

(Summary folytatása)

the reviewers attached to them, further carry on the onslaught of the inescapability of the Holocaust. Norbert Haklik's Reader's Diary describes György Konrád's posthumous book of essays (*Walking Stick – Excavation 5*). Konrád was a member of that last Hungarian Jewish generation that had been socialized before the Holocaust, and subsequently throughout his *oeuvre* he continued to draw his adult-child worldview from the catastrophe, which left its mark on all his writings – including on those dealing with European conflicts at the end of the twentieth century.

Tamás Gyurkovics is a young writer, whose *Migraine, the History of a Guilt* is not only a good novel, but also a welcome for illustrating that new and non-victimized generations are discovering the subject of the Holocaust – whose own existence, hitherto unknown to them, yet also has defined their prehistory.

Such is also the case of the writer Gábor Zoltán, whose documentary novel, *Orgia*, deals with the murders of Jews that took place in the Twelfth District in Budapest in 1944 and the beginning of 1945 (!!!), crimes which are unique even in the international context of the Holocaust and involve 100% Hungarian perpetrators. (He is also the narrator of the film "Monument to the Killers.") Zoltán's just released compilation, *Beautiful Verses 1944* is based on a brilliant idea (even if that adjective should rarely be used). During the calm socialist years, modeled on the anthologies that appeared every year, he routinely collected poems published in the press during the most deadly year of the Holocaust. There could not be any historical analysis or data presentation that would more vividly depict what the Hungarian Holocaust is.

Orsolya Péntek reviews two books. One is a 1949 Holocaust diary of a journalist who was deported from Szarvas and returned with the experience of the death camps, which was published in 2020 by the Kiesebach Gallery (but due to Covid, the press presentation was delayed). (I wrote to Tamás Kiesebach to send the book to Itamár Jaoz-Keszt, who was also from Szarvas but whose death so tragically canceled the mailing.) The author of the other book reviewed by Péntek is Ágnes Erdélyi, half-sister of Miklós Radnóti, who also became a writer and poet in close contact with her brother. (Tamás Bíró-Balogh is credited with collecting the scattered pieces of the barely begun oeuvre.) Orsolya Péntek raises an important point about Ágnes Erdélyi – which, however, can be applied to an entire destroyed generation: namely, how would such a promising career have matured if it had not ended in Auschwitz?

Ágnes Huszár also reviews two books. The first is by Judit Zerkowitz an excellent teacher (ELTE BTK) who died after a long illness during the corona virus epidemic, who wrote a memoir centered on her father in hiding in 1944 (*It Happened, Every Word Is True*), published by a Facebook group of her friends. (Such cases also exist!) The other book reviewed by Huszár is by Dr. Alex Sternberg, *Recipes from Auschwitz. From the Survival Stories of Two Hungarian Jews, with Historical Insight*, which focuses on processing the Auschwitz experience of a Jewish family from Pápa.

György Haraszti's forthcoming volume, *The Annotated Chronology of Carpathian Basin Jewry Between 1918 and 1945* is also an extensive – and very critical – review of Hungarian Holocaust scholarship. Mária M. Kovács's study entitled "István Bethlen on the Jewish Question, *Numerus Clausus* and Jewish Laws," is a posthumous communication, to the sorrow of many of us. Kovács's study takes closer look at the so-called Bethlen consolidation, which, however, was not accidental, as it was eventually to lead to the Holocaust. This study is the final volume in the *Holocaust Studies Series [Tanulmányok a holokausztról]* initiated by Randolph Braham, which appeared in twelve volumes. Two young colleagues of Professor Braham, Alexandra Schmal and Judit Molnár, commemorate the help he provided to young Holocaust researchers in publishing their work. We publish the Table of Contents of the anthologies, which will be an important starting point for Hungarian Holocaust research.

Through the life of Endre Bakó, the little-known poet of Debrecen, András Nagy shows that it was possible to perish in the grip of the Holocaust, not only in camps and in the labor service. We publish a relatively large number of poems from the poet – not as illustrations, but to bring them back from oblivion.

István Cziegler appears for the first time in this journal with his study "The Sign of Cain" about the biblical first killer, which is – finally! – not about the Holocaust – unless as primordial sin, as one killing his fellow man.

Ágnes Gergely publishes fragments from her autobiographical memoir. Tamás Vasas, whose work also appears for the first time in this journal, offers an introduction to the Jewish American poet Linda Pastan, as well as some translations of her poems.

Covid has now dominated our lives for a year but is dealt with here only in the poems of Balázs Györe, and indirectly in the portfolio of Gyula Krúdy, as he wrote about the Spanish flu, a similar experience of one hundred years ago.

Already after we had closed this issue (but an issue can never be closed) did we receive news of the death Itamár Jaoz-Keszt. Because this issue has been delayed because of Covid we have been able to squeeze a short commemoration into these pages, but we'll still write later about the significance of the void his death has left.

ÚJ FOLYAM

2020/4.

A FELTÁRULÓ EREDET NYOMÁBAN

Kuroli László: Több olyan folt. Egy nyilas nagybácsi portréja
Vári Attila és Czifra György Péter novellái
Kósbányai János: Pokorni Zoltán könnye

Kovács M. Mária: Bethlen István a zsidókérdésről,
a numerus claususról és a zsidótörvényekről

Haraszti György tanulmánya az 1918 és 1945 közötti magyar zsidó
történelem historiográfiájáról

Vasvári O. Louise: A katolikus zsidó Kardos Klára Auschwitz naplója
Bakó Endre: Egy bihari mártír poéta. Nagy András

Haklik Norbert, Péntek Orsolya, Huszár Ágnes Olvasónaplói

Pandémia: Györe Balázs versei, Krúdy Gyula tárcája
Linda Pastan versei, a költőnőt bemutatja Vasas Tamás

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Köszönjük.

Summary

Each issue of a journal is only apparently compiled by the editor. Rather, his role is to hold his ear to the heart of the era in which he lives and to try to condense what he senses there into the time frame that is still available towards the end of the Gutenberg galaxy. And for him to succeed, he also needs a lot of luck, although luck, too, may be controlled by “someone.”

The theme of this issue was originally very different: *Trianon*, for its anniversary year, but Covid has swept away this divisive memory, especially divisive from a Jewish perspective, so we are postponing that topic to calmer times.

The Holocaust happened three quarters of a century ago and today there remain hardly any survivors. Therefore, the twentieth century apocalypse now shows new dimensions, or – to use more contemporary terminology – mutations.

How does the aftermath of the apocalypse live or spread (like the virus) in the third and fourth generations? And especially – and this is definitely a new element in Holocaust reception – that this time it is not only the descendants of the victims who speak out but also some descendants of the perpetrators. This is happening all over the world, and in Hungary two documentaries – *Born in Auschwitz* and *Monument to the Murderers* – raised the topic of the trauma of our era: how the offspring of perpetrators of the Holocaust cope with the gravity of the sins that their parents and grandparents took to the grave with them. This burial of the past makes it impossible to work together on mourning and reconciliation – and hence to continue a normal life. And how will the trauma of victims continue in future generations of Jews? (Writing about this trauma has already appeared in our online version from the pen of Anna Gáspár-Singer, which in our next issue will be transferred to the journal proper.)

This new thematic block came together in almost a matter of weeks, so that something completely new, brought together by new contributors, has taken place, which has been fortuitous for the editing of this issue.

György Péter Czifra – a recently retired lawyer who has just started working as a writer at a new stage in his life and in a newly purchased garden house on Lake Balaton – tells the story of a girl born in a concentration camp who grew up as a German woman but learns as an adult – as does her father, who returns from the camps – that she came into the world from a Hungarian Jewish stock. As the author explained, he created his short story “Spring” from two real incidents. And what is more remarkable, the editor found that Czifra achieved the highest literary level with this work right at the beginning of his literary career. We meet a similarly brilliant intellect in László Kuroli, who is a twenty-year old doctoral student in humanities. From a comment his grandmother let slip in the last conversation he had with her he learned that his uncle had been a member of the Arrow Cross in positions of responsibility. Kuroli immediately embarked on a courageous and persistent search and found out the facts about the activities of his Arrow Cross uncle, even until after the regime change, when the uncle tried to sell himself as a righteous gentile, who had been a rescuer of Jews (“Many Such Stains”). In his vehement essay “Small, Hungarian, and Gray,” Kuroli explores the official barriers that still protect the “individual rights” of perpetrators. The editor is convinced that there is a strong and organic connection between sparkling talent and a liberating facing of the facts of the past. And when one thinks about it, consider what energies have gone to waste in the last three quarters of a century as a result of the narrowing, withering effect of suppression of such facts.

The hero of Attila Vári’s tragically shocking short story “Cat Leash” is raised by a “grandmother” in the belief that he is a descendant of Jews, but after the death of his foster parent it turns out that, on the contrary, his real father was a murderous Nazi. Attila Vári is a “classic” writer – his short story ended up published here after I had asked him to write a commemoration for the recently deceased Lajos Erdélyi (for which Vári produced a text which also shows fictional strengths). Vári then asked me why I had not published the short story he had submitted to this journal in 2008. Our correspondence soon revealed that this oversight was only due to the devil of the internet and I apologized immediately and promised that I would publish it in the next issue (even if now it would no longer be the story’s first appearance). In this case again fate was the editor – because Vári’s short story empowers not only his own contribution but also that of Kuroli and animates the subject of the Holocaust, which after seventy-five years is still revelatory and cathartic.

The interrelated articles in this issue are complemented by János Kőbányai’s (the editor’s) own writing, “The Tears of Zoltán Pokorni,” which has already been published online (HVG), but is included here because it is about the feelings and doubts of a well-known Hungarian politician, whose grandfather’s name appeared as a victim on a disputed World War II monument, but later it came to light out that in World War II he was in fact a sadistic murderer. This case, and its unfinished reception, is unique in its recent history.

Louise O. Vasvári’s essay, “The Auschwitz Diary of the Catholic Jew Klára Kardos,” also reveals an unusual narrative – based on a diary written in 1958, first published in 2001 but which remained unknown, and now has been published in English in 2020 to a wider possible reception. Vasvári’s research studies Kardos’s life from when she went through in the death camps to the end of her life as a Christian holy woman, not in the narrow Catholic sense, but in the true sense of Jesus (i.e. as a Jew). Hopefully, as a result of this publication, this Christian-Jewish testimony will be incorporated into the Hungarian Holocaust canon and knowledge.

In music there is the rule that if we play a chord it must be carried throughout the work, and in editing it is no different, so that Covid has also strengthened our book column offerings. These books, and the observations of

(Summary folytatása a bátós borítón)