NATION-RELIGION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY HUNGARIAN POETRY

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Nation-religion is a term for a national myth and rhetoric formed in Hungary from the 15th century in a quest for national identity. A part of it was the myth of the prehistoric genealogy of the nation and the chroniclers' accounts of the occupation of the area surrounded by the Carpathians in the 9th century. In the 16th century the country was occupied by the Turkish Empire, and the Hungarians parallelled their fate with that of the Lord's chosen people. In the 18th and early 19th centuries this semi-mythical, semi-religious compound, supplemented by a set of "intellectual emotions" (also retraceable in poems by Schiller, Shelley and Keats), was adapted to a romantic ideology of national history and codified in verse and prose by Ferenc Kölcsey, author of the national anthem. It influenced poetry in the Age of Reforms, and culminated in an apocalyptic imagery and visions of a demonic world when the War of Independence was defeated in 1849.

Keywords: nation-religion, national myth, romantic ideology of national history, romantic poetry, verbal imagination, intellectual emotions, moral sentiments, spiritual gifts, War of Independence (1848–1849), apocalypse, demonic world, memory, hope

Nation-religion is a term for a special kind of national myth and rhetoric formed in Hungary from the fifteenth century on by a spiritual quest for national identity. One part came to be formed by stories, based on thirteenth-century Hungarian *gestas* and chronicles, on the mythical and pseudo-historical genealogy of the nation and accounts of the occupation of the historical area of what used to be the kingdom of Hungary by seven Magyar tribes during the eighth century.[1] A new aspect arose during the sixteenth century when a part of the kingdom was occupied by the Turkish Empire. Then Hungarians sought help and refuge in the biblical story of the Jews and compared themselves to the Lord's chosen people and saw the Turks as God's scourge sent to punish them for their vices.[2] During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries this semi-mythical, semi-religious compound, supplemented with a few systematizing ideas borrowed from the New Testament (especially the "spiritual gifts" – 1 Cor 12–13), was adapted to a romantic ideol-

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ogy of history and widely used by poets and politicians to buttress the cause of national independence. This development was codified in verse and prose by Ferenc Kölcsey (1790–1838), author of the national anthem, and reached a conclusive phase in the transition from an apocalyptic imagery to the visions of a demonic world in the lyric poetry of Sándor Petőfi (1823–1849). Petőfi died in action in Hungary's War of Independence against its Habsburg ruler in 1848–1849. The defeat of the country was followed by nearly two decades of heavy oppression. In *Előszó* [Preface] (1850–1851), a poem by Mihály Vörösmarty (1800–1855), the poet of *Szózat* [Call to the Nation, a second national anthem of Hungary, 1836) summarized the atmosphere in a single memorable line, "Most tél van és csend és hó és halál" [It's winter now, and calm, and snow, and death]. Fragments of the nation-religion and the residual idea of "life in death" survived in poems by Mihály Tompa (1817–1868) and János Arany (1817–1882).

1. The Rise of the Elements of a "Nation-Religion" in the Middle of the Sixteenth Century

In 1526 the royal army of Hungary suffered a disastrous defeat from the Turkish army. Fleeing from the battlefield the king drowned in a swollen stream. During the decades that followed the fate of the country was sealed: Buda, the royal residence, became a stronghold of the sultan. The Turkish occupation of the central third of the country lasted one and a half centuries. Hungarian armed resistance continued and the sultans repeatedly renewed their attempts to extend their rule. The constant struggle resulted in considerable devastation throughout the country. Large areas became desolate. Life was made miserable by heavy taxation, ruthless vexation and brigandage. Tens of thousands, men and women, young and old, were sold at distant slave markets of the Ottoman Empire.[3]

What I term "nation-religion" dates back to this period. In 1533 Benedek Komjáti, the first Hungarian translator of the *Epistles* of Paul, referred to the Turks as the scourge God sent to punish Hungary.[4] In 1538 András Farkas, another Protestant writer, who had studied in Wittenberg and enjoyed an international reputation under the name Andreas Lupus Strigoniensis, published a poem in Cracow, which compared the fate of Hungary to that of the Jewish nation.[5] Just as during the biblical ages God had sent prophets to return his chosen people to the right path, in Hungary, threatened by the Turks with total subjugation, Protestant preachers felt it their duty to warn the people and to prophesy disaster unless they repented.

In later centuries this set of ideas became the kernel of a quasi-religious national rhetoric, which mimicked religious argument and shared some of the traits of the theological organization of religion. Nevertheless, these gestures belonged

to a semi-conscious national ideology with no aspiration to replace any established faith or religion. Perhaps "national myth" would term the nature of this phenomenon more precisely but the purpose of the present discussion is to point at the quasi-religious vocabulary and quasi-theological system inherent in it.

The analogy with the biblical story served the legitimization of an hyperbolic interpretation of Hungary's past. When Andreas Lupus Strigoniensis described the early Magyars as God's chosen people the phrase was not merely a poetical metaphor because by the second half of the sixteenth-century Hungary had become the center of the struggle to defend Christian Europe against the invasion of the Turks.[6] At this point the national interpretation of the bible was interlaced with the theological interpretation of the events. In *Vom Kriege widder die Türcken* (1529) Martin Luther had explained that the Turks were the scourge of God (virga Dei), and the Christians could not withstand them unless they would overcome the devil as the Turks were servants of this fiend, who would destroy not only land and people with the sword but also Christian belief and Christians' love of Christ: "Denn der Türcke (wie gesagt) ist ein Diener des Teuffels, der nicht allein land und leute verderbet mit dem Schwerd (Welchs wir hernach hören werden) sondern auch den Christlichen glauben und unsern lieben herrn Jhesu Christ verwüstet."[7]

Religious ideas associated with the God of the Old Testament were mixed imperceptibly with confabulations about the godhead of the pagan Hungarians, who had allegedly been a single personal deity like the God of Moses. Retrospective conjectures still risk speculations that the half nomadic tribes of the ancient Hungarians, roaming on the steppes of Asia, were monotheists, who had been in touch with an Eastern variety of Christianity. If this is hardly true of the Magyars of the eighth and ninth centuries, it *is* true that the early Hungarian chroniclers of the thirteenth century were Christian ecclesiastics, who believed that only God was wise, powerful and providential enough to bring the Hungarians out of Scythia to the Carpathian basin, a real Canaan of rich pastures, woods and rivers in accordance with the topoi of classical tradition. By the end of the eighteenth century a strange (from the point of view of rigorous religious thought perhaps even blasphemous) phrase, the "God of the Magyars", i.e., "the God of the Hungarians" [a magyarok istene], came into use. Its contacts with the nation-religion were circumstantial; in certain contexts it was hardly more than a mild form of a vulgar oath, in others, e.g., in poetical texts, it was a sublime and anxious call to the Almighty. The phrase referred to God in a special function, the function of Providence. (Commonly God is assigned to such providential tasks in national anthems and patriotic pieces of poetry all over the world, and in time of war religion acts in the role of "nation-religion" by helping to consecrate arms and offering prayers for a national cause.) As a rule, the "God of the Magyars," although the function attributed to him was reduced to providence for the nation, could not be distinguished in other respects from the God of other nations. Such differentiation was

not elaborated at all, not even to the extent of the distinction of the God of the Covenant who as a unique, single, invisible and almighty deity stood above the plural and visible gods or idols of the enemy.

It was the God of the Magyars whom Sándor Petőfi addressed in a poem at the outbreak of the Hungarian revolution on March 15, 1848:

A magyarok Istenére
Esküszünk,
Esküszünk, hogy rabok tovább
Nem leszünk!
(*Nemzeti dal*)

By the Lord God of the Magyars
We all swear,
We all swear to shake off our yoke
For ever!
(National Song)

This was the refrain of the poem and according to contemporary reports the mass of people who gathered in Pest by the building of the National Museum echoed these words aloud and marched around the city with revolutionary demands.

Another poem by Petőfi betrays the direct influence of words of the bible, "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light" (Ex 13:21).

Pusztában bujdosunk, mint hajdan
Népével Mózes bujdosott,
S követte, melyet isten külde
Vezérül a lángoszlopot.
Ujabb időkben Isten ilyen
Lángoszlopoknak rendelé
A költőket, hogy ők vezessék
A népet Kánaán felé.
(A XIX. század költői)

In wilderness we roam as once
Moses and his people did
Following a pillar of fire
God gave them for lead.
In recent ages poets are such
Guiding pillars of flame
Ordained by God to lead the people
To the land of Canaan.
(The Poets of the 19th Century)

In the phrase, "the God of the Magyars" the idea of the Christian godhead was mixed with the traditional idea that the God of the ancient Magyars was a pagan War God, the Lord of Hosts in the biblical sense. The opening and the closing strophes of the national anthem of Hungary (written by Ferenc Kölcsey in 1823) recall this idea making God responsible for the fate and destiny of his chosen people. His providential duty found expression in the unprecedented conception that Hungary, by her past tribulations, has atoned for the faults of the future:

Isten áldd meg a magyart
Jó kedvvel, bőséggel,
Nyújts feléje védő kart,
Ha küzd ellenséggel.
Balsors akit régen tép,
Hozz rá víg esztendőt,
Megbűnhődte már e nép
A múltat s jövendőt.
(Himnusz a magyar nép zivataros századaiból)

God bless Hungary,
Be merciful, gracious,
When we fight with enemy
Lend an arm to save us,
Let us have one good year for
Ages of misfortune,
This folk has settled the score
For the past and future.
(Hymn from the Turbulent Centuries of the Hungarian People)

In certain periods of history God displays his benevolence to the chosen people. The second strophe praises him for his generous support when the Hungarians settled down in the Carpathian Basin, this "land of promise" at the end of the ninth century.

Chroniclers relate that the Hungarians came to the valley of the Danube and the Tisza rivers as legitimate heirs of the land because they descended from Attila's Huns, who had reigned in this area five centuries earlier. A version of the myth was the legend that the forefathers of the Huns and the Magyars were twin brothers, Hunor and Magor, sons of Nimrod, "the mighty hunter before the Lord" (Gen 10: 9). The legend was established as a popular belief, and was supported by early Hungarian historiographers. It remained intact till mid-nineteenth century. Its rearguard positions were held for long even after the discovery of the linguistic fact that the Hungarian language, in contradiction with the legend, belongs to the Finno-Ugrian family of languages. In recent years there have been sporadic attempts to re-establish the theory of the Hungarians' kinship with the Huns.

Nevertheless, the second strophe of the national anthem recalls the legend mentioning Bendeguz, who according to the myth was the father of Attila or Etele, the king of the Huns.

Őseinket felhozád
Kárpát szent bércére,
Általad nyert szép hazát
Bendeguznak vére…

Thou guidedst our ancestry
To the Carpath Mountains,
And gavest a fair country
To Bendeguz's descendants…

In the framework of the "nation-religion" Hungarian history was conceived in quasi-religious terms as a salvation story. According to this belief the covenant between God and his chosen people worked well in the time of the founding fathers. The Hungarians were led to the present area of Hungary, the land of promise, a real Canaan, a land of milk and honey, but owing to their sins God had turned away from them and sent against them as his scourge the Tartars (during the thirteenth century) and the Turks (during the sixteenth century). Redemption is deserved only by those who sustain the memory of the heroic ancestors and imitate their virtues.

Facing a vision of the death of the nation János Arany insisted on a profane version of salvation:

Nem, nem! – Élni fog a nemzet
Amely összetart:
Kit önvétke meg nem hódít,
Nem hódítja kard.
Megbünhödtük ősapáink
Vétkét súlyosan;
Napjainkban, a jelenben,
Csak erénye van,
S az erényes nemzet jutalma nem égi:
Földön jut dicső és hosszu élet néki.
(*Egyesülés*. March, 1848)

No, no! – The nation, if united,
Is bound to live long:
Unless its own faults defy it,
It will not bend to sword.
We suffered tough chastisement
For the forefathers' faults,
In these days, in the present,

Only our virtue holds.
Nations' reward is no celestial worth,
But a long, brave life on the earth.
(Union)

Reference to "virtue" and its eventual celestial or earthly "reward" in the course of national history opened a new dimension in the thought of nation-religion. The necessary new elements were added by poets of the Reform Era, i.e., the two decades that preceded the Revolution of 1848.

2. The "Spiritual Gifts" and the Intellectual Emotions in the Verbal Imagination of Romantic Poetry

A fundamental aspect of the romantic conception of history was revealed in the study: "New Harmony: The Quest for Synthesis in West European Romanticism", by Henry H. H. Remak, who claimed that Novalis was the first true synthetic thinker of romanticism.[8] Novalis was concerned with historical continuity, or history conceived as an articulate continuum. Henry H. H. Remak cited a passage from *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* claiming that "hope" and "memory" establish continuity in the chain of historical events:

> Der eigentliche Sinn für die Geschichten der Menschen entwickelt sich erst spät, und mehr unter den stillen Einflüssen der Erinnerung, als unter den gewaltsameren Einbrücken der Gegenwart. Die nächsten Ereignisse scheinen nur locker verknüpft, aber sie sympathisieren desto wunderbarer mit entfernteren; und nur dann, wenn man imstande ist, eine lange Reihe zu übersehen und weder alles buchstäblich zu nehmen, noch auch mit mutwilligen Träumen die eigentliche Ordnung zu verwirren, bemerkt man die geheime Verkettung des Ehemaligen und Künftigen und lernt die Geschichte aus Hoffnung und Erinnerung zusammensetzen.[9]

One pole of this duality, "hope," is placed in a world historical framework in *Resignation*, a portentous piece of poetry by Friedrich Schiller. Here the poles are "Hoffnung" (hope) and "Genuß" (lust or pleasure). Mortals are endowed either with hope or with pleasure, but no one is entitled to both. Those who have hope have faith to endure need. The proof of the thesis is "world history," implying that its judgement is irrevocably universal. This universality is strangely ingrained in the closely knit algorithm of the argumentation leading up to a Hegelian last judgement, or ultimate reason, of the world: "Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht."

This all-embracing truism is declared by a "genius:"

"Mit gleicher Liebe lieb ich meine Kinder!"
Rief unsichtbar ein Genius,
"Zwei Blumen", rief er, "hört es, Menschenkinder,
Zwei Blumen blühen für den weisen Finder,
Sie heißen *Hoffnung* und *Genuß.*

Wer dieser Blumen *eine* brach, begehre
Die andre Schwester nicht.
Genieße, wer nicht glauben kann. Die Lehre
Ist ewig wie die Welt. Wer glauben kann, entbehre.
Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht.

Du hast *gehofft*, ein Lohn ist abgetragen,
Dein *Glaube* war dein zugewognes Glück.
Du konntest Deine Weisen fragen:
Was man von der Minute ausgeschlagen,
Gibt keine Ewigkeit zurück."

Here the unusual function and suggestivity of words like *hope* and *belief* seem to set them apart from common colloquial usage. They denote intellectual emotions, and the denotation is independent of their actual grammatical categorization: it is of no consequence whether their form is verbal or substantival, the system they belong to disregards grammatical differences between "gehofft" and "Hoffnung", or "glauben" and "Glaube." They refer to pure conceptual entities or ideas in a Platonic universe of intellectual emotions. But their universe is not static or motionless. They are interrelated functionally and act out their roles in a metaphysical narrative. In their interaction they behave as allegorical heroes. At an early stage of the development of this particular aspect of romantic mentality the allegory was explicit, the roles were taken by "genii", the genius of hope and the genius of memory, etc. Schiller's poem reminds us of this tradition with its paraphernalia of a goddess, a genius and the like but the argumentation does not depend on the roles they have.

What happens in Schiller's poem to actual words as terms of intellectual states or emotions? Words of common usage are manipulated so that they should regain their referential status in the context of "world history" and the "law" or the "judgement" of history counterpoised by a metaphysical universe of vague immortality, i.e., a platonic universe. This manoeuvre presupposes (and thereby posits) an eschatological plane of concepts in which world history is endowed with meaning (and value!) in the framework of such terms as "justice", "judgement" and "law." This meaningful continuum is like a plane which, due to its eschatological attributes, has both a lay and a religious (or a physical and a metaphysical) surface but in certain positions they are as indiscernible as the two (?) sides or surfaces of a Moebius ribbon. Here linear movement takes us imperceptibly from one side to

the other without ever actually changing sides. There are indeed no "sides:" a plane ordinarily defined by two dimensions has entered into the third dimension. Two motionless or parallelly moving points on the two sides of this plane would never find themselves on the same side unless they start moving towards one another. Only their *movement* counts, or they exist in movement only. Here movement is an existential attribute. Similarly, it is impossible to distinguish the lay and the religious or the physical and metaphysical planes of the eschatological constructions of those conceited pieces of romantic poetry whose argumentation is embedded in the continuum of world history. In "real time" movement the ethical consciousness of humanity and the fate or destiny of Man appear on reverse sides of a two-dimensional plane but they overlap in the timeless or meta-temporal existence of an eschatological concept of history. The religious interrelationship of crime with punishment and hope or belief with the idea of salvation is connected with the idea of a supernatural being and its providential attention to the deeds and misdeeds of mankind. In Schiller's poem the non-religious context of hope and merit (or reward) is laicized in an eschatological image of "world history," an omnipotent power of law in the sphere of human action and morality whose judgement parallels or substitutes the apocalyptic last judgement of the bible. Apparently Schiller's terms are woven in a metaphorical texture of moral imperatives (*hope* and *belief* are the legitimate share of people unentitled to *pleasure* and *vice versa*) and held together by the field force of a lay version of an eschatological view of history (*hope* and *belief* refer to a future, as yet not materialized *fate* while fate as irrevocably factualized *past* is *history*).

The gain of common words denoting intellectual emotions by an intersection with a metaphysical plane is exemplified in Paul's discussion of the "spiritual gifts" (1 Cor 12, 1), which is at once poetical, philosophical and psychological. His poetical hymn to *charity* (*agape* – 1 Cor 13) displays powerful rhetoric: charity is defined by antinomic and synonymic allusions circumscribing an intellectual emotion, which though nearly perfect is still human, and by reference to the yet unknown but sincerely hoped superhuman future "when that which is perfect is come" (1 Cor 13, 10). In this precise poetical system of definition by varieties the author demonstrates, and also imitates, the unity and identity of the spiritual gifts and the Spirit. The explanation that the body is a union of various members and organs, which cannot take the place of one another or of the whole, may refer to members of the local religious community, to those who "are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Cor 12, 27), or mankind in general. "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (1 Cor 12, 7). The stratification of the meanings coincides with the stratification of the conceited metaphorical structure, and the fading of one layer into another, and all into one, contributes to the unusual power of the passage. The play on words with doubled

or trebled reference or their interference brings about a verbal field of force able to gather and arrange the dynamic dispositions of *verbal imagination.*

The stratified structure of the conceptual spheres of metaphorical language ranging from common experience to metaphysical prospects seems to be specifically related to discourse concerned with transcendental purposes. Such transcendentalism, though as a rule exempt of direct religious intent or religiousness in the traditional sense, characterizes the verbal creativity of the romantic movement. Its spokesmen did not so much theorize about the transcendental aspect of poetry, they simply pointed at its whereabouts, its neighborhood, its general arrangement, and its images. Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* suggests that there is an "interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own."[10] About the "emotions" aroused by this interpenetration he declares that "the enthusiasm of virtue, love, patriotism, and friendship" is essentially linked with such emotions; and whilst they last, self appears as what it is, an atom to a universe. Poets are not only subject to this experience as spirits of the most refined organization, but they can color all that they combine with the evanescent hues of this ethereal world; a word, a trait in the representation of a scene or a passion, will touch the enchanted chord, and reanimate, in those who have ever experienced these emotions, the sleeping, the cold, the buried image of the past. Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world…"[11] And he adds that "poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man."[12]

The imaginative order, manifold arrangement, and logic are consequently derived from the very nature of language; i.e., an order, an arrangement, and a logic valid not only on the levels of phonetics and grammar but also on the levels of the "matter" or "stock" of language, the phoneme, the syllable, quantity, stress and intonation, the lexical unit, the patterns of minor and major utterance, simple and complex ideas, connotations and the major forms of verbal composition. The imaginative order is no static abstraction but action. Its exists in the effects it provokes. In its working, words, phrases and forms of colloquial usage rise above the levels of daily life. The imaginative arrangement of the dynamic capacities of language is not this or that abstract grouping of topoi, symbols or metaphors but their innate mobility from syzygies to antisyzygies, from near-conjunctions to total mergers and a wide range of as yet unexplored patterns. Dynamic formulations of meaning are brought about by their streaming self-arrangement and rearrangement in temporal yet constant algorithms of change. In Paul's hymn on charity the degree of the transcendental is reached by reference to the "face to face" vision at a time when the sober fact is that we are on this side of the demarcation line between life and perfect knowledge. The meaning is clear. Yet it remains unexplained why the moment of perfect knowledge is transferred, not to the empty abstraction of philosophical thought, but to an eschatological calendar, a future, uncertain date (with its absolute certainty otherwise) when humans achieve true

ripeness, if not in this worldly life, then in their next life. The syllogism is, as a matter of fact, a paralogism, an excellent poetical device. If we imply the Moebius-phenomenon of the presence of the metaphysical on this worldly side of existence, the word "faith" gains a new dimension, the dimension of verbally existent demystified mysticism. Which is perhaps the sublime eschatological *truth* of all great poetry. And this may remind us of Keats' statement in a letter to Bailey dated 22 November 1817:

> I am certain of nothing but the holiness of the Heart's affections, and the truth of Imagination. What the Imagination seizes as Beauty must be Truth – whether it existed before or no – for I have the same idea of all our passions as of Love; they are all, in their sublime, creative of essential Beauty.[13]

Hope as one of the transcendental factors whose value is subject to the judgement of history appears in Schiller's poem as part and parcel of a powerful scheme, a calculating mechanism keeping the law and executing the judgements of history. The power of the poetic idea comes from the eschatological aspect attributed to this superhuman interdependence of human strivings and world history. Similarly, transcendental and eschatological aspects of human history are involved in the syzygy and antisyzygy of *hope* and *memory.* This broad view of mankind verging on an unorthodox religious belief is not an isolated phenomenon in romantic poetry. A precise formulation of the interrelationship of the intellectual emotions created an intellectual background in such poems as *Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood* (1806) by Wordsworth and in *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* (1816) by Shelley.

The interest of early romantic poets in intellectual emotions may have had its roots in classicist sentimentalism. The personification these categories sustain is less a stylistic device than a necessity to meet the demands of an active function they fulfil both in a wide meta-linguistic sense of grammar and in an equally wide sense of theory or philosophy. Mythological personification was evident in the case of the "genii", or the two spirits, one good and the other evil, of Roman mythology, which attended mortals from birth to death. When their protégé died, their torches were turned down. (In another variety of the myth numberless genii exist as each intellectual and emotional faculty or category has at least one pair of them to represent its polarities.)

In the early nineteenth-century cult of intellectual emotions there is no clear division between their personification as *genii* and their distinction as independent psychological and/or moral categories. They are, on the one hand, spiritual "gifts," value-loaded as acts of participation in the Spirit, while, on the other hand, they appear as psychological entities with eventual moral preconditions and consequences. Poetical sensibility would not reduce itself to the cult of individual sen-

timents or separate emotions: it involves constant interest in their interrelations, i.e., not so much in the individuals' psychological make-up but on a transcendental plane of metaphysical existence. Monadic concepts like Hope, Resignation, Despair, Despondency, or Memory and Oblivion seem to be the constants of the sidereal mechanics of poetic imagination in terms of intellectual emotions. Keats addresses this astronomical geography in the second quatrain of his sonnet beginning with the words "When I have fears…"

> When I behold, upon the night's starr'd face,
> Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
> And feel that I may never live to trace
> Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance…

Keats' poems abound in such terms as fear, hope, love, pain, misery, delight, despair, joy and sorrow *(Welcome Joy and Welcome Sorrow…)* and poems like *Lines written on the blank fore-page of Beaumont and Fletcher's tragi-comedy, 'The Fair Maid of the Inn'* (Bards of Passion and of Mirth…) make it a task of the poets to speak to mortals:

> Of their sorrows and delights;
> Of their passions and their spites;
> Of their glory and their shame;
> What does strengthen and what maim.

The hesitation between the personification of, and a mythological reference to, moral sentiments (as "Figures", "Ghosts", "Phantoms") and their description simply as imaginary apparitions of the unexplored, or unexplorable, areas of psychological insight ("shadows") is exemplified by *On Indolence*. In this poem, in addition to "Indolence," "Love", "Ambition," and "Poesy" are evoked to participate in an inter-conceptual poetical game. The "shadows" of traditional (Graeco-Roman) mythology (e.g., "Lethe's weed and Hermes' feather" in *Welcome Joy and Welcome Sorrow*) are also omnipresent in Keats' writings. Often the titles themselves, as in the case of *Ode on Melancholy*, or *On Indolence* by Keats, or *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty,* or *Love, Hope, Desire, and Fear* by Shelley, suggest the thematical importance of such terms.

This was, however, not an unprecedented development. *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* by Milton were also thematic poems. They thematized an intellectual emotion but the elaboration of the theme did not reflect on its relations or the systems of its relations. In poems by Keats and Shelley the discussion of any one such intellectual emotion seems to involve a whole set of similar concepts. These concepts are integrated in the metaphorical structure or in an extended conceit of the poem. This may happen even to concepts personified as gods or goddesses, spirits or genii. In *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* the Spirit of Beauty is the immedi-

ate addressee; yet the second strophe ends in an enumeration of polar elements that human beings have "such a scope for,"

> Why fear and dream and death and birth
> Cast on the daylight of this earth
> Such gloom, – why man has such a scope
> For love and hate, despondency and hope?

The fixed stars of Shelley's sidereal map of the intellectual emotions may be located in a number of his poems of mood and sentiment. In *Stanzas Written in Dejection, near Naples* we find *delight, solitude, hope, calm, love, pleasure, despair, joy, memory,* and also the word *emotion.* It is of course not simply the presence of these concepts that defines the intellectual worth and atmosphere of the poem but the pivotal terms on which the direction of their interaction turns in course of the poetical argumentation or "dianoia" of the poem.

3. The Poetical Economy of "Moral Sentiments"

Now we see that the traditional variety of the nation-religion followed or paralleled the lines set by the Old Testament – themes such as the God of Abraham and Moses, a covenant with the chosen people, the land of promise, prophesying on crime and punishment, or God as the Lord of Hosts. The new development, the concentration on spiritual gifts, virtues, intellectual and emotional attitudes, moral sentiments and their contextual systematization may be considered as an analogue of a new spiritual modality revealed in the New Testament and its integration in the Platonic metaphysical tradition of romantic poetry.

The beginning of interest in spiritual gifts, virtues, intellectual and emotional entities, as well as moral sentiments coincided with the emergence of an attitude to concentrate on strictly spiritual problems, those of *conscience*. The initial phase of the literary presentation of this new stage of human self-reflection is apprehended in *Mimesis* by Erich Auerbach. In Chapter 2, dealing with a change of the sense of history in the transition from antiquity to Christianity, Auerbach discusses the scene of Peter's betrayal of Jesus (Mark 14, 66–72).[14] The spiritual novelty of the situation is the emergence or recovery of *conscience*. The consequences of this metamorphosis are codified in the theological passages of Paul's epistles, especially in his discussion of the "spiritual gifts" (1 Cor 12–13).

The phases of the emergence, the distinctive perceptualization and conceptualization of human *conscience* are detectable in the approaches made by the Fathers of the Church, with Augustine's *Confessions* as a key example. Lay varieties of the problem range from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to Rousseau's *Confessions*. As a phenomenon of cultural and sociological interest *The New-*

England Conscience by Austin Warren seems to be an indispensable historical case study.[15]

The introspective attitude inherent in the idea of conscience is paralleled in the subjectivized positions of romantic thought on the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. We should be aware of the role romantic poets – and romantic thinkers of a poetical philosophy like Kierkegaard ("Verfasser dieser Schrift ist keineswegs Philosoph, er ist, *poetice et eleganter,* ein Extraschreiber, der weder das System schreibt noch das System verspricht…"[16]) – played in the conceptualization of the key phenomena of conscientious behavior and conscious introspection.

In poetical thought the role of the "genii" was taken by concepts, ideas or categories of intellectual emotions, passions (Francis Hutcheson) or "moral sentiments" (Adam Smith[17]). The words which stand for them retained for long a lexical contact with, or a verbal transition to, the classicists' cult of antiquity. Memory, hope and others were represented as, or by, "genii". In *Resignation* a genius voices the conclusive sentence, while another, the hidden god, carries a torch and, meaning death, turns it down.

In the period under discussion psychology was still a kind of philosophical study, prior to its new phase of observation and experiment. In the treatment of complex and compound emotions impressionistic observation, introspection and contemplation prevailed. Poetry and literary prose offered a store of human experience, and important facts were revealed by historiography, public writing, memoires, journals, correspondence and the residues of popular knowledge. Provençal poetry was rooted in the metaphysics of the *finesse* of courtly love. In early modern philosophical systems the originating and organizing center was taken by a psychologically sensitive, apprehensive and contemplative Ego.

The intellectual emotions were conceived as ready-made conceptual entities defined by linguistic terms and the common sense they reflected in their verbal origin. The task of contemplation was reduced to the exploration of the linguistic content of the verbal category. If the problem of systematic arrangement arose, expectations were met by mere taxonomic ordering.

In this regard, despite their efforts in empirical research and introspection, Wilhelm Wundt and his contemporaries achieved no radical change. The traditionally philosophical notions of emotion and apprehension were continued to be treated as static wholes, or as monads, and they seem to have been excluded from the laboratory of concrete analysis. The psychology of sentiments, as cultivated by Georges Dumas, Wundt, Francis Galton or Théodor Ribot could not break completely with *philosophical* psychology.

Consequently it followed that poetry had the freedom of philosophical thought in its treatment of psychological terms, especially in the field of "intellectual emotions" or "moral sentiments." It is worthwhile to note that the systems in which

they appear tend to reach strict logical or mathematical economy (if only by a kind of taxonomical perfection). At certain points this approach arrives at a stage where it assumes the function of "double-entry book-keeping" and adopts terms of modern economy (capital, investment, interest, invoice, share, withdrawal, or loan). *Resignation* by Schiller comes close to this type of a give-and-take style of argumentation and the pivotal terms (*Vollmachtbrief* = authorization; *Rechnung* = invoice, account; *Rechnung halten* = keep an account; *zahlen* = pay; *Schuldverschreibung* = bill; *Schein* = voucher; *Lohn* = loan) of its logic or "account" belong to the vocabulary of finance. A few months after the defeat of the Hungarian war of independence, in February 1850 János Arany wrote a poem beginning with the line *Évek, ti még jövendő évek*... [You years, future years...] and echoed a motto from Byron, "My hair is gray, but not with years."

Évek, ti még jövendő évek,
Kiket reményem megtagad,
Előlegezni mért siettek
Hajam közé ősz szálakat?
Miért vegyülget ily korán e
Lombok közé sápadt levél,
Emlékeztetni a vidor fát,
Hogy majd kiszárad és – nem él!

Nem evvel tartoztok ti nékem:
Kaján elődötök, a múlt,
Adós maradt sok szép örömmel,
Míg szerfölött is oszta bút;
Ennek kamatját, jó reményűl,
Fizessétek le most nekem;
Ki tudja, úgyis: érem é azt,
Hogy a tőkét fölvehetem?...

You years, future years, still forthcoming,
Which I have little hope to see,
Why do you advance those untimely
Gray tufts to my hair so urgently?
Why should pale leaves mingle with the green
Foliage at an early date
But to remind the vigorous tree
To wither soon and die away?

Your debt is huge: the Past, malicious
Forefather of yours, did remain
My debtor with much nice pleasantry
Giving me more than my due pain;

> You should, if for good hope's sake only,
> Pay me the interest at once.
> Who knows if I live long enough to
> Collect the funds a few years hence?…

Obviously, here *joy* and *pain*, *hope* and *deception* are dealt with as if they were entries in double-entry book-keeping, and the algorythm on which the structure of imagery and sense depend is ruled by terms of finance: *advance*, *debt*, *debtor*, *pay*, *interest*, and *funds*.

4. Memory and Hope: "Spiritual Gifts" in the Catechism of the Nation-Religion

The words in *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* on the power of *memory* and *hope* to link the succession of the past, present and future moments of human fates in a continuum called *history*, recall a passage in *Nicomachean Ethics.* Here Aristotle found opportunity to make a brief reference to the connection of the future with hope, the past with memory, and the present with activity. He wrote, "What *is* pleasant is the activity of the present, the hope of the future, the memory of the past; but most pleasant is that which depends on activity, and similarly this is most lovable."[18] His first interest was not the structuring of human history but moral excellence and the lasting value of noble deeds:

> Now for a man who has made something, his work remains (for the noble is lasting), but for the person who acted on the utility passes away. And the memory of the noble things is pleasant, but that of useful things is not likely to be pleasant, or is less so; though the reverse seems true of expectation.[19]

The lasting value of noble deeds for the nation was taken as a token for an earthly equivalent of eternal life by Mihály Tompa, a poet, friend of Petőfi and Arany, and a Calvinist minister. In 1855, in an obituary of Count József Teleky, he pointed out that in the death of great people the immortality of the nation is revealed. Their spirits and what is valuable in their work will be added to the common treasure of the nation. The history of the nation is a thread handed by one great man to another. The masses of people, unaware of their own good, are like the sea carrying the ship of chosen spirits. The lives and deaths of millions remain traceless; only great spirits will keep their shapes in the formless sequence of time. In this lies the immortality of people who revitalize the verve of the nation and define a new direction for it. They live on as models for imitation. They survive, as for them death is only a means to re-create themselves in a new dimension, that of eternity.

The obituary is remarkable for it resolves the religious creed of personal immortality in a conception of national immortality and in the idea of the benefit of moral value ("the noble is lasting") as conceived by Aristotle. Memory is conceived as collective precondition of making the noble lasting, and thus as an ontological requisite of the nation's continuous existence. Nations eternalize themselves in the continuum of the memorable deeds of their best sons. By preserving the memory of the best the nation acts as a trustee of the communal interest in the re-creation of the models of its permanent re-institution.

Hungarian romanticism seems to have taken the constituents of the salvation story of the nation-religion as ready-made elements and merged them with the fictional use of emotional categories as they emerged in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in German, French or English literature. While, as we have seen, in earlier epochs the tenets of the nation-religion were, by and large, based on the Old Testament, in the first decades of the nineteenth century Hungarian romantic poets turned to a secular set of "spiritual gifts" to rationalize the ethical responsibility of the historical consciousness of the nation. The inconspicuous presence of this otherwise rather meticulous arrangement and its merger with the historical tenets of the "national myth" or nation-religion in nineteenth-century Hungarian lyrical poetry and public writing call attention to the role of the "spiritual gifts" or emotional categories in Western romantic poetry. They appeared not simply as a set of individual topoi but as a system of ideal elements forming a mythical background to fictional creativity. They appeared as "Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance" in Keats's words, and the constituent elements of what was, in Shelley's words, redeemed by poetry from decay of "the visitations of the divinity in man."

Ferenc Kölcsey was the first to elaborate the tenets of what I refer to as nation-religion. In a treatise on the need of religion to meet half-way the achievements of the Enlightenment and to counterbalance their eventual misconsequences, he began with the "spiritual gifts": faith, hope, and charity. As Paul's epistle, especially in the case of charity, bases its assumptions on common human feelings and reactions ("charity envieth not; vaunteth not of itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave unseemly…" 1 Cor 13, 4–5), Kölcsey justified the need for religion not with the revelation of religious truth but with human frailty. He was convinced that religion had no remedy against the rational arguments of the Enlightenment but he demanded patience from that side too, because, as he thought, religion represents a kind of necessary mystery or obscurity.

> Above and about the human nation, as it lives and wanders on this erratic planet, a beneficial equal proportion of brightness and darkness should be preserved. A breach of equal proportions, either by abundance of light or of darkness, makes the sight of weak human eyes falling.[20]

He was of the opinion that "religious ideas are more a consequence of emotion than of reflexion."[21] Unlike philosophy, religion is not a subject-matter to rational reflexion: "We are endowed with a certain kind of sensibility, denotable as religious sensibility, whose measure, like that of the sense of beauty, is different in each person."[22] Faith, hope and charity are defined as categories of sensibility.

These terms are recurrent in Kölcsey's prose and poetry. In a short story he discusses them repeatedly and defines "faith" almost exactly with the words of the apostle, "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebr 11,5). Kölcsey"s version is, "faith is but satisfaction that our knowledge of the thing is certain."[23] Of "hope" he states,

> Do not think that it is easy to discover the soul of man, as people believe who prepare heartless definitions of the secret recesses of the heart. Hope is a miraculous blend of faith and desire. This is why the three of them turn so easily from one into another.[24]

Kölcsey connected *hope* with its antagonist, *fear*. (*Political Greatness*, a sonnet by Shelley written in 1824, is focussed on the poles of Hope and Fear.) Religion is, as he defines it, "a power enabled to limit violence and crime most efficiently as it points to hope and fear in the future, beyond the boundaries of human law and correction."[25]

Discussing the intimate nature of religion, he declares that

> Jesus himself interwove his simple religion with mysterious divinations so that when rational examination comes to standstill he will rely on the heart and, with heart's aid, on phantasy [sic]. Under this heading come the mysteries of Redemption, the Trinity, the emphasis on the Fall, the promises of reward and the threat of punishment; and the wording itself, abundant with images, in which the purest, simplest morality was clothed by Jesus.[26]

This transmissibility between fantasy and religion, or imaginative discourse and ethics, seemed to be a reality also for poetry and literature. Obviously, Hungarian poetry in the 1820–1840's expropriated a central set of the emotional categories from Christianity. Consequently the meaning or interpretation of lay texts would also gravitate towards religious sentiment. Nevertheless, it was a great advantage to rely on the prestige of categories authorized by the Bible, sanctified by religious practice, and familiar for a large audience. Thus the imagery the nation-religion offered, however complex or esoteric, was not alien to common people. Its vocabulary contained the central categories of religious faith and feeling: *hope, faith, memory, vice, virtue, atonement, reward, redemption,* and *punishment*. For the poets of the early phase of the Hungarian Reform Era, the 1820's, the main source of imagery was a Graeco-Roman ensemble of deities and genii. The lan-

guage and poetic imagery of the new poets who began their careers in the 1840's was based on folk tradition, the language of the common people, to some extent the idiom of the peasantry (the vast majority of the population) and the popular set of religious imagery ingrained in the collective consciousness of the people. This development was parallel with the growth of Hungary's striving for full independence from Austria, and the legitimation of the use of the Hungarian language in all walks of life.

Memory had a primary function in the quasi-religious system of patriotic thought. The pieces of poetry quoted above suggest that memory works as an ethical standard of the nation's past. Past *vices* that require atonement are recalled and remembered while *virtue* is a pledge for future redemption. Memory, measuring the value of past deeds, points to the acts, attitudes, models of behavior needed for survival. Memory is an asset of the historical continuity of the nation; this is what keeps a group of people together as *one* nation. It is a moral imperative to remember the past of the nation. In this quasi-religious system of polarities the contrary of memory is forgetfulness or oblivion. It is a mortal sin to forget the past of the nation. *Mortal* in the full sense of the word: the consequence is the death of the nation, the end of its historical continuity. Death in this case is not a single event, an occurrence closing the lifetime of a nation, but retrospective annihilation: nobody will recall its memory, the nation will submerge, together with its past history, to Lethean oblivion. It leaves no trace, it disappears as if it had not existed at all. On the tricentenary of the 1526 Battle of Mohács, Ferenc Kölcsey prepared this admonition to the people:

> Any nation which disregards the memory of its past ages or lets it fall into nothingness, kills its own national existence, and whatever will start anew, it will no longer be what it was. From that time on the nation disappears, the nation which, from century to century, preserved images of its early past, which, observed from a distance, became an ideal and with the help of the ideal it rose higher and higher to a new greatness (…) What do you want? Do you expect the dead rise from their graves and come forth with their dreadful countenance? And what is your answer to their question, 'What nation are you, people? What is the proof that you are our progeny? We bequeathed a country to you and you wipe out our names from your memory. You tread cold-hearted the fields where we won battles and where thousands of us shed blood for your benefit. You neglect the graves where our bones lie. Woe to you: a curse is imposed on ungrateful heirs, relievable only by long atonement.[27]

Degeneration, the end of the "gens" (Latin for "nation"), presupposes a breach of genetic continuity. Thus the answer to the question, "What is the proof that you

are our progeny?" is paradoxical because it sets spiritual criteria (remembrance, memory) above the material proof, that of ordinary flesh and blood genealogy.

The continuity based on remembrance or memory is *narrative identity.* In a talk at a conference in the Institute of Philosophy of the Hungarian Academy of Science (Budapest, November 2, 1990) Paul Ricoeur explained that moral existence is based on narrative identity in which memory and fiction play an integrative role. Historical fate and the existence of nations find expression in a narrative identity, different from a "substantial," i.e., genetical or racial identity. In the sphere of human activity fiction functions as ethical imagination, as a laboratory of experimentation with possible varieties of ethical solutions.

Thus *memory* seemed to be the most emphatic ontological category of national continuity in the first half of the nineteenth century. Yet a close examination of the occurrences of the word *hope* reveals that this term had a similarly great existential weight. Gábor Dayka (1769–1796) defined life as "constant hope and fear" and arrived at the conclusion that anyone obliged to live this kind of life was entitled to be redeemed by death. ("Trembling hope" keeps the soul alive in the dead in *Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard* by Thomas Gray, and "My hopes and fears / Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge / Look down – on what? a fathomless abyss" in *The Complaint, or, Night Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality* by Edward Young.)

Ha a világon annyi élni,
Mint úntalan remélni, félni,
Sorvadni a kereszt alatt;
Míg nem az ember általhat
Az életnek keskeny köréből,
S a föld gyomrába visszatér,
S a végezés rejtett tőréből
Kifejtve, gyászos véget ér:

Oh, már megértem a halálnak!
Szegezd rám mérges íjad; im
Már nincsenek több könnyeim,
Szép napjaim mord télre válnak.
Pályámat elfutottam. Ints,
S indúlok önkényt a határra,
S bezárom éltem; – a halálra
Már senkinek több jussa sincs.
(Az év első napjára. 1792*.)*

If life is nothing here
But constant hope and fear,
And, carrying the cross,
To wait the final toss

From life's narrow girth
To a hole in the earth,
From ill fate's snare unbent
To reach a bitter end:

Oh, I am ripe for death!
Let me pass underneath:
No tears are left to shed,
Warm days bring wintery dread,
My course is run. Give sign
To cross the border-line,
And I leave life for I
Have all the right to die.
(For the first day of the year)

The idea that life bereaved of hope is ripe for death, or more strictly phrased, life, with hope lost, is worse than death, reappeared after the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence in poems by János Arany. In *A hajótörött (The Shipwreck,* 1850*)* the refrain declares

Az élet számvetése csal:
Reménybukott szív halni vágy,
Koldús marad meg mégse hal.

A false account of life all face:
Hope lost the heart seeks death but earns
A pariah's lot, no stroke of grace.

The poet's role is quasi-sacerdotal due to his task to preserve the memory of the past, as János Arany expressed it in *A dalnok búja* (The Singer's Sorrow), a poem he wrote in 1851, only a few years after the defeat of Hungary. Under the existing ruthless conditions the poet was unable to meet his sacerdotal duty:

De ő nem is zeng. Tehetetlen
Lantját letészi csüggedetten
És szíve felzokog:
Oh, ti nagyok, oh, ti dicsőek,
Félisteni régmult időnek,
Szerencsés dalnokok!

„Fényes, magasztos korban élni,
Büszkén emlékezni, s remélni,
Tinéktek adatott!
Osztozni a hősnek babérján,
Vagy bús panaszt emelni sirján:
De mindig – szabadot.

„Megállapítni az időnek,
A mult ködébe sietőnek,
Rohanó kerekét,
Birván szelíd ének hatalmát,
Örökéltűvé tenni a mát
S tegnap történetét.

His lips are mute, and, destitute,
He lays aside the harp untuned
With a heart sobbing aloud,
"Oh all you great and glorious bards,
The demigods of an age long past,
Yours was a lucky lot!

You lived in an age of light,
Remembered and hoped with pride,
That was your destiny!
You had a share in the hero's laurels
Or at his tomb you raised sad laments,
Yet you were always – free.

You halted time's wheel fast
Rolling to the mist of past
While your high mastery
Of sweet song's charm turned all
Todays as eternal
As *yesterdays'* history."

The poets' function was similar to that of the Vestals, custodians of the sacred fire brought by Aeneas from Troy to Rome, which was never permitted to go out lest a national clamity should follow. The poets of the nation had the power of song to invoke the forefathers and to keep alive the memory of heroes, who had made the nation great. Paradoxically, "life in death" involved poeticizing the end of the power of poetry.

5. Epilogue: From the Apocalypse to a Demonic World

In the autumn of 1848 the newly recruited national army of Hungary pushed back invading Austrian troops from Lake Velence (30 miles from Budapest) to Schwechat (nowadays the airport of Vienna). A yearlong war followed with changing success of arms. The cause of Hungarian independence also aroused sympathy abroad. An international brigade was formed; and Joseph Bem, a Polish exile, became captain-general of the Hungarian army in Transylvania, and an English gentle-

man, Richard Guyon, was commander-in-chief for a victorious campaign in Northern Hungary. In the summer of 1849 the Russian Tsar sent an army of 200,000 to help Austria. After a few months of bitter resistance Hungary succumbed against the difficult odds. The leaders, among them Count Lajos Batthyány, the prime minister, were executed, and thousands of people were imprisoned. It took nearly two decades to reach compromise for a limited form of national independence.

As to the problem of nation-religion: Sándor Petőfi, the poet of the Hungarian War of Independence, though a non-believer, relied heavily on biblical imagery and the topoi of religious belief. Such reference occurs even in his love-songs at peak epiphanic moments. *Az apostol* (The Apostle), a long narrative poem he wrote in the summer of 1848, is about a modern Christ-figure who takes up the cause of the wretched and the poor and, Christ-like, is judged and killed by the mighty.

An apocalyptic vision with obvious reference to Armageddon appeared in *Az ítélet* (The Judgement) as early as April 1847 foretelling a future when the nations of the earth gather to defeat the forces of the wicked.[28] During the war his patriotic poetry reflected the apocalyptic nature of the struggle. In his last poem, written shortly before he fell in a battle against the invading army of the Tsar, he envisaged a demonic world and the advent of a future that would erase even the memory of the struggle of the good against the victorious wicked and the horrors of that ghastly period.[29]

Historiographers seem to have underestimated the part nation-religion played in nineteenth-century Hungarian poetry. First András Hevesi called attention to it in 1937.[30] In the 1970's Mihály Szegedy-Maszák, László Szörényi and András Veres discovered the apocalyptic motifs in Petőfi's poetry and his vision of a demonic world. As Mihály Szegedy-Maszák put it,

> At the end of his life Petőfi was an active participant of a revolution, the last one defeated of the European revolutions of 1848. With profound insight he raised the impression of an historical moment to a universal level and witnessed the beginning of a demonic impetus preceding the birth of a world in which human values would attain perfection. With this vision of the world and the renewal of his style by the rejection of the rhetoric of one-way address, monological discourse, epic structure, the syntax of rhetoric and the use of explained metaphor he got close to the modes of Edgar Allan Poe. He foreboded a demonic epoch for Europe which would force on poets an insight of the working of the laws of tragic irony in the human soul.[31]

For survivors life was "life in death" in the decade that followed the War of Independence. In Arany's words even a *coup de grace* was denied to the victim of

oppression, "The heart seeks death but earns / A pariah's lot, no stroke of grace." The motif of "life in death" recurred in poems by Arany and became a basic structural element in *Toldi szerelme* (Toldi's Love, 1879), a verse novel with a tragic heroine for whom all that remains of life is "life in death."

Certain traits of the nation-religion reappeared in *Moses* (1861), a drama by Imre Madách (1823–1864) based on parallels between the Hungarian and the Jewish people. His magnificent dramatic poem, *Az ember tragédiája* [The Tragedy of Man] (1860) is a "world poem" inspired by the Genesis. It is a profane salvation story, a vision of world history from the Creation to the end of life on the Earth, with Adam as its protagonist and with no trace of national bias. Despite frequent reference to the Old and the New Testament and an intensive private eschatology in the lyric poetry of Imre Madách, János Vajda (1827–1897) and Jenő Komjáthy (1858–1895), these poets made no effort to invoke the spirit of the nation-religion. They sensed the atmosphere of a demonic world and reflected it in a lay eschatology with no promise of redemption.

Notes

1. A copy of the earliest chronicle extant, the *Gesta Hungarorum*, written in Latin by an anonym ecclasiastic during the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, was published by Joannes Georgius Schwandtner in Vienna in 1746.
2. Cf. Kálmán Benda, *A magyar nemzeti hivatástudat története (A XVI–XVII. században)* [The History of the Hungarian National Sense of Calling (During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries)] (Budapest, 1937); István Nemeskürty, *A bibliai örökség – A magyar küldetéstudat története* [The Biblical Heritage: The History of the Hungarian Consciousness of Mission] (Debrecen, 1991); Sándor Őze, *"Bűneiért bünteti Isten a magyar népet"Egy bibliai párhuzam vizsgálata a XVI. századi nyomtatott egyházi irodalom alapján* [God Punishes the Hungarian People for their Vices: An Analysis of a Biblical Parallelism Based on Printed Ecclesiastic Literature in the Sixteenth Century] (Budapest, 1991).
3. Cf. György Székely, "La Hongrie et la domination ottomane", XVe–XVIIe siècles. *Studia Turco-Hungarica,* vol. 2 (Budapest, 1975), 7–38.
4. *Epistolae Pauli lingua hungarica donatae. Az Zeenth Paal leveley magyar nyelven.* (Cracow, 1533).
5. Published as an appendix to István Gálszécsi, *A keresztényi tudományról való rövid könyvecske* [A Short Book on Christian Knowledge] (Cracow, 1538); Régi Magyar Költők Tára (RMKT), ed. Áron Szilády, vol. 2 (Works of Sixteenth-Century Authors), vol. 1, 1527–1546 (Budapest, 1880)
6. Cf. Lajos Hopp, *Az "antemurale" és "conformitas" humanista eszméje a magyar–lengyel hagyományban* [The Humanist Idea of the "Antemurale" and "Conformitas" in Polish–Hungarian Tradition] (Budapest, 1992). A detailed summary in French pp. 205–208.
7. Luthers Werke, 30/I, p. 120. Quoted in Mihály Imre, *"Magyarország panasza" – A Querela Hungariae toposz a XVI–XVII. század irodalmában* [The Complaint of Hungary: The Topic Querela Hungariae in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Literature] (Debrecen, 1995), 117.

8. Henry H. H. Remak, "New Harmony: The Quest for Synthesis in West European Romanticism," in *Literary Cross-Currents, Modes, and Models,* ed. Gerhart Hoffmeister (Detroit, 1990), 331–351.
9. Novalis, *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (Weimar, 1917), 108.
10. Percy Bysshe Shelley, "A Defence of Poetry," in *Shelley's Literary and Philosophical Criticism,* ed. John Shawcross (London, 1909), 154.
11 *Op. cit.,* 154–155.
12 *Op. cit.,* 155.
13. Quoted as a referential note to the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" in *John Keats Poems* (London, 1944), 192.
14. Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis. Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur* (Bern und München, 1946).
15. Austin Warren, *The New-England Conscience* (Ann Arbor, 1966).
16. Sören Kierkegaard, *Der Begriff Angst* (Berlin, 1960), 9.
17. Cf. Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (London, 1759).
18. *Nicomachean Ethics,* Book IX, 7. *The Complete Works of Aristotle,* ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), vol. 2, p. 1846, 1168a/13–15.
19. *Ibid.,* 1168a/15–18.
20. "Az emberi nemzet felett és körül, úgy a' mint ezen bujdosó csillagon él és bolyong, *világosságnak és homálynak* bizonyos jóltevő egyarányosságban kell elterjednie. Bontsd meg az Egyarányt, 's akár világosság a' homályon akár homály a' világosságon vegyen erőt, mindenik esetben elvakítottad az emberi gyönge szemeket." Ferenc Kölcsey, *Összes Művei* [The Collected Works of Ferenc Kölcsey] (Budapest, 1960), vol. 1, p. 1081.
21. "… azokat inkább Érzelem mint Reflexió következéseinek kell tartanunk." *Op. cit.,* vol. 1, p. 1076.
22. "Van bennünk bizonyos érzelem, mellyet Religiói Érzelemnek nevezhetünk; melly, szint úgy mint a' Szépnek Érzete, külömböző emberekben külömböző mértékkel találtatik…" *Op. cit.,* vol. 1, p. 1045.
23. "Mert a hit nem egyéb, mint azon megnyugvás, hogy a dologról szerzett tudomásunk bizonyos." *Op. cit.,* vol. 1, p. 276.
24. "Ne higyjétek, hogy az emberi lelket oly könnyű megismerni, mint azok vélik, kik a szív titkos rejtekeiről szív nélkül gondolt definitiókat készítenek. A remény, hit és kívánság csudálatos vegyítéke. Innen van, hogy e három oly könnyen foly által egymásba…" *Op. cit.,* vol. 1, p. 315–316.
25. "… az az erő mely az erőszaknak és a bűnnek legfoganatosabban vethetett határt, midőn túl az emberi törvény és fenyíték határain a jövendőben mutatott reményt és félelmet." *Op. cit.,* vol. 1, p. 1075. Cf. "These natural hopes, and fears, and suspicions, were propagated by sympathy, and confirmed by education; and the gods were universally represented and believed to be the rewarders of humanity and mercy, and the avengers of perfidy and injustice. And thus religion, even in its rudest form, gave a sanction to the rules of morality, long before the age of artificial reasoning and philosophy." Adam Smith, *op. cit.,* chapter VIII.
26. "Jézus a maga egyszerű vallását titkos sejdítésekkel szőtte keresztül, hogy az értelmi vizsgálatok elakasztván, a szívet tegye foglalatosságba s a szív által a phantasiát. Mert nem mind ezen megjegyzés alá tartoznak-e a váltságot illető titkok, a háromság; az eredeti romlás hathatós éreztetése; a jutalmakról és büntetésekről tétetett igéretek és fenyegetések; s maga az a képekkel gazdag előadás, melybe Jézus a legtisztább s legegyszerűbb morált öltözteté?" *Op. cit.,* vol. 1, p. 1074.
27. "Minden nemzet mely elmúlt kora emlékezetét semmivé teszi, vagy semmivé lenni hagyja, saját nemzeti létét gyilkolja meg; s akarmi más kezdődjék ezentúl: az a régi többé nem leszen.

Az időtől fogva eltűnt a nemzet, mely (…) hajdankora képeit századról századra szálítá, míg a késő messzeségben lassanként ideállá váltak, s mely ez ideál segédével magát való nagyságra felemelni képes vala (…) Mit akartok? azt várjátok-e hogy a halottak sírból felszálljanak? hogy rémletes arccal jelenjenek meg álmaitoknak? És mit fognátok felelhetni, ha szavaikat felemelnék? mondván: – 'Nép, mi vagy? hol a bizonyság, hogy tőlünk származol? hazát alkotánk, s te reánk nem emlékezel; hidegen taposod győzedelmeink mezeit, s a pusztákon, hol ezrenként hullánk el, sírhalmainkra nem vetsz tekintetet. Jaj, neked! a meg nem hálált örökségen átok fekszik, melyet csak hosszú megbánás törülhet le'." *Op. cit.,* vol. 1, pp. 1226–1228.

28. Cf. Veres András, *Mű, érték, műérték. Kísérletek az irodalmi alkotás megközelítésére* [Work, Value, Work Value: Experiments to Approach the Literary Work of Art] (Budapest, 1979), 134–135.
29. Cf. László Szörényi: Apokalipszis helyett kataklizma. A Szörnyű idő elemzése [Cataclysm Instead of an Apocalypse: An Analysis of the Poem "Szörnyű idő"] in *A Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum Évkönyve* [Yearbook of the Petőfi Literary Museum], ed. V. Nyilassy Vilma, vol. 10 (Budapest, 1973).
30. András Hevesi, "Petőfi," *Nyugat* 4 (1937).
31. "Élete végén Petőfi cselekvő részese annak a forradalomnak, melyet utoljára törnek le az 1848-as európai forradalmak közül. Mélyen átélve, általánosabb szintre emeli ezt a történelmi helyzetet: úgy látja, most bontakozik ki az a démoni mozgás, melynek meg kell előznie az emberi értékeket kiteljesítő világ megszületését. Nemcsak világképében, hanem stílusában is: az egyirányú megszólítás, az epikum, a retorikus mondatszerkesztés és a megmagyarázott metafora háttérbe szorításával Poe-hoz közeledik. Megsejti, hogy Európa démonikus korszaknak néz elébe, mely arra fogja késztetni a költőket, hogy a tragikus irónia törvényeinek érvényesülését lássák az emberi lélekben." Mihály Szegedy-Maszák, *Világkép és stílus. Történeti-poétikai tanulmányok* [World Vision and Style: Studies in Historical Poetics] (Budapest, 1980), 250.