdélyi, Lőrinc Szabó, Gyula Illyés, Sándor Weöres, Attila József, Zoltán Zelk, Miklós Radnóti, István Vas and Ferenc Juhász.³¹

Kirkconnell's aides and collaborators in this massive work were Payerle and his wife, and a post-1945 arrival, Maxim Táborny. His scholarly "mentors" in this period were three émigré academics: Dr. George Gömöri of Darwin College, Cambridge; Dr. Ádám Makkai, of the University of Illinois; and Dr. George Buday from England. The new anthology, comprising some 1,200 pages in manuscript, was completed in 1973. Its publication by the University of Toronto Press would have cost \$28,000, which made publication commercially unfeasible.³² A request for a grant from the multicultural programme of the Department of the Secretary of State in Ottawa has been supported by a number of Hungarian cultural organisations, but the quest has not been successful thus far.

Political Writings

During and after the Second World War, Professor Kirkconnell became involved in a very different kind of literary activity. Realizing the importance of the burning issue of the age, he plunged into political controversies and produced a series of books dealing mainly with the menace of totalitarian ideologies, the attitudes of New Canadians to political radicalism, and the Canadian war-effort. This type of writing was probably considered unbecoming to a scholar of classics and literatures. Undoubtedly Kirkconnell earned the disdain of some of his academic colleagues who preferred to weather the storm in the isolation of the "ivory towers" of the universities. In a way, however, Kirkconnell's wartime writings were not a major departure from his pre-war work; his polemical tracts helped New Canadians, just as his verse translations had during the 1930's. Both activities helped to gain respect for Canada's European immigrants.

One of the factors which prompted Kirkconnell to embark on political writing was his desire to confront and combat the growing influence of international Communism in Canada. He became aware of this danger during his residence in Winnipeg, a city reputedly the centre of radical leftist activities in inter-war Canada. Some of this reputation was well deserved; the city had its share of radical activists, but at no time was it ripe for a Bolshevik revolution *à la* 1917 — not even in 1919, during the notorious general strike. Radical influence in Winnipeg

seems to have been inversely related to the economic prosperity of the city's populace. Radicalism waxed during the post-war slump, and waned during the prosperous mid- and late 1920's, only to re-emerge with a vengeance during the Depression. Indeed, during a public lecture at the University of Manitoba during the early 1930's Kirkconnell encountered a "solid platoon of Communist hecklers" in his audience. They obviously disagreed with what he had to say on "How Russia is Governed."³³

Kirkconnell's war of words against Canada's Communists did not start in earnest until the outbreak of the Second World War. From the fall of 1939 until the spring of 1941, he condemned the Communist Party's attitude toward the Canadian war effort. This was the period of Nazi-Soviet collaboration, initiated by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-Aggression Pact of August 1939. During this time, the Communist Party of Canada refused to support Canada's war effort, evidently on orders from Moscow, and, indeed, engaged in anti-war propaganda. Kirkconnell assailed the Communists in three of his wartime books: *Canada, Europe and Hitler* (1939), *Twilight of Liberty* (1941) and *Seven Pillars of Freedom* (1944). He also warned about the Communists' real aim: "Whatever the outcome" of the war in Europe, he predicted in 1941, the Communists will work "for the break-up of the present order in North America. . . ."³⁴

It is difficult to judge the Canadian public's reactions to these statements. Some of Kirkconnell's contemporaries who had not already been convinced of the Communist menace probably remained incredulous and did not believe him until 1945 when Igor Gouzenko revealed the existence of an extensive Soviet espionage network in North America. The Communists' reactions to Kirkconnell's wartime writings were emphatic and vociferous. Canada's Moscow-controlled press, comprising nearly a dozen newspapers published in almost as many languages, denounced him as an agent of Nazi Propaganda Chief Goebbels, and ridiculed him in numerous tasteless cartoons.³⁵

The Hungarian language newspapers of the Communist Party of Canada participated fully in the campaign of vituperations against Kirkconnell. The war of words between the outspoken professor and the Hungarian Communists had started in 1943 when Kirkconnell refuted the public claim by Steve Szőke, editor of the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás* (*Canadian Hungarian Worker*) that his paper was not a Communist Party organ. Against this assertion Kirkconnell cited a 1931 resolution of the Communist Party of Canada which established the *Munkás* as one of the party's mouth-pieces.³⁶ After this exchange,

which took place in the pages of the popular weekly *Saturday Night*, the editors of Canada's Hungarian-language Communist press refrained from further public debate with Kirkconnell and contented themselves with name-calling. In 1944 they called Kirkconnell a "mad dog," and asserted that his *Seven Pillars of Freedom* contained all the "crafty intrigue, perversion and falsehood of this notorious professor."³⁷

Whereas Kirkconnell's anti-Communist writings were designed mainly to warn the Canadian public against the dangers of a Moscow-controlled Left, some of his other pronouncements during these years served to help Canada's immigrant minorities. Many Canadians still regarded central and eastern European immigrants with suspicion. Such suspicions were particularly widespread during periods of crisis. In the troubled 1930's, for example, radical tendencies intensified among most Canadian groups, especially the country's immigrants. This is not surprising, because these people tended to suffer the most. It was the most recent arrivals who were least equipped to cope with economic difficulties and psychological stress. Indeed, it is a wonder that not more immigrants became radicalized. But the few who did were noisy; and they confirmed many native Canadians' suspicions and increased their fear of all immigrants.

The outbreak of the Second World War heightened these suspicions. Many native Canadians would not believe that immigrants from enemy countries could be depended upon to support the Canadian war-effort. Hungarians were included among those suspected of latent disloyalty, even though their home country was late and reluctant in joining the Axis war-effort, and Hungarian-Canadians repeatedly declared their loyalty to Canada.³⁸ But the general public did not believe such declarations. Fortunately for Canada's Magyar residents, Professor Kirkconnell undertook the task of convincing his fellow countrymen that Hungarians, like Canada's other central European immigrants, were neither dangerous radicals nor potentially disloyal subjects.

Kirkconnell devoted more than a third of his book, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, to this subject. He conceded that Canadians of continental European descent, unlike their English-speaking compatriots, had no particular affection for Britain. But Kirkconnell maintained that this fact did not mean that these immigrants were disloyal to Canada. In fact, their allegiance, like that of French-Canadians, was first and foremost to Canada. A thorough examination of the public and press statements of Canada's ethnic groups of European background led Kirkconnell to conclude that:

While some of the groups have been seriously exposed to the propaganda of Communism and Fascism, and a minority among them have even succumbed to such external pressure, the majority, by reason of these very attempts at penetration, are all the better aware of the challenge to democracy and liberty involved in the rise of Hitler.³⁹

New Canadians in general, and Hungarian-Canadians in particular, were fortunate during the war to have had a spokesman like Kirkconnell.

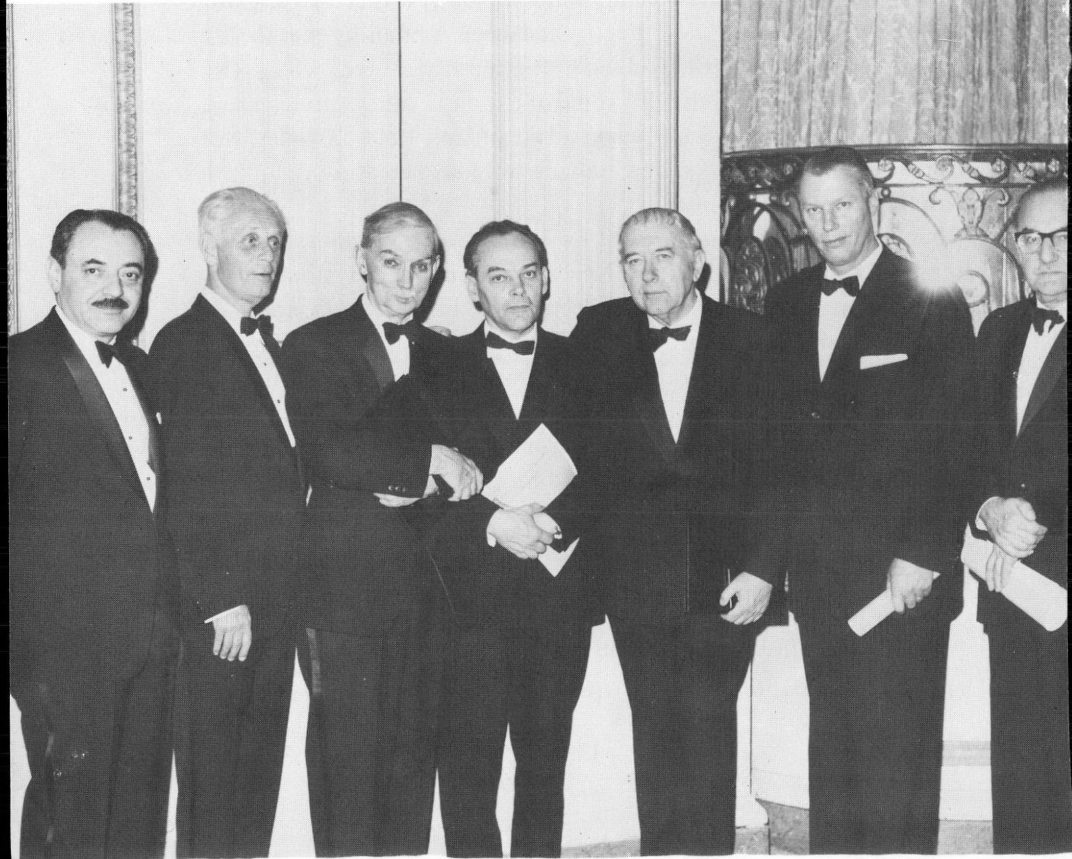
Popularizing New Canadian Literatures

Still another way in which Professor Kirkconnell assisted Canadians of European background was to encourage and popularize the works of immigrant poets and writers. He himself discovered the richness of the virtually unknown non-English and non-French Canadian literature almost by accident. Canadian texts of literary history and criticism never even mentioned works written in other than English or French. The country's immigrants were presumed to have no literary tradition of their own. But Kirkconnell found that a section of Wesley College's library was filled with books and journals written in Icelandic, produced by authors in both Iceland and Canada. Further investigation revealed that much Icelandic poetry had been written by members of Manitoba's compact little Icelandic community. Later, when Kirkconnell acquainted himself with some of the city's other ethnic groups, he realized that Winnipeg's Magyars, Ukrainians, Poles, Swedes, Norwegians, Germans, Greeks, and Italians were also creating their "considerable literatures."⁴⁰

The discovery of a new, wealthy branch of Canadian literature prompted Kirkconnell to study New Canadian letters systematically. He began to amass his own collection of literature produced by Canada's European immigrants, to seek out their poets and writers, and to start accumulating biographical and bibliographical information on them. In 1935 he published an anthology of New Canadian poetry, to be followed by a series of studies on New Canadian *belles lettres*, published mainly in the *University of Toronto Quarterly*. In his memoirs, Professor Kirkconnell evaluated the literature of New Canadians as follows:

Taken together, these minor literatures present an unrivalled picture of human predicament, of lives uprooted from a country and planted afresh with difficulty in Canadian soil.⁴¹

The volume of this literature was so extensive that, by the time he retired



from teaching in 1968, Kirkconnell had accumulated some 2,000 volumes of New Canadian books. The priceless collection has been recently deposited in Acadia University's library.⁴²

Only a small proportion of this collection consists of works written by Hungarian-Canadian authors. The earlier volumes include the poets Gyula Izsák, Sarolta Petényi, and Rózsa Páll Kovács, as well as the journalist Gusztáv Nemes and the historian Pál Sántha. The post-1956 collection of Hungarian works is more voluminous. It is filled by the poetical works of Ferenc Fáy, András Tamás, Márton Kerecsendi Kis, and others, the anthologies published by the Canadian Hungarian Authors' Association (Kanadai Magyar Írók Köre) under the editorship of János Miska, as well as other works published by Hungarian authors in Canada often with the help of such organizations as the Calgary-based Széchenyi Society and the Helicon Society of Toronto.⁴³

Expressions of Gratitude

During his long and distinguished career Professor Kirkconnell had been honoured by universities, learned societies, governments and civic and ethnic organizations. He had been awarded honorary degrees by over a dozen Canadian and European universities. Decorations and other honours were bestowed on him by the Order of the Icelandic Falcon, the Order of Polonia Restituta, the Royal Society of Canada, the Polish Academy of Literature, the French Historical Institute, the Humanities Research Council of Canada and other learned societies and civic associations.

Hungarians have also paid tribute to him. Kirkconnell's verse translations of Magyar poetry earned him homage from many poets and scholars in Hungary.⁴⁴ Following his invitation to join Hungary's Petőfi Society in 1932, another literary academy, the Kisfaludy Society, also voted him membership. This Society also bestowed on Kirkconnell its

Illustrations on the opposite page, top: Kirkconnell receiving the American Hungarian (Studies) Foundation's George Washington Award at the Plaza Hotel, New York City, April, 1967. Watson Kirkconnell and Zoltán Gombos. Bottom: Kirkconnell and other celebrities at the same function: from left to right: Paul A. Radnay, Hans Selye, Watson Kirkconnell, György Kepes, Marcel Bauer, Donald S. Harrington, Alexander Nekam. Photography by Bela Cseh, New York.

“Medal of Honour” for eminent work in Hungarian literature outside of Hungary. In 1938 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Debrecen during that institution’s quatercentenary celebrations.⁴⁵

With the coming of the war and the installation in Hungary of a regime hostile to Kirkconnell’s political ideals, paying further homage to his person was no longer possible there. Hungarians elsewhere continued to show their appreciation. Soon after the 1956 Revolution, Winnipeg’s Hungarian Literary Society made him an honorary member. Soon thereafter, Toronto’s Helicon Society presented him with a medal at one of its gala affairs. After the ceremonies Professor Kirkconnell demonstrated that his gifts were not confined to the realm of scholarship and writing: he also had a talent for dancing the *csárdás*.⁴⁶ Still later came the Gold Medal of Freedom, awarded to Kirkconnell by the Hungarian Freedom Fighter Association. And in 1967, at a banquet in New York City’s Plaza Hotel, he was presented with the George Washington medallion of the American Hungarian Foundation.⁴⁷

These honours have been undoubtedly only a partial expression of the North American Hungarian community’s gratitude. Further statements and deeds of appreciation came from private individuals, acquaintances, and scholars; mostly from men of a generation which, like Kirkconnell himself, had known another Hungary and had learned to appreciate poetry and literature. It remains to be seen whether a new generation of Hungarian-Canadians will cherish Kirkconnell’s work as much as the old did. Hopefully, it will. After all, thanks to his work, the descendants of immigrants will have a chance to read the poetry of their ancestral land long after they have forgotten the language of their forefathers.

An Appreciation

During his long career, Professor Kirkconnell displayed a boundless capacity for work, and a limitless interest in Canadian public affairs. His accomplishments in the field of Hungarian poetry and literature and his involvement with Hungarians in Canada and elsewhere constituted only one aspect of a career filled with constant activity and a great variety of achievements. For Hungarian-Canadians the results of this small aspect of his work were very significant. In the realm of poetry, Kirkconnell functioned as an interpreter of the Hungarian nation’s soul, not only to Canadians, but to the whole Anglo-Saxon world. His verse translations and other scholarly writings brought the literary genius of

Magyar poets and writers to the reading public of Canada and other English-speaking countries. This has substantially helped to enhance the Magyars' reputation in this country and elsewhere.

The improvement of the reputation of Hungarians was particularly important in Canada where, until recent times, the general public regarded immigrants from central and eastern Europe with a great deal of reserve and even disdain. Given the natural proclivity of the native-born in any country to receive newcomers with suspicion, the Canadian public's lack of confidence in and respect for immigrant groups is understandable. These attitudes were just another difficulty newcomers had to endure. For the sake of a healthier atmosphere in Canada's political, civic and social life, these attitudes had to be eliminated sooner or later.

The overcoming of nativistic antagonisms towards immigrants was a difficult process. Each newcomer individually and each ethnic group collectively had to prove to the native-born that, far from constituting a threat, immigrants were an asset to Canada's economic, political and cultural life. In this struggle for acceptance some newcomers were helped by the fact that they could learn English or French faster because their own mother tongues were similar. Other groups may have had a reputation established in agriculture, or craftsmanship, or business, or arts and culture, even before their members began migrating to Canada in large numbers. Hungarians were not so fortunate. Magyar is a Ural-Altai language, hence Hungarian newcomers tended to learn English or French more slowly than immigrants speaking Germanic or Romance languages. Canadians knew nothing or next to nothing about Hungary's culture, and could learn little about it from poorly educated peasants who rarely learned more than a few words of English. Educated Hungarians were, on the whole, not admitted to Canada until after 1945, and those who managed to land here despite regulations had little time to preach the excellence of their people's cultural heritage. Until the post-World War II period, moreover, Canada's Hungarians lived in isolation, or at best, in scattered, small communities, which were unable to generate a cultural life which would gain the appreciation of the public at large. Unable to prove their value and their cultural equality to the native-born population, Canadians of Hungarian background survived the first half of the twentieth century as victims of nativistic prejudice, and subsisted as second-class citizens in a land of freedom and plenty. For most of them it was a difficult and degrading experience. As a result of a combination of factors, gradually their lot improved. No doubt, one of these factors was the work of Watson Kirkconnell.

The extent of Kirkconnell's success in modifying Canadian attitudes to European immigrant groups cannot be assessed with any degree of certainty. But it is true that these minorities received better treatment during the Second World War than they did during the First. This was no doubt partly the result of Kirkconnell's work. His memoirs reveal that during the war many "Anglo-Canadians" favored the closing down of the entire ethnic press.⁴⁸ That this did not happen was probably the result of Kirkconnell's emphatic statements, made especially at the outset of the war, that all European immigrant groups were loyal to Canada. Rather than branding Germans, Italians and Hungarians "enemy aliens", and restricting their freedoms, the Canadian government established the Committee on Co-operation in Canadian Citizenship. The Committee, working under the jurisdiction of the Department of War Services, aimed at fostering good relations with all European immigrant ethnic groups. Though not an "insider" in Canadian decision-making during the war, Kirkconnell probably exerted considerable influence with policy-makers in Ottawa. That senior officials respected his views is indicated by the fact that he was consulted in the planning of what later became the Citizenship Branch of the Department of the Secretary of State. In fact, when the bureau was established, he was offered its directorship. It is characteristic of Kirkconnell's love for the unhindered exchange of views that he declined the honour. As an academic he would retain greater freedom to speak out on national issues.⁴⁹

After the war, Ottawa's more enlightened attitudes toward ethnic groups gained expression in the policy adopted regarding the ready admission of central and eastern European immigrants. Indeed, during the late 1940's and the early 1950's thousands of so-called Displaced Persons came to Canada to escape war-torn Europe's harsh conditions. Many of these were Hungarians. Their arrival greatly augmented the numerical strength of Canada's Magyar community. The fact that many of the newcomers were educated professionals helped to enhance the standard of the cultural life of Hungarian clubs and associations throughout Canada. It is not surprising that the 1950's saw the genesis of what will probably be remembered as the Golden Age of the Canadian-Magyar ethnic group: the post-1956 decades.

By this time Kirkconnell had retired from active public life. Troubled by advanced age, poor health, and deteriorating eyesight, he no longer had the strength to participate in public controversies. Despite these handicaps, however, he continued his verse translations and scholarly writing, and to assist his Magyar friends in every way possible. Indica-

tive of his helpful attitude and unwavering faith in Canada's Hungarian-Canadian community was his response to the planned launching of an English-language journal dealing with Hungary and Hungarians on a scholarly level: the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies*. Whereas many Hungarian academics refrained from associating themselves with a venture the success of which could not be guaranteed in advance, Professor Kirkconnell shelved every doubt and much more urgent projects, and promptly produced an article for the *Review*. A year later, when asked to become the journal's honorary editor, he consented without hesitation or delay.

The achievements of many men are not appreciated during their lifetime. To some extent, this is true of Professor Kirkconnell's work. True, he has been showered with honours and distinctions; but most of these expressions of thanks and appreciation were extended in recognition of his literary and scholarly activities. But the significance of Kirkconnell's work exceeds the realm of literature and poetry. This is especially true as far as Hungarian-Canadians are concerned. He has served us not only as the translator of the Magyar nation's soul to the English-speaking world; he has been one of the most dedicated and most effective benefactors of the Hungarian-Canadian community as well.

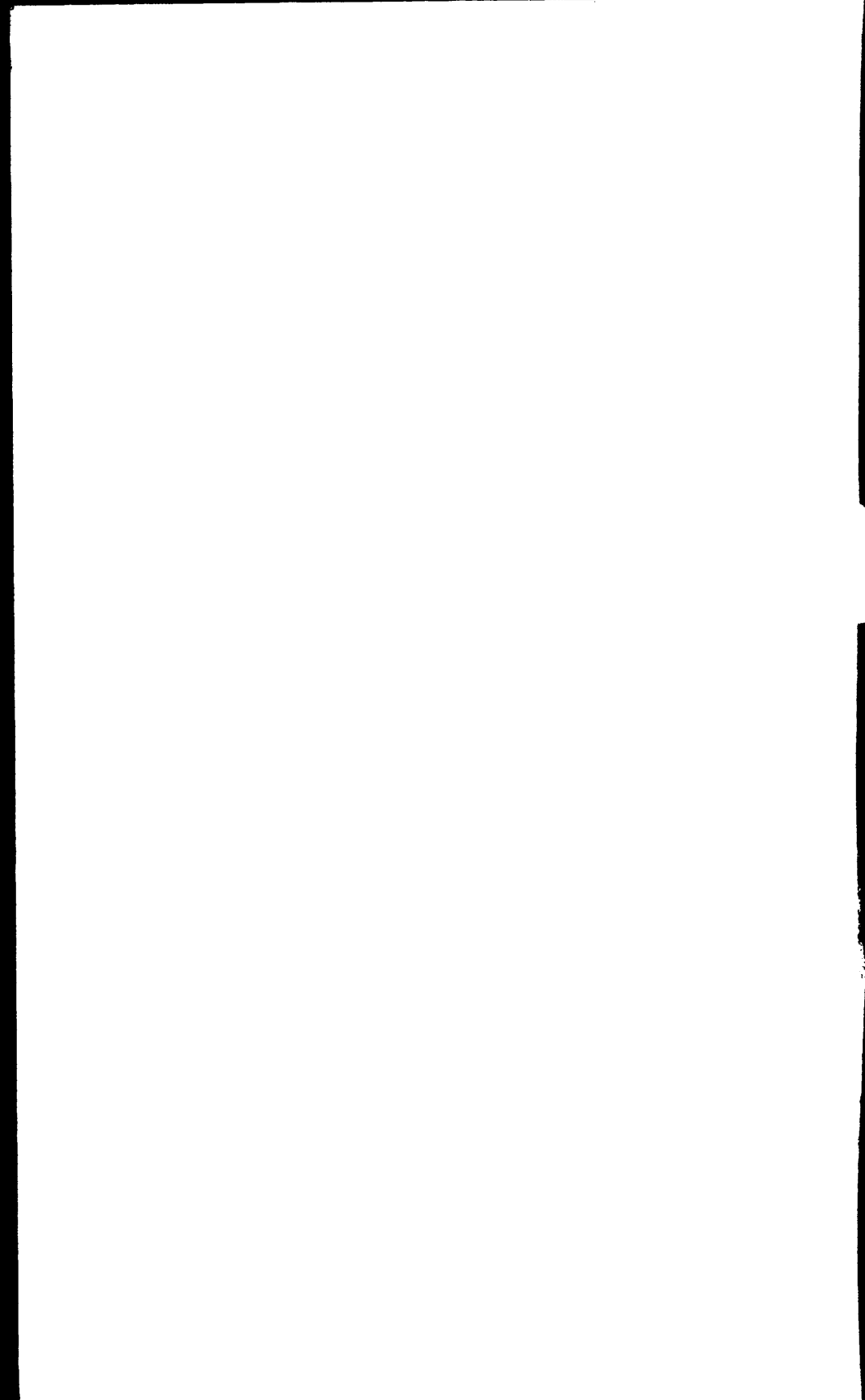
NOTES

Professor Bennett Kovrig has commented on the first draft of this essay; Professor Thomas Spira has meticulously edited the final draft; Drs. F. G. Haresár, Joseph Kohári and Messrs. Maxim Tábori, Béla Báchkai Peyerle and István Willerding have provided encouragement. To each of them I wish to express my thanks and appreciation.

1. Quoted by R. C. Brown and R. Cook, *Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), p. 28.
2. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 74.
3. H. B. Neatby, *The Politics of Chaos, Canada in the Thirties* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1972), p. 28.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
5. Under the heading "Hungarian" the 1911 census included not only all former residents of the multinational Kingdom of Hungary, but Lithuanians and Moravians as well.
6. *Ibid.*, 1 June 1937. On learning of its mistake, the company apologized and lifted its restrictions.
7. For a general work on the subject of prejudices in Canada see David R. Hughes and Evelyn Kallen, *The Anatomy of Racism: Canadian Dimensions* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1974).

8. S. Leacock, "Canada and the Immigration Problem," *National and English Review*, April 1911, pp. 316-37. Partially reprinted in Howard Palmer (ed.) *Immigration and the Rise of Multiculturalism* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1975), pp. 46-51.
9. Watson Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada: Memoirs* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), Chapters I and II.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 259.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
13. Watson Kirkconnell, *European Elegies* (Ottawa: Graphic Publishers, 1928), p. 9.
14. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, p. 59.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 263.
16. Watson Kirkconnell, *The European Heritage: A Synopsis of European Cultural Achievement* (London and Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1930), p. v.
17. Kirkconnell's addresses relating to New Canadian themes which he delivered before learned societies were his lecture "A Skald in Canada," delivered before a meeting of the Royal Society of Canada, and "The European-Canadians in Their Press," read before a meeting of the Canadian Historical Association. There was also his article "Canada's Leading Poet, Stephan G. Stephansson, 1853-1927," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, Vol. II (January, 1936).
18. Kirkconnell, *Canadian Overtones*, p. 3.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
23. *Ibid.*
24. The *Kanadai Magyar Újság* was founded in Kipling, Saskatchewan in the early 1920's. Later it moved to Winnipeg. Watson Kirkconnell, "A Canadian Meets the Magyars," *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies* 1 (Spring and Fall 1974): 1. Previous Hungarian newspapers in Canada, the *Kanadai Magyar Farmer* [Canadian Magyar Farmer] and the *Kanadai Magyarország* [Canadian Hungarian] proved ephemeral. The *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, which for many years appeared as a semi-weekly, was published for over half a century before it had to fold because of decreasing revenues and increasing labour and postal costs.
25. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 2. *A Slice of Canada*, p. 62.
26. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, p. 62.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 62f.
29. Quoted in Kirkconnell in "A Canadian," p. 5. Later contributions by Kirkconnell to the journal were included in two articles: "The Poetry of Ady" (Autumn 1937) and "Quintessence of Hungary" (Autumn 1938).
30. The *Hungarian Quarterly* was revived in the United States during the early 1960's, but it did not succeed in attaining the respect of North America's academic community. Another journal, the *Hungarian Historical Review* (1969-), lacks an adequate institutional affiliation and publishes studies relating predominantly to Hungarian protohistory. On this subject see Steven Béla Vardy, *Hungarian Studies at American and Canadian Universities* (Ottawa: Hungarian Readers' Service, 1975), reprinted from the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies*, 2 (Autumn 1975).
31. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 11.
32. *Ibid.*

33. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, pp. 315f.
34. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 316.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 316-318.
36. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 8. *Saturday Night*, 9 January 1943.
37. Quoted in *A Slice of Canada*, p. 318.
38. Hungary's involvement in the Second World War has been the subject of a great number of studies. For a detailed, classic treatment see C.A. Macartney, *October Fifteenth: A History of Modern Hungary, 1929-1945* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1961), 2 vols. For a briefer account see my *Hungary's Way to World War II* (Toronto: Helicon Society, 1968).
39. Watson Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 117.
40. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, p. 75.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 75f.
42. Letter, Mrs. Hope Kirkconnell to the author, June, 1977.
43. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 10.
44. For a partial list of these persons see *ibid.*, p. 3.
45. For a full text of Kirkconnell's "diploma" see "A Canadian," pp. 6f.
46. Dr. Ferenc Harcsár, then President of the Helicon Society, to the author.
47. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 9.
48. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, p. 119.
49. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 8.



Madách Revisited: Toward a New Translation of the *Tragedy of Man*

Thomas R. Mark

Imre Madách's *The Tragedy of Man* was published in 1861. The following year János Erdélyi launched a full-scale attack on the work in a lengthy essay and thereby precipitated a critical controversy that has continued to our own day. What precisely is the meaning of the fifteen scenes that constitute this strange dramatic poem – in form, a mystery play that traces in a traditional manner the history of Christian salvation from the beginning of creation to the end of the world; in content, an ever-darkening series of vignettes demonstrating the successive defeat and ultimate death of all human aspirations? And then there was the matter of the work's style: halting meters and irregular versification; awkward turns of phrase and unidiomatic constructions; dialectal provincialisms and archaic diction. The constantly recurring charge was that the poet of *The Tragedy* was dwarfed by the thinker. The fact remains that, when *The Tragedy* was staged in 1883 at the National Theater in Budapest, it became an immediate stage success. The dramatic poem thus became a poetic drama. Thus, whatever the stylistic shortcomings of Madách's work, its tantalizing ambiguities, its propulsive momentum, and its cumulative emotional intensity swept before it all adverse criticism. By 1963, at the National Theater alone (not counting the provinces), *The Tragedy of Man* received a thousand performances; it also became a required part of the curricula of most secondary schools. In brief, Madách's work acquired the status of a national classic, both as poetic drama and as dramatic poem.¹

How does one go about orchestrating a credible English version of such a classic? The first step is to see what previous attempts look like. There have been altogether four English versions of *The Tragedy*, the last having been published in 1963.² It is from this version that I quote a passage, taken from Scene XI, the London Scene. Lucifer takes Adam to task for placing faith in the progress of history:

The groaning of the slaves on Egypt's sand
Would not have reached to such a height as this;
And, save for that, how godlike was their work!
And did not once in Athens worthily,
The sovereign people, when it sacrificed
A great man, well beloved, the State to save
From peril might else have threatened it,
If we from such a height all things can view
And tears and idle doubt mar not our sight?

The objection to all this is not that it is light years away from what Madách wrote, or that it makes unintelligible what in the original is eminently clear, but that the whole thing is conceived in that peculiar pidgin English that Victorian orientalist reserved for "Englishing" the Code of Hammurabi. The first requirement, therefore, of a viable English version is that it stay true to the state of the English language of the translator's own day. This is such a truism that I need waste no time elaborating on it.

But what, for purposes of verse translation, *is* the state of English in 1977? We are still very much in that age whose American spokesman made the hero of his *A Farewell to Arms* remark about the "official" vocabulary of World War I: "I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious and sacrifice and the expression in vain. . . . There were many words you could not stand to hear . . . such as glory, honor, courage or hallow. . . ." Hemingway's tight-lipped embarrassment still prevails in Anglo-American literature. Such an anti-romantic, anti-rhetorical attitude stands in contrast to the state of the Hungarian language, not just in Madách's day, but even as late as the 1920's. An anecdote about Babits, dating from the 1920's, makes the point. When asked what Hungarian poem he considered the most beautiful, Babits replied, "Shelley's 'Ode to the West Wind,' in Árpád Tóth's translation." Whether true or apocryphal, the anecdote indicates that the kind of emotional rapture, romantic intensity, and large-scaled rhetorical pathos that characterizes much of Shelley could still find a receptive audience in post-World War I Hungary. How much the more so, then, in the 1860's, when not only in Hungary but elsewhere, too — one thinks of the "serious" passages of Dickens — the oversized rhetorical gesture was an accepted part of literary convention.

Of the three major personae in *The Tragedy*, it is of course Lucifer who is the least subject to the symptoms of this rhetorical convention. I say "of course" because Lucifer, the embodiment of critical rationalism,

employs the tone and vocabulary either of a philosophical realist, or those of a mordant cynic, whose chief illusion is that he is superior to all illusions. Nor is the language of Eve particularly troublesome. Deeply involved as she is in the life of the emotions, Eve is too busy living, as it were, to give vent to what we would consider exalted sentiment. It is Adam, surely, who sets the translator the greatest challenge. Created almost for the sole purpose of being always disappointed, Adam is less a living character than an animated allegorical function, whose hopes-raised, hopes-dashed attitudes pervade *The Tragedy*. Adam's very stance, therefore, is that of an inveterate idealist, a romantic optimist, who moves from age to age, from one social order to another, always seeking the perfect institutionalization of human brotherhood, and always meeting disenchantment. Appropriately enough, his language is filled with words like "pure," "sacred," "noble," "exalted," "radiant," etc. — in brief, all the glittering verbal counters of the storehouse of nineteenth-century rhetoric. The cumulative effect of such terms and expressions is a tendency — one that a translator must somehow cope with — to endow Adam with a naivete and a kind of predictable two-dimensionality that work against his being what Madách intended him to be (and what in the Hungarian he surely *is*): the spokesman for what is best in all of us, the spokesman with whom all of us identify. For a translator to edit such Shelleyesque language out of Adam's lines would be to destroy the very essence of the figure. Accordingly, I have tried, as best I could, to retain the sum and substance of such verbal gestures, but to tone them down wherever I found it possible to do so.

In general, I set myself one major overarching goal: to convey the impact of the original by following closely Madách's own dramatic cadences, hoping thereby to achieve an English approximation of the living voices of my Hungarian model. To this end, I have relied on whatever opportunities are afforded by blank verse — the basic meter of Madách's original Hungarian — to match the English version to the Hungarian one. Too, I have relied on blank verse to give the translation a degree of elevation and a sense of remoteness that I consider the acceptable modern equivalent of Madách's own archaic eloquence. Since much of *The Tragedy* takes the form of dialogue, I thought it best to render such passages in a realistic, indeed, at times colloquial style, using lightly stressed verse, as free as possible from the declamatory — trying thereby to reproduce the easy movement of the original. And, finally, I decided, for better or worse, to render into rhyme only a small part of the lines that rhyme in the Hungarian — *The Tragedy of Man* has 4,114 lines, of which a little more than 600 are rhymed — primarily

because most such lines are imbedded in the blank verse itself, more often than not in non-strategic places, and are so unstressed in their rhymes or so arbitrary in their patterns that the reader scarcely notes their existence as rhymed lines; when he does, he frequently cannot determine whether they are deliberate or merely adventitious. Thus I retained the rhymes only in extended passages of strongly marked rhymes, and even then only if I could do so without violence to the semantic sense. Where this proved impossible, I retained the meter, but not the rhymes.

How well I have achieved my aim, I must let others judge.

SCENE I

(Heaven. The Lord, suffused with the light of glory, sits upon his throne, surrounded by the angelic host, kneeling. The four archangels stand next to the throne. Intense light.)

Chorus of Angels: We hymn hosannas to our Lord on high!
Heaven and earth exult with praise of him
whose word commanded every thing to be
and on whose glance their destiny depends.
He is the all-embracing plenitude
of knowledge and of power and of bliss;
we are but shadows of his radiance.
We glorify him for that endless grace
that granted us this share in his effulgence.
Incarnate is the great eternal thought;
behold, the consummation of creation!
From every thing that breathes, the Lord awaits
a fitting homage to his holy throne.

The Lord: The mighty work is finished — yes;
the engine turns, its maker rests.
For eons it will wheel about its axle
before one cog will need to be renewed.
Up, you guardian-spirits of my worlds, up,
inaugurate your endless orbitings,
and let me once more revel in your grace
as you traverse your rounds beneath my feet.

(To the hushed strains of the music of the spheres, the guardian spirits rush past the throne, wheeling in front of them single and double stars, comets, and nebulas of various sizes and colors.)

Chorus of Angels: Look! see that haughty globe of flame
so proudly flaunting its own light;
and yet, it only benefits
a humble stellar constellation.
But here, this tiny twinkling star
that seems to be a feeble lamp,
is yet, for myriads of creatures,
a world immeasurably great.

Two spheres contend with one another,
bearing down close, flying apart;
this grappling is the splendid brake
that curbs and guides their onward course.

Down thunders that one, striking fear
in all who view it from afar;
but in its bosom multitudes
find happiness and gentle peace.

How humbly this one bears itself:
in time to come — the Star of Love;
may it be nurtured tenderly,
a solace to the earthly race.

Out there, new worlds, as yet unborn;
in here, the tombs of dying ones:
an admonition to the vain,
a comfort to the faint of heart.

In riot and in disarray
a monstrous comet hurtles down;
but, lo! it hears the Lord's command
and sets its crooked path in order.

Come here, dear youthful spirit, come
and bring your iridescent globe
cloaked in white or verdant veils
of alternating dark and light.

Heaven's great blessings be with you!
Go onward, brave and undismayed;
within your tiny boundaries
great ideas will struggle and clash.

Though smiles and tears, the fair and ugly
will take their turns like spring and winter,
these lights and shades will constitute
the Lord's anger, the Lord's favor.

(The guardian spirits of the stars withdraw.)

Archangel Gabriel: You, who circumscribed unending space
by increating matter in the void;
who generated with a single word
all distances and magnitudes,
hosanna to you, Wisdom.

(Prostrates himself)

Archangel Michael: You, who yoked the changeless to the changing,
creating everlastingness and time,
individuals and generations,
hosanna to you, Power.

(Prostrates himself)

Archangel Raphael: You, who radiate beatitude
and summon matter to self-consciousness,
you, who consecrate the universe
communicant of your transcendent wisdom,
hosanna to you, Goodness.

(Prostrates himself)

(An extended pause)

The Lord: And you, Lucifer, standing silent, self-sufficient?
Have you nothing to say in praise of me?
Or can it be my work displeases you?

Lucifer: And what should I be pleased with? That a few
substances, clad with certain properties
that you perhaps knew nothing of
till they revealed themselves to you
— or if you did, you could not alter them —
should now be kneaded pell-mell into globes
that tug and push and jostle one another,
wake to self-awareness in a few worms,
till all of space is filled, till all is cooled,
and only the indifferent slag is left?
If man can con your trick, he too, some day
will bring this off inside his laboratory.
You, for your part, placed man in your large kitchen
and now indulge his bungling clumsiness,
his godlike posturings, his botched concoctions;
but when he comes to spoil your cookery
you'll flare up in a rage — by then, too late.
Yet what do you expect of such a dilettante?
Then again — to what end, this whole creation?
To glorify yourself you wrote a poem,

matched it to this feeble hurdy-gurdy
and listen to the same old tune
creak on and on in endless repetition.
Is it appropriate that such an elder
play games that only children can enjoy —
in which a small spark, crammed into the mud,
mimes its maker, not as faithful likeness,
but only as distorted parody;
freedom pursues fate, and all is devoid
of meaning and intelligent accord.

The Lord: Homage only, not censure, is my due.

Lucifer: I give you only what I can -- my essence.
(Points to the angels)
This wretched crew here praises you enough,
and rightly so, for it was you
who gave them birth, as light does to its shade;
but I — I live from all eternity.

The Lord: Ha, insolent! were you not born of matter, too?
Where was your realm, where was your might, before?

Lucifer: I, too, might ask the same of you.

The Lord: What here is bodied forth into existence
has lived deep in my mind, time without end.

Lucifer: Among your thoughts did you not sense the void
that was the obstacle to every being
and that compelled you to create?
This obstacle was Lucifer,
the primal spirit of negation.
You overpowered me, for it's my fate
incessantly to fail in all my struggles,
but then, renewed in strength, to rise again.
You created matter, I won full scope;
side by side with life stands death,
and side by side with happiness, dejection;
by light, the shade, and doubt blights every hope.

I stand, you see, where you do — everywhere;
should I, who know you so well, bow in homage?

The Lord: Ha! seditious spirit, out of my sight!
I could annihilate you -- but no! Banished
from every spiritual bond, fight on
among the dregs, a hated alien.
And in your bleak and anguished loneliness
let this one thought torment you endlessly;
shake as you will your dust-forged manacles,
your struggle with the lord is doomed to fail.

Lucifer: No, not so fast; I'll not be lightly heaved
aside, like some shoddy tool, now grown useless.
It was together we created;
I now demand my rightful share.

The Lord Let it be as you wish. Look down
(with upon the earth, upon the grove of Eden;
scorn): there, in the middle, stand two slender trees;
I curse the both of them; now they are yours.

Lucifer: A scanty, tight-fisted dole, oh great lord;
but a bare foot of ground will do for me;
for if negation once can plant its feet
it will subvert your whole created world.

(Sets out to leave)

Chorus of Angels: Be banished from God's sight, forever damned.
Hosanna to the Lord, giver of laws.

NOTES

1. The only full-length study in English of Madách is by Enikő Molnár Basa, *The Tragedy of Man* as an Example of the *Poeme d'Humanite*: an Examination of the Poem by Imre Madách with Reference to the Relevant Works of Shelley, Byron, Lamartine and Hugo. Dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1972. DA133A (1973). Order No. 73-4799. Briefer treatments in English are by Charles Wojatsek, "The Philosophical and Ethical Concept of the Tragedy of Man," *Slavic and East European Studies*, VI, 210-227 (1961), and by the present writer, "'The Tragedy of Man': Salvation or Tragedy?" *Acta Literaria Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, XI, 291-308 (1973).
Of the enormous number of critical studies in Hungarian, two older ones have attained lasting distinction: Géza Voinovich, *Madách Imre és Az Ember Tragédiája* (Budapest, 1922), and János Barta, *Madách Imre* (Budapest, 1942). In the last two decades by far the most significant critic has been István Sőtér, whose discussions of Madách may be found in *Romantika és realizmus* (Budapest, 1956), *Nemzet és haladás* (Budapest, 1963), *Álom a történelemről* (Budapest, 1965), and, finally, *A magyar irodalom története* (Budapest, 1965), IV, 330-361.
2. All the translations bear the title *The Tragedy of Man*. The names of the translators and the dates of publication are: William N. Loew (New York: Arcadia Press, 1908); C. P. Sanger (London: Hogarth Press, 1933), reprinted in 1955 (Sydney: Pannonia Press); Charles Henry Meltzer and Paul Vajda, 1933 (Budapest), the 4th and final edition in 1960 (Budapest: Corvina); J.C.W. Horne (Budapest: Corvina, 1963).

The Image of Hungarian Poetry in the English-Speaking World

Enikő Molnár Basa

Hungarian men of letters have always been influenced by Western European literary movements from which they borrowed themes, styles, and ideas, only to naturalize them. Rather than imitate foreign models, they adapted various currents of world literature to Hungarian themes, language and meter (in this respect, especially, the models had great impact), and, to some extent, Hungarian tastes. Latin works of the Middle Ages, for example, received a Hungarian flavor by changing a locale or substituting a king's name. By permitting local customs to slip in also, the universal material immediately gained national coloring. This process was enhanced during the Renaissance and Reformation when Hungary's political position differed greatly from that of the new nation states of Western Europe, and all literary activity naturally mirrored the political and military situation, as well as the religious disputes. The years following the expulsion of the Turks and the Rákóczi Revolution increased Western influences. Not only did German literature — or rather, French Enlightenment through German intermediaries — play a role, but direct contacts with France and the Low Countries also enriched Hungarian cultural life. This era also saw the beginnings of the "backward" *litterati*, i.e., those men of letters who resisted the new trends identified with the Austrian rulers and who maintained the earlier tradition of the *kuruc* poetry with its typical Baroque dualism of spirit and flesh and its echoes of Cavalier poetry. In short, the late Renaissance and the early Baroque received a unique development in 18th century Hungary. The tradition represented by Zrinyi and Balassa was integrated into later tradition through this process of popularization.

English literature gained a prominent position in Hungary only in the latter half of the 18th century. From then on, however, it continued as an important factor, occasionally even eclipsing German influence. Presently American literature seems most popular, but then this is a world-wide phenomenon. The converse, namely English scholarly in-

terest in Hungarian literature, has been far more limited. We can discern a vivid influence of Hungarian themes and point to significant German, Italian and French poets who have come under the spell of Hungarian literature, or at least of a major Hungarian poet, but there is relatively little Hungarian literary influence on England. This might be blamed on the distorted image of Hungarian literature among Englishmen, and also on sheer ignorance. Yet there have been at least three periods when active interest was shown in Hungarian literature.

The first important reference to Hungarian poetry may be found in Sir Philip Sidney's *The Defense of Poesy* (1595). As a diplomat, he had travelled to Vienna and thence to the outposts of the Imperial forces on the Turkish frontier. This journey naturally took him into Hungary, specifically Pozsony (Bratislava), where he was the guest of a Dr. Purkircher; the French diplomat Languet had introduced them. Although Sidney's tutor assumed that the young man's visit would last only about three days, it lasted almost a month.¹ He met Lazarus Schuendi, commander of the imperial forces in Hungary, and in visits to the *végvárok* (outpost fortresses) gathered a lasting impression about military tactics and the life of soldiers in Hungary. Of a romantic and chivalric turn of mind, Sidney seems to have responded eagerly to the stimulus of this lifestyle.

Even more than the military information he gathered, Sidney seems to have valued his literary contacts. "In Hungary I have seen it the manner of all feasts, and suchlike meetings," he wrote in his *Defense of Poesy*, "to have songs of their ancestors' valor, which that right soldierlike nation think one of the chief kindlers of brave courage."² The context, it should be noted, was the discussion of lyrical poetry. Sidney defended this genre against those moralists who saw only the work of the devil in the appeal to the emotions. He introduced his discussion with these rhetorical questions:

Is it the lyric that most displeaseth, who with his tuned and well-accorded voice giveth praise, the reward of virtue, to virtuous acts? who giveth moral precepts and natural problems? who sometimes raiseth up his voice to the height of heavens, in singing the lauds of the immortal God?³

Thus, to Sidney, the appeal of these Hungarian songs was in their moral and patriotic tone and in their natural or "rude" style which, he felt, could be compared with the "Lacedaemonians." He conjured Pindar to substantiate his claim that victory in battle was to be celebrated over victory at the tourney. In short, in his contemporary world, Sidney could find heroic poetry that compared with the classical in dignity and nobility only in Hungary.

The mention of the songs of the "végvárak" was not an isolated instance of Sidney's interest. In his long romance *Arcadia*, he mentioned the oriental method of fighting that was practiced by the Hungarian knights or cavalry during the Turkish wars. In fact, his description parallels Bálint Balassa's in "Katonaének":

But this straunge land more straunge conceits did yeeld:
Who victor seem'd was to his ruine brought;
Who seem'd o'erthrown was mistress of the field:
She fled and tooke; he folow'd and was caught.
So have I heard to pierce pursuing shield
By parents trained the Tartars wilde are taught,
With shafts shott out from their back-turned bow.⁴

Sok vérben fertezvé
Arcúl reá térvén
Úzöt sokszor megvernek.⁵

With the generalization typical of many Renaissance authors, Sidney equated Tartars with Turks: the former fit the content of *Arcadia* better, and in any case, little distinction was made between the oriental nations in Renaissance England.

Evidence of Sidney's loyalty to the dying code of chivalry abounded in his works, but so did references to world affairs, notably the Turkish wars. He seems to have been regarded as an authority on Eastern European affairs in England and Queen Elizabeth's interest in the Emperor's situation demanded an awareness of Turkish movement in this region of Europe. Thus, we find numerous references in Sidney's later correspondence attesting to his continued connection with friends in Hungary.

In spite of this auspicious beginning, it was not until the 19th century that Hungarian poetry again aroused interest in England and led to translations of Hungarian works. Language, of course, continued to pose an unsurmounted barrier, but now several popularizers abroad began to interpret Hungarian literature. Admittedly, these mediaries often did more harm than good; but their efforts must nevertheless be acknowledged, for they did bring Hungarian poetry into the consciousness of some of the English and American public. Sir John Bowring, diplomat and businessman, poet and translator, was among the first important intermediaries.

The Hungarian literary historian, János Hankiss, has pointed out the

limitations of Bowring and others: their inability to overcome the “bécsi spanyolfal, amelyre ‘Mikosch’ vagy ‘Ungar Janosch’ torzképe volt ráfestve.”⁶ Bowring had to depend on Carl Georg Romy, Ferenc Toldy and finally, on Karl Maria Kertbény for his information. Not knowing any Hungarian himself, he used the German anthologies published by these men, or he obtained German versions of Hungarian songs. Since these sources were not critical in their selections, and since the German translations were often inaccurate, Bowring and the others formed a distorted picture. Admittedly, the exoticism of Hungarian literature, real or imagined, was emphasized in the English versions. This is what the readers expected, and this is what they were given. As Hankiss has stated, “A művelt külföldi ragaszkodik a magyar táj idilli zártságának, ember és föld szoros összetartozásának föltételezéséhez.”⁷

As early as 1827 Bowring published one of Sándor Kisfaludi’s “folk-songs” in the May issue of the *Monthly Review*. Undoubtedly, he was working from one of the many German anthologies or periodicals that carried numerous examples of the suddenly popular “Magyar” folk-song. Later, Bowring turned to Georg Romy’s *Magyarische Anthologie* as a source. It is ironic — and was unfortunate for the acceptance of Hungarian literature in Western Europe — that these sources represented the “distortions” rather than the true poetry of Hungary. They emphasized the sentimentality and exoticism of Pre-Romanticism at a time when both Hungarian writers and European tastes had progressed beyond this. Consequently, while Petőfi and his friends fought against the cheap success of unrealistic and sentimental verse, it was precisely such poems that became known abroad as Hungarian literature.

The ambiguous or divided response to Hungarian literature can perhaps best be illustrated by the reactions to specific works. Bowring’s *Poetry of the Magyars*, for example, received generally good reviews. The quality of the translations was uneven, the selection was strongly influenced by popular taste, but the introductory essay on the Magyar language and the estimate of Hungarian literature was surprisingly accurate. Yet, though interest in the book was lively enough, it failed to have any real impact. This occurred chiefly, I believe, because enthusiasm for things Hungarian was mostly emotional, based on English sympathies for the Revolution of 1848–49. Such emotional commitments had a counter-effect, too: *Frazer’s Magazine*, departing from the general trend of eulogy, published a review slanted at least as severely in the negative direction which illustrated its thesis by citing garbled letter-sequences purporting to be the Hungarian text.⁸ Similarly, the *Athenaeum* displayed prejudice or at least ignorance when it spoke of *János*

Vitéz as "a confusion of aimless marvels, strung together without skill."⁹ The reviewer had expected a realistic work and refused to read the poem as the allegorical fairy tale it is.

Inasmuch as Bowring came to rely on Kertbény more and more in his later work, his translations suffered. The false but persistent image of Hungarian literature as primitive, sentimental and exotic owes much to these early distortions. Even the later association with Hungarian émigrés such as Ferenc Pulszky and Louis Kossuth failed to overcome this early impression.

In the 19th century, the impact of the Hungarian Revolution was such that others besides Bowring became interested in Hungary. Both in England and in the United States periodicals carried freely translated versions of Hungarian poetry, especially that of Petőfi. For example, *Howitt's Journal* had already published some of Bowring's verse translations in 1847, and in 1852 the *National Era* printed a few Hungarian poems based on rough English texts given to the journalist and novelist Grace Greenwood by one of Kossuth's aides.¹⁰

Such popularity, however, only served to reenforce the extant image of Hungary and Hungarian literature and totally failed to draw the attention of any of the major poets — even of those who, like Matthew Arnold, Walter Savage Landor, Charles Swinburne or John Greenleaf Whittier — wrote about the Hungarian Revolution. This is not surprising, given the quality of these early translations of Hungarian works. Not even the translations of the late 19th century and of the early 20th corrected the situation. A gradual change came when two important translators emerged in North America. The first, William Loew, undertook to make the poetry of Petőfi and selected other 19th century poets available to English speakers. His versions were accurate but unpoetic.¹¹ Watson Kirkconnell's *Magyar Muse* (1933) was better, though the selection was heavily weighted in favor of minor contemporary poets.¹²

As in the mid-nineteenth century political events had inspired a wave of interest in Hungary, so too, in the mid-twentieth century the Hungarian Revolution again drew attention. The anthology, *From the Hungarian Revolution*,¹³ edited by David Ray, collected poems on the Revolution by various non-Hungarian poets as well as the poetry of many of the Revolution's participants which had first appeared in Hungarian in the volume *Füveskert*. This, however, was only the beginning; since the 1960's other works have appeared in English: a reprint of Frederick Reid's *History of Hungarian Literature*, Joseph Reményi's *Hungarian Writers and Literature*, and David Marvyn

Jones' *Five Hungarian Writers*.¹⁴ Such critical studies have done more for the cause of Hungarian belles lettres than volumes of poor translations ever could. They give critical analyses of the best in Hungarian literature, discuss literary movements, and explicate significant qualities in comparative terms. Here, Hungarian poetry is not viewed as an exotic creature but rather as an individual phenomenon of European literature. The same concern is seen in some recent articles that have appeared, and is the thesis of the anthology of modern Hungarian poets published by Corvina and Columbia University Press, and edited by Miklós Vajda.¹⁵

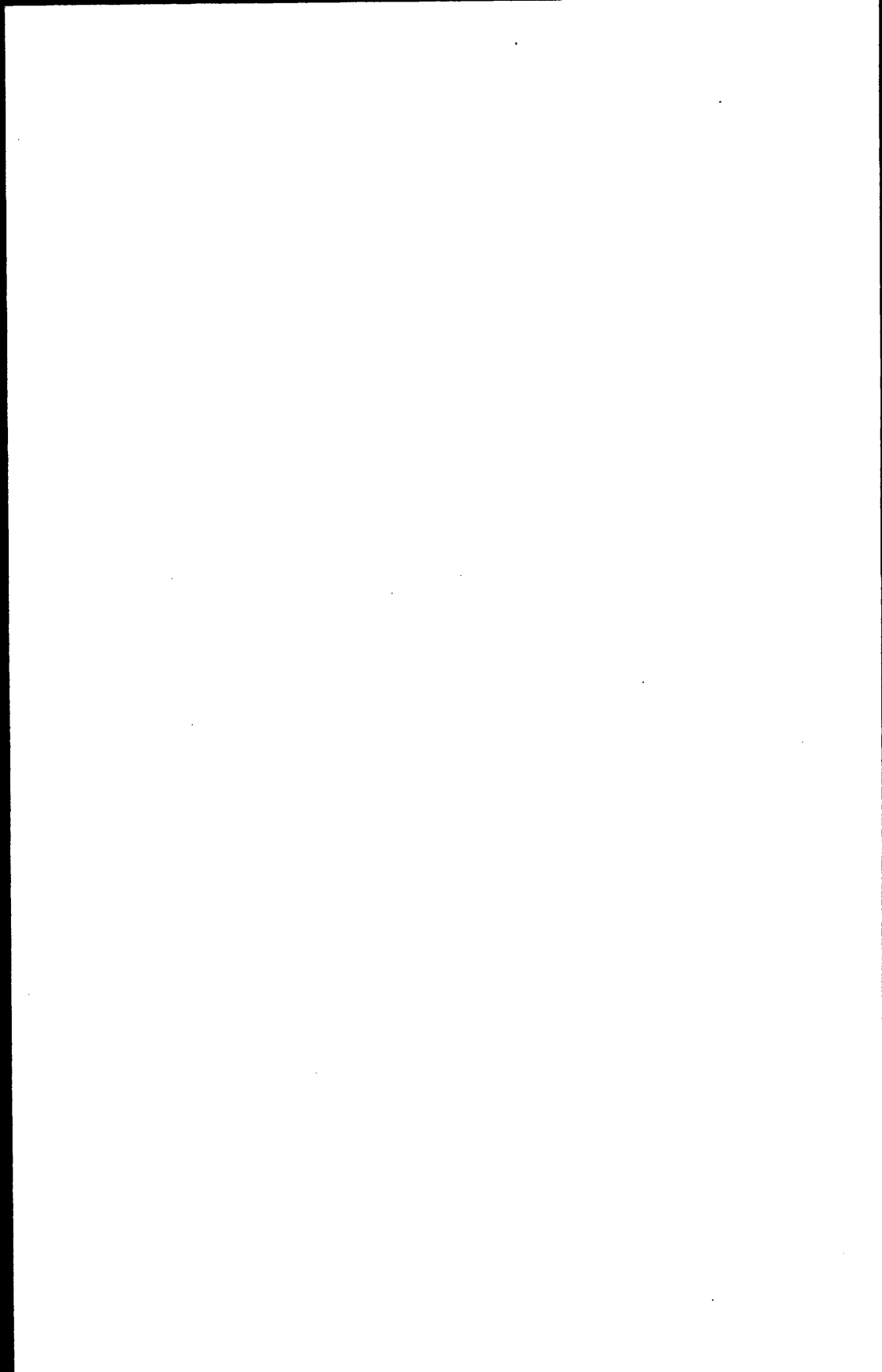
Some fifty years ago Henri Baldensperger, one of the founders of the comparative study of literatures, remarked that the middle of the 19th century ought to have been the era of Hungarian literature. This never occurred, but the image of Hungarian literature is finally escaping its limitations: both the "exotic" mold of the past hundred and fifty years and the limitations of purely journalistic interest which too often led only to publication in insignificant and little-read anthologies. A similar but more recent threat, publication chiefly within the Hungarian community without reference to the wider literary scene, also seems to be effectively countered. Hungarian literature now stands a chance of becoming known and appreciated for what it is.

NOTES

* Presented at the first annual Conference of the American Hungarian Educators' Association, Cleveland, Ohio, November 29, 1975.

1. Languet to Sidney, Letter of September 22nd, 1573, quoted in John Buxton, *Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance* (London: Macmillan, 1954), pp. 61-62.
2. Sir Philip Sidney, *The Defense of Poesy*, in *Tudor Poetry and Prose*, J. William Hebel, et al., eds. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1953), p. 819.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Sidney, "First Eclogues (1593), Ec. II. 11:400-430," in *The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, Albert Feuillert, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), p. 351.
5. Bálint Balassa, "In laudem confiniorum," in *Összes versei és Szép magyar komédiája* (Collected Poems and His Fine Hungarian Comedy) (Budapest: Magyar Helikon, 1961), p. 550.
6. János Hankiss, *Európa és a magyar irodalom a honfoglalástól a kiegyezésig* [Europe and Hungarian Literature from the Conquest to the Compromise] (Budapest: Singer és Wolfner, 1939), p. 350. Translation: "the Viennese screen upon which was painted "Mikosch" or "Hungarian John" as distorted pictures."

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 545-546. Translation: "The cultured foreigner insists on the idyllic unity of the Hungarian scene, on the assumption of the close unity of man and nature."
8. Review cited in Aurel Varannai, *John Bowring és a magyar irodalom* [John Bowring and Hungarian Literature], *Irodalomtörténeti füzetek*, 60 (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1967), pp. 103-113.
9. *The Athenaeum*, 29 March 1851, p. 350.
10. *Howitt's Journal of Literature and Popular Progress*, 11 (July-Dec., 1847), 28, 237-238; *The National Era*, VI (Jan. 22, 1852; Jan. 29, 1852; Feb. 12, 1852).
11. William Loew, *Gems from Petöfi and Other Hungarian Poets* (New York: P.O. D'Esterházy, 1881); *Magyar Songs: Selections from Modern Hungarian Poets* (New York: Samish and Goldman, 1887); *Magyar Poetry: Selections from Hungarian Poets*, enlarged and revised ed. of the two above-mentioned works (New York: Author-Translator's Edition, 1899); *Modern Magyar Lyrics* (Budapest: Tisza Testvérek, 1926); *Translations from the Hungarian: Toldi; Toldi's Eve; Ballads; Selected Lyrics* (New York: The Cooperative Press, 1914); *The Tragedy of Man by Imre Madách* (New York: Acadia Press, 1881); *Childe John by Alexander Petöfi* (Budapest: Hungarian Studio, 1920).
12. Watson Kirkconnell, *The Magyar Muse: An Anthology of Hungarian Poetry 1400-1932* (Winnipeg: Kanadai Magyar Újság, 1933).
13. *From the Hungarian Revolution: A Collection of Poems*, David Ray, ed. Adapted from the Hungarian *Füveskert*, ed. by Tibor Tollas (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1966).
14. Frederick Riedl, *A History of Hungarian Literature* (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1963); Joseph Reményi, *Hungarian Writers and Literature: Modern Novelists, Critics, and Poets*, ed. and with an introd. by August J. Molnar (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1964); David Marvyn Jones, *Five Hungarian Writers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966).
15. *Modern Hungarian Poetry*, ed. and with an introd. by Miklós Vajda, foreword by William Jay Smith (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).



REVIEW ARTICLE

Hungarian Poetry in English Translation: Two Recent Anthologies

Timothy Kachinske

Hundred Hungarian Poems. Edited by Thomas Kabdebo. Manchester: Albion Editions, 1976. Pp. 125.

Miklós Radnóti, Subway Stops: Fifty Poems. Translated, with an Introduction and Notes, by Emery George. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1977. Pp. 95.

Hungarian literature has long been *terra incognita* to Western readers. Hungary's linguistic isolation on an Indo-European continent and her history of subjugation to outside imperial powers are often given as reasons. But perhaps the primary reason for Western nescience of Hungarian poetry is the lack of good translation.

This decade has done more than any previous decade to remedy the neglect Hungarian poetry has suffered in the West. Since 1970 individual collections of Petőfi, Illyés, József, Radnóti, Weöres, Pilinszky, László Nagy and Ferenc Juhász have been published in North America and Britain. Also, during the period 1975 to 1980 no less than five anthologies of Hungarian poetry will have been published in English translation. By and large these translations are good. A variety of translation methods have been used. Some are done by native speakers, others by English-speaking poets and scholars who have come to know Hungarian letters, and still others are the result of collaboration between native-speaking Hungarians and English-speaking poets. Thus a variety of voices in translation is afforded the reader, as well as a wide selection of Hungarian poets.

Thomas Kabdebo's *Hundred Hungarian Poems* is an anthology that shows such a variety of approaches to the problem of translation. The list of translators is impressive. Many of the poems in this anthology are the result of partnership between Hungarian-speakers and English-

speaking poets, including such important poets as W. H. Auden, Robert Graves, Michael Hamburger, Ted Hughes, Edwin Morgan and John Wain. Internationally recognized scholars of Hungarian letters, such as George Gömöri, George Cushing, and Watson Kirkconnell, have also contributed translations. And some selections come from Hungarians such as Paul Tabori who have themselves become writers in England and America. Because of the range of translators, a distinct voice in English is assured for each Hungarian poet.

The historical scope of Kabdebo's anthology is ambitious. He includes poets from the Renaissance and Reformation to the present, arranging the one-hundred poems chronologically according to the birth of the author. However, the emphasis of *Hundred Hungarian Poems* is on more recent poets; more than half the anthology is devoted to the twentieth century. Firmly established modern writers such as Ady, G. Juhász, Babits, Kassák, Illyés, Attila József, and Radnóti are of course included. Also, a surprisingly comprehensive selection of contemporary poetry is given. A number of the important poets living in Hungary today are represented - F. Juhász, L. Nagy, Weöres, and Pilinszky all have a poem or two. Kabdebo also includes not-so-often read Hungarian poets living outside the national boundaries of Hungary, thereby expanding the anthology's range. Among these poets are F. Fehér (Yugoslavia), G. Páskándi (Romania), G. Gömöri and Cs. Szabó (England), L. Kemenes Géfin, G. Faludy and F. Fáy (Canada), and A. Makkai (USA).

The anthology is not without problems. Using the Hungarian tri-colors red, white and green across the entire cover is an eye-catching idea. Unfortunately, the horizontal colors are inverted, appearing green, white and red — the color arrangement of the flag of Iran. A few typographical errors occur. It is not so bad that József Erdély's Christian name appears with a "d" rather than an "f" in the biographical section "Notes on the Poets" (p. 112). When it is obvious to the reader that a name is misspelled, the error is not so important. But when a typographical error occurs in a line of poetry, as in György Rónay's "The Death of Virginia Woolf," it is not so easy to make allowance. In the line "The weaves are splashing round my hips," "waves" should replace "weaves" (p. 84). This is disconcerting because "weaves" is a noun that fits into the grammatical logic of the line. Without a close reading, a reader could take this line for a clumsy image, which it is not.

Hundred Hungarian Poems could have a more convenient format as well. Since it is designed for the English-speaking reader, it would have been appropriate to follow organizational conventions usually found in

books written in English. A table of contents, for example, would be helpful. As it is, the two title indices located at the back of the book, which list titles alphabetically in English and then in Hungarian, are of limited use. The "Index to Hungarian Titles" is of course essential, but of interest primarily to readers who know Hungarian. The "Index to English Titles" presupposes a knowledge of the title given a poem in translation, and such titles can vary considerably from translator to translator. The reader familiar with Magyar poetry in translation can for this reason find himself nearly as ill at ease using the index as would the novice, since alphabetical arrangement requires knowledge of what one is looking for. A table of contents listing authors' life dates would have been more useful, as well as being appropriate to the chronological arrangement of the book.

Emery George's *Subway Stops* is an important contribution to the growing interest in Radnóti. Hungarians consider Radnóti to be a major poet. Since his death in 1944, many collections of Radnóti's works have been published in Hungary, with some of these collections enjoying several printings. More than a dozen monographs on his life and work have been published by various Hungarian presses, and countless articles about him have appeared in Hungarian journals. Indeed, Miklós Vajda, literary editor of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, has said that Radnóti is among a handful of Hungarian poets who, had they "written in a language less isolated than Hungarian would now be revered wherever poetry is read." Interest in Radnóti in the United States has grown in recent years. Various poems in translation have appeared in American literary magazines, and in 1972 Harper and Row brought out *Clouded Sky*, a collection of poems from the posthumously published *Tajtékos ég*, translated into English by Steven Polgar, Stephen Berg, and S. J. Marks. This book is out of print.

Subway Stops is the first book in English to offer poems from all seven of Radnóti's books of poetry. The fifty poems are arranged chronologically, and include posthumous works. *Subway Stops* has an appealing format and good organization. The cover is an arresting, full page portrait of the poet's face. A table of contents, a selected bibliography and an introduction — all meticulously prepared — precede the poems.

The introductory remarks begin with an assessment of Radnóti's position in the tradition of Hungarian letters. George compares Radnóti to Petőfi, a comparison he warrants justifiable on both literary and historical grounds. Certainly Radnóti's universality, his active political engagement, and his tragic death appeal to the public imagination. The

fact that he was able to produce such a large body of work, both original poetry and translations, in a short lifetime of appalling hardship and difficulty makes him already a legendary figure in an age rather short on literary heroes. George summarizes his appeal quite succinctly when he says, "He is seen, like no one else of his generation, to have the power of synthesizing such polar extremes as tradition and innovation, the local and the cosmopolitan, the Christian and the classical, most importantly the perennial antagonism, in poetry, between engagement and art."

George notes that critics generally agree that important influences on Radnóti the poet "are found in the enthusiasms of Radnóti the translator." Radnóti studied the Greek and Latin poets, and translated Horace and Vergil. He knew French literature well, and translated Ronsard, LaFontaine and Apollinaire. His French was not limited to academic knowledge, for he and his wife made a number of trips to France, and several poems are prompted by places there, such as Chartres, Versailles and Paris. Radnóti also knew German, and translated Goethe and the German romantics. But Radnóti's native heritage was an equally important influence on him. His university education (culminating in a doctorate) provided a thorough knowledge of the Hungarian literary tradition, and the great nineteenth century Hungarian romantics — Petőfi, Vörösmarty and Arany — stand out particularly as having contributed to his work. The folk song is also a strong influence, and it is not surprising that Bartók was Radnóti's favorite composer.

The introduction concludes with comments on translation problems. George began this project because of "an almost personal feeling that Radnóti deserves an English-speaking audience." Previous translations were found to be "unsatisfactory at best," and he is quite correct in calling the only other volume of Radnóti in English (Harper and Row, 1972) "an extremely slipshod piece of work." In his own translations, George has aimed at "fidelity in form, pattern, diction, tone, mood, prosody down to sound repetition," a gargantuan task when dealing with languages as unlike as Hungarian and English. All of these things are of course important considerations, but fidelity to meaning (which George does not single out) is also important. For the most part, George is closer to Radnóti's meaning than any previous translator. But problems in meaning do occur, and the principal weaknesses of the translations result from a tendency to sacrifice precise meaning to formal considerations.

George tends to shift Hungarian active verb constructions into the

passive, or into noun phrases in English, thereby weakening the English versions. In "Elegy, or Icon, Nailless," the Hungarian verb phrase *dolgozni nem tud* (he cannot work) is changed into the noun phrase "work is out of the question," which is in fact a cliché (line 13). In "Friday," the verb *elfutottak* (they ran away, or fled) becomes "have taken flight" (line 11). Also in "Friday," the verb *kiöntött* (they overflowed) is changed to the passive "are flooded" (line 22). For the verb *alszik* (it sleeps), which occurs three times in the first two lines of the poem "Night," George gives "are asleep" twice and "is asleep" once. In "Picture Postcards," the verb *torlódik* (to become congested) is changed to the noun phrase "a traffic jam" (line 3). One would guess that George makes verb shifts such as these in an attempt to get more syllables. Although his concern for rhythms is laudable, whatever he may gain in metrical balance is taken from the power of Radnóti's language when active verbs are lost.

Sometimes George sacrifices meaning in his zeal to give a rhyme scheme to his translations. For example, in "Cartes Postales," the Hungarian *ikra* (roe) is given as "roes of eggs" in order to create a rhyme for the word "legs" (lines 4 and 6). The phrase "roes of eggs" is both redundant and not idiomatic. In "Friday," George gives "shiver" to rhyme with "river," thereby inventing the impossible construction "it (April) whips you with . . . shiver" (line 6). To cite another example from "Friday," one might examine the line *vad zápor hullt idönként* (sometimes a wild sudden shower fell). In an effort to give this line consonant rhyme with the word "place," which concludes the stanza, George creates the phrase "erratic dose," something that does not make clear sense in English and bears only a suggestive resemblance to the Hungarian original (lines 18 and 20). In "Letter to My Wife," we find the phrase "the silence in my ears is strident" created to fit with "silent," the last word of the previous line (lines 1 and 2). In Hungarian, the action verb phrase is *üvölt a csönd fülemben*, which translates literally as simply "silence howls in my ears." Faced with a choice between rhyme and meaning, the translator should favor meaning. Contemporary readers instinctively mistrust translations which are too-neatly rhymed, and rightly so, for it is unusual that this can be accomplished without sacrifice.

Though the English of the translations reads smoothly for the most part, a few poems do show, on occasion, insensitivity to connotation and usage in English. The aforementioned "roes of eggs" and "whips you with . . . shiver" illustrate this, and other instances of the problem occur sporadically. In "Cartes Postales," the verb phrase *tükre pattan* is

given as “its mirror snaps” (line 5). The verb *pattan* can mean “snap,” but in this particular situation the alternative “crack” would be better English; a broken mirror exhibits cracks, not snaps. Several mistranslations occur in “Night.” The Hungarian *a fatörzsben* (in the tree trunk) *a harkály* (the woodpecker) is given as “the snipe in its house” (line 4). The phrase *rózsában* (in a rose) *a rózsabogár* (the rose beetle) is given as “the fly in the rose” (line 5). Were “fly” intended, *légy* would be found in the original. However, flies do not live in roses. The pattern of imagery in the poem, which finds each creature quiet in its resting place, is disrupted. In “Root,” George renders the Hungarian verb phrase *nem érdeklí* (does not care) as “cares not a hang,” a euphemistic colloquialism which jars the native English speaker a bit in the context of the poem (line 11).

George’s translations are, however, better than any done previously. The early poems are especially well done. In “Portrait, Angry as Hell,” George shows Radnóti’s anger with a terseness in English that matches the original. In “Elegy, or Icon, Nailless,” George conveys very well the sympathetic energy with which Radnóti writes of a wanderer struck down and crippled by a count’s car. In “Love Poem in a Forest,” in which Radnóti compares his lover and a forest, George has rendered images with clarity and precision. *Razglednicák*, a series of four short poems written on a forced march only weeks before the poet’s death, are among Radnóti’s most frequently translated poems, and George’s versions are a decided improvement on previous efforts. The ominous, brutal, yet patiently sensitive quality of the poems makes translation especially problematic. A typically difficult phrase occurs in line 18: *az emberek mind véreset vizelnek*. Ruth Sutter, in a translation appearing in *Chicago Review* and *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, translates this as “the water the men make is black with blood.” Sutter avoids Radnóti’s verb *vizel* (to urinate) and introduces “black,” thereby changing the color imagery connoted by *véres* (bloody). The Polgar-Berg-Marks translation is “the men all piss red.” This is even further from the original because of colloquial verb usage changing the tone of the line, and the replacement of “red” for “bloody.” George’s rendering, “Blood shows in every man’s urine,” comes closest to both the tone and meaning of the original.

Although one may have reservations about the accuracy of occasional phrases in some of the poems, *Subway Stops* is on the whole a respectable piece of work, one which will be welcomed by admirers of Radnóti.

REVIEW ARTICLE

Hungarian Religious Poetry and Verse Translation

Zoltán Máté

Templomablak. Istenes versek és műfordítások [Church Window: Religious Poems and Verse Translations]. Compiled by Dezső Fükő. Budapest: Református Zsinati Iroda, 1975. Pp. 359.

SUMMARY. The first part of this book contains Hungarian religious poems from the fourteenth century to the present, while the second part is an anthology of classical, medieval and modern European religious poetry in Hungarian translation. The volume also contains a long introduction giving biographical information on the poets whose poetry is featured.

The central theme of the anthology is the relation of man and God. While views about this relation vary from one epoch to the next and from one poet to another, they are basically always positive. In twentieth century poets it often erupts from the deep chaos of the subconscious. "I believe unbelievably in God. Because I want to believe," wrote Endre Ady. To him God was a symbol, "the Great Secret," "Life," which permitted many interpretations. To the poet Lajos Áprily he is the "Lord of Curses and Death." To Gyula Illyés he is the "King of mighty arms" who, in the end, "forgives his enemies."

The poetry of Hungarian poets, especially twentieth century ones, reveals another recurring theme: the fate and mission of the "nation" and the "homeland." This theme is explored at some length in the poems of Lőrinc Szabó and Gyula Illyés.

Like most good anthologies, *Church Window* has few shortcomings. Although the volume claims to avoid any religious partiality, it fails to give appropriate representation to Roman Catholic poets. For instance, not a single poem by László Mécs, the Premonstratensian canon, is offered. Despite this and other minor deficiencies, the book offers a joyful reading of the multi-coloured images of Hungarian religious poetry and verse translation.

* * *

“Nem emel föl már senki sem,
Belenehezültem a sárba.
Fogadj fiadnak, Istenem,
Hogy ne legyek kegyetlen árva.”

Egy magáramaradt ember végső kétségbeesésében kiált így fel. Ez az őszinte, emberi megnyilatkozás önmagában még nem lenne különös. S hogy mégis egy tudományos folyóirat hasábjain esik róla szó, annak egyéb oka is van. E sorok írója József Attila, a “szocialista Magyarország” egyik legünnepeltebb és kétségtelenül a legtehetségesebb “proletár költője”. A fenti idézet a *Templomablak* című, vallásos költeményeket tartalmazó antológiából származik, amely 1975-ben látott napvilágot Budapesten.

A könyv két nagyobb egységre tagolódik. Az első magyar vallásos költeményeket tartalmaz kronológiai sorrendben, míg az utóbbi műfordítások gyűjteménye. A kötet bevezető verse egy 14. századi ismeretlen magyar költő műve, az “Ó-Magyar Mária Siralom”, amely nyelvtörténeti szempontból is páratlan. Balassi Bálint, a magyar renaissance kiemelkedő egyénisége, több verssel is szerepel. Zrínyi Miklós nyelve már a barokk pompa jeleit viseli. De helyet kapott a kötetben Arany János [magyar klasszicizmus], Madách Imre, Gárdonyi Géza, Ady Endre [szimbólikus ábrázolásmód], Babits Mihály, Juhász Gyula, Tóth Árpád [a 20. századi “nyugatos” költők], Radnóti Miklós, Áprily Lajos, Szabó Lőrinc, Illyés Gyula, Weöres Sándor, Devecseri Gábor és a magyar líra sok más kiváló művelője. Az antológia második felét műfordítások teszik ki görög, latin, olasz, francia, spanyol, angol, német, flamand, orosz, lengyel, szlovák, és finn nyelvből. A kötetet egy 30 oldalas ismertetés egészíti ki, amely hasznos információt ad a gyűjteményben szereplő költők életéről és munkásságáról.

A kötet költőinél központi helyet foglal el Isten és ember kapcsolata, viszonya. S ez a kapcsolat költők, korok, “izmusok” szerint változó, de végső eredőjében mégis mindig pozitív. Különösen a 20. század költőinél tudatalatti mélységek káoszából tör fel a modern ember egyszerű vágya hitre, eszmélésre: “Hiszek hitetlenül Istenben, / Mert hinni akarok, / Mert sohse volt úgy rászorulva / Sem élő, sem halott” — mondja Ady. E vallomás nála különleges nyelvi megformálást is igényel. A névszói és határozói elemek túlsúlyát két ige — a “hinni” és a dinamikusabb, határozottabb “akarni” — tartja egyensúlyban. A hit és hinni akarás kettősségének kidomborítása [mely a lelki feszültség forrása] a

magas és a mély magánhangzójú szavak polarizálásával [a magyar nyelv magánhangzó váltakozás törvényének stiláris alkalmazása] éri el végső kulminációját. Ugyanennek a költői kifejezőmódnak lehetünk tanúi egy másik Ady idézetben is: "akarom, hogy hited akarjam". Az Isten nála "Nagy Titok", mint ahogy az "Élet" is az; egy szimbólum, amely többféle magyarázatot enged meg. Adynál Isten sohasem valami elvont szellem, aminek nincs vágya, célja, tevékenysége. Az ő Isten-képe nem a dolgok végső lényegéről, önmagáról elmélkedő arisztotelészi Isten-fogalom, hanem egy aktív létező, minek léte valamilyen formában mindig kapcsolatban van a költő életével. Fehér fényben jön, hogy a költő "ellenségeit" leigázza [szövetséges]. Máskor cserélődik a szerep s a költő tér haza fáradtan a veszített "Élet-csatából". "Mindennek vége, vége: / Békíts ki Magaddal s magammal. . ." [ellenség]. Reményik Sándornál ez az Isten-arc egy "antik szobor" tiszta, nyugodt erejű hasonlatává egyszerűsödik. A költő nem "akar", nem követel többé, csupán nem nyugszik, míg "nem hívja elő" a világ szennye alá temetett hitét.

A hit tárgya, Isten, különböző költői megformálást kaphat. "Átok és Halál ura" [Áprily], aki "kiméri az idők folyamát" [Bersenyi]. Szörnyű fegyverű király, mert a végén megbocsát ellenfeleinek [Illyés]. Fodornál a definíció tágabb, mert feloldja a "Nagy Rend, Nagy Igaz, Nagy Fény" szimbólum rendszerében Isten fogalmát s a viszonyok rendszerének hegeli meghatározásához közelít. Reménytelen az emberekben hinni mert azok eleve kudarcra vannak ítélve, csak az Isten egyedül nem téved. A kálvinizmus ezen alaptétele többször is felbukkan, s a kötet ott a legmélyebb, ahol kételyek, vergődések dominálnak. "S hányatottam, miként a sáska, Mert csak Teneked van erőd . . . Nem szabad hinni senki másba. . ." [Ady].

Az antológia gazdag filozófiai gondolatokkal terhelt szóképekben is. A viszonylagos teljesség kedvéért idézzük Áprilyt: "csak a bukdácsoló patakok csevegnek (alliteráció), folyók a torkolatnál csendesednek"; vagy a hasonlatban megfogalmazott platóni filozófiai szemlélet metaforikus rokona Reményiknél. "A világ Isten szötte szőnyeg, s mi csak a visszáját látjuk itt."

Minden kiváló alkotás tartalmaz bizonyos hiányosságokat s ez érvényes a *Templomablak* című antológiára is. Noha a szerkesztők hangoztatják az előszóban, hogy "minden felekezeti egyoldalúságot kerülve, csupán tartalmi és formai szempontok szerint a magyar költészet egészére kiterjedő gyűjteményt" kívánnak publikálni, ez az igyekezetük csak részben valósul meg. Magyarország lakosságának 65%-a római katolikus, a katolikus költők és versek aránya a kötetben azon-

ban jóval ez alatt az arányszám alatt van. Mécs László például egy verssel sem szerepel. E bizonyos értékrendbeli hiányosság helyenként egyenetlenséget, színvonalbeli csökkenést eredményez. Lásd Berde Mária ragrimeit: “étket-vétket, sorában-Táborában, stb. . . .

Kutatva a kötet objektív karakterisztikáját, a figyelmes olvasó előtt a gyűjteményt domináló vallásos költemények mellett, illetve azokat átszöve egy alig látható másik hálózat is feldereng, melyet “magyarság motívumnak” nevezhetünk. Versek, főleg a 20. századi lírikusoktól, amelyek a nemzet, haza fogalmát érintik. Azt a Hazát, ahol “rontás kavarog” és “zavaros a jelen és jövő. . .” [Fodor]. Szabó Lőrincet például örömmel tölti el a II. világháborút követő ujjaépítés, a városok, a vidék gazdagodása, az éles osztályellentétek eltűnése. De a gyógyuló folyamat eszköze nála a szeretet. Hangja elutasító lesz és merész, ha a magyarságtól idegen világnézetre vagy társadalmi rendszerre gondol, mert “nem azért vagy, hogy odaragadj ügghöz. . . amely nem tiéd. . .”

Elvetélt szabadságharcok, vallásháborúk [ahol nem Istenért, hanem Isten miatt folyt a harc], Magyarország nagyhatalmi pozíciójának elvesztése után a költő feladata, hogy a “messzelátó magyar”, a nemzet lelkiismerete legyen “őrizve” egy “nem-enyém vagyont” [Illyés] és megadja a magyarság jövőbeli helyét és szerepét Közép-Európában:

“Áradj belénk hát, oh örök
igazság és szeretet!
Oldozd meg a bilincseket,
amikkel a törzs és vér leköt,
hogy szellem és ne hús tegyen
magyarrá s nőjünk ég felé
testvér népek közt, mint fák,
kiket mennyből táplál a Nap.” [Babits]

A *Templomablak* e sokszínű költemény-üvegeinek fény-harmóniája adja a magyar vallásos költészet nagyszerű élményét.

SPECIAL SECTION

Toldi

An Epic Poem (1846)

by János Arany

translation by

Watson Kirkconnell

in collaboration with

Tivadar Edl

PROLOGUE

"I now remember times long pass'd away,
When the good Nicholas Toldi had his day."

— Hosvai

As on an autumn night a herdsman's fire
Across the sea-like prairie flashes higher,
So Nicholas Toldi to my gaze is cast
Out of his time, ten generations past.

I seem to see his stateliness of height,
And his stout lance in devastating fight;
I seem to hear the thunders of his voice,
Like the loud tongue that God's deep wrath employs.

That was a man, a hero of the best;
His match lives not to-day from east to west;
If from his grave he rose to you and me,
You'd think his deeds were wrought by sorcery.

Three men to-day could not lift up his mace
Or set his sling-stones or his lance in place;
You would turn pale to see his massy shield
And his gigantic jack-boots, spurry-heel'd.

CANTO ONE

“He lifted, with one hand, a massive pole,
To point the way to Buda, then their goal.”

— Ilosvai.

Sun-scorch'd, the spare heath-grass is brown indeed,
Grasshoppers there in languid cohorts feed;
Among the bulrush-rootstocks nought is seen
Of sprouting grass; nor is the prairie green.

A dozen farm-hands in the hay-stack's shade
Are snoring, as if all were well array'd;
Yet, empty or half-fill'd, big hay-carts stand
In idleness amid that summer land.

The lean fork of a draw-well, long and bleak,
Looks deep into the well, its draughts to seek.
You'd think it an enormous gnat, whom dearth
Had sent to suck the blood of Mother Earth.

Beside the trough, a herd of oxen lies,
Parch'd, and molested by a host of flies;
But with the noon-day heat the men are spent,
And none draws water for their discontent.

As far as glance can scan the earth and sky,
Only one waking person can you spy;
A mighty pole on his broad shoulder swings,
Although upon his chin no down yet clings.

Fix'd on the high-road is his dreaming gaze,
As if he yearn'd for other, distant ways.
You would consider him a living post,
Set on that hillock where two highways cross'd.

Why do you stand, my fair lad, in the heat?
You see the others snore in soft retreat;
The dogs lie on the grass, tongues lolling out,
And would not dream of chasing mice about.

Haven't you ever felt a wind as hot,
As this, that soon will wrestle on this spot,
And, licking up the road, seem to invoke
From dust a chimney's belch'd-forth clouds of smoke?

Ah, it is not the whirlwind that he sees,
Spanning the long, dun road with mummeries:
For there, beyond the grey dust, with its drums
And glittering arms, a brilliant army comes.

And as it penetrates the fog of dust,
A sigh from the lad's mouth breaks in a gust.
With eager stoop, he sees the troops draw nigh
As if his soul were focuss'd in his eye.

"O gallant Magyar soldiers, fine and true,
How fain, how longingly I gaze at you!
Where go you, and how far? Perchance to fight?
And pluck in war fame's flowers pearly-bright?"

March you against the Tartars or the Turks
To bid Good-night to them and all their works?
Would I were one of you, and march'd along,
You gallant Magyars, your brave troops among!"

Such was the course of Nicholas Toldi's thought,
And carking furrows through his soul were wrought.
As thus he brooded in his youthful brain,
His heart became convulsed in yearning pain;

His sire had fought; his brother George he kenn'd
Had grown up with the King's son as his friend,
And at the court, while Nicholas draws in hay,
That rascal proudly whiles his time away.

Meanwhile the troops drew near with martial tread,
Great Endre Laczfi riding at their head;
On his bay steed he sat, a man of note,
With gold embroidery thick upon his coat.

Behind him rode smart, feather-capp'd battalions
With gaudy saddles on their prancing stallions.
As Nicholas gazes at that gallant corps,
His eyes, with too much gazing, become sore.

"Hey, peasant! Which road leads to Buda-town?"
Asks Laczfi, looking arrogantly down.
Straight to the heart of Toldi goes that word.
It forthwith gives a thump that can be heard.

"A peasant, am I?" Nicholas mused in hate.

“Who should be squire of this whole estate?
Perhaps my brother George, that fox unstable,
Busy to change the plates at Louis’ table?”

“A peasant, am I?” And his rising gorge
Was full of horrid curses against George.
Then whirling his vast pole, without a strain,
By one huge end he seized it, like a cane,
 And held it horizontal with one hand
To point them Buda-ward across the land.
Bands of wrought steel his arm’s stout thews resemble, —
The out-stretch’d tree-trunk does not even tremble.

The Palatine and all his army bent
Their gaze on him in sheer astonishment.
Says Laczfi: “That’s a man, whoe’er he be!
Come, lads, who’ll wrestle now with such as he?
 Or who among you all can hold straight out
That shabby sign-pole of the lusty lout?”
They murmur, discontented: ’twould annoy
A knight to wrestle with a peasant boy.

But who would fight a duel with the thunder
When wind and sultry murk are rent asunder?
Who’d dream of fighting with God’s anger warm
And His long, hissing arrow of the storm?
 For only such a one such odds would give,
If he loves God’s fair world and wants to live.
For woe to him, in Nicholas’ hands bestead!
He’d cry out for his mother, were she dead.

The troops, in thronging pageant, pass him by,
And all pay tribute to his potency;
All speak frank words of kindliness and grace;
All beam upon him with a friendly face.
 And one says: “Comrade, won’t you come to war?
That’s what a lad like you is valued for!”
Another says: “My good lad, what a shame,
Sired by a peasant, you will be the same!”

The host has gone; its murmurs now are mute,
Borne down the wind; the dust obscures its route.
Home wanders Toldi, full of grieving pride;
The fallow rocks beneath his mighty stride;
 Like some insensate bullock's is his gait;
The glooms of midnight in his eyes dilate;
Like some mad, wounded boar's his wrath persists;
The pole is almost crush'd in his great fists.

CANTO TWO

“And when George Toldi home from Buda
 came,
His younger brother was assail'd with
 blame.”

Ilosvai

While Nicholas thus his soul in grief was rending,
At home at Nagyfalú a feast was pending:
The chimneys smoked as if the house were burning;
The sleepy well-prop never ceased from turning;
 Calves, lambs, and sucking-pigs shriek'd out in gloom;
The hen-yard underwent a day of doom;
Maids that were ill had yet no breathing-space,
The hearth was busy as a market-place.

One pour'd much water in a mighty pot,
And there, when on the fire it bubbles hot,
Into that bath the fowls are quickly dipp'd,
Their feathers snatch'd away, their sandals stripp'd;
 One fears that sweating may the lamb befall,
And tears away its jacket, hide and all;
Another maid belards the slender hare,
That fat may drip from his lean carcass there.

One rocks a sucking-pig above a flame
And scrapes away its bristles; here one dame
Brings wine in wooden bowls, or skins instead,
Or in a beechwood trough bears in the bread.

What meant this hubbub in a widow's house
Where none had long been wont such din to rouse?
Was it a wake for Lawrence Toldi's dame,
Or some new feast of bridal for the same?
Has her sad widow'd bed grown dull perchance,
And does her fading body seek romance?

This is no wake for Lawrence Toldi's wife
Nor has new marriage dawn'd upon her life.
But all the cooking, roasting, has been done
Since George comes home, the house's first-born son.

George was a great lord, with a wide demesne,
Treasure in heaps, and contumelious spleen.
Proud guards and well-armed lackeys throng his ground,
And herds of whinnying stallions, packs of hounds.

He'd come now with a teeming retinue —
A lazy, good-for-nothing, hungry crew —
To gobble half the income, with a curse,
And pocket the remainder in his purse.

In icy tones he did his mother greet —
Who would have poured her soul out at his feet.
"Where is the lad?" he gruffly asks his mother.
No one would dream he meant his younger brother.

"He's outside with the farmhands, making hay.
I'll send for him at once." — "No, let him stay!"
Shouts George. "No need for him." The mother's heart
Feels a great knife-stab slash its veins apart.

"No need for him" but lo! unhopéd, uncalled,
The lad appears. Fierce pangs his spirit scald,
His inmost self still felt the aftermath
Of shameful grief and all-afflicting wrath.

But what a miracle would Heaven forge!
No word of blame he utters against George.
Something was quieting his soul's deep hate,
Though what it was I cannot clearly state.

When unexpectedly he saw George face him,
His arms, unwilling, opened to embrace him;

But the other pushed him back with scornful pride
And from his worthy brother turned aside.

Out of the mother's eyes the teardrops run
She steps up to her stony-hearted son,
With trembling lips, hands clasping and unclasping,
But George upbraids her hopes in accents rasping:

“Why, mother do you pet your lapdog so,
And guard your darling child from winds that blow?
Dip him in milk and butter, grant each plea,
A famous blockhead he will grow to be!

Work on the meadows clamours to be done,
But the young squire here must have his fun!
He, like a dog, smells the fat dinner coming,
And leaves the servants to the work benumbing.

“For him you've always wept, when I spoke out.
He'll grow up nothing but a lazy lout;
Too idle for a peasant, toil he mocks,
Though he could work, as mighty as an ox.

Just stick him in the window as a show,
And smile with pleasure as you see him grow!”
Loud was the laughter with which George thus spoke
And from the lips of Nicholas sorrow broke:

“Each word you utter is a lie -- or curse --
No jot of truth is in this charge of yours.
I know right well what you would have me be!
May God love you as you are loving me!

My hopes in field or battle you would mock
And even find my work a laughing-stock.
You rage lest I should share the common bowl!
You'd kill me in a twinkling, by my soul!

“I do not want to linger in your way
And so I'll gladly go from here today.
A hundred miles the world is, up and down,
And so I'm off, to win my own renown.

But what belongs to me I mean to take!
Hand over, brother, what is my due stake,
My portion of the estate -- cash, horse and arms --
And then the Lord may bless us both from harms!”

“Lad, here’s your share! Don’t say you haven’t got it!” —
George cried, and struck. His brother’s forehead caught it.
But Nicholas Toldi is not chicken-hearted;
Deep in his soul revenge is now imparted.

His eyes, like smitten steel, throw out a spark;
His fist’s great bony mace prepares its mark.
And George falls back in fear; his doom is sure
If that one blow his body should endure.

For that one blow would lay him in a den
Where, by God’s grace, he’d never eat again,
Where, a cracked bone, shut in a narrow room,
He’d not recover till the Day of Doom.

But in the brothers’ strife to intervene
The mother with an outcry rushed between;
Her body shielded George, and yet her fear
Had been for Nicholas and his sad career.

The wild boy feels his muscles’ stress uncoil;
He sadly turns his glances to the soil,
And like a man freed from a fever’s bout,
From his dead father’s home he totters out.

In misery he walked, in answer mute,
Sat in the yard’s far corner destitute,
There bent his throbbing head above his knee
And burst out weeping, with no man to see.

CANTO THREE

“With rage against young Nicholas he was
filled
Because a well-loved soldier he had killed.”

— Ilosvai

In the old house, the whole crew were elated;
From food and drink men only ceased when sated.
When they rose up from stout George Toldi’s board,
His men in throwing spears their zeal outpoured.

Young blood and old wine in their veins upswirled;
In their right hands the wooden lances whirled;

They all teased one another; like wild colts
They romped around in spirited revolts.

George Toldi, after having swilled his share,
Threw his proud self into a soft armchair,
And from the wide verandah watched with pleasure
How his gay troops made merry beyond measure;

Then marking in a corner the young lad,
His brother Nicholas, all alone and sad,
The sordid instincts of his soul awoke
And to his lumpish louts with spleen he spoke:

“Hallo, boys! See that bustard sorrowing!
He hides his mournful beak beneath his wing.
Roosting is he, or dead? Use your best knack
To bang that plank behind his sulky back!”

As when a hare is tossed among some hounds,
The wanton soldiers' mischief knew no bounds.
The boards behind his head banged loud with spears
While still his earlier sorrow perseveres.

No mystery was this onset all unblest,
The case was obvious and manifest;
This drastic joke against himself was sped —
Often the missiles hardly missed his head.

Though far from calm, Toldi endured their clangour;
His soul still wrestled with his rising anger;
Then mastered it, and rested in disdain
That these rude varlets sought to give him pain.

For you must know, these rogues who caused him harm
Could be swept off by his avenging arm,
Like that of Samson that once killed alone
A thousand infidels with one jaw-bone.

For long he kept his temper firm before them;
It seemed his best revenge was to ignore them;
He tried to hide his knowledge of their aim,
And didn't move one ear for all their game.

But when a spearpoint grazed his shoulder-blade,
His rage flared up in fearful fusillade:
Seizing the millstone-block on which he sat,
He hurled it at his foemen, crude and fat.

The heavy stone flies on: where will it stop?
Upon whose head in thunder will it drop?
Run, Nicholas, run! For death your neck will claim!
Nothing can wash away a murderer's name!

Out from your father's home your path goes blurred
Like a wild boar's when driven from the herd
Because with his sharp fangs he's slain his fellow
And the others drive him off with gash and bellow.

The mighty stone flew on, and where it fell
It smote a noble soldier clear to hell;
As in a mill, the weight his members crushes
And oozing juice from out his body gushes.

The dusty soil drinks up the blood in haste,
A film of death upon his eyes is placed.
Thus the disaster that had stilled his breast
Brought sudden agony to all the rest.

At this the wrath of George surpassed belief,
The death of his bold soldier brought such grief:
And he was happy that his brother's deed
Could make his plans to ruin him succeed.

His cunning, crooked purposes, he saw,
Could now be covered with the veil of law;
And with such guise his slaughter to invest,
He gave strict orders for his prompt arrest.

CANTO FOUR

"Now Nicholas' mother, grieving for her son,
In secret sent him food when he had none.

-- Ilsvai

As when the antlered stag, by arrows hurt,
Darts to the forest-depths, with thickets girt,
To seek the soothing water of a spring
And herbs to heal his wound's keen suffering,

But finds, alas, the spring is dried-out ground
And healing herbs are nowhere to be found;
Scratched by all branches, pricked by every thorn,
More dead than living is the beast forlorn,

Thus Nicholas strayed. Grief on his neck now rode;
Its spurs his anguished side incessant goad;
As in a burning barn a tied horse leaps,
His own heart in his breast its pounding keeps.

The brook he roved; among the rushes hid;
But found no resting-place in all he did.
In vain he'd sought for solitude apart;
He found no remedy to heal his heart.

And like a reed-wolf, by a shepherd chased,
He entered a broad cane-brake's arid waste;
Yet every reed-stem whispered in his ear
That none in all the world had woes more drear.

Root-stocks his pillow were, and reeds his bed;
God's firmament of blue stretched overhead.
At last the dark night took him to her breast
And pitched a tent of black above his nest.

Sleep like a butterfly came fluttering
With drowsy sweetness on its dusky wing,
But scarcely dared upon his eyes to light
Until the rosy dawn has routed night.

Sleep was afraid of gnats, of reed-stems harsh,
The rustle of wild beasts that thronged the marsh,
The far-off noise of those who sought him out,
But most of all his soul's dismay and rout.

But when at last day touched the eastern hill,
The gnats sought out their roosts, and all was still.
On the lad's head sleep stole down in disguise
And spread two soothing wings above his eyes,

Then kissed dream-honey on the boyish lips,
Culled from night's poppies with obsequious sips,
Honey of magic spells, with charms replete —
From Nicholas' mouth pure water trickled sweet.

But urgent hunger grudged him even that,
Roused him from slumber like an autocrat,
Drove him and spurred him with intent so harsh
That soon he wandered through the whole wide marsh.

He sought the nests of wild birds in the muck,

The homes of moorhen, plover, gull and duck;
He wrecks their houses, steals their motley eggs,
Because his starving maw for fodder begs.

Having with eggs allayed his hunger's pains,
In making future plans he racked his brains.
Where should he go? What should he start? My God!
His ardent soul alone its pathway trod.

He could depart and hide in some strange guise
But for his mother's face before his eyes.
If no news came, his safety sure to make,
Her aged heart, he knew, would slowly break.

For three long days he brooded on his fate,
Then heard the reeds a rustling penetrate.
Thinking it was a wolf, he stayed his arm —
Only his brother would intend his harm.

But it was Ben, his servant old and true,
Sent by his mother without more ado.
Upon his master's neck he falls with joy
And presently addresses thus the boy:

“How glad I am to find you, master dear!
For three long days I've rummaged for you here.
Through bogs I've sought you, as a wife a pin,
And lost all hope to find where you had been.

That you were starved with hunger I was sure
Or eaten by the wild beasts on the moor.
Here is my satchel, open it and dine!
For there's roast meat, white bread and bottled wine.”

With this, the old retainer rubbed his eye;
Then knelt down on the soil, where standing nigh
He'd set his satchel. This he now unpacked,
Course after course, in a delightful act.

He even made a table, laying out
The satchel and its lid in joy devout,
Laid on it bread, the wine-flask and the meat,
And with two apples made the meal complete.

He then took out his clasp-knife, star-bedight,
And offered it in his young master's sight;
The latter took the knife and sliced the bread —
On it and meat right hungrily he fed.

With joy the faithful Ben beheld him eat,
More pleased than if himself he downed the meat;
As if he ate himself, his mouth would move,
And his grey lashes showed a tear of love.

When the lad brought his appetite in check,
The old man fiercely wrung the wine-flask's neck;
The flask shrieked, and poured out its bubbling blood
In the old servant's hands in rosy flood.

First with the wine his master's health he drank;
A few drops down his throat in fervour sank;
Then, seeking Nicholas with the flask to ply,
He wiped his mouth upon his shirt-sleeves dry.

Wine freed the old man's spirit like a sluice;
His heart swung open and his tongue got loose!
With Nicholas' grandsire he began his tale
(A whip-boy had he been, of small avail);

Of Nicholas' sire and dame his yarns he'd forge,
Of Nicholas, too, and of his brother George;
Perhaps to the world's end his words had been,
If Nicholas had not sadly broken in:

"It hurts to hear you, while your heroes stalk!
Have done, I beg you, with this painful talk!
Once, sitting at the hearthside, glad and gay,
I could have listened until Judgement Day!

Oft have you praised my father's noble force
Until the midnight ended our discourse.
Thereafter sleep stayed absent in the skies:
Often till dawn I couldn't close my eyes!

"What was, is past! That which was good is gone.
A new pen writes. My lot has changed anon.
I killed a man, an outlaw I became.
Who ever knows when I can clear my name?

Yet I believe in God, the orphan's stay.

Perhaps I'll shed my blood, some noble day,
And wipe away the shame, obscene and dread,
That my dear brother brought upon my head.

"I was not born -- these thoughts my spirit flog --
To hide among the rushes like a frog!
Nor was I made a cowherd, or a serf,
Or doomed to draw in haycocks from the turf.
I shall stay here until the night sets in
And shadows on the fields their watch begin.
Then, when across the world I make my track,
Even the wind will bring no message back!"

Ben, as he heard these words, became depressed
That his young master sought to leave the nest.
He stood in silence, then with sudden wails
Wrote crosses on his sandal with his nails.

Then he began to speak and begged the lad
Not to grow angry at the thing he bade,
But truly this was folly he proposed.
Why go from home, when home all good enclosed?

"Look here, dear master: In four days at best
Your brother George will leave for Budapest.
Then what has happened will be quite forgot.
You'll be our little King, as like as not.

Your honest servants would you leave alone,
Who feel for you as if you were their own.
Bimbó and Lombár would you leave behind,
Such oxen as one nowhere else could find?

"Your favorite pastimes would you quite forgo?
Who in the mill two sacks as one can stow?
Who lift a millstone, and all men confound?
Don't go, my dear! Stay on familiar ground!

Do not afflict with sorrow, through and through,
All the sad village folk of Nagyfalú!
The ancient house of Toldi guard and save!
Don't push your poor old mother to the grave!"

The lad kept silence as the old man pled.
At painful words, he merely shook his head.
But when his mother's name those pleas impart,
It rolls a stone upon the young man's heart.

He gives no answer as the old man pleads,
And sighing gazes at the whispering reeds;
Upon the whispering reeds he looks so long
That tear-drops to his lashes slowly throng.

As if he wiped away his forehead's sweat,
His finger to his eye he slowly set;
The tears along his finger flowed to earth
While he to Ben expressed these words of worth:

“Dear Ben, please tell my mother from my lips
That her son's star is darkened in eclipse.
No word or sight of it her love will win;
It will be lost as though it had not been.

“It will not really die, but disappear
As when a man shall hide for many a year,
But afterwards, when he returns again,
He shall be found a marvel among men.

My mother this shall hear in deep content;
Even small babes shall feel astonishment;
My mother's heart will leap with happiness.
May it not burst in all its joyful stress!”

So Nicholas spoke. Then Ben took up his task:
Back in the empty satchel put the flask,
Wiped off his clasp-knife with devoted care
And folded up the lardy linen there;

Then shouldering his knapsack, said Good-by
And set off homewards. His reluctant eye
Showed that he longed to stay. His course he knew,
And 'mid the waving rushes passed from view.

CANTO FIVE

Nicholas went wandering about the marsh,
Along the brook, amid the reed-fields harsh.

— Ilosvai

Day to the reedy marsh had closed her eye,
But left her big red mantle in the sky;
Then Night prevailed and stopped the crimson mirth,
Drawing a funeral cloth o'er sky and earth,
 Setting it neatly off with coffin-nails,
A million million stars in glittering trails;
Then laid the crescent moon, in silent walk,
A wreath of silver on the catafalque.

Then Nicholas on his unknown path set out,
Into the reedy marsh more deep he'd scout;
But just as if a rope had pulled him back,
He could not leave his mother by that track.
 He would look backward, but in vain, I ween;
There was no living creature to be seen.
He looked again, then turned himself around:
To take his leave of her, his steps were bound.

But as he backward turned in slow retreat,
The marshy soil gave way beneath his feet;
A wild wolf's lair below was manifest —
Two little whelps were whining in their nest.
 Nicholas was sorry to have trod upon them,
And bending down, he set caresses on them,
As when a shepherd boy, who trains his pup,
Pats his small, hairy head to cheer him up.

But here, kind pats were wholly out of place,
For suddenly reeds rustle; fierce of pace,
The she-wolf, entering with a fiendish howl,
Attacked him, and at once the fight grew foul.
 On her hind legs the wolf in fury rose,
Scratching with poisoned paws at Nicholas' nose;
Teeth in her ravening jaws gleamed weirdly white
And seemed to sparkle in the moon's fierce light.

Toldi turned quickly round to meet the attack;
Blows from his great fists beat the onset back;
From the beast's mouth and nose the blood-drops flew;
Its staring eyes bulged forth and bloodshot grew.

Its tongue, which the wrecked mouth could not contain,
Was gashed on by the teeth in frenzied pain;
Like a mad dog's, its thick saliva fell;
None ever saw a beast more fit for hell.

Nicholas at last, irked by such savage heat,
Called for sure succor from his sturdy feet,
And as a bull might throw with horns unsoft,
With one great kick he hurled the wolf aloft.

Down in the bog far off the creature dropped,
Breaking the span of reeds on which it flopped,
And as upon the earth it tumbled prone,
It thumped the surface with a mighty moan.

As if a devil in its hide were hid,
It bounded up, no faltering invalid,
And with a roar, its frenzy to unsheath,
Renewed the battle as with sharpened teeth.

On Nicholas' shoulders then its paws were spread;
It gaped its jaws beside the youngster's head;
Its hind-legs on his knees pressed resolute —
God damn to hell the incorrigible brute!

All might be well, but now to help his kind
A howling he-wolf dashed in from behind.
How now, bold Nicholas? Does not terror fill you?
Had you a thousand lives, they still would kill you!

Not in the least! One rather must suppose
That as the danger grew, his courage rose.
He will win out. Don't doubt the lad's a winner.
He was not born to be the grey wolves' dinner.

Then as the she-wolf in her grappling twists,
He held and pressed her throat with both his fists;
Her paws grow feeble in abrupt surprise,
Strength vanished from the sinews of her thighs;
Her eyes protruded, full of tears and blood;

Her tongue was like a coulter in the mud;
Breath could not issue, prison'd in her throat;
Her jaws staying gaping, from their rage remote.

Toldi then raised her; with a mighty swing
He flailed her at her mate, about to spring.
Twice beaten back, the male, with tail a-twitch,
In utter fury bit at his own bitch.

It was quite clear that he would rise again
Unless young Toldi slew him there and then.
He therefore pounded him: from such a fray
He would not wake until the Judgement Day.

Thus having slain the beasts by mighty deeds,
He took a little rest among the reeds.
The pair of young wolf-whelps were likewise dead,
Trampled and lifeless in the bulrush-bed.

The parents lay, one here, one farther on,
The sickle moon upon their corpses shone;
Coolly she looked upon that reedy place,
A golden sauce-pan with a shining face.

Nicholas now racked his brains with worry's yeasts,
But not, I fear, in grieving for the beasts.
Of his own wolf he thought, his brother bad,
Who sought to eat him up and all he had.

Why should his brother treat him like a cur?
Why would he be his executioner?
No ill to George did Nicholas e'er bequeath:
Why should he gnash upon him with his teeth?

If with the wolves he made comparison,
His brother was far worse to think upon.
Wild beasts are warlike to defend their lair;
Do not provoke them, and they will not care.

When the starved belly urges them to kill,
They slay no more than would their needs fulfil.
From farmers' herds, only a tithe they win,
And never prey on their own kith and kin.

But see his brother, see that man of strife;
Why did he have designs on Nicholas' life?
Why did he seek his blood, in malice stony?
Why would he drive him from his patrimony?

What if to him, who did his life pursue,
He meted what to wolfish souls is due?
Or are men out of tougher stuff contrived,
And George's death-day had not yet arrived?

Stop, Toldi, stop! Murder is your intent.
Do not in such a deed your grievance vent!
A murdered kinsman's blood to heaven cries
And calls for vengeance to the sky of skies!

Know you, that if your brother you should kill,
Your soul you'd damned to everlasting ill.
Be not afraid, for God above you stands.
Leave all retaliation in his hands.

As if a quick resolve his mind had swept,
He rose, and to the creatures' corpses stepped,
Shouldered them swiftly and set out in wrath
Upon his dangerous nocturnal path.

In headlong haste the tangled reeds he bent,
And left a swath behind him as he went.
The two dead wolves were dangling down his back
As to his mother's house he kept his track.

CANTO SIX

“And now it came to pass, George Toldi's
mother
For Nicholas deeply grieved, his younger brother.”
Hosvai

At the thorp's edge, beneath the fair moon's light,
The house of Lawrence Toldi glimmered white.
Behind it a great orchard spread out green,
Broad as some lowland forest's wide demesne.

One doorway of the house the garden faced:
Here Madam Toldi's bedroom had been based,

Rosemary pots mourned on its window-sill.
This was the spot where Nicholas lingered still.

He laid the wolves upon the dewy grass;
On tiptoe, like a thief he seemed to pass
And went up to his mother's close-locked door.
Long time his ears some signs of life implore,

 But all in vain. High in the lintel gray,
Only a death-watch beetle ticked away.
He would have rapped, but fear his pulses gripped;
His fingers on the handle slid and slipped.

What was the reason for this sudden fear?
He could have faced old Satan with a sneer
But dread to startle her his zeal destroys,
Lest she should wake up frightened by the noise;

 For if he woke her up too suddenly,
She might not dare to open at his plea;
Nay, she might rouse the household with a shriek
And cancel every hope with her to speak.

Putting the wolves upon his shoulders wide,
He went round to the building's other side;
There, too, all living souls had gone to bed,
Even the dogs were sleeping in a shed.

 The door was open; George he could survey;
A coverlet of moonbeams on him lay;
And deep in slumber on the portico,
The sentinels were stretched out in a row.

With all asleep, he did not hesitate
But on the doorstep laid the wolves' twin weight
And seized with his great hands primordial
The spears that had been leaned against the wall,

 Then nailed the garments of the guards to earth
Lest they should quickly rise to prove their worth.
He stepped into the room. Ha, brother evil,
Now is the time for you to join the devil!

Then Nicholas watched, behind the mosquito-net,
His brother's snores in sequence rise and set.

Just take one grip! — had he a thousand souls,
An everlasting peace upon him rolls.

Said Nicholas softly: "Now I could commit it,
And rightly, but my conscience won't acquit it.
This time I'll spare you, and shall disappear,
And only leave a sign that I've been here."

And having spoken thus, the wolves he spread
Upon the edge of the old-fashioned bed,
And gently spoke to them: "There, there abide you!
Behold your elder brother lies beside you!"

Then into the next chamber he proceeds,
Where sits his mother in her widow's weeds.
Her folded hands upon the table lay
And over them her head bent sad and grey.

Sweet sleep had sought to ambush her, in vain;
He was unable to break through her pain.
At last he won, accomplishing his will
By borrowing the mantle of a chill;

Into her head his potions did he pour,
Down to her heels and back again once more,
Crippling her senses with his languor deep.
Thus must he work, before she fell asleep.

Nor was her silent slumber long to last;
Quickly, at Nicholas' steps its spell was past.
The lady startled when she heard him stir,
But Nicholas spoke, her terrors to deter:

"My dearest mother, do not be afraid!
For with no harm do I this house invade
Though in the darkness, like a wandering ghost.
By day-light, as you know, my life were lost.

The widow, at these words, felt no alarms.
But folded her dear son within her arms,
No space a farthing's span was surely missed
Upon his face, that was not softly kissed.

"Ah, do I see you then?" his mother cried.
"Through my despair for you I almost died.
Alas, a softer tone my tongue must keep —
Your brother in the next room lies asleep."

Such were her words. No more would she have said
Were they on the broad Hortobágy instead!
There had she clasped him in the same embrace
And rained maternal kisses on his face.

He felt her tremble, as emotion quelled her;
She would have fallen if he had not held her.
He, too, was deeply stirred, and did not dare
To answer while stark sorrow was his share.

Firmness he sought, but it was all in vain;
As if sharp needles gave his nostrils pain,
Or sharp horse-radish underneath his nose
Were grated, did it twist in tingling woes;

From his two eyes the tears that overflowed
On his dear parent's visage were bestowed;
As rilllets down a hillside merge as one,
The twofold streams of tears together run.

Nicholas then steeled his soul from such despair.
He touched his forehead to his mother's hair;
Then gathering up his strength in vigour rude,
He somehow overthrew his weeping mood,

And soon addressed his mother, speaking thus:
"Cease now, dear mother, from embracing us.
My hours are numbered, and I dare not stay.
I must take leave, because I go away.

"I do not hope that I at home could live
With George — to whom may God his judgement give!
'Twould end, I fear, in my destroying him.
May God defend me from that seizure grim.

This is my message: Do not be oppressed.
Drive off the mighty terror from your breast.
Hopes for my sure return with gladness fill me
I trust in God; His mercy will not kill me.

"In my two arms enormous strength I feel.
In barn or mill I shall not waste my zeal.
My father's warlike deeds our annals grace;
Shall I alone bring shame upon our race?

I'll seek the King, a soldier to become,

I'll show for him some exploit mettlesome;
Nor shall I shame my brother's soul accurst —
Nay, from sheer envying, his spleen will burst.

“Therefore, dear mother, hear my earnest plea:
Don't worry or shed tears because of me.
Why sorrow ere their death for mortal men . . .
When even the deceased will rise again?”

He would have talked in time's sheer disregard,
But the dogs started howling in the yard,
On hearing this, he straightway realized
That he had made a blunder ill-advised.

The anger of the dogs had been aroused
By scent of the two wolves while still they drowsed;
Servants would wake, the barking to report,
And Nicholas cut his conversation short:

“Not for a moment longer dare I stay.
May the Lord bless you as I go away!
God bless you in this world, and in the other!
That is my heart's true wish, my darling mother.”

Then “Bless you . . . bless you . . .” he the echo caught.
Who should bless whom was tangled in her thought;
But well she knew that God's all-seeing eye
The secrets of her inmost heart could spy.

When from her breast the boy had passed again,
No poet could describe her fearful pain.
Her soul, that chained them both, in sorrow's chutes
Was not unclasped but torn out by the roots.

Meanwhile the beagles whined and whimpered still
And even sought the door with baying shrill;
The servants, with an effort, got up now;
George also was awakened by the row.

“Who's there? What was it?” Everybody cried,
Until the two wolf-carcasses they spied.
“'Tis Nicholas' work. Nobody else could do it.
Chase after him, you curs, or you will rue it!”

As if a nest of hornets rose to sting --
Such was that house's furious murmuring.
Colliding down the gallery they go;
On foot or horse, they eddy to and fro.

Whither? No person knew their quarry's tracks.
All of them jumped about like maniacs.
At last George scolded them, in fury hollo'd,
Then took the lead and all the others followed.

But did the widow hear the hunt's wild sounds,
The horns, the shouting, and the howling hounds?
Heard she them bawling, "Hold him! Boldly snatch!",
Well knowing whom they meant to hold or catch?

She did not hear it. As her son departed,
Her feeble feet gave way; and broken-hearted
She slowly fell unconscious on her bed;
Only God knows how long she lay as dead.

CANTO SEVEN

"He vowed, in pity for the lady's woe,
He would avenge her son's sad overthrow."

— Ilosvai

Those who on earth have neither friends nor pelf
Find their cause taken up by God himself.
See how he made poor Nicholas' case his own:
Across the moon an inky cloud was thrown;

In utter darkness, nothing could be found,
Then thunder burst and lightning cracked around,
The wrath of God a village soldier slew --
At once he perished, without more ado.

George Toldi's filthy heart was full of dread
When God's own lightnings circled round his head;
His scattered dogs were called back by the horn;
His strayed men also gathered, all forlorn.

The hours of night were drawing close to day
As he rode homeward with his drenched array.

And all the while his anger fiercer grew
Because his bloody plan had fallen through.

All night long, Nicholas wandered, staunch yet pale,
Braving the rain, the lightning and the gale.
And when the dawn the night afar had chased
He found himself amid a desert waste.

Who was his comrade as the day passed by?
The sun that followed him across the sky,
Caught up, passed on, and sank at last from sight,
Leaving him friendless in the sodden night.

Three days passed by: and on the fourth at noon
He saw in a mirage great mountains swoon;
He was amazed — the like he ne'er had seen —
Not the mirage but mountain peaks serene.

He hastened on and on, through weary hours;
When evening came, he glimpsed tall Buda's towers.
And just before the sunset hour he came
And saw the well-known field of Rákos' fame.

The field of Rákos close to Pest is set;
It was at Pest that he with evening met,
Beside a cemetery, in whose park
The mound of a new grave was looming dark.

Whose grave it was, he did not greatly care,
But — God Almighty! — who was standing there?
Surely his mother, in a mourning dress,
Bowed by a pair of crosses in distress!

Not she, but someone like her, it appears.
A stone would have been melted by her tears.
Why should not Nicholas make her grief his own,
Having a heart much softer than a stone?

His bosom filled with pity, up he stepped
And asked her who it was for whom she wept.
Then the sad widow who this watch was keeping
Answered his question with a storm of weeping.

“Oh, my dear lad! Your word my sorrow stuns.
Today I buried here two gallant sons:

Upon an isle, by a Czech's hand they fell,
And may God never save his soul from Hell!"

She spoke no more. This much was agonized,
For with her grief her tongue was paralyzed.
Down on the black mound of the grave she knelt
And bowed there in the anguish that she felt.

This lasted long, and Nicholas held his peace
Until her lamentation's voice might cease.
And when at last her tears had had their vent,
After a time her sorrow seemed nigh spent.

Then spoke he: "Madam, now your tears have end,
What is your case, I cannot comprehend.
Who slew, and why, I have not understood:
And is there no one to claim blood for blood?"

On hearing this, the lady stood erect
And all her cruel affliction sharply checked.
The outline of her face was lean and wan
And under glooming brows her great eyes shone:

"Blood calls for blood, you say. But I possess
No one to succor me in my distress.
My heart is like an autumn stubble-field
From which the scythe has swept its golden yield."

Then Toldi said: "Don't cry. For from their biers
Your sons will not be raised up by your tears.
But may the Lord bring doom upon my neck
If I do not take vengeance on that Czech.

I therefore beg you, and it will avail,
Tell me the whole of an unvarnished tale.
I have a widowed mother of my own
And can have pity on a widow's moan."

The lady by this time had taken heart
And now set forth her tale in every part:
Upon a Danube isle a Czech knight fought
In single combat, and great havoc wrought.

Of boasts and bluster was his conversation,
And ever he abused the Magyar nation.
Many had fought, and died, and left to mind them
Widows and orphans in lament behind them.

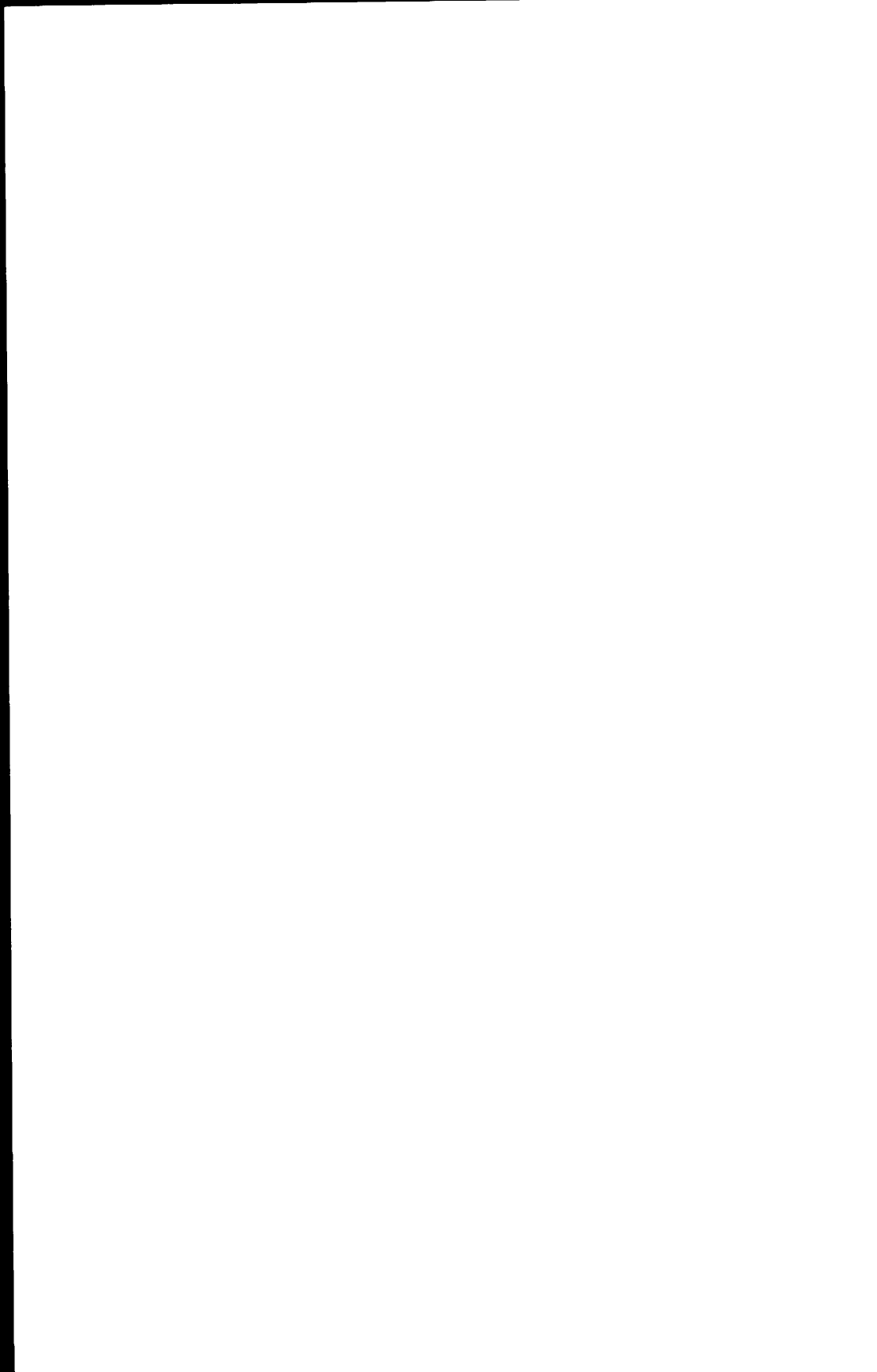
But yesterday her sons had sought him out,
Her sons, the Magyars' best beyond a doubt.
In all the world were none so kind as they,
And now together in one grave they lay.

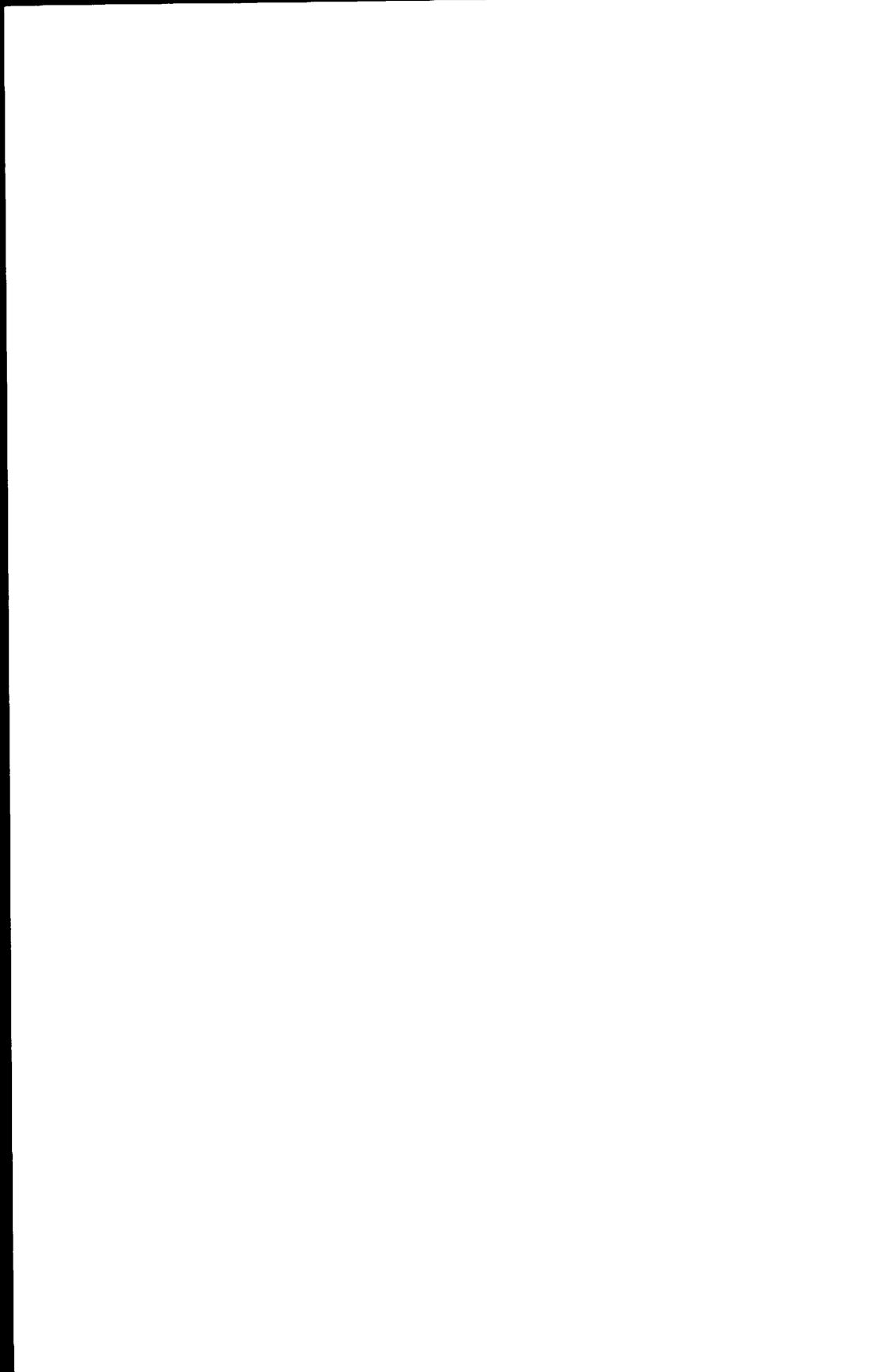
The world grew fearful. There was none tomorrow
To fight the cruel Czech and bring him sorrow.
When morning came, he would be there at ease,
Spouting his obscene words and blasphemies.

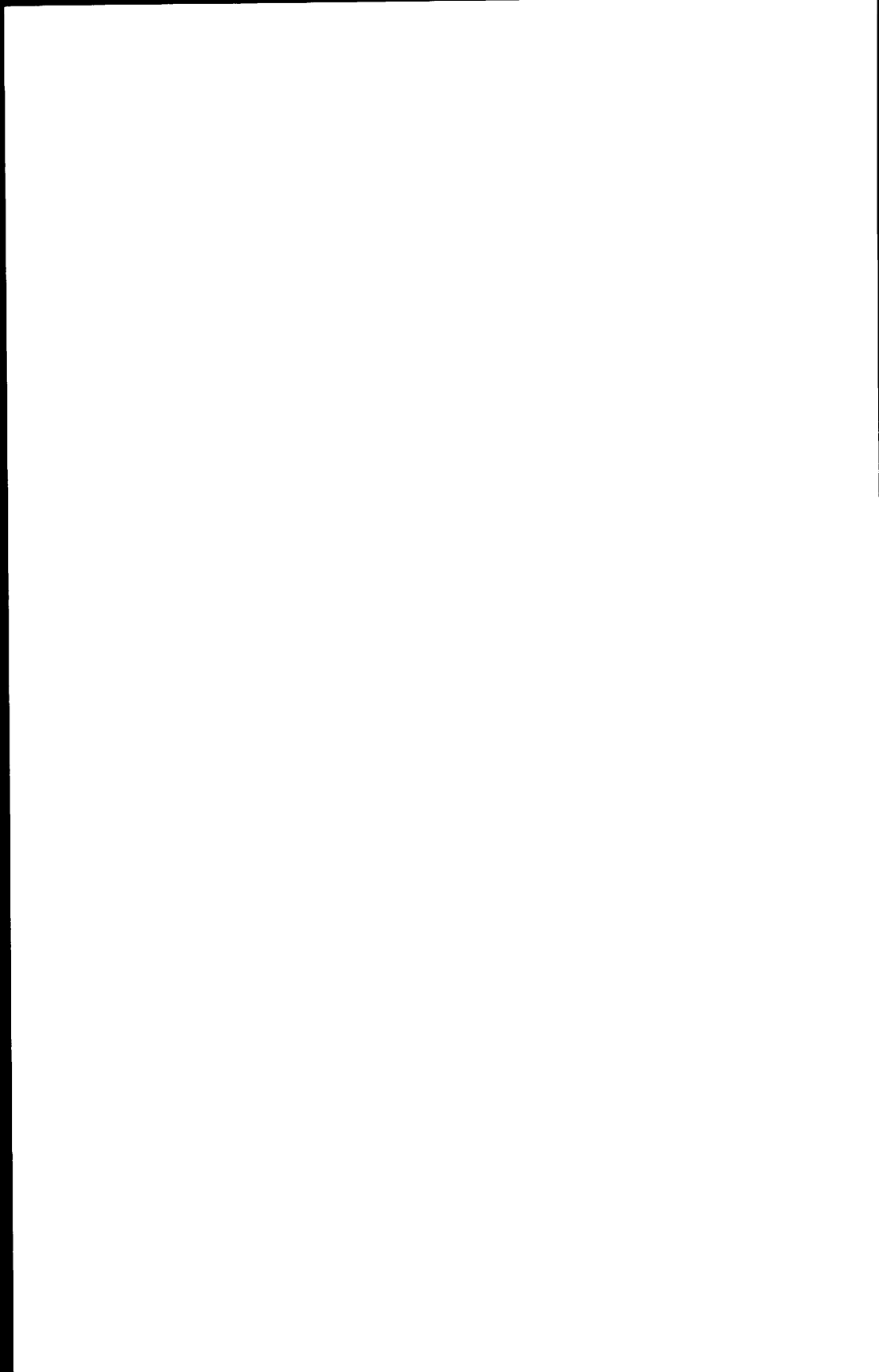
When Nicholas now the whole affair had heard,
He did not, of his purpose, say a word,
But took his leave, and set out for the city,
Revolving mighty plans amid his pity.

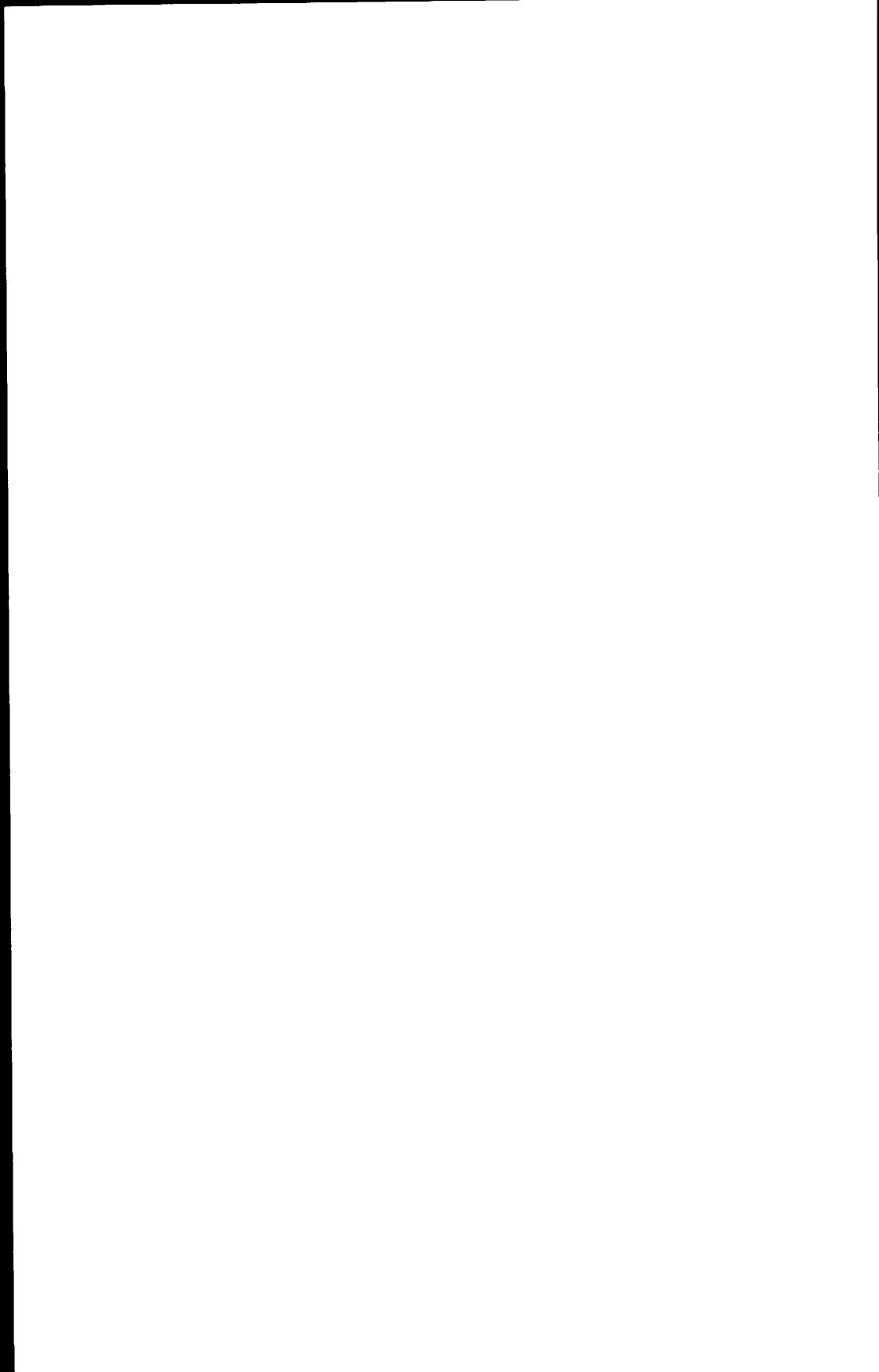
From street to street his hasty steps would stray
As if he were familiar with the way;
Yet, of a fact, he only roamed around,
For neither food nor shelter had he found.

(To be continued.)









REVIEW ARTICLE

Quo Vadis Transylvania?

Andrew Ludányi

The Hungarian Nationality in Romania. By Institute of Political Sciences and of Studying [sic] the National Question. Bucharest: Meridiane Publishing House, 1976. 53 pp.

Transylvania: The Hungarian Minority in Rumania. By Julia Nanay. Problems Behind the Iron Curtain Series No. 10; Astor, Florida: Danubian Press, Inc., 1976. 85 pp.

Scholars are hesitant to review books, pamphlets and other works which deal with problems on a non-scholarly level. This is a serious mistake. It leaves unevaluated the writings not only of unorthodox new talent, but also the writings of charlatans, propagandists and pseudo-scholars. Yet, because the former are unrecognized and because the latter are unchallenged, society is shortchanged. Thus, unscrupulous and questionable sources may become respectable enough to be quoted for the documentation of misleading or erroneous assumptions and myths and illusions are perpetuated which should have been weeded out long ago. The perpetuation of such distortions of reality continues to plague the understanding of the historical role and the political relations of the peoples in East Central Europe as well.

Two recent additions to such popular illusion-building have been the pamphlet published by the Rumanian Institute of Political Sciences entitled *The Hungarian Nationality in Romania* and the booklet compiled by Julia Nanay for the Danubian Press of Astor, Florida, entitled *Transylvania: The Hungarian Minority in Rumania*. Both of these works were written in an emotion-filled atmosphere, seeking to justify the Rumanian and Hungarian positions respectively, relative to the treatment of Transylvania's inhabitants by the government of present-day Rumania.¹ Both as works of propaganda and as sources of informa-

tion, they leave a great deal to be desired. Yet in both there are positive as well as negative features.

In *The Hungarian Nationality in Romania*, published by the Rumanian Institute of Political Sciences, the major merit can be found in the "Annexes" which are appended to the text. Annex #1 lists the constitutional, electoral, statutory, civil-criminal, legal definitions of the Hungarians' and other nationalities' rights and obligations in present-day Rumania. Unfortunately the listing is incomplete. It neglects to discuss those laws which hinder Hungarian economic, educational and cultural opportunities in Rumania (*e.g.*, Decree-Law 278 [May 11, 1973] which requires a minimum of 25 elementary school students and 36 high school students to maintain Hungarian classes).² However, it does provide a complete list of the positive, *symbolically* significant general references to majority-minority relations (pp. 28-34).

Annex #2 provides a list of industrial enterprises which have "been commissioned or developed during the 1966-1975 period" in those counties of Transylvania which have "a more numerous Hungarian population" (pp. 35-38). Unfortunately, the listing has a number of shortcomings. First, it fails to differentiate between "commissioned" and actually "developed" enterprises. Secondly, it does not indicate what percentage of the local Hungarian inhabitants actually benefit from these enterprises. Industrialization in itself is not always a boon to the local population. It can be, and has been, used to dilute the ethnically compact Hungarian areas of Transylvania (*e.g.*, Cluj-Napoca [Kolozsvar], the largest city in Transylvania, was 84% Hungarian in 1890; its population has been systematically Rumanianized since 1918, mainly through industrialization and urbanization. Thus, the Hungarians' share of the total population was 83.4% in 1910. This percentage has been reduced to 54.2% by 1930, 50.3% by 1956 and 45% by 1966, so that the Rumanians [12.4% of the population in 1910] have actually become a majority of the city's inhabitants. The population of the city grew in these 85 odd years from 30,000 to over 205,000 at the present.)³ Thirdly, the listing gives only Rumanian place names, creating the impression that the towns are historically Rumanian. Any objective presentation should provide the place names of Transylvanian cities in all relevant languages (*e.g.*, Tirgu-Mures [Marosvásárhely], Sibiu [Nagyszeben, Hermannstadt], etc.). Only such a portrayal can really acquaint people with the actual multi-national tradition and development of the area.

Annexes #3 and #4 summarize the publishing opportunities of the

Hungarians in Rumania in terms of their daily-weekly newspapers as well as monthly, bimonthly, quarterly and annual periodicals, journals and yearbooks (pp. 39-45). This provides a profile of existing Hungarian publications in Rumania. It is a useful listing insofar that it indicates the age, concern, frequency of publication, number of copies and number of pages of the various papers and periodicals appearing in Hungarian. Shortcomings of the listing are primarily two. First, it does not relate the vital statistics of these publications to their previous development. For example, it does not tell us whether the 25,000 copies of *Igazság* (published in Cluj-Napoca [Kolozsvár]) is an improvement over the past or a reduction. The same is also true in reference to the number of pages or the frequency of appearance of each one of these publications. In view of the cutbacks announced in 1974 because of a "paper shortage," it would be interesting to compare the statistics given for 1976 with those of 1973 or 1969 or 1966. Furthermore, it would be interesting to compare the ratio of cutbacks in minority publications with cutbacks among majority publications. A second shortcoming is that this listing provides place names, again, only in Rumanian.

The last "Annexes" in *The Hungarian Nationality in Romania* (pp. 48-52, not numbered) are three press excerpts, two from the Hungarian literary weekly *Élet és Irodalom* (Budapest) and one from *Target*, the paper of the Fifth General Assembly of the Ecumenical Council held at Nairobi, Kenya in 1975. These excerpts are direct responses to specific charges against Rumanian policies relative to freedom of publication and religion. The first two excerpts commend Rumanian efforts in the publishing field, while the third one is a favorable testimony by minority church leaders from Rumania. There is no place to reflect on the specific testimonies. It is perhaps enough to note two weaknesses. In the case of the first two excerpts, the information is provided without any explanation of their objective. Thus, in themselves they are incomplete and incomprehensible for an uninitiated audience. In the case of the third excerpt, the testimony includes an explanation, but it comes from a source which is obviously constrained and not disinterested. The excerpts also suffer from numerous English mistakes in style and composition (e.g., "mispresented" instead of "misrepresented" on p. 53) and from errors in facts and/or evaluation. For example, on p. 52, it is contended that: "Religious journals are printed by the Protestant Churches in Hungarian and German languages, for their clergy, for their theological schools as well as for their believers." As Annex #4 (p. 43) points out, there are only two Hungarian language religious publications, *Református Szemle* and *Keresztény Magvető*. The former is a

bimonthly appearing in 1,000 copies, while the latter is a quarterly appearing in 500 copies. It is unlikely that these are capable of satisfying an audience composed of 700,000 Calvinist, 700,000 Roman Catholic, 50,000 Unitarian and 30,000 Evangelical readers (p. 23).⁴

The text of *The Hungarian Nationality in Rumania* does not even possess the limited value of its annexes. It is clearly and simply *apologia*. Altogether the text is only twenty-one pages (pp. 5-26). It is divided into four sections, providing a historical-demographic background, a brief review of economic, political and social conditions, a discussion of educational and cultural opportunities and a summary of religious rights as these relate to the Hungarians.

The presentation attempts to provide an easily understandable and favorable picture of Rumania's treatment of its Hungarian population. It does not succeed for both stylistic and substantive reasons. Awkward sentences, misspelled words (*e.g.*, "monther tongue" p. 24, "jear" p. 43) and inappropriate word usage (*e.g.*, "swap of experience" instead of "exchange of experience" p. 43) hinder an effective communication of the message. Similarly, substantive errors or distortions are bound to irritate the informed observers of East Central European affairs. Examples of the latter include the blurring of the significance of certain statistics by relating them to an imprecise time perspective. In relation to the publication of religious books in Hungarian, the given statistics are related to "the last few years" (p. 25). What does this mean? The last two, five or ten years? Another example is the statement that Dávid Ferenc (1520-1579), the founder of Hungarian Unitarianism, was born in Cluj-Napoca (p. 25). In 1520 there was no such city! To be historically accurate, he was born in Kolozsvár [Klausenburg], today renamed Cluj-Napoca. This use of only Rumanian place names, even when they do not fit the context, is a recurring abuse. In the first section entitled "General Data", other questionable or misleading statements are also made. On p. 6, it is contended that the "Hungarian feudal state" only came into being "in the 12th century." On this same page it is also contended that the "Szecklers (*i.e.*, Székelys) . . . lived alongside the Romanians from whom they also learned the art of writing." It is indeed ironic that such claims can be put forward when the only *written* source used by present day Rumanian historians to "prove continuity" in medieval Transylvania is the *Gesta Hungarorum* of the Hungarian King Bela III.

Julia Nanay's *Transylvania: The Hungarian Minority in Rumania* is not as blatantly propagandistic. Yet, it is also ineffective in shedding light on the actual state of affairs in Transylvania. It, too, is weighted

down by serious shortcomings in both presentation and content. This is really unfortunate, because Nanay's little book could have become something more than an ineffective propaganda pamphlet. With a few re-writings, a strict editor who could have weeded out unsupported generalizations and factual errors, and a thorough proofreading, it could have become a useful little handbook on Transylvania and the fate of its Hungarian inhabitants.

From the "Foreword" and "Table of Contents" to the "Appendixes" and maps, the presentation is marred by all sorts of weaknesses. The maps included in the booklet are either hand-drawn by an amateur or reproduced from some other source without giving credit to the original source. The hand-drawn map on p. 23 is an example of hasty preparation. The two maps reproduced at the end of the book are too dark and are not even properly labeled.

The carelessly prepared maps are used to supplement a poorly written text. Practically every page contains a meaningless sentence, a weakly constructed paragraph or an inaccurately used concept, phrase or word. Two examples will have to suffice. On p. 11, the following sentence appears: "Nationalism emerged as one of the heroic stalwarts of national unity and oftentimes, of minority anguish." and, on p. 28, "Disunity was a direct consequence of a meshing of allegiances." Similar examples could be listed *ad infinitum*.

Confused word usage and inconsistent use of place names makes *Transylvania: The Hungarian Minority in Rumania* even less understandable. Like the Meridiane publication, the Astor, Florida brochure also uses mainly Rumanian place names. On p. 25 an effort is made to provide Hungarian names for the cities along the present Rumanian-Hungarian border. The result is "Nagy Károly" and "Nagy Bányá," when it should be "Nagykároly" and "Nagybánya." More serious, but just as uneducated, is the misquoting of the formula for Stalinist nationality policy as "nationalistic in form, socialistic in substance" (p. 30) when it should be "national in form, socialist in substance." A similarly serious weakness is the loose use of the word "race" instead of nationality or ethnicity when discussing population statistics on pp. 31-36. Other abuses would be the terms "fascist" on p. 19 and the term "judeo-communism" on p. 24. This sampling is merely the tip of an immense iceberg of word abuses and name errors.

Incorrect labeling of social reality indicates an inadequate grasp of that reality. It also indicates a lack of rigorous research. Results of the latter shortcoming are also legion. Only the most glaring instances will be mentioned. In the "Foreword" on p. 5 it is contended that: "The U.S.

is alone in the world in basing its population growth on multi-national immigration." What about Brazil, Canada and Australia, to mention only the most obvious others?! On pp. 31-35, reference is made to the census of 1952 and statistics are quoted based on this census. There was no census taken by Rumania in that year. The only post-war censuses this reviewer is aware of are those of 1948, 1956, 1966 and one that is being processed at the present writing. In Appendix II "Geopolitical and Demographic Features of Transylvania," reference is made to an article written by G. Satmarescu for a journal entitled *East Central Europe* "edited by Professor Fischer-Galati of the University of Colorado" (p. 85). According to this reference, the Satmarescu article estimated that there were 2.4 million Hungarians in Rumania. This is in error in one respect; the Satmarescu article appeared in the *East European Quarterly*, VIII, No. 4 (Jan., 1975) not *East Central Europe!*

More serious than the above errors is the unquestioned acceptance of the Rumanian propaganda position relative to the Second Vienna Award of 1940. In the "Table of Contents" (p. 7) we can read the following: "The Vienna Diktat and the release [sic] of northern Transylvania to Hungary." This is seconded by the discussion that follows on pp. 22-25. Time after time the Vienna Award is referred to as a "Diktat." It is the height of inefficiency for a Hungarian propaganda brochure to support the claims of Rumanian propaganda. The Vienna Award was the result of an arbitral decision. Hitler's fear of military complications on the eve of the attack on the Soviet Union led him to exert pressure on Rumania and Hungary to resolve their dispute over Transylvania. Both were constrained to make a formal request for arbitration. The award was based on a presentation of both the Rumanian and the Hungarian claims to the area. At the arbitration table Germany's Ribbentrop favored the Rumanians while his Italian opposite number, Ciano, favored the Hungarians. Finally a compromise was worked out between the two positions which divided Transylvania between Rumania and Hungary. Furthermore, the population of Northern Transylvania had a Hungarian plurality (1,380,506 Hungarians to 1,029,470 Rumanians) while Southern Transylvania had a Rumanian majority (2,274,561 Rumanians to 363,206 Hungarians) with the remainder of the population made up mainly of Germans, Jews and Serbs.⁵ The Rumanian population statistics used by the author to condemn this decision are highly questionable on the basis of her own discussion of Rumanian census figures (pp. 32-36) as well as other available Rumanian and Hungarian census results.⁶

The "Diktat" blunder is even more surprising in light of the more

balanced presentation of the Vienna Award provided in Appendix I, "An Historical Background," (p. 83). It is hard to imagine that the author of the brochure was unfamiliar with the contents of Appendix I. At the same time, this Appendix (pp. 79-84) is the best written and most effectively presented part of the entire booklet. Unfortunately there is no indication from where these pages have been obtained. The analysis of the content, however, convinces this reviewer of two things: One, that the author of this Appendix was not the same person as the author of the entire brochure. Two, that the Appendix is taken from a more dated source. Since no mention is made in it of the most recent Rumanian Constitution (1967), but the 1952 document is specifically cited (p. 84), we can surmise that it was written sometime in the late 1950's or early 1960's, — too long ago to be the work of the brochure's young author.

Aside from Appendix I, the Bibliography (pp. 75-77) deserves some praise. It includes many of the English-language sources that relate to the fate of contemporary Transylvania and the destiny of East Central Europe. It could have been a little more selective, but for the purpose of the booklet in question, it is more than adequate. In retrospect, the text does not reflect an adequate awareness of the wealth of information listed in the bibliography. The extensive footnoting notwithstanding (pp. 59-74), the brochure remains a research paper that has been hastily prepared for publication. The footnotes indicate merely that a great deal of effort has been exerted to compile the information. However, it is not effective documentation. Some of the explanatory footnotes reflect the same unclarity as the text. One example is footnote #17, which states: "Xenophobia, like patriotism, enters into nationalism but is not a part of its doctrinal composition." Footnote #23, on the other hand, must have been left out when the brochure was rushed to the printer. I seriously doubt that anyone in Astor, Florida read more than the title of *Transylvania: The Hungarian Minority in Rumania*, either before or after it left the printer. This is irresponsible, and it is unfair, not just to the readers interested in Transylvania, but also to the young author whose name is linked to the brochure.

Aside from shoddy workmanship, both of the booklets reviewed are objectionable for one other, more weighty, reason. The appearance of these booklets will not draw Rumanians and Hungarians to understand each other any better. No serious effort is made in either instance to present an objective analysis. Thus, old myths and illusions are reinforced, thereby projecting into the future the nationality hatreds of the recent past. An effort at an objective evaluation — which would also have demonstrated the many shortcomings of present-day Rumanian

treatment of Transylvanian Hungarians — would have avoided the intensification of polemics. Instead, it could have opened the door to a discussion on a question that requires understanding, honesty and humanity on *both sides!*

NOTES

1. The news of deteriorating majority-minority relations, with distinctly adverse consequences for the minority, prompted many Hungarian-Americans to demonstrate against Rumanian policies. These demonstrations (May 8, 1976, in front of the Rumanian Permanent Mission of the United Nations in New York, and June 16, 1976, in front of the Capitol, Washington, D.C.) coincided with Rumanian efforts to obtain the "most-favored-nation" trading status with the United States. The Meridiane booklet appeared during the summer of 1976 almost in direct response to these demonstrations and the lobbying on Capitol Hill. The Danubian Press, in turn, came out with its publication in the fall of 1976. For more information on the events of 1976 see: "Rumania's Most Favored Nation Status and Human Rights Violations Against the Hungarian Minority in Rumania: Speeches, Public Statements and Interviews of U.S. Senators and Congressmen, May-November 1976," Committee for Human Rights in Rumania, New York, Dec., 1976, and "Testimony of László Hámos on Continuing Most-Favored-Nation Tariff Treatment of Imports from Rumania," before the Subcommittee on Trade of the Committee on Ways and Means; New York: Committee for Human Rights in Rumania, Sept. 14, 1976. For the series of news stories which sparked all this activity see: "Bureaucratic Chicanery against the Churches in Rumania," *Neue Züricher Zeitung* (Zürich, Switzerland) Feb. 1/2, 1975; "Transylvania's Ethnic Strains," *The Financial Times* (London) April 2, 1975; "New Curbs on Art Likely in Rumania," *New York Times*, May 28, 1976; and "Repression Rise Seen in Rumania, Emigration and Travel Is Held Further Restricted," *New York Times*, May 30, 1976.
2. "Transylvania's Ethnic Strains," *The Financial Times*, *Ibid.*
3. The ethnic evolution of all the major Transylvanian cities is summarized in the as yet unpublished "Statistical Studies on the Last Hundred Years in Central Europe" compiled by the Mid-European Center, New York, 1968. Also see: G. D. Satmarescu, "The Changing Demographic Structure of the Population of Transylvania," *East European Quarterly* VIII (Jan., 1975), pp. 432-433; Elemer Illyes, *Erdély változása: Mitosz és valóság* (München: Aurora, 1975), p. 17.
4. These Rumanian statistics on the number of Calvinists, Roman Catholics, Unitarians and Evangelicals is probably much too low. However, even if we would accept them as a valid estimate, their correlation with the total number of copies of religious publications (p. 43) is in itself incriminating!
5. *Recensământul General al României din 1941 6 Aprilie: Date Sumare Provizorii* (Bucuresti: Institutul Central de Statistica, 1944), Table 1, p. ix; "Rezultatele Recensământului Maghiar 1941," *Comunicari Statistice*, No. 1 (Jan. 15, 1945), Table 18, pp. 14-15.
6. *Ibid.*

Book Reviews

Kard és Kasza [Sword and Sickle]. By Albert Wass. A Literary Guild Publication, 1976. Pp. 860.

Albert Wass left Hungary after the Second World War. Although he is far removed from his native Transylvania, under the blue Florida skies he continues to write about that land as if he had left it only yesterday.

Wass is not one of those trend-following writers who exploit sex in order to appease certain elements of the reading public. He never transgresses the bounds of good taste; yet he is popular among Hungarians and non-Hungarians alike in many parts of the world.

His major works are: *A tizenhárom almafa* [Thirteen Apple Trees], *Adjátok vissza hegyeimet* [Give Me Back My Mountains], *Valalki tévedett* [Someone Has Made a Mistake], *Magukrahagyottak* [The Forsaken]. These are not only entertaining novels; judging by the reviews in the non-Hungarian press, they have achieved world-wide recognition. Wass's books have been translated into German, English, Dutch and Spanish; they have brought the attention of many nations to the peculiarities of the traditions, history and spirit of the Hungarian people.

There are readers who, at first, note only his unique style, his rich vocabulary, and interesting sentence construction. But sooner or later everyone realizes that Wass has an important message. In one of his novels a mortally wounded man asks a girl to teach him to pray. The girl bends down her head and prays: "Our father who art in heaven. . ." "Our father. . ." repeats the man submissively. Then he bursts out "why in heaven? why not here on earth? He is needed here, not in heaven. . ."

Another of his novels, *Elvásik a veres csillag* [The Red Star Wanes], reveals Wass's peculiar characteristic, the ability to introduce warm and clean humour into a tragic story. This is not an attempt on his part to make his novels more colourful. It is a product of his inner joyfulness which is present even in his descriptions of the misfortunes of Hungarian Transylvanians during and after the Second World War. This

talent enables Wass to depict the sufferings of his people in a manner palatable even to non-Hungarians.

Wass's new book, *Sword and Sickle*, is an historical novel. Part I is a chronicle, not only of a family, but also of the Hungarian nation through nine hundred years. The author's breadth of knowledge is revealed by his description of a people's evolution, spirit and traditions. The second part is a description of the modern age, the era of the Second World War. It is not a dull report on the politics and diplomacy of the day, but a lively, touching story of a people, the Hungarians of Transylvania. It carries the reader with the story and makes him share the joys, grief and cares of the novel's heroes. The author's message is clear. It is wrong to place the burden of guilt for the Hungarians' misfortunes on scapegoats such as the "aristocracy" or the "clergy". Hungarians were collectively responsible for the tragedy that overtook them, and they all must individually bear the burden of that responsibility.

The sword and the sickle are symbols. The former is indispensable in the conquest of the homeland and its defence against external foes. But one can retain the homeland only with the sickle, the plow: through the cultivation of the soil, through backbreaking and honest toil.

Wass has received many literary honours, but he has not stopped writing. He has now presented us with a unique book which combines joy and sadness, encouragement and warning. This is a work of eternal validity, for today's man, who has conquered space but keeps stumbling on earth, needs moral guidance. After reading this book the despondent will raise his head, the sad will smile, and those who had lost hope will discover light in the seemingly dark future. What more can a writer offer to his readers?

Holland

Erzsébet Kisjókai

Quest for a New Central Europe: A Symposium. Edited by Julius Varsányi. Adelaide – Sydney: Australian Carpathian Federation, 1976. 295 pp. ISBN 0 9597246 0 3.

In his introduction to the work, Dr. Varsányi describes its purpose in the following terms:

This is not an attempt to pass moral judgements on a particular political reality, but rather, a scrutiny of its underlying facts and superimposed features, in an attempt to determine the degree of validity of this reality, and the viability of an alternative form of regional arrangement.

The alternative proposed is regional integration in East Central Europe, defined as "all the countries . . . situated between the two German states and the Soviet Union: Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia." This integration is to be accomplished through the guaranteed neutralization of the area and its voluntary participation in the proposed regional structure.

As several of the contributors point out, the idea of some regional arrangement in the Danubian area is not a new one. The individual articles are designed to show that no insuperable obstacles of a geographic, historical, economic, or legal nature exist to prevent some form of integration. The ethnic diversity problem is recognized and dealt with at some length. Various practical and legal solutions are proposed to deal with this internal problem.

It is in the area of external political relations that problems arise. The only article specifically labeled "political" deals with Austrian neutrality. Dr. Felix Ermacora, Austrian legal specialist and member of the Austrian Parliament, describes in some detail the practices and policies of his country's internationally recognized neutrality. In concluding his article, Ermacora indicates that permanent neutrality is only effective "if it is in the framework of the big powers of the region" and "if its activities are generally recognized at least by the states of the respective region." He also points out that the hegemonial power in the area would have to acquiesce in the neutralization process.

It is this practical political consideration which creates difficulty. The Soviet Union is not likely to acquiesce in any arrangement which would leave a divided Germany on the far side of a belt of neutralized states. Until some permanent resolution to the German problem is implemented (if then), the Soviet Union is unlikely to permit any Central European regroupment which would diminish its power position in the area.

Neither the Brezhnev Doctrine nor the Sonnenfeldt Doctrine offers much hope to believers in a neutralized Central European federation. Each doctrine envisions continued Russian involvement in the region. The recent elaboration of West European "Eurocommunism" by the Spanish, Italian, and French Communist parties adds a new complication. The doctrine appears to present a challenge to U.S. and Soviet political interests throughout Europe. If the two major powers attempt to limit the political impact of the Eurocommunists, the result may well be a strengthening of the status quo in each half of Europe.

The circumstances surrounding the book's publication are intriguing. The book, dealing with Central Europe, is published by the Australian

Carpathian Federation, and printed by the Dai Nippon Printing Company in Hong Kong. A more truly international venture could hardly be imagined. A careful reading of some of the articles leads to the suspicion that Australian Carpathians are really Australo-Hungarians (pardon the pun) in disguise. The term "Carpathian Basin", rather than Hungary, is used regularly in the text, often with the basic assumption that the basin would serve as the focal point of the integration movement.

From an over-all perspective, the articles are uneven in quality and interest. The translation of the Ermacora article is undoubtedly correct, but a bit stilted. Typographical errors are an occasional minor annoyance.

While the book is intended to promote a political goal of sorts, most of the articles selected are neither political nor polemical in content. They have been drawn from a wide variety of academic disciplines. Graphs and charts provide statistical information on population factors, natural resources and trade. One need not be an academic specialist in order to profit from reading the work, although its primary appeal will be to the Central and East European devotee.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Edward E. Platt

A Short History of Hungary. By Zoltán Halász. Translated by Csaba Szabó. Budapest: Corvina Press, 1975. Distributed by Imported Publications Inc. of Chicago. 275 pp. Illustrations. \$10.00 cloth.

Tastefully turned out by Corvina, this historical primer presents and updates for English-language readers the interpretation of Hungary's past familiar to us from the work of the late, outstanding Marxist historian Erik Molnár. The translation is nearly flawless and idiomatic, though we hope that the rendering of the 1918 Károlyi *öszirózsás forradalom* as the "Michaelmas Daisy Revolution" will prove to be less risibility-inducing in Britain than in America.

Structurally the book is disproportionate. The first fourteen centuries of Hungarian prehistory and history ending in 1900 receive 174 pages; the ensuing seventy years, 87. More space is devoted to the 10th Hungarian Party Congress than to the Reformation, about the same as the author gives to the Rákóczi and Kossuth Wars of Independence each. The illustrations are excellent but there are no maps. The translator's practice of using Hungarian place names in discussing events taking place in territories detached from Hungary in 1918-1920 (Pozsony, Érsekújvár, Gyulafehérvár, Balázsfalva, Világos, Liptószent-

miklós, etc.) makes it impossible for the non-Hungarian reader to trace the narrative on modern maps published outside Hungary. Similarly, the use of a correct but unfamiliar German geographical nomenclature instead of place names familiar from English historical writing (for example, Höchstädt for Blenheim) fails to prompt instantaneous reaction in the lay reader's mind.

Methodologically the text, which otherwise reads well, lapses into weaknesses characteristic of dogmatic historiography. Hypothesis is presented as historical fact, as on p. 15: "The ordinary Magyar [of the early 10th century] had the choice of two alternatives: to join the armed bands or . . . to till the soil," etc. Historical fact incongruous with the justification of a synthesis is omitted, as on p. 243: "Ferenc Nagy, who was in Switzerland at the time . . . was summoned by the government to return home. . . Nagy refused and sent a letter of resignation instead." The non-captive reading public has the omitted facts available in Ferenc Nagy's *Struggle Behind the Iron Curtain*, Macmillan: New York, 1948, pp. 405-426 and in the open diplomatic archives of the West. The book ends with a presentation of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary (p. 247) as a curtainraiser to the end of the dialectical process in that country and so perforce of Hungarian history.

The 1975 publication of this little book in Budapest roughly coincided with the signing in Helsinki of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The fact that it is being freely distributed in America by Imported Publications, Inc. of Chicago should be partial proof of U.S. compliance with those "third-basket" desiderata of the Final Act which call for reciprocity in the free movement of ideas and in access to printed information. We hope that the Hungarian counterpart of the American Imported Publications, Inc. will soon be, if it isn't already, as free of government control in importing and distributing information originating anywhere in the world as is the Chicago firm which has placed Zoltán Halász's book in our hands.

Fort Thomas, Kentucky

Leslie C. Tihany

The Crises of France's East Central European Diplomacy, 1933-1938.
By Anthony T. Komjathy. Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1977.
Distributed by Columbia University Press. 277 pp.

As a general rule scholars would agree that highly critical reviews should be kept as brief as possible, if indeed they should be written at all.

Now and then, however, this rule deserves to be discarded in the interests of professional standards — standards which must apply to scholars and publishers alike.

Dr. Komjathy calls his book, *The Crises of France's East Central European Diplomacy, 1933-1938*. One need not quarrel with a title, but one has every right to measure its appropriateness against the book's contents. It is true that one can live with the "East Central" designation, although the Introduction makes it clear that "Central" would have been quite adequate (2). So too we can accept with grace the idea of successive "crises", even though the crises identified by the author generally failed to be regarded as such by French statesmen of the day. And we can even suppress our curiosity as to why the book ends without explanation in 1938, shelving for the moment our doubts that Munich was "the last diplomatic defeat of Britain and France before the outbreak of World War II" (210). But we can only swallow so much.

The title suggests that this is to be a book about French foreign policy with special reference to Central Europe. In fact, the emphasis is reversed in the work itself. Much attention is paid here to the Central European states, "Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia", and relatively little to France. For instance, the Munich affair is rather brusquely dismissed with the remarkable pronouncement that "the Munich crisis became the crisis of Britain and not of France" (208). In the long run we may be grateful for such facility, for a good deal more research would have been necessary in order to make the exercise worthwhile. Is it really possible to say anything about France in the 1930's without having read the eleven volume post-war commission of inquiry entitled *Les événements survenus en France de 1933 à 1945*? Can one really afford to venture remarks on French military preparations before having consulted Weygand's memoirs, or Bankwitz, or Tournoux, or Challenger, or at least some of the vast periodical literature on the subject? Searching in vain for references to such works in this book, the reader might properly balk at some of the author's suggestions: for instance, that which blames the French for squandering the Polish alliance by not planning for the "speedy occupation of Denmark" (31). And if one is really going to explore French policy in Central Europe, can one afford to ignore the ambassadorial memoirs of Laroche, Noel, Coulondre, Puaux and Chambrun, the published papers of Lukasiewicz, the collection of papers in *Studia Balcanica* (1973) or even the monographs of Budurowycz, Wathen, Gehl and Bruegel? In a word, the rare instances of unpublished source materials, combined with League of Nations publications and the pub-

lished diplomatic documents from Germany, Britain, France, America and Hungary, do not compensate for what constitutes some quite extraordinary omissions.

The kindest thing that one is able to suggest is that such omissions are responsible for some equally extraordinary judgments. Weygand's memoirs alone should have pre-empted references to the "undisguised admiration of French military experts for the Soviet armed forces" (61), just as they would have qualified the notion of the "militarily useless Soviet mutual assistance" (139) by pointing up the principal French desire to avoid any renaissance of the Rapallo agreements between Germany and Russia. Similarly, many of the neglected sources would surely have encouraged, if not demanded, qualifications for such contentions, that French "military leaders . . . proved to be incapable of understanding the influence of changed technology on strategy" (213), that the French felt "absolutely secure . . . behind the Maginot line" (139), that Popular Front foreign policy "did not accept the validity of natural alliances" but allowed "ideology and not realistic interests" to determine "allies and enemies" (78). Finally, one would have hoped that more careful research might have reduced the chances of presenting the French as quite unimaginably stupid. If a point is incorrect in the first place, no amount of repetition is going to change the fact; and thus the reviewer is moved to deny the claim that Laval was "naive" enough to believe that "the Little Entente would unconditionally follow the desires of France" (107) and to deny that Blum was "naive" enough to believe that "Britain had the same feelings vis à vis Germany as France did" (171). Throughout this work it is repeatedly suggested that the French were simply oblivious to the special and competing needs of their individual allies and clients.

One is less confident that problems of documentation are responsible for the many internal inconsistencies. For instance, what are we to believe after having been told that Titulescu's rapprochement with Russia was "pursued over the objections of his government" (149) and that "the government agreed with Titulescu's rapprochement attempts with the Soviet Union" (161)? Should we conclude that Blum entertained "the hope of reconciliation" with Italy, which he considered "absolutely necessary" (165), or rather should we accept that Blum did not care about offending Mussolini (176), that he refused to believe in the Duce's sincerity, and that he "excluded the possibility of any cooperation with Italy" (178)? Are we to believe that French trading policy with Central Europe was "disastrous" (26) because it wilfully neglected the economic interests of France's client states, or should we

temper such an indictment by recognizing that France "was not in a position to effectively help the Polish economy" (41), that she "did not need" Yugoslavian goods, and that she "was not in a position economically to help Hungary" (115)?

To these complaints one is obliged to add two others. First, a conceptual problem lies at the heart of this book. There is no doubt at all that we are in need of a work that investigates more closely the nature of France's relations with Central Europe; and this work does contribute to that cause. However, in order to appreciate such a topic fully, surely we have to be told more about France's relations with the western powers, especially with Great Britain. Unless and until we are given that sort of broad coverage, we are likely to be further plagued by such judgments as those which refer to the "questionable value" of a British alliance "as far as true French interests were concerned" (202).

Second, this work prompts us to wonder where all the editors have gone. The reviewer has compiled a list of 42 printing and spelling errors, excluding those in the footnotes and bibliography and excluding 11 cases of *fait à compli* (sic). One would think, too, that flaws of greater magnitude required even less detection.

. . . but in 1934, Germany also entered this group, while France moved into the neutral block, which consisted of Poland, Switzerland, and England in 1933, and was joined by France in 1934. (68)

Thus, while in 1933 Austria's foreign trade was fairly distributed among the friendly . . . , hostile . . . , and neutral . . . blocks, in 1934. (68)

Finally, the translations are frequently awkward and unclear. We encounter for example: 'A throughout pacifist state of mind preferred to believe. . .' (135); 'It will be easier . . . if Austria will have. . .' (178); the German minority was also "aggrevated (sic) by the arrogant and 'politically not too psychological' attitude of the Czech bureaucracy. . ." (186). And did Fichte really say that for any nation 'peace exists till her own frontiers are not invaded' (215)? If so, what in heaven's name could he have meant by it?

This is not an impressive piece of work, except perhaps in its deficiencies. One would hope that for his next book the author will resist the understandable urge to rush to publication, and that he will find himself a more meticulous and thorough publisher.

University of Winnipeg

Robert J. Young

BOOKS RECEIVED

Charles L. Bertrand (ed.). *Revolutionary Situations in Europe, 1917-1922: Germany, Italy, Austria-Hungary*. Montreal: Interuniversity Centre for European Studies, 1976.

Gyula Gombos (ed.). *Szabó Dezső és a magyar miniszterelnökök*. Washington, D.C.: Occidental Press, 1975.

Peter I. Hidas. *The Metamorphosis of a Social Class in Hungary during the Reign of Young Franz Joseph*. Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1977.

László Konnyü. *Egy költő visszanéz. Önéletrajz*. St. Louis, Missouri: Amerikai Magyar Szemle, 1977.

Thomas Spira. *German-Hungarian Relations and the Swabian Problem from Károlyi to Gömbös 1919-1936*. Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1977.

Joseph Széplaki (compiler). *Bibliography on Cardinal Mindszenty (1892-1975)*. Youngstown, Ohio: Catholic Hungarians' Sunday, 1977.

Joseph Széplaki (compiler). *Hungarian Newspapers in Microfilm Available in the United States and Canada*. Youngstown, Ohio: Catholic Hungarians' Sunday, 1977.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS (continued from page 114)

edited the *Review*, has served as the Hungarian Readers' Service's Vice-President, and has acted as the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Association for the Study of Hungarian History. Currently he is on leave from his teaching duties and is doing research with the aid of a Canada Council Leave Fellowship.

THOMAS R. MARK has received his undergraduate training at Brooklyn College and earned his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Columbia University. His specialized fields are Shakespeare studies and Milton studies. He has published articles in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, *Irodalomtörténet* and *Acta Litteraria*; and reviews in *Slavic Review* and the *American Historical Review*. Dr. Mark is Professor of English at Colorado State University.

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Dr. Basa is President of the American Hungarian Educators Association and Vice-President of the Southern Comparative Literature Association. She has organized Hungarian sessions at Modern Language Association conferences and has presented papers at the ICLA Congress in Budapest, the AHEA Conference and other forums. At the present, she is working on turning her doctoral dissertation on Madách's *Tragedy of Man* into a book.

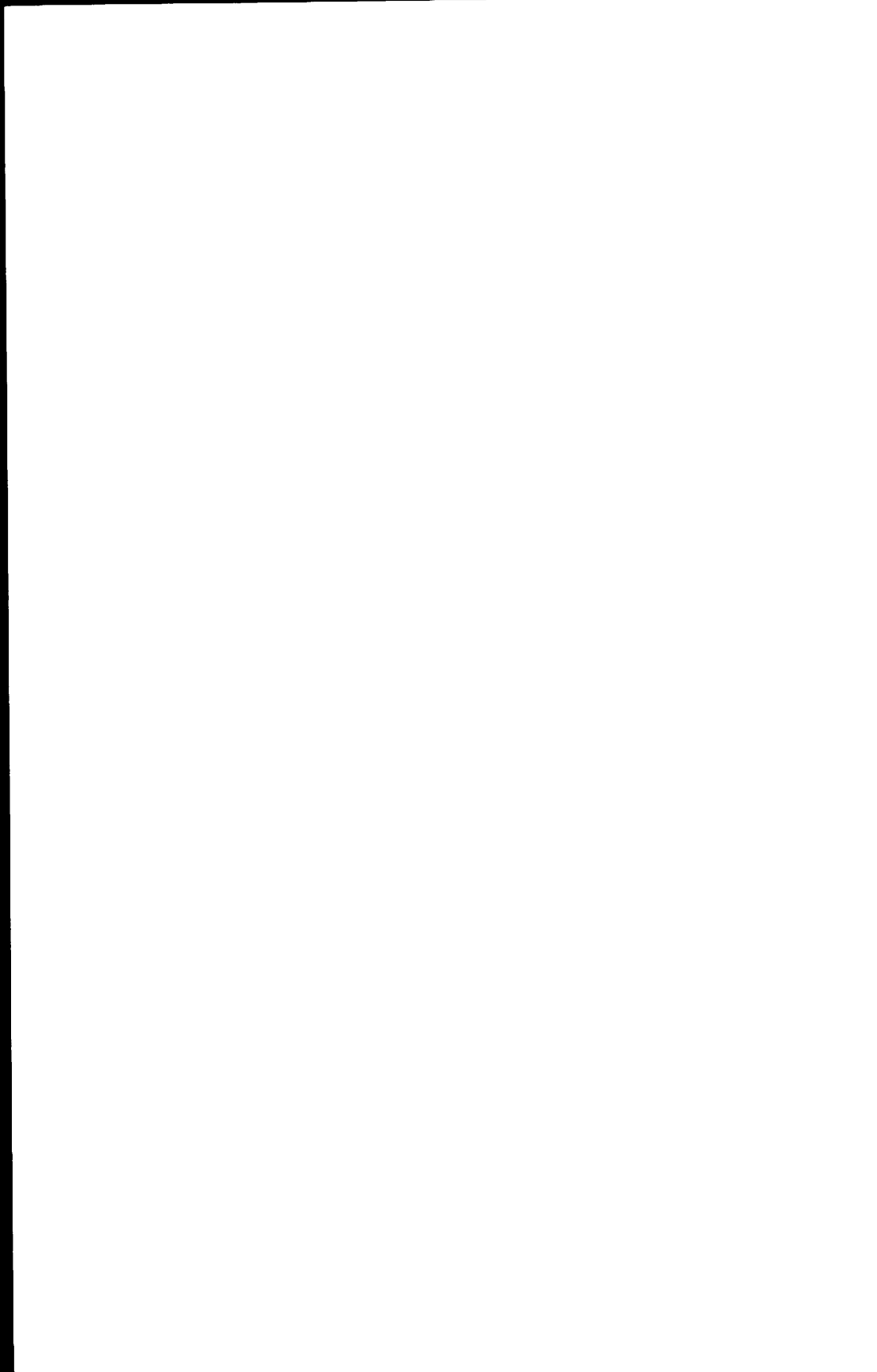
TIMOTHY KACHINSKE has studied at the University of Minnesota and Budapest's Eötvös Loránd University. He has taught at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, Minnesota. Currently he is continuing his studies at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London.

ZOLTÁN MÁTÉ received his doctorate from Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest in modern Hungarian literary history. Since 1970 he has been living in Canada and during the past few years he has been on contract with the Public Archives of Canada's Ethnic Archives section.

WATSON KIRKCONNELL, O.C. (1968), M.A., Ph.D., D. ès L., D. Litt, L.H.D., D.P.Ec., LL.D., F.R.S.C., served as the *Review's* Honorary Editor from 1975 until his death earlier this year.

Professor S. B. VARDY of Duquesne University is a frequent contributor to our journal.

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TO THOSE WISHING TO SUBMIT MANUSCRIPTS

1. The editors of the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies* invite the submission of original articles and review articles in the field of Hungarian studies.
2. All manuscripts should be sent to the Editor, *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies*, Department of History, Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, K7L 2W3.
3. Persons wishing to review books for the *Review* should get in touch with the Editor.
4. Persons wishing to prepare review articles—either detailed discussions of a single book or a review of some area of Hungarian studies—should get in touch first with the Editor.
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9. All manuscripts intended for publication should be submitted IN DUPLICATE. They should be clearly typed on one side of 8½ x 11 inch or similar size paper. The entire manuscript should be double spaced with ample margins. FOOTNOTES should be numbered consecutively in the text and typed double spaced at the end, beginning on a fresh page.
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