

SUMMARY

A quarter of a century has gone by since the regime-change in Hungary. As it turns into part of history, this period ever increasingly highlights the preceding historical eras we associate with Horthy and Kádár, separated by totalitarian dictatorships – the age of the Holocaust (the later Horthy era) and late Rákosi regime (the Stalinist era that set the stage for Kádár).

Having failed to confront the sins of these shorter and longer eras, Hungarian society has remained their prisoner. It has used the long awaited freedom of the past quarter century not for building the future but for idle reviews of the past; not for confronting it! It has made efforts to transform deceptive nostalgia into “progressive tradition” that deprive of air and energy the establishment of any history free of fiascoes and false directions, that inevitably lead to a *cul-de-sac* history. Instead of internalizing the Holocaust into its consciousness, into its “culture,” and thereby regaining its health, Hungarian society is simply bored with it; its perpetrators and their victims alike. The Holocaust is considered an obstacle to leading a “normal” life; that is the reason this society remains ill – perhaps forever.

We would like to recover! We want to be healthy – though in a society refusing to face itself this is impossible.

This is the reason that the main theme of our current issue is also the Holocaust, at the time when intellectual life is taken up by discussing the question of which of the bad regimes has been the “more modern” one?

Randolph Braham’s essay, *A post-mortem of the holocaust in Hungary: probing interpretation of the causes*, following countless monographs and articles of its author, throws new light on the nature of the Hungarian holocaust. János Kőbányai’s essay argues that teaching the Holocaust cannot be effective in Hungary if remembrance is not conducted in credible places, that is to say, in the Holocaust’s Hungarian “anterooms”: railway stations and brick factories Mihály Vajda shares his views on much-talked-about the fine arts exhibition *What is Hungarian?* Gábor Andreides, the young researcher, published for the first time in our periodical, compares Italian and German fascisms.

György Kozma examines the phenomenon – mainly in himself – when keeping one’s Jewish past a secret might lead to sympathizing with fascism.

Júlia Vajda’s study, not for the first time, delves into the Holocaust experience’s mental and psychological symptoms. László Bernáth, cultural journalist (in whom I greet my first editor here, in the family of authors of our periodical), tells us about his experiences in Auschwitz, in an imagined dialogue with his father; the son says good bye to his father in Auschwitz after the father had saved the life of his fourteen-year-old son. Ferenc Apró (also making his first appearance with us) introduces us to a hitherto unrevealed milieu: Miklós Radnóti’s circle of Jewish friends in Szeged.

Géza Röhrig has sent us some poems after a long absence. Béla Vihar’s poem from 1956 deals with an Auschwitz story.