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HUNGARIAN REVIEW

A Quarterly Journal from Central Europe

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THE TIME OF GREATEST SECURITY

Zsolt Németh in Interview with Csongor Szerdahelyi

Hungarian foreign policy seems to have found itself in a rare tight spot, and many worry that we are becoming isolated. We spoke with Zsolt Németh, chairman of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee about his assessment of the current standing of Hungary's international relations.

CSSZ: *Sovereignty, Atlantic commitment, NATO enlargement, and the EU. How do you assess developments? What role is Hungary playing in European processes?*

ZSN: Although Hungary is not in an easy situation, I think the global state of affairs is even more difficult. I consider the Russia–Ukraine War to be the most serious problem. This war affects the entire European continent, international relations, and the future of the Hungarian nation. I consider it crucial that the year 2024 brings some solution to this. The other very serious conflict currently raging in the Middle East began with the attack on Israel by the terrorist organization Hamas. No end appears to be in sight for this conflict either. The big question is whether we are moving in the direction of a world war, or whether we will manage to localize these conflicts and achieve stability and peace.

As for the role Hungary can play in current European processes, I am not as pessimistic as your question implies. I consider it a great achievement that a compromise was worked out at the European Council this past December, and progress was made on the issue of funding with regard to Hungary. The ten billion euros is, I think, a very good sign. We know that two thirds of the total amount has not yet been disbursed, but if the first third has been paid out, the other two thirds will eventually follow. It was also important that we managed to find a solution on the issue of Ukraine, as a result of the constructive coffee break. In other words, we did not use our veto, but only abstained. It was an instance of constructive restraint, a legal institution known by the European Union, and we have used it in many other instances in recent years. Thus, we considered compromise more important than imposing our own opinion. We also demonstrated our willingness to compromise at the extraordinary European Council on 1 February. This is also important, because this year Hungary will assume the mantle of the presidency of the European Council, and to effectively fulfil the attendant responsibilities, we need a certain amount of 'trust capital'.

CSSZ: *As for Sweden's NATO membership, you were among those who assured us that Hungary would not be the last to ratify, yet that was what happened. As a consequence, many have formed a negative impression of Hungary.*

ZSN: Let us go back to the roots of these issues. Two years ago, the Russia–Ukraine War broke out and the world was terrified of what this could lead to. Europe was frightened too. For many decades, Finland and Sweden had successfully represented the position of neutrality, but then they abruptly decided that they needed to be under the NATO umbrella. We have been members of the alliance since 1999, and taking a long view of our history, this has felt like the time of greatest security for us. NATO membership enjoyed 80 per-cent support at the time of accession, and this has not decreased since then. There is a broad foreign policy consensus in Hungary on this issue. The dominant political forces all agree on EU and NATO membership.

So the Swedes and the Finns decided that they wanted to join NATO. In the last two years, we helped this process with decisions made at two summits. NATO invited Finland and Sweden. Hungary supported these decisions, and at the last summit in Vilnius, it was possible to recognize Finland as a member of NATO. This year, the alliance will turn seventy-five, and Hungary will have been a member for twenty-five of those years. I am sure that Sweden will become a member after the Finns by the summer jubilee summit in Washington. Both countries have very well-prepared military forces. Their accession will also increase our own security. Just as we will contribute to strengthening their sense of security. It was also important for us in 1999, twenty-five years ago, that we were accepted by the community of NATO member states, and similarly today it is very important for the Finns and Swedes that we support them as well.

CSSZ: *One of the goals of Russia's military aggression was to prevent Ukraine's integration into Western economic and military structures. However, Putin miscalculated. As a result of the two-year war, NATO has begun to expand eastward.*

ZSN: Yes, Putin is to blame for NATO expansion: until the outbreak of the war, public opinion in both Finland and Sweden was clearly on the side of continued neutrality. Without the war, this expansion would not have taken place. NATO is getting stronger, and I think this process should continue. NATO is a key pillar of global security. For this, of course, it is important to maintain a civilized partnership between the individual member states. In recent years, the relationship between Hungary and some EU member states has become strained. The Finns and the Swedes played their part in straining Hungarian–Finnish and Hungarian–Swedish relations, but this past year, during which Hungary considered how to approach this issue, has contributed to the development of mutual understanding. There was also a change of government in both countries, and a completely new tone was

introduced. In terms of their social philosophy, the new governments are closer to the thinking of Fidesz and the majority in Hungary, whether in terms of migration or gender, to name just two key areas. The delay in the ratifications was therefore not without value. The message of the Swedish–Hungarian prime ministers' meeting held in Budapest was to take note of the beneficial effects of the above process and seal it. The signed security and defence agreement package open up a new chapter in Swedish–Hungarian bilateral relations.

CSSZ: *Your Facebook post last year, 'Ruszkik haza!' ('Russians go home!'), was very memorable. Hungarian public opinion is moved by very complex impulses, but this was a decisive and well-timed speech*.

ZSN: We are in the middle of a terrible war: more than half a million young people have already lost their lives. We experienced something similar in 1956, 1968, and 1980 in Central Europe, when the imperial instincts of the Soviet Union came to the fore and, within the framework of the Brezhnev Doctrine, they were able to prevent us from becoming free, independent, and democratic countries. We might not be the Hungarians we are today without 1956. It is our duty to oppose the revival of these imperial instincts in Russia. Every nation has the right to determine its own future and life. When we talk about the sovereignty of European nations, we must not forget about the sovereignty of Ukrainians and Georgians. That was the background of my post. Even today, the easiest way to end this war is for the Russians to go home.

Of course, we are facing a very complex situation. In recent years, we have seen many deleterious instances of Ukrainian nationalism. We must do everything to make Ukraine a democratic, rule of law-based state. The process of joining the EU provides an excellent framework for this. This is also why we emphasize what our expectations of Ukraine are, and so far this has yielded results. Among the conditions for starting EU accession negotiations, the expectations formulated by Hungarian diplomacy are very prominent.

CSSZ: *We are speaking a few days after the Hungarian and Ukrainian foreign ministers held talks in Uzhhorod. Was that meeting a good starting point for resolving tensions?*

ZSN: Yes, it was. In December, before the European Union decided to launch accession negotiations with Ukraine, Kyiv made a very meaningful gesture by amending the National Minorities Act, which aimed to Ukrainianize Hungarian and other ethnic schools. However, it has not yet restored the legal situation of 2015. For the first time, the Hungarian foreign minister was able to explain our position on this matter to his Ukrainian counterpart and the head of the presidential administration. From the Hungarian perspective, the conditions for the official use

of the minority language have not been met, the status of minority schools remains unclarified, the use of the minority language in higher education and vocational education, the possibilities of using geographical and place names in the minority language, and the collective rights and cultural right to autonomy of nationalities of Ukraine, have likewise not been restored.

There is still work to be done, but encouraging steps have been taken, and if we continue on this path, Ukraine's position in bilateral relations and in the whole conflict will be much more defensible, as it will take from Putin's hands the weapon with which the Russian leader is effectively attacking Ukraine on the international stage, asserting that Ukraine is pursuing an ethnocratic, homogenizing, anti-minority policy. It would be both simple and wise to neutralize this accusation, which would also greatly improve Ukraine's relations with its western neighbours. Cooperation between Ukraine and Central Europe is not at all hopeless, but Kyiv must realize that it will not only be the United States and the major powers that will be its western welcoming environment in the future, but primarily Central Europe. The deepening of Central European cooperation is the main path to European integration for Ukraine.

Translated by Thomas Sneddon

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A NEW, REPRESSIVE GERMANY

Boris Kálnoky

Germany's political elite has been unable to weaken the national conservative AfD (Alternative für Deutschland) with arguments. Now it has taken a new approach: open repression. The rule of law itself is in danger.

On 13 February, Nancy Faeser, Germany's minister of the interior, said something that would have set off a media firestorm had Viktor Orbán said it: 'Those who mock the state should feel the strength of the state' (*Diejenigen, die den Staat verhöhnen, müssen es mit einem starken Staat zu tun bekommen*). Sitting next to her, Thomas Haldenwang (CDU), Germany's head of the secret service (Bundesverfassungsschutz), nodded in agreement. Despite the fact that, strictly speaking, the remark could be interpreted as anti-constitutional, and his job is, in theory, to protect the constitution. After all, the right to mock the state is the very essence of liberal democracy, as enshrined in Germany's constitution or Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*).

But Haldenwang believes the state must act against certain 'thoughts' and 'speech'. The fight against right-wing extremism, he warns, should not be limited to preventing violence. 'We must take care that certain ways of speaking and thinking do not become prevalent in our language', he said in an interview.[1] In other words, he wants to somehow limit what people can think and say, even if those views and thoughts are not themselves criminal.

A new, repressive Germany is taking shape. New rules are set to widen the powers of the secret service to investigate people even if they are not suspected of crimes. They may be sanctioned for harbouring right-wing thoughts. For that, they may lose their jobs if they work in the public sector, for instance as teachers. Faeser announced thirteen measures that aim to treat 'right-wing networks' like 'organized crime'.[2] Many observers in Germany suspect that the government is aiming to criminalize and ultimately ban the biggest opposition party, AfD, and make life uncomfortable for its media and supporters.

The secret service law will be modified to enable investigators to examine private citizens' bank accounts even if they are not suspected of any crime. Currently, financial investigations by the Verfassungsschutz are warranted only in cases of violence and/or *Volksverhetzung* (hate speech and/or calls for violence against racial groups). In the future, investigators will be able to look at the bank accounts of anyone who has the potential to 'act' or 'influence society'. In other words, if you run a big Twitter/X

or Facebook account, or are a well-known but conservative journalist, you may be investigated. Has a particular individual donated to AfD? That may be a problem. Banks will be 'sensitized' regarding the means of dealing with such people.

The mainstream media has largely failed to express alarm about this, though some mainly conservative publications have focused their attention on it, labelling the new rules an 'attack on the freedom of speech'. Some also believe that Germany's ruling three-party coalition of Greens, Social Democrats and liberals (FDP) may break apart, because not all liberals are comfortable with the planned measures.[3] However, an end of the coalition would mean new elections, and current polls indicate that the FDP might well fail to make it into Parliament.

Why is all this happening? Political elites have become alarmed by the rise of the national conservative AfD. All stratagems aimed at weakening them—not giving them media coverage, not cooperating with them, calling them fascists—have failed to slow their advance. So, the next option seems to be outright repression.

AfD has shown in the last few months that it has the potential to become a real player in the political arena, winning the approval of more than 20 per cent of voters in opinion polls in January. Since then, government-supported mass demonstrations 'against the right' and the relentless denigration of right-wing views in the media, by the government itself and, remarkably, by the heads of the criminal police and the secret service, have succeeded in diminishing AfD's performance in opinion polls. Most recently, the party dropped to a little below 19 per cent support in polling.[4] This may represent a real trend, or it may be that people are now simply scared to tell pollsters their political preferences.

Still, AfD remains the second strongest party, and in Germany's eastern provinces, it is the strongest. In September, there will be elections in three eastern *Bundesländer* or federal states: Saxony, Brandenburg, and Thuringia. AfD looks set to win in all of them with 35–37 per cent support in the polls in Saxony (up almost 10 per cent from the last elections in 2019). The liberal FDP may fail to win even a single seat in Saxony's regional parliament. The Greens and Social Democrats both poll around 7 per cent. That would make it difficult to form a 'grand coalition' with the Christian Democratic CDU, currently at 30 per cent. It would also mean that the political 'firewall' all mainstream parties have agreed to against the AfD has failed to contain it. That may explain why Germany's government parties are now ready to weaken some fundamental tenets of liberal democracy itself in order to 'defend democracy'.

There is one new element in play: a former left-wing politician, Sarah Wagenknecht, has formed a party carrying her name, the 'Bündnis Sarah Wageknecht' (BSW). It is set to enter Parliament in all three eastern German elections. Observers view it as

a successor and competitor of the decrepit, post-Communist 'Die Linke', which has collapsed in the polls. But that is not much consolation for the mainstream parties, especially the Greens and SPD.

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THE TURNING OF THE GEOPOLITICAL WHEEL

Zoltán Koskovics

It is a universal rule of human interactions on all levels that periods of rapid transformation are dangerous. Regardless of time or geography, people have always been safer and more prosperous when things around them evolve smoothly and slowly. Sudden change all too often brings danger and personal tragedy. When international systems undergo alterations, as they have several times in our history, entire nations can crumble. All previous international arrangements were regional or trans-regional. Neither the Roman nor the British Empire ever created or sustained a truly global order. The 'Pax Americana' was the first genuinely global order and, imperfect as it was, it brought about an all-too-brief era of unprecedented technological progress and prosperity. The unipolar moment, however, is over. Here, we will examine how the American-led order failed, who is to blame, and what is to come.

THE ORDER

Historically speaking, the Pax Americana was a flash in the pan. Yet it had deep roots and produced echoes that still feed many people's misguided belief that the hegemon rules the world. The United States was the biggest winner of the Second World War: it sacrificed the fewest lives, its infrastructure escaped unscathed, and its industrial capacity at the end of the war massively outpaced everyone else's. Americans found themselves in a perfect position to shape the new world that would emerge from the ashes of the old.

The US and its Western allies created the modern financial system at Breton Woods in 1944. The Washington Treaty established NATO in 1949. The Americans, like the British before them, ruled the seas and controlled the shipping lanes. International trade was standardized to their preferences through the 1947 General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), replaced by the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995. International development and aid were domesticated thanks to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.[1]

The fall of the Soviet Union ushered in the age of unipolarity. The United States took over the institutions designed between 1945 and 1991 to keep the war cold. There was a set of organizations that the two superpowers had allowed to operate with some autonomy in order to police the rules that Washington and Moscow had set for

their competition. These were unable to maintain their freedom of manoeuvre and gradually came under the sway of the single global hegemon, losing their credibility and with it their ability to limit smaller conflicts to the rules established by the giants of the previous age.

Two such examples are the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The IAEA was instrumental in limiting the spread of atomic weapons and helped countries gain access to peaceful nuclear technologies. Trusted as an honest broker throughout the Cold War, it became a thorn in George W. Bush's side as late as 2003, when it challenged Washington's narrative in the run-up to Gulf War II.[2] Despite a valiant struggle for institutional autonomy, the IAEA gradually submitted to the authority of the hegemon. When, in 2022 and 2023, the Ukrainian military shelled the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, the IAEA, even though it had a team of experts present at the plant, refused to blame Kyiv, and the head of the watchdog, Rafael Grossi, called for an end to the 'shelling' without apportioning blame.[3]

The OPCW is the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC, 1993). The organization itself is a product of the optimism of the post-Cold War 1990s, but the treaty underpinning it is very much a Cold War creation, shaped by the two superpowers of the time. It was central to reducing chemical weapons stockpiles in the first decade of its existence, but by the time of the Syrian Civil War, it had come under Washington's sway. During the siege of Douma, Bashar al-Assad was accused of ordering a chemical attack on civilians. Western governments seized on the events to launch airstrikes against regime forces. The OPCW later released a report 'confirming' the use of weapons banned under the CWC, but several investigations, including by award-winning journalist Aaron Maté, have since conclusively proven[4] that the document released by the watchdog contains deliberate falsifications designed to provide post-hoc validation for the US-led missile strikes on Syria.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, American power reached an unprecedented zenith. It controlled the major trade routes, the world's only reserve currency, the global institutions that shaped financial markets, scientific research, and the most important forums for cultural exchange and diplomacy. By 2008, however, that order was rapidly approaching an unexpected end.

THE UNRAVELLING

A hegemon has a monopoly on successful violence in its area of responsibility (in the case of global hegemony, the entire planet). This does not require the dominant

power to be victorious in all its military adventures. After all, the US, like many regional hegemons before it, botched many an invasion. But being a ruling colossus means the ability to successfully prevent any actor from imposing its will on any other by military means against the express will of the hegemon.

American hegemony thus ended on 8 August 2008, when the Russians invaded and defeated Georgia. The war caused massive shock and outrage in the Western world, because it was not supposed to happen under the Pax Americana,[5] but the historical significance of Russia defeating an American ally in open warfare was largely lost on most commentators and political leaders in the United States and its allies. Other actors in China, India, Latin America, and the Muslim world took notice, however, and the world began to change. Russia then reinforced this message during the Syrian Civil War, where it destroyed a network of American proxies[6] to keep its client, Bashar al-Assad, in power.

Unipolar order can be somewhat fragile. If the system is designed to allow some actors to retain a significant degree of autonomy, or to permit the rise of influential powers, these nations will eventually coalesce around an international project—formalized or not—aimed at eroding the influence of the leading power. Pax Americana was a lax order, and its dazzling success in international trade, growing global prosperity, technological development, and cultural exchange could not have been achieved without the autonomy enjoyed by the system's stakeholders. Further, Washington never fully imposed its will over Beijing, and Moscow escaped its direct influence soon after the 'shameful' and chaotic 1990s. Growing Sino-Russian cooperation inevitably formed the seed around which successful global resistance to hegemony could slowly but inexorably develop.

Was the end of Pax Americana inevitable? In time, certainly, but there was nothing unavoidable about the suddenness of its collapse. China was until recently among the main beneficiaries of the globalized trade maintained by the Order, and even Russia had been, for a time, a constructive part of the system. Both of these participants could have been convinced that the Pax Americana was in their short-term interest. And if you can repeatedly engage the immediate self-interest of rational stakeholders, many successive short terms can easily become the very long term. The reason this never happened had to do with ideology.

Classical liberalism's *laissez-faire* instinct was an ideal approach to managing a vast array of allies, client states, and vassals, and it contributed greatly to the United States' ultimate victory in the Cold War. Where Moscow wanted to tell you everything you *could* do, Washington merely told you what you could *not* do. Had American leaders possessed the wisdom to continue in this vein, we would almost certainly still be enjoying the security and prosperity that Pax Americana had to offer. Alas, they did not.

Western liberalism evolved first into progressivism and then into the Church of Woke. Note the terminology: classical liberalism was a political ideology, but Wokeness is a religion. The latter demands that you believe impossible things (like men giving birth) with absolute certainty. At the altar of Wokeness, tens of thousands of children are declared to have 'gender dysphoria' every year in the US alone, with thousands put on hormone therapy, hundreds on puberty blockers, and dozens subjected to surgical procedures that irrevocably alter their bodies.[7] This is a form of child sacrifice reminiscent of the worst practices of pre-Columbian Mesoamerican cults.

The world outside Western Europe and North America sees the full horror of what liberalism has become very clearly for the moral abomination that it is. Worse still, the abhorrent nature of what has become a state religion is compounded by its aggressively proselytizing nature. Washington's military adventurism would have had a less corrosive effect had it not been accompanied by a campaign of conversion to progressive liberalism. If your war goal is to transform, say, Iraq into a 'liberal democracy' you doom yourself to an unwinnable, endless war. You are also inviting resistance of a nationalist—itself formidable—and also religious persuasion. Liberalism's descent into Wokeness has turned the world against America and the West, transforming otherwise salvageable military campaigns into a series of disastrous defeats, culminating in the humiliation of Afghanistan in August 2021.[8]

THE TRANSFORMATION TO A NEW ORDER

It is no great mystery where the world will wind up after the present interregnum between orders: a multipolar international system, which is the norm rather than the exception in history. There will be several great powers with global reach. A somewhat diminished United States is bound to remain the strongest of these well into the first decades of multipolarity; China and India are certain to retain their place among the leading global powers. Russia may or may not join them. Strategically important regional powers such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Brazil, Argentina, Egypt, and Türkiye are already rising.

The outlook for Europe is rather bleak. One reason for this is the demographic crisis, which I will discuss below; the other is that of all the regions of the wider West. Europe has succumbed most fully to the Church of Woke, and until our continent extricates itself from this intellectual swamp, it cannot act in defense of its own interests. In the short term, Europe is doomed to become either a client of a weakened USA, or a mere peninsula to the west of a Eurasia dominated by other players.

The new order will be a flexible system. The number of players, and the very real possibility that new actors may emerge and established ones fall, provide ample

opportunity for the small adjustments necessary to keep the complex system humming. However, the emergence of antagonistic geopolitical blocs is also probable. The key question is how rigid these blocs become. If trade flows and technological and cultural exchanges remain relatively unimpeded, the coming multipolar world may prove even more hospitable than the Pax Americana we left behind. The road to get there, however, will be rocky.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC BOMBS AND THEIR SHOCKWAVES

Two demographic bombs have already exploded; we just have not yet felt the shockwaves. The global North—along with China and the Korean peninsula—are facing an inevitable demographic crunch, while some regions of the global South have seen such growth in recent years that a spiral of civil strife will inevitably lead to a major regional war involving hundreds of millions and a corresponding tsunami of migration away from the conflict zone.

Nigeria[9] and Burkina Faso[10] have a total fertility rate (TFR) of five live births per woman, while Niger[11] and Chad[12] are closer to seven. Worse, these TFR numbers are actually falling, and used to be well above seven almost everywhere in the Sahel. The damage is well and truly done. The demographic explosion that has already taken place is virtually unprecedented, and it will lead to catastrophic shortages of basic resources like food and drinking water. The coups that are sweeping across sub-Saharan Africa are the first symptoms of a much more serious malady that will lead to an explosion of violence in the region.

Hungary's former president, Katalin Novák (2022–2024) rose to international prominence trying to reverse what she describes as a demographic ice age. It is natural for a Christian conservative government with a series of strong electoral mandates to focus on protecting the family, but President Novák's contribution ensured that demographics forms an important dimension to everything Budapest does. Nevertheless, Hungary will still feel the demographic crunch. The population will fall below 9 million before it stabilizes, and the economy will be hit hardest around 2035, when the labor force suddenly shrinks as many Hungarians reach retirement age.

Most of the West is in a similar predicament, but without Hungary's insight into encouraging families to have more children. In Europe, France is the sole country in which the demographic numbers are merely bad, not downright awful. But the population crisis is there, masked by the effects of decades of mass immigration. The civilizational composition of the population living in France is dynamically shifting away from the original inhabitants. This explains the increasingly violent social

unrest that is rapidly becoming the norm in French cities. As power shifts along with population, the political structure of France will come under increasing strain. The same can be said of Western Europe as a whole, but without the consolation of having a reasonably decent demographic outlook, at least on paper. Spain and Italy seem doomed, as do Japan and South Korea.

As for the great powers, India is in much better shape than the United States, while Russia and China face challenges very similar to those in Europe. If demographics were destiny, we could award the next century to India: its population pyramid is enviable, and the TFR of 2.05 gives no cause for concern. The confidence with which most geopoliticians project that the United States will survive its dethronement as hegemon is related to its relatively healthy demographics and the fact that most immigration comes from Latin America, which is civilizationally close to the original population. Russia has opted for a policy of family protection and birth incentives. In recent years, however, it has become clear that such measures will not produce results rapidly enough to forestall a severe crisis in the 2030s. Consequently, the Kremlin is encouraging large-scale but controlled immigration from the former Soviet republics. China faces the deepest crisis of any major power. The demographic writing on the wall is one reason why China cannot just replace the United States as a new undisputed hegemon.

PIRATES AHOY!

A key pillar of our prosperity is the security of the world's seas, where the vast majority of international trade takes place. Supply and production chains have become incredibly complex. The manufacture of cars, phones, laptops, and much more relies on parts that make dozens of stops at huge ports along maritime supply routes thousands of miles long. The shipping component of the cost of most of what you buy, from your tennis shoes to complicated machinery, has fallen to less than 5 per cent of the price you end up paying thanks to security at sea. This is historically unprecedented. In the nineteenth century, that number would have been closer to 90 per cent.

Until recently, the United States was the undisputed ruler of the seas, or at least successfully projected an image of being so, and the American Navy remains the most powerful to this day.[13] This all but eliminated piracy on the high seas. Advances in navigational technology and weather forecasting reduced accidents. All of this combined to increase the number and size of ships in the merchant marine, as well as to decrease insurance premiums. This happy state of affairs, however, is fast disappearing.

At the time of writing, the US is desperately trying to force the Houthi rebels in Yemen to stop sabotaging the shipping lane through the Bab al-Mandab Strait, and failing miserably. When the US can no longer maintain (at least the perception of) total dominance at sea, piracy by state and non-state actors will return with a vengeance. Historically, raiding at sea has been among the most profitable activities humans have engaged in, and pirate companies will pop up everywhere from Venezuela to Papua New Guinea. This means that insurance premiums will rise precipitously, which in turn will lead to skyrocketing shipping costs. Imagine a $10,000 iPhone. Imagine a rapid decline in food shipments because they cannot be made profitable.

As multipolarity emerges, global and regional powers will naturally take control of their zones of responsibility. These actors will be able to police their waters and guarantee safe passage for commercial shipping. The first order of business for the stakeholders in the emerging multipolar world is to start talking to each other about dividing areas of responsibility into manageable chunks. In this light, the recent enlargement of BRICS can be better understood. The BRICS, with Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa and other major players,[14] should not be seen as an alternative to the American-led order. That order is already gone; BRICS is rather a scaffolding around which a new global order might be more safely built. If the US stops clinging to a lost hegemony and starts focusing on reality, it too will have an essential role in creating and sustaining a new concert of nations.

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[8] William A. Galston, 'Anger, Betrayal, and Humiliation: How Veterans Feel about the Withdrawal from Afghanistan', *The Brookings Institution* (12 November 2021), www.brookings.edu/articles/anger-betrayal-and-humiliation-how-veterans-feel-about-the-withdrawal-from-afghanistan/.
[9] World Bank, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN?locations=NG.
[10] World Bank, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN?locations=BF.
[11] World Bank, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN?locations=NE.
[12] World Bank, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN?locations=TD.
[13] Stephen Kuper, 'Yes, the US Navy Is "Still More Powerful" than China, but It Is Relative', *Defence Connect* (22 August 2023), www.defenceconnect.com.au/naval/12624-yes-the-us-navy-is-still-more-powerful-than-china-but-it-is-relative#:~:text=The%20overall%20battle%20force%20%5Bof,by%20the%20end%20of%20FY2030.
[14] Since 1 January 2024, the BRICS+ include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

EDUCATION AND IDEOLOGY: FROM HUMANISM TO WOKEISM

David Martin Jones

Education has always been of interest to the Western mind. The concern with instruction and the character of that instruction has preoccupied both political thinkers and governments since Athens grappled with the reasons why it had lost the Peloponnesian Wars and reflected on its decline in the fourth century BC. What was to become one of the key texts in the Western canon, Plato's *Republic*, outlined at an early date the necessary conditions for building and sustaining a just polity. The education of its citizenry played a central role. The polis, Plato advised, should pay careful attention to the stories, we might say the narratives, and the history and literary education its young received, as well as the music they listened to. There would be no rap in the Republic.[1] Education was firmly meritocratic. The best and brightest would be equipped with an education in mathematics, logic, and dialectic. In a somewhat different vein, Aristotle also thought a properly balanced political constitution required citizens capable of ruling themselves through reason, in order that they could be governed by the rational laws they had democratically agreed in political debate in the agora, rather than by men.

This classical perspective, in its Greek and Roman form, profoundly shaped the evolution of a Christian model of education and its understanding of scholarship and schooling during the Middle Ages. Religion and an awareness of the biblical message replaced a Platonic concern with the poets and their treatment of the gods, as well as a Roman concern with rhetoric and *historia*. But something of the classical model and the seminal texts of Aristotle and Plato still lingered in the medieval schools and that great medieval invention, the university.

The first universities were formed in Paris and Bologna, where scholars and students found it convenient to band together in a legal corporation termed *universitatis.* At the core of the medieval teaching of the *universitatis* sat the primary curriculum or *trivium*, comprised of grammar, logic, and rhetoric that preceded progress to the advanced level or *quadrivium* of arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. The medieval universities, along with the monasteries, provided the scribal officers for feudal rulers, facilitating the marriage between the spiritual and temporal powers.

The university course of study (*studium*) also evinced a preoccupation with unresolved religious questions to which Abelard in *Sic et Non* applied the term *theologia.* Since the medieval era, 'no one who thinks about education for long can remain ignorant

of the intimate and ambiguous relation between religious passions and the impulse to theorize, that has shaped educational practice in the West'.[2]

During the Renaissance, the revival of classical learning and the rediscovery of previously lost or neglected classical texts saw a movement away from the university model to new academies and colleges like the Florentine Academy of Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, the Collège de France in Paris, and Gresham's College in London. The revival of a classical model witnessed a new concern with humanism and individual self-fashioning, as well as a speculative interest in natural philosophy and scientific experimentation. The contrasting works of Castiglione on the education of a gentleman and Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis,* in their different ways, evinced this new, humanistic spirit.[3]

Whilst universities increasingly became finishing schools for an aristocratic elite, as well as fulfilling a clerical function, new scientific knowledge was more often pursued outside the university, in academies beyond religious supervision and patronized instead by nobles, city states, or monarchs like Charles II, who founded the Royal Society to pursue 'natural philosophies'. The early modern period also saw a growing attention to public schooling. Religious endowments, royal patrons, and wealthy philanthropic merchants founded grammar schools where bright children from humble backgrounds might receive a formal education. Schools, like that in Westminster, produced playwrights such as William Shakespeare, John Webster, and Ben Jonson.

With the coming of the Enlightenment, a renewed interest and emphasis on reason captured the ruling elites. It encouraged the emergence of a public sphere where argument and dissenting opinion were tolerated. It gave rise to a critical spirit and a new concern with political accountability. There also arose a new interest in childhood and the realization that reason might be the handmaiden of the emotions and the passions. As the English poet William Wordsworth wrote, 'The Child is father of the Man; / And I could wish my days to be / Bound each to each by natural piety'.[4] Jean Jacques Rousseau was the writer and thinker who best captured and influenced this fashionable preoccupation with both the innocence of children and the idea of a primitive noble savagery. In his *Emil* and *The Confessions*, Rousseau elaborated the lineaments of a new education of the emotions that would develop the child into a morally responsible adult capable of functioning in a truly enlightened republic guided by a moral sense that reinforced the general will.[5]

It is in the context of a philosophically and politically charged radical Enlightenment and the French Revolution, which promoted the rule of reason, that French philosophes like Destutt de Tracy first coined the term 'ideology'.[6] De Tracy considered ideas as social levers for building a new population capable of achieving liberty, fraternity, and equality.

EDUCATION TURNS IDEOLOGICAL

It becomes appropriate perhaps to talk properly of education and ideology from this period, when Enlightenment rationalism found itself dialectically challenged by revolution and romantic nationalism. This revolution in consciousness also addressed the emerging industrial state's concern about how to order a modern, secular political condition through mass education and the inculcation of a shared public morality or consciousness. Modern society required its members to possess the literary and numeracy skills to fulfill a role in the emerging anomic, urban, and industrial landscape. We can identify, over the course of the nineteenth century, new theories of education that sought to address the ideological preoccupations of the modern nation state and its critics.

However, before this Enlightenment concern with the ideological development of an educational programme fit for a new industrial society began to assert itself, the eighteenth century also witnessed a revived religious and philanthropic preoccupation with bringing Christian morality to the rural and urban poor. Charity schools, ragged schools, and new religious educational foundations like the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge provided both Bible study and basic education. These charity schools, whether Methodist, Catholic, like those of St Vincent de Paul, or Nonconformist, like Joseph Lancaster's Borough Road school in London, sought to inculcate a Christian ethic and habits of virtuous conduct and obedience through practices of rote learning.

Liberal rationalists, by contrast, approaching the issue from an ideological perspective, saw a growing need for the modern, secular condition to create utility, maximizing individuals' capability to meet the demands of a rationally ordered market economy. Jeremy Bentham's *Chrestomathia* (1816) outlined the model school for disciplining the masses, inculcating productive norms of behaviour through practices of regular assessment and examination. Bentham proposed a system of teachers, monitors, classrooms, and registers subject to regular inspection. Competitive examination and 'the place capturing system' would inculcate shame at failure and pleasure at success.[7] Through this system, implemented at University College school and University College in London, utility would form the calculative individual capable of succeeding productively in a progressive, liberal economic and political order.

Developing alongside this liberal utilitarian vision of a society built on rational calculators went various schemes for child-centred education. Following Rousseau, we can identify an idealist, libertarian preoccupation with stages of child development and child-focused learning that would facilitate the formation of autonomous individuals. Maria Edgeworth, Freidrich Fröbel, Margaret Macmillan, and Jean Piaget all saw, in different ways, a path of development facilitated by access

to a practical curriculum, kindergarten, and education through experience in natural surroundings. Schools like Dartington Hall and Summerfield continued some aspects of this moral tradition into the twentieth century.

The interest in child-centered education also elicited a new concern with eugenics and breeding a healthy population as the modern European state became increasingly concerned with a eugenically as well as a morally fit population. Schools that dealt with the abnormal, delinquent, and unfit increasingly complemented a regime of 'normal' schools and professional teacher training. From the 1880s, social Darwinists like Francis Galton devised intelligence quotient tests that decided a student's fitness for higher education.

Somewhat differently, from the late nineteenth century, various socialist schemes of education led to public primary or board schools being established in London by Fabian Socialist councils, whilst trades unions founded workingmen's colleges. Subsequently, during the twentieth century and following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, systems of state education in the Soviet Union and, after the Second World War, throughout much of East and Central Europe were devoted to building the new socialist man and woman fit for the socialist utopia waiting to be born. This evidently required an awareness of Marxist–Leninist thought and its application to everyday life.

By the late twentieth century, outside the Eastern Bloc, the West had established a broadly humanistic and pluralistic system of education that facilitated some form of education for all. From the 1960s, there also emerged a new attention to tertiary education and the assumption that a university education, previously the domain of a few, should be open to all. It was liberals and conservatives as well as socialists who presided over the vast expansion of secondary and tertiary education, especially across the Anglosphere, in the late twentieth century.

Ironically, the repercussions of this educational revolution had the paradoxical consequence of undermining both the secular liberal humanism of the eighteenth century and the increasingly utility-maximizing project of the late nineteenth century, and it is to the consequences of this revolution that we shall finally turn.

THE CONCEPT OF A UNIVERSITY: FROM HUMANISM TO CULTURAL REVOLUTION

As we have seen, education, at least since the nineteenth century, has been profoundly engaged in political and ideological projects. From a liberal economic perspective, education is a process of inculcation in the norms necessary to function in a modern utility-maximizing social and political project. Individuals are essentially

interchangeable cogs in a social wheel harmoniously sustaining itself, and which efficiently provides education, welfare, and growth. The condition is ultimately a structurally functional but disenchanted one, or what Max Weber termed an 'iron cage' of bureaucratic order.[8]

In this context the university, and tertiary education more generally, served some version of an ultimately technocratic, managerial enterprise. In the course of the twentieth century, university courses that did not serve business, science, or society increasingly came to be viewed as redundant.

From the late nineteenth century conservatives and humanists criticized the utility-maximizing and managerially rationalist approach to education and knowledge. Cardinal Newman, in his *Idea of a University*, captured this conservative reaction. The process of training, he argued, by which 'the intellect instead of being formed or sacrificed to some particular or accidental purpose, some specific trade or profession or study or science, is disciplined for its own sake, for the perception of its own proper object, and for its own highest culture, is called liberal education'.[9] This alone could provide a distinct and clear atmosphere for thought amongst disputatious scholars. Properly understood, the academic sphere was a distinctively different world of understanding, seperable from both a vocational purpose and the practical world of experience.

The attempt to render scholarship practical or useful, however, was always central to rationalist, progressive, and ideological projects. Since the time Newman wrote, universities and schools have been pushed towards providing professional and vocational training. Yet university education, properly understood, could only preserve its pure identity as a love of wisdom (*philosophia*) according to the compass of academic scholarship and a concept of truth and the good. Without this guide, universities' increasing involvement with society and social projects reduced them to the helpless pursuers and instruments of incoherent, but officially sanctioned, desirabilities. This was indeed their twenty-first-century fate, first under progressive and politically correct guidance and subsequently as instruments of a Woke deconstruction of what the idea of a university once represented.

By the 1960s, the university and the humanistic ideal had been besieged not merely by those who sought to adapt it and render it more practical and market-friendly, but by those who sought to destroy it. This destructive impulse presented itself in the idiom of transformation. It initially emerged in the movement to 'de-school' society associated with Paulo Friere and others who first advanced the notion of an anti-colonialist agenda.[10] Schools are here represented as enclaves where the young are processed into acceptance of the injustices of the capitalist society in which they will live. The de-schooling movement required instead that the university and the school

be an instrument of class and racial emancipation. On its wilder shores, influenced by both Marxist critical theory and Mao's conduct of the Cultural Revolution in China, it sought to undermine the academic tradition and its scholarly apparatus, expose it as an ideological instrument of the ruling liberal elite, and ultimately decolonize the very idea of education.

The fundamental tenet of this transformative mood is that all barriers between human beings must be destroyed. This reduction of everyone to a condition of perfect equality is pure emancipation. In the process of achieving it, traditional understandings and branches of scholarship must be overturned and replaced by the silenced, victimized, oppressed, and culturally distinct 'other'. In the 1980s, this became the perverse ambition of post-structural deconstruction and postcolonial discourse theory. Minorities must be cherished, racism and structural racism exposed, and the majority indoctrinated in the codes to fit them for the transnational, this-worldly utopia that the new left's long march through the institutions after 1968 was intended to achieve.

The doctrine of social transformation has been with us for a while. It now possesses both a pseudo-religious and moral fervour, as well as a political and social agenda to mould its subjects into a monotonously agitated uniformity, filling thoughtless minds with unexamined formulas. Kurt Vonnegut satirized the tendency in *The Sirens of Titan* and the short story *Harrison Bergerson*.[11] The Hungarian conservative Thomas Molnar found its ideal type in the role assumed by the intellectual in the post-war world, who became the natural leader and manipulator of utopia.[12]

Critical Marxism infused with post-structuralism aligned with other progressive strands of thought to capture philosophy and turn it away from understanding the form of the good, and towards a transformative ideology. These utopian manipulators view the emancipated university as the blueprint for the new society. However, such reckless theories produce evil consequences, as is daily manifest in recent campus demonstrations that descend into rage and hate-filled unreason.

The task of what we might call the secret university is to save philosophical speculation from its prostitution in the procrustean bed of what Molnar termed 'robot man'. The true identity of the university—and of education more generally—is buried deep beneath the accumulated detritus of moral pieties, political doctrines, misleading legends about the past, and irrelevant aspirations towards changing the whole character of human existence. Ultimately, the only thing that universities ought to do is the only thing they can do: sustain the academic world.

Over the centuries, Europe, whenever it has found itself in a blind alley, has engaged in a kind of dialogue with its classical past. It did so during the emergence of the medieval university, again at the Renaissance, and once more during the early

Enlightenment debate about the ancients and moderns. It is in urgent need of doing so again, to overcome the tedious, parochial provincialism of the present moment and its illiterate contemporary enthusiasms. The great strength of the European university has been its steadfast assertion (until very recently) that the body of knowledge it cultivates is open to all who are prepared to give their time and imaginative intelligence to it. Yet it remains a contingent feature of a properly academic world (but a contingency unlikely to disappear) that most people do not have the time or interest to follow the scholar into this realm. It is a vocation that only the independent or intrepid can afford. Properly understood, when the true scholar hears the siren call of his responsibility to the oppressed, he can recognize the apparent—but specious—plea, yet dismiss it for the utter academic irrelevance of what is being said.

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[1] Plato, *The Republic* (London: Penguin, 1987), 99. Socrates particularly disapproved of dirges.
[2] Kenneth Minogue, *The Concept of a University* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2005), 72.
[3] Badassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier* (Venice, 1528); Francis Bacon, *The New Atlantis* (London, 1626). At the core of this utopian vision is a state funded scientific institution, Salomon's House, devoted to the Baconian method of empirical investigation.
[4] William Wordsworth, 'My Heart Leaps Up' (1807), *Poets.org*, https://poets.org/poem/my-heart-leaps, accessed 20 February 2024.
[5] Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions*, 1789; *Emile or A Discourse on Education*, 1762. Rousseau's idea on education served a blueprint for the revolutionary government's national education programme after 1791.
[6] See K. R. M. Minogue, *Alien Powers. A Pure Theory of Ideology* (London: Orion, 1985). Ideology became, Minogue wrote, 'the purest possible expression of European civilization's capacity for self-loathing'.
[7] M. J. Smith, ed., *The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham*, *Chrestomathia* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1984), 189.
[8] Max Weber, *Political Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
[9] John Henry Cardinal Newman, *The Idea of a University* (New York: Holt, Reinhart & Winston, 1964), 114; alterations to the quoted text are from Newman's original: https://think.nd.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2.2-Newman-on-education-a-Brief-Introduction.pdf, accessed 20 February 2024.
[10] Paulo Friere, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Buenos Aires, 1968). See also Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Paris, 1961).
[11] Kurt Vonnegut, Jr, *The Sirens of Titan* (New York, 1959). In *Harrison Bergerson*, 1961, Vonnegut writes: 'The year was 2081, and everybody was finally equal. They weren't only equal before God and the law. They were equal every which way. Nobody was smarter than anybody else. Nobody was better looking than anybody else. Nobody was stronger or quicker than anybody else. All this equality was due to the 211th, 212th, and 213th Amendments to the Constitution, and to the unceasing vigilance of agents of the United States Handicapper General'. See: www.tnellen.com/cybereng/harrison.html, accessed 20 February 2024.
[12] Thomas Molnar, *The Decline of the Intellectual* (2nd edition, New York: Routledge, 1994).

THE IDEA OF A 'CHRISTIAN EUROPE'

Zoltán Frenyó

For today's observer, both the existence and the non-existence of a 'Christian Europe' appear self-evident. It is an undoubted fact of history that Christianity and Europe experienced most of their history as organically interwoven entities. It is equally obvious that they are separate entities, which never completely coincided, either at the beginning or at any point over the many intervening centuries, and in many respects have never been so distant from one another as they are today. In the following, we will attempt to outline how the essence of Christianity and Europe, both separately and in tandem, is formed by a process, a chain of centres of gravity, the content of which in both cases is enhanced by the growth and unceasing unity of cultural sources and spiritual roots on the one hand, and on the other, natural separations and painful splits following mature syntheses. In short—in the words of Ecclesiastes (3:7)—we must know the 'time to rend' and the 'time to sew'.

On the basis of countless contemporary statements, we can say that now is the 'time to search' on this topic, since we have already learned much about the 'time to lose' in its manifold forms (here, for the time being, I am of course thinking of our losing the right values, rather than ridding ourselves of burdens that hold us back). There is also a 'time to keep', because in our perturbing world, tried and tested values must be reintroduced into real life, and therefore there is a 'time to speak' in this area as well. Determining the right direction and most effective ways of doing things must, of course, always be preceded by self-knowledge: understanding the essence of 'Christian Europe', this endlessly complex phenomenon and concept.

The idea itself has been examined many times and in great detail, reflecting the character of different eras; great thinkers and influential scholars have tried to capture the complex concept of Christian Europe on a historical, cultural, philosophical, and spiritual level, as well as to isolate, as it were, the spirit or essence of its constituent elements: Europe and Christianity. We may cite, among others, Charles Dawson, Oscar Halecki, Gonzague de Reynold, Oswald Spengler, and Arnold J. Toynbee, as well as the works of Novalis, Chateaubriand, Herbert Werner Rüssell, Adolf von Harnack, Romano Guardini, Karl Adam, and even Ludwig Feuerbach.

In recent years, as a result of Hungary's political direction, books and studies dealing with Europe have also multiplied in Hungarian literature. At the same time, as part of this voluminous literature covering economic, political, legal, and cultural issues, significant differences in perception and standards can also be observed. Regarding

the issue of religions and European integration, one opinion—unacceptable to us—is the following:

> I would like to emphasize that one cannot and must not speak of Hungary as a Christian country or Europe as a Christian continent […]. This is about the modernization of an almost thousand-year-old bad tradition. Christianity is not a political programme, and in a political sense, neither Hungary nor Europe should be spoken of as anything other than a secularized, civil society […]. We are committed to the protection of human rights, not to the realization of a homogenous Christian society […] I believe that the role of churches in the process of European integration is to strengthen liberalism, political and cultural pluralism, and tolerance […]. Religious pluralism is therefore the prerequisite for political pluralism. In addition to Catholic Christianity, a very important element in the "Europeanness" of Hungary's identity is the continuous presence of the Protestant churches and the Jewish community.[1]

Amid many valuable books, a work has been published which reviews the most influential writers on the idea of a self-consciously European identity, while completely ignoring Christian thought and literature, and the Christian spirit.[2] This phenomenon, which has become characteristic of a part of Europe, is as tragic as it is symptomatic. Against such ideological beliefs, Pope John Paul II declared in his apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa*:

> There can be no doubt that the Christian faith belongs, in a radical and decisive way, to the foundations of European Culture. Christianity in fact has shaped Europe, impressing upon it certain basic values.[3]

Since in Europe's case the unity, the specific spirituality, and the world of values presupposes diversity from the outset, similarly to the central 'energy' of Christianity and the message contained in the acts and person of the Saviour, taking shape in history through the great balance of different, complementary forms, levels, doctrines, and genres, in both cases the aforementioned 'search for the essence' must avoid many misconceptions and misdirections. Due to the structure, formation, and actual spirit of Europe and Christianity, attempts to purify the 'essence' by discarding elements judged inessential is always incorrect, because it always entails constructing an empty, rigid, false concept of essence. Harnack's rational reduction is false, just as cultural morphology is misleading if, for example, it only highlights the 'Faustian' or 'Apollonian' spirit, or criticizes the dominance of 'logocentrism'. Likewise, it is wrong to understand Christianity if, leaving aside the pillars of dogma, only one element of its complex reality is highlighted, as for instance when Chateaubriand only considers the aesthetic dimension of Christianity, even if this achieves short-

term acceptance, because the price manifests itself in the long term in a loss of balance. Despite the manifest difficulties, there seems to be no doubt that there is indeed a specifically European spirit and Christian spirit.

Edmund Husserl, when he discussed the crisis of European humanity from a philosophical perspective in 1935—while approaching the problem of Europe as a non-Christian—spoke about the fact that there is something unique about the European individual, which outsiders sense and find attractive:

> I mean we feel (and with all its vagueness this feeling is correct) that in our European humanity there is an innate entelechy that thoroughly controls the changes in the European image and gives to it the sense of a development in the direction of an ideal image of life and of being, as moving toward an eternal pole.[4]

Later, Husserl expresses the view that Europe, as a concept elevated above individual peoples and nations, is a spiritual unity that has not reached or perhaps is still reaching its mature form:

> From the point of view of soul, humanity has never been a finished product, nor will it be, nor can it ever repeat itself. The spiritual telos of European Man, in which is included the particular telos of separate nations and of individual human beings, lies in infinity; it is an infinite idea, towards which in secret the collective spiritual becoming, so to speak, strives.[5]

The symbol of this infinite telos is the fleeting shape of our continent's namesake. The myth of Europa (Εὐρώπη) contains important lessons: she comes from Asia, and the truth appears in her wake through her sons, the judges of the Underworld, as does the culture that the Greeks take possession of, through writing, brought by her brother, who was looking for her. In her person she unites the universe—the sky, the earth, and the underworld—but at the same time her figure is so vague as to disappear in the myth, and when speaking about her, even Herodotus obviously has difficulty interpreting her role.[6]

This obscurity cannot be considered accidental, either then or later. For the ancient Greeks themselves, it was about the experience and symbolic presentation of the transition by which Greek culture grew up on the periphery of the great cultures of the Middle East. In later epochs, the name was able to remain valid and carry meaning because the development and enrichment of Europe took place through very similar transitions, through the meeting and completion of cultures, the continuous shifting of their centres of gravity, and then—maintaining a productive tension—their fusion into a greater unity. Athens, Rome, Byzantium, Aachen, then

the German (Holy Roman) Empire, Central Europe, Spain, and London signpost this process, at the end of which the New World and the East already represent external reference points, and thus in this vast process, Europe, with its major historical points of significance, comes almost to stand at the centre.

There can be no doubt that there exists a European spirit and European consciousness, but this is manifested in the continual interplay of both constant and changing factors, in the course of internal and external dialogues. Despite the fact that Europe has great ideas and values that can be named, spiritual Europe is not a closed concept, because due to its aforementioned nature, it always presents itself as a concept and task to be reformulated and interpreted, and perhaps this stems from the perennial shortcomings of European civilization, as well as the values of European humanism. Thus, while Europe does have certain pillars, Europe is never 'finished', so its essence, perhaps precisely due to its richness, can always be questioned, perhaps more markedly than in the case of other cultures and continents.

Of course, some historical eras are more conducive to this kind of reflection than others, as for instance in the decades after the First World War, when the concept of a European civilization was called sharply into question. That questioning has remained valid ever since because new challenges continually keep it so; the difficulty, however, is that in the aftermath of the long nineteenth century, a fragmented Europe has not yet reassembled itself into an organic whole that would allow of truly fruitful questioning. As a result, even today, intellectual efforts in this direction comprise wishes, needs, and invocations of old roots. I therefore believe that, from an analysis of the spirit of Europe, what feels most decisive today is the sense of division, rather than the inclusion of a new source, or maturation, or growth. Europe is fighting with what is left of itself.

The vast arc of history that we alluded to above is obviously most closely related to Christianity, the history of which in many respects followed a very similar trajectory. Europe does not only mean Christianity, and Christianity does not only mean Europe, since both its birth and future mission lie outside it. Nonetheless, Europe was born in the spirit of Christianity, within its framework, and Christianity found its fulfilment in Europe. If we try to interpret the conceptual essence of Christianity and Catholicism, we can rely on the insights of many prominent figures of Catholic thought. Karl Adam wrote:

> So enormously rich and manifold and conflicting do the particular elements of Catholicism seem to the student of comparative religion, that he supposes he must at the outset discard the notion of an organic development of primitive Christianity established by Christ Himself.[7]

If we examine the conceptual essence of Christianity, as already pointed out by Romano Guardini, we at once encounter a paradox: normally, when thought attempts by speculative means to grasp any domain that belongs to concrete existence, it isolates its basic definitions, determines what data points can be deduced, and postulates its prerequisites or categories as universally necessary. But as Guardini states:

> In our case, however, it is different. Where it is typical to encounter an abstract idea, a historical personality appears. There is no abstract definition of the essence of Christianity. There is no doctrine, no moral value system, no religious position, no life programme that can be separated from the person of Christ, and of which we can still say: this is Christianity. He is Christianity; that which reaches man does so through Him, and the relationship that can exist between God and man is through Him.[8]

Nonetheless, it must also be added that, just as the individual elements of Catholicism cannot be added up to form the essence of Christianity, so Catholicism—in the words of Karl Adam—cannot be considered identical to early Christianity or the message of Christ. He emphasizes:

> So the fullness of Catholicism wells out of the fullness of the revelation of the Old and New Testament, out of the fullness of Scripture and Tradition. But it is a fullness in unity, for it is animated by one spirit and by one soul.' [If we consider revelation as a whole, we can see] Oral tradition, the apostolic teaching alive and active in the Christian communities, that is prior to and more fundamental than the Bible. […] And it possesses a quality which the Bible as a written document does not and cannot have, and which constitutes its pre-eminent merit, namely, that living spirit of revelation, that vitality of revealed thought, that 'instinct of the faith' which stands behind every written and unwritten word, and which we call the 'mind of the Church' (*phronema ekklesiastikon*). This spirit of revelation lives in the living hearts of the faithful, and is quickened and promoted by the apostolic teaching authority under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. It is the most genuine, primary and precious heritage from the preaching of Jesus and His apostles.[9]

A lifetime later, the Second Vatican Council's highly significant constitution on revelation beginning with *Dei Verbum* declares of sacred tradition: 'The Holy Scriptures themselves thereby acquire a deeper meaning, and are made ceaselessly effective', and formulates the relationship between the sacred scriptures and the sacred tradition as follows: 'The sacred tradition and the sacred scriptures are therefore closely intertwined and interpenetrate each other. Because they both come from the same divine source, they cohere and lead towards the same goal.'[10]

The Holy Scripture is the word of God, because it is set down in writing through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Sacred tradition, on the other hand, hands down the word of God, entrusted to the apostles by Christ our Lord and the Holy Spirit, intact to their descendants, so that they may faithfully preserve, explain, and spread it in their preaching, by the light of the spirit of truth. As a result, the church does not derive its certainty about all revealed things exclusively from the scriptures. Both should therefore be accepted and respected with equal reverence and respect. Speaking about this, the constitution states:

> It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, Sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.[11]

If we consider the fundamental elements in this light, we can see how it is possible for Catholicism to remain essentially unaltered: 'The life of Catholicism grows, but it does not outgrow itself. The Church has advanced, past all hesitations and reverses, until the whole truth self-balanced on its centre hung.' That is why the church can show 'an organic growth in the consciousness of the faith. There is no petrifaction here; yet there is on the other hand nothing erratic or abrupt, but an organic development.'[12] It is nevertheless possible—Karl Adam explains—that the inner balance of Catholicism may seem to shift from time to time. Whenever heresies arise, the church highlights and reformulates the erroneous propositions. However, this is merely a contingent, temporary shift in balance:

> And Catholicism displays its vitality, its inner unity and truth, now clearly in the fact that it always ultimately regains its balance, after such temporary disturbances, although it may take it centuries to do so. The strong force which gives it back its inner equipoise is the vital spirit of revelation transmitted in its teaching authority, or, more profoundly, the Holy Spirit living in it.'[13]

This great process is more closely characterized by Antal Schütz, who conveys the beauty of the world of dogmas with the structural laws thereby revealed:

> In many instances of overlapping dogmas, a relation can be established which […] may be termed the structural law of the free balance of polar opposites. Thus, it is an anti-Pelagianist dogma that grace is absolutely necessary for every act of salvation. The opposite and complementary (thus polar opposite) dogma: God grants the necessary grace to all, in any circumstance. Or: all are implicated in original sin—without personal consent. The polar opposite dogma: all are saved by Jesus Christ—in principle without personal

> involvement. The law of polar opposites is likely to pervade the entire structure of dogma (it is enough to consider those dogmas that express the harmony of God's justice and mercy). Its root is to be found in the fundamental dogma that the Holy Trinity is expressed in opposites.[14]

All this shows the peculiarity of the development of dogma in the church, for the characterization of which we turn once more to Karl Adam:

> For the dogmatic development is no fortuitous one, but corresponds to the needs and problems of the contemporary Church. Since they who bear the spirit of the revelation are themselves living men and living members of the body of the faithful, they are in constant sympathy with the questions and needs of the 'learning Church', of the community of the faithful. They are able to bring revealed truth into connection with those needs and questions, and from its store to provide those answers for which the faithful look. So there is a constant movement in the exposition of the faith, and a continual dispensation of the store of revelation for the benefit of hungry souls.[15]

Let us examine the ways in which this behaviour manifests itself, and how the relationship between tradition and contemporary spiritual values has changed during the development of Christianity. The words of the Apostle Paul indicate the essential direction of early Christian thought: 'For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God' (1 Corinthians 1:22–24). Christianity thus draws upon two entirely separate spiritual sources. In terms of revelation, it naturally draws directly upon the Old Testament. In the ancient world, on the other hand, it soon came face to face with Hellenic culture, which it adopted in certain regards, and used to enrich its expressive power. Christianity is a unique continuation of both traditions; in this, it is not characterized by simple acceptance, but by processing and reinterpretation.

Accordingly, Christianity's relationship with the Jewish religion does not represent either continuity or a complete break. Christianity does not reject the Old Testament, as Marcion did, but attaches importance to it, reinterprets it in terms of salvation history, and considers it a prototype. Christians consider themselves to be the true fulfillers of the law in the new covenant. Justin gives expression to that which both separates and unites: 'For the true spiritual Israel […] are we'.[16] Retaining the Old Testament necessitates continual intellectual effort and reflection, which promotes the development of commentary literature and interpretation, and contributes to the spread of allegorical exegesis. The importance of this is already evident when we compare this spiritual position with Islam, which accepts and values the common

tradition, but teaches that its truth is fully, faithfully, and clearly stated in the Quran, and there is no need to separately maintain external sacred texts.

By entering the pagan world, Christianity confronted the issue of (antique) Hellenic culture. From the beginning, two ways were open to it: to despise Hellenic culture, or to appreciate it. Here, too, we must simultaneously observe shifts in emphasis across shorter periods and the successive effects of determining personalities professing different views. The alternating emphasis shown in the assessment of culture develops in accordance with the historical process by which it broadens and enriches its own culture through a succession of oppositions and alliances, shaping and enriching its teaching as a whole. Within the Christian spirit, we witness from the beginning and throughout subsequent epochs the perpetual alternation between these two approaches, either rejecting or appreciating external cultural influences. Their joint presence is well exemplified by the generation of apologetics. One of the notable expressions of appreciation of ancient culture can be found in the work of Saint Basil the Great entitled *Address to Young Men on Greek Literature*, in which we read: 'Consequently we must be conversant with poets, with historians, with orators, indeed with all men who may further our soul's salvation.' At the same time, this means a certain attitude, a selection: 'So we, if wise, shall take from heathen books whatever befits us and is allied to the truth, and shall pass over the rest.'[17]

Perhaps the most characteristic formulation of the other view, the rejection of ancient education, is attributed to Tertullian. '[Paul] had been at Athens,' says Tertullian, 'where he had come to grips with the human wisdom which attacks and perverts truth, being itself divided up into its own swarm of heresies by the variety of its mutually antagonistic sects. What has Jerusalem to do with Athens, the Church with (Plato's) Academy, the Christian with the heretic?', he exclaims, then emphasizes that 'the Lord is to be sought in simplicity of heart'.[18]

In his work 'Athens and Jerusalem', published in 1938, Lev Shestov ponders this problem. Shestov asserts the antagonism of paganism and Christianity. For the Greek spirit, Athens meant Ananke [Ἀνάγκη], the world of necessity, and it glimpsed this on the plane of politics, economy, science, and philosophy, in a world independent of the gods. The other approach opposed this sense of necessity, creating a new morality, a new spirit. This new attitude fighting for freedom is religion and Jerusalem, the world beyond reason and autonomy, where man accepts the principle of freedom: responsibility, sovereignty, personal consciousness, and individual destiny.[19]

I believe that positing Athens and Jerusalem as a dichotomy or contrast is false and unhelpful, whether in the third or the twentieth century. On the other hand—and this connects to what was said before—the real development, the resolution of their opposition, is represented by Rome, or more precisely Christian Rome. After that,

Europeans will no longer have to deal directly with Athens and Jerusalem, but with Rome, which combines and integrates them, from which time on dialogue with the two other cities will be renewed from time to time. Rémi Brague, who in his recent works of great importance introduces a not historical but rather constructed concept of *romanitas*, declares: 'We are Romans in relation to the Greeks as well as in relation to the Jews,' just as we are Romans in the struggle between classicism and barbarism.[20]

Even after the integration of its cultural sources, Roman Christianity considered it its task to evaluate and re-evaluate its traditions and roots. Islam, by contrast, represented a clearer break with ancient culture. Byzantium—because it consciously archaized and maintained an excessive continuity with classical culture—possessed less and less insight into this ancient culture, and developed fewer and fewer opportunities for reflection upon it, because it felt that it did not need to strive towards ancient culture, being its direct heir and possessor. The initial positional advantage was thus reversed, with Rome's intellectual position resulting in fertile tension. Christian Europe does not assume that it has adopted everything from its cultural sources, so it returns to them from time to time through occasional periods of renewal (such as the Renaissance). (Classicism perhaps took this too far, becoming excessively Hellenistic.) In any case, when we talk about the European, Western Christian culture, the original meaning of the word 'culture' (cognate with 'cultivation') takes on real significance.

The unique complexity, inner balance, and broad scope of European Christian culture is shown by the way it has developed and maintained countless conceptual dualities of the most diverse nature, as elements within its understanding of creation and human existence. Such complementary elements include: faith and knowledge, theology and philosophy, mind and heart, truth and life, word and writing, rationalism and mysticism, grace and freedom, individualism and collectivism, Platonism and Aristotelianism, Greek and Latin church fathers, the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*, papacy and empire, pope and synod, the lay community, the clergy, and monasticism, this world and the afterlife, optimism and pessimism, theology and pastoral care, and love of God and love of humanity. European Christianity lives through the moving or autonomous movement of factors such as these and their cohesion in history, and it is this fertile disunity, we believe, that gives it a unique place among the ranks of civilizations.

'*Oportet haereses esse*' (For there must be also heresies among you) says the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 11:19), and with these words we must also refer to the dark sides of development. Though even in schisms, which can be found in Christianity from the beginning, there are positive elements to: 'that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.' In the history of Christianity, we can observe countless schisms and heresies. Orthodoxy naturally casts opprobrium upon the

work and activities of heretical thinkers, but at the same time we can also see that clarifying their doctrines also contributes to a better understanding of the content of orthodoxy. Karl Rahner writes about this as follows:

> One must always bear in mind the possibility that during the history of a heresy, realizations of the essence of Christianity may arise in the field of doctrine and practice, which were potentially always preserved and included in Catholic (that is, true and comprehensive) Christianity, in its historically legitimate form, but which had not yet reached the same high degree of definite realization; these moments of heresy can therefore stimulate the development of church doctrine and the unfolding of church practice, and can thus fulfil a positive salvation-historical function in relation to the Church […]. It is therefore not as though the Church merely protects, in a static sense, the permanent system of its truths, which it has already correctly understood, from heresies. In fact, the Church clearly knows her own truth only by hearing its denial and rejecting it because it contradicts her truth and her (still developing) self-conception.[21]

However, in order to understand the negative nature of the crisis, we must also think about the issues raised by Ghislain Lafont in his *Theological History of the Catholic Church*. According to Lafont's rather polar formulation, we are in a certain sense dealing with a history of crisis. The author is convinced that 'institutional development and the passing on of teaching did not take place according to the law of tradition development that excludes all other possibilities. The tradition knows low points and mistakes. Both anachronistic and promising present forms can be illuminated by the events of the past.' Lafont was motivated by the desire, as he describes:

> [To] shed some light on a so-called historical mystery: what could have been the cause of the relative infertility of Catholic theology between, say, 1274 and 1878? In fact, during this six-century period—while the face of the world changed so much, and such significant developments took place in the life of society, philosophy, and science—we rarely meet great doctors of the Church, except in mysticism. Can anything explain this fact, which is ultimately painful and has consequences for the preaching of the Gospel?[22]

Although these formulations are one-sided and exaggerated, the question must nevertheless be faced. Because it is indeed true that the Catholic Church, which is on the one hand a story of spiritual growth, now finds itself in a time of 'loss' and 'rending'. Schism and detachment—as already noted—have attended the Catholic Church from the beginning. However, while in roughly the first half of its history its heresies could be separated from the development of the foundations of its great

dogmatic system, the second millennium—it seems—brought somewhat different, more serious, and more painful separations. This process can be explained historically and ideologically, but its consequences still affect us today, and therefore a new kind of evaluation is required. The stages of this process are the Great Schism between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, the separation of Protestantism and Catholicism, and finally, the entire phenomenon of modern secularization, by which Christianity 'externalized itself' in the most extreme way, thereby posing the greatest possible challenge to itself. To characterize this process, we can now only refer to the classic, explanatory distinction that Jacques Maritain used to contrast theocentric and modern anthropocentric humanism.[23] Secularization, as the most extreme challenge in the perspective of many generations, now most acutely raises the question of roots and unity, renewal and synthesis, and the form and method of return. Efforts in this regard are today referred to by the term 're-evangelization'.

In order not to approach this question in a one-sided manner, the following question must also be raised: it is true that there are many visible signs in history that during a few centuries of the Middle Ages Christianity was more present and operated as a more influential element than in many preceding and subsequent centuries; however, does not the Christian character and idea of medieval Europe appear as a constructed concept in a certain sense? Vid Mihelics—who in the 1950s and 1960s, in his 'Ideas and Facts' column in the Hungarian Catholic periodical *Vigilia* repeatedly dealt with what he considered the pressing phenomenon of 'de-Christianization'—quotes the opinions of French thinkers in one of his writings: 'In 1935, Le Bras stated that "the universal and living faith of former ages" always seemed strange to him.' He refers to the Catholic religious sociologist Jacques Toussaert's astonishing and exaggerated, but nonetheless thought-provoking, statement: 'There is no Great Century in the history of the Church […] One should not be pessimistic or optimistic about any century.'[24]

At the same time, Mihelics asserts that although 'every century had its common difficulties and dark sides, this should not hide from us the completely new face of the present age', and the entirely new difficulties facing Christianity. This can be indicated by decreasing church attendance, for example, which has fallen to a level unimaginable in the past. De-Christianization is therefore a real process, although we must also consider the recent signs of receptivity to religion. 'It is certain'—writes Mihelics—'that we are approaching the end of a specific type of "Christian civilization", but it is by no means clear whether Christianity itself has been sacrificed.'[25] In this regard, Karl Rahner reminded us of the disunited nature of Christianity, comparable to that which characterized the first centuries of Christianity. As Mihelics argues:

> Like every birth this new Christian era also has its painful travails: it is shown by the crisis that Christianity is going through today, as a result of which some are predicting the end of Christianity. However, throughout its long history, Christianity has experienced the bitterness of rebirth more than once. We can be sure that this time it is not heading towards some emotional and moving twilight, but rather marching towards a new dawn, even if at present it remains shrouded by night.[26]

In this situation, the approach to be followed may be one of bearing witness as a Christian, an idea expressed in the 1950s, and which can also be found in statements made today. And since Christianity fulfilled itself in Europe, and Europe was born and developed under the sign of Christianity, it is the values which emerged in this process that come to the fore, and which—in a barely visible way—must again be given an effective role in the shaping of our future society.

So-called European values have long been the subject of rancorous debate, and they are indeed a problem of central importance. For our part, we cannot endorse the perception promoted by the spirit and ideology of modernity, as if the essence, achievement, and remaining value of European civilization were encapsulated within the absolute triple ideal of liberty, equality, and fraternity. All three ideas—following ancient antecedents—are in fact of Christian origin, and acquired their true meaning in the context of the entire Christian worldview and humanism. Embedded in these contexts, and freed from their profane form, these ideas can attain their true meaning and value as Christian concepts. Explaining them, elucidating the true content of these concepts, and understanding what they do and do not mean, would, however, require a separate study. Let us merely note here that the idea of so-called tolerance and extreme relativism, which is expressed by modern ideology and which, through continual and zealous enforcement, is endangering our civilization, should also be rejected.

The problem of state and government forms is a topic of similar weight, and likewise a far-reaching issue. Without considering the true breadth of the topic, we will content ourselves here with mentioning the multi-layered concept of democracy, which has provided the framework for political thinking in the Western world for three-quarters of a century. In the spirit of properly understood democracy, Robert Schuman refers to Bergson,[27] who says that democracy stems from the essence of the gospel, because its driving force is love. He then adds: 'Democracy will either be Christian or it will not be. An anti-Christian democracy will be a caricature that descends into either tyranny or anarchy.'[28] We must consider the following as fundamental European values: unconditional respect for life; the dignity of the individual; the idea of human responsibility, role and purpose; the importance of the common good; solidarity and love; family; health; nature; holidays; and peace. The correct perception and enforcement of all this is the great task of today.

What attitude and behaviour does the maintenance of our civilization require? Tertullian writes that people are not born Christians, but become Christians;[29] Saint Paul the Apostle calls on Christians to 'put on the whole armour of God' (Eph 6:10–17); and Jacques Maritain says the following: 'In terms of existing in history, what is important is not success (which in any case does not last forever), but to be present (which is indelible).'[30] In the background of Christian efforts, there is and must be a principled optimism that gives meaning to things, which Maritain describes as follows:

> Authentic Christianity has a horror of the pessimism of inertia. It is pessimistic, profoundly pessimistic in the sense that it knows that the creature comes from nothingness, and that all that issues from nothingness tends of itself to return to nothing: but its optimism is incomparably deeper than its pessimism; for it knows that the creature comes from God, and all that comes from God also tends to return to Him. A truly Christian humanism does not […] make man static at any one point in his evolution. It knows that not only in his social being, but in his inward and spiritual one, man is still but a sketch drawn by night of his true self, and that before he attains to his true lineaments—at the end of time—he needs to go through many changes and renovations. For if there is a human nature which as such is unchanging, it is precisely a nature which is in motion. […] And there are eternal truths immutable as such, yet which constrain history so that it ceaselessly changes its intellectual climate and enables these truths to realize under various forms their potentialities in time and in the things of time.[31]

Translated by Thomas Sneddon

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[5] Husserl, 'Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man. The Vienna Lecture, 1935', 331.

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[8] Romano Guardini, *Das Wesen des Christentums* (The Essence of Christianity) (Wirkbund Verlag, 1938).

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[10] 'Dei Verbum, Caput II, 8–10', *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 58/12 (1966), 820–822.
[11] 'Dei Verbum, Caput II, 8–10', *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 58/12 (1966), 820–822.
[12] Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism*, Chapter IX.
[13] Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism*, Chapter IX.
[14] Antal Schütz, 'Struktúratörvények a dogmák világában' (Structural Laws in the World of Dogma), *Theologia*, 9 (1944), 14–16; István Előd, ed., *Deum docuit. Antal Schütz, a hittudós* (The Scholar of Religion) (Szent István Társulat, 1982), 262–263.
[15] Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism*, Chapter IX.
[16] Justin the Martyr, 'Dialogue with Trypho', XI. 5. J-P. *Migne: Patrologia Graeca*, 6 (1857), 500.
[17] Basil of Caesarea, 'Address to Young Men on How They might Derive Benefit from Greek Literature', 2.; 4. J-P, *Migne: Patrologia Graeca*, 31 (1857), 568–569.
[18] Tertullian, *The Prescription against the Heretics*, VII. 8-10. J-P. *Migne: Patrologia Latina*, 2 (1844), 20.
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[24] Vid Mihelics, 'Az "elkereszténytelenedés" jelenségéről' (On the Phemonenon of 'Dechristianization'), *Vigilia*, 4 (1965), 228.
[25] Vid Mihelics, 'A kereszténység jövője' (The Future of Christianity), *Vigilia*, 1 (1969), 44;
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[28] Robert Schuman, *Európáért* (For Europe) (Pannónia Könyvek, 1991), 67.
[29] Tertullian, *Apology*, XVIII, 4; *On the Testimony of the Soul*, I. 7.
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SOVEREIGNTY AND INTEGRATION

In Memoriam *Ferenc Mádl*

László Trócsányi

On 29 January 2024, the Mádl Ferenc Institute of Budapest held a one-day conference on the work and ideas of the former president of the Hungarian Republic (2000–2005). Dr Ferenc Mádl (1931–2011) was a legal scholar who specialized in the law of the European Union, even during those years when Hungary was firmly in the grip of the Soviet empire. As a professor at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, he was a seminal master for generations of legal scholars and lawyers, among them leading politicians of Fidesz, the current governing party. In 1990, József Antall, the first prime minister of the reborn Hungarian democracy, included Dr Mádl in his government, first as Minister of European Affairs and Science, then as the Minister of Culture and Education. Professor László Trócsányi, a member of the European Parliament and of the Constitutional Court of Hungary, discusses here a European theme close to the heart of President Mádl.

When we remember the legal scholar Ferenc Mádl (1931–2011), we recall a person for whom the two terms in the title of my paper—sovereignty and integration—had a very special meaning. And if I may, with due humility and friendly respect, draw a parallel between one of the greatest Hungarian legal scholars of all time and the representatives of modern jurisprudence, I feel it important to mention that the examination of the relationship between sovereignty and integration is perhaps even more topical today. But what is the actual relationship between these two multifaceted concepts? Do they get along or do they constantly bicker, as if each were always attempting to triumph over the other? Or can harmony be established between them?

Let us start with sovereignty. The term is almost as old as European history. Etymologically, the concept of sovereignty is linked to the 'sovereign', the person who had full authority over the inhabitants of a specific territory. In Hungarian history, ever since we can speak of statehood, the word sovereignty has been associated with the king, whose sovereignty over his subjects was unlimited and unconditional, and who could exercise power without the consent or agreement of others.

It was the thinkers of the Enlightenment, and later the bourgeois revolutions, who sought to limit the notion of autocratic royal sovereignty. The concept of popular sovereignty is already in evidence in the works of Rousseau, best expressed by his notion of the *volonté générale*, or general will, which is the result of the unification of the people. The conflation of the people and national sovereignty can be found in

Article 3 of The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789, which states that 'The principle of any Sovereignty lies primarily in the Nation. No corporate body, no individual may exercise any authority that does not expressly emanate from it.'[1] According to the Fundamental Law of Hungary (the Hungarian Constitution), the source of public power is the people, and the people exercise their power through their elected representatives, or in exceptional cases directly. It can be stated that the word 'sovereignty' in its original meaning is linked to a state and answers the question of where the source of power lies, as well as indicating that a given state acts autonomously in its international relations. 'Sovereignty' therefore has an important meaning from the point of view of both constitutional and international law.

'Sovereignty' and 'state' are two interrelated concepts. As the former vice-president/president of the French Council of State, Jean-Marc Sauvé, said in 2013: 'the State is the foundation on which the nation was built and constitutes its matrix'.[2] Indeed, what is responsible for the development of a nation is independent statehood. In terms of constitutional law, the state constitutes—among other things—the state bodies that make the laws and are responsible for their implementation, the administration of justice, and the bodies that decide on major investments, etc. In international law, the state constitutes an independent actor in international relations. The theoretical foundations of sovereignty and a state's freedom of choice seemed stable until the end of the Second World War. The United Nations and all the international legal documents emphasize the sovereign equality of states. 'Sovereignty' is a glorious word for a nation and a country, but it can also be a dangerous word, used to subvert the international legal order. There were examples of this in Europe before the Second World War.

This brings us to the issue of integration. After 1945, many things changed. In Western Europe, the spirit of the times was defined by Franco-German reconciliation, the Treaty of Rome, and in the countries of the so-called Eastern Bloc alignment with the Soviet system. In the countries of Western Europe, integration at the supranational level began in the 1950s, and the Common Market took off in the early 1970s. The four fundamental freedoms and economic cooperation were a success story, and it was the achievements of the European Common Market that rightly impressed Ferenc Mádl. In addition, human rights have increasingly come to prominence and been given new meanings. Civil society has become an independent factor of power, and judicial activism has steadily gained ground: judges are no longer just the mouthpieces of the law, but interpret the law to improve it or to produce new legislation. The role of the state has been increasingly constrained and limited to regulatory powers, while privatization processes, and the creation of state agencies and quasi-state bodies, have created a new role in contrast to the strong Gaullist concept of the state, which had earlier nationalized entire industrial sectors.

In Central and Eastern European countries, regime change took place at a time when the idea of state sovereignty was on the decline in the West, and economic cooperation was being complemented by the drive for political union in Europe. The countries participating in the Schengen cooperation have abolished border control on internal borders as an expression of national sovereignty, while with the introduction of the euro they essentially gave up the right to mint their own currency and determine exchange rates. Moreover, the institutions of the EU have powers, including sanctions, to enforce budgetary discipline on a given country. Set goals now include the development of a common foreign and security policy, as well as cooperation on justice and home affairs. Subsidiarity is a universally recognized legal principle, but in reality, its application is overruled in practice by the imperatives of Brussels. The countries that joined the EU in 2004 had no choice but to follow Western models. We implemented privatization—albeit often in an ill-considered manner—in strategic sectors, we integrated Community law into our legal systems, we created state agencies, we introduced liberal legal concepts in the field of human rights in the courts, and the role of the state was aligned with the patterns we had been given. In Hungary, the Constitution of 1949, as amended in 1989, was able to provide all the conditions for this to happen, but it was no longer able to provide the necessary responses to the challenges that began to emerge in the late 2000s.

Since the beginning of the last decade, there has been a rethinking of processes in Europe. Our continent had to handle several crises: in 2008, an economic crisis, from 2015 a migration crisis, from 2020 COVID, and that is without mentioning Brexit, or the war that is still going on in our immediate neighbour. The change of approach within individual states, the reconciliation of national sovereignty and European integration in public law, is reflected in the amendments to national constitutions and the decisions of national constitutional courts. Until the late 1980s, national constitutions either remained silent about European integration or saw it as sufficient to mention within the framework of traditional international legal cooperation, whereas since the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 several countries, including Germany and France, have adopted detailed so-called 'Europe clauses', and the content of such clauses has been continuously supplemented over the years.

The same is true for the Hungarian Constitution. The obligation of public authorities to protect constitutional identity is increasingly emphasized in the Constitution, and Article E, which contains the EU clause, has been supplemented. In addition, national constitutional courts in some European countries have recently handed down a number of decisions which have caused concern in the institutions of the EU. For instance, there was the decision of the German Constitutional Court of 5 May 2020, which found that EU institutions had acted *ultra vires* and that this had damaged Germany's constitutional identity. Constitutional identity, or constitutional self-identity, appears increasingly in constitutional court decisions and public law literature. Recently,

a ping-pong match took place between the Romanian Constitutional Court and the European Court of Justice on whether decisions of the Romanian Constitutional Court based on the Romanian Constitution could be set aside by ordinary courts when they conflict with Community law. Moreover, the Hungarian Constitutional Court has authorized the government to investigate the effectiveness of Community law in the context of a constitutional interpretation regarding migration.

All of this shows that, although the fine-sounding slogan of constitutional dialogue is one that everyone likes to emphasize, we are witnessing debates between different manifestations of the sovereignty–integration tug-of-war. To use a car metaphor, institutions of the EU are stepping on the accelerator in order to create an ever-closer union, while the member states are refusing to take their feet off the brakes, citing their national constitutions. It could be said that the reference made by the Constitutional Court to *ultra vires* could even be seen as locking the brakes. Translated from legalese, it is a stop sign indicating that EU bodies can only take their decisions in compliance with the rules of competence that apply to them. We can call this sovereignty protection, because if the EU wants to take decisions in an area for which it has not been delegated, we are faced with a violation of national sovereignty. I consider the 'Erasmus and Horizon' case to be an example of this, because I firmly believe that the issue of national higher education reform is not an issue for the EU and moreover, that the financial interests of the EU cannot be jeopardized *ab ovo* by universities participating in either the Erasmus programme or the Horizon Europe programme.

There is also a demand for sovereignty at the level of national politics. Today, countries like to determine which areas they consider strategic, while respecting the achievements of European integration. To mention just a few issues: how can the protection of national strategic sectors be ensured? What approach should be adopted regarding the issue of nuclear energy? What is the role of the state in maintaining regulated prices, determining the taxation system, or protecting the interests of farmers? How can they prevent unwanted influence in strategic sectors, develop their defence and military capacities, or deal with migration? In 2014, France enacted a law listing strategic sectors, and setting out the rules for foreign acquisitions in these sectors. In France, the website of the Council of State says that a monthly conference is organized on the subject of 'the foundations of sovereignty'. Constitutional, economic, and military experts expound on what national sovereignty means for France today. The reference to the fundamental interests of the nation (*intérêts fondamentaux de la Nation*) is increasingly common in the case law of the French Constitutional Court.

All this also means that there are areas of sovereignty where states do not want the decision to be taken out of their hands. This could provoke a debate in the supranational space, as the institutions of the EU, particularly the Commission,

often in response to pressure from the European Parliament, seek to play a more and more decisive role in strategic areas. This leads to daily political and legal battles, involving a variety of actors.

Therefore, we can legitimately ask: where does the truth lie? No one can deny that integration has achieved results that are universally acknowledged. Thus, European integration has a meaning and a mission. However, the word 'sovereignty' should not be retired, and its importance should not be underestimated. More recently, the term 'European sovereignty' has also been added to the political lexicon, often replaced by the term 'European strategic autonomy'. Jean-Claude Juncker has tried to give some definition of European sovereignty. According to him, 'European sovereignty is born of Member States' national sovereignty and does not replace it'.[3] This approach is very similar to the concept of European citizenship, which, however, has not yet really taken root in the public mind. The strategic autonomy of Europe is more of a geopolitical concept, taking on significance in the context of competition between continents. However, since the EU is not a state, European sovereignty cannot be construed as a legal concept either. The proposition that our continent should have strategic autonomy is certainly to be supported. However, this autonomy will only be constructive if it serves the interests of all EU member states and is in accordance with their historical and cultural traditions. This can only be achieved through constant negotiation and compromise. This is what European integration is all about.

The key to the future success of European integration is the extent to which member states remain masters of the treaties and can define the framework for their cooperation, based on compromise. Ferenc Mádl believed in the need for cooperation between member states. We must surely agree with him today but must also consider that new times present us with new challenges. Still, to quote Seneca, we must ensure that 'nothing ever takes us by surprise'.[4] I believe that sovereignty and integration are not mutually exclusive concepts. Even if there are debates, we need these two concepts also in the future. This is in the common interest of the European member states and the European continent.

Translated by Balázs Sümegi

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[1] 'The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, 1789', *Élysée,* www.elysee.fr/en/french-presidency/the-declaration-of-the-rights-of-man-and-of-the-citizen, accessed 15 February 2024.
[2] Jean-Marc Sauvé, 'Où va l'État?', *Conseil d'État*, 16 October 2013, www.conseil-etat.fr/publications-colloques/discours-et-interventions/ou-va-l-etat2, accessed 15 February 2024.
[3] Jean Claude Juncker, 'State of the Union Address 2018', *European Commission*, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_18_5808, accessed 15 February 2024.
[4] Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic* (Xist Publishing, 2016).

ON THE BRINK OF A POST-DOUBT WORLD?

Tibor Várady

WHEN DOUBT IS LOST

I remember the day, in the autumn of 1990, when a dead body washed up on a sandy riverbank of the Danube in Novi Sad (in Hungarian, Újvidék), Serbia. This became the topic of the week in the town. We were on the brink of the Yugoslav Wars. The next day I met an acquaintance who was a Croat. 'Do you see, Tibor, what these Serbs are doing? They killed this guy and threw him in the Danube, just because he was a Croat', he said. I asked him whether he had any more information about the victim. 'Everybody knows', was his answer.

Later the same day, in the afternoon, I met a neighbour who was a Serb. After a short exchange of greetings, our conversation turned to the tragic event. His comment was: 'Do you see what these Croats are doing to us? They beat this poor man to death and pushed him into the Danube, just because he was a Serb!' I tried to proceed with further inquiries, only to hit a wall of certainty. 'This has been going on for centuries', said my neighbour.

Attempting to get some information about the victim, I asked a colleague who was teaching forensic medicine at the University of Novi Sad. He made inquiries and told me that no documents were found in the pockets of the dead man. The corpse probably landed in the Danube somewhere where the river marks the border between Serbia and Croatia (at that time these were two republics within Yugoslavia). What had been established was that it was the body of a male, between forty and fifty years old, and that he had been shot. The name and the nationality of the victim remained unknown.

I have never learned anything more about the identity of the dead man found by the riverside in Novi Sad. Perhaps I missed something later in the press, but it is more likely that the question was simply forgotten. At the same time, both alternative answers from my two Novi Sad acquaintances rose to the level of absolute truth. And the outrage prompted by those answers became part of our reality.

Many things were lost during those days and months. What first disappeared from the scene was doubt. There were still some local Serbs, Croats, Hungarians, Albanians, and others who preserved their capacity for doubt, but their dissident

thinking was no longer visible in the public discourse. The absence of doubt cleared the way for many things. Including a senseless war.

Slobodan Milošević, the main architect of the Yugoslav Wars, was also a man without doubt. I learned this from a friend of mine from my hometown Zrenjanin. (Its earlier official name was Veliki Bečkerek in Serbian, Nagybecskerek in Hungarian, and Grossbetschkerek in German.) Unofficially—and with an added attempt to show it with English spelling—the name of my town was, and still is, 'Betchkerek'). Nebojša Popov was the name of my Betchkerek friend. After finishing high school in our hometown, we studied together at the Belgrade Law School. Milošević was also among the law school students. At that time, Nebojša was a Communist, and became the party secretary at the law school. Later he became one of the most distinguished dissidents in Yugoslavia. Nebojša knew Milošević quite well. Once he told me that Milošević was a man who never lied. Not because he always told the truth, but because he firmly believed whatever he said. He was a man liberated from (or deprived of) doubt.

If doubt is lost, substitutes for knowledge can easily be shaped. At the same time, expertise, science, and rationality lose their privileged position. Ignorance becomes an able competitor. And now I am not only talking about Yugoslavia and the Milošević years. A number of studies show that we have a global problem. Tom Nichols's book *The Death of Expertise*[1] is an excellent example. Nichols drew attention to his inquiries three years before his book was published. In the 17 January 2014 issue of *The Federalist*, Nichols published an article entitled 'The Death of Expertise'. In this article he writes: 'I fear we are witnessing the "death of expertise": a Google-fuelled, Wikipedia-based, blog-sodden collapse of any division between professionals and laymen, students and teachers, knowers and wonderers—in other words, between those of any achievement in an area and those with none at all.'[2]

One may add that alternative knowledge and alternative truth can cover more ground than expertise. More things are being qualified as ascertainable. Forensic experts at the University of Novi Sad were unable to establish the nationality of the man whose corpse was found at the beach. Strollers driven by conviction proved more capable. They achieved certainty. As a matter of fact, they unveiled more than one certainty. Had I discussed the issue with a Hungarian friend in Novi Sad, I might have been enriched by a further alternative truth.

ON TRENDS AND/OR TRUTH

The challenges of a post-doubt actuality currently swarm around us. This might prompt an effort to try to perceive where doubt stands these days, and where it could step in. The purpose of doubt is also becoming an open question. One sees more and

more steps inspired by the postulation that doubt may postpone the establishment of true sense. This may be true, but postponement is a better option than rushing headlong and forgetting sense. It is also a fact that doubt (if it is not a unidirectional doubt) may disturb the comfort of polarization.

Focusing on doubt, one also needs to face situations in which doubt itself is adrift. One needs an intellectual approach towards doubt. What marks the intellectual is a self-crafted or self-checked doubt, rather than merely following trends of suspicion.

While we were facing COVID, we were also facing a spate of revolts against science, riding on the coattails of scepticism. In periods of emergency, scientific guidance becomes more relevant in everyday life. Nichols warned against the collapse of the division between professionals and laymen. But this division has a chance of becoming important, and contested, once again. If the health and the lives of practically all of us are at stake, scientific opinion and advice are no longer esoteric, and cannot be kept at a distance. The recommendation to get vaccinated departed from the realm of reasoned opinions placed in scientific periodicals. As science moves closer to everyday life, the claim for the equality of ignorance is increasingly questionable. This leads to revolt and to the attempt to demolish once again the wall between professionals and laypeople. Ignorance can fight. One possible strategy is to exploit scepticism, to qualify science as conspiracy, and to argue, for example, that the actual purpose of vaccines is to implant devices that will ruin our privacy.

The COVID-type predicament has come to the fore several times in history—and has been expressed in literature as well. In 1947, Albert Camus published a novel about the plague. The setting is not the globe, but Oran, in French Algeria, yet some of the author's observations have a global relevance. In *La Peste* (The Plague), Camus starts one of his sentences with the following words: '*Le mal qui est dans le monde vient presque toujours d'ignorance…*' (The evil that is in the world almost always comes of ignorance). Yet Camus finishes his sentence by adding, that good intentions can cause as much damage as wickedness: '*et la bonne volonté peut faire autant de dégâts que la méchanceté, si elle n'est pas éclairé*' (and good intentions may do as much harm as malevolence if they are not elucidated).[3]

Rational knowledge and awareness of truth may reduce the damage. But many things can impede reasoning and the search for truth. Conspiracy theories directed against science are just one of many. We have also witnessed a competition for the position of leading opinion, and this contest shapes public attitudes. There are many contestants, and the race may be influenced by the expectation of privileges. The search for truth has never been at a safe distance from temptations. Impulses may create alternative truths. Furthermore, researchers may be influenced by the

consideration that one of the potential results is more in line with the prevailing social and/or political trend.

During the years of communism, the dominant trend had a name. It was called 'party line', and we were surrounded by the expectation that we follow it. Let me add that the compulsion to follow a dominant line of thinking is not restricted to communism. One could say that under communism the sanctions were more threatening, but at the same time, it was intellectually somewhat easier to perceive some truth not situated along the dominant line of thinking. One could also note that patterns of accommodation to what is dominant have survived many systems. Trust in convenient magic has received repeated proofs—hence it has yielded reliance. During the communist era, your chances of getting support for a research project or a conference increased dramatically if you placed in the proposed title the magic term 'socialist self-management'. Today the terms 'sustainability' or 'sustainable development' yield a similar advantage.

One should also take into consideration that—as noted by Camus—even good intentions may push us away from reality, and cause damage. This can be confirmed by many examples in various areas of life. I would like to mention here some legal cases that I found in the legal archive of my father and my grandfather. By some near miracle, all the files have remained for over a hundred years since 1893. During the past several years, I have been trying to put together books of documentary prose based on this archive.

A good number of cases show the first years after the Second World War. The location of these cases is Banat, part of the province of Vojvodina within Serbia. During the Second World War, Banat was under German occupation. The insanities of the Nazi ideology left dramatic marks. In the years after Hitler's defeat, it was natural to formulate a response driven by the swing of strong emotions. In this period, all judgments ended with the motto *Smrt Fašizmu Sloboda Narodu!* – 'Death to Fascism, Freedom to the People!'. (The labelling 'Nazi' might have been more appropriate, but 'fascism' was the term that became accepted as a target.) The anti-fascist emotions were certainly understandable and justified. But even justified emotions may grow into unrestrained excesses. On 16 October 1946, the public attorney of Betchkerek (then Zrenjanin) accused Antal Péli of 'intentional contribution to the strengthening of the fascist army'.[4] In many cases in which the suspect faces such an accusation, the defence turns towards details—because details are stumbling blocks which may somewhat impede the momentum of the accusation. It turned out that what Antal Péli did was the following: In the village called Mokrin (Homokrév in Hungarian), he owned a paprika mill located in the apartment of the sister of a friend of his, and he was selling ground paprika. According to the prosecutor, during the German occupation, Péli sold paprika to

German buyers, and since it is known that paprika contains vitamins, it could have been used to enhance the health of the fascist army. The defence pointed out that during the German occupation buyers were determined by the military command. For many years before the war and before the German occupation, Péli had been selling paprika to local Serbs and Hungarians as well, not only to the Germans. The details created some distance between Péli and the label: 'intentional contribution to the strengthening of the fascist army', but he did not remain unscathed. He was sentenced to three years of prison. (Upon appeal, this was reduced to one and a half years.)

In another case driven by fervour rather than logic, István Csepcsányi, a Lutheran priest from Betchkerek (Zrenjanin) was charged in 1947 for 'criminal acts against the people and the state'. One of the specific charges was 'committing an anti-people smile'. This was substantiated by the witness statement of a neighbour. In this statement, it was explained that 'when the Red Army was marching in, the accused stood by the window in his priest's apartment and watched them marching with a cynical, derisive smile on his face'.[5]

To continue with another example, in 1946 Branko Đurić was accused by the Betchkerek prosecutor of keeping in his yard 'two sows of fascist origin'.[6] The background of this case was that after the victory over German occupiers, a law was enacted ordering the confiscation of all German property—with the exception of the property of those local ethnic Germans who had joined Tito's partisan forces. It is a fact that there were some local Germans in Banat who took part in Hitler's misdeeds. There were also some who joined the antifascist partisan forces. The majority of local Germans stayed away from both evil and heroic actions, yet they were still hit by reprisals. After the law targeting German belongings was enacted, some local Germans entrusted articles of their personal property to Serbian and Hungarian neighbours, in order to save something from confiscation. Branko Đurić was such a Serbian neighbour, and this was the context of the charge that he kept in his yard two pigs (more precisely two sows) of fascist origin.

At this point, it may cross one's mind that some parallel could be drawn between the stance of the Betchkerek prosecutor and the approach of the Luxembourg-based FIFe (Fédération Internationale Féline). In its 'Statement Regarding the Situation in Ukraine' the FIFe declared:

> The Board of FIFe feels it cannot just witness these atrocities and do nothing, so it decided that as of 01.03.2022:
> • No cat bred in Russia may be imported and registered in any FIFe pedigree book outside Russia, regardless of which organization issued its pedigree […].[7]

FIFe is right in stating that it is difficult to just witness atrocities and do nothing. It is understandable that one should wish to join a movement spurred by a justified emotional response. Yet at the same time, it is hazardous to give full control to the response itself. Even if they start with rational roots, convictions driven by such emotions may go too far. Besides, even if they propel one in the right direction, the responses may go beyond the borders of rationality. And let me add that one does not have to be pro-fascist or pro-Putin to disagree or to permit a smile about statements pertaining to pigs of fascist origin or cats bred in Russia. Convictions aim at purity. They seek to achieve disinfection. Yet the effect of these efforts at sanitation may wipe out the truth as well.

One could add that those being carried away by strong convictions may not even notice that they have landed in an intellectual trough. They still feel safe because trust or mistrust remain within reach. Truth, however, cannot be reached without climbing out, using the ladder of doubt. According to Lord Tennyson, even faith relies on honest doubt. In his poem 'Doubt and Faith' he says: 'There lives more faith in honest doubt / Believe me, than in half the creeds.'[8]

IS SCIENCE A REMEDY WITHOUT DOUBT?

Emotional swings, impulses, and exaltation are part of our world, and may yield twisted estimations of things that concern us. Science may rein in exaltation and keep truth within reach. But a disbelief in science is also among the challenges around us. Such suspicion is usually not based on inquisitiveness, and does not mirror an aspiration to double-check some scientific conclusions. Had the Novi Sad strollers learned that inquiries and forensic testing had concluded that the nationality of the victim was unknown, they might have expressed suspicion towards science. This suspicion would not have been stirred by credence that more facts could have been discovered, but rather by a disappointment that their conviction (or prejudice) had not been confirmed. And the same stance usually marks suspicion directed towards scientific conclusions pertaining to climate change. These suspicions are not logical. But does this mean that all scientific findings regarding climate change should be protected against doubt?

René Descartes is often quoted with the purpose of confirming that thinking is a necessary precondition of being. What is usually cited is '*Cogito ergo sum*', or 'I think, therefore I am'. But this is only part of the phrase. Descartes's full sentence in his *Discours de la méthode* reads: '*Dubito, ergo cogito, ergo sum*'. Thus, 'I doubt, therefore I think, therefore I am'. Thinking is a prerequisite of being, and doubt is a prerequisite of thinking.

Endeavouring to rein in waves of scepticism against science, doubt must be kept alive. One should not avoid the question of whether some current trends in science might alleviate the shaping of mistrust and offer a sensible basis for suspicion. In other words, we must ask whether trends and fashions that are sweeping people beyond logic may also be shaped within science itself. Doubt deserves a place within science as well. I would like now to turn towards an example that deserves to be debated—and this is the drift sparked by growing confidence in measurability, or 'trust in numbers' yielding quantification.

At this point I shall turn back again to my hometown. I remember a Serbian folksong that remained popular for many years. (It reached 'sustainable' popularity, as one would say today.) The key rhymes were the following: 'Through the village crosses Mitzi / Sixty percent spiritlessly'. People liked to sing this song. What prompted joy while singing, was the poeticized assumption that Mitzi's enthusiasm or lack of enthusiasm can be measured in exact percentages. We found this irresistibly funny. Today, some inclinations in science are stepping into the position of the songwriter.

To cite an example, PISA studies offer us data about the exact level of enthusiasm of teachers in almost 100 countries.[9] Thus, we are now in a position to know the precise percentage of enthusiasm of teachers in, say, Norway, the UAE, Austria, Serbia, Hungary, Macao, the Dominican Republic, Kazakhstan, and many other countries. To add another example, we are also getting exact data about the level of democracy in different parts of the world. In 2011, while teaching in Atlanta, Georgia, I put aside an issue of *The New York Times* in which I read the results of research establishing that, on a scale of 1 to 10, the level of democracy in Tunisia is 2.8, in Egypt 3.1, in Algeria 3.4, in Libya 1.9, and in Bahrein 3.5.[10] Such assessments have become mainstream. The question arises whether scepticism towards scientific trends which yield such indexes should be qualified as irrational or rather as rational scepticism.

Over recent decades, social sciences have forged important new methods of measurement. One of the sound motivations behind endeavours to undertake measurements—and to express results in numbers—is objectivity. We have also witnessed a growing trust in measurability. The question may be raised whether trust in measurability stays within the limits of the actual potential of quantification. It makes sense to analyse and try to ascertain the actual level of democracy (or the level of enthusiasm of teachers) in different countries. It is less clear whether confidence in quantifiability remains in proportion to our actual capability to measure enthusiasm or, say, democracy. In other words, the question is whether we are in fact validating or instead banalizing scientific research when we disclose the finding that the level of democracy in a given country is 3.3 out of 10, or that the level of teacher's enthusiasm is 35.6 per cent.

Shaping arguments as a pro-Betchkerek lawyer (and trying to follow the spirit of the song), I could even reason that 60—the percentage of Mitzi's lack of enthusiasm—was established on more solid grounds. According to the song, Mitzi was 60 per cent spiritless during a summer afternoon. It is easier (and more rational) to establish the level of enthusiasm (or lack of enthusiasm) by focusing on just one afternoon, rather than considering a longer period during which moods may be changing (yet perceptions are not tested every day). Furthermore, the mood of Mitzi was the mood of a lady in a Banat village. PISA is trying to measure enthusiasm in almost one hundred countries. Expressions of enthusiasm may be very different in various civilizations. In this situation, establishing comparable numbers on the same scale is a daunting task.

Let me repeat that objectivity is clearly one of the distinctive positive marks of science. This approach has critical importance because it brings to the forefront facts, rather than beliefs, personal interests, or prejudices. As a matter of fact, objectivity cannot be contested on a rational basis. Yet questions can nevertheless be raised in connection with particular strategies under the cover of objectivity and impersonality. Furthermore, cogent doubts have also been expressed concerning the relationship between truth and numbers. In his well-known book *Trust in Numbers* Theodore Porter points out that 'Objectivity as impersonality is often conflated with objectivity as truth'.[11]

Numbers yielded by measurements are unquestionably important parts of the picture researchers are trying to shape (and users of research are relying upon). But if trust in numbers becomes a dominant trend, the temptation arises not just to place numbers among important objective indicators of truth, but to conflate numbers with the whole truth.

This temptation has gained some ground when it comes to evaluation by science, but also in the evaluation of science. I shall now turn attention to the latter. Numbers have become the main point of support in assessing scientific achievements. What has gained critical (almost exclusive) importance in the process of appointing a professor, or electing a member of an academy of sciences, is the ranking of periodicals in which the candidate published his/her scientific works, as well as the number of citations. This is certainly in line with objectivity. If numbers are the main basis of decisions, this might impede choices on the grounds of political preferences, friendship or animosity, or ethnic or other prejudices. But in line with quandaries regarding the limits of measurability, one also needs to face the question of whether there are layers of reality that could have been disregarded following the instinct to quantify, and whether there are causes that are more complex than the standard grounds accepted as the basis of numerical data. And if such layers and causes exist, whether they also have an impact on the formation of truth.

The ranking of periodicals (according to, say, Web of Science, SCOPUS, or the Hirsch Index) offers a point of support for grading manuscripts that have been published. In other words, since journals are today distinguished as, for example, M-21, M-23, M-24, or Q.1, Q.2, Q.3 periodicals, the quality of publications in these journals is typically measured by computation based on the figures appended to a periodical. These figures (just like the number of citations) have become dominant pillars of evaluations. Values are becoming established within a world of numbers. It is now accepted as truth that a publication in M-21 is of higher quality than a publication in M-32, and an article that was cited 58 times is worth more than an article that was cited 42 times.

It is difficult to contest (and need not be contested) that the authority of a journal in which a study was published is a relevant indicator of quality. Citations may also serve as a guide. They show that a work has sparked interest, and in typical cases, references show respect towards the publication referenced. A higher number of citations is a sound indicator of recognition. The question is whether these (valid) indicators should be exempted from any doubt, and whether they could substitute other methods of evaluation. Inquiry should also be directed towards various grounds on which ranking may be established, and towards aspirations by which citations may be motivated.

In a periodical with a higher ranking, editors are typically more rigorous. Hence, the quality standards are higher, and the value of an accepted manuscript is presumably also higher. However, one should also consider various human motivations that might unsettle the harmony between the ranking number of the periodical and the quality of a manuscript. Typically, scientists tend to publish truly important works in periodicals of higher ranking. But other impulses can also predominate. Recognized scholars sometimes send important manuscripts to a given periodical not because it is highly ranked, but because it is the periodical of their home university. Studies of exceptional value are sometimes published in a Liber Amicorum devoted to an appreciated colleague. Also, highly ranked periodicals may be reviews that follow a certain course of thinking and may reject some manuscripts as unsuitable (despite their value). Furthermore, notwithstanding the ranking of the journal, editors may also make mistakes in one or another direction, and it is somewhat dangerous to treat their assessment as an indisputable, numerically expressible truth.

Another question that might be raised is the following: the ranking of periodicals is used as an objective foothold for inferences. Yet there may be subjective constituents influencing the ranking itself. In some countries, a ministry makes decisions about ranking (having considered the opinion of an expert committee). I have often heard that the editors of some journals which did not receive an expected ranking expressed

grievances stating that higher rankings were given on the ground of political, ideological, or personal preferences. This may be difficult to prove, but it cannot be discarded as a possibility (and such a peril is not restricted to decisions made by state authorities). In sum, in trying to reach quality assessment (and searching for truth), it makes sense to replace subjectivity with numbers. But one should keep in mind that ranking numbers can also be shaped following subjectivity and other human imperfections.

The same applies to citations. It does make sense to consider citations as indicators of quality. Yet while using the number of citations as evidence of value, figures can become somewhat divorced from content because the reason for citation is not a distinctive element in shaping statistics. It is true that one typically cites a scientific publication on the grounds that it contains some ideas worth mentioning, or because it has some findings that may serve as a foothold for important conclusions. Yet other motivations are also possible, and they are also part of the reality. If A is citing B, noting that what B wrote is sheer nonsense, within the dominant system of estimation, this is just one more citation enhancing the value of B's work. Furthermore, once an indicator of quality becomes part of public knowledge, attitudes of adjustment are shaped. Based on friendship and cooperation, 'I cite you, you cite me' practices are gaining ground. Then there is also the motivation to cite a work because it is appropriate and fashionable to cite it. Widely quoted articles are sometimes cited by authors who have not actually read them, but who know (or at least feel) that such a citation is expected. This leads us to a phenomenon labelled the 'Matthew effect'. Robert Merton devoted two studies to this phenomenon, citing the Gospel according to Matthew: 'For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.'[12] Merton concludes that the same effect has also gained ground in science, where 'the Matthew effect is the accruing of large increments of peer recognition to scientists of great repute for particular contributions in contrast to the minimizing or withholding of such recognition for scientists who have not yet made their mark.'[13]

A further point is the issue of language. As the English language is becoming more and more dominant, it is logical that an article published in English gets more citations. One may add that due to the ascendancy of the English language, and given the broader number of contenders, it makes sense to assume that one will have to endure tougher competition if one sends a manuscript to a highly ranked English-language journal. Thus, there is some logic behind the predominance of Anglophone publications. However, this should not mean that a study published in a German, French, or perhaps even Serbian, Croatian, or Hungarian periodical, cannot be a truly outstanding piece (even if it has more modest—or much more modest—chances for worldwide citation).

If the ranking number of periodicals and the number of citations become the main indicators of quality, assessors can become somewhat divorced from their own opinions—and their duties. In a time of the dominance of objective standards, one could raise the question of how often members of academic appointment committees still read the scientific works of the candidates. An interview would probably not yield truly trustworthy answers because the duty to read is still present in the assessor's conscience. It would be interesting to know whether such a conscience will remain on the scene after a few decades.

Trust in numbers also has some impact on the existence—or perceived existence—of scientific works. There were times when unpublished manuscripts were also considered while assessing whether a candidate has appropriate credentials to be an academic teacher or researcher. Thus, they were treated as existing scientific works. This is still not prohibited today, but it is no longer part of the normal practice. Only works that have already passed some appraisal (and been published) are considered. The question may be raised whether perceived existence is nowadays being further postponed until sufficient time has elapsed to see whether the paper in question did or did not get a fair number of citations. If this were the case, waiting for indicators of objectivity might also mean brushing aside fairness, because an author who published an excellent study produced something that already exists and deserves a foothold for appointment, even if the decision of the assessors is being made before the quality could have been quantified by the number of citations.

Striving towards objectivity is certainly a trend that deserves respect. Subjectivity forges more suspicion—typically justified suspicion. If results are generated following beliefs and convictions, it is easy (and logical) to target them by relying on objectivity. Yet one has to take into consideration that objectivity implemented by quantification might also engender beliefs. And beliefs may expand beyond reality. This also applies to trust in numbers and faith in measurability. Furthermore, in the course of evaluations, quantification may not only divorce us from favouritism and predilections, but from the subject of evaluation as well. Even from the scientific work itself, after scrutiny has been turned towards numerical indicators of quality. Distance is shaped outside the workroom of evaluations as well. As appreciation (like pride) is becoming linked to the ranking of periodicals and to the number of citations, so public attention is joining the same reality, and becoming increasingly remote from the published thoughts themselves. More and more, what gets noted, what is being discussed among colleagues, and what is getting remembered in connection with an article is the place of publication and the number of citations, rather than what was said in the given scientific paper. I saw a sign of this recently when a former student of mine sent me an e-mail proudly informing me that an article of his had been published in an M-21 periodical. He did not mention the topic of his article. One could treat this as an omission, but one could also see it as a warning signal.

The question arises as to what patterns of coexistence are being forged between empirical data and thinking, in times when the relevance of numbers is fortified by a trend. Many things have happened since Immanuel Kant published his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Critique of Pure Reason) in 1781. Maybe it would make sense to reinvestigate (under a new angle and considering new doubts) the relationship between empiricism and pure reason.

BUREAUCRATICALLY INSPIRED TRENDS IN THE ACADEMIC WORLD?

It is dangerous to follow principles that discard doubt. This also applies when truly valued principles—like objectivity—are at issue. And some queries have indeed arisen. For example, the question as to whether the demonstration of objectivity may forge some unwelcome links with bureaucracy.

Attempts to measure reality are logical parts of the endeavour to see and understand it. At the same time, it has become a common practice to express findings in numbers. Quantification may also simplify matters. Albert Einstein supported attempts to make things simple—but with a caveat. In his words: 'Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler'.[14] The question is whether quantification may yield results that are simpler than possible, and whether these may serve goals outside the aims of science. Several authors have come to the conclusion that a reliance on statistics and quantification is especially convenient for bureaucracies. Schemes can more easily be built on numerical or other simple indicators. Kurt Danziger notes that statistical analysis is providing 'a culturally acceptable rationale for the treatment of individuals by categories that bureaucratic structures demanded'.[15] One may add here the following remarks of Theodore Porter:

> The appeal of numbers is especially compelling to bureaucratic officials who lack the mandate of a popular election, or divine right. Arbitrariness and bias are the most usual grounds upon which such officials are criticized. A decision made by the numbers (or by explicit rules of some other sort) has at least the appearance of being fair and impersonal. Scientific objectivity thus provides an answer to a moral demand for impartiality and fairness. Quantification is a way of making decisions without seeming to decide. Objectivity lends authority to officials who have very little of their own.[16]

It is not easy to answer the question of whether reliance on numbers is implementing impersonality or just affecting an appearance of impersonality—or to some extent both. For bureaucracies, it is certainly convenient if they can make classifications and render decisions based on numbers or other simple indicators of postures and qualities.

The trend of quantification offers support. Can we speak here of some collusion between bureaucracy and science? It would make things much simpler than possible if we said that science was following the trend of measurability and quantifiability just to suit bureaucracies. It cannot be contested that there are indeed legitimate motivations behind efforts to measure and quantify. Yet the question nevertheless arises whether the drive to quantify pushes science and bureaucracy closer together (say, by making it easy to categorize democracy and teachers' enthusiasm). Can we say that some conduct in science is being shaped by bureaucratic expectations?

Looking for examples that deserve to be discussed, I could mention some trends in perceptions and evaluations that appear to be shaped to fit bureaucracy. During the past several decades, university professors, departments, and faculties have met the task of defining the goal of academic teaching by formulating 'learning outcomes'. I shall cite some illustrations. At a university where I was teaching, EU law was taught by a legal scholar with a worldwide reputation. This is how he formulated the learning outcome of his course: 'Ability to understand the history, the basic principles and institutions of the European Union'.

I am sure that my colleague would have been capable of formulating a rather insightful analysis of the genuine goals he has been trying to achieve through teaching. But to do so, he would have had to draft an essay or a research paper—and this would have been unusable for the given purpose. In reality, learning outcomes are formulated for administrative use. Let me also mention that had I read an essay or research paper written by my colleague, I would have recognized him behind his sentences. In the sentence he wrote to satisfy the requirement to outline the learning outcome there is nothing incorrect, but this sentence could have also been written by anybody else. By outstanding and by mediocre professors too. Is this a move towards what Nichols described as the 'collapse of any division between professionals and laymen'? If phrases are at issue, equal access is practically granted. (Fortunately, in the realm of actual teaching, excellence is still distinguishable—and so is the outcome of high-quality teaching.)

Let me add two more 'learning outcomes' from those submitted by universities where I was teaching (one in the US, another in Europe): 'Ability to form an informed and reasoned judgment' and 'ability to solve problems'. (This last formulation was complemented by a 'specific descriptor', which stated: 'Ability to identify a problem and the theoretical and methodological tools to solve it, and to use the appropriate approach to solve issues'.) The logic behind such formulations is set by expectations. Authorities that decide on approval (and financing) of teaching programmes are expecting sum-ups usable as data. Reality may indeed be better perceived with the help of data. However, an overall expectation of data might also lead to a drive to convert reality into data—or to replace reality with

data. It is quite imaginable to have a scientific conference at which academic teachers and researchers would discuss possible 'learning outcomes' in various fields, and turn some attention to scrutiny of the notion itself. Such a conference would probably yield valuable analytical findings (often multifaceted findings) about desirable learning outcomes. 'Ability to solve problems' could hardly belong among such findings. This is more in line with 'datafication' than with revealing goals. The demand to formulate learning outcomes has not created any inspiration to try to reveal the actual goals and possibilities of teaching. Because this would not have served the function. A different conduct is being instigated within the academic community; in the course of defining learning outcomes (to be submitted to administrative authorities) professors do not feel that they are expected to scrutinize what the actual projected outcomes of teaching are, rather they feel that they are supposed to recite outcomes that are fitting.

There is no reason to turn away from objectivity. It is also a fact that numbers, rational summations, and data are logical reference points for objectivity. Yet trust in numbers, summations, and data may turn into self-perpetuating trends, and these can sweep us towards cohabitation with bureaucracy—a problem which cannot easily be solved. (I am afraid that no solution is guaranteed by the fact that we already have among us former students, intellectuals who passed courses with appropriate learning outcomes, and it was put on record that these graduate thinkers received the 'ability to solve problems'.) Science can only serve as a remedy if it keeps a healthy distance from phrases—and if it does not discard doubt, not even doubt regarding its own manners.

A CLOSING REMARK

The assumptions that the body washed up on the Novi Sad river beach belonged to a Serb or Croat were indeed fragments of our surrounding reality. What was sorely missing from reality was doubt.

The disappearance of doubt is a signal that should prompt inquiry. Doubt (or scepticism that is akin to doubt) may divert us from dangerous shortcuts to certainty. However, it can also turn into impulses and obstruct reality, raising mistrust against things that simply do not fit into prejudices. Like other patterns of human behaviour, doubt and scepticism can rely on different motivations, and can be used with different levels of competence. There are choices. It is important to take a closer look, and to choose and apply doubt that opens rather than eliminates sensible options. Doubt may delay things and keep us longer in a pre-truth world. (Or return us to a pre-truth world by the vehicle of checking results and methods of research.) But the absence of doubt may push us towards a post-truth world, and this is a menace that appears increasingly proximate. The signs have multiplied. They include the awakening of catchphrases. In

2016, the *Oxford Dictionaries* declared 'post-truth' to be the international word of the year. In coming years, 'post-doubt' may become a competitor.

Science, and the doubt engendered by science, may still keep us at a healthy distance from a post-truth world. And what about doubt regarding science? Scepticism towards science needs to be confronted. There is every reason to oppose the suspicion that scientific advice in favour of vaccination is crafted to support surveillance by secret services. Just as there is every reason to buffer the waves of suspicion that push warnings about climate change (or the theory of evolution) among conspiracy theories. Yet waves and trends capable of pushing us beyond rationality can exist within science as well. And doubt aimed towards trends and attitudes shaped within science must not be surrendered to opponents. To cite just one example, faith in measurability could (and should) also be checked by science itself. A more professional doubt will not discard quantification, but it may recognize some limits. Science is capable not only of following trends, but of recognizing them too. Therefore, science should get ahead and gain an upper hand on the playground of suspicion. George Santayana made this clear around a century ago. In his words: 'Scepticism is the chastity of the intellect, and it is shameful to surrender it too soon or to the first comer.'[17]

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[1] Tom Nichols, *The Death of Expertise: The Campaign Against Expertise and Why It Matters* (Oxford University Press, 2017).
[2] Tom Nichols, 'The Death of Expertise', *The Federalist* (17 January 2014).
[3] Albert Camus, *La Peste* (Gallimard 1947), 113.
[4] Case no. 134/1946 Zrenjanin District Court (Okružni sud). The file number in the attorney archive is 12395.
[5] See more about the Csepcsányi case in an English book of documentary prose: Tibor Várady, *People in Spite of History* (Central European University Press, 2021), 312–335.
[6] Case no. NSK 59/1946, District Court (Okružni sud) Zrenjanin. The number of the attorney archive is 12406.
[7] The Statement is available on the website of the FIFe, www1.fifeweb.org/wp/news/7412.
[8] Alfred Tennyson, 'Doubt and Faith', www.poetrynook.com/poem/doubt-and-faith.
[9] PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) studies are coordinated by the OECD.
[10] Charles M. Blow, 'The Kindling of Change', Op-ed, *The New York Times* (5 February 2011), A-15.
[11] Theodore Porter, *Trust in Numbers* (Princeton University Press 1995), 74.
[12] Matthew 25:29.
[13] Robert K. Merton, 'The Matthew Effect of Science II', *Isis*, 79 (1988), 609.
[14] Fred Shapiro, ed., *The Yale Book of Quotations* (Yale University Press, 2006), 231.
[15] Kurt Danziger, *Constructing the Subject: Historical Origins of Psychological Research* (Cambridge University Press 1990), 109.
[16] Porter, *Trust in Numbers*, 8.
[17] George Santayana, *Scepticism and Animal Faith* (Dover Publication, 1923), Ch. 9.

GYULA WLASSICS: POLITICIAN AND POLYMATH

János Martonyi

In the life of Gyula Wlassics, 'the paths of three generations converge, and two great eras are clearly delineated. He became a descendant of his own age and a contemporary of posterity'.[1] This is how the *Pesti Napló* (Pest Daily) editorial of 31 March 1937 begins. And Wlassics was indeed a remarkable and influential figure in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Hungarian history. His life and unique oeuvre span decades, connecting the pre- and post-First World War eras of Hungarian history, and exerting an influence during both the happier and the gloomier epochs.

But the oeuvre of Wlassics spans not only eras, but also the most diverse domains of human achievement. Within a single life, he combined science and education with public activity, practice with theory, legislation with law enforcement, Hungarian with European, and national with international, and all in such a way that—while excelling in all the activities he put his hand to—he also created a mutually enriching, harmonious unity between them. Wlassics was at once a scientist, teacher, politician, legislator, and judge, and in consequence, we can consider him a defining and outstanding figure in Hungarian history. He was given only one—fortunately long—life, but his oeuvre could have profitably occupied several lifetimes. Every aspect of his creative life could be the subject of an independent study, or even a book, and the length and scope of this essay do not allow for an in-depth appraisal. Thus, in lieu of a comprehensive biography, it will suffice to trace some of his most outstanding achievements.[2]

As a young lawyer of thirty, he penned a remarkable study. His work *A tettesség és a részesség tana* (A Study of Perpetration and Complicity) is still mandatory reading for practitioners of criminal law theory.[3] He participated in the codification of the criminal code and the legal framework for criminal procedures, and in recognition of his numerous studies he was made a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1886, then a full member from 1892, and later became its vice-president. From 1890 he was a professor of criminal law at the University of Budapest, and from 1892 he served as a member of parliament, where he put forward the bill on the free practice of religion. In recognition of his influential speeches and active participation in legislative work, he was appointed minister of religion and public education in 1895.

Some of the outstanding results of Wlassics's tenure as minister for culture, which spanned a total of eight years under three successive governments, included 1,100 new public schools, most of which provided free education, an improvement in the quality of the upper tiers of the public education system, the transformation of public schools into more specialized grammar schools, the introduction of economic and commercial education, the revision of the secondary school curriculum, the introduction of art lectures, the strengthening of teacher training, the further development of the Eötvös College, the granting of foreign scholarships, the introduction of an adjunct institution in higher education, the transformation of the examination procedure in medical training and, above all, the opening of the humanities, medicine, and pharmacy to women, as well as the introduction of compulsory primary-school education for girls, the relocation of the Budapest university clinics and the University of Applied Sciences, the construction of the buildings and clinics for the University of Kolozsvár (now Babeș-Bolyai University, in Cluj-Napoca), the Museum of Fine Arts, the Museum of Applied Arts, and so on... This liberal minister in a liberal government defended academic freedom: 'to investigate whether philosophical systems accord in every respect with public opinion, or to subject them to inquisitions, would be impossible to reconcile with academic freedom'.[4] It was during his tenure as minister that the laws on the free practice of religion were implemented, and Judaism was declared an established state religion. As he said, he wanted an education system that was national but also of a European standard, and it can safely be said that he succeeded. However, he achieved significant and lasting results not only in education, but also in all other areas within the competence of the Ministry of Culture.

He did all of this without ever abandoning the ever-expanding and deepening scientific work he had begun as a young thinker. He gained fame and recognition through his studies on criminal law, and his monograph discussing the issues of culpability and complicity won the Sztrókay Prize from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Together with his many other works, he contributed to establishing the empirical foundations of Hungarian criminal law and criminal procedural law, with insights that remain valid and useful to this day. In October 1890, he received the 'royal decree' on his appointment as professor of criminal law and the law of criminal procedure at the University of Budapest. Thus, when after eight years of government service he returned to his university chair, he was actually continuing his never-abandoned academic and teaching activity, which was popular among students. Nor did he give up politics when he entered academia, and starting from 1892, he was elected five times as Member of Parliament. His interests gradually went beyond the traditional field of criminal law and, in line with his public activities, he increasingly turned to legal history and public law, and later, primarily in response to external, international circumstances, he wrote extremely important studies in the field of international law and geopolitics.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Wlassics's scientific work is that his thinking was always in response to the circumstances of reality, and his theories were always based on questions and challenges posed by that reality. When criminal court practice raised the dilemma of establishing guilt and complicity, and even causality, Wlassics immediately understood the importance of these questions, systematized them, and drew the necessary theoretical conclusions, thus also providing practical guidelines for judgement and sentencing. He simultaneously reacted to events and shaped them, sensing what was important and what timely, and developing the necessary theoretical framework for understanding these phenomena. This is why politics, public life, and science are inseparable in the life and work of Wlassics, and why his thought and activities have had a lasting impact on public life and science, both responding to reality and shaping history. He was a legal scholar in the truest sense of the word. But for him—as István Egyed wrote—'law is not merely a discipline that interests a particular group of people, but an idea and a national programme that encompasses all of life'.[5] And indeed, if law was for Wlassics an idea that encompassed all of life, then it must respond to every aspect of life, as well as process and analyse everything that happens both domestically and in the wider world. Attention and analysis could not be limited to the field of 'law' as narrowly defined, but must be extended to all areas that affect and influence public life, meaning the life of the community and thus the nation.

From the long list of his studies and the wide range of his subject matter, it is sufficient to draw attention to just a few examples. After his work on criminal law, he wrote a paper on cultural policy issues, and in 1911 *Az 1867: XII. t.c. jogi természete* (The Legal Nature of Article XII of 1867), which is to date the most thorough and influential analysis of the public legal system established by the Austro-Hungarian Compromise.[6] Its starting point is the important statement that 'it is inadmissible to mix the law with political considerations that are alien to it and disturb it. […] As such, we must be especially careful not to dress public law in political garb. When it came to Hungarian public law, the majority of Austrian public-law specialists were willing to help salvage from the wreckage of "unified Imperial policy" the basic tenets of Hungarian public law. They were willing to replace legal provisions with political provisions.'[7] From a public law standpoint, Wlassics subjected to thorough criticism the diverse range of laws that could be traced back to the concept of a unified Austrian empire, and showed that in the 'Compromise' legislation establishing the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Hungary 'maintained full sovereignty, and was limited only internationally, not constitutionally, by the Compromise. […] For us, only what forms part of Hungarian law is binding.' He refers to a study by István Tisza, which held that 'only cases in which commonality is recognized by both legal systems can be considered shared cases'. And if the depth of case-law precedent was 'unequally divided (between Hungarian and Austrian jurisprudence), then based on the nature of the matter at hand, and with due consideration given to the equality of the two

legislatures, the text which most narrowly applies will be given priority'. He also quotes Gyula Andrássy Jr., who remarked that 'Joint cases do not owe their origin to imperial law, but to the concordance of Hungarian and Austrian laws'.[8]

According to the conclusions of the study, 'In Article XII of 1867, all provisions that apply to the procedures for handling common matters are to be considered international treaties. […] Article XII of 1867 in no manner infringes upon the sovereignty of Hungarian legislation'. From the latter follows the additional clause, according to which 'No law besides Hungarian law is binding in Hungary'. As for the manner of dealing with joint matters, 'the method of agreement shall also be recognized as the method of modification'. However, his most important proposal, and indeed his main aim in writing the study, was to make 'the thinking of the Hungarian nation more uniform in matters of public law'. Indeed, he even writes, 'I go further: we must reach a level whereby our legal thinking is mature enough and our arguments sufficiently powerful that we can inspire and improve the public law literature of Austria as well'.[9]

He goes on to analyse matters that seem to turn in the direction of legal history, but in fact pertain to Hungarian public law, i.e. the constitutional and international legal situation, which most directly and sensitively leads him also into the domain of foreign policy. In 1913, he wrote a comprehensive study elaborating the foreign-policy thinking of Gyula Andrássy. Even with today's eyes—perhaps especially with today's eyes—it is a fascinating read.[10] This work, *A gróf Andrássy Gyula külpolitikája* (The Foreign Policy of Count Gyula Andrássy) provides a comprehensive analysis of the outstanding statesman of the Dual Monarchy, under the pretext of a report on the book written by Ede Wertheimer about Gyula Andrássy and his era. It is in itself remarkable that one of the outstanding figures of Hungarian history wrote so extensively about another outstanding Hungarian politician who preceded him chronologically, and who also played an important role in European history. (Andrássy was born in 1828, Wlassics in 1852). Wlassics's study underlines precisely the European dimension of Andrássy's activities, and draws parallels between Andrássy's age and the time when the study was written. As he writes, 'The Balkan problem was on the agenda in Andrássy's time, as it is today. Then, as now, the peace of Europe revolved around how the Dual Monarchy could arrive at an understanding with Russia. Even today, even then, we had to protect our interests against rising threats. In his day, as in ours, there was a danger that the Balkan states might become the instruments of Russian pan-Slavism.'[11]

Wlassics calls Andrássy and Otto von Bismarck the two outstanding political figures of their time, and states that both were 'true politicians to their very souls, with all the power of their intellect. […] The task of diplomacy had by then a wider ambit than merely gauging the atmosphere of courts and noble salons. Forming

an understanding of the souls of nations and peoples was considered the primary task of modern diplomacy. [However,] they were markedly different. Bismarck could almost have been said to loathe parliamentarism and the system of ministerial political responsibility. Andrássy, by contrast, though he saw the many dark aspects of parliamentarism, nevertheless saw in it also the lifeblood of the Hungarian Constitution, so often suspended and revived, as well as the indispensable, organic safeguard of the Hungarian national state, and thus sought to preserve it intact.'[12]

The study analyses all areas of European politics in their geopolitical connections, then states that 'true mastery of diplomacy with all its bright qualities in complete harmony' was to be found in Andrássy's Eastern policy. The primary goal of this policy was to 'give the Dual Monarchy a leading role in the Balkan problem', as part of the complicated system of relations and competition between the great powers—namely Germany, Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and Austria–Hungary. According to Wlassics, the Congress of Berlin 'prevented a world war'. As he writes, 'Andrássy's greatness as a statesman and his diplomatic skills are demonstrated by the work that he performed at the Berlin Congress'.[13]

In 1913, Wlassics already felt the danger that this world war had been forestalled 'only' for a few decades. Nevertheless, it was thanks to this reprieve that Hungary was able to experience one of the most successful eras in its history under externally stable conditions. However, Andrássy resigned after the signing of the Dual Alliance between Germany and Austria–Hungary in October 1879. On this, Wlassics writes the following: 'He saw that the time had come for him to retire. He often remarked that over the course of his life he had noted how like actresses, dancers, and beautiful women, statesmen and diplomats tended to cling on for too long, and never retired at the right moment; he did not wish to follow their example.'[14] However, the writing of this study, which is of outstanding importance from both a historical and a foreign-policy perspective, did not distract Wlassics from his 'narrower' profession. He continued to be concerned with the practical issues of public law and public administration, and submitted a proposal for the reform of the administrative judiciary.[15]

In 1914 he still had time to return to another extremely timely and important issue of Hungarian public administration in a study entitled *Az önkormányzat és felügyeleti jog* (Self-Government and Supervisory Law).[16] However, the outbreak of the First World War naturally diverted his attention away from this work and towards the outside world. In 1915 he published a study entitled *A német világpolitika* (German World Policy),[17] followed by *Hadifogoly és nemzetközi jog* (The Prisoner of War and International Law)[18] later the same year. The learned criminal lawyer could not help engaging in a legal and moral analysis of the events that were shaking the world and his nation, all the more so since it became obvious at the beginning of the world

war that millions could be, and ultimately would be, prisoners of war on both sides. The situation of these people must be settled by respecting basic moral norms and the legal norms based upon them, encapsulated in international legal regulations. In 1917 he wrote a study entitled *A semlegesség a világháborúban* (Neutrality in the World War),[19] which was written based on extensive research and received serious international attention. Its most important proposal was that after the war, the law of war and within it the questions of neutrality should be regulated in detail by international law.

Towards the end of 1918, he could see that matters were extremely grave. '[T]he situation is terrible […] we have made many, many mistakes […] and the biggest was that we imagined ourselves to be at the centre of the world, and never made serious efforts to nurture international contacts', he wrote in a letter to Győző Concha.[20] The war thus made Wlassics, who had already made a lasting name for himself in the fields of criminal law, then public law and within that administrative law, into a consummate analyst of the most timely and difficult issues of international law. In this context, he wrote his most significant study on international law in 1919, entitled *Adalékok a tartós jogbéke intézményeihez* (Additions to the Institutions of Permanent Peace by Law),[21] in which he makes proposals for the post-war international order.

It is no coincidence that the title of this foundational work on international law contains the term 'peace by law'. In the very first sentence of the study, Wlassics states that 'after the Great War, the degree to which the development of the conditions for lasting peace can be perfected will determine the future character of international law'. International law would thus be shaped by the conditions of peace, but at the same time peace itself depended on international law—peace must be ensured by this law. As he writes, 'the foundation of this work is the establishment of a League of Nations and its most important pillars: mandatory international arbitration, a permanent international court, an international conciliation council with mandatory procedures preceding any declaration of war, the sanction of the judgments of international courts (international executive power), and the freedom of the sea. There will be a steady, gradual limitation on armaments, the enforcement of the will of the people in foreign affairs, and an end to secret treaties.' This was because, in his view, 'humanity's community of interests is a stronger force than any mutual hatred or tension'. But Wlassics was no dreamy utopian. He knew that there was an implicit question mark at the end of this sentence, but he formulates the proposition as a moral imperative in the Kantian *sollen* sense. Hence why he quotes the 'central idea of the Holy Father's discourse on peace, which states that the future world order should be based on the moral power of law, the rule of international justice, and legality. […] The Pope's famous peace speech expressed the thoughts of the entire Christian world. He was imbued with the hope […] that the law will, in a moral sense, mark a new beginning for humanity.'[22]

In order to establish lasting peace, Wlassics emphasized, and indeed was one of the prominent proponents of, a permanent international organization, the League of Nations. In this study, he refers to President Wilson's famous Fourteen Points, 'according to which a general union of peoples should be established. It must be ensured that the political independence and territorial integrity of large and small states be ensured by mutual guarantees'.[23] Then, in order to prove that a 'union of peoples is not a new idea', he presents the pertinent thoughts and proposals of Dante, Dubois, Campanella Saint Pierre, Bentham, and Kant in a comprehensive historical overview. He pays special attention to the latter two. Bentham bases his proposal for permanent peace on the sovereignty of peoples, with the fundamental notion that the pillar which maintains the international legal order is mutual trust and respect between peoples. Kant, he writes, 'deals with our question in several of his works, but his small and significant work *Zum ewigen Frieden* (On Eternal Peace) (1706) was frequently discussed during the war, though it has been cited far more often than it has been read. But for us Hungarians now, at a time when others wish to divide up states as though they were mere lumps of stone, the great philosopher's categorical statement that states have souls is genuinely uplifting. They should not be treated as mere things.' He goes on: 'Kant considers it unlawful for states to interfere in the constitution and governance of other states. This is how equality, the right to self-determination, and integrity can be established as the pillars of eternal peace.'[24]

After discussing matters related to the Interparliamentary Union, then his criticisms of the Hague peace conferences and a presentation of ideas for organizations to be established to ensure lasting peace, Wlassics turns to his own proposals: 'I had no doubt that this world catastrophe represented a monumental turning point in the history of humanity, and that we must take a great step towards the much-mocked perpetual peace, as perhaps an unattainable ideal, in order to achieve the legal status of lasting peace. The natural basis for this is an alliance of peoples. But the prerequisite for this is that all states must first conduct an unflinching appraisal of their own arrangements. Those things required to fulfil the ideals of a democratic state and a democratic government will vigorously seek to assert themselves everywhere and in all directions. […] The basis of the future international legal order', he writes in a declarative manner, setting out the ideal to be attained, 'will be the alliance of peoples. An equal association of free, sovereign peoples who will place their international disputes under the rule of law and will of their own volition place themselves under an obligation to submit their disputes to the procedure determined by international law.' However, legitimate doubts and concerns immediately arise: 'As I write these lines, I am reading the strict armistice conditions established by our adversaries, and just as they cast a dark shadow over the conditions of peace, so they cast a dark shadow over my faith in the alliance of nations, because it can securely bear the new world order of lasting peace only if its internal cohesion is not overcome by the destructive poison of desperation and excessive humiliation. Anyone who

truly desires a new world order based on the alliance of peoples must take care that the defeated do not suffer so grievously at the peace congress that incurable wounds are inflicted upon nations […]. If the peoples of the world genuinely hope that the peace congress ending the current war will mark a step forward for the progress of humanity, the dawn of a new era, then they must not allow the defeated to be burdened by the weight of an injustice that shall inflame their blood and national pride.' The study concludes with the following sentence: 'Such treatment would not be in Europe's interest. Such treatment would not represent the justice necessary to ensure lasting legal peace and the promised new legal and moral world order.'[25]

In 1919 he published a study entitled *Az önrendelkezési jog* (The Right to Self-Determination),[26] followed in 1920 by *Béke és a magyar kérdés* (Peace and the Hungarian Question).[27] The tragic developments for Hungary following the end of the war thus inevitably foregrounded Hungary's destiny for the learned international lawyer and the politician. That is why he wrote an English-language work entitled 'The Right of Self Determination'[28] in 1922, and in the same year published a highly influential and exceptionally valuable study entitled *A kisebbségi védelem anyagi és alaki joga* (The Material and Formal Rights of Minority Protection),[29] which in many ways remains a guiding influence to this day.

Within the timeless oeuvre of Wlassics as a whole, this study on minority protection is particularly—even alarmingly—timely. His findings on the actual situation of national minorities are still valid today, and although his proposals have been partially implemented, they by no means meet the requirements he defined in terms of substance and actual application. His starting point is that the protection of minorities cannot be considered an internal matter for a state, but 'a tissue of issues that are subject to international legal settlement and international protection. […] That state law is no longer an obstacle to an international resolution protecting minority rights is most resoundingly proven by the various treaties that ended the Great War', which 'also obliged our neighbouring states to protect minorities.'[30] In his view, the protection of minorities forms a category of internal affairs (since it does formally concern a state's dealings with its own citizens) 'which in its entirety also requires an international solution. […] Intensive study must seek to establish the maximum level of minority protection that can be reconciled with the goal of state unity, so as not to conflict with the requirements of a state's interest in internal unity. The key idea should be that minorities can engage in their national and religious life to the fullest extent possible within the modern constitutional democratic state. They should be able to dispose of the institutions, organizations, individual and *collective rights* as fully as can be allowed, ensuring the undisturbed continuity of their own national and religious life.'[31] Wlassics therefore also demanded collective rights, thus laying the foundation for one of the most important tenets of modern Hungarian minority protection policy. But it also refers to the connection between

the protection of minorities on the one hand and peace and security on the other: 'if it is true that one of the greatest obstacles to world peace is the oppression of nationalities, if it is true that the concept of a modern democratic state cannot tolerate the oppression of minorities, then who dares doubt that the issue of minority protection is directly before us as a global problem?'[32] Hence, he argues, 'the idea must be propagated and elevated in the public consciousness that every state, even in the absence of international pressure, has an ethical and legal obligation to provide the most complete minority protection possible in the prevailing local circumstances'. It is necessary to clarify the question of 'the extent to which the principle of state unity can be reconciled with the autonomous expansion of nationalities as collective personalities in the particular situation a state finds itself in. A stable line must be found somewhere between mere federalism and thoroughgoing autonomy. But maximalism should be the guide. The differing situations of states will not allow for rigid uniformity […], the guiding principle should be the idea that where such autonomy is possible it should be granted, as from it the unity of the state can only draw strength: narrow-mindedness will ultimately prove self-defeating.'[33] Even today, these points could not be articulated more clearly or forcefully.

The most important practical proposal of the study is that, in order to oversee the safeguarding of minority rights, a 'separate unbiased, completely impartial international committee should be organized, under the aegis of the League of Nations'. This committee would also have to be granted the power of sanction, as the only way to ensure that this 'surveillance organization' would do more than merely look good on paper. However, Wlassics went beyond the control committee in the field of minority protection institutions. 'I warmly support the Tribunal des Nationalitées, as a separate court, which, as a court, would decide on nationality issues according to the same principles and procedures as the international court.' This would be necessary, he points out, because 'here we are not talking about disputes between states, but matters between states and their own citizens'.[34]

Wlassics therefore simultaneously points out the dangers, makes suggestions for solutions and, to a large extent, foresees the future, our present. His institutional proposals were implemented—albeit partially and incompletely—in their essential terms. It was also good to see that 'in our age, minority protection is no longer the dream of a few enthusiasts'. The realization of the principle that 'the power of positive legal provisions contained in international treaties and the alliance of nations also provide a guarantee for the serious fulfilment of the obligations undertaken'[35] has yet to be realized, and indeed the process leading in that direction—begun in no small part based on the proposals made by Wlassics in this study—is still far from finished.

It would be a mistake to assume that this incredibly fruitful scholarly activity in any way curtailed Wlassics's political and public activities. He was an MP for four

parliamentary terms, until 1905, and in 1906, the monarch appointed him president of the Administrative Court. He held this high office for more than twenty-five years, until 1933. From 1906 to 1918 he sat in the House of Magnates (The upper house of the Hungarian Parliament), and was its speaker from June to November 1918, meaning that it fell to him to close the House of Magnates on 16 November of that year. In 1927, as president of the Public Administrative Court, he became a member and then speaker of the re-established upper house, established on the basis of Article 22 of 1926, which was drafted with his participation.

Among the range of high public offices, the only one he never held was that of prime minister. The simple reason for this is that he twice turned down invitations to become prime minister. First, at the end of the coalition period, Apponyi and Andrássy proposed his appointment as prime minister, and secondly, on 11 October 1918, at the suggestion of Sándor Wekerle, the monarch offered him the position, but he turned the proposal down.[36]

It would be an impossible undertaking to list all the domestic and international organizations, associations, societies, and bodies of which Wlassics, who spoke and wrote excellently in German, French, Italian, and English, was president or member of. Internationally, it is worth noting that he is a member of the International Society of Comparative Law, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, and the International Diplomatic Academy in Paris.

In 1897 the monarch awarded him the Iron Cross first class, in 1916 he was granted the rank of baron, and in 1926 he received the Grand Cross of the Hungarian Order of Merit. In 1921 he was awarded the grand prize of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The justification stated that 'in the field of international law, he showed the correct way to protect our well-conceived national interests'. In 1933, he became an honorary doctor (*honoris causa*) of the University of Szeged. Among the many high honours he received, perhaps the most important for us today is his membership of the Order of the Hungarian Corvin Chain, which was created as a new and most prestigious award in the decree signed by the regent, Miklós Horthy, and Kunó Klebelsberg on 11 October 1930. The twelve members—Albert Berzeviczy, Ernő Dohnányi, Ferenc Herczeg, Jenő Hubay, Sándor Korányi, László Ravasz, Pál Teleki, György Zala, Kunó Klebelsberg, Bálint Hóman, and Bertalan Karlovszky—chose to grant Wlassics membership, and until 1936 he served as president of the Order. In 1936, with his health deteriorating, he resigned from this position, and the members elected Hóman as his successor.[37]

He died on 30 March 1937, at the age of eighty-five. He was buried on 3 April and the regent, the prime minister, members of the government, and the leading figures in the country's political and scientific life attended his funeral. 'He worked until

his candle went out, and alongside his illustrious achievements in public law, he made important contributions to the literature of public law and international law. Through his work, Hungary gained many true friends in the legal public opinion of the world', was the judgement of the *Pesti Napló* obituary cited at the start of this article.[38] The nation bade a dignified farewell to this giant of Hungarian public life and science. But his thoughts, as well as the spirituality, humanity, and moral values which those thoughts embodied, have remained with us.

The main task and responsibility of the Order of the Hungarian Corvin Chain and its members is to ensure that the message of Gyula Wlassics's oeuvre remains with us, and that his life, dedicated to the service of the nation, serves as an example for future generations.

Translated by Thomas Sneddon

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[1] 'Báró Wlassics Gyula' (Baron Gyula Wlassics), *Pesti Napló*, Budapest (31 March 1937).
[2] This study is primarily based on Miklós Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve' (The Oeuvre of Gyula Wlassics), *Zalaegerszegi Füzetek 8*, ed. Imre Kapiller (Zalaegerszeg: Millecentenáriuni Közalapítvány, 2002), 9–36; and on Dr Gábor Hamza's commemorative text in The Hungarian Academy of Sciences IX Department's 'Jubilee Commemorations', https://mta-hu/íx-osztaly/jubileumi-megemlékézekések -106146.
[3] Gyula Wlassics, *A tettesség és részesség tana* (A Study of Culpability and Complicity) (Budapest: Akadémiai Értesítő, 1983), 347.
[4] Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve', 17.
[5] Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve', 26.
[6] *Franklin-Társulat* (Franklin Society) (Budapest: Magyar Irodalmi Intézet és Könyvnyomda, 1911), Országgyűlési Könyvtár, 'DTT-Magyar Jogi Portál', www.ogyk.hu.
[7] *Franklin-Társulat*, 38
[8] *Franklin-Társulat*, 38.
[9] *Franklin-Társulat*, 39.
[10] Gyula Wlassics, 'Gróf Andrássy Gyula külpolitikája' (The Foreign Policy of Count Gyula Andrássy), *Budapesti Szemle*, vol. CI, vol. V (l913).
[11] Wlassics, 'Gróf Andrássy Gyula külpolitikája', l.
[12] Wlassics, 'Gróf Andrássy Gyula külpolitikája', e.
[13] Wlassics, 'Gróf Andrássy Gyula külpolitikája', 22.
[14] Wlassics, 'Gróf Andrássy Gyula külpolitikája', 25.
[15] Zoltán L. Lomnici and Gyula Wlassics, President of the Hungarian Administrative Court, 'Reformjavaslat a közigazgatási bíráskodásról' (Reform Proposal on the Administrative Judiciary), *Zalaegerszegi Füzetek*, 127.
16 Gyula Wlassics, *Önkormányzat és felügyeleti jog* (Self-Government and Supervisory Law) (Budapest, 1914).
[17] Gyula Wlassics, *A német világpolitika* (German International Policy) (Budapest, 1915).
[18] Gyula Wlassics, *Hadifogoly és nemzetközi jog* (The Prisoner of War and International Law) (Budapest, 1915).
[19] Gyula Wlassics, *A semlegesség a világháborúban* (Neutrality in the World War) (Budapest, 1917).

[20] Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve', 24.
[21] Gyula Wlassics, 'Adalékok a tartós jogbéke intézményeihez' (Additions to the Institutions of Permanent Legal Peace), *Jogállam*, XVIII/1–2, (1919), 1-47.
[22] Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve', 2.
[23] Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve', 4.
[24] Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve', 4.
[25] Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve', 47.
[26] Gyula Wlassics, 'Az önrendelkezési jog, Plebiscitum. A nemzeti kisebbségek védelme' (The Right of Self-Determination, Plebiscite, and the Protection of National Minorities), *Budapesti Szemle* (1919), 1–50.
[27] Gyula Wlassics, 'Béke és a magyar kérdés' (Peace and the Hungarian Question), *Magyar Jogi Szemle* (1920), 385–393.
[28] Gyula Wlassics, *The Right of Self Determination* (Budapest, 1922).
[29] Gyula Wlassics, *A kisebbségi védelem anyagi és eljárási joga* (The Material and Formal Rights of Minority Protection). See also Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve', 25, and a special print from the 1921–1922 issue of *Külügyi Szemle*.
[30] Wlassics, *The Right of Self Determination*, 3.
[31] Wlassics, *The Right of Self Determination*, 6.
[32] Wlassics, *The Right of Self Determination*, 6.
[33] Wlassics, *The Right of Self Determination*, 7.
[34] Wlassics, *The Right of Self Determination*, 10.
[35] Wlassics, *The Right of Self Determination*, 15.
[36] Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve', 24.
[37] Mann, 'Wlassics Gyula életműve', 27.
[38] 'Báró Wlassics Gyula'.

ON THE POLITICAL THOUGHT OF LÁSZLÓ OTTLIK

Zoltán Pető

László Ottlik (1895–1945) was one of the defining personalities of Hungarian political thought during the interwar period. As one becomes acquainted with his writings, the image that unfolds before the reader is of a 'big picture' thinker blessed with versatile talent, but his name has been virtually forgotten in today's Hungarian culture,[1] and his work still awaits thorough evaluation and perhaps a deeper understanding.[2] Ottlik's oeuvre covered not only political science, but also sociology, aesthetics, jurisprudence, and political journalism. The philosophical essence of politics, the concept of majority and minority, the relationship between the masses and modernity, modern party systems and party politics, and the question of the origin of sovereignty or state power concerned him just as much as a specific interpretation of democracy, a critique of liberalism in line with the zeitgeist, or evaluation of the new types of dictatorship of the time, particularly Italian fascism and the phenomena pertaining to German National Socialism. In fact, he spoke about all the issues of his time, even those only loosely connected with politics. His analyses did not simplify questions of social theory into strictly economic parameters: his approach instead attempted to supply a complex, realistic picture of the contemporary functioning of parliamentarism, and the contemporary theory, interpretation, and problems of democracy and even dictatorship, taking human nature into account.

In terms of the Hungarian tradition of political thought, Ottlik's greatest merit may have lain in his attempt to introduce into political science a wider theoretical horizon than was permitted by the jurisprudential approach of late-nineteenth-century thinkers such as Gyula Kautz, Ignácz Kuncz, and Győző Concha. In fact, Ottlik can be considered one of the first high-quality domestic practitioners of political philosophical thinking, which had already taken shape in the Western world, following antecedents in antiquity and the Middle Ages, at the latest with the tradition of Renaissance political thought (Machiavelli, More, Bacon), and continuing through the work of Burke, Tocqueville, and Mill. Within the university framework, Ottlik tried to cultivate a theoretical vocabulary that met the standards of Western political science of the time, and to carry on a dialogue with its most important authors. However, his unfortunately premature death at the end of the Second World War means that his professional biography remains fragmentary.[3] His knowledge and extraordinary preparedness are immediately apparent based on the usual references of his extant writings: the authors he liked to quote included

Oswald Spengler, Robert Michels, Vilfredo Pareto, Eduard Spranger, Carl Schmitt, Max Weber, Max Scheler, and Arnold Toynbee.

His biographer, József Szabadfalvi, calls Ottlik a 'conservative social scientist'. Ottlik himself did not use the terms 'conservative' or 'conservatism' to characterize his ideological position—rather, whenever he uses such words, regardless of context, it is always in the literal sense of 'to conserve'. However, the development of his worldview was undoubtedly strongly influenced by the thinking then prevalent in the modern natural sciences: positivism and Darwinism play an important role in his thinking as a young man. Nevertheless, an early work of his written in critique of Marxism, which rejects the 'authority' of enlightened reason in favour of the authority of ancestral tradition, undoubtedly shows a conservative strain in Ottlik's thinking. This was the work that essentially launched his career as a social scientist.

> [A]ll authority in knowledge and experience comes from the elders, meaning also ancestors, and ultimately the authority of the past. God is also 'father'; his authority is the very first ancestor: the authority of a being older than all existence. The past […] is an integral part of the present: that which is memory in the individual consciousness is tradition in the social consciousness.

Ottlik was not a Christian thinker in the strict sense, though the idea of God and divine Providence are undoubtedly present in his work. However, he rarely placed ideas of a religious origin in a political context, still less in organic unity with his formulations based on post-Kantian philosophical epistemology or the natural scientific worldview.[4] The young Ottlik was undoubtedly attracted to positivism, and in his work *The Social Theory of Marxism* he rejects 'historical materialism'. He does so, like the logical positivists, precisely on the grounds that it is not in fact a natural science, but a metaphysical theory operating with a concept of substantiality.[5] With reference to Herbert Spencer, he formulates his critique thus:

> We do not attach great importance to the metaphysical debate between materialism and spiritualism, because we share Herbert Spencer's view that the truth cannot be expressed by either materialism or spiritualism.[6]

However, four years later, in his philosophical work entitled *A társadalom filozófiája* (The Philosophy of Society), Ottlik 'establishes that the categories and methods of the natural sciences are unsuitable for the purposes of social science (sociology).[7] It can be considered certain that Ottlik rejected Lockean theories of a 'social contract'. As he put it in his work *A politikai rendszerek* (The Political Systems):

> There has never been an actual instance of power being created in the way the speculative theory of popular sovereignty envisions: on the basis of a voluntary agreement between independent and equal individuals and the contract thus established between them.[8]

In Ottlik's view, in order for the idea of something like a 'social contract' to be born at all, it is first necessary that 'all the normal forms of power disappear'.[9] He maintained, instead, that the birth of a new state power actually takes place through violence:

> [a] gang-like clash of small and large groups, terrorist actions, and finally through the subjugation and organization of the formless 'atomized' mass—or as a result of the charismatic power of an outstanding individual.[10]

Ottlik argued that the 'dogma of popular sovereignty' considers its task to be the protection of equality, but this cannot be fulfilled, since power exists only where there is discipline, where 'one commands and the other obeys'.[11] If everyone commanded and no one obeyed, then no one would have power. Let us add that, in Ottlik's view, such a state would essentially mean anarchy in the sense of the Hobbesian state of nature, rather than some egalitarian utopia where social and class 'oppression' are abolished and a kind of anarcho-communist Canaan is achieved as a result of the miraculous evolution of the human condition. In his work critiquing Marxism, with reference to the witty English Catholic social philosopher G. K. Chesterton, he put it as follows:

> All socialists today still unwaveringly believe in the omnipotence of reason, and believe that man is an absolutely mathematical 'creature', although Gilbert Keith Chesterton rightly says, a madman is not someone who has lost his reason but someone who has lost everything but his reason. […] [T]he moral nature of man does not change over time, and it is only through changes in knowledge that one can differentiate between the types of people of different ages. There is really no question of a person progressing morally, at most we can speak of intellectual progress, but even here the depth of specialized knowledge is accompanied by an increasingly narrow focus and overall limitation.[12]

In the same work, he also expresses his strong scepticism towards the ideals of the French Revolution of 1789 (liberty, equality, fraternity):

> The ideas that first rose to prominence during the French Revolution, although they later became the constructive ideals of several murderers, represent the most peculiar, destructive, antisocial passions, which are firmly chained to the depths of consciousness.[13]

In contrast to liberal-democratic and socialist theories, he did not envision the structure of society in terms of an egalitarian, atomistic model consisting of perfectly equal building blocks. Like most conservatives, he had little interest in putting forward plans for an ideal society. It seems that for Ottlik, the 'normal pattern of power' was some form of power or governance based on an organic hierarchy, in a community comprising leaders and subordinates. In his view, the concept of society already includes *ab ovo* the idea of hierarchy: we cannot therefore speak of an egalitarian society, since equality is directly contrary to sociality. Complete equality is only found outside society: it is possible 'before' or 'after' the formation of society. According to the legal interpretation of his works entitled *Jog és társadalom* (Law and Society) and *A társadalomtudomány filozófiája* (The Philosophy of Social Science), published in 1926, 'the power of law is superior power, or rather the other way around, since only superior social power can be called law, or state power' Ottlik reformulates this as follows:

> Accordingly, one can only talk about law and the state where such consciously superior power is present. [...] In other words, 'that community is sovereign which possesses superior power' and indeed 'we reach the limits of law at the frontiers of the state'.[14]

On account of his aristocratic values and perhaps also his upbringing, he did not really conceive of the primary bearers of this sovereignty being the economic elite, but rather a natural aristocracy predicated on moral and intellectual excellence. Ottlik argues that the selection of a political elite with an aristocratic spirit is beneficial because in aristocratic societies the sons of statesmen themselves grow up in an atmosphere of incessant public activity.

The 'aristocratic sense of self-worth' of certain elements of society is extremely important because it will become an 'indispensable factor in developing the national character'. An aristocracy with a sense of self-worth is therefore, in Ottlik's view, the backbone that always maintains the life of the nation, and which 'has the most favourable conditions for its selection'.[15] The task of the aristocracy is also to maintain the superior ethos of the 'great man' and charismatic genius who founded the society, and to be able to present it to the broad masses of the people as a living example. Ottlik emphasized the social leadership functions of the aristocracy, the professional elite, especially with regard to the Hungarian nobility, which, according to him, was a 'national character-shaping factor' throughout Hungarian history.[16]

Ottlik emphasized that 'a good system of government can only be aristocratic in nature'.[17] At the same time, clearly perceiving that in modern societies the conditions for ensuring the caste-like separation of social strata are no longer present, he also

considered democracy a reality that had to be accepted,[18] and believed it necessary to create a 'new nobility' rooted in the people, in which the traditions, specific ethos, and character of the old feudal nobility would be adapted to fit the changed circumstances of the age. As stated in the study cited above:

> Healthy democracy does not and cannot mean anything except the requirement that the valuable elements of the lower strata of the people always have a way open for them to rise to a rank commensurate with the value of their talents and services.[19]

The establishment of such a 'healthy democracy' is necessary, first of all, for the preservation of the true aristocracy, precisely because if the members of an aristocracy of birth 'do not feel the need to justify their privileged position with commensurate achievements' then decline and decadence will set in, and the society will degenerate. In Ottlik's view, it was precisely this unfortunate process of aristocratic decadence that led to the outbreak of egalitarian revolutions against the aristocratic ideal.

He attributed the decline of the aristocracy of feudal origin in the age of modern revolutions to a 'weakening of will among the holders of power'.[20] He felt that it was not primarily the development of political self-awareness among the masses that led to the revolutionary phenomenon, but rather the weakness and 'disintegration' of the elite. For Ottlik, the masses are fundamentally passive, the transformation from one social form to another is always dominated and directed by the elites, and modern revolutions are actually caused by intra-elite disputes, as in the clash between a comparatively weakened and worn-out noble or feudal elite and emerging new elites. In Ottlik's view, which is in many ways similar to the interpretation of some adherents of so-called 'elite theory' in the social sciences,[21] the relationship between the elite and the masses is constant. Only the composition of the elite changes, not its nature. Ortega y Gasset, often quoted by Ottlik, also approached the relationship between modernity and the phenomenon of the crowd in a similar sense, emphasizing that, given the nature of things, only a minority can lead. One of Ottlik's formulations is particularly reminiscent of the Spanish thinker:

> In reality, the masses and the majority do not have an 'opinion': instincts and emotions rule them; their position will always be determined by the outlined energy relations, which shape 'public opinion' in the intelligent, leading layers of society.[22]

Ottlik also clearly perceived that the relationship between the masses and the elite in modernity is peculiar and paradoxical. The boundary separating modernity from

other eras of human history can on the one hand be grasped precisely in the change of the relational system: the representative of the elite must necessarily cooperate with the masses, and give voice to its particular passions, performing, as it were, an act of identification. As he stated in his 1923 essay *Felelősség és szükségszerűség* (Responsibility and Necessity) with regard to the First World War, the first 'total war', which almost completely destroyed the traditional order and aristocratic, dynastic traditions of Europe:

> The necessity of events increases the more the importance of the crowd in a given era is emphasized, and as example one need only look at the tragically hopeless struggle that even the greatest individuals have waged in vain against the tides of revolution.[23]

Referring to Spengler's epochal work *The Decline of the West*, Ottlik declared that his age was one of 'declining civilization', in which the statesman who stands above the crowd is at the mercy of the 'actual powers' whose representatives, Ottlik argued, were above all 'public opinion', the press and 'larger or smaller social interest groups':

> [T]hose persons who do not adequately express the views of the masses standing behind them are quickly overthrown, and their *formal* power, which is not the same as the actual power established in a society, will sooner or later be swept away by events.[24]

> Just as, in his view, the relationship between the elite and the masses—their opposition and communality—is essentially constant throughout history, so human nature is also constant: Ottlik, in contrast to Marxist and liberal ideas, sees mankind as not entirely a product of circumstance. It cannot be said that 'being determines consciousness'; in history we are confronted by character types with a definite metaphysical foundation, and though they may take different forms, their essence remains the same. In his short work on the history of political systems he puts this idea as follows:

Man is eternal and human types are also eternal types, only society bears the stamp of its age on its forehead, as within it the expression of individual types varies. The 'ordinary man' or 'commoner', who during the Middle Ages remained invisible behind the grim ramparts of the feudal world, now takes centre stage, because today we have 'democracy', meaning that this type has become the ruling class. On the other hand, the type that wore the clanking armour of the medieval lord still demands freedom for himself: this type has now become the American tycoon or European dictator.[25]

TYPOLOGY OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS: DICTATORSHIP AND DEMOCRACY

Ottlik's descriptions of the political systems of the time—considered his most lasting and academically important achievement—can be found in the following works (books and long studies): *Diktatúra és demokrácia* (Dictatorship and Democracy, 1929), *Parlamentárizmus és diktatúra* (Parliamentarianism and Dictatorship, 1932), *A politikai rendszerek története. Középkor és újkor a világháborúig* (History of Political Systems. Middle Ages and Modern Times until the World War, 1940), *A politikai rendszerek* (Political Systems), in *A mai világ képe II: Politikai élet* (Picture of Today's World II: Political Life, 1939), and *Bevezetés a politikába* (Introduction to Politics, 1943). In this study, we primarily base our evaluation on his 1939 work *Political Systems*, which, in our opinion, in addition to being the most detailed and comprehensive among Ottlik's analyses of political systems, also offers the clearest exposition of the author's particular worldview and the peculiarly Ottlikian assessment of the political phenomena of the age.

In his works covering political systems, he described and interpreted the political history of Britain, America, France, Italy, Germany, and Russia, employing a methodology that at times took a more analytical, political science approach, and elsewhere relied on a more essayistic style. The classically informed categorization of state types, which revives the fundamental interpretative categories of Greek philosophy, can be traced back to the state types put forward by Plato and Aristotle. In categorizing specific forms of government, Ottlik notes that:

> Greek political theory already pointed out many 'eternal' problems, which scholars have been trying to answer ever since. The history of political thought must be dealt with, because when we examine ultimate problems, we always find ourselves confronted with the answers given by eminent statesmen of distant epochs, which remain relevant today.[26]

At the same time, Ottlik emphasized that the processes characteristic of ancient societies were merely analogous, and by no means identical, to the processes of modern societies:

> Every state theory only makes sense as long as it is connected to the institutions, spirit, and unique problems of a concrete political reality, a historical society and public life, and is rooted in the consciousness and key questions of the age.[27]

Based on his conclusions, he separated and distinguished the concepts of 'government type' and 'state type'. In his view, only two government types are possible: monarchy

and oligarchy. The state type, meanwhile, is determined by who or on whose behalf the monarchical or oligarchic exercisers of power control and govern the state: if it is for the benefit of one person, then the state type is autocracy, if for the benefit of the 'best' then it is an aristocracy, and if it is for the 'the masses as sovereign' then it is a democracy.[28]

According to Ottlik, the various combinations of the two basic government types and the three state types, in the empirically extant states to be found in history, have generated some extremely complex combinations, and in truth we can only very rarely speak of 'pure' forms that could be interpreted in terms of simplistic categories such as dictatorship or democracy.

A wide range of attitudes may prevail in a given political system, and these may determine the purpose of the state, creating or destroying the conditions necessary for political freedom or justice. As is evident from this, in contrast to liberal theories of state, which make the enforcement of the abstract principle of 'freedom' (encompassing justice and good governance, among much else) dependent on the limitation of state power, for Ottlik, the possibility of 'good order' has very little or nothing to do with the current state type. As in the Platonic or Aristotelian tradition, Ottlik considers the attitude of the ruler(s) to be the decisive influence on the nature of the political order.

A. Autocracy becomes 'tyranny' when power purely serves the personal desires, whims, or obsessions of the ruler, and 'absolutism' if its goal is to serve the deity it is the earthly representation of, or to further the glory of a particularly exalted human community (family, dynasty, or patrimonial state). (Absolutism is, then, a 'theocratic', 'dynastic' or 'enlightened' autocracy, i.e. an autocracy that aligns itself with public or state interests.)

B. Aristocracy is either 'timocratic'—when ambition predominates—or 'plutocratic'—when the emphasis is on wealth, and if the wellbeing of members of the ruling class is the only consideration, and 'patriotic' if the key consideration is the glory of the nation.

C. The political attitude of a democracy is 'socialist' if the wellbeing of society as a whole is the primary consideration, 'pacifist' if the overarching goal is peace and the happiness of the population as the sum of many discrete individuals, 'nationalist' if it regards the people as an eternal, ideologically coherent unity, sees it as a 'nation' and wishes to serve its glory, or 'imperialist', if it seeks to attain this glory through the conquest and subjugation of other peoples and countries.[29]

Highlighting one of the author's most important problems related to the typology of political systems, and now applying it to the specific conditions of his time, we can formulate it as follows: in his view, the debate between 'democracy' and 'dictatorship'—as public opinion and, in part, the theoretical analyses of contemporary political science tended to frame it—is an unhelpful simplification and, ultimately, a false dilemma. There are forms of dictatorship that are compatible with a democratic form of government—such as, according to him, the 'Soviet Russian and German "führer" state'. On the other hand, there exist dictatorships with entirely incompatible worldviews, such as fascism and Bolshevism. According to Ottlik, '[I]n reality it is always easier to create understanding and cooperation between certain dictatorships and so-called democratic states than between differing types of dictatorships'.[30] He argued that the paradigm contrasting 'freedom' and 'oppression' within a dualistic clash between 'democracies' and 'totalitarian states' was objectively false and ideologically motivated:

> In the polemical statements of bourgeois democracies, the 'totalitarian state' [...] is presented as an obvious symptom of mental confusion, against which the 'liberal-democratic state', the salvation of individual freedom, prosperity, and peace, is seen as synonymous with sanity, normality, and health itself.[31]

It should be noted that Ottlik praised British parliamentarism before the outbreak of the Second World War, though with the caveat that he did not consider the 'insular' British form of government a suitable role-model for 'continental' powers even then. From the mid- to late 1930s, the elements that brought his worldview closer to the conservative–liberal position represented by István Bethlen and his circle are clearly present in his journalism. This is unquestionably the case, for instance, in his support for free competitive capitalism in 1931, where Ottlik attributes the higher cultural and social development of humanity to capitalism, clearly in line with the liberal idea of progress. His reference to the 'classic English proverb' ('Democracy is self-government') can be linked to this, when he called the essence of the 'new Hungarian state idea' 'self-governing democracy' in his essay *Pax Hungarica*.[32] In his 1932 study, *Parliamentarism and Democracy*, he characterized British parliamentarism as a veritable school of aristocratic governance, in a positive sense: at that time, he still believed that the character of British governance successfully elevated it above the political currents of the day. The British Parliament so felicitously combined the aristocratic and democratic principles that in it 'the aristocracy of birth increasingly gives place to a purely intellectual and moral aristocracy, which, however, has preserved all the virtues and traditions of an old aristocracy of birth'.[33]

Like Tocqueville, he traced the uniqueness of British development to the independence preserved by the British aristocracy against centralizing power. This is how, in his view, the institution of the British parliament could become the balanced governing body

that 'combines the advantages of aristocracy and democracy: it provides aristocratic governance on the broadest democratic basis'.[34] However, it seems that Ottlik's worldview changed markedly around the time the Second World War broke out: the anglophone political tradition, which he had previously treated with sympathy, seems to have been replaced by a German–Italian orientation, and in parallel, it seems that the British capitalist approach which he had previously praised had lost its appeal for him.

Whereas Ottlik described the Soviet system as a 'hopelessly pathological malformation […] which merely joins the two convergent curves of anarchy and despotism into a single destructive cycle',[35] when it came to the political systems established by German National Socialism and Italian fascism, his view—though hedged with reservations—was fundamentally more positive; a position that could hardly have been expressed in a study written after the end of the Second World War. Ottlik, together with German thinkers such as Martin Heidegger or Carl Schmitt, were frequently optimistic regarding the economic and social results that characterized the first half of the dictatorships led by Mussolini and Hitler, and he imagined that he might have discovered in them the Carlyle archetype of the 'great man'. It is clear that Ottlik, like other intellectuals such as Othmar Spann or Vifredo Pareto, first because of their instinctive and entirely understandable aversion to communism, and secondly because of certain phenomena associated with liberal democracy which they deemed undesirable, turned almost eagerly towards 'fascism', which seemed able to take concrete steps towards the suppression of communism, which they considered the main enemy. This attitude, born of historical experience, can only be understood and evaluated correctly by readers in the modern world if they attempt to put themselves in the mindset of those who lived through the chaos that followed the end of the First World War.[36]

The most problematic element of Ottlik's work for today's readers undoubtedly concerns his views on certain twentieth-century dictatorships, in particular National Socialism and Italian Fascism. In connection with the well-known events of the Second World War, these systems were naturally discredited, and anyone who had formerly evinced sympathy for them was automatically discredited. As Ervin Csizmadia notes:

> The political scientists of the time themselves entered the arena of contemporary political struggles, and could not withstand the collapse of the still-emerging academic institutional system. Instead of a continuation of the relatively peaceful beginnings of the reconstruction effort, the international position and reputation of Hungarian political scientists was gravely undermined by the fact that Hungary had gone over to the 'wrong side', and the words spoken from this side of the divide carried ever less weight among scientists living in democratic systems.[37]

In assessing this problem, it is of course worth bearing in mind that Ottlik expressed his views on these systems before the Second World War. If we look at Ottlik's analyses from this specific context, it can shed light on many interesting points that are missing or distorted from the point of view of the liberal–democratic or communist evaluations and critiques of Nazism and fascism. It is also quite certain that Ottlik was by no means alone in his own time in holding such a point of view, and that the positive elements emphasized in his assessment were widely accepted. As Miklós Szalai puts it:

> Italian fascism—and other European fascist movements—[...] could represent a 'third way' between free-market capitalism and statist socialism, i.e. between two alternatives that most European intellectuals saw as both bad and obsolete. [...] Not only the far-right, but also a significant number of liberal and conservative publicists and social theorists were enthusiastic about fascist Italy during this era.[38]

Ottlik never became a follower of Hitler or Mussolini. As far as we know, he did not join any Hungarian fascist or national socialist party or organization (though we do not know, for instance, whether he had any dealings with Szálasi's Arrow Cross movement), and his relations with the far-right of the time, if they existed, were probably very limited, given his social status, his close relationship with Bethlen, his upbringing, and his aristocratic self-consciousness. Anti-Semitism, for example, was not at all emphasized in Ottlik's work, although there is no doubt that, in line with the contemporary zeitgeist, certain traces can be found in him as well.

Ottlik's thesis that fascism and especially Nazism were democratic in a certain sense can also be divisive. Ervin Csizmadia calls Ottlik's thesis that there is no exclusive opposition between democracies and dictatorships a 'scholarly error'.[39] According to Csizmadia, despite Ottlik's 'gross scholarly errors (consider his paper on the mutual exclusivity of democracy and dictatorship—Ottlik, 1929)', he can be considered a representative at the beginnings of a trend in political science that is 'acceptable even today'.[40]

Determining the extent to which Nazism or fascism can actually be considered democratic phenomena obviously also depends to a great extent on how exactly we interpret the concept of democracy. In terms of today's usage, which mostly equates democracy with the specific ideological concepts and characteristic terminology of modern liberal democracy, or even simply with the concept of 'good governance', it is obviously not. However, since the term democracy in Ottlik's use of the term did not have a completely fixed use and basically did not represent a value theory category, the question should be approached differently. Ottlik seems at times to have understood democracy in terms of 'ruling in the name of the people' (identification) on the one hand, and on the other of expanding social mobility and eliminating

privileges of birth and hereditary differences in social rank. In this sense, Ottlik's view that there was a democratic element to National Socialism and fascism can be considered coherent.

Another issue, of course, is that Ottlik did not really address the specific problem of so-called totalitarianism theory, as emphasized, among others, by Raymond Aron. Although Aron, like Ottlik, believed that in the institutional implementation of the democratic principle, the one-party and the multi-party system represent two typical versions,[41] he argued that there was an 'impenetrable dividing line' between totalitarian and non-totalitarian systems, and that this was more important than whether these are technically democracies or not. He believed that the first principle of Western democracy is respect for rules and laws—at least in principle. This could be summarized as 'the rule of law'[42]—and it remains a significant difference even though these rules and laws are in practice made by specific people, and can be manipulated.[43]

In closing our study, we may draw our conclusions: the work of Ottlik raises many questions which are still of interest today. This is true even if readers' value judgments are radically different from Ottlik's, or, in light of historical experience, they evaluate the dictatorships and bourgeois democracies of the twentieth century quite differently. We nevertheless hope that this short introduction finally makes it clear why it is worth paying attention to this extremely well-prepared political thinker working at the forefront of scholarship in his time. There is no doubt that Ottlik's particular and determined belief in aristocracy stands in direct opposition to all fashions and utopian ideas which, basing society on the principle of equality, are willing to recognize only functional differences between individuals (even if all experience and our observations of the practical functioning of society contradict this). If we consider aristocracy to be the 'rule of the best' then perhaps this concept cannot be fully applied to the nobility as manifested in historical aristocracies. However, if we suggest instead that an aristocrat, i.e. the 'most outstanding person' is not primarily a social class, but rather an intellectual–spiritual type, which can be found in all layers of society, then aristocracy may indeed be a principle that can be affirmed and followed, or at least taken into account, in what Othmar Spann called a 'true state'.

Translated by Thomas Sneddon

[1] Géza Ottlik (1912–1990), the much better-known Hungarian writer, was his cousin.
[2] For this reason, the efforts of József Szabadfalvi are to be welcomed: since the 2000s, he has begun systematically publishing articles on Ottlik's oeuvre, and over the course of last year, he published a shorter monograph, partly using and reworking previously published writings. See: József Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós. Ottlik László (1895–1945)* (A Conservative Statesman and Political Scientist: László Ottlik [1895–1945]) (Dialóg Campus Kiadó–Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, 2019). Szabadfalvi's endeavour marks the first attempt to process the work of László Ottlik in a scholarly manner.
[3] László Ottlik disappeared at the end of the Second World War, in the winter of 1945. Having returned to Hungary and resettled from Kolozsvár (Cluj), he may have lost his life during the Siege of Buda.
[4] According to Szabadfalvi, Ottlik defined his own worldview in a philosophical rather than a religious sense: as a synthesis of the critical neo-Kantianism and the metaphysical idealism of Plato and Bergson. (Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós*, 58).
[5] Cf. Rudolf Carnap, *Überwindung der Metaphysik durch logische Analyse der Sprache* (The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language) (Great Papers Philosophie, Reclam Verlag, 2022).
[6] László Ottlik, *A marxizmus társadalomelmélete – Elméleti kritika és történelmi tanulságok* (The Social Theory of Marxism: Theoretical Criticism and Historical Lessons) (Budapest: Franklin-Társulat, 1922), 54.
[7] Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós*, 58.
[8] László Ottlik, *A politikai rendszerek története. Középkor és újkor a világháborúig* (History of Political Systems. Middle Ages and Modern Times until the World War) (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1940), 34.
[9] Ottlik, *A politikai rendszerek története. Középkor és újkor a világháborúig.*
[10] László Ottlik, *A politikai rendszerek* (Political Systems), in Gyula Kornis, Gusztáv Gratz, Lóránt Hegedűs, and Emil Schimanek, eds, *A mai világ képe II: Politikai élet* (Picture of Today's World II: Political Life, 1939) (Budapest: Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, 1939), 52. 'The initiation or re-initiation of political development in the wake of declining eras is always linked to the name and actions of a great man, a "charismatic" genius far above the average.' László Ottlik, *Politikai géniusz – politika elit* (Political Genius—Political Elite), material from a celebratory lecture held at the general meeting of the Transylvanian Museum Association, 28 February 1943), in *Acta Juridico-Politica*, 11, Jogi előadások II, Universitas Francisco-Josephina Kolozsvár.
[11] Ottlik, *A politikai rendszerek története. Középkor és újkor a világháborúig*, 35.
[12] Ottlik, *A marxizmus társadalomelmélete – Elméleti kritika és történelmi tanulságok*, 18.
[13] Ottlik, *A marxizmus társadalomelmélete – Elméleti kritika és történelmi tanulságok*, 56,
[14] Quoted in: Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós*, 33.
[15] Ottlik, *Politikai géniusz – politika elit*, 48.
[16] Ottlik, *Politikai géniusz – politika elit*, 48.
[17] Quoted in Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós*, 82.
[18] He used the term 'democracy' in several different senses, but he firmly rejected ideological democratization.
[19] Ottlik, *Politikai géniusz – politika elit*, 48.
[20] Ottlik, *A politikai rendszerek története. Középkor és újkor a világháborúig*, 372–373.
[21] Above all: Mosca, Pareto, and Michels.
[22] Ottlik, *A politikai rendszerek*, 373.
[23] Ottlik, 'Felelősség és szükségszerűség' (Responsibility and Necessity), *Társadalomtudomány*, 1–4 (1923), 386–399.
[24] Ottlik, 'Felelősség és szükségszerűség', 391.

[25] Ottlik, *A politikai rendszerek története. Középkor és újkor a világháborúig*, 5.
[26] Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós*, 97.
[27] Quoted in Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós*, 97.
[28] Ottlik, *A politikai rendszerek története. Középkor és újkor a világháborúig*, 36.
[29] Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós*, 106.
[30] It is noteworthy that this insight of Ottlik's in 1939 was precisely confirmed by the Soviet–British–American alliance that emerged during the Second World War.
[31] Ottlik, *A politikai rendszerek története. Középkor és újkor a világháborúig*, 52.
[32] László Ottlik, 'Pax Hungarica', *Magyar Szemle*, 3 (1934), 299.
[33] Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós*, 83.
[34] Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós*, 291.
[35] Szabadfalvi, *Egy konzervatív állam- és politikatudós*, 525.
[36] On the contemporary reception of fascism in Hungary, see Miklós Szalai, 'Befogadás, értelmezés és kultusz: Mussolini és az olasz fasizmus megítélése a két világháború közötti Magyarországon' (Acceptance, Interpretation, and Cult: Mussolini and the Perception of Italian Fascism in Hungary between the Two World Wars), *Múltunk*, 60 (2015), 50–71.
[37] Ervin Csizmadia, 'A magyar politikatudomány tradíciói a két világháború között' (The Traditions of Hungarian Political Science between the Two World Wars). *Munkabeszámoló*, OTKA, 39–40, http://real.mtak.hu/2695/1/69072_ZJ1.pdf, accessed 16 June 2020.
[38] Szalai, 'Befogadás, értelmezés és kultusz', 51, 55.
[39] Csizmadia, 'A két háború közötti magyar politikatudomány diszkurzív tematikái, Dékány István, Ottlik László és Makkai János munkásságáról' (Discursive Themes of Hungarian Political Science between the Two wars, on the Work of István Dékány, László Ottlik, and János Makkai), in Máté Szabó, ed., *Beszélő politika. A diszkurzív politikatudomány teoretikus környezete* (Talking Politics: The Theoretical Environment of Discursive Political Science) (Budapest: Jószöveg Műhely, 2000), 181.
[40] Csizmadia, 'A két háború közötti magyar politikatudomány diszkurzív tematikái, Dékány István, Ottlik László és Makkai János munkásságáról', 162–184.
[41] Raymond Aron, *Democracy and Totalitarianism* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), 28–50.
[42] Although admittedly this is more a liberal than a specifically democratic principle.
[43] Raymond Aron, *Democracy and Totalitarianism*, 221–233.

REFLECTIONS ON THE EUROPEAN UNION

Árpád István Gordos

Although the power struggle in the EU is political in nature, it is nevertheless essential to compare the value perceptions and legal systems of EU member states, and to underline the facts established on that basis in the current debates. However, it is also advisable to explore and shed light on legal norms, legal institutions, and legal practices adopted by the member states in the past.

It would be simply insulting to deny Greece the intellectual heritage of ancient Greece. This applies even more strongly to Roman law in relation to Italy. All the more insulting because the references to Greek philosophy, Roman law, Christianity, and Judeo-Christian roots, and the Enlightenment as the inherited traits of a common European identity were erased, albeit after a debate,[1] from the draft Treaty on European Union.

However, neither Hungary nor, more broadly, the countries of East Central Europe, should be ashamed of the democratic rule-of-law achievements of their past. A little over eight hundred years have passed since the adoption of the Hungarian Golden Bull, one of the oldest constitutions in recorded history. On 24 April 1222, King Andrew II of Hungary issued what would become the main pillar of the subsequent Hungarian legal system. And since our current Fundamental Law (the Hungarian Constitution) also recognizes the heritage and significance of our historic constitution, the 800th anniversary was commemorated in a worthy manner. This commemoration became internationally visible, and put an end to the label of 'new democracy', often used to be little our country, together with the disrespect that underlies it.

We are also frequently lectured on the importance of checks and balances. The hoped-for commemoration of the Golden Bull also shed light on the institution of the *jus resistendi* or right of noble resistance clause as a significant counterbalancing achievement forming part of our democratic heritage. One can even recall a great example of a delicate balance of power: during the time of King Louis II, who came to the throne at the age of ten in 1516, the council that governed the affairs of the country comprised, together with the six high ecclesiastics and the same number of lords, sixteen commoners, who thereby constituted a majority. We should also take note of the Diploma Andreanum or the Golden Charter of the Transylvanian Saxons, which granted extensive self-governing political autonomy to several territories and full cultural autonomy to the Saxon ethnic group in 1224.

In addition, in the context of the old and new Hungarian democracy, it is worth recalling that Montesquieu—who laid down the principle of the triple division of state power, separating legislative, executive, and judicial powers—also visited the Hungarian Parliament in Pozsony[2] (now Bratislava) to study the matter directly before his visit to England, twenty years before the publication of his seminal work, *De l'ésprit des lois* (The Spirit of Law, 1748), in Geneva.

Nowadays, when absolutist aspirations in the form of diktats regarding 'democracy' or the 'rule of law' are emerging in the European Union, it is worth recalling our own heritage when it comes to democracy and the rule of law, both for the world at large and for ourselves, as well as our region, particularly in the context of Montesquieu.

THE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC COLONIZATION OF THE EU

The violation of the principle of equality and other fundamental principles is a major stumbling block in the already deeply scarred cooperation among EU member states. As the EU is a union of member states and European citizens, equal rights should apply to both member states and European citizens. However, looking at the member states, we may note that the Commission, which is supposed to act as the guardian of the Treaties, has been rather selective in a number of cases, for example in the procedural sanctions for excessive deficit in the event of breaches of the Maastricht convergence criteria.

It is well known that one in seven EU citizens belong to a national or linguistic minority. They suffer from violations of their rights in many EU member states, which in turn lead to additional violations of their rights on the part of the EU. The situation is similar in the case of the EU's cohesion policy. The two European citizens' initiatives, of which the Minority Safepack led by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) has proven successful, are precisely aimed at remedying these problems. The other initiative, a petition led by the Szekler National Council, which aims to achieve equal rights for national regions and, by extension, for minority citizens living in such regions, by ensuring cohesion policies and cultural diversity, has now completed the first phase of collecting citizens' signatures. However, the European Commission did not put any bill on the EU agenda even in opposition to the supporting action of the European Parliament in the case of the RMDSZ initiative and a new ruling of the European Court on national minority region relating to the Szekler National Council case.

The United Kingdom's exit from the European Union raises the issue of equality in terms of the language status of member states. As Danuta Hübner, in her interpellation delivered in the European Parliament on 27 June 2016, pointed out, 'Under our rules, every EU member state has the right to choose an official language. Ireland has chosen Irish, Malta has chosen Maltese, and only Great Britain chose English'.[3] Consequently,

Hübner, the former Polish commissioner, indirectly suggested that, due to Brexit, English should be removed from the list of official languages of the EU by amending the Treaty, the primary law of the Union, even by and within the withdrawal treaty itself.[4]

Of course, the UK's exit agreements have so far not dethroned the English language. Therefore, it remained an official language of the EU partly because it was not challenged by any member state during the ratification process on the grounds of a breach of the principle of equality. But this cannot happen, because only agreements on the accession of new member states fall within the competence of national parliaments, not those on withdrawal.

The 'flexible' rejection of principles was, of course, to be expected in this case, too. The removal of English would entail a review of the status of the three working languages: English, French, and German. The timid but emerging Polish ambition is, realistically, to make Polish, the language of the most populous of the six Slavic-language EU member states (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Poland, Slovenia, and Slovakia), the third EU working language, to replace English, given the many Slavic languages in use in the EU. France, obviously, would also like to restore the sparkle of its own halo.[5] Germany is no less interested, as the use of its language in EU institutions has been almost banished, despite its working-language status.

Regarding the question of the abolition of English as an official language of the EU, the French position could have been decisive. The question was whether or not Paris would limit itself in line with the pressure of global forces and not take a stand to upgrade the legal status of French in the EU. Would the sovereign interest of a member state prevail, or would federal Europe and the globalist interest once again win out in Paris? After all, French was the first working language of the EU before its eastern enlargement.

These aspects could have been a daily feature of French domestic policy, all the more so since President Emmanuel Macron declared the recovery and strengthening of the international role of the French language as a goal when he was inaugurated. On another occasion, he explicitly spoke of the need to restore the place and role of French in the world, in the spirit of multilingualism, and to encourage the use of French in economic and diplomatic life.[6] Brexit presented a legitimate opportunity to dethrone English in the EU, meaning that the historic possibility of raising the international profile of French thus also depended on the decision of the French president.

The linguistic, i.e. cultural, self-abandonment of Paris also put an end to the Polish intentions, which were cautiously represented in Danuta Hübner's interpellation. And it has also thwarted the potential increase of the role of the German language in the EU, which is not surprising, since self-abandonment does indeed permeate German politics and everyday life. But what is more disturbing for all the other

member states is that the twenty-seven-member EU does nothing in practice to promote linguistic equality and diversity, and to enforce its motto of being 'united in diversity'. With the departure of the United Kingdom and the maintenance of the official linguistic status of its dominant language, the linguistic and cultural colonization of the EU has become a fact, whether we like it or not.

ON THE RIGHT TO USE ONE'S MOTHER TONGUE IN EUROPE—IN LIGHT OF JAROSLAV HAŠEK'S VITRIOLIC PAMPHLET PENNED 112 YEARS AGO

The protection of the rights of indigenous national minorities living in the EU, especially their linguistic rights, has been proposed by European citizens through a successful citizens' initiative. This initiative is the Minority Safepack, which has been endorsed by the Dutch, German, and Hungarian parliaments, as well as several regional/provincial parliaments in the Netherlands and Germany.

The European Parliament also endorsed it in January 2021, by an overwhelming majority. But another key EU institution, the Commission, has put a stick between the spokes of the moving bicycle. True to form, it has issued a statement that it will continue to oppose the safeguarding and development of the rights of all indigenous minorities under EU law. This is, of course, partly understandable, since the Commission's migration policy is rather similar vis-á-vis nations with indigenous majorities.

The case, which falls within Commission Vice President Věra Jourová's scope, is not making progress because the Commission has not dared to do what it did before 2004. Back then, the Commission instructed the legal predecessor of its Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) to complete an assessment of the education situation of indigenous national minorities in their mother tongues (Migrants, minorities, and education) for the fifteen member states, and to publish the results of the assessment, but has failed to do the same for the EU as a whole for nineteen years now. This omission is all the more incomprehensible given that the assessment analysing the employment of national minorities (and migrants) was carried out for all fifteen EU member states and it was subsequently extended to the new member states as well.

However, the Commission's inaction will, hopefully, not be protracted for too long. The most militant region is the Frisian-inhabited Dutch region/province, which has embarked on a determined campaign, with many institutions showing their solidarity. In the meantime, the Czech commissioner should take note of her compatriot, the humorist writer Jaroslav Hašek's crooked mirror, since Brussels has been lending a hand to similar violations of rights and the perpetuation of many people's grievances as reflected in the following excerpt from Hašek's 'Proposed Language Regulations:'

I.
In order not to violate Article XIX of the Reich's Basic Law, both nationalities are granted the right to use their mother tongue, with the restriction that German must be spoken in offices, public places, on the street, etc. The use of the Czech language at home between spouses [is allowed only] if spoken in a whisper, so as not to disturb or provoke their neighbour, if he or she is German, with this inferior language.

IV.
At the post office, the use of the Czech name is only allowed in the case of a purely Czech municipality within the district. If the letter passes through a mixed or German district, the address must not be written in any other language than German, so as not to offend the national sentiment of the Germans. The German concession is so great that Czech proper names, whether names of persons or names of persons, need not be translated into German. So, for example, the address 'K. Krikava, Tylova ulece, Smychov' can remain Czech, rather than the way it should actually sound: K. Schreilhals, Organtingasse, Lachau. Or Jan Nemecek, Vysehradon, Hans Deutscherle in Höherburg.

If the Czechs do not accept these moderate demands, we are ready to defend our sacred rights with blood (not our own). Heil! Heil! Heil![7]

Hašek wrote this in 1909… Thank God, Ms Jourová can enjoy this in her mother tongue and get the message. I can assure her that we Hungarians do understand Czech humour, also when we watch their excellent films.

Translated by Balázs Sümegi

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[1] European Union – Intergovernmental Conference 2002–03, CIG 37/03.
[2] Béla Dezsényi, *Magyarország és Svájc* (Hungary and Switzerland) (Budapest, 1946), 77.
[3] Hortense Goulard, 'English Will not Be an Official Language after Brexit, Says Senior MEP', *Politico* (27 June 2016), www.politico.eu/article/english-will-not-be-an-official-eu-language-after-brexit-senior-mep/.
[4] Goulard, 'English Will not Be an Official Language after Brexit, Says Senior MEP'.
[5] 'Discours d'Emmanuel Macron á l'Institut de France sur l"ambition pour la langue francaise et le plurilinguisme – Elysée, 20 March 2018.'
[6] 'Une ambition pour la langue française et le plurilinguisme: Bilan après 5 ans d'action. Élysée, 27 Octobre 2023.'
[7] Published in Prague in *Karykatury*, 1/4 (4 February 1969), and in Budapest in *Európai Utas*, 1 (2009).

THE FÜRTH–BUDAPEST INTELLECTUAL HIGHWAY

On the Personal Meetings between Henry Kissinger and József Antall

Enikő Bollobás

Henry A. Kissinger, who died this past November at the age of one hundred, has left a great void in American foreign policy thinking. His comprehensive strategic approach, based on the political philosophies of outstanding diplomats of the nineteenth century, is sorely lacking in today's American foreign policy. In the early 1990s, he found a worthy intellectual interlocutor in Hungarian Prime Minister József Antall, who also thought in historical terms—Kissinger died just two weeks short of the thirtieth anniversary of Antall's death. Both embodied the best American and European traditions in their personalities and political views; posterity, for its own sake, should remember them, study their work, and, above all, learn from them. Kissinger and Antall met on several occasions and had long conversations not only about the current issues of the time, such as the crisis in Yugoslavia, but also about Europe and Russia in a broader perspective. Hungarian Review *wishes to pay tribute not only to the memory of Henry A. Kissinger, but also to that of József Antall through the recollections of literary historian Enikő Bollobás, who first worked as deputy chief of mission and then chargé d'affaires at the Hungarian Embassy in Washington, DC, in the early 1990s, and participated in the Kissinger–Antall meetings in Washington in October 1991 and in Budapest in March 1993.*

The scene of the one-on-one meeting in 1991 was the Hungarian prime minister's hotel suite in Washington, where the two European-educated politicians, both of whom thought in broad historical and geographical terms, talked without interruption for two hours in German and English. They immediately took to one another, agreeing on which historical events the conflicts of the present could be traced back to, and on the parallels by which more geographically distant conflicts could be interpreted.

At that time, Henry Kissinger very rarely held discussions with serving politicians, and even this meeting was arranged almost by accident, through one of my father's oldest and closest friends, who had once been Kissinger's classmate in Fürth, Germany. Thanks to this relationship, he received me in the summer of 1991 in the Park Avenue office of Kissinger Associates in New York, when I approached him as the chargé d'affaires of the Hungarian Embassy in Washington—on the recommendation of our old friend Werner Gundelfinger—to invite him to

Hungarian Prime Minister József Antall's (L) meeting with former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger (R) in Washington, DC, in October 1991. © Enikő Bollobás

a meeting with the Hungarian prime minister. Being fully aware of József Antall's intellectual and statesmanlike qualities, the former American secretary of state and national security adviser agreed immediately to a meeting in Washington, which would become one of the most memorable events in the Hungarian prime minister's second trip to the United States in October 1991.

The central topic of the nearly two-hour-long conversation was the crisis in Yugoslavia. Antall expressed his regret that the West was not taking efforts at democratization in Yugoslavia sufficiently seriously, and said that he considered the preservation of Yugoslav 'stability' (by which he meant territorial integrity) more important than the anti-communist efforts of the peoples of Yugoslavia. Antall's words perhaps elicited Kissinger's agreement because, in his argument in favour of a confederation of sovereign states, the prime minister cited precedents familiar to the German-American politician, whereby imperial centres were successfully dismantled through plans implemented in every detail, to disassemble and reconstitute formerly imperialist forms of government.

Kissinger became an enthusiastic supporter of Antall's proposal, which he considered a positive model for the dissolution of Yugoslavia. The Antall plan was as follows: The democratic community—including (Antall here listed them by name) the then EEC, NATO, the United States, Canada, Austria, Japan, the (then still extant) Soviet Union, Poland, the Czech and Slovak Republics, and Hungary—should recognize the independence of all six former Yugoslav states at the same time. In addition to international recognition of the new republics, the autonomy of the minorities, such as the Albanians in Kosovo, the Hungarians in Northern Serbia (Vojvodina), the Serbs in Croatia, and the Croatians in Serbia, must also be guaranteed. To prevent territorial encroachments, the borders of the former member states must be made international state borders and guaranteed by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE, since 1994 the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, OSCE). Based on the example of the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, it could be assumed—Antall argued—that this process would not last more than three to five years, during which time, with the help of the Euro-Atlantic community, the parties would be able to agree on the division of the various portfolios previously managed from Belgrade, including the ministries of finance, foreign affairs, and education.

In March 1993, the crisis in Yugoslavia was still the region's most pressing problem, and as such was the primary topic of the second Kissinger–Antall meeting, which took place in the prime minister's parliamentary office in Budapest and was even longer than the first. Antall stated with regret that the West had indeed not taken the Yugoslav crisis sufficiently seriously, allowing the attempted coup in Moscow and the Gulf War divert its attention. Now, however, in 1993, not only was the entire Yugoslav problem repeating itself in Bosnia, providing a 'microcosm' of the 1991 crisis, but this Balkan crisis also contained elements of the larger, 'Soviet' problem, meaning that understanding and handling the Yugoslav crisis could have helped in the interpretation of broader European processes. In addition, the tangled threads of power in the region were further complicated by tensions between Bosnians and Serbs/Russians, the Yugoslav–Muslim antagonism, the communist or post-communist opposition, and the echoes of the First World War pervading Europe as a whole. Milošević expected the West to become bored and distracted and, like Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, or Rákosi, was pursuing a wait-and-see policy, which is why it was especially important for the West to assert its demands through consistent action.

Continuing Antall's line of thought, Kissinger dismissed the idea of boots-on-the-ground military intervention, citing, among others, the cautionary example of Beirut, and saying that American troops were just as likely to be held hostage in Bosnia. Instead, he proposed airstrikes—within the framework of a political

programme still to be developed—which would also include security guarantees for Hungary. Antall drew his interlocutor's attention to the fact that the North Atlantic Alliance was necessary for the whole of Central Europe. Moreover, without it the security of Greece and Turkey would be illusory, since between the two wings of NATO there were countries that did not officially belong to the Alliance. NATO's eastern wing was made especially vulnerable by the close relationship between Milošević and Greek Prime Minister Konstantinos Mitsotakis.

Looking further afield, Antall and Kissinger turned to the topic of Russian imperialism, including that of the Soviet era. Antall expressed his firm support for Ukraine, a point on which Kissinger also agreed, and emphasized that in Moscow it was rare to meet a politician who accepted the fact of the Soviet Union's dissolution. Moreover, Russian imperialism was emotionally unable to renounce even the Baltics and Poland. Referring to the relationship between the Yugoslav crisis and Russian imperialism, Antall emphasized the fact that resolving the Balkan crisis would also have a counterbalancing effect on Russia, meaning that in the short term it was necessary to concentrate on Serbia.

Kissinger was curious to hear Antall's opinion on the elections that had taken place in Hesse not long before, where the extreme right had performed well. Antall argued that radical right-wing movements are most often driven by left-wing forces, as was clearly evident from the way the radical right was advancing in Europe, and was even present in Hungarian domestic politics to a small extent. But while France could afford to weaken Chirac and Giscard to ensure Le Pen was kept from power, it was still important in both Germany and Hungary not to exclude potential right-wing voters. In other words, said Antall, Adenauer and Strauss had been right on this point. Kissinger agreed that Eastern Europe could not skip certain stages of development: what Western Europe had achieved over the span of twenty years could not be accelerated in Eastern Europe. He also remarked, however, that he considered Eastern European countries to be psychologically better off than the former East Germans, because the latter lack any sense of national identity or national pride.

As a senior diplomat, I was always proud to sit in on József Antall's international negotiations, because every single time world leaders—whether President Bush, Vice President Quayle, Washington senators, former President Reagan, former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, Queen Elisabeth II, UN High Commissioner Thorvald Stoltenberg, or Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt—all spoke to him as a highly respected statesman and showed considerable interest in his wide-ranging political analyses. Antall's horizons were always broad: he was not limited to Central European issues, still less to domestic Hungarian problems, but also interpreted, in their historical contexts, events taking place in distant lands,

and was capable of placing himself in the position of his negotiating partner. As he walked down the steps of the Hungarian Parliament, Kissinger aptly remarked that 'Your Prime Minister understands European conditions better than most European politicians.' He wrote the same thing in a letter to his former classmate in Fürth.

Translated by Thomas Sneddon

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LÁSZLÓ LAJTHA, THE 'IRREGULAR' COMPOSER

A Review Essay of Lajtha László írásai I–II
*(Writings of László Lajtha I–II) edited by Melinda Berlász**

Kata Riskó

Writing for the periodical *Tiszatáj*, the folk music researcher and former Lajtha disciple László Vikár hailed the selected writings of László Lajtha, edited by Melinda Berlász and published in 1992,[1] in the following words:

> Although much of this long-overdue debt has been paid off by the lectures, concerts, recollections, quiz games, and radio programmes held on the centenary of László Lajtha, as well as by an array of essays and studies devoted to him, it is perhaps this recently published first volume of his writings that will best help us gain a deeper familiarity with Lajtha, this preeminent figure of twentieth-century Hungarian culture and member of the French Academy of Science.[2] Whatever others have said or written about him may be true and fine, thought-provoking or inspirational, but when he spoke about himself, binding his thoughts in a tight sheaf; when he, the scholar of excellence, illuminated still-obscure corners of Hungarian folk music; when, as a contemporary composer or friend, he discussed Béla Bartók, Claude Debussy, or Vaughn Williams, he at once offered a more detailed, more authentic portrait of himself than anyone else ever could.[3]

The reader will find this to be even more the case today, picking up the 2021 critical edition[4] containing all the writings of Lajtha we know of which he intended for the public, whether previously published or in manuscript form. The first volume of his collected writings, containing 55 items and published in 1992, was the culmination of a research project lasting more than a decade. As a first selection, it aimed to present a well-balanced overview of Lajtha's oeuvre. In addition to pieces reflecting his academic interests, it included writings on other composers, contemporaneous artists, the public affairs of music, and his own career, here and there studded with commentary of a more intimate, personal nature.

* This review is a version of the talk delivered at the book launch hosted by the Institute of Ethnology, Research Centre for the Humanities on 24 November 2022.

László Lajtha around 1920.
Source: Wikimedia Commons

Even then, the project as intended ultimately had its sights set on a complete edition, but this was not feasible at the time. Although that first volume can seldom be found on bookshop shelves today, there were reasons other than scarcity for including the previously published material in the new two-volume edition nearly thirty years later. Most importantly, the new edition gives us the benefit of editorial principles and concepts standardized across two volumes. It incorporates some one hundred texts, but the new ones outstrip the previously published fifty-five in length. The main novelty consists of previously unpublished manuscripts, some in fact lost since the original excavation of sources, including drafts, articles published in foreign countries in languages other than Hungarian and hitherto unavailable in Hungarian translation, as well as music reviews from Lajtha's early years. A few of these did see print in studies by Lajtha researchers, but most have remained essentially unknown to the public—until now.

This new edition provided an opportunity to republish the long studies, sometimes heavily illustrated by music scores, originally written after the Second World War as introductions to the volumes of *Népzenei monográfiák* (Monographs on Folk Music),[5] a series intended to provide a comprehensive inventory of Lajtha's particular field-works, while some had appeared in other reference works well known to researchers of Hungarian folk music. Although these had been familiar to professionals from the original books, the fact that they can now be read as part of the same new edition is significant not just because of the sheer scope of the collection, but also because of Lajtha's global outlook. For almost four decades, Lajtha served on the staff of the Museum of Ethnography—until 1947 known as the Ethnographic Collection of the National Museum—exploring various facets of folk music, folk dance, and their ethnographic aspects, as well as the history of folk and classical instruments.

His findings are inseparably intertwined in his writings, whether they be primarily academic, educational pieces intended to raise public awareness, or treating of public affairs.

Lajtha's interests encompassed all aspects of culture. In terms of folk music and dance, he would invariably address the ethnographic background, and even published narrative texts and descriptions of customs without specific relevance to folk music or dance. He was particularly fascinated by liminal fields such as prose fairy tales informing sung ballads, narratives set to music, and the ritual movements performed during the practice of folk customs, which he would discuss in the context of dance tradition. He recognized the role of each part of society in the emergence of the distinctive and diverse complex we call Hungarian culture, including urban Gypsy music, the dances of the more cultivated classes, religious folk songs, ancient heritage, and various European influences through the ages. He frequently insisted on the unity of folk culture and, more generally, of culture as a whole. In a draft manuscript presumably written in the 1940s, for instance, he argued that the use of audiovisual recordings in ethnographic field work, which he had urged on several occasions, would 'finally make it possible in its handling of material to restore the great initial unity we have lost through academic specialization owing to research methods focused on dissection, collection, and analysis. Folk music does not exist in isolation. All things breathe together.'[6]

The two-volume critical edition of collected writings under review here is akin to the 1992 edition inasmuch as it organizes the material around the major themes of the oeuvre. The foremost ordering principle within each thematic unit is chronology or, in the case of writings on folk music, the fact of previous publication. In her foreword, Melinda Berlász introduces the pieces not only according to their position in the inventory of sources and in terms of their publication history, but also as parts of the proposed thematic groups. The navigation of the reader in time and searches for names in the text are assisted by an index of Lajtha's writings and, respectively, an index of names, both appended to the second volume. Following each study, editorial notes marshal the sources and publication data of the text, along with the name of the translator, if any. These primary notes are accompanied, where necessary, by more in-depth notes explaining the circumstances of writing, the purport of the text, differences between variants, and Lajtha's own allusions, occasionally rectifying incorrect information provided by him.

Most of the writings published here—about four-fifths of the total—consist of material that has appeared in print before, with the remaining one-fifth having survived in manuscript form. All of them are characterized by a communicative, conversational style, as implied by Vikár, which is hardly surprising given that Lajtha dictated much of what became his writing to his wife.[7] This orally inflected quality

also pertains to Lajtha's academic publications. Instances in which he supplies citations are the exception, even though his assertions are always grounded in a broad knowledge of the professional literature. Vikár says that Lajtha's prose is a reasonably faithful facsimile of his habit of speech in daily life: 'His always precise choice of the right word, his impeccably constructed sentences, the lucidity and facility of his expression, and his fine, witty metaphors are all part and parcel of Lajtha's writing style.'[8]

The overwhelming majority of the texts deal with folk music. With the exception of two brief autobiographies, the first volume is filled with studies, articles, bibliographies, and lecture manuscripts devoted to this subject. This thematic set also includes two pieces familiar from the press of the day, as well as the aforementioned draft, all attached as an appendix to the second volume. Some of them, sometimes originally written in a language other than Hungarian, are lectures and articles intended to offer an overview of Hungarian folk music and, more generally, of the nature of folk traditions. Another pet topic of Lajtha's that crops up frequently is the use of audio and video recordings, which he strongly advocated. Among the works written in French and first made available in Hungarian translation here (complete with explanatory notes to the original French text) mention must be made of the chapter Lajtha compiled for the 1939 volume sponsored by the League of Nations entitled *Folklore musical*.[9] Following an introductory outline, the chapter gives an account of the current state of folk music research in Hungary, aided by an index of relevant collections, publications, and studies. Of particular note is Lajtha's lecture on Hungarian laments or mourning songs collected by the author, delivered at an event hosted by the International Folk Music Council, in which he describes mourning music as a sublimation of a psychological need.[10]

The articles and lecture manuscripts from the period between the two world wars offer a glimpse into workshop activities at the Museum of Ethnography, which recruited a growing number of young students for collecting and research projects. One of the important works with relevance to this pursuit, among others, is the autograph manuscript of a copious and comprehensive lecture on Hungarian folk music from 1928, annotated by Zoltán Kodály.[11] Taking Lajtha's writings side by side with Kodály's iconic studies, including his prudent and cautious chapter on folk music published as part of the four-volume *A magyarság néprajza* (The Ethnography of Hungarians, 1933–1937),[12] the reader can draw inferences as to the questions and disputes surrounding folk music research in Hungary during the period.

Lajtha proposed a number of new ideas, and often put the emphasis elsewhere in his elucidation of certain issues. As early as in the late 1920s, he began to focus on the historic stratification in folk music, and the interaction between surviving stylistic layers superimposed one upon the other. This historic perspective, considered

authoritative to this day, would become the guiding principle of Kodály's own synopsis mentioned earlier. Researchers had from the start been preoccupied with the special archaic style of Hungarian folk music, and especially with the arguably Asian origins of the descending pentatonic scales and frequent fifth-shifting characteristic of many folk songs. In addition, Lajtha always emphasized the formative role of European influences and interactions in shaping the Hungarian folk music tradition. Kodály perhaps had Lajtha in mind when he insisted that, in his own comparative analysis of melodies, he did not juxtapose individual motifs or lines but entire melodic architectures, and that similarities on that higher level could not be accidental.[13]

Lajtha had more than once pointed to the survival of Gregorian chant motifs in folk music, and urged the establishment of an inventory of musical motifs on the analogy of such compendia of decorative motifs in folk art.[14] By the same token, Kodály's observation may well be taken to refer to the folk application of 'ecclesiastical modes', when he says that the Gregorian influence 'was not that of an abstract tonal system, but that of living music. Peasants could only accept tunes, not ecclesiastical modes.'[15] Lajtha's branching interests and debating talents proved stimulating to the young people working at his side, and his ideas certainly influenced later trends in folk music research as well. His writings also tell us a great deal about an age marked by a close cooperation between professionals in folk music and ethnography, and specifically about the concept of folk music he transmitted to his ethnographer colleagues during joint collection projects, in talks he gave before the Hungarian Ethnographical Society, or as part of his job as curator for the museum.

The thematic focus on folk music is carried over to the second volume with works on folk dance. Alongside shorter articles and lectures by Lajtha—who also pioneered the scholarly research of Hungarian folk dance—this second volume also features an ambitious overview he co-authored with the ethnographer Sándor Gönyey for *A magyarság néprajza*,[16] complete with excellent quality reproductions of original photographs held by the Museum of Ethnography. This study, which in the volume follows Kodály's chapter on folk music and is of comparable length, centres on the description of the nature and historical layers of the same tradition. Here, the authors have the opportunity to delve into details—such as the discovery of ancient ritual motifs in children's games—which had to be confined to footnotes in the shorter texts. Another article, published in French in 1941 and appearing here in Hungarian translation for the first time, offers an entirely different but equally sweeping perspective on Hungarian folk dance.[17] Instead of a historical analysis, this study focuses on the aspects of Hungarian folk dance exhibiting its connections with, and differences from, the dance cultures of Western Europe, including the ancient motifs of children's games and women's circle dances, gestures in folk customs, and the use of accessories such as scarves, spurs, and sticks. Finally, Lajtha points to body posture and other distinctive features as unique to the Hungarian tradition.

The fourth chapter, devoted to the history of instruments and musical iconography, is the only one in which six studies had been published as part of the 1992 edition. Originally written as part of the author's job at the museum and (including texts introducing the most treasured pieces in its collection) his ongoing research in folk music, these pieces are published here accompanied by several high quality reproductions. The fifth thematic group consists of sixteen hitherto unpublished journalistic articles on music. Of special note among them is Lajtha's discussion of the manuscript of a Saint Elizabeth Hymn dating from the fourteenth or fifteenth century, with analogies to Gregorian chant. The article was probably commissioned by Elemér Varjú, literary historian for the National Museum and co-author responsible for introducing the source and the text.[18]

The rest of the collection consists of various mostly accidental print articles, together with a useful indication of how Lajtha as composer and music teacher arrived at his views. According to the proof-reader's report written by the folk music researcher Bálint Sárosi and quoted in the introduction, these pieces are most relevant for drawing conclusions as to 'Lajtha's erudition, elegance, wit, as well as his modernity and originality as a composer'.[19] The bulk of material not published in the earlier collection comprises a separate group including Lajtha's early attempts at music criticism, obituaries, as well as more intimately toned writings intended to bring his readers closer to his favourite composers and their music. This miscellany also contains a set of articles Lajtha wrote for *Protestáns Szemle* (Protestant Review). As a Calvinist presbyter and choir master of his congregation, Lajtha often spoke out on issues pertaining to church music, urging a reformed approach open to any form of music, ancient or new, as long as it could be considered authentic. Occasionally he would send in a review of music or a book, highlighting themes of interest for Calvinist affairs, such as the interpretation of Bach, the veneration of old organs, and the legacy of embroidery hung on the church walls.[20] In Chapter Six, he confesses his faith in a personal sketch entitled 'My Son's Confirmation'. Other fascinating entries in this chapter include two informal, witty talks on music history and aesthetics he delivered to a circle of friends, discussing issues of art and Romanticism.[21]

The editor's tireless work could hardly garner higher praise than what Vikár had said about her in the context of the first anthology: 'While Lajtha was alive, we knew less about him than we know now, thirty years after he died.'[22] Moreover, it is equally true for this newly published, now complete edition that 'as we delve into the volume, we get closer and closer to Lajtha, even as we must ask, with mounting curiosity: Who really was this nonpareil, extraordinary person—to quote his own description of himself, this "irregular" man?'[23]

Translated by Péter Balikó Lengyel

[1] Melinda Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László összegyűjtött írásai I* (The Collected Writings of László Lajtha I) (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1992).
[2] Correctly, Lajtha was a member of the French Academy of Fine Arts.
[3] László Vikár, 'Lajtha László emlékezete. Összegyűjtött írásainak megjelenése alkalmából' (Remembering László Lajtha. On the Occasion of the Publication of His Collected Writings), *Tiszatáj*, 48/3 (March 1994), 89–93, 89.
[4] Melinda Berlász (editor), Viola Biró, and Viktória Ozsvárt (assistant editors), *Lajtha László írásai I–II* (Writings of László Lajtha) (Budapest: Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, Rózsavölgyi és Társa, 2021), 792 pages.
[5] László Lajtha, *Szépkenyerűszentmártoni gyűjtés* (Folk Music Collected in Szépkenyerűszentmárton) (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1954); *Széki gyűjtés* (Folk Music Collected in Szék) (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1954); *Kőrispataki gyűjtés* (Folk Music Collected in Kőrispatak) (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1955); *Sopronmegyei virrasztó énekek* (Vigils from Sopron County) (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1956); *Dunántúli táncok és dallamok I* (Transdanubian Dances and Tunes) (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1962).
[6] László Lajtha, 'Nincs népzene külön… Minden együtt él' (There is no folk music by itself … Everything is living together), in Melinda Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai II* (Budapest: Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, Rózsavölgyi és Társa, 2021), 767–770, 767.
[7] Melinda Berlász, 'A közreadó előszava' (Editor's Foreword), in *Lajtha László írásai I* (Budapest, Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, Rózsavölgyi és Társa, 2021), 9–27, 22.
[8] Vikár, 'Lajtha László emlékezete', 91.
[9] László Lajtha, 'Magyarország' (Hungary), in Berlász ed., *Lajtha László írásai I*, 163–179. For a reprint of the French text, see Melinda Berlász, 'Contribution hongroise à l'organisation internationale des investigations de la musique folklorique (Écrits de László Lajtha, 1934, 1939)', in *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 22/1–4 (1980), 427–458.
[10] László Lajtha, A magyar siratókról' (On Hungarian Mourning Songs). Hungarian translation of a typewritten manuscript in English, in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai I*, 374–379.
[11] László Lajtha, 'A magyar népzene' (Hungarian Folk Music), in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai I*, 351–368.
[12] Zoltán Kodály, 'Zene' (Music), in Károly N. Bartha et. al., *A magyarság szellemi néprajza 2* (Spiritual Ethnography of the Hungarians) (*A magyarság néprajza IV* [The Ethnography of the Hungarians]) (Budapest: Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, 1937), 9–84. The study was also published separately, under the title *A magyar népzene*, in several reprints, as well as in English, in *Zoltán Kodály, Folk Music in Hungary*, enlarged edition revised by Lajos Vargyas (Budapest: Corvina, 1971).
[13] Kodály, *Folk Music in Hungary*, 108.
[14] Cf. for instance, Lajtha, 'A magyar népzene', 354, and Lajtha, 'Népzenei formaproblémák' (Formal Problems in Folk Music), in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai I*, 58–65, 59.
[15] Lajtha, 'A magyar népzene', 354; Kodály, *Folk Music in Hungary*, 100.
[16] László Lajtha and Sándor Gönyey, 'Tánc' (Dance), in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai II*, 452–524.
[17] Ladislas Lajtha, 'La danse hongroise', in *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, 10/2 (December 1941), 530–538. Hungarian translation: 'A magyar tánc', in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai II*, 531–539.
[18] Elemér Varjú and László Lajtha, 'Egy Szent Erzébet-himnusz Zsigmond király korából' (A Saint Elizabeth Hymn from the Age of King Sigismund), in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai II*, 607–615. The partially flawed reconstruction of the melodies was subsequently corrected by Benjamin Rajeczky in his *Melodiarium Hungariae Medii Aevi I: Hymni et sequentiae* (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1956), Nr. 21, Nr. 97.
[19] Berlász, 'A közreadó előszava', 22.

[20] László Lajtha, 'Schweitzer zenei munkássága' (The Musical Oeuvre of Schweitzer), in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai II*, 624–627; 'Egyházzenei vitánk margójára' (Addendum to Our Debate on Sacred Music), in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai II*, 628–633; Gertrúd Palotay, 'Oszmán-török elemek a magyar hímzésben' (Ottoman-Turkish Elements in Hungarian Embroidery), in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai II*, 549–652.
[21] László Lajtha, 'Beszélgetés a művészetről' (Conversation about Art), in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai II*, 713–724; and László Lajtha, 'A romantikáról' (On Romanticism), in Berlász, ed., *Lajtha László írásai II*, 725–733.
[22] Vikár, 'Lajtha László emlékezete', 89.
[23] Vikár, 'Lajtha László emlékezete', 89.

REMEMBERING GYÖRGY FERDINANDY

Hungarian author György Ferdinandy (1935–2024) was born in Budapest. He enrolled at Eötvös Loránd University in September 1956, majoring in French and Hungarian. However, with the outbreak of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution a few weeks later, and the subsequent occupation of Hungary by Soviet troops, Ferdinandy found himself compelled to flee his homeland. He settled in France, where he attended university in Strasbourg and Dijon. Some four years later, he ventured further west, leaving Europe for Puerto Rico in the Caribbean, where he taught at the University of Puerto Rico. He worked and taught in a number of different roles over the course of the next several decades, writing and publishing in Hungarian, French, and Spanish, and garnering several prestigious awards for his fiction. He eventually settled in Miami, USA, in 2000, though he often travelled to Puerto Rico, and he also began to return regularly to Budapest, where he was welcomed as a writer who had enjoyed a splendid career on the international stage. In his prose, Ferdinandy always straddles the boundary between autobiography and fiction. Even in his earliest works, he seems immersed in the act of retrospection. Yet even while he guides readers through landscapes that are clearly deeply personal, he also writes as something of a chronicler of the dramatic upheavals of the twentieth century. Hungarian Review *pays tribute to him with the English translation of an excerpt from his novel* Unusual Happiness *(2019) and a short story titled* Hiatus *(2005).*

UNUSUAL HAPPINESS

Back then, the zoo was my paradise. Sometimes, I would spend every Sunday afternoon by the fences, staring wide-eyed. I knew the lion and the monkeys by name.

Later, I told my kids about them. When I think back, I realize that I much preferred to talk about animals than I did about people. At the time, the yard and the street weren't as clearly separated from each other as they are now. The yard and the street, the city and the countryside. I used to tell a story—my favourite—about how I caught the Easter Bunny red-handed, hiding chocolate eggs and presents. When I was a kid, the wild rabbits still came into the yard, ransacked the vegetable garden, and ate all the fresh sprouts. But the Easter Bunny had had a sack on his back, and the sack had been full of painted eggs. There might even have been a bit of truth in the unusual story, because I still clearly remember the spot where my rabbit jumped over the fence.

After the Easter egg story, the kids always insisted on hearing about grandpa's pheasants. My granddad had liked to hunt. His Flobert and his double-barrel flintlock were always hanging by the door at his place. Every year, at the beginning of November, my grandparents would wrap the lamps up in newspaper.

Judit Reigl, The Rings of the Universe, oil on canvas, 90×121 cm, 1954.
© Kálmán Makláry Fine Arts

Once, I went out to the bathroom a little earlier than usual, and in the light of the early morning, I saw the pheasant chicks squatting by the arbour. My grandfather carefully opened the window, stuck the rifle barrel out, and bang, bang, he shot the lamps from the branch. What a disgrace! I had to promise never to say a word about it. But my grandmother didn't make any such promises. She reproached me for some time for this little adventure.

I had another little story too. When I was in the institution, we caught the bats that were hanging from the ceiling in the attic. I kept the blind little critters in shoeboxes under my bed. We assigned numbers to them and made bets, and they shrieked with anger when we rubbed their noses together. But the kids didn't like this story. They were afraid of bats because Dracula and vampires were already quite the rage by then. And someone had told them that it wasn't nice to torture animals.

Back when I was a kid, no one bothered with that kind of thing. We tore the wings off dragonflies, cut worms in half in kindergarten, and then glued their tails and heads together with sap.

Even if they never saw them, my kids grew up surrounded by the animals of the temperate zone. They knew that a hedgehog burrows into the forest floor when

winter comes, and they recognized edible snails, which we would promise to give milk and butter if they would come out of their little houses and drag their silver trails further. They learned that if they stuck a blade of grass into the middle of an anthill, they could suck the spicy formic acid out of it.

Yup. I taught them all that. Animals were part of their lives too.

Because in the tropics where we were living, it was just parasites. Fungi, viruses, invisible microorganisms. The natives had already eaten every animal worth eating. No pheasants or rabbits left in the forests and fields. Not even cats were spared. If you haven't studied anatomy, you can't tell the difference between a cat and a rabbit. Where thousands of people live within one square kilometre, no one bothers with such trivialities.

Here, the people have been getting their food from ships for centuries. Canned food brought from the mainland in huge shipping containers, and a good thing too, because there's only about three weeks' worth of food on the island.

In school, when they learn about barnyard animals, the children draw pictures of fried chickens by the henhouse. The Three Sisters on the milk cartons clearly produce milk, and apples grow in boxes. And, as I hardly need note, there are no zoos.

When the winds have carried away the birds, silence falls over the island. To cut a long story short, the kids learned everything they knew about animals from my stories. So they never learned patience. That caring for one another is not something you do from time to time, but rather as a matter of life and death. An everyday task. They never learned devotion, self-sacrifice, and unconditional trust. Everything that a child of old would have learned from even the most miserable watchdog.

Which is why I was all the more surprised when my daughter came to me, quite serious, with a question.

'Dad, you always had a dog, right?'

'As long as I could', I replied. 'Why?'

My daughter is eight. She's in the second grade. She burst out crying. Clearly, she had been expecting a firm, even peremptory no. In the tropics, animals kept as pets spread intestinal parasites and skin diseases.

'Where is it?', I asked, for I had learned by then that there was always a very concrete explanation for a question like that.

Behind the parish, by the volleyball court, a stray bitch had whelped her litter, and the priest, who had recently arrived from the Old World, had passed out the pups.

As if an old children's story had come to life. I had never seen my daughter so happy.

'What will you call it?', I asked.

'Désiré!'

'Dezső?', I asked, a bit bewildered.

'Come on, Dad,' she replied in a motherly tone. 'Désiré means eagerly waited for. Something you've been wanting for a long time.'

We didn't even have the dog yet, and already it had inspired my daughter to use such lovely words.

'Let's build a doghouse for it', I said, giving in.

It didn't occur to me that in the tropics, animals sleep outside.

Translated by Thomas Cooper

HIATUS

The refugee camp was situated out in the flood plain of the Rhine, among willow-trees that were paddling in stagnant waters, embankments, and canals. One could walk over to the river within a few minutes along the dike. Here, north of the town, the banks of the Rhine were completely uninhabited.

We too used to stroll out there: where else was there for one to stroll at that time? We looked at the brown spume and the Black Forest on the far bank. Somewhere over there, opposite us, was the source of the Danube as well, and far away, under the span of the skyline, the pint-sized homeland that would bring tears to one's eyes as evening drew in.

Not that we had any wish to return. Barely a few months had passed since we had made it across the minefield separating barbaric East from cultivated West. All the same! We had begun to understand that sometimes there can be a well-nigh intolerable extreme not only of slavery but of freedom too. When a person loses so much that what is left is not worth it.

No, those of us who were there, by the Rhine, were longing more for the other, the German bank. In our eyes, at that time, Germany was the Promised Land. An earthly paradise. It was a fact that the neighbouring giant had by then been reborn from the ruins, barely ten years after the war. The Americans had first destroyed it and then reconstructed it. And could anyone fail to be aware how industrious the Germans are!

All we saw of it was how cheap petrol was over there, and the fact that one didn't have to swot up on the irregular verbs with which the French plagued our existence in the camp here. And then again, anyone with a German name who gave their word of honour that their forebears were German would be granted citizenship—and very nearly every single family in Hungary could claim ancestors like that. Here on the French side, by contrast, an exile was given the third degree over even a lousy residence permit.

Is it any wonder, then, that there were some who swam across the Rhine? Even some who drowned in the attempt. But then we would eventually be granted one of the pale-blue passports issued by the UNHCR in Geneva.

*

Outside, mixed media on canvas, 225×225 cm, 1996. © Kálmán Makláry Fine Arts

By then I was the proud owner of a 125-cc motor scooter. And I had a job prospect: a Cologne-based publisher was looking for an editor. It stood to reason: I perched on the scooter, with my friend Babó awkwardly riding pillion. Rope dancer!—that's what our associates in the camp called him, because he had once been a ballet dancer in Budapest, but after a two-year break a ballet dancer was one thing he would never be again. Never mind. We scorched across the bridge over the Rhine and produced the two pale-blue passports at the frontier.

The Vespa merrily scudded along on the winding German roads, going from village to village as scooters were not permitted on the autobahn. We had planned to make a stop en route at Fulda to call on Babó's friend, who was doing military service

Guano, oil on canvas, 172.5×175 cm, 1958–1963. © Kálmán Makláry Fine Arts

there, in Hesse. What did a little detour like that matter to a meteorite that could nip along at forty miles an hour!

It was dark by the time we reached the barrier at the entrance to the barracks. I remember trying to stammer out in English what business had brought me there.

'Ákos!', the guard yelled into the telephone.

At that time, after 1956, the American Army was largely made up of Hungarians. Immigrants were called up to do military service as soon as they had been granted the right to settle down. If luck was on their side, they would be shipped back to the

Man, oil on canvas, 226×189 cm, 1967. © Kálmán Makláry Fine Arts

Old World. Eighteen months after the Revolution had collapsed, it was they who were the occupying force for the Germans here in the Rhineland.

Little over a year ago, Ákos had been a French horn player in the Budapest Opera House; now, he said, he was a piano tuner. People weren't too hot on French horn

players in America. In the Army he was a trumpeter: he now played reveille and taps. He didn't have much else to do. As he said, he was the occupying force for the Germans.

I no longer recall how long we stayed in the state of Hesse, or even where we found quarters. I do recall, though, that the French horn player introduced me to a red-haired dreamboat who all but rewrote my travel plans.

She had silky skin as white as driven snow—that's what I remember most of all. I have dim recollections of sitting in a park on a velvet-smooth, sweet-smelling lawn. The girl was saying how she had been operated on not long before. No, she didn't remove my hand; on the contrary, she lifted up her colourful little skirt and showed me the long, pink scar in her groin.

As for me—how odd one is at the age of twenty!—a cold shiver ran down my spine. No more exploring for me, thank you very much! All the same, there was something about even this fleeting encounter, something—how should I put it?—heart-rending. Though what it might have been, that I no longer recall.

*

In Cologne, we found a room in a workers' hostel. On the ground floor, right below us, was a beer house where there was raucous German singing. Babó insisted on waiting for me there, in the boozer. I made a tour of the city on my own in search of my workplace.

The full name of the firm was the American Hungarian Publishing Company, and it was run by a priest monsignor. Father Bükkösi Fuvaros's office was up on the first floor of the headquarters, but half of one's day might easily slip by before one was admitted into the good father's presence.

For starters, my particulars were taken down by the parish secretary, a scrawny man of priestly aspect. The reverend father did not arrive until noon, and until then I was provided with reading matter. 'If you wish to pray', said the secretary, 'I can lend you my rosary'.

Priests must have had a really cushy number here in Germany, by all accounts. I was seated in a fragrant leather armchair, that on the left bank of the Rhine would have been fit for minister. As far as the firm went, it published a mixed list of rigorous classics and woeful dilettantes. At that time it was putting out a gold-embossed volume of poems about Petőfi.

‘That’s the only way we have of stopping the Bolsheviks from appropriating poetry’, said the secretary. He placed before me a critical edition of the works of Jókai that had come with the morning’s post.

‘There you are!’, he exclaimed. ‘Now they’re even daring to criticize Jókai!’

By then a volume of essays had already been published about Father Bükkösi, the author of the volume of poems about Petőfi. ‘The abbot with a maiden’s lips’, one person had written. And the reverend father did indeed have dainty, kissable lips—along with a bull neck, a crewcut, and deeply set eyes. ‘He carries a little camera under his white habit’, the cover blurb gushed.

‘You too should write about him, my son’, the secretary urged. ‘It will be a useful letter of introduction!’, he added helpfully.

Oh, yes! It was high time the—let’s be frank—rather tacky poems about Petőfi were brought up to date. ‘The poet’s heart is a scarlet pouch of virtue!’ It was not clear from the text whether this assertion applied to Sándor Petőfi or to Cologne’s faux-Petőfi.

After which Bükkösi Fuvaros, the author in person, made his arrival. He had diminutive, chubby hands; I had time to notice that as he squeezed my hand at length.

‘I want to start a paper’, he breathed into my ear. ‘A period, yes, a periodical.’ He was palpably carrying that little camera under his white habit. ‘After the revolution’, he explained, ‘students were not the only ones to get out into the big wide world, but nobody gives a hoot about the others.’

The periodical was to bear the title of *Young Worker*; this was where the editorial role adumbrated in the classified advertisement would be awaiting me.

No, the reverend father was certainly not a stupid man. The refugees from the war were slowly reaching pensionable age, so he was now starting to line up the next lot of taxpayers: the 1956 refugees.

When you’re in your twenties, however, you don’t use your loaf. Abhorrence welled up more strongly in me than ambition: I peeled Father Bükkösi’s podgy fingers off mine and returned to him the recently signed Petőfi volume.

That is where my first trip abroad came to an end. Babó was waiting for me downstairs in the boozer. By the time I arrived, he too was singing. ‘There’s a song, and no one is singing it!’, he muttered drunkenly. When he reached the bit about ‘and all along

Eve, oil on canvas, 229×206 cm, 1967. © Kálmán Makláry Fine Arts

the girl just giggles', he roared it out. Admittedly, I too had joined in by then: at this point in the old barrack song, there was a three-syllable pause.

The Germans nodded appreciatively. Rests like that were also common in their marches: *Eins-zwei-drei!* Even ten years after the war, they too would still come out with the old marching songs when they had had a few too many.

*

Outburst, oil on canvas, 112×137 cm, 1956. © Kálmán Makláry Fine Arts

The workers' hostel was stranded desolately at the end of an outer suburban street. The outer suburban bit, of course, is merely supposition on my part. At that time, German cities had not yet been fully built up; there was still rubble on the streets, never mind inner and outer suburbs. In the evening, cumbersome American automobiles were parked the whole length of pavement, the glutinous strains of New Orleans jazz spilling from their radios.

'Hey, they're screwing!', remarked Babó, who had sobered up by then.

We took a peek, and indeed, there on the back seat, there would be a flaxen-haired *fräulein* with her legs in the air. Outside, hulking negroes were lounging against their enormous automobiles, drinking bottles of beer. The atmosphere in that Cologne outer suburb was cosy, homely.

Well, what can one say? The Germans had lost the war. All the same, the two of us were indignant; down in the Rhine's flood plain we had got used to the girls opening up their legs for us.

Guano, oil on canvas, 219×269 cm, 1959–1963. © Kálmán Makláry Fine Arts

'Back home', said Babó, 'you never saw a single Russki in the street.'

'But whenever we needed them', I countered, 'they would always be there in a flash!'

'So are this lot.'

But then, the Germans had not risen up in revolt, had they? They worked from daybreak to nightfall, letting the 'good ole boys' bang their girls.

I kick-started the Vespa and we sang at the top of our voices on the merrily chugging scooter. In Alsace, they have a folk hero who goes by the name of Hansi, a cross between Johnny Hayseed and Huckleberry Finn. 'Lucky chap!', as the song goes, to the rhythm of the trumpet's reveille call to which the residents of Fulda jumped out of bed. 'What's at hand he'd rather forget. And what he needs, he cannot get!'

'We're such smart alecs!', Babó said. 'Totally impractical.'

We drove back over the Rhine bridge, leaving Germany behind. We had begun to understand that for us no such thing as paradise existed. Here in the free world, as we called it, a French horn player can at best be a piano tuner, and a ballet dancer a rope dancer.

We didn't even get to look at the source of the Danube, though we really ought to have stopped it up: why else make the trip? So that the Danube did not flow for at least half a minute. And we ought to have photographed it too, but then with what? We carried something else around in our trousers in those days—not cameras.

Translated by Tim Wilkinson

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A FATEFUL ENCOUNTER BETWEEN GALLERY OWNER AND ARTIST

Kálmán Makláry in Interview with Judit Jankó

To mark the 2023 centenary of Hungarian painter Judit Reigl's birth, three large-scale exhibitions were organized in Budapest. One of the most important exhibitions of this centenary year, held in the Budapest Hall of Art in collaboration with the Kálmán Makláry Fine Arts Gallery, presented the most important stages of the world-famous painter's seven-decade journey. In addition to the more than eighty paintings by Judit Reigl, the exhibition also includes works by other outstanding artists of the Nouvelle École de Paris, or Second Paris School. We sat down with Kálmán Makláry to discuss the career and lasting significance of Judit Reigl, who escaped from behind the Iron Curtain in 1950 and settled down in France for the rest of her life.

JJ: *Are you satisfied with what we can now see in Budapest of the art of Judit Reigl? Is it the complete picture?*

KM: The picture is incomplete. There are certain eras we have not touched on very much, and there is still plenty left for future exhibitions. In particular, we exhibited fewer of her surrealist works, as they had already been presented in other international centenary exhibitions. For instance, her iconic painting *Incomparable Pleasure* was exhibited by the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin. And even though we had 1,700 square metres at our disposal, we could have filled the entire Hall of Art. I am glad that several works are now being shown in a Hungarian museum for the first time, such as the two large-format paintings called *Process*, borrowed from the collection of the Hungarian National Bank.

A few years ago, we found a hidden series in a German private collection, the *Cosmic Abstraction* series, which we were able to use to occupy an entire wall. In the centenary year, there were also exhibitions of Reigl's work in key galleries and museums in Paris, Berlin, and Amsterdam, among other locations. In New York, the Reigl painting which was exhibited in the Hall of Art in 2005, at her first exhibition in Hungary, hangs between two Jackson Pollock paintings at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA).

JJ: *What is the message expressed by the Budapest Hall of Art exhibition?*

KM: Internationally, Judit Reigl is perhaps our most important artist. She was also a very important person in my life, and I thought that on the centenary of her birth,

Judit Reigl and Kálmán Makláry in the middle of book editing, November 2009. © Kálmán Makláry

we should pay tribute to her art with a fittingly large-scale exhibition. In addition, I feel it is very important to start bringing back and reintegrating into Hungarian public consciousness those artists of Hungarian origin who worked in France at that time, and to present other important international artists from the Second Paris School, such as Jean Dubuffet, Hans Hartung, Jean-Paul Riopelle, and Jean Degottex.

JJ: *What should we know about the Second Paris School? What was the environment Judit Reigl entered after succeeding in her eighth escape attempt from communist Hungary?*

KM: That is a popular legend; Judit did not go to the border eight times. Being a cautious person, when something began to appear suspicious to her, she abandoned her plans and went back to the drawing board. Nor did she go alone, but with Teréz Dávid, sister of the art historian Katalin Dávid, who died in 2023 at the age of one hundred, three year after Judit passed away in 2020, aged ninety-seven. It was with Teréz Dávid—who later became a successful cartoonist in New York under the name Tissa David—that she set out on her journey. They had spent their youth together—when Judit took the exam for the College of Fine Arts, Tissa sat on one side and Ferenc Fiedler on the other. They were accepted, and their friendship lasted until the end of their lives. So in 1950, Judit and Tissa defected together. By the time they arrived, Simon Hantai was already out, and Antal Bíró—who was just then leaving for Sweden with his wife—gave Judit his studio for the first few months.

Hitchhiking between Ferrara and Ravenna, oil on canvas, 154×97 cm, 1950.
© Kálmán Makláry Fine Arts

Center of Dominance, oil on canvas, 148×180 cm, 1958. © Kálmán Makláry Fine Arts

In Paris, she too was captivated by the spirit of the age, and although she began to create surrealist works, she did not immerse herself too much in that style. Many of her collages from this period can be found in the MoMa, Metropolitan, and Pompidou collections, but in total she painted perhaps half a dozen surrealist pictures. She was most interested in automatic writing, although she always emphasized to me that it was total automatic writing that she invented and practised, with which she went beyond surrealism.

The Second Paris School, i.e. the Nouvelle École de Paris, is not an art school, but rather a collective name for an art grouping related to a specific place and period. Between 1945 and 1965, more than three hundred and fifty artists who created abstract works lived and worked in Paris. Among them, we present the works of Antal Bíró, Vera Braun, Ferenc Fiedler, Simon Hantai, Pál Kallós, Zsigmond Kolozsváry, Anton Prinner, Endre Rozsda, Géza Szóbel, Ágota Vajtó and the aforementioned foreign greats, Dubuffet, Hartung, Riopelle, and Degottex.

JJ: *When did you first meet Judit Reigl?*

KM: In the very early 2000s. I defected in 1987, hoping to go to Australia, but finally made it to America instead, where I started working in the art world. In 1915, the Panama–California World Exhibition was held in San Diego, and as part of this event the city constructed a replica of the Prado Museum building, which was just being renovated when I lived there. I went to college, studied art history and exhibition organization, and one day, while passing through the park, I noticed a banner unfurled over the construction site: 'Future home of Minge'. I looked up what that was, and when it turned out to be a private museum, I immediately submitted my application. It was a complete surprise when they called me in because the position of deputy director had become vacant due to a death in the family, right when they were preparing for a very important exhibition.

The building was reopened with this exhibition, and it became the exhibition of the year in the US. I was offered a permanent contract. The environment was fantastic, and I learned a lot about art and fundraising. In the meantime, I continued to study art history and was able to 'transfer' for an academic year at a European university. That is how I ended up in Paris in 1996. In addition to studying, I started working as a volunteer at the Hungarian Institute, where I participated in the organization of exhibitions, and began to get to know the Hungarian artists living in Paris. Hantai was the first to have a major exhibition opened in 1997, after fifteen years of silence, and that is where I met him.

I contacted Judith Reigl, but at that time the meeting did not come together. She later told me that if she had met everyone who contacted her, she would never have been able to get any work done. We finally met over a picture. I bought an early oil painting of hers, and not long after, Judit called me to say that she needed that picture, wanted to buy it from me, and that I should take it to her right away. I told her that I had bought the picture for myself, and she would be the first person to know if I decided to sell it, but that I would like to visit. That is how it happened—I visited her, we talked, I bought a picture from her, and our collaboration began. It really struck me how many top-quality pictures were stacked on top of each other in her attic. I could not understand why nobody cared about these.

JJ: *How did you become involved with Reigl's work?*

KM: Judit's career began very well—she took part in important museum exhibitions and worked with good galleries, but made the mistake of working with Hantai's dealer, Jean Fournier. However, Hantai suddenly began to see her as a competitor, so Fournier no longer exhibited Judit, who had so little money that she could not even rent an apartment in Paris. So she moved to Marcoussis, a small village. For a long time she could not make a living from painting, but her first major commercial success came with her picture *They Have an Insatiable*

REIGL JUDIT 100 – Judit Reigl and the Second School of Paris, Exhibition at the Budapest Hall of Art, 4 October 2023 – 28 January 2024. © Műcsarnok

Thirst for Infinity—even though her works were presented in a separate room at the Pompidou Centre in 1996.

I opened my gallery in 2000, and I already had a large enough network of contacts in Paris that I was invited to prestigious art fairs, to which I began taking Reigl's works from the early 2000s. In 2005, Julia Fabényi gave us the opportunity to organize a large Reigl exhibition in the Budapest Hall of Art. Judit took some persuading. She did not want an exhibition in Hungary, saying that it was where artists came from, not where they went to exhibit. I told her that was not the case, that it was no longer the same Hungary she had left, but had good galleries, collectors, etc., so we should go for it. She only very reluctantly gave her consent.

JJ: *What did Reigl say about the 2005 exhibition?*

KM: She was surprised by how many people were interested in her art. The catalogue accompanying the exhibition eventually turned into a book of two hundred pages—this was actually the first book I made about her art. A year later I asked Ági Berecz, whose doctoral thesis at the Sorbonne had been on Hantai's work, and who was well acquainted with the art of the fifties, to write the history of the Second Paris School. In the meantime, the Budapest Hall of Art exhibition

REIGL JUDIT 100 – Judit Reigl and the Second School of Paris, Exhibition at the Budapest Hall of Art, 4 October 2023 – 28 January 2024. © Műcsarnok

sparked interest in Judit Reigl in France, while also bringing in Hungarian collectors, who bought her pictures at serious prices.

JJ: *What was it about Reigl's work that caught your eye?*

KM: I think I have an eye for quality, my professional knowledge is solid, and starting from the 1950s, I have a fairly good idea of who did what in the art world. Hantai, for example, put all kinds of things into his pictures, like an alchemist. Judit's work is much cleaner. Her early colourist works almost seem to vibrate; there is a lot of energy in these pictures, and somehow it comes through on the canvas. In the *Explosion* series, as the glowing oranges and reds emerge from behind the layers of paint, it is clear how much fire there is in these images. I started looking for and collecting her works because I thought, this woman is brilliant. It is unbelievable that everyone has overlooked her. Now there are at least ten galleries who deal with her work, looking for her pictures at every auction worldwide, from London to Paris to New York. Currently, the problem is that there are so few of her pictures available on the market.

JJ: *Where are the pictures?*

REIGL JUDIT 100 – Judit Reigl and the Second School of Paris, Exhibition at the Budapest Hall of Art, 4 October 2023 – 28 January 2024. © Műcsarnok

KM: Judit herself told me that she destroyed at least five hundred of her paintings. She gave eighty works in one series to farm workers, to burn in the fields, because she needed the space in her studio. The attic where she worked was only thirty square metres, and she stored three hundred pictures there. She lined up the large ones in rows, one behind the other. There were also many canvases piled on top of one another on the floor—she was walking on them. She was the kind of artist who had very little interest in anything besides creation. That was her life. What was more important to her than the sale was who her work would go to—she did not sell to just anyone, even if not making a sale meant she had nothing to eat. Judit always wanted to know where and to whom her picture would go. I only understood the significance of this when, in preparation for the Budapest Hall of Art exhibition, we started asking to borrow works from private collections. And I have come to the decision that I will no longer sell my best Reigl pictures.

Translated by Thomas Sneddon

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The doctrine of social transformation has been with us for a while. It now possesses both a pseudo-religious and moral fervour, as well as a political and social agenda to mould its subjects into a monotonously agitated uniformity, filling thoughtless minds with unexamined formulas. Kurt Vonnegut satirized the tendency in The Sirens of Titan *and the short story Harrison Bergerson.*

David Martin JONES, *Education and Ideology: From Humanism to Wokeism*

The world outside Western Europe and North America sees the full horror of what liberalism has become very clearly for the moral abomination that it is. Worse still, the abhorrent nature of what has become a state religion is compounded by its aggressively proselytizing nature. Washington's military adventurism would have had a less corrosive effect had it not been accompanied by a campaign of conversion to progressive liberalism.

Zoltán KOSKOVICS, *The Turning of the Geopolitical Wheel*

Wlassics states that 'after the Great War, the degree to which the development of the conditions for lasting peace can be perfected will determine the future character of international law'. International law would thus be shaped by the conditions of peace, but at the same time peace itself depended on international law—peace must be ensured by this law.

János MARTONYI, *Gyula Wlassics: Politician and Polymath*

Even after the integration of its cultural sources, Roman Christianity considered it its task to evaluate and re-evaluate its traditions and roots. Islam, by contrast, represented a clearer break with ancient culture. Byzantium—because it consciously archaized and maintained an excessive continuity with classical culture—possessed less and less insight into this ancient culture, and developed fewer and fewer opportunities for reflection upon it, because it felt that it did not need to strive towards ancient culture, being its direct heir and possessor.

Zoltán FRENYÓ, *The Idea of a 'Christian Europe'*

Descartes is often quoted with the purpose of confirming that thinking is a necessary precondition of being. What is usually cited is 'Cogito ergo sum', or 'I think, therefore I am'. But this is only part of the phrase. Descartes's full sentence in his Discours de la méthode reads: 'Dubito, ergo cogito, ergo sum'. Thus, 'I doubt, therefore I think, therefore I am'. Thinking is a prerequisite of being, and doubt is a prerequisite of thinking.

Tibor VÁRADY, *On the Brink of a Post-Doubt World?*

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