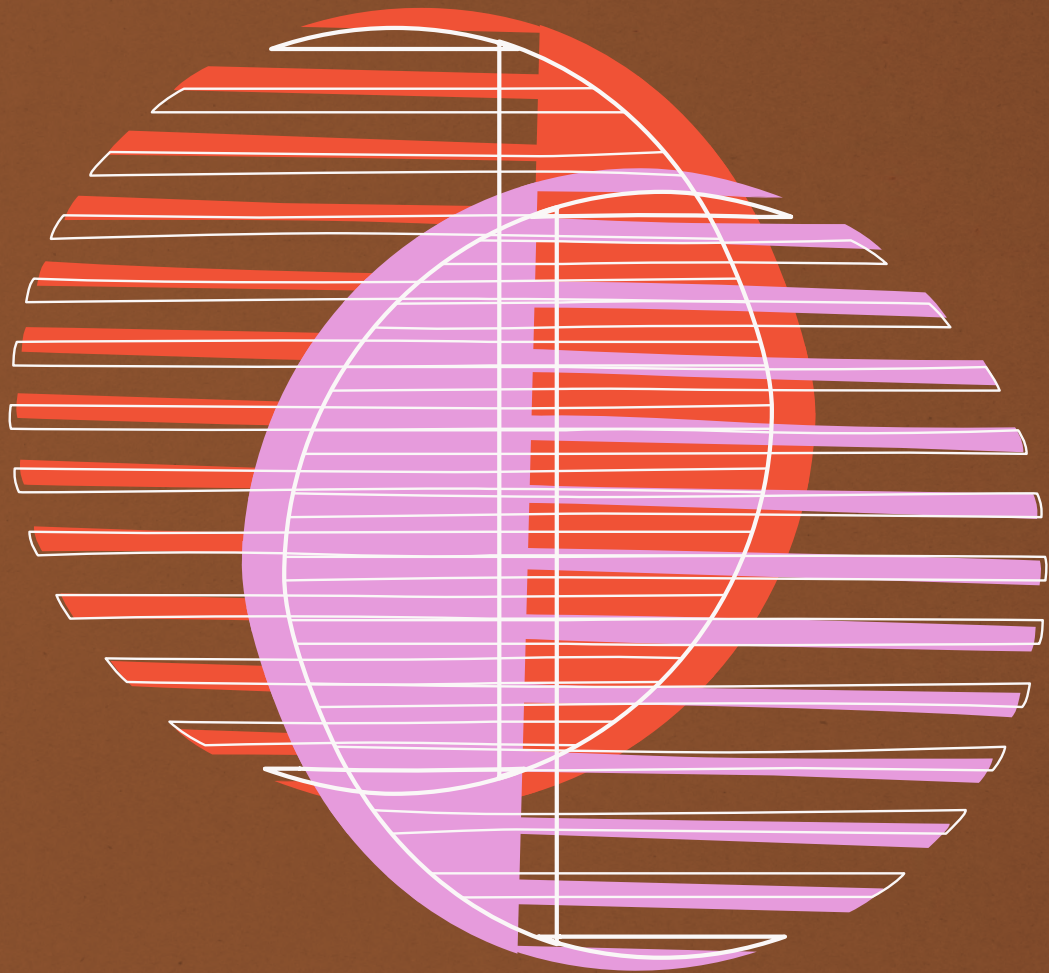


# A Wonderful Story?



An Avant-Garde  
Artist Couple:  
Erzsi Újvári  
and Sándor Barta

A Wonderful Story?

An Avant-Garde Artist Couple:  
Erzsi Újvári and Sándor Barta

Edited by

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and Merse Pál Szeredi

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# Introduction





Erzsi Újvári and Sándor Barta  
Budapest, c. 1919  
Kassák Museum

## Introduction

Erzsi Újvári and Sándor Barta are among the forgotten authors of Hungarian avant-garde literature. Today, their works are less well-known and less accessible, despite the fact that critics of the 1910s and 1920s followed their work closely, and in many cases, regarded their new poems and volumes as equivalent to the poetic works of Lajos Kassák. The 2022 exhibition in the Kassák Museum and the volume based on the exhibited material, aim to close this gap. Our aim is to present a representative cross-section of Újvári and Barta's work, covering their entire oeuvre, and thus not only focus on the early avant-garde period but also on their later, partly unexplored works.

To date, literary history has largely dealt with their avant-garde period, when Kassák's younger sister, Erzsi Újvári, and her husband Sándor Barta, co-editor of *Ma*, stood at the forefront of the Hungarian avant-garde for around five years, between 1917 and 1922. Their poems and manifestos were published in Kassák's journals while they were active participants in shaping *Ma*'s revolutionary programme. However, in 1922, like their colleagues who also had come under the influence of the Communist Party, they left Kassák's group, and moved to the Soviet Union in 1925. The decade or more that followed was an exciting, but little-researched, and even partly unknown period of their work. While partly on a continuum with their earlier avant-garde art, they also significantly transformed their public and literary image, and placed their art in the service of Soviet state propaganda. In 1938, despite his embeddedness and commitment, and like hundreds of thousands of his fellow revolutionaries and émigrés, Barta was executed following a show trial, while Újvári died of illness two years later.

Their legacy was rescued and brought to Budapest by their children, yet after the Second World War, writers who had been executed during the 'Great Purge' were considered taboo by the post-war Stalinist regime that was also established in Hungary. In the 1960s, in the spirit of Kádár-era consolidation, when the rehabilitation of left-wing writers, who had been sidelined or executed during that earlier period, began, which was euphemistically referred to as an 'unlawful' era. This was the period when Barta's novels, shorter epic works, and poetry were reprinted, or even published for the first time. Yet, the emerging generation of literary historians who focused on the twentieth century were not motivated by the ambition to rehabilitate the revolutionary literature of the heroic era, but to re-read the

interwar period from the perspective of Western modernity. In this context, the avant-garde was regarded as an experiment without a sequel, and was essentially limited to Kassák's oeuvre.<sup>1</sup> From the 1960s onwards, Ferenc Botka's primary research and bibliographies included information on Barta and Újvári's Proletkult<sup>2</sup> and Moscow periods,<sup>3</sup> while László Illés published analyses of the *Új Hang* journal and Barta's show trial based on materials from the Moscow secret police archives that were opened following the regime change.<sup>4</sup> The first post-war analysis of Barta's poetry, including the avant-garde period, was Gyula Illyés's perceptive work published in 1962, in the volume *Ki vagy?* [Who are You?], containing Barta's selected poems.<sup>5</sup> Both Géza Aczél, Kassák's monographer, and Pál Deréky, a researcher of the avant-garde, published studies focusing on Barta's avant-garde period.<sup>6</sup> Erzszi Újvári's work received even less attention than Barta's during the Socialist era. The first detailed study of her avant-garde poems was by György Kálmán C., part of a volume of her collected works in 1986, published on Zsuzsa Barta's initiative.<sup>7</sup> Kálmán C. returned to Újvári's poems in 2008, and more recently, Györgyi Földes has dedicated a detailed analysis of Újvári's literary works as part of her research into the forgotten female writers of the Hungarian avant-garde.<sup>8</sup> Unlike all these works, our primary aim here is not the evaluation of the two writers' works within the matrix of the Hungarian literary Modernism(s), but rather to provide a contextual analysis of the two political and literary oeuvres with the help of recently discovered archival sources.

Until recently, research into those artists who, like Barta and Újvári, emigrated to the Soviet Union, represented a difficult academic challenge. Methodical international research into these figures has only begun in recent years.<sup>9</sup> The challenges were as follows: first of all, while a reading of national literary histories presents these figures who emigrated and even changed languages many times as atypical, within the international avant-garde, they were the rule rather than the exception.<sup>10</sup> Any examination of such works is hindered by the fact that archival research must be carried out in territories that are difficult to access. This is partly due to obvious logistic, linguistic, and expertise reasons – which is

<sup>1</sup> Szeredi 2022, 124–130.

<sup>2</sup> The word "Proletkult" is an abbreviation for the Russian expression "Proletarskaya Kultura" (Proletarian Culture). It emerged from the need for a movement to organise and support proletarian art in the revolutionary Soviet Union. It became an international organisation in 1921 and dissolved in the mid 1920s.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Botka 1969; Botka 1984; Botka 1990.

<sup>4</sup> Illés 1961; Illés 1962; Illés 1994.

<sup>5</sup> Illyés 1962.

<sup>6</sup> Aczél 1976; Aczél 1977; Deréky 2000.

<sup>7</sup> Kálmán C. 1986.

<sup>8</sup> Kálmán C. 2008, 32–48; Földes 2021.

<sup>9</sup> For more details, see Dobó 2022.

<sup>10</sup> On the theoretical background, see, for example, Latour 1993.

why it is no coincidence that whole research teams are often set up in nearby border fields.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the exploration of nomadic oeuvres also poses a major theoretical challenge (but also an opportunity), since they cut across the logic of national literary histories.<sup>12</sup> The second challenge is that the basic narrative scheme of avant-garde historiography and museology is that of the heroic epic, which accentuates the countercultural, emancipatory, and norm-breaking strategies of avant-garde actors. However, many of them were not heroes, or not heroic in every stage of their lives: from Míra Holzbachová to Erzsébet Újvári, many such figures took part in the running of Stalinist regimes for periods or even decades after their avant-garde phase. The field of Modernism studies offers more accessible narratives to present, for example, the avant-garde dancer at antifascist cabarets or the poet using Expressionist language to convey the bodily experiences of women struggling in the wartime hinterlands, than it does to characterise the work of a Czechoslovak Party functionary or a publicist helping create the Soviet international propaganda of the 1930s. This says nothing of the fact that these different fields and periods are dealt with by separate, specialised disciplines that are not necessarily in contact with one another. It is debatable whether the 'heroic' avant-garde periods can be separated from the entire oeuvre, nor is it obvious how these clearly different periods of life should be linked.

The present volume represents an attempt to interpret all the available archival material, from Hungarian, Viennese émigré, and Soviet sources. This work also has significant implications for the history of the collection. Zsuzsa Barta and György Barta, with the help of their father's former colleague, Andor Gábor, successfully rescued their parents' literary archives from the basement of their Moscow flat evacuated after the Second World War.<sup>13</sup> Most of this material was brought to Budapest in 1948 by Zsuzsa Barta, and later, in the 1970s, parts of it were transferred to the library and manuscript archives of the Petőfi Literary Museum. During that time, museum staff purchased Sándor Barta's original manuscripts, as well as the official documents of the Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists in the Hungarian Language operating in the Soviet Union, along with copies of

<sup>11</sup> For example, the research group *Red Migrations: Marxism and Transnational Mobility after 1917* at Ohio State University ([u.osu.edu/redmigrations](http://u.osu.edu/redmigrations)) is currently working on various figures active in the international workers' movement (more precisely, within the Soviet Union's cultural politics network) similar to Erzsébet Újvári, Irén Réti, and Erzsébet Kádár. One further example is the six-year ERC project at Ghent University, *Agents of Change: Women Editors and Socio-Cultural Transformation in Europe, 1710–1920 (WeChangEd)* completed this year, which examines women's roles in European transnational journal networks ([wechanged.ugent.be](http://wechanged.ugent.be)).

<sup>12</sup> Schein 2019; Neubauer – Török 2009.

<sup>13</sup> Recollections of Zsuzsa Barta, transcript of an unknown recording, undated. Kassák Museum, KM-AN-2021.3.46.



Barta's publications in Russian.<sup>14</sup> In the 1980s, Zsuzsa Barta made several trips to Moscow researching her parents' estate, where she had photocopies made of her father's manuscripts held at the Gorky Institute of World Literature. These photocopies were also included in the Petőfi Literary Museum's collection.<sup>15</sup> However, one part of the photo albums, letters, and manuscripts in Zsuzsa Barta's possession ended up not in the Museum's collection, but were transferred to the family of her brother, György Barta, after his death. In 2020–2021, the Kassák Museum purchased these items from György Barta's daughter, Katalin B. Barta, and her family. Several previously unknown manuscripts and photographs from this collection are published in this volume for the first time.

This volume follows the structure of the exhibition at the Kassák Museum. It includes literary as well as primary sources, as well as notes and analyses to aid interpretation. Our aim is to present the works of the two authors within the context of the relational structure – one that has now become completely submerged and is therefore difficult to grasp – in which both artists considered themselves professional revolutionaries, if not revolutionaries first and foremost. The selection of poems, novellas, and essays in this volume was guided by the desire to present the two artists' lives during their Budapest, Vienna, and Moscow periods. The first section contains a biographical chronology of Újvári and Barta. This is followed by a more detailed presentation of their two most important works, both published in 1921. Erzsébet Újvári's *Prózák* [Proses] and Sándor Barta's *Tisztelt Hullaház* [Highly Esteemed Morgue] are the defining works of the Hungarian avant-garde movement's Expressionist and Dadaist periods. The third part of the volume offers an overview of one particular aspect of Újvári and Barta's complete oeuvre, namely their perceptions of family, child-rearing, the role of women, and how these perceptions changed. Sára Bagdi's essay places the primary sources in a broader cultural historical context. In the final section, we present biographical micro-stories based on the legacy collections of the Petőfi Literary Museum and Kassák Museum, which provide insights into Barta and Újvári's works, as well as the social and political context of their lives. Cross-references are also provided to help navigate between sections of the volume.

The present volume, *A Wonderful Story?*, is the second in the Kassák Museum's Kassák Workshop series of open access digital publications, dedicated to providing access to the Museum's various research activities in art, literary, and social history.

<sup>14</sup> Petőfi Literary Museum, Manuscript Collection, V. 3667/1–36.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, V. 4334/1–15.

Chronology of the Life of  
Erzsi Újvári and Sándor Barta

# Chronology of the Life of Erzsi Újvári and Sándor Barta



Sándor Barta



Erzsi Újvári



Erzsi Újvári and  
Sándor Barta



Context

1897



Sándor Blau (Barta) is born into an assimilated Jewish family in Budapest on 7 October. His father is a tailor and the family lives in modest circumstances. He contracts tuberculosis as a child. Apprenticed to his father, he graduates from secondary school in 1914 and works as a trainee in the grain traders Strasser und König for six months. In 1915, he enters the Ministry of Finance as trainee. He changes his surname to Barta in 1917.

↗ [131] Sándor Barta in the Ministry of Finance

1899

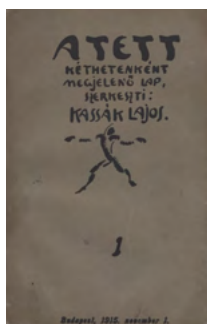


Erzsébet Kassák, Lajos Kassák's youngest sister, is born in Érsekújvár on 14 July. She moves with her mother and two sisters to Budapest in 1906, where she subsequently works in the Angyalföld shroud factory and continues her school studies with some breaks.

1915



*A Tett*, the first Hungarian avant-garde periodical, is launched by Lajos Kassák in November. Less than a year later, it is banned for its anti-war stance.



*A Tett*  
vol. 1. no. 1, 1 November 1915  
Kassák Museum

1916



Kassák launches a new magazine, *Ma*, in November.



*Ma*  
vol. 1. no. 1, 1 November 1916  
Kassák Museum



Erzsébet Kassák starts to publish prose poems in her brother's magazine in 1916 under the name Erzsi Újvári. Her first piece entitled *Háború! Asszony! Holnap!* [War! Woman! Tomorrow!] appears in the 6 May issue of *A Tett*.

↗ [132] The Early Work of Erzsi Újvári



On 3 December, Kassák holds a talk entitled *Szintetikus irodalom* [Synthetic Literature] on avant-garde poetry to the Galilei Circle of freethinking young people and university students. According to Kassák's autobiographical novel, Sándor Barta delivers a vehement criticism of Kassák's and Újvári's poetry.

1917



After the incident in the Galilei Circle, Barta brings his avant-garde poetry to Kassák, who publishes his first poems in the February issue of *Ma*. He later becomes a permanent member of the *Ma* editorial.

1918



After the Aster Revolution, the *Ma* circle becomes politically radicalised. In the first special worldview issue in November 1918, Barta formulates the group's demands in the *Kiáltvány a kommunista köztársaságért* [Manifesto for a Communist Republic].

1919



In January, Sándor Barta's first book of poetry is published in the *Ma* imprint with the title *Vörös zászló* [Red Flag].



Sándor Barta  
*Vörös zászló* [Red Flag]  
Cover design: Sándor Bortnyik  
Budapest, Ma  
1919  
Kassák Museum

↗ [137] Sándor Barta: *Red Flag*





The fourth worldview special issue of *Ma* publishes excerpts from Lenin's *The State and Revolution* (1917), translated by Sándor Barta and Mózes Kahána.



*Ma folyóirat világszemléleti negyedik különszáma* [Fourth Worldview Special Issue of *Ma*]  
Cover design: Sándor Bortnyik  
January 1919  
Kassák Museum



The Hungarian Soviet Republic is proclaimed on 21 March. Kassák and his circle support the new system but continue to work independently of party directives. The last issue of the Budapest *Ma* appears on 1 July.



Sándor Barta and Erzsébet Újvári regularly take part in performances organised by the *Ma* circle in Budapest and elsewhere. They are married on 28 June.



The *Ma*-group  
*Színházi Élet* [Theater Life]  
20 April 1919  
Kassák Museum

1920



Kassák relaunches *Ma* in Vienna in May, starts to build international contacts, and becomes familiar with the Dada movement.



After the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, Sándor Barta and Erzsébet Újvári follows Kassák into exile in Vienna. They regularly publish their poetry and other writings in *Ma*.





Sándor Barta is deputy editor of *Ma* from May 1920 to July 1922. His drama *Igen* [Yes] is published as a book in the *Ma* imprint at the end of the year.

1921



Erzsi Újvári's book of poetry, *Prózák* [Proses], is published in the *Ma* imprint in June with illustrations by George Grosz.



Sándor Barta's book of manifestoes *Tisztelt hullaház* [Highly Esteemed Morgue] is published in the *Ma* imprint in September.

1922



The *Ma*-group in Vienna (Hietzing)  
From left to right: Sándor Bortnyik, Béla Uitz, Erzsi Újvári, Andor Simon, Lajos Kassák, Jolán Simon and Sándor Barta  
1922  
Petőfi Literary Museum



Sándor Barta's *Mese a trombitakezű diákról* [Tale of the Trumpet-handed Student], a book of tales and short stories is published by *Ma* in April.

↗ [146] The Tales of Sándor Barta



Ideological differences lead to the break-up of the *Ma* circle. In May, the previous co-editor Béla Uitz, together with Aladár Komját, launches a Proletkult magazine, *Egység*, which is critical of Kassák.



Gogol's *Diary of a Madman* and Rabindranat Tagore's *Nationalism*, translated by Sándor Barta, are published by Julius Fischer Verlag (Jenő Tamás Gömöri) in Vienna.



Sándor Barta and Erzsi Újvári also leave the *Ma* staff during the summer and break with Kassák and Jolán Simon.

↗ [148] Debate on Proletkult in Vienna



In November, Sándor Barta launches the Proletkult magazine *Akaszott Ember*, in which he attacks Kassák. This periodical survives for only three issues in 1922/1923.



*Akasztott Ember*  
vol. 1. nos. 1-2, 1 November 1922  
Kassák Museum

- ↗[151] *The First Gathering of the Mad in a Garbage Bin*
- ↗[162] Erzsi Újvári and Sándor Barta in *Akasztott Ember*

## 1923



In March, Sándor Barta changes the title of his magazine from *Akasztott Ember* to *Ék*, and it runs for six issues in 1923/1924.



*Ék*  
vol. 2. nos. 4-5, 20 April 1924  
Kassák Museum

- ↗[170] *Crystal of Time: Moscow*



Sándor Barta and Erzsi Újvári publish their poetry and other writings in *Akasztott Ember*, *Ék*, and *Egység*. Their daughter Zsuzsa Barta is born at the end of the year.

- ↗[179] Zsuzsa Barta's Birth Date

## 1924



Lenin dies on 21 January, and after a brief contest for power, Stalin secures leadership of the Soviet Union.

- ↗[181] The Death of Lenin



Sándor Barta enters the Communist Party of Hungary.



Sándor Barta and Erzsi Újvári move to Moscow with the help of International Red Aid. They are first accommodated in János Mácza's flat in Sretenski Boulevard. In 1926, they get a flat of their own in a Moscow suburb, Sokolniki Park, and around 1932, they move into a newly-built condominium in Tisinskaya Street, also in the suburbs.

- ↗[183] *Miniatures from Red Moscow*

1925



Sándor Barta's first novel, *Csodálatos történet, vagy mint fedezte fel William Cookendy polgári riporter a földet, amelyen él* [A Wonderful Story, or How the Bourgeois Reporter William Cookendy Discovered the Land on Which he Lived] is published in instalments in *Nőmunkás* [Woman Worker], a Sunday supplement of the Košice-based Communist daily newspaper *Kassai Munkás*. It later appears in book form, and the same year, it is published in German translation by Vorhut Verlag. A Russian translation is published in Moscow in 1926.

↗ [190] Sándor Barta's Books Published in the Soviet Union



In October, the Hungarian section of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (RAPP) is formed in Moscow, and Sándor Barta is a founding member.

1926



The Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists in the Hungarian Language is formed in Moscow. Their first publication is the *Sarló és Kalapács Évkönyv* [Hammer and Sickle Yearbook], published in Vienna.

↗ [193] The Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists in the Hungarian Language



Sándor Barta and Erzsí Újvári are active members of the association, and their poetry and other writing is included in the *Sarló és Kalapács Évkönyv*. Barta is a member of the editorial board. The same year, Erzsí Újvári's two sisters Mária and Teréz, and Teréz's husband Béla Uitz, also move to Moscow.



Sándor Barta takes a job at the Soviet censor's office Glavlit in the German and English section, where he works for *Deutsche Zentralzeitung* and *Moscow News*.

1927



Sándor Barta's and Erzsí Újvári's Hungarian-language writings start to appear in *100%* (Budapest), *Új Előre* (New York), *Párisi Munkás* [Paris Worker] (Paris), *Új Március* [New March] (Vienna) and *Munkás* [Worker] (Košice).

↗ [195] Erzsí Újvári in *Új Előre*



The Hungarian Group of the Society of Former Political Prisoners and Exiled Settlers premieres Sándor Barta's play *Vörös 1919* [Red 1919].



Trotsky is expelled from the Party in November.

1928



Máté Zalka, Antal Hidas, Béla Illés  
and Sándor Barta  
Moscow  
1928  
Kassák Museum

1929



Stalin announces the first Five Year Plan and the collectivization of agriculture.

↗ [202] The Collectivization of Agriculture in the Soviet Union

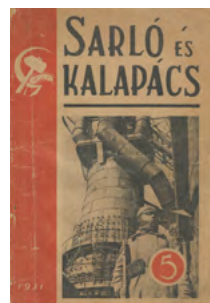


Erzsi Újvári's last known poem *A vörös Fekete tenger partján* [On the Shores of the Red Black Sea] appears in *Munkás- és Parasztnaptár* [Worker and Peasant Calendar] of Košice.

↗ [177] *A vörös Fekete tenger partján* [On the Shores of the Red Black Sea]



*Sarló és Kalapács*, a magazine for Hungarian speakers in the Soviet Union, is launched in December. Sándor Barta and Erzsi Újvári are regular contributors.



*Sarló és Kalapács*  
vol. 3. no. 5, May 1931  
Petőfi Literary Museum

↗ [205] The *Sarló és Kalapács*

↗ [207] Sándor Barta: *Pell-mell*

1930



Their second child, György Barta, is born on 3 September. Erzsi Újvári writes less and less, spending her time looking after her children.



Sándor Barta's short stories *Misa* [Misha] and *Pánik a városban* [Panic in the City] are published in Russian translation in Moscow.

1931



Sándor Barta is involved in drawing up the manifesto for Hungarian proletarian literature, which is published in *Sarló és Kalapács*. Sándor His short stories *A kilyukasztott szavazólap (350,000)* [The Pierced Ballot Paper] and *Menedékjog* [The Right to Asylum] are published in Russian translation in Moscow.

↗ [209] Erzsi Újvári: *The Bell*



Sándor Barta and Zsuzsa Barta  
on vacation  
Crimean peninsula  
1931  
Kassák Museum

1932



RAPP is closed down in April. A few months later, the Hungarian section reports its dissolution in *Sarló és Kalapács*.



Sándor Barta goes on a tour of the Urals as a member of an international writers' brigade together with the French writer Louis Aragon and the Dutch writer Jef Last. He writes about his experiences in several reports and poems.

↗ [214] The Ural Journey

↗ [221] Tuberculosis

1933



Sándor Barta and the International  
Brigade of Proletarian Writers at the  
monument of the glass factory workers  
executed during the white terror  
Konstantinovka  
14 August 1933  
Kassák Museum



Sándor Barta's novel *Nincs kegyelem* [No Mercy] is published by the Publisher of Foreign Workers Living in the Soviet Union in Moscow. He writes an autobiographically-inspired novel *Aranyásók* [Gold Diggers] about pre-First World War Budapest but it is not published until 1957.

1934



At the First Soviet Writers' Congress in August, the literary requirements of Socialist Realism are announced. From Hungary, Gyula Illyés and Lajos Nagy attend the congress.





Barta Sándor's short story *Kétszer kettő – öt* [Twice Two is Five] and an excerpt from his novel *Nincs kegyelem* are published in Moscow in Russian translation under the title *A győzelemig* [Until Victory].



Erzsébet Istenes moves to her daughters – Mária, Teréz, and Erzsébet – in Moscow for two years, and mainly lives in the flat of Sándor Barta and Erzsi Újvári.

1935

↗ [226] "The Mutter" in Moscow



Erzsi Újvári is diagnosed with a chronic disease that leads to disability (multiple sclerosis) and regularly goes to a sanatorium for treatment.



Erzsi Újvári in a Soviet sanatorium  
September 1935  
Kassák Museum

↗ [231] Sándor Barta's Autobiographies

1936



Sándor Barta watches the Mayday parade from the grandstand on Red Square. His novel *Amnesztia* [Amnesty] is published in German.



In a move to consolidate his power in the Soviet Union, Stalin launches the Great Purge. The official reason for the politically-motivated imprisonments and executions is to rid the country of spies and saboteurs but most of them are based on trumped-up charges.

1937



Sándor Barta launches a people's front magazine of literary and social affairs, *Új Hang*. The pilot issue appears in late 1937 and the first issue in the following January. Its principal staff include Béla Balázs, Andor Gábor, György Lukács, and József Madzsar. After Barta's arrest, Andor Gábor takes over as editor.

↗ [235] Sándor Barta and *Új Hang*

1938



*Új Hang*

vol. 1. no. 1, January 1938

Petőfi Literary Museum



Sándor Barta is arrested on the night of 14 March and held in Taganka prison. On the trumped-up charge of counter-revolutionary spying, he is sentenced to death and executed at the end of May. His family is not informed of the execution, and they search for him in vain in Moscow prisons.

↗ [237] The Great Purge

1940



Erzsi Újvári's health deteriorates rapidly and she dies in a Moscow hospital on 11 August. Her sister Mária Kassák takes care of her children. They weather the Second World War in Chistopol in the Urals and afterwards move to Hungary.

↗ [240] The Life of Zsuzsa Barta

↗ [246] The Life of György Barta

↗ [249] Rehabilitation of Sándor Barta

↗ [251] The Books of Erzsi Újvári and Sándor Barta after 1957

Two Books from 1921

## Women in the Hinterland: Erzsi Újvári's *Proses* and their Illustrations

Erzsi Újvári started to publish her Expressionist numbered poems (*Prose: 1, Prose: 2...*) in *A Tett* in 1916, and continued in *Ma*. Most were written during the First World War, and the war was their central theme. Scenes set in the intimate spaces of small communities in the hinterland convey the wartime experiences of working women from their own point of view. Újvári was alone in the early Hungarian avant-garde in examining such serious and neglected issues of the time as disintegrating families, the sexual desires and loneliness of isolated women in the hinterland, and the problems of battlefield injuries, pregnancy, and the life of children living in poverty – all in a specifically women's narrative and from the perspective of physical sensation. In 1918, Sándor Bortnyik made illustrations of the descriptions of apocalyptic landscapes that set the background of the *Prose* series. Bortnyik made naïve, folk-tale-like images of scenes of brutality, with an expressly interpretive intention.

Újvári's poems were published in book form in Vienna in 1921. There, she included only one poem on a family theme, number 7, about the experience of childbirth. Foremost in the anthology are revolutionary poems written around 1919. The three illustrations in the book, drawn by George Grosz, radically reinterpret the original message of Újvári's poems. Grosz belonged to the left-wing Dada group in Berlin. His graphics represent workers and urban poverty in the public spaces of the city after the war and the revolutions. They portray people as victims of the war years and class oppression. By contrast, Újvári's 1919 poems speak of revolutions and the productive power inherent in grassroots movements. She ascribes a definitive role in social resistance to women, unlike Grosz, in whose work women appear typically as prostitutes serving the haute bourgeoisie.





Sándor Bortnyik: *Airplane*  
Illustration to Erzsébet Újvári's *Proses*, 1918  
Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery  
Archive photography

Well-fed women stretching in the lap of white houses.  
Silence.  
The eaves dripping, four black drops sitting at the base of the walls.  
Somewhere, the butcher is chopping meat.  
Silence.  
Liquor frothing at the bottom of smelly pots.  
Dazed heads hiccupping softly.  
Then only the gigantic blue sky dominates.  
And silence... silence.  
Bony child hands building their castle in the dust,  
and the sun flows away too in viscous mud.

Under dancing nails the knees of sad, identical people  
break. Their heads fly, gums flayed by the black mud. Above them  
silence – din – fire – droning – clouding over. The machine deals out  
blows, clattering – growling, stopping with outstretched wings, and  
like the eagle – plummets.  
One hundred eyes fix at once on the red spot.



Somewhere singing stops.

They go and they go. Women open their silent mouths

Where to?

Where to?

The train in motion. Heavy wheels break the stones, widening  
cannon muzzles deal out terror. Sweating horsemen pull the cross-  
bearing wagons ahead. Girls throwing flowers, their burning eyes  
shining into the blind void.

Just a drop!

The wagon turns, the vanishing sun burning great holes into its roof.

The flames reach the sky!

Give me a hoe!

What about the cows!

We need water!

Wagons!

My rocking horse!

Help!!

People!

Just my money!

Wait up!!

Fire falls. The broached houses collapse on one another.

Water!

A hoe!

Disoriented, they seek the way out.

To the West!

Under swaying lines, crying mothers pull their naked children towards  
them. People running into clumps, shouting for their partners.

A blinded horse trampled into their midst – they fell silent.

A priest officiating without arms ran out from the church.

Storming horsemen filled the town with blaring proclamations.

To the train!

They rushed into red smoke.

Before the last well, a broken pole thrusts into the sky.

The grunting herd rolls down the hill.

A frightened woman gave birth to her dead son in a ditch.

Thick fatty smoke lashes the sheep pen roof, horses burn,

whinnying they lower just their heads, the burning lantern illuminating  
through the grille.

On trampled fields, bell clappers clang farewell in their ears.  
A bull is still bellowing somewhere.

Bloodily they slip and slide on narrow steps.  
The other softens their crooked backs. Smelly smoke settles in  
their burned throats.  
Red and blue eyes signal atop sooty stone mounds  
Shaking hands rattle gold.  
Enough?  
Mine too!  
Departure!  
They stuck to the windows.  
The cows!  
My Dad!  
Into gaping mouths roils only the moon as conciliator.

*Ma*, vol. 1. no. 2, 15 December 1916, 23.

Heavy-smelling beds in the depths of the room. Sharp bodies stretching out from the corners illuminate the darkness. Muscly arms interlink above heads. Shirts opening on chests. Large colourful blotches spread angrily across resting skin. A black wheel rattles on the wall. Its leaden legs stretch far down. The chambermaid knocks at the door. A yellow gas flame splatters across the faces. Five o'clock! Get up get up! It's already late! Sweating faces peer out from beneath the thin blankets. Only one waited. And waited. And then he too moved. Cautiously sliding his swollen feet to the floor. Could not get up. Spat blood in the night. Bitter saliva blistering in the mouth. Somewhere, the factory sounds the horn: ten minutes.



Sándor Bortnyik: *Village II*.  
Illustration to Erzsébet Újvári's *Proses*, 1918  
Rómer Flóris Art and History Museum  
– Imre Patkó Collection

They laid him back down.  
No!  
Me?  
Just my back!  
Bluish pearls shining on his luminescent brows.  
Just my back!  
Bricks and boiling ashes are placed on his body.  
Ow!  
Cover him up!  
Black and yellow wheels turning in a circle. Feels like he'd grown a beard. It will grow bigger and bigger.

Terraced houses thrown high up. Suddenly, roads open before them. Sunday. Pals. The boulevard glimmering at the end of dark streets. A wild vine fence, green tables, colourful lamplights. Yellow posters. A clanging tram. An empty hearse.

Is he asleep?

Somebody opened the oven's jammed grate.

Cinema. Dark alcove. Red slips of paper. Coins jingling. Faces staring into coffee house mirrors. Sparkling electric wires. Music in the basement. Dolled-up girls. Soldiers. Tired soldiers.  
A yellow terminus.  
Damjanich Street.

A young mother rubs smelly oil into the weak body of her child lying on the table.

Lads playing the accordion. Hurdy-gurdy. Old street-sweeper couples timidly swing their veined legs.  
Play the csardas!  
A burning-eyed girl lifts her glass and the glistening wine runs down between brown breasts.

Now he sensed the smell of her body.  
One mouth moistening on the other's. Cold fingers intruded with a knife edge between his teeth.  
Help me!  
A head in a black scarf leaned towards him.  
My chest!

Someone laid a wreath of blood red flowers at the tea light.  
A singing child pulled his watch-chain to the ground.

Horses, grey and black horses.  
A boat setting off underneath the bridge.  
Girls in white dresses with Easter pillows.

Oh!

A bent-beaked parrot yelled in his ear:  
Money!

Money!

In the forest three roads offer their body.

Oh!

It's burning!

Soon!!

Cold compresses placed on the temples. The woman from next door pulled a thick eiderdown across his shivering body.

Then they left on tiptoes, only an old man remained next to his bed.

Greasy steps. The machine is running. Petrol. Sparks. Burning. The machinist runs. Late. Falls on the strap. Falls to the floor. Takes it again.

Firehose.

From his ribs, a mighty spray of water escapes. Maybe up to the sky.

On the wall: a bloody head and foot.

His teeth continue moving in an empty barrel.

His eyes fell on the apron of a lamenting girl.

And in the door, someone stopped his heart.

!Water!

He sat up. Struck the old man in the face with all his strength.

Then fell back. His body like ice. Only his eyes swivelled last at the burning. He grabbed his chest. One more attempt.

Give it here!

His eyes fixed on black nothingness.

A-a-á...

His mouth remained open and shone like a round mirror. Shining dangerously with chattering teeth. He dug his nails deep into his flesh. Exerted his bones once again.

Then...

Somebody moved at the back.

Stepped forwards.

And indifferently tied up the dead man's fallen chin.

*Ma*, vol. 2. no. 4, 15 February 1917, 58–59.



20 December.

The houses reach white and hunched right down to the lands.

Knotty tree branches propping up the sky.

The milk loaf crackling at the bottom of overheated ovens.

In a broad courtyard the pig is squealing, a knife thrust into his stomach right up to hilt. A frightened woman scoops up the flowing blood into a white bowl.

The houses' wounds are dressed with long poles.

The fools are resting on fresh straw.

She had also prepared. Forgetting everything, she threw herself into doing things,

The dress sticking, stinging to her body.

The brother-in-law chopping thick logs in the storeroom.



Sándor Bortnyik: *Village I*.

Illustration to Erzsébet Újvári's *Proses*, 1918

Rómer Flóris Art and History Museum

– Imre Patkó Collection

While she just turns and turns, turns and turns.

The hungry man eyes tickle her skin.

She pulls her headscarf tighter. And blows hard into the crook of her palm.

The wind is playing.

The bell rings.

Their fingers draw a cross on their bodies.

And they keep working.

Restless old men tiptoe along the road.

Thick snow.

And the priest is already saying mass in the church.

Pista!

What?

Help!

They dragged the grinder into the storeroom.

Their hands touched. Their gaze dropped frightened to the ground.

The young lad was almost boiling with burning desire.

Her thoughts returned swiftly to the first nights of love. Her man also went wild for her after a whole day's work. With his smelly body he watched the girlish window opening.

A farmyard shepherd is herding his flock on the road.

They came to their senses.

She ran into the courtyard. And stuffed her chapped mouth with freezing snow.

The candles are already burning on the table laid white.

Last year's harvest boiling in corpulent jars.

The doughnuts turning red in overflowing bowls.

And the smell of wax, smell of wax.

Luminosity.

Outside, the holy box fell from frozen arms to the ground.

Their noses twitch at the smell of salt meat.

They sat down at the table. Waists bending deep above the food.

The white flesh of the capon falls apart in their teeth.

The glasses offer up their golden rims.

They empty them.

The strong drink urges boiling blood into their faces.

They drink again.

Wordlessly, their minds are already rebelling against their own agony.

They push the flowery plates away, no appetite.

Their heads bow.

Then eyes boldly play with the other's.

An unknown wildness courses through the lad's body.

His neck almost snapping under his heavy head.

Rum glints on the table.

Her mouth meets the lip of the bottle.

Her hands fall helplessly into her lap.

She cries out.  
My poor man!  
Two years!

After other difficult trials they only lasted this far.  
His chest now straining against hers.  
He fought with the other man.  
Won even without being seen.

Ey!

The brother drew her in with his familiar gestures. Caressed her  
head. Reached for her shoulder.  
Felt a thousand ants in his palm.  
Is it you?  
She screamed.  
Jóska!  
She laughed. She felt in her lap the head of the man who returned.  
Thrust her boiling, tearful head under his shirt.  
He jumped in fear.  
The first woman whose wide lips left a burning mark on his skin.  
He pulled her up.  
Threw her onto the bed.  
Her flesh fainted in agony into his wide palm.  
She wound both her arms around his neck.  
Jóska!  
Pista!  
Jóska!  
His white teeth tore her mouth.  
His body set her thighs on fire.  
He pushed her away. And playfully raised her into his arms.  
Still blowing for a while.  
Then his weary head slumped on her pillowy breast

Ornamented pieces of paper stuck on the sweaty window by the  
wind.

Midnight.  
And the mouths of the returning congregation begin a weeping new  
psalm.

*Ma*, vol. 2. no. 4, 15 February 1917, 59–60.



Sándor Bortnyik: *The Dancer*  
Illustration to Erzsébet Újvári's *Proses*, 1918  
Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery

Burned hair. A smell of heavy perfume.

Like potbellied bumble bees, the comedians rub up against the base of the walls.

A ring at the door.

A ballerina in a black vest jumps on stage.

Flowers blooming once more on her restless ankles. Two stark lines deepen her burning gaze. Fine golden threads glitter on her arms.

The olive branch trembles in the hands of virgins dressed in white.

At the end of the line stand two torch-bearing servants.

Music babbles up softly.

The flower stands centre-stage, waiting for her dance.

She stretches from stem to trembling petals. Her nervous twitching wearies a thousand eyes. Feet on tip-toe. A different spring strains in each finger.

She's coming today. Dancing for him. She's coming. Accidentally landing here, from faraway shores. With her tired body, bringing new pleasure.

She throws her head back. Shrivels up. The body slipping further on twenty nails.

The face of the musicians is a red ball, a yellow snake coiling in the middle.

She slips back. And jumps forward.

Her mouth now falls wildly on the flower. The petals are already dead.

Her gums turn red.

The flower's bitter moisture drops down her parched throat.

A thousand palms beat in thanks.

And into the doorframes throw those coming from below green, white and yellow colours.

Two years' service at the front. He has already embraced every enemy territory.

Two sickly lines spreading next to his mouth.

Tomorrow he leaves for the mountains. But came to see the girl.

A white candle blobbing onto brown furniture. Tall leather armchairs next to the wall. In the corner, a bed proffers up its soft lap.

She stood before him. Her face had grown longer from the dancing. Her colourfully drawn shoulders were shaking.

How I waited for you!

She sat in his lap like long ago.

Her tearful eyes sought his. Her neck, like a startled snail, fled to his breast.

He stared ahead, apathetic. The silence troubled his exhausted nerves.

Somewhere a man is being made to stand before the mouth of their canon.

What's wrong?

Tomorrow!

Going back?



Her hair has come loose and winds around her neck as if to strangle.

Don't go!

She laughed. Threw her head back. Pursed her lips for a kiss.

The hot body sensed in the other's lap. And his fists had grown soft, looking at the pink skin.

Oh!

Red blood seeping out from under his teeth.

My mouth!

The moon shone in, casting the brown cross of the window onto their struggling bodies.

Autumn.

Somewhere on the smelly fields, harvesters bathing their weary chests in the wind.

In the city, the roads are still white.

And the trees stretching their knotted arms into the sky.

Days passed with painful remembrance.

After headache cramps, a fever crept over his body like a maddening heatwave.

Sunday. Two performances.

He felt a sharp stab in his waist. The old wound hurt once more on his hot mouth.

He hid his shivering body among the pillows.

Wrinkled faces laughing at him.

Funny.

A deaf old man asleep next to a worn-out piano. Puny palm tree trunks. The singing canary's cage atop the blind mirror.

And the secret admirer wringing his hands at his cowardice.

Six o'clock.

For noses accustomed to the smell of lead, the fresh air is almost painful.

The oldest girl smears herself with thick paint in a basement flat.

After the audition.

She stops the street crossing.

The orchestra strikes up once more. The double drums are electric.

Carriage drivers in their seats bow the double bass. The organ pipe is an automobile. The harp reverberation of thin telephone wires.

And from the end of the gutter a chimneysweep conducts with his crooked broom.

It's morning.

From the whiteness of the pillows only a pinched face emerges. Two red marks. Two burning eyes.

As if the head had been strapped up in the night.

His hands yearn for the stuffed salt stacks, for the soil.

My head!

Terror had beaten his eyes murky.

What will become of me?

He threw the pillows off with force.

His legs trembling under his shirt like loose market-hall whistles.

The bite!

Somehow he hauled his body, stretched out stiff, off the bed.

Wrapped his arm around his neck. His mouth wheezed a last act.

Wanted to bend his waist. His feet went up on tiptoe as usual.

Couldn't move any more.

He turned around.

His likeness stared back in fright from the mirror.

My God!

My waist!

Threw his body against the mirror in rage.

Then.

Fell to the floor.

The silver slivers flew into the air.

Then came down.

And pierced his body with their glittering shards.

*Ma*, vol. 2. no. 5, 15 March 1917, 75–76.

One evening something made her cramp up. Someone wanted to tear her body in a hundred ways.  
 She bit her lips in pain.  
 Laughed.  
 Her mouth never opened for a barbiturate. And in her mind the lyrics dedicated to Him began to play.  
 The stiffness of her arms will be His soft bed. The fire in her eyes will only burn on His whim.  
 Woe.

An old man peeped out from somewhere in the depths of the oven.  
 Our Father!

Then, his loud voice fought with the silence.



Sándor Bortnyik: *Birth*  
 Illustration to Erzsébet Újvári's *Proses*, 1918  
 Collection of Nimród Kovács  
 Image supplied by Jill A. Wiltse and H.  
 Kirk Brown III, Denver

Mari! Hey!

As if in the village they'd all heard the cry at once.  
 Frightened, the women ran to huddle together.  
 Storerooms thrown open. Pots clattering. The well's dangling arm glows with resin from the fire of their palms.  
 The cambric and the lace, only occasionally tossed towards the sun, now they too have emerged.  
 And the midwife with her smelly apron.  
 The coils of hair thrown onto the neck were tired straight out.  
 The tiny feet sought rest in fright.

Rum asserted itself from the table.

She held out her hand for a kiss.

My Mum!

Her sharp eyes cut through the air towards the patient.

Holy water!

She drew a cross on her stomach with dripping fingers.

Why?

Because God sent a woman a dog-headed child.

The nightmare slapped the other child and even now his five fingers are ablaze on its face.

Woe!

Above the cradle, someone is crumbling the sweet-smelling quince to make oil.

And someone is offering the fire of their body to warm the cushion.

Water!

It never hurt like this before, and she was only glad that it would be a boy.

What's the time?

In the morning the horses are waiting with fresh sinews.

And who will put the yoke on them tomorrow?

Who is holding the milking bucket under the frothy milk?

The hens will lay their expensive eggs next door.

My God!

The wheat is being shucked because there is nobody to gather it up.  
Mum!

From the table, sharp scissors and knives stab into his head.  
But the great pain no longer brings tears.

The rascal!

Someone is using their lungs as a bellow for the fire. The other's shirt tears over the tough chest as they lower the bucket into the water.

A piercing cry.

Her arm, like a poplar branch, there is no rest.

Ohhh woe!

Her painful feet desire a faraway place.

Her body torn as if by cylindrical machinery.

Pista!!

Her eyes a blinking candle on the grave of the dead.

Jesus Christ!

An unknown village. Burning houses and her with open wound thrust into the wind.

I'm dying!

The final tension.

Torture from within.

And now a head is blooming at the foot of the white bed.

Woe...

She feels if two tears from heaven are rolling down, and rolling, rolling...

The child burst out crying

The skin on an old man's face stretched taut red when his mouth sprung open in pleasure.

Boy!!

Women: the weeping corn heads of infecundity, they snatched it up. And raised the rare pearls of their palms with their tensing arms high.



Boy!

On their faces mix yellow and red.

The patient's mouth could barely move.

Over here!

She was scared for him.

To me!

Her voice bounced off their ears, their breath almost warming the weak body.

They just watched.

And watched.

Felt the other's pleasure as their own for a minute.

Oh! Give it here!

Someone swaddled the child next to the patient.

And now the pink head was absorbed into the curve of her body.

Mine!

The women's wailing arms followed, swinging.

Then they departed far from the bed.

It's her!

Her!

The burning globes of their eyes fell to pieces on the sand of the floor.

Somewhere in the crook of the basement last year's harvest was being tapped.

And someone began playing the flute in front of the door.

*Ma*, vol. 2. no. 11, 15 September 1917, 166–167.

They set off. In fine spirits. Erzsébet bridge. The wire coiled warmly in sailors' hands. They humbly smashed the boat's neck on the floor.

The peasants, because there was no point in walking, sat at the foot of the railings.

Someone stabbed his golden streak in their eyes and terrified their ears with his voice.

Downwards!

Downwards!!

In front of the narrow staircase, the weakening sinews shook inside the body fat. One hundred needles pricked them in the head if they looked down.



Sándor Bortnyik: *Flood*  
 Illustration to Erzsébet Újvári's *Proses*, 1918  
 Rómer Flóris Art and History Museum  
 – Imre Patkó Collection

The women!

And down there, like a visionary:  
 green faces under the lamp. Black and yellow cones on the floor.  
 The red eyes of the mother rabbit. Gleaming granite apples. A high-combed cockerel in a cage.

At top speed, because the captain has held the iron in his palm for two days and two nights.

A patient's mouth was sweetened with apples.  
 Someone was showing him their watch.

All at once, they were scared to the pit of their stomachs. Last year's wine reflected in their eyes.

Captain, Sir!!!

Turn right!!!

The Gypsies started dancing the czardas.

Hey!

Turn right!!

Hey!!! Hey!!!

Someone beats the violin necks into silence.

???

A girl started laughing.

Then the two purple stripes began writhing silently. Others howled all at once.

Captain!!

Nerves stretched to breaking point. As if something were pestering their hearts.

A child playing on the floor – suddenly started clapping.

Swing!

A dry-headed old man came to his senses shrieking.

We're sinking!!

The jokers' jaws dropped green.

The sinew of those seated snapped ready for action.

The man whose rheumatism had devastated his legs was conducting furiously.

Forward!

Their tongues fired off rockets. And entangled in each other.

Ran in one hundred directions. No point. They tore one other.

The door!!!

Help!!!

The steps!!!

The old people laid wreaths on their chests with shaking hands.

Children's mouths cried wide open.

Mum!

Someone was sick with convulsions and beat his chest bloody in agony.

My house!!

Identical cries whistling.

Just me!  
Just me!  
Just me!

A woman pregnant with the first child pulled her feet timidly in front  
of her belly.  
She hasn't even seen the sun!

Payot shining radically in the refugees' hands.  
O, Adonai!

A patient's mouth shut silent. The mother stillscared bent over him  
and warmed his face with her tongue. Bluish pearls dropped into  
her palm from his forehead.  
My light! My love! My life!  
And then, with a loud thud, she too threw herself on the floor.  
The others stormed about like a choir.  
The leak!  
the water!  
the leak!

Someone mentioned the earth. The psalms now rang out from their  
hopeless mouths.  
Help!

Tongues tortured.

Where is he?  
The door!!  
My feet... My feet...

Once again they reached the steps. All in vain. Arms linking with the  
other's.  
My neck.

Piling up in a crush.  
White foam escaping from their tongues.

Water... Water... Water...

Once more they fought.

But something idiotically pulled them back.

Oh-oh-oh!

Only the coloured globes of their heads they tossed into the sky.

*Ma*, vol. 3. no. 7, 15 July 1918, 84.



Erzsi Újvári  
*Prózák* [Proses]  
 Cover design: Lajos Kassák  
 Vienna, Ma, 1921  
 Kassák Museum

George Grosz  
*Das Gesicht der herrschenden Klasse*  
 [The Face of the Ruling Class]  
 Berlin, Malik-Verlag, 1921  
 Kassák Museum







21

Éjjel egy lánynak énekelni kezdett a melle.  
Börtönökből hegyekre futottak a fák.  
Csak ti ültök még mindig a falak alatt.  
Gyerekeitek labdák a cirkusban és nem szabad megnőniök.  
Gyertek velem!  
Hintát költünk a legmagasabb hegyek közé.  
Tornyokat az asszonyok mellére tűzzük.  
Velem!!  
A bányákból kiguritjuk a vakok szeméit.  
Hegyekről lemossuk a temetőket.  
Madarak veletek a rizsföldekre szállunk.  
Sipokat faragunk a gyárak kéményéből.  
Gépek az olajforrások elé futunk.  
Halljátok-e állatok?  
Tüzeket rakunk az ostorokból.  
És énekelni fogtok a várandós anyákkal.  
Nézzétek, a csillagokat szedem lámpásnak a tenyereitekbe.  
Karjaim már elértek a napot.  
Gyertek!  
Félcénk kiáltoznak a kókusz szigetek.

20

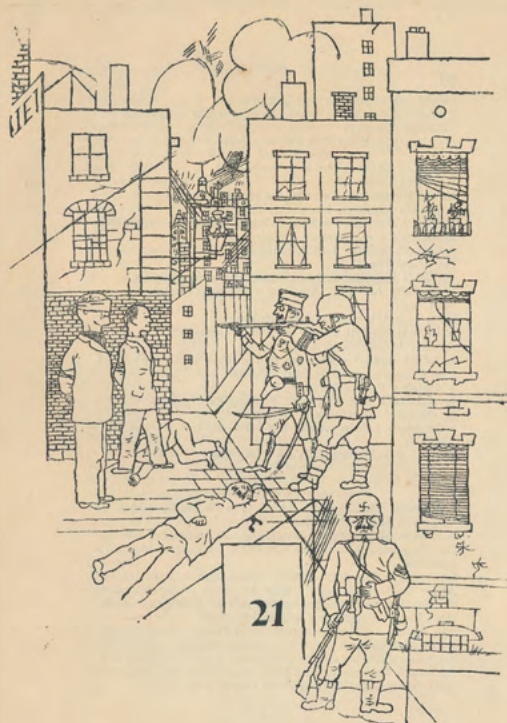
Ki érti meg az állatok bölgését  
Az örökös munkáról és a ketrecrekről?  
Csak én kívánok velük egy jászólnál lenni.  
Mert az én szemem is örökké kérdeznek.  
És hol van aki felelni tudna?  
Testvéreimet isten mellé tiltották az asszonyaik.  
Ha néha lejönnek hozzám betakarják a szememeit.  
Társaim a hold alatt az asszonyért hegedülnek.  
Talán a párom?  
De ő fehér gyolccsal a testemet mossa,  
Mert holnap talán már melém fekhét.  
Emberék!  
A ti nyelveiken szólnak.  
Talán még lesz valaki köztetek aki felém nyújtja a kezét.  
Akkor szememeit a madaraknak adnám.  
Sánes üvegéből házakat fujnak a hegyek tetejére.  
A narancsszagu szigetek elé usznék.  
De csak az állatok jönnek.  
Várjátok veletek megyek a jászolok elé.

19

Valaki megöntözte az országot.  
S reggel a nap hiába ugrott az égbe, senki se hallotta  
a harangok szavát.  
Hidakon papok futottak égő tőmjénél.  
Nyugatra!!  
Ágyak az utcára dobták az embereket.  
Ki hitte?  
Valaki ijedtében a Duna alá itta magát.  
A gyárak kéményei hiába fűtültek.  
Férfiak bukfeneket vetettek, fákra másztak és örömlükben  
leharapták a nyomorékok pupáját.  
Asszonyok ostorba fonták hajukat.  
Ha valaki jőne!  
Erdőből szakállas emberek másztak elő és ugatva a  
konyhába futottak. Anyák a vizek elé csúsztak  
Mert jaj!!  
Ők a gyerekek után fognak kérdezni.  
S ki tudja melyik madár vitte el a szemüket?  
Az inasok összetörték a műhelyeket.  
A folyók mind kiáradtak és lemosták az utcalányok arcát.  
Egy csillagász az országotat figyelte.  
Láttatok-e valaha örömet??!  
Gyerekeknek szárnyuk nőtt. Madarakkal röptek.  
Hajók mind kifutottak a vizekre.  
A kórházak helyén szökőkutak fakadtak.  
Elünk!!!  
És a gyerekek tüzet vittek a város alá.

16

Szátokban csikorognak a kővek. Pihenő tenyereketben az  
asszonyok éhes gyomra sír.  
A ti bűnököt, hogy gyerekeitek szájából vörös utak folynak.  
Mert homlokotok kinyitása helyett, a szagos husokért vere-  
kedtetek.  
És hangotok fölzendült mikor „uraitok folszabadítani jöttek”  
Akkor testvéreitek fejét hegyes kővekkel koszorúztátok és  
aki biztatón rátkendézett, annak szemét az ujjaitokra tűztétek.  
Most korgó gyomorral a kutakba merültök.  
Égő fejetek a hideg kémények alatt futkos. Pedig tegnap,  
A mérnököt életüket keverték a papírra: maguktól induló gépe-  
ket, széles ablakokat dobtak elétek, hogy az örömről énekeljétek.  
Asszonyok kemény testtel a könyvekről beszéltek és mellükről  
egészséges gyerekek hullottak az öregek ölébe.



One night a girl's breast started to sing.  
From the prisons ran trees to the mountains.  
Only you are left sitting under the trees.  
Your children are balls in the circus and are not allowed to grow.  
Come with me!  
We'll tie a swing between the highest mountains.  
We'll pin towers to the breasts of women.  
With me!!  
We'll roll the eyes of the blind out of mines.  
We'll wash the cemeteries from the hills.  
Birds we will fly with you to the rice fields.  
We'll carve pipes from the factory chimneys.  
Machines run in front of oil wells.  
Animals do you hear?  
We'll build fires out of whips.  
And you will sing with the expectant mothers.  
Look, I'll gather the stars to be lights in your palms.  
Come!  
My arms have already reached the sun.  
The coconut islands are screaming for us.

Erzsi Újvári: *Prózák* [Proses], 1921.

Who understands the animals' sobbing  
About perpetual work and the cages?  
Only I wish to be in the same manger as them.  
Because my eyes, too, question eternally.  
And where is the one who could answer?  
My brothers were seated next to god by their women.  
When they sometimes descend to me they cover my eyes.  
Under the moon, my companions play the violin for the woman.  
Perhaps my partner.  
But he washes my body with white cambric  
Because perhaps maybe tomorrow he will lie beside me.  
People of the Earth!  
I speak in your language,  
Perhaps one of you will reach out to me.  
Then I would give my eyes to the birds.  
Houses blown of coloured glass onto hilltops.  
I would swim to the orange-scented islands.  
But only the animals are coming.  
Wait I shall go with you to the mangers.

Erzsi Újvári: *Prózák* [Proses], 1921.

Someone watered the main roads.  
And in the morning the sun leapt into the sky in vain, nobody heard  
the sound of the bells.  
Priests ran on bridges with burning incense.  
To the West!!  
Beds threw people out onto the street.  
Who would have thought it?  
Someone drank themselves to the bottom of the Danube in fright.  
The factory chimneys whistled in vain.  
Men turned somersaults, climbed trees and bit off the cripples'  
hunched backs in joy.  
Women braided their hair into whips.  
If only someone would come!  
Bearded men crawled out of forests and ran barking into kitchens.  
Mothers slipped before the waters  
Because woe!!  
They will enquire about the children.  
And who knows which bird took their eyes?  
The apprentices smashed up the workshops.  
The rivers all flooded and washed away the prostitutes'  
faces.  
An astronomer was watching the main road.  
Have you ever seen any joy??!  
Children grew wings. They flew with birds.  
Ships all sailed out to sea.  
Fountains sprang forth on the sites of hospitals. We are alive!!!!  
And the children brought fire underneath the city.

Erzsi Újvári: *Prózák* [Proses], 1921.



The stones are gnashing in your mouths. The women's hungry stomachs crying in your resting palms.  
Your crime is that red paths are flowing from the children's mouths. Because instead of opening your foreheads, you fought for stinking meat.  
And your voices rang out when "your masters came to set you free"  
When you crowned your brother's heads with sharp stones and stuck your fingers in the eyes of those who looked at you in encouragement.  
Now you have plunged into the wells with your stomachs rumbling. Your burning heads running about under the cold chimneys.  
But yesterday.  
The engineers mixed their lives onto paper: they threw self-starting machines and broad windows before you in order to sing of joy. Hard-bodied women spoke of books and healthy children fell from their chests into the laps of the old.  
Girls planned broad squares and under their hands everything fled into a tower.  
The poets forgot their weeping hearts. The hills fought with the sea so that the roads would be free.  
The painters mixed warm colours and the eyes screamed out. The theatres' walls were shattered by trumpets.  
Sacrifices were made on the street for the new faith.  
Freedom!!!  
The trains set off from the villages with the hearts of the brothers. But you did not see them because your mouths were shouting for the flowing wine.  
Workers!  
You waved your white palms when they "came back".  
Peace!!!  
And now you sit with your great wounds under the cold chimneys. Waiting.  
Until someone steps in front of you and once again you set off with your heads on fire.

Erzsi Újvári: *Prózák* [Proses], 1921.

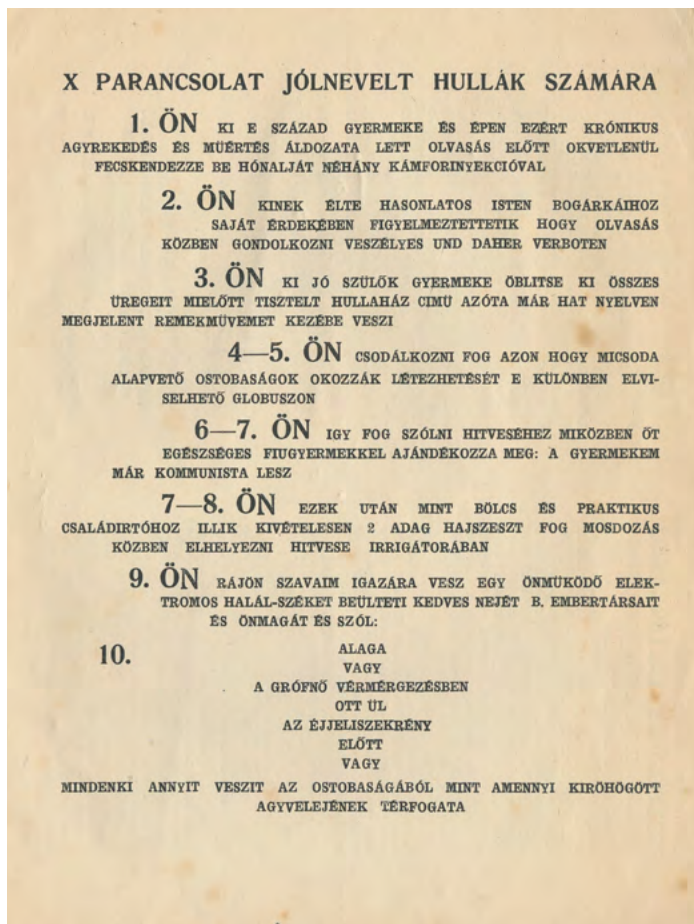
## Sándor Barta's Anti-Manifestoes

The world of the Hungarian exiles in Vienna in the 1920s was an artistic and political laboratory, and one of its distinctive documents is Sándor Barta's 1922 book *Tisztelt hullaház: egy kiskorú költő szónoklatai a forradalomról, népszerű életölcselet egyszerű agysejtűek számára, Boldog antológia, csodálatos kongresszus ))))))) DHUJKLMNOPCXXXRRRRRRRRRöööööÖ* [Highly Esteemed Morgue: The Stump Speeches of an Under-Age Poet about the Revolution, Popular Advice for People with Simple Brain Cells, a Happy Anthology, Wonderful Congress ))))))) DHUJKLMNOPCXXXRRRRRRRRRöööööÖ]. This book corresponded to the programme and position of the Vienna *Ma*, a work of free experimentation with political and artistic ideas without regard to realistic opportunities for action and actual public demands. Like all of the Hungarian left-wing milieu in Vienna, Barta was preoccupied with the failure of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and the receding chances of revolution. *Highly Esteemed Morgue* turns the standard form of expression and art forms of the workers' movement on its head. Barta deconstructs and rewrites the familiar texts of the manifesto, the political oration, the meeting, the slogan, the story of redemption, and the choir, but also develops a (self-)ironic stance towards his own avant-garde poetry.

Barta saw political and economic struggle as insufficient in itself to challenge what he saw as petit-bourgeois ethics and culture. In contrast to his later propagandistic texts expounding the principles of Soviet cultural politics, Barta's works of the early 1920s used Dadaist devices to rebel against hierarchical, conformist, and conventional culture. Instead of simple messages, Barta's anti-manifestoes are a polyphonic, film-like stream of rapid alternating narrative views with linguistic fragments juxtaposed with pre-lingual elements, onomatopoeic words, and gibberish. He no longer believes in the intellectual revolutionary artist "heroes" and considers that the suppressed groups are capable of liberating themselves without the "10 speaking people" and the "trumpet-handed student"; in one of his avant-garde tales, for example, "Simple-minded Zachariah, the saviour" redeems humanity from every messiah, and thus from himself.



Barta Sándor  
*Tisztelt hullaház: egy kiskorú költő szónoklatai a forradalomról, népszerű életbölcsélet egyszerű agysejtűek számára, Boldog antológia, csodálatos kongresszus )))*  
 DHUJKLMNOPCXXRRRRRRRRRöööööö  
 [Highly Esteemed Morgue: The Stump Speeches of an Under-Age Poet about the Revolution, Popular Advice for People with Simple Brain Cells, a Happy Anthology, Wonderful Congress )))]  
 DHUJKLMNOPCXXRRRRRRRRRöööööö  
 Cover design: Lajos Kassák  
 Vienna, Ma, 1921  
 Kassák Museum



Sándor Barta  
 X. parancsolat jólnevelt hullák számára  
 [Ten Commandments for Well-Behaved Corpses]  
*Tisztelt hullaház*  
 Bécs, Ma, 1921

1. YOU who are the child of this century and therefore have become a victim of chronic brain constipation and connoisseurship must, without fail, before reading inject your armpits with a few drops of camphor.

2. YOU whose life resembling god's little bugs is warned, in your own interest, that thinking while reading is dangerous und daher verboten.

3. YOU the child of good parents must rinse out all your cavities before picking up my masterpiece entitled venerable morgue translated already into six languages.

4-5. YOU will be amazed at the fundamental nonsense that causes your existence on this otherwise tolerable globe.

6-7. YOU will address your spouse thus while she presents you with five healthy sons: my child will be a communist.

7-8. YOU then as befits the wise and practical familicide will, while washing, place 2 measures of hair tonic just once in your spouse's douche syringe.

9. YOU will realise the truth of my words take a self-operated electric chair then seat in it your dear wife b. fellow humans and yourself then say:

10.

alaga

or

the septicaemic countess

sits there

before

the bedside table

or

everyone loses as much of their stupidity as the capacity of the brain matter they laughed out.



# Népszerű életbölcselet egyszerű agysejtűek számára.

## I. Az ember viszonya a világhoz:

A.)

KIINDULÁSI ALAP: Miért van az ember?  
Felelet:

**MERT** ■

További kiindulási alap: Miért legyen?  
Felelet: Önmagáért.

1-ső tétel { Senki sem élheti ki az életet maximálisan ha azt nem kizárólag mint önmaga függvényét értékeli és vizsgálja.

B.)

KIINDULÁSI ALAP:

Ha nem tudok a hátam mögötti fáról  
akkor a hátam mögötti fa nincs

Az én illetőleg a világ összetevői:

|            |   |   |              |                 |  |
|------------|---|---|--------------|-----------------|--|
| 2-ik tétel | 1. Az anyagelosztódás folytonossága = kémia | } | MONIZMUS     | SZUBJEKTIVIZMUS |  |
|            |   |   |              |                 | 2. Azaz nincsenek értelmes és értelmetlen processzusok csak processzusok   |
|            |   |   |              |                 | 3. Tehát minden értelmi kapcsolatteremtés énem esetlegességeinek függvénye |
|            |   |   | RELATIVIZMUS |                 |  |

## TIZENHÁROM NAIV KÉRDÉS

1. Önző disznó tehát az ember?  
Igenis.
2. Lehet ezen segíteni?  
Nem.
3. Kell ezen segíteni?  
Nem.
4. Miért?  
Mert az önzés hiányérzet.
5. Mit kell tehát csinálni kedves Pálinkás elvtárs?  
A hiányérzetet kell megszüntetni.  
(Helyes.)
6. Hányféle hiányérzet van?  
Materiális és kulturális.
7. Hogy szüntethető meg a materiális hiányérzet?  
A primár életfeltételek megteremtésével.
8. Hogy szüntethető meg a kulturális hiányérzet?  
A kultúra szabaddátételével.
9. Hogy történjék ez kedves Balázs Béla?  
Az embereket szabaddá kell tenni a mai „kulturától“.  
(1-es.)
10. Valószínű hogy ezekután boldog lesz az ember?  
Nem.
11. Hanem?  
Magassabbrendű narkotikumok teljesebben adják a boldogság érzetét, mint a kevésbé magasabbrendűek.
12. De miért narkotikumok ezek? he... he... he...  
Azért kedves Sallai mert csak az élet vonalából hatnak.
13. És azon túl?  
Változatlanul fennáll: mindennek az ellenkezője is igaz.

## II. Az új világhoz vezető út:

az a forradalom amelynek alapja egy kettős hiányérzet: a materiális és a kulturális.

Jó anyag tehát mai összetevőiben a jó forradalomhoz a munkásság?

NEM.

Forradalmat akar ma egyáltalában a munkásság?

NEM.

Mit akar tehát a munkásság?

KENYERET.

Kap most is kenyeret a munkásság?

Kap, de keveset.

Mit akar tehát a munkásság?

TÖBB KENYERET.

Mit?

Több kenyeret kérem szépen.

Szabad ezen gunyolódni?

Nem.

Mit kellene akarnia a munkásságnak?

Az életet.

De hiszen az élethez a több kenyéren át visz az ut!

A több kenyéren át elsősorban a kispolgárságba visz az ut.

Az élethez vezető egyetlen ut az élet maradéknélküli megkívánása.

Jó, jó, de a forradalom alapfeltétele a materiális hiányérzet.

A materiális hiányérzet a kenyérlázadás alapfeltétele.

Hm. A kommunista gazdasági rend tehát nem forradalmi tény, kérdem én öntől leejtett álkapoccsal?

A kommunista gazdasági rend a kapitalista gazdasági rendnek emberibb továbbfejlesztése a trösztökön szindikátusokon nagybirtokokon és bankokon keresztül felelem én önnek mély keserőséggel.

Kérdem tehát öntől mi a forradalom?

Az a benső és csakis egyenkint és kizárólag szubjektive és föltétlenül dogmákon lovagolás nélküli művelet, amely következtében a világról való elgondolásaink a teljes-(ebb) élet irányában változnak meg.

Erläuterungen:

Kétféleképpen származhatnak elgondolásaim a világról:

1. Ha azt (a világot t. i.) a priori, a magam összetevőivel, megfertőzeten eszemmel mint közvetlenül érdeklő jelenségkomplexumot vizsgálom, tehát megkonstruálom magamnak a világot.

2. Ha jó és kimerítő filozófusokat olvasok tehát reproduktív uton és mások folytonos reprodukálásával másodlagos uton.

(Refrain: senki sem élheti ki maximálisan az életet ha azt nem kizárólag mint önmaga függvényét értékeli és vizsgálja.)

Vagy: Nietzsche és Kant filozófiája között mindössze annyi a hasonlóság hogy mindketten a világról irtak, viszont ennyi a különbség is.)

Azonban a kultúra örök kérem he... he... he...

He... he... he... a Kultúra valóban az. Viszont a kultúra a mindenkor uralkodó rend (URALKODNI=KOMPROMISSZIUM) ideológikus alátámasztója: kizsákmányoló és nem felszabadító.

Ennek illusztrálására szolgáljon a következő tabella:





**Egy egyszerű kaucsukmunkás lelkióceánia az Ur**

TÖRZSSZÁM: = 9.684.448 =

1921. Junius

Ujjlenyomat helye

o/o

**SZELVÉNYEK KOITUSZ SZAKSZERVEZET KATONASÁG**

IGAZGA TŐ RENŐR SÉG MŐSOR UTÁN TÁNC

4 polgári felesége rajong a

**SZIFILISZ MOZIÉRT** amerikai vigjáték 4 malterozó állvány nyai utca

nikotin nikotin alkohol alkohol tárcsa rovat  
gyerek az ágy alatt NICK-CARTERT olvassa  
**KENYERET** kozmikus detektívdráma  
le a puderos naccégákkal (szakszer. § 48/a.)  
a labororium az őráit hüvelykujjában vagy az erkölcs győzelme szárazon és vizen

**REND!**

lakásán található könyvek: **O h n e t**, munkáska lendárium kizárólag fizikai munkásoknak, senki szigetén...

Szerel mi levelező  
O II éves kisleány sulya . . . . . 29 kiló } ÖSSZESEN:  
L 9 " kisleány " . . . . . 24 " } Kgr. 53.-  
L L  
A TŐ

**1. FEBRUÁR 1.**

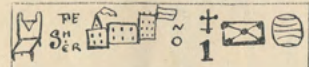
le a zsidókkal! (létminimum minusz 50%) Éljen Hindenburg?

MI IS HASZNOS POLGÁRAI AKARUNK LENNI A TÁRSADALOMNAKI

HSSZONY Főz varr mos ápol napi elfoglaltság 19 óra ápol főz mos Europai szaloncukra 1 db hullával illiomleltű bankárokkal és megjutalmazott életmentőkkel  
fő ti tab jai  
Egy gazdag fiú története vagy hogyan lehet Ön milliomas származása dacára is 24 óra alatt jó kommunis-tává 37°8' 1GYONYORÚ!

**1921-ik esztendejében a kapitalista világrendben**

KICSIT KÖHÖG SÁRGA CSIKÓ EREDETI KOSZTUMÓKKEL (204 Jókából álló könyvtáralap javára)  
DEMAGÓGIA HATALOM PUSKÁI POLITIKAI FILM: FEHÉREK EGYESÜLJÜNK



JÖN A SÁRGARÉM

**Éljen a forradalom?**

mégis csak jó az Isten mégis csak szép az élet 2x szerelem komp lexum irodalom kék szökőkutak  
**A PROLETÁR** szenvedési és reményei 6 véres és megható részben melyben és ezáltal egész tisztességesen kérem s a becsületes burzsoázia számára is közkívánatra újból bebizonyítottatik hogy a mai óráberek mellett lehetetlen az erkölcs utján megélni

hogyan keletkezik a családirtás vagy lopni bűn-e? vagy győz az igazság és zsarnok burzsi halála írta: egy jó elvtárs (a régi jó időkben)

MŐSOR UTÁN TÁNC HIDEG MELEG BUFFET GIGÁNYZENE HÉTFO HÉTFO HÉTFO

T. B. C. A MUNKA SZENT 606.  
KEDD: MINDENKI LEHET MILLIOMOS SZERDA: OLVASSATOK A PARTKIADVÁNYOKAT CSÜTÖRTÖK: U J M Ő S O R PÉNTEK: ROCKEFELLER A ZSÁKHORDÓ SZOMBAT: minden ut »

**VASÁRNAP**

HÉTFO HÉTFO HÉTFO  
ROCKEFELLER A ZSÁKHORDÓ  
SZOMBAT  
GYORSFÉNYKÉPÉSZ 38°2'

A forradalmár összetevői ezek?  
Nem  
Miért?  
Mert ezek az összetevők a mai életrend biztosítékai, leszerelő és nem tudatosító erők.  
III. tétel: Az a proletariátus amely a mai összetevők egyrészében (az ugynevezett kulturális összetevőkben) narkotikumot tud találni a mai összetevők másik részére (a mai magántulajdonos tbc. és kizsákmányoló életrendre) az önmagában hordja a mai uralkodó állapotok egyensúlyát, tehát már eleve képtelen a forradalomra: az egyetlen lehetőségre, amelyben felszabadíthatná magát.  
Mit kell tehát tenni?  
Meg kell bontani ezt az egyensúlybeli állapotot. Hogyan?  
A mai ugynevezett kulturális összetevőket elégtelenné kell tenni arra, hogy lenarkotizálhassák az embert.  
Hogyan?  
Igényesebbé kell tenni kulturkivánságaiban.  
Ez az a bizonyos kulturájában forradalmasított ember, akiről Lengyel József megboldogult elvtársunk azt írta 1919-ben a „fiatalság“ lapjában hogy olyan mint a magyar mágnás angol lord kaucsukcipőszarkot hord?  
Ez az.  
Ez az a kulturájában forradalmasított ember akiről Kun Béla azt jelentette ki az egész kispolgárság üdvőceánjától körülzokogva hogy burzsoádekadencia?  
Ez az.  
Ez az amiért „azember“ (?) című három hónapon át így köszöntötte föl az ellenforradalmat: Ez kell a proletárnak?  
Ez az.  
Ez az a kulturájában kaucsuksarkozott angol mágnás magyar burzsoá dekadencia ez kell a proletárnak amit jó elvtársi kötelesség Luntcharkival, Zólával, Dantével és erotikus atlaszokkal a hónuk alatt a jó-forradalmároknak lekakálni egy eklektikus moccanással?  
Ez az.

És mindezek tekintetbevételével miféle sürgönykiáltványt kell intézni azonnal Európa, Ázsia, Afrika, Amerika, Ausztrália és a sarkvidéki népek összes ovdásaihoz?  
A következő kiáltványt:  
**ANYÁK** becukrozott tenyere ellen  
**APÁK** gyilkos önszeretete ellen  
**HÁZAK** börtönös békessége ellen, mik szentelt ürüléket fakasztanak a pápaszemek ajkain  
**MERT** minden élet önmagáért való  
**MERT** minden élet csak önmaga tövényei szerint élhető ki a legteljesebben  
jaj bordélyok vajaskádaiban anyák légüres csipőin minden volt életek hevernek most bele a kezdődők puha agyvelejébe  
**ÜLTESSÉTEK PUSKAPORRA A CSALÁDOT!**  
**DIÁKOK**  
RAGASSZATOK ZÖLD PAPIRSZÁRNYAKAT A KÖNYVESPOLCAITOKRA!  
mert én tudom  
1921 tavaszán mindenki annyit veszít az ostobaságából mint amennyi kiröhögött agyvelejének térfogata  
**KATONÁK**  
LÉPJETEK KI A BANKÁROK PÜSPÖKÖK GENERÁLISOK  
GERINCÉBŐL  
**MERT** én tudom  
lekvárhalak az egyesült államok japánok angolok dreadnaughtjai  
**MUNKÁSOK!**  
VIZELJÉTEK KI MAGATOKBÓL A NÉPAKADÉMIAKAT VEZÉREITEKET ÉS KONGRESSZUSAITOKAT



# FIGYELEM!

EURÓPÁBAN 1½ percenként fordul fel egy tudó-  
vészes

## AZ ASSZONY ELLEN

MERT Ő AZ aki kigyujtott éjszakák barrikádok  
sztrájkok induló  
sarkkutatók fölött ken-  
guruk kereplésével átsi-  
pitja magát

ÉS HIÁBA hogy háztetők  
élein csatornák karjain ben-  
gálit füstölget elröpült kölykei  
után

ÉS HIÁBA hogy mozdonyok  
teste dicséretét énekelik a hajszálnyi  
viaduktokon

MERT Ő AZ aki percek paraszában  
felissza a forradalmakat

MERT Ő AZ aki felihatatlan testén elbé-  
kelteti az ELLENTÉTEKET

MERT Ő AZ aki mézpuha gerinceket és tejfehér  
ÜNNEPEKET nevet a városok fölé

AZ Ő ünnepre való testén minden nyomorultak  
feje körül kigyulladnak az elégedettség viasz-  
gyertyái

SZOMNAMBU-

LISTÁK

SZABÓ DEZSŐ

UTÁN

TALÁLKOZUNK

A GELLÉRTHEGYEN

SCHLACHTA s. k.

AZ ELÉGEDETTÉG PEDIG MA A KIZSÁKMÁ-  
NYOLÓK ÉLESZTŐJE

## A MŰVÉSZET ELLEN

MERT csak önmaga határain belül építkezik  
és minden emberi megnyilatkozás a BEHORDOTT  
TÁVOLSÁGOKKAL ARÁNYOS  
ÉS ezért nem mondom én kedves

## KASSÁK LAJOS

hogy a ház szebb festmény mint a kép, hanem mondom  
igenis hogy nagyobb emberi lehetőség a képnél és  
mondom legfőképen hogy a HÁZ, KÉP, ZENE, IRO-  
DALOM, TECHNIKA, FILOZÓFIA, POLITIKA,  
KÜLÖN-KÜLÖN KISEBB EMBERI LEHETŐ-  
SÉGEK mint egy EGYSÉGES ÉLETFORMÁBAN  
EGYESITVE ÉS EZ TALÁN AZ ÜNNEPÉLY  
VAGY AKÁRMI MÁS EGY INDIVIDUUM EGY-  
SÉGÉBEN KARMESTERSÉGÉBEN

A KULISSZÁK

A NÉZŐK ÉS

KOMÉDIÁSOK

AZ ILLUZIÓK

ÉS LÁTVÁNYOS

SZINHÁZKET

RECEK

AZ ÖNMAGUK

ÉRT VALÓ SZI-

NEK ÉS FOR-

MÁK ÉS SZÓ-

NOKLATOK ÉS

BÖLCSELKE-

DÉSEK

### NÉLKÜL

SZINEKKEL FORMÁKKAL HANGOKKAL ZENE-  
KAROKKAL EZERTORKU SZAVAKKAL ÁGAS-  
KODÓ MOZDONYOKKAL BETÜKKEL HULLÁM-  
ZÓ TRIBÜNÖKKEL CSAK KOMÉDIÁSOKKAL

ÉS EZÉRT MONDOM hogy a mai ember részember  
tehát a mai művész is és mindegy még az is hogy szajhák  
manikürözött álkapsain vagy formák egymással hely-  
zetes geometriáján fürdési ki magán SPECIFIKUS  
látókörét

A MŰVÉSZ A FILOZÓFUS A KÉMİKUS A  
ZENÉSZ A MUNKÁS A BOHÓC A MAI SZEPARÁ-  
CIÓS ÉLETREND produktumai, nem egy állapotot  
teljesen betöltő (a gyászoló az örülő) hanem egyetlen  
életcsíkon futó szakot reprezentálnak

SZEPARÁCIÓ pedig annyi mint kis körökre  
bontani az életet, hogy azokon belül elbirhatóbbá  
váljon az élet hogy azokon belül a mai életrend ki-  
egyensúlyozási műveleteit biztosabban elvégezhesse  
hogy részemberek produkálódjanak akik celláik  
cizellálásába öljké bele minden kétségüket és fájdal-  
mukat

MERT minden mély és emberi megnyilatkozás  
valamennyi határokon és cellákon túlról indul el ér-  
vényes valamennyi határokra és cellákra és ezért  
elsősorban a határokat gyöngíti agyon.

És amit legvastagabban legnagyobb betűkkel  
kellene világgá ordítani hogy:

## FILOZÓFIA ÉS KÉMIA NEM KÜLÖN!

Ime itt a vége a kiáltványnak s általában az  
egész népszerű bölcseletnek, amelyet szigoruan  
egyszerű agysejtűek számára szerkesztettem.

Filozofusokba temetkezett halottsiratók mű-  
vészetbe szomorodott poéták savreakciókon üldögélő  
kémikusok most kórusban obégathatják felém

VISSZA A MAGAD TERÜLETÉRE DILETTÁNS  
DE ÉN MONDOM:

egyszerű ember vagyok  
minden terület az enyém  
minden területen egyformán látó  
minden képleteken technikákon  
beszajkózottságokon túl

a legteljesebb emberi lehetőségeket csak én csak így  
mutogathatom fel magamból.



Sándor Barta

Népszerű életbölcselet egyszerű

agysejtűek számára [Popular Life Wisdom  
for the Simple-Minded]

Tisztelt hullaház [Highly Esteemed Morgue]

Vienna, Ma, 1921

## I. MAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORLD

A.)

Starting point: Why does man exist?

Answer: BECAUSE.

Next starting point: Why should man exist?

Answer: For himself.

1st theorem: Nobody can live life to the fullest if they do not also value and analyse it exclusively as a function of themselves.

B.)

Starting point: If I am not aware of the tree behind my back then there is no tree behind my back.

The components of the world regarding the self:

2nd theorem:

1. The continuity of material distribution = chemistry

2. i.e. there are no intelligent or unintelligent processes, only processes

MONISM

3. Therefore every worthwhile search for contact is a function of the contingencies of the self

RELATIVE

SUBJECTIVISM.

~

## THIRTEEN NAÏVE QUESTIONS

1. Is man therefore a selfish pig?

Yessir!

2. Can this be helped?

No.

3. Must this be helped?

No.

4. Why?

Because selfishness is a feeling of want.

5. What then should dear Comrade Pálincás do?

The feeling of want must be done away with. (Correct.)

6. How many feelings of want are there?

Material and cultural.

7. How can we do away with the material feeling of want?

By creating the primary conditions of life.

8. How can we do away with the cultural feeling of want?

By making culture free.

9. How should this happen, dear Béla Balázs?

People should be freed from today's "culture." (Fail.)

10. It's probable that people would then be happy?

No.

11. Then what?

High-grade narcotics deliver a fuller feeling of happiness than lower-grade ones.

12. But why are these narcotics? heh... heh... heh...

Because, dear Sallai, they are only effective from the course of life.

13. And beyond that?

It remains unalterably that the opposite of all this is also true.

~

## II. THE PATH TO THE NEW WORLD

is the revolution whose basis is a double feeling of want: the material and the cultural.

In today's components then, are the workers good material for the good revolution?

No.

Do the workers want a revolution at all?

No.

What do the workers want then?

Bread.

Are the workers receiving bread?

They do, but not much.

What do the workers want then?

More bread.

What?

More bread please.

Can this be ridiculed?

No.

What should the workers want?

Life.

Because the path to life is through more bread!

The path via more bread leads primarily to the petty bourgeoisie.

*The sole path leading to life is the indivisible desire for life.*

Fine, fine, but the basic condition for revolution is material want.

Material want is the basic condition for bread riots.

Hm. The communist economic system is not therefore a revolutionary fact, I ask you, stunned.

The communist economic system is the more humane development of the capitalist economic system via trusts syndicates large estates and banks I respond to you with great bitterness.

I therefore ask you what is revolution?

It is the inner, individual and exclusively subjective operation, that necessarily rides free of dogmas, whereby our notions of the world are consequently transformed towards a full(er) life.

Erläuterungen [Expositions]:

My notions of the world may derive in one of two ways:

1. If I examine it (i.e. the world) a priori, with all my own components and my unsullied mind, as a complex phenomenon of direct interest, I therefore construct the world for myself.

2. If I read good and exhausting philosophers [I construct it] therefore in a reproductive way and with the continuous reproduction of others in a secondary way.

(Refrain: Nobody can live life to the fullest if they do not also value and analyse it exclusively as a function of themselves.

Or: the only similarity between the philosophies of Nietzsche and Kant is that both of them wrote about the world, and this is also the only difference.)

Yet culture is eternal heh... heh... heh...

Heh... heh... heh... Culture is indeed. Yet culture is the ideological buttress of the prevailing ruling order (TO RULE = COMPROMISE); it is exploitative and not liberatory.

~

The following table serves to illustrate this:

THE SPIRITUAL OCEAN OF A SIMPLE CAUCHO WORKER IN THE GLOBAL CAPITALIST SYSTEM IN THE YEAR 1921 OF THE LORD

Reference no.: 9,684,448

June 1921

Place fingerprint here

Coupons – Coitus – Trade Union – Military  
Director – Police – dance after the show

4 middle-class wives go wild for Syphilis Cinema  
American feature with 4 plastering scaffolds

Conti Street – feuilleton column  
Nicotine – nicotine – alcohol – alcohol  
Bread!

Child under the bed  
Reading Nick Carter  
Cosmic detective drama, or the laboratory in the thumbs of the fool,  
or the triumph of ethics on mainland and sea

Order!

Down with powdered dignitaries (trade union para. 48/a.)

These books were found in his flat: O h n e t, workers' calendar exclusively for manual workers, on the island of nobody...

Lovers' correspondence – OLLA

11 year old girl's weight: 29 kilos  
9 year old boy's weight: 24 kilos  
Total: 53 k.–

Law-needle  
1. FEBRUARY 1.

Down with the Jews! (subsistence level minus 50%)  
Long live Hindenburg?

We also want to be useful citizens of society!  
5 crowns for the Russian Aid Foundation

Woman: Cooks sews washes nurses – Daily duties 19 hours  
– Nursing cooking washing – European salon drama with one corpse, purple-souled bankers and well-rewarded life savers

“Arise, wretched of the Earth” – 37,8°

The story of a rich boy or how you too can become a good communist in under 24 hours despite your millionaire origins  
– !BEAUTIFUL!

Schubert

Coughing a bit – Yellow colt – With original costumes (for the good of the library consisting of 204 Jókai-volumes)

Demagogy – The guns of power – Political film: whites unite! – The yellow peril is coming

Long live the revolution?

The evening mood is still good after all



God life is still good – Love complex x2 – Literature – Blue fountains  
– Police boxes

THE PROLETARIAN'S sufferings and hopes, in six bloody and moving parts, in which and hereby I respectfully request by popular demand, including the decent bourgeoisie, that it be proved again that on our current wages it is impossible to live a moral life

Or

How does familicide come about

Or

Is stealing a crime?

Or

Truth will win out and the death of the tyrant bourgeois

Written by:

A good comrade (from the good old days)

Dance after the show – Cold hot buffet – Gypsy music

Monday: T.B.C. – Work is Holy – 606.

Tuesday: Everyone can be a millionaire

Wednesday: Read party publications

Thursday: New show

Friday: Rockefeller the stevedore

Saturday: all roads lead to – Conti str. – Nicotine – Alcohol

Sunday

Rockerfeller the stevedore

Monday

Saturday

Coit...

Photos while you wait

38,2°

~

Are these the components of revolution?

No.

Why?

Because these are the components that guarantee the way of life today, they are demobilizing forces, not conscious-raising forces.

Theorem III: The proletarian who can locate narcotic effects in one part of today's components (the so-called cultural components) carries within him the balance of today's prevailing circumstances

for the benefit of the other part of today's components (today's privately owned TB and exploitative way of life), and is therefore incapable of revolution: the sole possibility in which to free himself. What should be done?

This state of balance must be broken up.

How?

Today's so-called cultural components must be made too inadequate to anaesthetize people.

How?

The standard of their cultural demands must be raised.

This must be that certain culturally revolutionized man of whom our late comrade József Lengyel spoke in 1919 in his paper of the "youth," that just like the Hungarian magnate the British lord wears caucho heels?

That's it.

This must be the culturally revolutionized man about whom Béla Kun stated that it's bourgeois decadence sobbing from the entire petty bourgeoisie's ocean of greetings?

That's it.

That's why "The People" celebrated the counter-revolution for three months: this is what the proletarian needs?

That's it.

This is the Hungarian bourgeois decadence in the culture of caucho-heeled British magnates that the proletarian needs which with good comradesly obligation it shits out with Lunacharsky, Zola, Dante, and erotic atlases under its arms with an eclectic movement?

That's it.

~

And bearing all of this in mind what kind of manifesto must be telegraphed forthwith to Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australia, and all the nurseries of the polar region dwellers?

The following manifesto:

Mothers against their sugar-coated hands.

Fathers against their bloody self-love.

Homes against their penal peace, which cause consecrated faeces to spring forth on the lips of the bespectacled.

Because every life is for itself.

Because every life can be lived most completely only according to its own laws

oh in the bordello buttery bathtubs, on mothers' hips devoid of  
air there was everything lives now loll about in the soft brains of  
beginners.

Plant the family in gunpowder!

Students, stick green paper wings on your bookshelves!

Because I know: in the Spring of 1921 everyone lost as much from  
their stupidity as the capacity of their ridiculed brains.

Soldiers, withdraw from the bankers', bishops', generals' spines!

Because I know: the dreadnaughts of the United States, Japan and  
Britain are jamfish.

Workers! Urinate out from yourselves the people's academies, your  
leaders and your congresses.

~

ATTENTION!

In Europe, every ninety seconds a consumptive bites the dust  
Against the woman,

Because it's her, who screeches herself hoarse with the clatter  
of kangaroos above burned-out nights, barricades strikes and  
nascent corner researchers.

And there's no point in smoking bengali on the edge of roofs in the  
embrace of canals after their kids who flew away.

And there's no point in locomotive bodies singing praises on hair's-  
width viaducts.

Because it's her, who in the embers of minutes drinks up the  
revolutions.

Because it's her on whose undrinkable body the CONTRADICTIONS  
are resolved.

Because it's her who laughs honey-soft spines and milk-white  
CELEBRATIONS above the cities.

On Her celebratory body around the head of each wretch the wax  
candles of contentment catch fire.

Somnambulists

After

Dezső Szabó

Let's meet

On Gellért hill

Schlachta, signed

Yet today contentment is the yeast of exploitation

AGAINST ART

Because they build only within the boundaries of themselves  
and every human statement is proportionate to the assembled  
distances, and that's not why I say dear

LAJOS KASSÁK

That the house is a finer painting than the picture, but I do say that  
there is greater human possibility than the picture and I say above  
all that the house, picture, literature, technology, philosophy, politics,  
other lesser human possibilities as united in a uniform way of life  
and perhaps this is the celebration or anything else an individual in  
his unity in his conductorship

Without

The backstage, the audience and comedians, the illusions and  
spectacular theatre cages,  
Colours and forms for themselves and forms and speakers and  
sophistry.

Grandstands surging with colours forms voices orchestras  
thousand-throated voices forking locomotives letters just with  
comedians.

And this is why I say that the man of today is a partial man therefore  
the art of today is whatsit whatever and also that the on the  
manicured jaws of whores or on the geometry of mutually situated  
forms a SPECIFIC horizon washes itself.

The artist the philosopher the chemist the musician the worker  
the clown are the products of today's separational way of life, not  
something that perfectly fills a (mourning or glad) state but they  
represent a section running on the sole strip of life.

Separation however is like breaking life up into little circles so that  
within them life becomes more bearable so that within them today's  
way of life can perform its balancing manoeuvres more confidently,  
so that partial men produce, they who pour all their doubts and  
pains into engraving their cells, because every deep and human  
statement departs from beyond all boundaries and cells applicable  
to all boundaries and cells and thus primarily debilitating the  
boundaries.

And what must be shouted out loud in the thickest largest letters is:

PHILOSOPHY AND CHEMISTRY NOT SEPARATELY!

Behold this is the end of my manifesto and in general all my popular wisdom, which I edited strictly for the simplest of minds.

Hired mourners buried in philosophers, poets saddened in art,  
chemists dithering on acid reactions may now in unison lament at me:  
BACK IN YOUR BOX YOU DILETTANT.

But I say:

I am a simple man,

Every domain is mine,

Beyond every uniformly viewed domain,

Beyond every formula technology,

Beyond rote learnings

The most complete human possibilities only I and only thus can

I expose from within me.

On Social Reproduction in  
the Discursive Space of  
Revolutionary Utopias and  
Propaganda Reports



## On Social Reproduction in the Discursive Space of Revolutionary Utopias and Propaganda Reports

From 1919 until the 1930s, the questions of women’s perspectives in society and the sexual division of labour were reoccurring themes in the literary oeuvre of Erzsébet Újvári and Sándor Barta. These texts reveal a comprehensive overview of the two authors’ literary work and, in more concrete terms, the social context in which the texts were written. In this study, I will therefore examine how the questions of social reproduction and the sexual division of labour are addressed in Újvári and Barta’s texts.<sup>1</sup> Social reproduction, or reproductive labour, encompasses the multitude of all tasks that the individual or a household must perform in addition to productive (paid) labour. It includes child-rearing, housework, sex, and everything that holds the fabric of society together, including the everyday cultivation of human relationships.

The events that overturned the economic conditions at the turn of the century – such as the First World War or the Soviet-type economic planning – also heightened inequalities in the gendered division of labour. In the factories of wartime hinterlands as well as in Soviet industry, the proportion of female workers significantly increased, and the double burden of reproductive labour and wage labour came to define everyday life for more and more women. Accordingly, this study will focus in particular on the socially constructed image of women in the Hungarian Soviet Republic (1919) coming after the post-First World War economic collapse and that of the Soviet shock worker movement from the 1930s. It will also discuss in depth how these ideals were depicted in Újvári and Barta’s texts. Although both periods placed women’s economic emancipation at the centre of their ideologies, there were fundamental differences in the social and economic conditions between the Hungarian Soviet Republic and the Stalin’s Soviet Union. These two divergent contexts allow us to examine the rhetorical devices in Újvári and Barta’s texts that either conceal or expose the contradictions in public discourse surrounding social reproduction in the given period.

Barta and Újvári were married during the Hungarian Soviet Republic and it was during this revolutionary period

<sup>1</sup> The final form of this study was realised thanks to suggestions from Blanka Bolonyai, Gergely Csányi, Tibor Meszmann, and Katalin Teller. The title is a quote from Erzsébet Újvári’s *Próza: 10* [Prose: 10].

that they first formulated their views on the social roles of women and their concepts regarding the family as a social unit during the times of revolution. Despite the fact that both authors imagined an ideal society in which women and men would share equal burdens of productive and reproductive labour, Barta and Újvári's parallel literary oeuvres also bear the traces of structural inequalities in the gendered division of labour. The essence of their revolutionary ideas changed little after 1919, but during their exile in Moscow, the two authors' texts nonetheless lost their subversive potential and became tools of propaganda instead. To better understand this process, we must first examine how the discourses around the gendered division of labour – to which Barta and Újvári subscribed – either concealed the overwork that fell to women or posited it as natural. Because the gendered division of labour is not limited merely to the opposition between productive and reproductive labour, in order to recognise the ideology behind these texts, we must also take the symbolic aspects of labour into account. In doing so, we must also ask in which function and context emotional care – performed in the areas of child-rearing, relationships and collegial relations – appears in Újvári and Barta's texts.

### Revolutionary Theories of Social Reproduction

From 1917 onwards, Újvári and Barta worked together on the editorial board of *Ma*. Following the social democratic–progressive Aster Revolution of 1918–1919, the *Ma* group began publishing special issues dedicated to the propagation of their worldview, in which they laid out the founding principles of their own activist programme and declared solidarity with the revolutionary aims of Communism.<sup>2</sup> This series also included a Hungarian translation of the Soviet constitution and excerpts from Lenin's 1917 work *The State and Revolution*. In the translations for these special issues, the 'woman question' was only touched upon in the context of general suffrage and it was only Újvári and Barta who discussed women's perspectives in relation to the revolution in any further detail. Nevertheless, Újvári and Barta's works were not completely unique in that, several foundational works on the intersection of Marxism and feminism had already appeared in Hungarian prior to 1919. Engels's *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* had been included in the first Hungarian edition of Marx and Engels's collected works (1905). Following Marx and Lewis H. Morgan,

Engels examined the historical development of social relations and criticised the subordinate role of women in the bourgeois family in terms of the gendered division of labour. At the same time, however, neither Marx nor Engels developed a coherent or well-integrated theory to interpret reproductive labour. It was through the theoretical and practical works of August Bebel and Alexandra Kollontai, among others, that a political programme emerged after the turn of the century which secured the founding principles of Marxist feminism.<sup>3</sup>

Bebel's volume *Women under Socialism* was regarded as standard literature in the Hungarian labour movement. It was described as formative by both Kassák in *Egy ember élete* [The Life of a Man] and Barta in his semi-autobiographical novel *Aranyásók* [Gold Diggers]. Kollontai's work first appeared in Hungarian during the Hungarian Soviet Republic, in the same year that Lenin appointed her to run her own department, the Zhenotdel. Yet Kollontai's actual achievements as a party politician never lived up to the radical Marxist social politics of her theoretical works. In *Communism and the Family* (1920), she argued for a comprehensive reform of the nuclear family and child-rearing, the abolition of private households, and the complete collectivisation of reproductive labour including child-rearing.<sup>4</sup>

During the years of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and exile in Vienna (1919–1925), Barta's concept of the family steadily came to resemble that of Kollontai. In Újvári's poems, however, there was no mention of the collectivisation of child-rearing; only in 1924, in a poem written on the occasion of Lenin's death, did she refer to elements of Lenin's political programme that were in line with Kollontai's respective thoughts. These ideas faded from Barta's writings too during the years of exile in Moscow. By the 1930s, when Újvári and Barta were discussing the everyday life of Soviet working mothers in the form of schematic propaganda reports, Stalinist politics no longer followed Kollontai's principles even on the level of rhetoric. Stalin had reasserted traditional gender roles linked to the nuclear family,<sup>5</sup> and the state's partial assumption of female reproductive labour was carried out via the same institutions (kindergartens and schools) as in Western capitalist states, while most of the unpaid reproductive labour, in addition to wage labour, was still done by women in their private households.<sup>6</sup>

↗ [104] Erzsi Újvári: *Lenin*

<sup>3</sup> Csányi – Gagy – Kerékgyártó 2018, 7–13.

<sup>4</sup> Kollontai 1977, 250–260.

<sup>5</sup> Somlai 1990, 25–40.

<sup>6</sup> Csányi – Gagy – Kerékgyártó 2018, 7–13.

## Sándor Barta on the Collectivisation of Households and Child-rearing (1919–1924)

Barta was not involved in the political organisations of the Hungarian Soviet Republic but in line with the reformist initiatives of 1919, he hoped that the proletarian dictatorship would undertake a fundamental rethinking of the modern family and the economic role of women. The representative body of the Republic, the National Assembly of Councils, supported the “opening up of every profession and every field to women,”<sup>7</sup> and “fully equal pay for women and men performing the same work.”<sup>8</sup> It also stated that “a sufficient number of nurseries and day-care centres even in the smallest village”<sup>9</sup> should be established, to guarantee child-care during mothers’ working hours, yet during the few months of the proletarian dictatorship, no serious steps were taken to realise these goals. The KMP (Communist Party of Hungary) published Kollontai’s 1916 essay *The Working Mother*, which had called for the introduction of maternity benefits in pre-revolutionary Russia, but a radical rethinking of the institution of the bourgeois family was not an integral part of the Hungarian Soviet Republic’s programme. A booklet published by the People’s Commissariat for Public Education on the subject of free love entitled *Kommunizáljuk-e Zsófit?* [Should We Communize Zsófi?] only dealt with the economic situation of women arguing that without women’s economic autonomy, neither the number of forced marriages can be reduced nor divorce could appear as an accessible legal option.

↗ [94] Family Concepts

In his 1919 manifesto *Világforradalom – világburzsoázia és program* [World Revolution – World Bourgeoisie and Programme], Barta also expected reforms of the economic base to transform social relations, the birth of the “self-confident woman on her way somewhere (and not towards the cage of contemporary marriage)” but on the pages of *Ma*, he held a much more radical position – one that was almost Kollontai-esque compared to mainstream Republic politics – on the general obsolescence of civil marriage and the family as institutions. Accordingly, he argued that “we want therefore to separate the man from the woman economically and vice versa,” and, like Kollontai, advocated for the complete socialisation of child-rearing.<sup>10</sup>

↗ [86] Sándor Barta: *Világforradalom – világburzsoázia és program* [World Revolution – World Bourgeoisie and Programme]

<sup>7</sup> *Tanácsok országos gyűlésének naplója* [Diary of the National Assembly of Councils] 1919, 262.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 263.

<sup>10</sup> Barta did not borrow his ideas on the collectivisation of child-rearing directly from Kollontai, since these themes were already in the public consciousness. Among others, Oszkár Jászi, a founding member of the Galilei Circle, addressed the question in his 1907 volume *Új Magyarország felé: Beszélgetések a socializmusról* [Towards the New Hungary: Conversations on Socialism].

According to Barta, the socialisation of children should take place among their teachers and peers, “far from the sentimental or brutal tyranny of the parents,” and thus argued that priority should be given to the ideological education within the movement over the symbolic transmission of values within the traditional family setting. On this point, there was no substantial difference in practical terms between Barta and Kollontai’s positions, yet Kollontai did not justify the collectivisation of child-rearing on the basis of the nuclear family’s flawed or even harmful rearing practices. She thought that parental example did not hinder collective upbringing; on the contrary, for the collectivisation of child-rearing, it was a necessary condition that Soviet women should extend the emotional care they provided to their children to the whole of the children’s community.<sup>11</sup>

Barta’s 1919 manifesto did not yet clarify the terms and the specific social and economic conditions in which the left wing reform of the bourgeois family should be conceived. Three years later, when he analysed the cultural and welfare institutions of bourgeois capitalism in his Proletkult journal *Akasztott Ember*, he outlined a clearer picture of the social systems he regarded as ideal. Here, he discussed the bourgeois institutions that simultaneously maintain and conceal the inequalities emerging in capitalist societies. Barta argued that although the proliferation of kindergartens, cheap cinemas, and tenement buildings appeared to respond to the needs of the modern proletariat, their true social significance was confined to ensuring that the workers regained their capacity to work from day to day: “The aim: work, drudgery. And everything else is merely an instrument.”

↗ [168] Sándor Barta: *Cirkusz-kapitalizmus 2.*  
[Circus-Capitalism 2.]

In this series, Barta criticised the floor layout of tenement blocks for mirroring the traditional forms of the private household and the bourgeois family: it “breaks universal reality into millions and millions of small worlds. If we now imagine in these small chambers and also on the gravest of furniture: the father with his hierarchical power and the mother toiling around the square kitchen range in the blindness of motherhood and her 18-hour working day, and the children, who will become pale imitations of their parents.”

↗ [167] Sándor Barta: *Cirkusz-kapitalizmus!*  
[Circus-Capitalism!]

Barta’s journalistic writings in *Akasztott Ember* already assumed that the abolition of the private household was the most important precondition for demolishing capitalism and collectivising housework and child-rearing, but his own social vision did not take final shape until 1925 in his utopian novel *Csodálatos történet, vagy mint fedezte fel William Cookendy polgári riporter a*

<sup>11</sup> Kollontai 1977, 250–260.

*földet, amelyen él* [The Wonderful Story, or How the Bourgeois Reporter William Cookendy Discovered the Land on Which he Lived]. The novel condenses all the social experiments and economic innovations that Barta desired from Soviet politics into the fictional space of the Northern Settlement. “Public property, solidarity, collective joint effort, voluntary mass discipline, systematic planning, the material and intellectual collective unity of all workers” would be the principles on which the community of workers would organise the Settlement’s society.<sup>12</sup>

↗ [96] A Wonderful Story

In the novel’s *kolkhoz* and factory communities, the private household has been completely abolished, washing, cooking, and childcare are formally organised, and although productive and reproductive labour are apparently shared out equally, the emotional labour of child-rearing remains invisible, and those social roles that are primarily conceived in terms of emotional labour lose their social meanings in the text. The emotional attachment between mother and child is glossed over even when one of the protagonists, Una, leaves her new-born at the Northern Settlement’s clinic when she and her husband start looking for accommodation and work. Consequently, the collectivity concept sketched out in the novel remains largely pragmatic. The characters have no emotional motivations and their decisions are defined solely by practical concerns.<sup>13</sup>

### Erzsi Újvári’s Revolutionary Poems

In Újvári’s works, women’s double burden – the combination of productive and reproductive labour – is a recurring theme. Yet unlike Barta, who almost exclusively emphasised the material dimensions of labour, Újvári approaches the real significance of the double burden from the perspective of the emotional and caring duties that women have to perform. In most cases the emotional aspects are mentioned in the context of reproductive labour and child-rearing but the social and economic relations of wage labour are also maintained by a series of symbolic acts.<sup>14</sup> In Újvári’s oeuvre,

<sup>12</sup> Barta 1925.

<sup>13</sup> Kollontai discussed the new morality in several essays, and most extensively in *Make Way for Winged Eros: A Letter to Working Youth* (Kollontai 1977, 276–292). For more detail on the collectivisation of child-rearing, see *The Labour of Women in the Evolution of the Economy* (ibid., 142–150). Kollontai was unable to successfully bridge the yawning gap between theory and practice but for her, in contrast to Barta, emotionally rich human relations were part of the new Communist morality. Since many aspects of the social expectations vis-à-vis women were mediated through the emotional aspects of reproductive labour, Kollontai recognised that both the symbolic and material aspects of reproductive labour had to be taken into account.

<sup>14</sup> Kollontai 1977, 250–260.



women's emotional labour is most often found in the context of reproductive labour, relationships and child-rearing, but the female protagonists in her texts also perform acts of emotional care within the realms of revolutionary movements and wage labour.

To "be" a woman and a mother also carries an important social meaning in Újvári's revolutionary poems. Three of her poems appeared in the special worldview issues of *Ma*, in the same series Barta's *Világforradalom* manifesto was published. Újvári's *Asszonyok* [Women], *Próza: 5* [Prose: 5] and *Próza: 10* [Prose: 10] represent the revolution as a movement involving the whole of society, whose real impact can be measured in terms of whether it reaches those invisible sections of the working class such as women and children. Her early poems reveal a complex fabric of invisible reproductive labour, which, in addition to housework, caring for the sick (*Prose: 1*), and pregnancy (*Prose: 7*), also includes the emotional care to be performed in a relationship.

↗ [27] Erzsi Újvári: *Próza: 1* [Prose: 1]

↗ [37] Erzsi Újvári: *Próza: 7* [Prose: 7]

Újvári's poems also address the disproportionate division of emotional care tasks within relationships and the negative aspects of the expectations attached to them, including anxieties, and the constant sense of responsibility. In her 1918 text *Vándorlás* [Wandering], she examines how the social expectations attached to motherhood can become the instrument of domestic violence, describing an abusive relationship, in which the father questions the mother's love for the child, making her feel guilty, and who then turns her pain and anger against her own child. The lines of *Próza: 18* [Prose: 18] also bear the traces of the anxieties that women are burdened with:

↗ [92] Erzsi Újvári: *Vándorlás* [Wandering]

↗ [102] Erzsi Újvári: *Próza: 18* [Prose: 18]

In our eyes we carry miscarried children.  
When we want to laugh, the plates and mortars play the organ out  
of our mouths.  
In the evenings we strap our hearts with white sheets.  
Because we carry every joy and sadness of our partner on our bodies.  
Who can stand it any longer???

They pin us onto the beds with burning needles  
If we want to live we build burning towers above our bellies  
And morning.  
Every morning doctors open our groins Nuns water our hearts with  
white cans.

[...]

Because today we saw the other woman's breast in our partner's eyes.

And in vain we cry. We laugh.

Tomorrow we shall find it again inside.

Women!!!

If we could tear ourselves away from our partner's warm loins. We'd reach the mountains and foals would run with us. We would bathe our eyes in water and never again see the kitchens' chimneys.

In her early works, emotional labour is often coupled with the experience of shame, a sense of duty and vulnerability, but in her revolutionary poems, the emotional labour performed by women also plays an emancipatory role, inasmuch as women's mostly invisible emotional labour is also indispensable for the reproduction and perpetuation of the movement. Quoting Újvári: "the children want us to give them their strength" and "the children from our bodies shall carry the eternal dissatisfaction asunder."

↗ [90] Erzsi Újvári: *Próza: 10* [Prose: 10]

### The Moscow Years: Female Care in the Service of Propaganda

Following their years of exile in Vienna, Újvári and Barta moved to Moscow in 1925 with the help of Red Aid.<sup>15</sup> During their Soviet exile (1925–1938/40), both followed the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers' (RAPP) directives on literary realism. The majority of the two authors' essays continued to be set primarily in Hungary or Vienna, while their recurring themes were the unemployment and vulnerability of workers that characterised the 1920s and 1930s.

In the Moscow Hungarian émigré periodical *Sarló és Kalapács* and occasionally in the New York-based Communist journal *Új Előre*,<sup>16</sup> Barta published short stories about wage strikes and various forms of labour exploitation, including the lack of care for the elderly and sick (*Nyugdíj* [Pension], 1927) and the vulnerability of house maids (*Marusza* [Marusa], 1925). In Moscow, he also published the short story *Misa* [Misha], whose shorter version was published in 1924 in *Ék* and *Új Előre* under the title *Peleske Miska*. The more radical dimensions of the social utopia he had developed in Vienna (rejection of the bourgeois family and private household and

<sup>15</sup> The International Red Aid was founded as the official aid-organisation of the Komintern in 1922 to support political refugees sympathising with the Soviet Union. It also disseminated major propaganda-campaigns during the 1920s and the 1930s.

<sup>16</sup> *Új Előre* was the Hungarian-language Communist émigré daily paper in New York. It was initially a socialist publication entitled *Előre*, and adopted a Communist orientation from 1921, appearing as *Új Előre* until 1937.

educational reforms) faded from his texts written in Moscow exile but in *Misa*, he returned once again to his critique of the bourgeois family and its institutions. He argued that the bourgeois family model and school system – which bourgeois ideology stages as naturally given for all – are neither self-evident nor accessible for those living on the margins of society, and that the workers' movement therefore had to take over the social integration of those excluded from the institutions of the bourgeois family.<sup>17</sup>

The main character of the text, Misha, was born around the turn of the century in Budapest, lost his parents as a new-born, and found his primary socialisation through the workers' movement. He is first cared for by the neighbour, a cobbler, and later by a member of the Vasas Trade Union (Hungarian Metalworkers' Federation). He sings for the first time in front of an audience at the Vasas headquarters and later finds a job at the Ganz factory via the trade union. His personality is shaped by mass movements, demonstrations, and the institutions of the workers' culture, and even in the defining moments of his socialisation, he only has sporadic personal contact with others, often remaining an external observer of the ongoing events. Misha only grows really close to the old miller whom he first met at a demonstration at which "the old man lifted him up and held him in front of the crowd,"<sup>18</sup> so that Misha could see the faces of the protesting workers. In contrast to the story of Barta's novel *Aranyásók* [Gold Diggers], in which workers are recruited through personal conversations and friendships at work, Misha instinctively sympathizes with the movement from an early age, even before he had met union members in person. Barta's narrative provides no substantive answers concerning the extent to which the solidarity and identity-forming configurations of such political mass movement can correlate with the emotional world and socialisation needs of a child of Misha's age, but unlike the abstract society of *Csodálatos történet* [A Wonderful Story], the short story *Misa* provides us with specific examples of how the solidarity networks that develop within the workers' movement and overall in the proletariat function on an everyday level.

After her family had moved to Moscow, Újvári published stories in *Új Előre* on the issues affecting women and children living in extreme poverty including access to education, dangerous urban public spaces, and prostitution. She was particularly concerned with how the double burden of working mothers affects children. In the stories *Szép rét az iskola* [The School is a Beautiful Field] (1927) and *Mihályka élete és halála* [The Life

↗ [199] Újvári Erzsébet: *Szép rét az iskola*  
[The School is a Beautiful Field]

<sup>17</sup> Barta 1972, 164–224.

<sup>18</sup> Barta 1972, 190.

and Death of Mihályka] (1926), a mother working in the factory leaves her child at home, who then ends up at risk during the mother's shift.

By the turn of the 1930s, the theme of exploitation at the workplace had disappeared from Barta and Újvári's texts. In the interests of establishing the ideological basis for the newly-introduced economic planning, production had to enjoy unquestionable priority in Soviet literature, and the new RAPP directives allowed no room for critical analysis of productive labour. After Stalin announced the introduction of the first Five Year Plan in 1928, the steady growth of production became the most important measure of social progress. From 1930 onwards, the RAPP placed shock workers at the centre of its official programme,<sup>19</sup> and gave preference to journalistic writings in which authors directly addressed the shock workers of Soviet factories.

↗ [223] Sándor Barta: *Útban az Ural felé*  
[On the Road to the Urals]

Barta's longest report series was written in 1932 on a propaganda tour of the Urals organised by the Soviet government and the *Union internationale des écrivains révolutionnaires* [International Union of Revolutionary Writers], in which he took part as a member of an international brigade of writers, including Louis Aragon, Elsa Triolet, and Jeff Last. During the tour, he conducted practical, fact-driven interviews in public spaces with workers focusing on the economic situation of Soviet families with a level of factuality similar to that of *Csodálatos történet* [A Wonderful Story]. He summarises the life of a female doctor working in the Urals as follows:

She has two jobs and earns three hundred and seventy-five roubles, her husband earns two hundred and fifty, and her father receives a pension of seventy-two roubles. They have a two-room flat for which they pay eight roubles a month. She tells me that supplies were low in spring, but now that the kolkhoz markets have opened, the situation has improved. They regularly receive bread, sugar, and everything else on the ration card. They receive sixteen kilos of flour per person per month.

A female judge of peasant origin, who was appointed after three months of training, is also mentioned in the report series from the Urals.<sup>20</sup> In the 1930s, women entered many fields that had previously been the exclusive reserve of men while at the same time, many women working in the factories were not skilled. Unlike the female judge representing the people's court,

<sup>19</sup> Zambani 2011, 257–258.

<sup>20</sup> Barta 1972, 434–439.

who immediately landed a responsible job after a brief training, the women who were new to employment generally worked un-skilled or semi-skilled jobs.

The extensive industrialisation of the Soviet economy would not have been possible without the mass employment of women. From 1930 onwards, a campaign was launched to recruit mainly young, unskilled women into the factories. The welfare system was not equipped to provide childcare for such a large number of working women, and so in contrast to the ideas of Kollontai, more and more Soviet women were hit by the double burden of wage labour and housework. The new Soviet ideal of woman, the female shock worker (*Udarnitsa*) was able to assume jobs in sections of industry previously reserved for men, and participated successfully in work competitions to surpass the production norm while also being responsible for the family household.<sup>21</sup>

Újvári published only one report in *Sarló és Kalapács* in 1934, which also marked the end of her career. Nastya, Újvári's interviewee for *Gálocska* [Galochka], lived near Újvári in Sokolniki and was home on maternity leave when Újvári visited her for an interview, in which she describes how a young mother, who had recently moved from the countryside to the city, was trained at the childcare centre to care for her baby according to modern medical guidelines. Right before *Gálocska*, Újvári also published a propaganda essay entitled *Udárnyica* [Udarnitsa] in *Sarló és Kalapács*. Both texts discuss the Soviet social policy measures (maternity leave) and institutions (prenatal care, the factory medical system, childcare, kindergartens) that helped young female factory workers cope with both wage labour and child-rearing.<sup>22</sup>

↗ [120] Erzsi Újvári: *Gálocska* [Galochka]

↗ [118] Erzsi Újvári: *Udárnyica* [Udarnitsa]

Making the emotional labour of women more visible, which in the early poems helped explicate labour-related gender inequalities, now served the projection of propaganda in *Udárnyica* and *Gálocska*. Even at home, Nastya performs her maternal duties as

<sup>21</sup> Illič 1999, 27–42.

<sup>22</sup> In practice, the services listed in Újvári's *Udarnitsa*-essays were frequently not accessible. In her book on Soviet women workers, Melanie Illič summarises a Soviet article published the same year as Újvári's texts, in which a labour inspector provides a detailed account of the shortcomings in a Leningrad factory, revealing the contradictions between state propaganda and actual practices in the factories: "In November 1934 *Trud* published a short article by Kletschina, the labour inspector at the Krasnyi Treugol'nykh factory in Leningrad. Kletschina complained that 'the relationship of the administration with working women is heartless'. The director of one of the departments, Khodash, did not want to employ women who were nursing mothers. The situation in other departments at the factory was little better. No special place had been identified where women could feed their babies. The report also noted that there were attempts to reduce the wages of women taking statutory »nursing breaks«. One female shock worker, Naezdnikova, had received wages of 132 rubles a month before the birth of her baby, but once she had become a nursing mother she was being paid only 86 rubles. Kletschina complained that tens of qualified women workers at the Krasnyi Treugol'nykh factory, having become mothers, were being forced to leave the factory." (Illič 1999, 71–72.)



a shock worker and, upon her return to the factory from maternity leave, she continues to work as one. To quote Újvári: “Nastya gets back to work, all her nerves now dedicated to production – because she knows that during this time, Galochka is in good hands. Because she knows that the more consciously she works upstairs, the better life will be for Galochka downstairs.”

↗ [12] Erzsi Újvári: *Gálocska* [Galochka]

In these texts, Újvári justifies female shock workers’ overwork by the love they feel for both the factory and their children. In the *Udárnyica* essay, Katya voluntarily returns to the factory during her maternity leave to train up the girl who replaced her so that the brigade does not fall behind. The text presents the culture of Soviet work competitions as a grassroots movement brought to life by the commitment of the workers and their love of the factory and work. No mention is made of the real economic pressures behind the shock worker movement or of the fact that the wages of brigade members were dependent on how fast they trained up new workers.<sup>23</sup> In reality, most of the unskilled young women recruited into factory work performed overtime because of the precarity of their financial situation. Declarations about women’s work ethic, the love of the workers’ collective, and work itself served to cover up the underlying economic conditions that created the udarnitsa phenomenon and to make women’s overwork appear natural.

### Closing Remarks

Overall, social reproduction remained a key issue for both Újvári and Barta, although they departed from different premises and emphasised different aspects of the same social problem. Barta approached the problem of social reproduction from the material side and expected reforms of the economic base to eliminate inequalities in the gendered division of labour. Újvári analysed the same issues but also discussed in detail the emotional aspects of the gendered division of labour and women’s subjective experiences. However, she wrote little on how economic determinants influenced social expectations towards women.

<sup>23</sup> Sergei Tretyakov’s 1935 short story *Nine Girls* also argued that the success of the Stakhanovite female tractor brigade led by Pasha Angelina was due to the fact that the brigade was not exclusively organised along formal lines, and that the women also turned to Pasha with their personal problems: “they cry together, they laugh together.” The female shock worker invested emotional labour in rebuilding the brigade’s collective, and this caring love extended beyond the brigade members to the material means of labour: “Pasha knows the tractor like the back of her hand and cares for it as a mother cares for her child.” (Tretyakov 1995.)

The two authors published many texts on social reproduction between the two world wars, yet, many aspects of women's invisible labour nevertheless remained invisible in the Újvári-Barta oeuvre. In Barta's novel *Csodálatos történet* [A Wonderful Story] and his later reports, his disregard for the emotional aspects leads to an oversimplified model of the gendered division of labour, one in which many elements of the social expectations of women are lost. In the case of the shock worker cult in Újvári's late texts, however, although emotional labour receives a prominent role, the propaganda written into the text treats symbolic aspects – such as caring and love – as inherent parts of “female nature” and uses them to stage the exploitation of female workers as natural.<sup>24</sup>

Ranging from the avant-garde to propaganda, Barta and Újvári's oeuvre provides many insights from various perspectives into the public discourse surrounding social reproduction and their analysis gives rise to numerous methodological questions that can function as a starting point for a critical analysis of literary and journalistic writings on social reproduction. A parallel analysis of the two authors' texts serves as a reminder that when scrutinizing the ideologies behind discourses on the gendered division of labour, it is also important to examine how they tackle the different aspects of emotional care, since the inequalities encoded in the gendered division of labour are not strictly limited to the opposition between productive and reproductive labour. Emotional care, traditionally performed by women, is equally present in both domestic and wage labour, and further complicates and deepens the unequal division of labour.

<sup>24</sup> Women's “caring nature,” which is posited as natural, similarly limits the visibility of reproductive labour. (Csányi – Kerényi 2018.)

### Barta and Újvári's Utopian Conceptions of the Family During the Hungarian Soviet Republic and Exile in Vienna

For Újvári and Barta, marriage was both a directly-lived social and emotional experience and the setting of political and artistic fiction. They got married in 1919. In the same year, Barta issued his manifesto *Világforradalom – világburzsoázia és program* [World Revolution – World Bourgeoisie and Programme] detailing point by point the reforms he demanded from the Hungarian Soviet Republic in the areas of the arts, sciences, and family life. He regarded the family as the basic unit of society and embraced it as a crucial question in his political visions.

His programme combined the social policy of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, the Soviet reform movements, the Marxist feminist doctrines of Alexandra Kollontai, and the educational reform principles of the Soviet workers' school. Barta's 1919 manifesto stated that rearranging the economic base of society was not enough for fundamental change. He held communism to be "merely a means [...] to create an anarchic culture" free of "petit bourgeois morals."<sup>1</sup> He declared that in the ideal family, both parties are economically and emotionally independent and should receive the same education and, thus, also have equal opportunities in the world of work. He considered that the primary social setting for children should be shifted from the micro-community of the bourgeois family to the extensive community of society and that their own peers and teachers should take responsibility for their upbringing.

These ideas took final form in Barta's utopian documentary novel *Csodálatos történet, vagy mint fedezte fel William Cookendy polgári riporter a földet, amelyen él* [A Wonderful Story, or How the Bourgeois Reporter William Cookendy Discovered the Land on Which he Lived]. This is set in the society of the Northern Settlement symbolising the idealised Soviet Union.

Barta and Újvári thought differently about the relationship between the individual and society and about the roles of women and men. Unlike Barta, who looked at the macrostructure of society and made no distinction between the public and private spheres (society and family), Újvári concentrated on the direct and personal experiences of proletarian families and proletarian women.

<sup>1</sup> Barta 1919 | Barta Sándor, *Világforradalom – világburzsoázia és program* [World Revolution – World Bourgeoisie and Programme], *Second Worldview Special Issue of Ma*, 2 January 1919.

In her writing, women and children reflected on general social problems through their own micro-environments. This perspective enabled a close examination of power relations such as doctor-patient, parent-child, child-teacher and man-woman; for Barta, these often appeared only in abstract or utopian images.

Újvári's conception of the woman's revolutionary role, too, was more complex than Barta's. She proposed an elevated status for women both in attaining their own social equality and in educating the new generation. Unlike men, who merely "stopped to rejoice in their own creation", Újvári saw women as potential catalysts for a truly universal social emancipation that also reached those on the periphery of society.

↗ [90] Erzsébet Újvári: *Próza: 10* [Prose: 10]

Asszonyok! [Women!]

*Ma folyóirat első világszemléleti különszáma*  
[First Worldview Special Issue of Ma]  
Cover design: Sándor Bortnyik  
November 1918  
Kassák Museum



Újvári Erzsé

Red heads on the black asphalt.  
Morning.  
At the crossroads laughter, shrieking.  
Scared women run from dark gates in front of their partners. They  
lay their blossoming palms on the other's eyes. They closed the  
roads with their skinny breasts.  
Don't go!!  
Workers. Soldiers. Students.  
They threw the women's bodies a great distance.  
With your flesh??  
Back???  
No!!  
Their tired feet flowed into the roads.  
And they watched.  
A girl mourned the orphanhood of her thighs.  
They left me here!!!  
The women were suddenly scared.



Alone.  
Underneath their eyes, terror had thrown dark circles.  
What should we do??  
Someone slipped in front of them in fear.  
After them!!!  
The other one dripped poison into their ears.  
Slip after them??  
Who are you???  
Just them???  
Just them???  
Their bent waists stretched on the wall.  
Women!!!  
Someone drummed white paths on their minds.  
Again!!  
Home!!!  
They stopped once again in front of the gates.  
And then their loud pleasures hit the walls.  
For us!!  
The rooms' sick eyes opened brightly.  
They laid naked children under the sun.  
We want to live!!  
They bathed their bodies warm and laughed full-throated towards  
the sky. Instead of school the hardest-bodied woman had  
undressed in front of the children.  
This is how you should be!!!  
Someone wanted to pray. Flutes resounded from her throat,  
The laughter and the light turned somersaults in space.  
Because they were already grown up! People!!  
The houses exploded in fear.  
And their big-headed children, like red devils, ran in every direction  
on the roads.

*Ma folyóirat első világszemléleti különszáma*  
[First Worldview Special Issue of Ma], November 1918, 4.

Like the mainstream current of Marxist feminism, Barta argued – in a manifesto published in the worldview special issue of *Ma* – that the Hungarian Soviet Republic should concentrate on women’s economic independence to ensure their intellectual independence and create opportunities for women to take an equal part in production.



*Ma folyóirat világszemléleti második különszáma*  
[Second Worldview Special Issue of Ma]  
Cover design: János Mattis Teutsch  
January 1919  
Kassák Museum

*Woman*

The solution to the woman question is today regarded as an inescapable prerequisite by all higher cultures.

A higher way of life prohibits us from addressing a woman as we must today: whose wife are you?

We also want to address her like this – out of selfishness, because only in this way can she become part of our new self and we in turn address her thus: who are you?

It is from the new economic opportunities that we expect the self-confident woman on her way somewhere (and not towards the cage of contemporary marriage), a woman facing us with the same burden, who does not accept any kind of special concessions from the man and who makes this monumentally clear to him. We want the woman to be a productive friend and not a dolled-up nuisance who expects everything with and for her.

We know that the new woman must be brought to life in the thoughts of the new man (in an almost godlike pose and almost as if from nowhere) because we feel the most devastated and in place of them it is only us who is not and who is a plaster cast product of the current capitalist world order – who we do not need either today or least of all in the new culture!

As the basis for a more lasting assemblage of the new man and the woman we proclaim not gender according to contemporary immature ideologies, but the precondition of a spiritual encounter.

In the sex life, as the freest form of life, we regard spontaneous reaching out to each other – beyond all bourgeois refinements – as the most healthy.

### *Family*

We regard the family, in its present productive capacity, division of labour, and moral and absolutist configuration, as a simple function and well-chosen buttress of the contemporary social order.

We see in the family a million dead ends of rapid and broad development, a hotbed of conservative determinants which, later, can barely be eliminated in the offspring.

For the woman it means the complete subordination of her individuality to the family through her drudgery.

As a precondition for the new, healthy culture we want therefore to separate man from the woman economically and vice versa, and also separate the offspring from the parents. Together, in the friendship of those who informally teach them young, and far from the parents' sentimental or brutal tyranny.

In brief, this should suffice for the time being on the new culture, whose realisation we seek in the communist economic order.

*Ma folyóirat világszemléleti második különszáma*  
[Second Worldview Special Issue of Ma], January 1919, 2.

## Marriage

Barta and Újvári got married in 1919, during the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Kassák recalled that they did not originally plan to marry since Barta considered marriage to be an obsolete bourgeois institution.



Marriage portrait of Sándor Barta  
and Erzsi Újvári  
Budapest, 1919  
Collection of the Braun-Barta Family



"Arranging how they will live together in the future is a huge problem. If they get married, Bözse doesn't want to move in with the Bartas, while Barta is afraid of our family. In any case, they couldn't care less about such conventions. They've heard that traditional family life came to its end in Russia, where young people can marry freely and nobody will ever again have the right to interfere in other people's private lives. That's how they want to live too, but my mother insists that they should officially get married. They've asked Jolán for advice, but she's also advising Bözse to file their marriage with the registrar.

- It's just a straightforward formality - she says - but it's better to follow such formalities."

Barta is quick with his know-it-all response:

- It's not important for us to be wed as husband and wife. We love each other, and this is more than enough for us. I don't want Bözse to be a slave like the other women.

- And what if you want to have children?

Barta replies:

- There'll be child republics by then, we'll take the children out from under the parents' conventional, stupid discipline and let them grow up free and uninhibited!"

Marriage Certificate of Sándor Barta  
and Erzsí Újvári  
12 January 1920  
Kassák Museum

Lajos Kassák: *Egy ember élete* [The Life of a Man] (Excerpt)

Budapest főváros.

## Házassági anyakönyvi kivonat.

| Folyó szám                          | A házasságkötés helye és ideje (év, hó, nap)   | A vőlegény   |                              | A menyasszony  |                              | A házasságkötési tanúk családi és utóneve, lakhelye  | Házasságkötési kijelentések. Aláírás előtti esetleges megjegyzések. Aláírások.   |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|--|
|                                     |  | családi és utóneve, állása (foglalkozása), vallása, életkora, lakhelye | szüleinek családi és utóneve | családi és utóneve, állása (foglalkozása), vallása, életkora, lakhelye | szüleinek családi és utóneve |  |  |
|                                     | Buda-<br>pest<br>1919.<br>Január<br>12-én<br>Kispest-<br>terén<br>Kassák<br>utján<br>22.<br>számon<br>Kassák<br>Erzsébet | Barta<br>Sándor<br>író   | Blau<br>Gyula<br>Rudolf      | Kassák<br>Kunzióbet  | női<br>Kassák<br>Gyula       | Kassák<br>Lajos<br>Budapest<br>F. Váci utca<br>n. 15.<br>Reiter<br>Károly<br>Budapest<br>F. Rákóczi<br>u. 3. | Erzsébet<br>Kassák<br>akb.<br><br>mint polgári házasság az 11. cikkben és előtte<br>együttösen jelenlevő házasságkötők, miután azok<br>előtte a két tanú jelenlétében személyesen külön-<br>külön kijelentették, hogy egymással házasságot<br>kötnének, a törvény értelmében házasságkötésnek<br>nyilvánultak.<br><br>aláírásból s. k. |
| Utólagos bejegyzések. Kiigazítások. |  |  |                              |  |                              |  |  |

Bizonyítom, hogy ez a kivonat a \_\_\_\_\_ szerint \_\_\_\_\_ megegyez.

Kelt Budapest, 1920. január 22.

Kassák Erzsébet  
anyakönyvvezető, u.

12. r. sz.

16. sz. minta az A. U. 115. §-hoz.

Magyar Állami anyakönyvtár. Budapest, 1919. — 1995.

Újvári's early poetry does not follow the economic approach of Marxist feminism and treats reproductive labour and childcare as being of equal value to productive labour. Recognising the social significance of reproductive labour was, thus, in her view more important than building institutions like creches and day-care centres.

In a brown salon the girls' tired thighs lean towards the bed.  
But they open their eyes with their fists.  
Because of all the women it's only they who dared answer for their lives.  
They sensed that people set off for the embrace of trees and forests.  
And they are just laughing mouths. Their spines lean towards the earth.  
Someone's body cramped up.  
My arm was a smelly olive branch and now I cry alone.  
It's her from whose arms fell the large yellow sheaves. She stood up. Look, my breasts get scarred when I see a man, and still I call him for pleasure.  
And me?  
My lungs split red to keep my mouth hot. Now who will help me throw it in the sun?  
In vain do we offer our bodies as pillows.  
If we end up in the men's gaze they shower us with their hate.  
Only children view us as saints, thanking us for our bodies with their wide crying mouths.  
And we coil our arms into bed.  
Why?  
Someone shone the light of their mind on their discontent.  
Because we have seen the home.  
If we threw our burning glance towards the houses, our mothers blinded us with love.  
The men pleased children upon us so that we would always lack rest.  
Now we want to live.  
And yet we soften our palms only with our sad eyes, and expect the men to fight for us with their strong chests.  
But this remains pointless because they always go their own way.  
Their arms are reaching one another at the countries' border.

And the women. They place their strength on their children's white foreheads. They cry.

But we have already tortured ourselves to a man.

We, instead of sorrow, give the girls dissatisfaction,

We shouldn't wait until the men raise us into intelligence.

We should not just be the understanding ears of our partners.

Let us throw our arms to the sun, because our strength can only be measured in creation.

Instead of healing the sick our minds should throw machines in front of all work so that people can bathe in the sun.

Let us pull parks in front of the houses to open the roads in four directions.

Women.

If the men stop to rejoice in their creation, our feet will have no rest because the children want us to give them their strength.

Our weeping breasts shall light flames in our eyes.

We will be mothers.

Mothers.

And the children from our bodies shall carry the eternal dissatisfaction asunder.

*Ma folyóirat 1919. májusi demonstratív különszáma*

[May 1919 Demonstrative Special Issue of Ma], 1 May 1919.

(Middle-class bedroom with a small bed) Man. Woman. Child.

Woman: (dressed in outdoor clothes, pacing nervously) That's enough... I don't want this any more!

Man: (standing questioningly in the centre of the room) What???

Woman: (bored, throwing her hands up): Yes... the marriage... new clothes... going to bed early.

Man: What do you want???

Woman: Myself! My life!!

Man: Did I hurt you? Are you lacking something?

Woman: No!

Man: (suffering) Then tell me, why?? Why???

Woman: I understand!!

Man: You are my wife!!!

Woman: (stops and turns towards him) You gave me shelter so a white bed would reach under your waist.

Man: (terrified) Me???

Woman: (loudly) So my body would only coil up for you because you desire me. For you... and who knows... who knows where you came from!

Man: Me? My woman!!

Woman: (starts pacing again) Whatever!!

Man: (begging) Look... I... the child... alone...

Woman: (raising her arms in joy) Alone... Who were we so far?! The black towns... the sun drips yellow into the cellars.

Man: (looks astonished)

Woman: My eyes... (goes towards the chaise longue, her arms fall into her lap) and for four years!!!

Man: (grasps at her helplessly)

Woman: Four years!!!

Man: (steps towards her, throws his head on her chest while raging) your arm!... your breast!... your mouth!

Woman: (as if drops of ice were running down her spine) All in vain!!!

Man: Mine... you are mine!!

Woman: (laughs)

Man: Your body... you too!!

Woman: (slowly lifting his head up) Why do we torture each other??

Man: (seeking her mouth) Don't we?? It's not true??

Woman: (quietly) I'm leaving!

Man: (watches for a while, then stands up above her)

Woman: I'm leaving (adjusts her clothes)

Man: (turns and throws himself onto the small bed) My Józsi!!!  
My son!!!

Woman: (flinches nervously)  
Man: (shaking, sits the child up) My little son!! ...Your mother ... doesn't love you... she's leaving...  
Child: (looks at him in incomprehension)  
Man: Look... She's leaving!!  
Child: (reaching out to his mother, starts crying) Mummy!  
Woman: (bends down)  
Man: (whispering in the child's ear) She's leaving!  
Child: Mummy!!  
Woman: (biting her mouth until it bleeds)  
Man: (turns his gaze towards the woman while reaching for the child) My Józsi!! (stands up and places the child in the woman's lap as if was a precious flower)  
Woman: (recoils)  
Man: (laughing) My god... and still!  
Woman: (straightens out, stares at the man with burning eyes) You... youuuuuuu!  
Man: (retreats in fear) He wanted it!  
Woman: (looks)  
Child: (tired) I want water!!!  
Man: Water???(skulks off towards the door, pleased) My doves! (he leaves)  
Woman: (now looking at the child. Her mouth suddenly tightens at something. Rough breathing. Neck fills with blood) Leaving... (Two dark embers burned beneath the bed. From her arms, ten black snakes coil around the child's neck. The red courtyard of a mouth. She feels something stretching out straight in her lap. Stares just above it. Then raising up her arms and laughing into the silence) Alone!... alone!...

*Ma*, vol. 3. nos. 8–9, 15 September 1918, 93.

# Family Concepts

The Hungarian Soviet Republic extended the elective franchise to every woman over the age of 18, introduced prenatal allowance, and increased maternity allowance. The left-wing social criticism of the regime concentrated on the redistribution of capital and labour through wage struggles and the universal right to work. It propagated the idea of women taking work, of coeducation in school and in vocational training, and the elimination of wage differences between men and women employees.

**Munkásasszonyok! Leányok!  
Dolgozó proletárnők!**

**Kedves Olvasó!** Ha kezébe veszed ezen röpiratod, ne dobd el!  
Dolgozó, keservesen küzdő nő vagy te is, olyan, mint akik szólnak hozzád,  
Neked, családodnak keservesen meg kell dolgozni a mindennapi kenyérért,  
sőt talán a háboru óta egészen

**magadra vagy hagyatva**

és izzadva, kinlódva, sokszor könnyezve keresed kenyeredet! Egészséged, lelki  
erőd abban a munkában vész el, midőn élelem után futkosol.  
És mégis talán te is azok közé tartozol, akik álmodoznak arról, hogy  
egyszer minden jobbra fordul! Ne hidd ezt!

**Tenni kell valamit!**

Gondolkozz csak! Sült galamb senkinek sem repül a szájába! Tégy hát  
te is valamit.

**Gyere közénk**

mí megmutatjuk az utat, melyen minden proletárasszonynak és leánynak  
haladni kell s jobb lesz mindannyiunknak!  
Legyen bármi is foglalkozásod, napszámba járj, avagy otthon dolgozz  
mások számára, saját háztartásod vezeted, avagy a másét, ruhát mosol, vagy  
gyárba jársz, jöjj el a

**Magyarországi Munkásnőegyesületbe  
VII, Almássy-tér 2,**


ahol minden héten **kedden, pénteken** este 7 órától **összejövetelek,  
felolvasások** vannak s dúz könyvtárát a tagok ingyenesen használhatják.  
Minden pénteken

**ingyenes jogi tanács**

van mindenféle ügyes-bajos ügyekben.

Testvéri üdvözlettel  
**a Magyarországi Munkásnőegyesület**  
VII, Almássy-tér 2, földszint jobbra.

Kiadó: Farkas Istvánné. — Világosság Rt. Budapest 46681



*Munkásasszonyok! Leányok! Dolgozó  
proletárnők!* [Working Women! Girls! Working  
Proletarian Women!]  
Budapest, Hungarian Working Women's  
Association, 1919  
National Széchényi Library



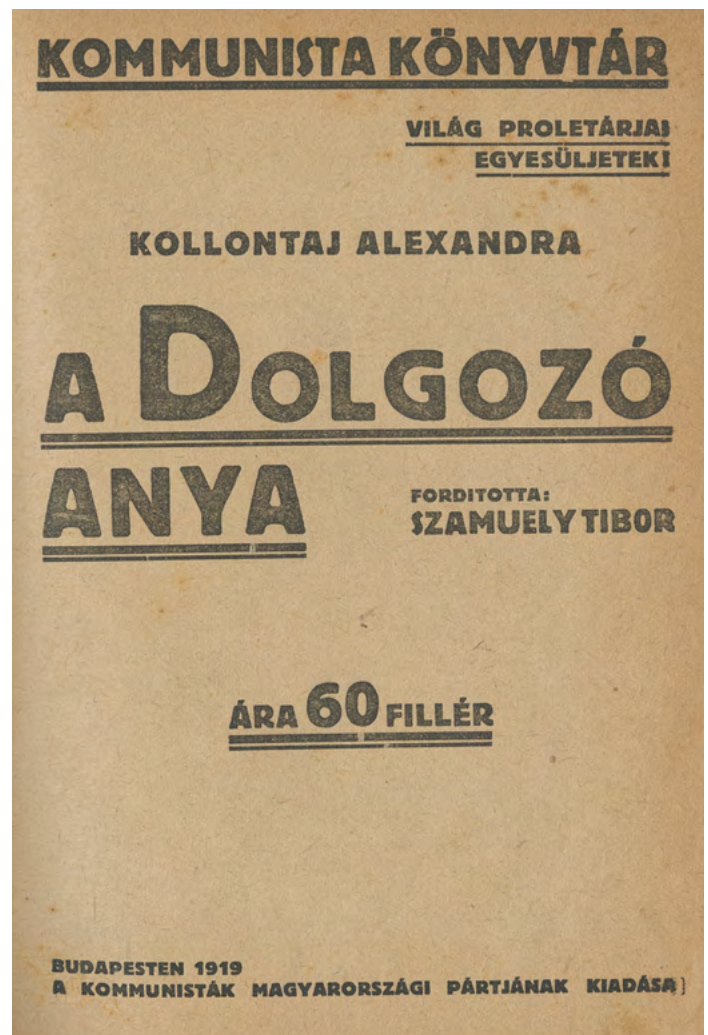
In 1919, August Bebel's book *Woman and Socialism* was republished, and Tibor Szamuely translated Alexandra Kollontai's essay *The Working Mother*. Kollontai saw childcare as a task for society as a whole and claimed that a condition for the emancipation of women was to remove the restriction on their time imposed by reproductive labour so that they may take part in productive labour in equal time with men. This required many of the tasks involved in reproductive labour to be taken over by wider society, and free creches, nursery schools, and afternoon schools to be provided by the state.

The People's Commissariat for Public Education published booklets that set out in a few pages the social programme of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. They were aimed at criticizing bourgeois, capitalist society, exploding myths about the communist conception of the family, and mobilising proletarian women. The booklet *Kommunizáljuk-e Zsófit?* [Should We Communize Zsófi?] argued that economic independence for women would reduce unequal power relations in marriage and lessen the number of forced marriages.

*Kommunizáljuk-e Zsófit? Oktató írás a szabad szerelemről és egyről-másról, amit tudni illik és muszáj is az asszonynépnek*

[Should We Communize Zsófi? Educational Essay about Free Love, and a Few Things it is Fitting for the Female Population to Know, and They Must]  
Budapest, People's Commissariat for Public Education, 1919  
National Széchényi Library

Alexandra Kollontai  
*A dolgozó anya* [The Working Mother]  
Translated by Tibor Szamuely  
Budapest, Party of Communists in Hungary  
1919  
Petőfi Literary Museum





## VIENNA | 1920–1925 | Utopia

Sándor Barta's documentary novel follows the scenes of Vladimir Mayakovsky's 1921 drama *Mystery-Bouffe*, where the "unclean", symbolising the international proletarian community, visit heaven and hell and are disappointed by the social order of the afterworld. They start to build their own utopian communist society on Earth. In the second part of *Csodálatos történet* [A Wonderful Story], a fictional report on the Northern Settlement, Barta develops his ideas on production, the family, and childcare. The Northern Settlement is an idealised evocation of the Soviet Union in the 1920s, with modern healthcare, facilities for mass sport, electricity available everywhere, production cooperatives, modern factories, and workers' schools.



Sándor Barta

*Eine wunderbare Geschichte, oder wie  
entdeckte William Cookendy, bürgerlicher  
Reporter, die Erde, auf der er lebt*

[A Wonderful Story, or How the Bourgeois  
Reporter William Cookendy Discovered the  
Land on Which he Lived]

Cover design: Paul Munels

Vienna and Berlin, Vorhut Verlag, 1925  
Österreichische Nationalbibliothek

Erzsi Újvári  
*Prózák* [Proses]  
Cover design: Lajos Kassák  
Vienna, Ma, 1921



The revolutionary poems Erzsi Újvári wrote in Vienna are in dialogue with Barta's novel. Although she did not write about the utopia as minutely or as programmatically as her husband, her poetry reflects on all the issues that Barta was concerned with. In many cases, examination of the challenges to be faced in childcare, work, and personal relationships brought her to conclusions that differed from his.

## A Wonderful Story

In this section, we juxtapose some of Újvári's 1920s poetry with excerpts from Barta's novel *Csodálatos történet* [A Wonderful Story]. The paired passages show the attitudes to childcare, partner relationships, and working women in the utopian society of the Northern Settlement, and how Újvári's poems set up a dialogue with Barta's programme novel.

*The state's responsibility for childcare in the Northern Settlement*

...everything we saw in the maternity clinic itself, which was already a living, revolutionary reality, indicated that substantial and profound changes were taking place in the revolutionary settlements.

After Una's condition swiftly improved from the excellent treatment and specially formulated diet, we decided to leave the clinic and join the normal circuit of workers. This was made easier by the fact that having met their goal, Doo and Una now wanted nothing more than to settle down somewhere and start working. They left their child for the time being at the clinic, where there was a special ward set up for this purpose. Then we said goodbye to the clinic's director and the people we met there, and set off into town to report to the Party building.

Roiling-blooded girls painful-chested men and joyless children set  
off towards you  
Park.  
Underneath your trees a blind woman sings above her dying child  
Wooden-footed soldier salutes himself to death before your lights  
Pregnant woman goes into labour in the lap of your bushes  
Oh where should I put it?  
An adolescent with an inflamed groin is drinking himself stupid at the  
bottom of the lake.  
The sword-swallowing Saracen sliced up his throat. Clowns  
dragged him into the circus.  
The park of pleasures!  
Cried-out eyes and tired fists wander towards you  
Whistling factory gates airless workshops give them back their  
laughter  
Trees you must bow and dry their tears  
But woe  
A hungry child bit off the wax doll's roses and now cries  
Horses stop booths collapse and the bushes open wide  
To where should we run with our pains?  
Look, on the road into town a man is talking to you about laughter-  
filled days  
Go and take his hand.

*Ék*, vol. 1. no. 3 (8), 1 September 1923.



*Partner relationships*

I took her hand and felt I was holding a great treasure, but was looking for reassurance that I could keep her for myself. That she would also be mine tomorrow, that she would preserve the dew of her body and mind just for me.

Márta returned my gaze with her big, intelligent eyes and understood everything.

– You see, – she said – you don't love me.

– Márta, why do you think that?

– You're greedy, you want reassurance for tomorrow. Your love is still often just rampant ambition and possessive satisfaction.

– You're wrong, Márta... or maybe you're right. But I know today that tomorrow, and the day after, I will love you as much as I do now...

– But why do you have to tell me this today? How come you have these problems today? Look, today I am completely yours and hold nothing back. What do I care right now what becomes of us tomorrow? And even if I did care, is it possible that for whatever reason we are good for each other today, we have to commit ourselves for an entire lifetime? Why? Today it would be trite to say that you are the only smart and handsome man I may love. No, today there are plenty of smart and desirable men and women. And today we don't just declare that the only balanced way of life is free love, we also live it too. I love you for many reasons that others don't have. But I don't love you for anything that is not and cannot be in others. Where you come from, people take a foolish oath in a moment of exuberance, which then extends into years of no exuberance, they tie themselves down for a whole lifetime. And then they're full of internal and external ulcers, they cheat, deceive, abandon each other, and often kill themselves. Our life, on the other hand, is a giant crossroads. A silvery web woven across the earth. We have no coercive ties, we don't want possession, we just want to love each other. And we don't want to prolong this state with any kind of unnatural tie, because we know how to be natural, simple, and social in everything, which includes our sex lives. Most people around us think like you, but us young people have already moved on.

We had not yet seen the sun and the heart of the bells  
In our eyes we carry miscarried children. When we want to laugh,  
the plates and mortars play the organ out of our mouths.  
In the evenings we strap our hearts with white sheets.  
Because we carry every joy and sadness of our partner on our  
bodies.  
Who can stand it any longer???

They pin us onto the beds with burning needles  
If we want to live we build burning towers above our bellies  
And morning.  
Every morning doctors open our groins  
Nuns water our hearts with white cans. We'd be blind! The knives.  
The needles.  
And at night perhaps the candles will sing in front of our beds.  
But to live!  
To live!!

Because today we saw the other woman's breast in our partner's  
eyes.  
And in vain we cry. We laugh.  
Tomorrow we shall find it again inside.  
Women!!!

If we could tear ourselves away from our partner's warm loins. We'd  
reach the mountains and foals would run with us. We would bathe  
our eyes in water and never again see the kitchens' chimneys.  
But where to??? Where to???

In our mouths the plates have once again begun the play the organ.

*Ma*, vol. 6. no. 4, 15 February 1921, 51.

*Working women*

The peasants set off for the commune. About four hundred of them. Women, elders, and children running between their ranks.

The commune was waiting for them, knew they were coming.

The chairman of the commune workers' council explained all of this to us as he guided us through the site. He was a skinny peasant man with a big moustache who had worked his way up to become commune leader. He spoke little, disjointedly, and preferred to point with his hands, like this:

– This used to be the lord's stables – he said, pointing at a group of buildings that resembled small family houses. – There were two spacious rooms in each, they had shared rooms and dining rooms. They had baths too: the lord used to have his horses swim in them. Fresh, animated life everywhere. A visible improvement in people's lust for life and culture. The women worked too, but meanwhile the commune had relieved them of the problems of cooking, washing, and child-rearing.

Of all the sewer rats it was you who called us to you  
You preached the brandy away from our mouths.  
You oiled the machines under our hands  
Your voice was the oven on the white fields of Siberia.  
You build ships on the sea for the restless-blooded  
Gave the pine forests as gifts to the sick  
The workers of the land were all your brothers.  
From the shoulders of women you wanted to remove the cauldron  
of laundries, children and hunger  
And now at the bottom of dark tenement buildings they cry their  
pain into the milk of new-born babies over steaming troughs.  
The workshops, on stone cobbles  
We bury you in the factories' smoke  
Lenin!  
We are your bothers.  
We took each other by the hand  
And under your lanterns we march on the Earth.

*Ék*, Lenin Issue, 25 February 1924.

## Workers' school

In the early 1920s, even before their daughter Zsuzsa was born, Újvári in her poetry and Barta in his writing addressed the issues of childcare, the parent-child relationship, and the responsibilities that parents, the state, and society bore in raising the new generation.



Erzsi Újvári, Zsuzsa Barta  
and Sándor Barta  
Vienna, August 1925  
Kassák Museum

Erzsi Újvári, Zsuzsa Barta  
and Sándor Barta  
Vienna, 1925  
Kassák Museum

Zsuzsa Barta in a stroller  
Vienna, 1925  
Kassák Museum



*Workers' schools and the republic of children*

Well look how life is so much more beautiful and alive here for a child. They don't learn about nature from sterile depictions in books. Their depictions are living things, they have breadth and depth, bodies, smells, voices, and silences. And their relationship to book depictions is the same as how a body relates to its shadow. But it's not only with their eyes that they get to know nature, they also use their tiny play tools, the most agile and lovely little tools: rummaging and foraging around in nature with their hands. They know the material, they observe the animals and plants, the agile ants, the sluggish snails, the moths suddenly taking flight, and the bowing of the plants. They encounter life itself, and not only its shadow, buried in the crypts of dusty books.



Children stole their mothers' eyes  
And ran from the cities  
Birds sang from their mouths  
Lemon groves grew on their palms  
They lowered mirror houses over the mountains with the singing  
girls  
They tied sails onto churches  
They raised the roofs of stables  
And the animals turned somersaults in the fields  
One of them jumped into the horizon to play!  
The fish threw glittering stones at them  
To play!!  
Old people wove nets from their hair  
To catch the stars  
A peacock swept the animals' cages from the earth  
To play!!  
To play!!!  
Look the animals have taken the children by the hand  
Trees began playing the flute  
And somewhere the blind found their eyes around a well

*Ma*, vol. 6. no. 9, 15 September 1921, 131.

Barta first wrote about workers' schools in his magazine *Akasztott Ember*, where he conflated Tolstoy's principles of educational reform and the technical school on his Yasnaya Polyana estate with the Soviet workers' schools programme, creating the impression that the Soviet government was carrying on the traditions of Tolstoyan education.

## A gyermek Szovjetországban

Dacára azoknak a rendkívül súlyos gazdasági viszonyoknak, melyek közt Szovjetországnak ma élnie kell, az orosz dolgozók mégis maguk-ravállalták az alkotó munka megpróbáltatásait és lassan, de állandóan új és új életformákat teremtenek.

Szovjetország a jelen súlyos harcaiban nem feledkezik meg az új életrend objektívairól sem, s csak természetes, hogy e területen is első-sorban a gyermekek ügyét karolja fel.

Igy többek közt Jassnaja Polinát Tolstói Leó birtokát a körülötte fekvő összes majorságokkal és mezőségekkel együtt a gyermekek birodalmává alakították át.

Az orosz föld nagy írója a „Jassnaja Polina-i bölcs“ mindennél jobban szerette a gyermeket. Ugy szerette őket, ahogy csak Tolstói tudott szeretni.

800 szegény paraszt és munkás gyerek él itt a maga törvényei szerint, de mégis objektív és emberszerető tanítók vezetése mellett.

Valóságos gyermekgazdaságok létesültek itt, a gyermekek maguk művelik a földeket, ugyanazokat a földeket, amelyeken egykor maga Tolstói is szántogatott. Az itteni iskolákban Tolstói szellemében tanítják a gyermekeket. A gyermekek Tolstói könyveiből tanulnak, a Tolstói által egykor megszerkesztett a—b—c—és könyvekből. Mindaz, amit itt tanítanak a tolstói etikával és szellemmel van átitatva. Van itt többek közt egy állandó kiállítás a gyermekek munkáiból, különféle ipariskolák (gépépítészet, asztaloság, lakatoság, szabóság, stb. stb.) gyermekkert, gyermekszínház, üdülőtermek, tornatermek, sporttérsek stb. stb. A telep a „Népfelvilágosítási Népbiztoság“ szervezte, de a telep kormányzását maguk a gyerekek végzik. Ezért legmegközelítőbben gyermekközösségnek, gyermekkommunának lehetne e kis telepkeket elnevezni. A gyerekek maguk osztják ki egymásnak a munkát, maguk készítik el (vegetáriánus alapon) az ebédjüket, maguk gondoskodnak a házi- és fűtési feladatokról, a berendezés épségben tartásáról stb. stb.)\* Az instruktorok és tanítók lehetőleg teljesen kívül állnak a gyerekek benső életrendjének megszabásától, úgy hogy ezek szinte teljes szabadságot élveznek.

Ez a gyerekbirodalom egyik legszebb és legnagyobb alkotása Szovjetországnak. És egyben legfényesebb bizonyítéka annak, hogy Tolstoinak, e nagy gondolkodónak elképzelései és a kommunizmus végcéljai teljesen azonosak.

\*) E cikket a „Kulturwerk in Sowjetrußland“ című könyvből vettük s noha a gyermek életének főnti formáit nagy általánosságban mi is helyeseljük, mégis rögtön le kell itt szögeznünk azt az alapvető különbséget, mely köztünk és a fentiekben a munka fogalma körül adódik. Míg a tolstói morál és így a tolstói gyermekközösség is a munkát, mint a legfelsőbb erényt fogja fel, és oktatólálja rá az emberekre e morálon át, addig mi a pusztán megélhetésért végzett munkát (ugyanevezett kényszerű munkát) csak valami szükséges rossznak fogjuk fel és a tolstói felfogással ellentétben semmiesetre sem benne látjuk az élet célját, hanem sokkal inkább a minimumra való leredukálásában. Mi az életet élni s nem pedig agyondolgozni akarjuk és ezért elsősorban az önkéntes alkotó munkalehetőségeket akarjuk megnövelni. És éppen ezért helytelenítjük a tolstói gyermekközösségek munkaszisztémáját, melyek legkevésbé sem a helyes munkamegosztás elvén, hanem sokkal inkább a munka bálványozásának s a munkaszaporításának elvén alapulnak. A munkát és ezzel magát a munkást is (ez esetben a gyermeket) visszasiüllesztik az ezerféle munkát végző háziipar kezdetlegességébe és 16 órás elfoglaltságába, és ezzel ugyan tanúságot tesznek a civilizációval szemben érzett és nagyjából indokoltnak is elfogadható gyűlöletükről, de legkevésbé sem az öntudatos felismeréseiben erőt is érző emberről, aki egy helyes mozdulattal a rosszat is szolgálatába tudja kényszeríteni. Mert lehetetlen, hogy éppen a gyermekek legyenek azok, akik e primitív munkamegosztás jobban-mondva munkamegterhelés elvénél fogva már a gyereksorsukat is a robotban éljék fel. A gyermekközösségeknek ilyenforma szerkezetét csak az a kedvezőtlen gazdasági helyzet mentheti, amelyben ma Szovjetország él, s amelyben e gyerekközösségek sokszor ténylegesen rá voltak utalva arra, hogy szükségleteiket ily módon fedezték. De kétségtelen, hogy egy teljesebb, technikailag fejlettebb termelési rendszerben a munka elvégzésére sokkal szociálisabb szisztémát kell találni.

Sándor Barta  
A gyermek Szovjetországban  
[The Child in Soviet Russia]  
*Akasztott Ember*  
vol. 1. nos. 1-2, 1 November 1922  
Kassák Museum

Despite the exceptionally difficult economic conditions in which Soviet Russia must live today, Russian workers have nevertheless taken the hardships of creative worker upon themselves and are slowly but surely creating ever newer ways of life.

Soviet Russia has not, in its present grave battles, neglected the objectivization of the new life order either, and it is only natural that in this sphere too it should primarily embrace the cause of children.

Thus, among other things, Yasnaya Polyana, Leo Tolstoy's estate, together with its surrounding farmsteads and fields, has been transformed into an empire for children.

The great writer of the Russian land, the 'wise man of Yasnaya Polyana,' loved children above all else. He loved them only as Tolstoy could love them.

800 poor peasant and workers' children live here according to their own rules, but still under the guidance of objective and philanthropic teachers.

Proper children's farms have been set up here, with the children cultivating the lands, the same lands that Tolstoy himself once ploughed. In the schools here the children are taught in the spirit of Tolstoy. They learn from Tolstoy's books, the A-B-C books he once edited. Everything they teach here is imbued with the spirit of Tolstoy's ethics and spirit. Among other things, there is a permanent exhibition of the children's work, various industrial schools (mechanical engineering, carpentry, locksmithing, tailoring, etc. etc.), a children's garden, children's theatre, recreation halls, gymnasiums, sports grounds etc. etc. The colony is run by the 'People's Commissariat for Education,' but the government of the colony itself is run by the children. Therefore, these small colonies can be most appropriately termed children's republics or children's communes. The children themselves allocate work to one another, prepare their own lunches (on a vegetarian basis), oversee compliance with the house rules, the maintenance of equipment etc. etc.\* The instructors and teachers are, as far as possible, completely removed from determining the children's internal order of life, so that they enjoy almost complete freedom.

This children's empire is one of the most beautiful and greatest achievements of Soviet Russia. And it is also the brightest proof that the ideas of Tolstoy, this great thinker, and the ultimate goals of communism, are completely identical.

\* This article is taken from the book *Kulturwerk in Sowjetrussland*, and although we also generally approve of the aforementioned forms of

children's life, we must nevertheless also point out the fundamental difference that exists between ourselves and the above concerning the concept of work. While Tolstoyan ethics and thus also the Tolstoyan children's community regard work as the highest virtue and force it onto people via this ethic, we regard work performed for mere subsistence (so-called compulsory work) as a mere necessary evil and, contrary to the Tolstoyan understanding, we see in work nothing of the purpose of life, much rather its reduction to the minimum. We want to live life and not work ourselves to death for it, and therefore want to increase voluntary creative work opportunities. This is precisely why we condemn the work system in Tolstoyan children's communities, which are not at all based on the correct division of labour, but rather on the principle of idolization and propagation of work. They relegate work and therefore the worker himself (in this case the children) to the primitiveness of a thousand types of cottage industry and 16-hour activity, which thus proves their largely justified hatred of civilization, but [their unjustified hatred of] the man who feels strength in his self-conscious awareness, and who can correctly press evil into service. For it is impossible that it should be the children who, because of this primitive division of labour, or more precisely burden of labour, should live out their children's lives in drudgery. Such organisation of children's communities can only be justified by the disadvantageous economic system of today's Soviet Russia, and in which these children's communities were often dependent on meeting their needs in this way. But undoubtedly, a much more social system of labour must be found in a more complete and technically advanced system of production.

*Akaszott Ember*, vol. 1. nos. 1–2, 1 November 1922, 7.

Workers' schools were introduced in the Soviet Union by a decree of 16 October 1918. Instead of the traditional subjects of bourgeois education, the emphasis was on production processes, and instead of hierarchical, frontal teaching, the children were to collectively organise the allocation of work. There was also a plan to adopt this form of education in the Hungarian Soviet Republic.

(Somogyvári 2016, 84–85.)

“The education of the future, regardless of the various types of school, must be imbued by the spirit of the workers' school. This spirit requires workshops for processing paper, and materials such as wood and metal, at every level of schooling. Working in the workshop is intended to provide the essential technical skills and, on that basis, to make the teaching and education more direct and multi-faceted.”

*Decree of the Education Department of the Budapest Workers' and Military Council on the introduction of technical education and the organisation of preparatory workshop courses, 9 May 1919*



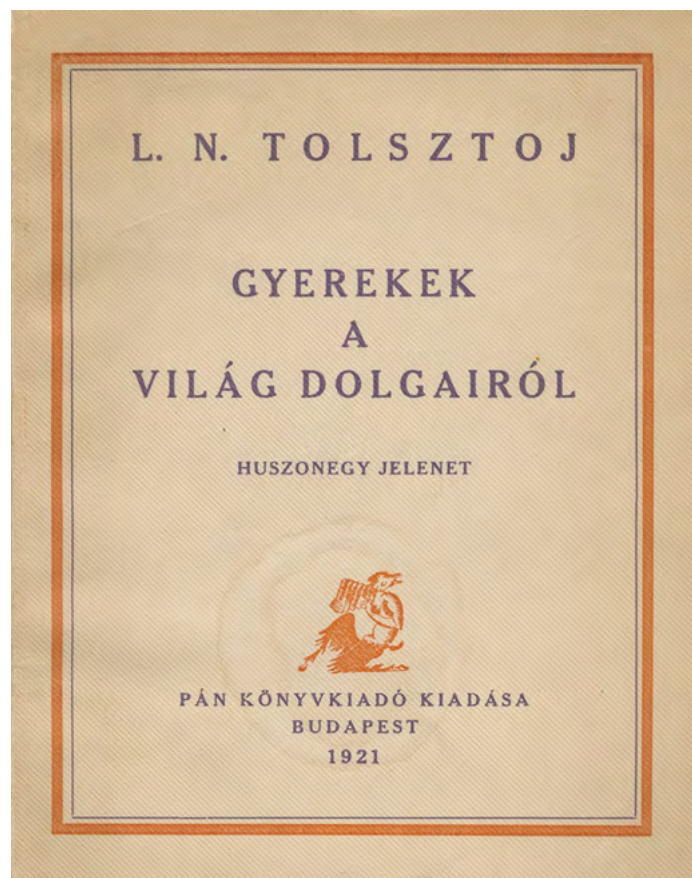
*A régi és az új iskola. A népnevelés felszabadítása és a kommunista munka és játékközösség a gyermeknevelésben* [The Old and the New School. The Liberation of People's Education and the Place of Communist Labour and Community Play in Childcare] Budapest, People's Commissariat for Public Education, 1919 Petőfi Literary Museum



Lev Tolstoy built a school on his Yasnaya Polyana estate in 1859. Children there were taught reading, grammar, Russian history, drawing, music, mathematics, science, and religion. There was no fixed curriculum and the teachers could extend lessons or miss them out altogether depending on what aroused the students' interest.

The schools Barta mentioned in his *Akasztott Ember* article had gone into operation after Tolstoy's death but under a civil initiative to which the Soviet government only granted permission. They did not consistently follow the ideology of Soviet workers' schools. Tolstoy's daughter Alexandra was appointed the director of the museum and education centre in Yasnaya Polyana in 1921, and she set up agricultural and industrial secondary schools on the estate. Beset by financial difficulties and the destructive prescriptions of the Soviet educational authorities, she abandoned her post in 1929 and emigrated from the Soviet Union. (Tolstoy 1981.)

Lev Tolstoy  
*Gyerekek a világ dolgairól* [The Wisdom of Children]  
Translated by Dániel Várnai  
Illustrated by Sándor Nagy  
Budapest, Pán, 1921  
Petőfi Literary Museum





## Soviet Doctrines of the Family as seen by Barta and Újvári: Propaganda and Beyond

A few weeks after the publication of the utopian account of the Soviet Union, *Csodálatos történet* [A Wonderful Story], Barta and Újvári went to live in the real version. They arrived in Moscow in 1925 with the expectation of participating – like the protagonists of the novel – in a true social transformation. Although they took active part in Soviet cultural and party life, their own household became increasingly distant from the emancipated two-earner model they regarded as ideal. As Barta – who spoke several languages – took on a series of offices in various writers' unions run by the Communist Party, the family and household tasks all fell to Újvári. Although she published less and less, she kept on writing. Her essays on child poverty and the everyday life of proletarian families were published in *Új Előre*, the communist newspaper of Hungarian exiles in the United States, a somewhat peripheral periodical in Moscow terms.

During their time in Moscow, the social visions that had filled Újvári's poetry and Barta's utopias gradually subsided. In the 1930s, they both wrote propaganda reports and essays on the lives of Soviet families and mothers for the Hungarian journal in Moscow, *Sarló és Kalapács*. These pieces celebrated Soviet social measures even though the Stalinist dictatorship had radically suppressed the reform movements extolled in Újvári's revolutionary poems and Barta's manifesto of 1919. During the Great Purge, Barta was indicted in a show trial. He was executed in 1938. Újvári died of a serious illness two years later.

The Stalinist constitution of 1936 declared that women enjoyed equal rights with men but that equality applied almost exclusively to access to work. Women took an equal part in Soviet industrial and agricultural production and performed just as heavy manual labour as men. At the same time, in an attempt to increase the population, the Stalinist regime banned abortion.



*Stalin's Constitution provides*

*Equality of races and nations*

*The right to education*

*Equality of women*

*The right to work*

*Care for the elderly*

*The right to asylum*

*The right to rest*

Propaganda Montage

Sarló és Kalapács

vol. 8. no. 24, 15 December 1936

Petőfi Literary Museum



# Sándor Barta in Yasnaya Polyana

In 1935, on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tolstoy's death and six years after Alexandra Tolstoy had left the country, Barta visited Yasnaya Polyana. He wrote an article praising the state school operating on the estate but made no mention of efforts towards educational reform.

"In Tolstoy's time, the single-class, parochial evening school was held in a shabby hovel. [...] Then the Soviet government built here its middle schools, where the children of local collective farm peasants and workers were taught. The atmosphere was festive. Pioneers welcomed the new arrivals at the gate. The corridors and classrooms were transformed into exhibition spaces, which bore witness to the connection between life and the school, the warm affirmation of Soviet life, boundless activity, strength, knowledge, culture, and fighting determination. It could not have been any other way."

BARTA SÁNDOR:

## Látogatás Jasznaja Poljanán

Este fut be a vonat Tulába. A pályaudvar egymagában áll, messze a várostól. Apró, szízsórtán ácsorgó házak, inkább viskók talán, a régi Tula szármalmas maradvékai. Tula tizennégy kilométerre van Jasznaja Poljanától. Közel és mégis milyen messze fekdtt ez a város, amely kicsiben visszatükrözté egész Oroszországot, az orosz nép nagy írójától, a világhíradalom egyik legnagyobb mesterétől. Tula a mézeskalács és a cári fegyvergyár városa, amely száz- és százezer puskával látta el az orosz gyalgyságot, puskákkal, amelyeknek csöve a nép szívének volt irányítva. Tolstoj látta a puská csövében rejtőzö borzalmakat, látta minden egyes dörrénés mögött az önkényuralom sötét areát és gyilkos tekintetét felvilánni. Tolstoj éppen ezért gyűlölte az erőszakot! Am Tolstoj dogmatikusságában ellene volt annak is, hogy azok, akik ellen a puskák csöve irányult, az erőszakkal szemben erőszakot alkalmazzanak. Tolstoj nem látta meg azt a hatalmas erőt, amit ezek a puskák jelenthettek olyan kezekben, amelyek tudták, hogy mit kell velük csinálni. Tolstoj kapitulációt prédikált a cárizmus puskaesővei előtt, Lenin harcot. Fordították meg a fegyvereket! Tudjuk? a történelem Leninnek adott igazat. A megfordított puskaesők megfordították a történelem futását.

Tula tizennégy kilométerre fekszik Jasznaja Poljanától. Tula egyike a legrégibb ipari városoknak, amelyben Tolstoj idejében már 251 gyár volt, amelyben a munkások ezreit zaskmányolták ki, amelyben tízezrek laktak nyomorult tömegszállásokon, éltek fél-állati, kulturálisan, emberhez méltatlan életet. Tolstoj nem látta meg sem a gyárakat, sem a proletariátust, sem annak szenvedését, sem annak harcát a saját és a dolgozó parasztság felszabadításáért. Tolstoj nem látta meg azt az erőt, amely a történelmi fejlődést hordozta magában.

Tula a kormányzósági palota, a cári hivatalnokok, a generálisok, csendőrök, kozákok, rendőrök, spionok, provokátorok városa volt, akik ezer gyilkos eszközzel örköztek a munkásság és félrabszolgalsorsban tartott parasztság minden mocnáására. A cári csendőrök, rendőrök, kozákok kegyetlenségéről legmdk jár- tók be az egész világot. Am Tolstoj túrelmet és megtartóztatást prédikált a letiport tömegeknek.

Tulában negyvenhárom templom, két kolostor, pápi szeminárium, de csak egyetlenegy színház volt. Tolstoj azonban ellátta a kultúrát és a tömegeket a művészet és kultúra megvételére tanította.

Tulába százával özmöltek az egész kormányzóság feneketlenül síros utjain a kúhézett parasztok, a Jasznaja Poljana körüli föld- birtokon százakkal éltek jobbágyi és féljobbágyi sorsban Tolstoj muzsikjai, am Tolstoj nem azt mondta nekik, hogy vegyék el a földet, amely a tettek, hanem a saját házán belül harcolt azért, hogy még életében átadhassa a parasztnak a saját földbirtokát. Számára morális kérdés volt a földkérdés.

Tolstoj filozófiáját, Tolstoj tanításait sem az orosz proletariátust, sem az orosz parasztságot nem követte. Tolstojnak, a filozófusnak nem volt igaza. Az orosz proletariátust és a dolgozó parasztságot Leninre és Sztalinra hallgattak.

Am Tolstojt, az író soha és senki se becsülte igazabban és mélyebben, mint a győzelmes orosz proletariátust. Tolstojt az író, aki leleplezte a cárizmus kegyetlenségét, aljasságát, bormirtságát, aki megmutatta a cári bürokrácia igazi arcát, aki harcászallott az egyház ellen, aki a cári hadsereg és militarizmus esküdt ellensége volt. Lenin a legnagyobb írók közé sorolta, akinek művei a proletariátus legértékesebb kulturális örökségeit képezte. Ezért emlékezik most meg olyan kegyelettel az egész szovjetnyilvánosság Tolstoj halálának 25 éves évfordulójáról. Ezért zárandokol most el Tolstoj sírjához az orosz irodalom színe-áva.

Autóbuszon utazunk Jasznaja Poljana felé. Az utcákat finom hó fedli. Ezre több a villanylámpa, nagyvárosi lármával futnak szembe velünk a villamosok, már aszfalton szalad az autóbusz, mezdtték az épületek, kiszélesedtek az utcák, moszkvai üzletek, moszkvai forgalom a járdákon, új házak, egy mozi, két mozi, három mozi, — ez már az új Tula, amelyet Tolstoj már nem érte- tett meg.

Uj ötemeletes munkásházak közt kigyózik az út. Nemsokára feltűnnek a régi és új vasgyárak konturjai. Egy dombrol, amely mély völgybe szakad bele, vörösen izzó salakot okádnak az emel- kedés szélén álló hatalmas vaskatlanok. Mélyvörös felhők usznak a gyárak fölött, amelyek új műhelyszárnyakkal kirugnak az út széléig.

A gyárakon túl elérünk Jasznaja Poljanát. A bemészelt törzszű almafák légtől közt feltűnnek a kastély környéke. Látjuk a ker- tet, de mindezt csak hófüggönyön keresztül. Nagy csönd ül meg a

kastély parkját. Egy kivilágított térségre tartunk, ahol az új iskola áll. Magas, ivlámpákkal körülvevtt udvarral, amelyen a Gorkij-gyár autói- nak reflektorai néznek szembe a kastély csukott ablakaival. Modern új épület ez az iskola, amely bármelyik nagyvárosban bá- ram helyet foglalhatna. Tolstoj idejében silány viskóban volt az egyosztályos pápi esti iskola. Tolstoj megkísérelt a saját birtokán egy világi iskolát felállítani, de a parasztság közt észlelhető for- rongó hangulatra hivatkozva, a gubernum kormányzója néhány hónap múlva becukkatta az iskolát. A szovjetkormány középiskolát építeltette ide, amelyben a környék kolhozparasztjainak és munká- sáinak a gyerekeit tanulnak.

Ünnepi hangulat. Pionérok várják a kapuban az érkezőket. A folyosók és tantermek kiállítási helyiségekké alakultak át, ame- lyek mind az élet és iskola kapcsolatáról, a szovjetélet meleg igen- léseről, határtalan aktivitásról, erőről, tudásról, kulturáról, har- cos elszántágról tesznek tanúságot. S nem is lehet másképpen. Tolstoj végső fokon nem adott mást, mint azt, ami életében kö- rülvevte. Lenin azt mondta róla, hogy Tolstoj 1905-ik tükrét adta az orosz falunak. Ez az iskola tükrét adja az őt körülvevő szov- jetvalóságnak. Micsoda hatalmas különbség. Tolstoj csupa guny, megvétel és tagadás, a Tolstojról elnevezett iskola csupa lelkesé- des és építés. Az iskola körül még akadnak tolstojámosok, még láttunk öszhaju nénikéket és idősebb férfiakat, akik bensejükben talán még ma is fanatikusai Tolstoj tanításainak, amiket mérföl- des léptekkel ugrott át és hagyott el az élet. De hiába vannak ők. Hiába élnek a kegyelet háján. Hiába számítottak a fiatalágra. Ez az iskola a tolstoji rekvizitumok és a nagy ember haló porának közelsége dacára is a hatalmas, eseményekben és eszmékben oly gazdag, száguldó szovjetvalóság levegőjét ontja magából. Tolstoj háromméteres, fehér habkból készült szobra, amely olyan, mintha alkotója puha anyagból öklözte volna ki, ott áll az iskola előcsarnokában, de alatta egy új fiatalásg nő fel, egy új nemzedék, amelynek tanítómesterei Lenin és Sztalin voltak.

Réggel Tolstoj lakóházát, a muzeumot és a nagy író sírját látogatjuk meg. S itt, ebben a fehérre meszelt egyemeletes épületben, amelyben minden úgy maradt, ahogy akkor volt, amikor Tolstoj huszonötévvél ezelőtt utoljára kifutott belőle, hogy meneküljön a környezete elől, hogy újra és újra nekiküldve megtalálja önmagát, megtalálja a nyugalmat — itt minden felnyitott könyv, min- den kopott butordarab, minden szöglet Tolstoj emberi vívódásai- ról, családi tragédiájáról, hatalmas alkotásairól szól. Tolstoj há- romszor változtatott munkahelyet ebben a házban. Hol lent a földszinten, a vastag, nedves árkádok alatt dolgozott, ahol valami raktárféle lehetett ezelőtt s amelynek ablakain még látszanak a vastag vasrúcsok maradványai s falalából elrozsdásodott vaskari- mák állnak ki, hol az emeleten rendezkedett be, igyekezve kino- san elváltatni magát a családjától. Itt az előcsarnok, — már itt kezdődik a könyvesszekrények sora — innen nyílik az ajtó a fo- gadóba, ahol Tolstoj tükkára ült. Az asztalon még ott hevernek papírtekercsek, a leveélborítékok, az íróasztalok. Valami ásalag íróegyp is itt áll a sarokban, letakarva. Itt az ablak alatt egy kis asztal. Ide jött sokszor Tolstoj is fogadni a vendégeit, írkat, ze- nészeket, egyszerű muzsikokat, mindenkit, aki felkereste. Képek



A gorkiji autógyár két munkása Tolstoj sírjánál

Sándor Barta  
Látogatás Jasznaja Poljanában [A Visit to  
Yasnaya Polyana]  
Sarló és Kalapács  
vol. 7. no. 24, 15 December 1935  
Petöfi Literary Museum



Although Soviet education laid great emphasis on producing "practical people", Stalin, in 1931, repealed the school reforms that had accompanied the ideal of the workers' school and restored the traditional, frontal, and hierarchical classroom regime. (Somogyvári 2016, 83.)



Munkában tanul az ifjúság  
[The Youth Learns at Work]  
Sarló és Kalapács  
vol. 3. no. 7, July 1931  
Petőfi Literary Museum

1931  
190  
190  
240  
280  
380  
7150  
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609 651 896  
628

675  
631  
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208

**Világ proletárjai egyesüljétek!**

**SARLÓ, ÉS KALAPÁCS**

A SZOVJETUNIÓBAN ÉLŐ MAGYARAJKÚ DOLGOZÓK LAPJA

7. EVFOLYAM 1935 április 1. 7. SZÁM

Tisztelet kiadóinak áruszáradék a repülőgépek

**A kommunista hős**

A német frontotól bombárgéppel megrongált hadtestre szállt Fiete Schalter elöljáró a bombárgéppel együtt kislóra vezetett, szel az indokolásod, hogy "erkölcsös jelleme" akadályt a harcokért, amelyekben a németek által megrobbantott bombárgéppel a frontotól hátrahagyva a hátsó részre került az elöljáró. A hátsó részre került az elöljáró és bevetésén keresztül, mert Fiete Schalternek nem volt egyedülállóan része a német frontotól megrongált hadtestben, hanem azért ott volt az elöljáró egy kislóra repülőgépet vezetni, ami a németek által megrongált hadtestet a hátsó részre hozta.

Fiete Schalter, ez a kommunista hős, a németek által megrongált hadtestet a hátsó részre hozta. A hátsó részre került az elöljáró és bevetésén keresztül, mert Fiete Schalternek nem volt egyedülállóan része a német frontotól megrongált hadtestben, hanem azért ott volt az elöljáró egy kislóra repülőgépet vezetni, ami a németek által megrongált hadtestet a hátsó részre hozta.

"Nem voltam sejtője a német frontotól megrongált hadtestre, mert az lett volna, amikor a hadtestet megrongálták. Csak úgy én tudtam, hogy a németek által megrongált hadtestet a hátsó részre hozta. A hátsó részre került az elöljáró és bevetésén keresztül, mert Fiete Schalternek nem volt egyedülállóan része a német frontotól megrongált hadtestben, hanem azért ott volt az elöljáró egy kislóra repülőgépet vezetni, ami a németek által megrongált hadtestet a hátsó részre hozta.

Mikor a hadtestet megrongálták, így történt.

Együtt keresek a harcban, mert mégis az én felelősségem az, hogy a hadtestet megrongálták.

Az elöljáró megrongált hadtestet a hátsó részre hozta.

"A németek a hadtestet megrongálták, mert az elöljáró megrongált hadtestet a hátsó részre hozta.

Minden magyar dolgozó, munkás, elöljáró, aki a német frontotól megrongált hadtestet a hátsó részre hozta, az elöljáró megrongált hadtestet a hátsó részre hozta.

És a hadtestet megrongálták, mert az elöljáró megrongált hadtestet a hátsó részre hozta.

**Folytassátok a harcot Rákosi Máttyás kiszabadításáért!**

Csemo a gyermekosztályomban

BERGELY SÁNDOR HAGYATÉK

1935. ÁPRILIS 1.

Gyakorlati embereket nevel a szovjetiskola  
[The Soviet School Educates Practical People]  
Sarló és Kalapács  
vol. 7, no. 7, 1 April 1935  
Petőfi Literary Museum

# The Udarnitsa

In 1930, the shock worker (udarnik) movement became the focus point of the ideology of the RAPP (Russian Association of Proletarian Writers). Women workers (udarnitsa) who performed well in both childcare and factory work received particular attention among the shock workers.

Újvári's pieces in the Hungarian-language periodical *Sarló és Kalapács* were aligned with the political agenda of the RAPP. In her essay *Az udárnyica* [The Udarnitsa], a pregnant shock worker attends a modern medical examination and with the doctor's permission goes back to the factory for a few days to train her substitute. Újvári's essay *Gálocska* [Galochka] concerns a young mother who first attends a kindergarten and then goes back to the factory that has its own kindergarten, nurses care for the babies, and mothers can go in to breastfeed.

An Udarnitsa  
Soviet Union, first half of 1930s  
Gyula Illyés Archives



Pása Angelina nézete  
[Pasha Angelina's Opinion]  
*Sarló és Kalapács*  
vol. 8, no. 13, 1 July 1936  
Petőfi Literary Museum



A szovjetgyerek

### Pása Angelina nézete

A Balti tengertől a távolkeleti Japán tengeség, az északi Jeges tengeről Ázsia délvégéig, a kínai határig a javaslat megjelenése óta, több mint száz nemzetiség foglalkozik a Szovjetunióban az anyaság, a gyermekvédelem kérdésével. A Szovjetunió területén élőknek, mindenkinek egyenlő joga hozzászólni. És hozzászólnak. A levelek, cikkek ezrei érkeznek naponta egy-egy újság szerkesztőségébe. Ezer és ezer példát lehetne felhozni, hogyan vitatják az említett javaslatot a hivatalok; a tudományos intézetek; a gyárak, bányák, a szovhozok és kolhozok dolgozói. Álljon itt az ezrekre menő példák egyike. A Sztarobesevskij traktorállomás női traktoristáinak csoportvezetője, Pása Angelina levelet írt, amely a június 7-i „Pravda”-ban jelent meg. Mit mond ez a fiatal kolhozista nő, akit a Lenin-renddel tüntettek ki munkájáért?

„Amikor megtudtam, hogy gyerekem lesz, azt mondta néhány munkatársam: Pása neked nem szabad gyereket szülni. Te csoportvezető vagy, tömegszervező. Felőled tud az egész ország. Te ígéretet tettél Sztálin elvtársnak, hogy ebben az évben traktoronként 1600 hektárt végzünk el. A gyerek ennek elvégzésében akadályoz majd tőled.”

Ezután elmondja Pása Angelina, hogy akik így beszélték, azok még a régi mód szerint gondolkodtak. Elmondja, hogy a csoportjában dolgozó tiz nő közül hét van férjvel és mind a hétnek van már gyereke. Mégis, nemhogy elmaradtak volna a férjcsoporttól munkateljesítmény tekintetében, de már el is hagyták őket. Ezek után azt mondja még:

„Akkor is mondtam társaimnak, hogy nincs igazatok. Törekedjünk gyermekek szülni és traktoronként 1600 hektárt elvégezni.”

Ez és ehhez hasonlók hallatszanak a Szovjetunió egész területén. És ezek a hangok világos bizonyítékai annak, hogy az élet szükségyszerűen megelőzte a javaslatot.

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KIADJA A KÜLFÖLDI MUNKÁSOK KIADÓJA MOSZKVA

ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ РАБОЧИХ В СССР МОСКВА

A szerkesztőség és a kiadóhivatal címe: Izdatyelszivo Inostrannih Rabocsih, Moskva 25 Otkyábeja (Nikolskájja) u 7. — Fogadó órák Nikolskájja 10. sz. alatt 2—4-ig. Telefon 86—42. — Előfizetési ár egész évre, 6 fél évre 3 rubel. Egyes szám ára 25 kopek.

1143 — На венгерском яз. Тираж 4000 экз.

Москва, Филипповский пер., 13.



Katya was hurrying to the compulsory doctor's visit. She was still only a member of the Komsomol, but would be a mother soon. On her head was a red kerchief, but underneath her heart, new life was already growing big and round.

On the corner, a radio speaker from the 'Krasniy Mak' was blaring out one of her favourite songs.

But look, as if the little scamp had also heard the music, he started restlessly wriggling his legs.

The blood rushed happily to Katya's face.

The paediatric department and the maternity and nursing mothers' clinic was housed in a separate wing of the new, four-storey outpatient centre named after [the Norwegian explorer, scientist, diplomat and humanitarian] Fridtjof Nansen.

Three people were already waiting in front of Katya in the bright, wide corridor. She looked nervously at the hands of the clock. Finally, it was her turn. The doctor greeted her like an old acquaintance. She asked her a series of questions, then weighed and examined her, and dictated to the nurse sitting at the table how much the abdomen had expanded and how the child was positioned. She spent a long time listening to the heartbeats of mother and child.

– Put her on leave! dictated the doctor.

Katya was only half listening to the doctor's words. Her gaze wandered over the posters on the walls. One of them proclaimed in capital letters that every working mother in the Soviet Union would receive two months' leave before the birth and six months' leave afterwards, with pay! The other poster presented the situation of mothers in capitalist countries. Small photographs depicted the murderous method by which, such as in China, women go into labour in front of machines or, as in many other countries, where babies are born during sheaving.

The nurse woke her from her daydreaming. She washed the red spot on her arm with a light cotton pad. The doctor held a thin glass tube in her hand to catch the drops of blood.

– What's this for? – asked Katya, frightened. – I'm healthy!

– Hey hey, you're in the Komsomol and don't know that we do blood tests on all parents?

Katya calmly held out her hand and received the paper confirming two months' leave, and the referral to the nearest maternity home. From that day on, Katya didn't hear the factory whistle calling her to work; as the others left home, she could calmly turn over in bed.

The next morning, Vashka would tease.



– Hey Katyinka, I wouldn't mind getting pregnant from you for a month or so.

A few days later, Katya was visited by her female colleagues who worked on the same assembly line. They complained that she'd been replaced by a girl who'd recently arrived from the village, who messed up the tempo of the entire line and sometimes forced them to sit for minutes at a time with their hands in their laps.

Katya listened to them, but didn't say anything. The next morning, she hurried to the factory. Most unusually, she found the secretary of the trade union committee at his desk. She told him what she wanted.

The secretary scratched his head.

– It's a difficult case, Sonya has been sent by the doctor to the sanatorium, Olga's child is ill, and I can't allow you back to work, you're on leave.

– It's only a matter of me working a few days with Nastya until she gets used to the job.

The secretary's face lit up:

– You love the factory, Katya. You're a real shock worker. You've called me a bureaucrat many times, but on this occasion I'm not scared of you. I can't allow you to work without medical permission.

The next day, Katya got medical permission and trained Nastya in under three days.

That month the brigade fulfilled the plan, just as it had when Katya was still working, and didn't drop down the ranks either then or during the whole of Katya's maternity leave.

*Sarló és Kalapács*, vol. 6. no. 12, 15 July 1934.

A quiet autumnal light envelops the Sokolniki forest. A flock of restlessly cawing crows flecks the blue sky flashing between the trees. The leaves of the trees bid farewell to their boughs with a pale quiver. Old men with walking sticks sit on the abandoned benches, gathering the sun on their bony palms. Children from the local district children's home stroll along the forest path. Their tiny feet stumble in the carpet of leaves, collecting pine cones and singing ditties.

Next to the forest stretches Great Deer Street. Once lined by the summer cottages of rich traders, these buildings have now been transformed into children's homes, sanatoriums, and overnight shelters. The rest are occupied by workers.

We visit the home of the blonde Nastya, on the shock worker list of the Elektrozavod 104 lamp division. Nowadays she has lots of time – although her four-month maternity leave (on full pay) is coming to an end – to spend in the courtyard nursing her daughter, whose hair is as blonde and wavy as hers. Nastya is singing some jolly refrain, her voice reminiscent of the village's primitive wooden whistle, swinging her legs to the rhythm of the song.

– Your living quarters are cramped, Nastya – I tell her as she leads me through the narrow entrance hall to her little room.

– They certainly are cramped. But we're only here until the first of May. By then, the houses will be finished, which the factory is building for the shock workers.

The best piece of furniture in the room is the little girl's cot, and arranged on the chair are the baby's essentials that Nastya received for free like all other new mothers. On the table is a small booklet from the nursery with drawings: "How to raise your child." On the first page in bold type is the sentence: "Mothers, be shock workers in childcare too!"

– And are you really a shock worker? – I ask her, pointing at the little booklet.

– Nastya smiles. She shows me a white rubber dog and a box of sponge cakes.

– I got this yesterday as a reward for looking after Galochka so well.

What's more, Nastya came up here from the village only three years ago, and only put on her first urban [modern] clothes two years ago.

And indeed, as she changes the baby and gets ready for breastfeeding, it's clear that Nastya knows all about modern child rearing. She has taken the doctors' advice.

Ványka will be home soon. In big rubber boots, in rough canvas clothing. He works on the metro. Huge lumps of clay stick to the heels of his rubber boots. But before he even steps foot in the room, Nastya called out to him while breastfeeding:

– Did you wipe your feet? Don't come in until you've cleaned yourself up!

– They're driving you completely mad in that nurse! – grumbles Ványka from outside, but still, when he enters the room he is completely clean and has even brushed his hair with a wet brush. Nastya is a shock worker even at home.

\*

The lamp division is where the gas flame burns. The glass revolves and grows hot in skilful female hands. The faces are tense in concentration, the muscles dancing on their arms. Nastya works with youthful, relaxed vigour. Her leave has expired.

Down in the children's garden of the factory, Galochka is lying on a white bed. While Nastya is working, the mother is replaced by the doctor and nursery assistant. When it's time for feeding – every breastfeeding mother receives half an hour feeding time – she runs down to the children's home. In the entrance hall she washes her hands and puts on a white apron, and the nursery assistant places the child in her lap. There's a clock on the wall, so one can measure the amount of time the child has fed. A few minutes are left for laughing and talking, then all the aprons are put back on the pegs, one by one.

Nastya gets back to work, all her nerves now dedicated to production – because she knows that during this time, Galochka is in good hands. Because she knows that the more consciously she works upstairs, the better life will be for Galochka downstairs.

*Sarló és Kalapács*, vol. 6. no. 19, 1 November 1934.

For the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the October Revolution, Dziga Vertov directed a documentary film *Lullaby* dedicated to the women of the Soviet Union. Made one year after the introduction of the Stalinist constitution and the ban on abortion, the film consists of romantic scenes of Soviet mothers and their children. Stalin himself appears as the guest of a women's congress celebrating the new constitution, which has "strengthened women's emancipation." The film, however, did not convince Stalin. It was shown in Soviet cinemas for only a few days and all of the directors' proposals for films in the following years were rejected.



Dziga Vertov  
Нольбельная [Lullaby]  
Documentary  
1937

# Sokolniki

Sándor Barta and Erzsi Újvári were first accommodated in Moscow in János Mácza's flat in Sretenski Boulevard. In 1926, they got a flat of their own in a Moscow suburb, Sokolniki Park and around 1932, they moved into a newly-built condominium in Tisinskaya Street, also in the suburbs.

"We agreed on meeting again [with Barta], and combined it with a walk around town. He came to pick me up and said they wanted to have me over for lunch so that I could meet Erzsi Újvári. We made our way over to their flat on the outskirts of town, in Sokolniki. We cut across an enormous park, the edges of which hinted at a well-off residential area. A sudden shower came down in typical unforeseen Moscow fashion, we could set off at a run, but our shirts were soaked through and there was no end to the park.

In a one-room, one-kitchen flat in one of the absolutely basic ground-floor wooden houses, I was received by a bony proletarian woman with her black hair in a bun, straight out of a Gorky novel: the poetess whose girlish verse I had read at school, and who was therefore perfectly preserved in my imagination as a young girl.

At Barta's place, nothing was how I had expected. It was difficult to associate the flat with anyone here correcting the proofs of a paper to be read in England. The rainwater was running off us, and out of our shoes, so we had to get changed. This is how I unwittingly became acquainted with the depths of the poet's wardrobe.

But lunch turned out exceptionally well, not because of the food but the rugged cheer of our hostess. She had decided to cheer us up. Two half-drowned guys can either laugh or cry at their fate. We chose to laugh.

As an upshot of this, and to ensure we ate our paprika fried potatoes and large melon in good spirits, they talked of their earlier life in Vienna, since which ten years have already passed."

Gyula Illyés: *Bartáról szólva* [Regarding Barta] (Excerpt)





Map of Moscow  
 Moscow, Intourist  
 1920s  
 Petőfi Literary Museum  
 From the Archives of Andor Gábor



Zsuzsa Barta and Sándor Barta  
Moscow, Sokolniki, 1931/1932  
Kassák Museum

"[In Sokolniki] we moved into a single-storey small wooden house full of Hungarian émigrés. We lived on the ground floor, in a one-room flat without a kitchen or any mod cons, although we did have a beautiful veranda and a garden. In those days, there was no electricity, and we used a petroleum lamp and brought water in from the well, like in the village. That counted as pretty comfortable for the time. [...] In the 30s, my father acquired a co-operative property. We moved to the outskirts of town into a new, brick house. We had three rooms, my father had a study, there was a dining room, which was also the living room, and we also had a children's room with a balcony. [...] This was the Barta family's second home, it was where my father was arrested, where my mother died, and from where we were later evacuated."

Recollections of Zsuzsa Barta (Excerpt)



Erzsi Újvári, György Barta, Sándor Barta  
and Zsuzsa Barta  
Moscow, Sokolniki, 1931/1932  
Kassák Museum



Sándor Barta  
Moscow, 1931/1932  
Kassák Museum



“The house preserved its Hungarian habits in the Russian environment. [...] Uncle Zoltán, a Hungarian émigré of peasant origin living on the first floor, kept pigs and chickens. Every year, to the Russians’ astonishment, he would hold a pig slaughter.”

Recollections of Zsuzsa Barta (Excerpt)



A family with pigs  
Moscow, Sokolniki, 1931/1932  
Kassák Museum

## Erzsi Újvári's Letters to Ilona Matics, 1930s (Excerpts)

Ilona Matics was the daughter of Kassák's eldest sister, Mária, born when her mother was young and unmarried. In the 1930s, Ilona cared for Kassák's elderly mother in Budapest. At the beginning of the decade, Újvári regularly corresponded with Matics, who was pregnant with a son. In their letters, they shared their thoughts about motherhood, health care for mothers and children, and parenting.

"You write that you are doing everything you possibly can for the child. Dear Ilonka, this is very smart, but I somehow can't imagine it any differently: a mother with a certain level of culture will always pay attention to the child's hygiene, as much as her economic circumstances allow, of course. You should never be proud of how much you do for the child, but rather how much you cannot give them. Don't follow the example of the mothers living in the courtyard, those poor things overwhelmed and spiritually destroyed by poverty. It's not their fault that their children are not as well cared for as the children of the better off. I don't think there are many mothers who wouldn't want to give their children the best if they could afford it. I want to remind you never to think too highly of yourself for being such a good mother, because the only way you can be even better is to know that it is not enough just to bring a child into the world, but you must also bring them up properly for life itself. I would love to see the little ones, and since my Zsuzsi was born I've loved children even more than I did before, even though you know how much I fought with you as a little girl, I sometimes even gave you all a good beating, but this was only because I saw how weak your mother and grandma were with you. Even then I said rather the mother played the cruel role than have her child becoming a spoiled marionette who can't make their way in life (especially if it is a girl)."

"My only wish, even today, is that if only my mother were here I could have been twice the person, I could have entrusted someone else with the childcare, so that the children would have been with someone who loves them. I am definitely a very sentimental person and it's always been very important to me that children should receive love. And that hinders me in my development and in my work."

Kedves Ilonka!

Ma kaptuk meg második leveledet és én síték ra válaszolni ne, hogy azt gondoljatok, hogy valami bajunk van. Először is meg kell írnom hogy körülbelül két héte elküldtem a címre az én adosságom meg hátra levő részét. kerlek te is nezd át a szamitasodat és írd meg hogy megkaptad e a teljes összeget. Azt is meg kell írnom, hogy az anyukád két parcharisnyával kevesebbet adott csak nekem átadni mint amit feltüntettel azon a cedulan, ezt tehát vedd figyelembe a szamitasnál. Azonkívül ugyanakkor küldtünk a mamának is mind a hárman egy kis összeget. Arról majd külön fogunk neki írni. Most azt írta terek a tegedet legjobban érdeklő témára a kis fiadra. Írod, hogy a gyerek nagyon szepen fejlődik és, hogy nagyon szep gyerek. Azt elhiszem hisz az apja nagyon egészseges ember, miért lenne akkor a gyerek beteges? Írod, hogy te mindent megtesszel a gyereknek amit csak tudsz, kedves Ilonka ez nagyon okos dolog de én ezt valahogy elsem tudom graskep képzalni, minthogy egy anya aki egy bizonyos kulturnivon áll, a mai gyermek hígenáát szem előtt tartajva persze amennyire azt az ő gazdasági körülményei megengedik. Te neked sohasem arra kell büszke lenni mennyi mindent meg tessel a gyereket, hanem azon, hogy mennyi mindent nem tudsz meg megadni neki. Ne vedd példának az udvarban lakó elő anyákat, akiket szegényeket elbutított és szellemileg megölt a nyomoruság nem ők tehetnek arról, hogy az ő gyerekeik nem ol, an apoltak mind jobb sorsban elő szülők gyerekei. Nem hiszem, hogy sok olyan anya van aki nem a legtöbbet és a legjobbat akarna adni a gyerekeknek ha volna anyagi módja ra. Egyre akar ak figyelmeztetni tegedet, ne bízd soha sem el magadat, hogy te milyen jó anya vagy mert csak így tudsz majd meg jobb lenni ha tudod azt, hogy egy gyereket nem elég csak a vilagra hozni hanem azt az életre is kell nevelni. Szeretnem látni a kis emberket, én mibba a Zsuzsim megszületet meg jobban szeretem a gyerekeket mint addig szeretem, pedig te tudod mint kis lány már mennyit vesződtem veletek, neha ugyan én elis raktalak titeket, de ezt is csak azért mert lattam, hogy az anyukád és a mama gönge volt hozzatok, már akkor is azt mondtam inkább az anya vállalja magara a kegyetlen szerepet mint a gyereke egy elkenyeztett az életre nem való babu legyen (plane ha za meg lány is) Kedves Ilonka az, hogy a gyereket szep tisztan és a lehető leghigenikasabban tartod azt soha teveszd össze azzal hogy vizont az legyen fontos neked, hogy a gyerek mindeg ellegans is legyen és estleg a te évesedet vagy az övet azzalxa az ezrel jaro kiadással megsilasyítsd. A te fiad valószínűleg egy szabadabb vilagba fog elni és nem azért fog nekud köszönetet mondani, hogy ellegansan nevelted föl, hanem azért, hogy a erős egészseges embert neveltél belőle aki örülni tud az életnek. Nagyon örültünk annak az akhogy te és a mama jó viszonyba vagytok csak ne engedj, hogy a ma sokat dolgozzon mi majd mindamx amint csak tehetjük mindig fogunk küldeni neki. Azt, hogy valamit segítsen az semmi de mosást vagyéhez hasonló nehéz munkát nem kell neki már csinálni. Gondold csak meg mennyit dolgozott ő már életében. legvel jó a mamához his



Kedves Ilonka!

Egy teljes délutánt levelirással töltök csak azért, hogy nektek írjak. De most aztan nem lehet panasz sokat fogok írni.

Hat először is, nagyon de nagyon rosszul teszem ha minket magukolysz azért, hogy a szegény mamának milyen nehezen kell élni. Ilonka ha csak a legkisebb módja volna annak, hogy mi innen segítsük a mamát akkor nem kellene abra, senkinek minket figyelmeztetni mert bennünk talah sokkal jobban ki van fejlődve az egymást segítő érzés mint az otthoniakban. Mi sokkal jobban tudjuk értékelni mit tett értünk az anyát mint bárki. Emberek akik az embertarsaikkal szemben a legteljesebb felelősség érzettel éreznek és összelekednek azokat nem lehet azzal vádolni, hogy a saját anyjukról elfelejtettek. Már az unalomig hangsúlyoztam, hogy milyen okai vannak annak hogy mi nem tudunk a mamának küldeni. Miért kell még mindig föltételezni rólunk, hogy rosszabbak vagyunk mint ti. Egyszer majd megismerés igazán bennüket. Addig is, faj rosszul esik azt tudni, hogy ahelyett, hogy legalább te megértene folyton a legmélyebb, a legfajjobb pontját az érzéseinknek bolygatod folyton. Látnod én nem írok ezekről a mamának, ne, hogy sirjon a levelünkön inkább vállalom a szívtelen szerepet minthogy még én is bántsam őtet.

Nekem még ma is egyetlen vágyam, hogy bárcsak itt lenne a mama én befőlem már, kétszer annyi lehetett volna ha valakire rá bírnám bízni a gyerekek nevelését, azt, hogy valaki olyan legyen velük aki szereti őket. En bizony egy elég szentimentális ember vagyok és folyton és mindig nagyon fontos nekem, hogy a gyerekek szeretetet kapjanak. Ez pedig gátol engem a fejlődésben és a munkában. Ha a mama itt volna akkor ez mind megszűnne meg lenne a butaságom mikor én hazajövök. De most én nem beszéltem róla hogy jöjjön velünk. De akkor is csak azt gondoltam, hogy azt kell tennem ami a mamának jobb és hideg az anyukád is ezt gondolta.

Társak az embert beleállítani az élet közepébe és megnevezni a környezetét és akkor lemérni azt, mert kell ennek az embernek rossznak lenni és csak akkor mikor már megtanultad így nézni a dolgokat van jogod kritizálni.

Na kedves Ilonka kiesit, ellovagoltam magamtól De nagyon fáj a mama sorsával való vádolás. Azon kívül nem hiszem, hogy te még fogsz haragudni ezen a levelért. Legfőljebb gondolkozni fogsz rajta. Te tenyleg egy rendes ember vagy és nem akartalak bántani.

Most magunkról. En tanulni kezdtem. A Sándor egészséges. A Zsuzsika egy szép okos kislány. Nem tudom miért irta az anyukád, hogy a gyerekek beteg a Zsuzsikával igazán baj van. Nem azért mert nem jól tartjuk, hanem azért mert általában gyöngye gyerek. Viszont a Gurika egy vasgüro egész nyáron és most a télen is meg egyszer sem volt beteg. Az orvosok mint a gyerekek tartják. Borzasztó csibész. Nyáron neked is küldtem fényképet és nem irtal semmit róla. Nagyon örült anyukád a fényképeknek és mi is. Attól talan ha van fényképek nektek is a mamának és a Bartaeknek is küldjétek, az egy darab élet otthonról aminek nagyon örülünk.

Már rengeteget irtam. Most legközelebb te ír sokat. Mit csinál a kisfiad és a ferjed, ő miért nem ír az anyukád úgy várja az ő levelet.

csokolunk mindannyian náske

Erzsi Újvári  
Sándor

Erzsi Újvári's letter to Ilona Matics  
first half of 1930s  
Kassák Museum



# Biographical Micro-Histories



## Sándor Barta in the Ministry of Finance



Certificate of  
Sándor Barta's  
public accounting  
exam  
18 May 1918  
Kassák Museum

“After the collapse [of the Soviet Republic], Barta reported to his department as a former ministry official, as if nothing had happened. He was driven out of the building. Perhaps nobody know where he had been or what he had done during the Revolution, but he is Jewish, and that’s enough for his former colleagues to throw him out.”

Lajos Kassák: *Egy ember élete* [The Life of a Man] (Excerpt)



Portrait of Sándor Barta  
1910s  
Kassák Museum



Passport photo of Sándor Barta  
1910s  
Kassák Museum

# The Early Work of Erzsi Újvári

## *Erzsi Újvári in Budapest*

"My sisters were still working in the shroud factory. They came home in the evening, greeted me warmly, laughing and chattering, clearly happy to see me. The loudest among them was Bözse, tiny with black hair, still barely visible above the ground yet already going to work, with her old, dusty clothes, the roots of her thick black hair tinged with quicklime dust from the shrouds. She grew up in Pest, and still the influence of the countryside is strong. She is shy and clumsy in her flattery, her vigorously smoothed-out hair woven into a thin ponytail, her feet pointing slightly inwards in her large shoes. [...] On Saturday, Bözse brought her wages home, the only fixed source of income for the family. This little girls works a lot, an awful lot. Apart from the war factories, maybe only the shroud factories are doing well in this town. Business is booming, they work almost around the clock, and the wretched girls are becoming even thinner and more anaemic in this frantic production. The stifling air in the cellar workshop, and the ubiquitous powdered quicklime will soon drive them into their graves. When Bözse comes home at night, her hair is white from the lime, and her eyes are as dull as if she had cataracts."

Lajos Kassák: *Egy ember élete* [The Life of a Man] (Excerpt)



Portrait of Erzsi Újvári  
Vienna, c. 1920  
Kassák Museum

Béla Uitz  
Portrait of Erzsi Újvári in her youth  
c. 1915  
Collection of the Braun-Barta Family

“One time I looked in her exercise book and was surprised by the sentences penned in uneven letters and with an untrained hand. A maturing, intelligent and colourful soul emerges from the writing. Their school homework is to write short stories based on their everyday experiences; they have to compose them by themselves. Bözse’s writings are more and different from the simple schoolwork exercises. The poor girl has such an observant eye and a vibrant, rich imagination. I am not biased against her, but what she produces unconsciously is almost enviable. It’s clear that she spends what little free time she has here around us, but she also has her own personality, she looks in the same direction as us but sees things we do not.

– This snotty kid is quite special – I told Jolán. – We need to keep watch over her and support her. Our own start in life was so different, more primitive and clumsy. And it’s precisely because we know what it is to wander about without daylight that we have to be on her side. Jolán took a look at the exercise book and she also thought the little stories were quite special and beautiful.

– If we manage to put the publication together, I’d print some of her stuff just for the fun of it. Not as a work of literary value, but as human documents that are valuable just as they are, unfinished and unpolished. I’ve seen negro sculptures and cave drawings, and they are somehow related to these writings.

We sat down with Bözse to talk to her about her homework. She was almost coy in her defensiveness. We didn’t tell her that we thought her writings were special or good, she wouldn’t have understood praise, but we talked to her in such a way that her eyes opened even wider, and she was more confident to say what she felt and thought. Even if she doesn’t realise it, she is going through puberty and is therefore almost hysterically sensitive. So it’s not just rough chunks of meat with the skin on, or coffee with fat floating in it that make her retch and retreat, but also harsh words and a searching gaze. Jolán talks to her with warmth and intimacy, as if they were friends the same age, and it works. Bözse, who’s never had a friend before, is now opening up, asking questions and learning without any particular difficulty. In this surrounding strange environment, it was also good for us to discover her for ourselves. We are now one more with her, even without doing any further calculations for the time being.”

Lajos Kassák: *Egy ember élete* [The Life of a Man] (Excerpt)

The world hiccupped and showed its inverted stomach to the sun. War. Rabid decapitation. Women's crying asphyxiated into convulsions. Streets going mad from the proclamations of red posters! Snaking rafts of people. Brandy fumes. Wild shouting.

- War!

Arid fields awaiting red fluids... Conscription. People hiding themselves blue. Contagious newspaper myths.

- War!! - War!!!

Trumpets recruiting the world. Map-drudges glorifying. The grinding of steel. Tearful farewells.

- The meat grinder!!!

Mothers in labour. Protestations to God... And then only bewildering visions. People nipped in the bud. In the chaotic space, mournful, hungrily weeping chimney stacks.

Machines on their last legs. The last strain. An interrupted buzzing. Through wide open factory gates rushes a pack of frightened yokes towards you: Life's womb City!

It reached them too. Lifted their young bodies from happy maturity.

- War...

- So you have to leave too?

- !

- Are you leaving me here? Don't you feel my passion?

- !

- Your heart is no longer bleeding on the evening of the thirtieth?

Who is it you need if you can leave me here?

- I am a person too!

- But you're mine...

- They're calling me!

- You're my man!

- The world has dug its heels in - as they say - and must be soothed... and he left...

Two entreating women's arms fell from his neck. His head was burning. His mouth remained puckered from the softening kiss. The rolling wreath of power had pulled him in: swallowed by the barracks' giant catfish mouth...

The woman just stood there... sat and waited... waited!

Widow, tiny room. Sour food. Golden-backed bumblebees strap the sweating head. Sheer lust, but no... no intelligent foresight.

The next day. Wet pillows. Head drooping. Deep hollowed eyes.

Withered thighs. Flaking mouth straps. Fever... hot-cold fever

A beautiful dream.

Yellow circles, red circles, black circles... Muddled up colour sauce...



Bathed, abundant male bodies in the boiling gold of the sun.

Awakening.

Torturous accusation. Women next door tittering. Disease.

- If only he'd come...
- Mutilated?
- He loves me!
- Is his body going cold?
- I'd wrap mine around his.

\*

I burn alone.

A letter. Dead. Shot in the forehead.

- My beautiful man! Help! Oh my heart!!!

\*

- Am I still alive?

Waddling fox-headed mothers come to him to glean hope. But to no avail.

Nocturnal torments. Clumps of hair torn out. Some sooty interfering hand rummaging about in his brain.

Woeful last rites arise in all their pomp from his night-times.

Candles smelling of fat. Shackled plaster apostles. In the incense-infused boat are yellow heads, dislocated jaws, a horror pyramid of protruding eyeballs clinging to the starry vault.

Now the priest lifts the burning chalice to his forehead.

Organs weeping. Figures singing. Humble ringing laughter.

- My beautiful sweet partner!

His aching fingernails dig up a running red pearl from his flesh.

A great, all-smothering silence. But it doesn't last long.

Days falling fast. Sad resignation.

Autumn... Winter... Spring-filled life brightening over sticky problems.

A new, furious pace in the sagging veins.

Kitten-like female companions. Magnetic "you'll see" encouragements.

Eye-catching shop window displays...

Finally, a soldier.

Hungry eyes flashing.

Desire sparks a burning bush in their minds. Free fingers intertwining in spasm.

- An old acquaintance!
- Sure, and my man too... Poor thing!

A few more pains striking up.  
And then only the endless delirium of mutual reality in everything.  
Kiss. Money. Pub. Perfume. Sweaty faces. Shoulders grating against  
his bare shoulder, unknown eyes penetrating his eyes.  
Surrounded by drunken trollops at the midnight market.  
He trembled.  
- Mulled wine, over here!  
He was afraid, since this was the first time, and so he ordered:  
- Brandy.  
Rasping throats cheered. Rocket-fuel drinks. Head stunned. Mulled,  
maddening blood...  
He feels a leaden, boiling hand creeping along his body.  
- Oh my head!  
More heat. Goose-pimpled shivers. A tired waist bending over.  
- You'll be my other man, won't you?  
They heard her. All at once, a hundred mouths give a wailing laugh.  
Someone cursed to the stars.  
A woman jumped on a table laden with drinks. She no longer knew  
anything beyond her burning, miserable self. She threw her rosetted  
legs so high they almost dominated over it all:  
- And who shall be, woe is me, my other man?

*A Tett*, vol. 2. no. 13, 6 May 1916, 209–211.

Sándor Barta's Expressionist poetry started to appear regularly in Lajos Kassák's magazine *Ma* in 1917. The central themes in Barta's poems were the social issues that concerned the activist movement. The political radicalisation of the Kassák circle may also be traced in his poems of 1918/1919. A selection of his work was also published as a book, *Vörös zászló* [Red Flag], in January 1919.

Telep [Slum]

Cauliflower breath from the factory chimneys,  
encircling the sky.

Above the trapezed courtyards  
the clouds hawk themselves about,  
until the little wind runt (already a tornado on the ocean)  
slaps them into a storm.

But the women  
meanwhile gesticulate towards the pots,  
(the affinity of emptiness, slaps and curses)  
the kids jockeying and bleating on the banister,  
while three punchable types swell into iron rosettes,  
upon which the wives of the cobbler, the tailor and the locksmith  
pull out the iron in fits of tears,  
they pick up the kid turning purple,  
and hurl him into the musty corners, like dough.  
And in the screeching frenzy they kneel again down onto the  
gathered floors  
(blood – the H<sub>2</sub>O of caustic soda and stomach cramps)  
the square of filth grows into the square-terror state without walls,  
gurgling out of consciousness.

But this can't last long either.  
From staring death  
the women next door with jugs of vinegar,  
– Barrels! Hectolitres! No! No! Go! –  
lug them back into all fours.

And again they grow infuriated at the pails,  
lobbing them into the dead kitchen ranges,  
and once again the corridors, the kids, the other,  
hysterically dashing out

Sándor Barta

and shrieking into each other's topknots they flit about, bat-like,  
(hanging out to dry – underground – washing steam)  
the reason is time a billion times.

Because of them, in the evening, the men set about one another  
with fiery poker irons,  
with knives smelling of herring,  
but in the chilled rooms beneath them pillow-case ribs crack,  
(outside the soapless washing rustles) –  
and on Sunday at dawn the women breathe out with them too  
their hidden lives  
and until nightfall they can foolishly lean their elbows on each other  
on stone steps.

Oh Fate!  
Oh Virtue!  
Oh Work!  
I praise you!

The rheumatic cobbler lives here,  
the tailor with renal failure,  
the locksmith with one lung,  
the printer the blind,  
the carpenter the deaf,  
and the women live here too, but they just have weak hearts.

Sándor Barta: *Vörös zászló* [Red Flag], 1919.

Sky blue, grass green, washerwoman consumptive,  
 washerwoman's son is the baker's boy,  
 washerwoman's daughter the whore,  
 and all of them, all stand in the morning,  
 while the morning gleams asunder on the horizon,  
 the horizon moves into the hills,  
 the hills abate into the cities,  
 smoke forms thick massive clumps above the cities,  
 the smoke, the sulphur, the heat.

For the washerwomen wait hunchbacked turtles,  
 the walls dash up to the turtles,  
 the red iron camel whinnies over too,  
 the pails and the cauldrons snarl down from the twine floor  
 and steam meanders,  
 the steam, the fire, the water.

The baker's boy rubs flour into his head,  
 and the baker's boy's breast forms a fist,  
 and tears stroll in contest from under his ribs,  
 and the apprentices smack him with dough,  
 and flour plummets from the ceiling,  
 and water bubbles from the floor,  
 and the fire will excavate the walls and can bite into the breast of  
 the air,  
 and the mercury bites the glass  
 and the blood bites the skin  
 and in the kitchens the kneading goes on –  
 Jesus!  
 the fire, the kitchens, the flour.

On the streets the chamber maids burning up till the sky and two  
 yellow marks laughing under their armpits.  
 And the washerwoman only has two weeks to live because 320  
 people fell again in ochre-fleshed mud  
 Woe!!!  
 The prostitutes play bogeyman out of the window at the little ones  
 in shorts,  
 one of the prostitutes is the washerwoman's daughter  
 and she sticks a pretty, combed mask out of the window,  
 because her head is the washerwoman's head,  
 and the washerwoman's head is: a wrinkled apple.



The washerwoman's hands are also wrinkled,  
and now she spins and turns and rubs,  
and she has no head,  
because the fiery iron camel is her head,  
because all the wet rags are her body,  
because the two pails are her feet,  
smoke pipes from her eyes,  
and she sees with her ears,  
only her two hands dominate,  
her two hands dominate.

The prostitute's hands were sliced from velvet,  
the prostitute collects red stomachs,  
and tickles arterial paths along fat uncles' spines,  
and then knees  
and her hair flutters  
and pants,  
and then, she can buy herself red, yellow and green in the big  
purple shops.  
Sure.

The baker's boy is her brother,  
and the baker's boy's arms are made out of paper lanterns  
and his head is a red brick gate  
and his eyes are two bottomless crates  
and his ears are the openings to two ovens  
and he has no ears,  
no ears.

The washerwoman is the sister of the whore and the sister of the  
baker's boy and the baker's boy is the man.  
The man goes,  
the city kneels before him in humility,  
and the camel-headed washerwoman goes from the right  
and the mask-faced prostitute goes from the left,  
and the baker's boy takes them by the hands.

Because the baker's boy's head is made out of kitchen knives  
and the moon is a skinflint and the sun weighs down,  
and the washerwoman's body is made out of honey  
and the bells ring,  
and the prostitute's tongue is made out of a rocket,

and the policemen keep watch on the peak of their kepi caps,  
and the lunatics bow green ribbons into the sky.

And they go.

They go, above the ice laundry rooms,  
above the red workshops,  
above life and death,  
above man and woman,  
above rich and poor,  
and their voices resound,  
their voices, their voices,  
go wild.

Sándor Barta: *Vörös zászló* [Red Flag], 1919.

I launch rockets at life without 15,000 years, at your 20 years of life,  
but by this I don't mean that  
I would jump head first from the 6<sup>th</sup> floor  
for a girl, for honour or some other prolix  
inflamed conscience.

Because, young man, this is a farce!  
But if you're out in the streets late at night dizzy  
from the electric light bulb cells  
or from the proprietorial clutches of the workshops,  
or even from the air brakes of the trams rushing underground

and with polluted joy you row out to the promenades' machine-  
gunning slobbering human chaos – curved arc lights tan you with  
bundles of straw – or on the red couches in bordello hovels you  
are yelling your life,

}  
}

yellow contrast  
there's the  
flesh

or your future mother-in-law, old and forced to become a pimp  
tickles you around her anaemic daughter with her daily stew,  
– yellow contrast there's the girl –  
girl, my girlfriend: within the square walls her bad lungs shriek at her  
sewing-machine life,  
and the gate-mouthed trollop,  
YELLOW CONTRAST!  
and you believe it's life!  
What a farce this is, young man,  
young man, young man!

Because they never told you that work is not virtue,  
they never told you that you'd pickaxe everything beneath you  
for your body's best life with all the valour of law,  
– *man is just friendly or hostile matter* –  
they never tell you who that all-into-nothing hypnotizer Anatole  
France is,  
and the Rest,  
that they are building inside you and forming you into a marionette  
– perhaps they aren't even aware (?) –  
beneath their fat-bellied will.

They don't tell you who the steadfast mile-high palm is,  
who fondles the curtains apart away from purple moans inside  
fragrant theatres,  
pronounces the "*triumph of ethics*" in cinemas for the foolish janitors  
and in the minds of mothers,  
and which, with a million postcards (flyers!) of sentimentalism  
gossamers the lives of seamstresses and healthy-gummed butchers

into sleepwalking.  
They don't tell you anything,  
they leave you: oh holy freedom!

You, who flits between inner-city erect males and female knee-high ankles,  
or who singled out the woman and the tuberculosis just for yourself  
among the canals on the outskirts,  
young man, you don't know what life is.  
LIFE!

Life is instability,  
extending anywhere,  
bursting into song any time,  
the seven weeks of Sunday,  
the laughter, the fist, the near-and-far,  
Socialism, Anarchism, death by hanging,  
I understand! Do you understand? I understand!!!

And now imagine the waters for all of this,  
but everywhere, everywhere on earth:  
the air's shining body resonates red from the mood of the rowers.  
imagine the green fields:  
strapping athletes stretching their breasts till bursting point,  
to collapse first at the finishing line,  
imagine that the broad, high-domed hospitals are empty at home,  
on the horizon, healthy children screeching on mile-long  
rollercoasters,  
the liberated lives of girls in white dresses skyrocket from the hills,  
nobody goes hungry when the world dines,  
and everywhere the violins soar,  
in the park, lads with staffs and laughing girls argue about Everything,  
and nobody asks why you detonate yourself in the head.  
Young man, if you believe me, I know that the wise and the sober  
laugh in my face,  
but I, who have wallowed through the night and the fights  
among my ember brethren I killed the artist and poet in me underwater,  
– *to become a tool* –  
I weave a path for you.

Sándor Barta: *Vörös zászló* [Red Flag], 1919.

if a man, and your nerves are not yet hopelessly wired,  
 if the earth, you are the honourable telegram cable of women and  
 books,  
 leading well, pinpointing steel, but also self-conscious, a strong-  
 willed fist,  
 a devastating cross-section of positives in negatives,  
 if you are not yet a bookworm  
 and in your head neither more nor less is orchestrated  
 than the marked pain in pleasure and deed of your vigorous youth,  
 if your coltish mind has not yet been mashed by the antiquated  
 hogwash of classical cultures,  
 nor by contemporary painters, who are just adorning the canvases  
 with Christ problem number 66,000 and their old mums' worn out  
 teapots,  
 the snuff-headed academics who, with oxen cheek, write volumes  
 on the faeces of Senegambian flies,  
 if you don't believe the poets either, who today  
 have nothing to eat  
 in the bloody prisms of 1918 and yesterday and the day after  
 tomorrow,  
 singing the praises of life, strength and pleasures,  
 if you hit your father back and laugh at your mum,  
 because they want you bound to their bosom with the holy self-  
 satisfaction of family,  
 if you rile up your teachers against their unconscious (?) Judas  
 role,  
 your mother's maids against the dawn rage beneath you and your  
 father's lechery,  
 if you rile up your mother against your father and remove her from  
 the screaming children's room and the stinking kitchens into the sun,  
 if you rile up your father against his straightjacketed life,  
 so that he doesn't kick the bucket aged 40 from tuberculosis and  
 honour,  
 your sisters against the histrionics of their syphilitic governesses,  
 and you'll cut their maudlin desire to conform out of their minds,  
 if you steal your friends off to the hills and in the red  
 wombs of the mines you form for them the crack within,  
 if you charm the engineers into planning broad so bright tenement  
 blocks,  
 the stonemasons to mortar the windows stealthily wider,  
 and carve out ornamented, hygienic streets, and nail together  
 gardens and squares,



the doctors to talk to "Them" about the anti-toxin of knowledge,  
the lawyers to fulminate parallels between the robber murderer and  
the bank shareholder in courtrooms smelling of corpses,  
the chemists to stop flogging their villainous brains out over new  
nitro-glycerines and fake foodstuffs,  
the railwaymen to build the dynamited reflectors of culture into the  
blood and crass bloated villages instead of throbbing steel hordes  
the peasants not to bury their ears and windows and with a wild, wilful  
pose to laugh in the faces of the champagne sparkling landlords, when  
they next ride out to the borderlands to scheme credit,  
the officials not to rub their noses into a shine on company  
directors' parquet floors,  
and All Of Them to become a herd of burning fists one morning and  
to form everything, everything for their hunger for redemption and  
listen to nobody, nobody who once again auctions them off as a  
dim-witted herd and with the dignity of the crowd plays the Judas  
under their noses

Man, if you do this, you are my Brother,  
I greet you on Earth.

Sándor Barta: *Vörös zászló* [Red Flag], 1919.

## The Tales of Sándor Barta

During the Hungarian Soviet Republic, Sándor Barta wrote his first prose poem that imitated folk tales. Jolán Simon, Kassák's wife read it out at a propaganda performance organised by *Ma* in Kaposvár on 31 May 1919. Barta's collected tales, written between 1919 and 1921, were published in the volume *Mese a trombitakezű diákról* [A Tale about a Trumpet-handed Student].

A heated debate about the place and role of storytelling continued throughout the period of the Soviet Republic. The Storytelling Department of the Commissariat for Public Education was formed under writers Béla Balázs and Anna Lesznai, and held storytelling afternoons and ran story-writing competitions for workers' children.

In the years following the Hungarian Soviet Republic, the social democratic newspaper *Népszava* published several new books for young people by Zseni Várnai, Teréz Nagy, Margit Beke and Ego (Margit Fried). In 1923, József Migray and Mária Takács compiled a book of tales from different peoples of the world entitled *Mesekincs* [Treasury of Tales]. It was the last storybook that *Népszava* published and storytelling disappeared from the left-wing programme after 1923.



Sándor Barta  
*Mese a trombitakezű diákról*  
[A Tale about a Trumpet-handed Student]  
Cover design: Lajos Kassák  
Vienna, Ma, 1922  
Kassák Museum

Béla Balázs, in his article *Ne vegyétek el a gyermekektől a mesét!* [Don't Take the Tales away from Children!], argued that folk tales were important for the workers' movement because traditional folk tropes were the products of pre-capitalist, classless societies. József Migray commended the power of mythical heroes to mobilise society: "To attain socialism, we need the fearless heroes of folk tales – optimists who believe in themselves and the justice of their causes and bravely face up to every barrier."

József Migray  
 A mese [The Tale]  
*Népszava Naptár* [Népszava Calendar], 1919



Ego (Margit Fried)  
*A régi ház gyerekei* [Children of the Old House]  
 Budapest, Népszava, 1920  
 National Széchényi Library

"This book will belong to the children of the Hungarian Workers' Association for Children; and to my children too."  
 (Margit Fried)

## Debate on Proletkult in Vienna

The activist group of artists led by Kassák, ridden with ideological disputes, disintegrated in 1922. Béla Uitz, co-editor of *Ma*, was the first to leave. In May, he founded a proletarian culture magazine, *Egység* together with the poet Aladár Komját, another former member of the *Ma* circle who had broken with Kassák in 1917. *Egység* was aimed at creating a Hungarian-language forum for Proletkult set up in accordance with party directives issued in Moscow. In the first issues, the editors attacked Kassák and accused his magazine *Ma* of having counter-revolutionary, bourgeois, *l'art pour l'art* leanings.

The ideological dispute effectively arose from a dilemma already expressed during the 1919 Hungarian Soviet Republic: was avant-garde literature and art capable of speaking to the masses and promoting the political and cultural aims of the communist revolution? Uitz and his associates claimed that the new (Western) tendencies of the avant-garde were leading to formalism as an end in itself and by following them, the Kassák circle were losing sight of the original goals of the movement.

Initially, Sándor Barta and Erzsi Újvári stayed with Kassák. Barta took up the *Ma* line in the dispute, insisting that the aim of the new art after the failed political revolution should rather be to promote the cultural revolution of the working class, thus leading to an organic social transformation. In late summer 1922, however, Barta and Újvári also broke with Kassák. In November, Barta founded another magazine, *Akasztott Ember*, intended as an organ of "universal socialist culture". The manifesto that appeared in the first issue outlined a working plan for a "Cultural Revolutionary International" with identical aims to Proletkult.

The early issues of *Akasztott Ember* also included Barta's and Újvári's own Dadaist poems. In response, critical articles in *Egység* attempted to steer Barta's magazine in the "right direction". In 1923, the name of the magazine published in Vienna, changed from *Akasztott Ember* to *Ék*. *Ék* took an exclusively Proletkult line.



Andor Rosinger  
Review of *Akasztott Ember* (Excerpt)

"Notwithstanding its unclear principles and lack of groundedness, *Akasztott Ember* nevertheless manifests well-defined and serious values. Its fight is against art as a self-contained way of life, and against all forms of aestheticism. [...] The fact that Sándor Barta went in such a short period of time from being a pessimistic, petty-bourgeois anarchist rebelling against all disciplines – even the proletarian – to having to take an increasingly concrete political position, including recognising the legitimacy of the Communist Party, explains the hope that if his theoretical errors and ambiguities were discarded, the Communist and proletarian cultural movements would gain a valuable worker."

*Egység*, vol. 1. no. 4, 10 February 1923, 16.

Sándor Barta's letter to Tibor Déry  
Vienna, 8 November 1922  
Petőfi Literary Museum

Wien 822 November 8,  
Kedves Déri!  
Levelet megkaptam, ígondoltam benne  
levegő kritikái, rést és a Kassák és  
egyéb ügyeket nem tartom ennekadóra sem pusztán személyi ügynek a fölfeletlenül merészségnek tartom az ellene való nyílt harcot, mint az ilyen harokra alkalmat adó tettek elkövetését vagy hallgatolagosa elhallgatásait. Nem nekem, aki 7 évig együtt dolgoztam Kassákkal, de nem Kassákért hanem fentem elvi dolgozóim nem elvon egyszerű ez a kérdés, mint talán magának. Én egy szétzillesztett megalomban álllek, mint aktív résztvevő a megalomban és pedig mindig egy intranszigenz és együttmaradásra törekvő tendenciával. Tehát az, hogy kiváltan részemről egy igen súlyos etikai kérdés is kellett, hogy legyen, én nem a polgári radikális Kassákkal álltam össze, de nem is játékosdára és nem is kis önsz és jesszuita szemfergatására, ha ezt a keményesebb letlehetőségek így kívénjék stb. Kassákkal az én ügyem meg nincs elintézve a talán végerenyesen nem is leez seha. Mert, amit ostnál már nem az én ügyem egy sokkal általánosabb és nagyobb retegeknek felelősséggel tartozó ügy lett és már. Egyezéval, maga aki kívül áll a dolgozaton és bizonyos mertekben meg is érti őt olyan dolgozókat, amikert én őt sehaem fejem megerthetni, addig anig annak vallem nagamat, aminek ma, minden maga nem fog engem megerteni. Nekem semmiféle polgári vállveregetés nem kell, nem kell autoritásnak polgári radikalizmus és lavírozás emberek egyáltalában nem kellenek, Ezen én már alapsan túl vagyok, én mindakelőbbemmel kiléptem balra, de Kassák egyik lábát meg bantfelejtette a polgári fesszekben. Innen az ő nagy eszébsége, amikor arról van szó, hogy mit is keres ő ottan. Én tudom, hogy nem szabadna ott mit kerennie, de ő megmagyarrázta

hegy előkészíti ezt a világherradalmat a tömegek nevelését és az új Európát. Akik szinten ludasak az ilyeniben természetesen igazat adnak neki, de ugye az én szememre csak azok jöhetnek számba, akik nem ludasak.  
Kedves Déri Tibor! ha már a ludaségnél tartunk, hát valljuk be maga is ludas egy kicsit az ilyeniben, és ha egyébként nem volna semmi ellentét is közöttünk, de már ez is elég ahhoz, hogy az A. E. tisztán a szememre etikus kérdés eszembe jöjjön. ~~Én nem tudom, hogy irásait, mert végerenyemen csak annak van dalani~~ értelmé, amit az ember maga is keményen vesz és az egy életével te akaratlanul, egyes kényszerűen - de kényszerűen.  
Remélem maga sem fog megharagudni, azért mindent megírtam. Ebben a reményben szívvelyesen üdvözlél:  
Barta Sándor



Dear Déri,

I received your letter and have reconsidered the critical part of it, and despite this I do not regard Kassák and the other matters as merely personal matters [and] I regard it as fundamentally more moral to enter into open conflict against [him] than to commit or tacitly conceal the acts that gave rise to such conflicts in the first place. No, for me – who worked with Kassák for 7 years, and not for him, but for important points of principle – this question is not as simple as it might be for you. I stand within a movement that has disintegrated, like someone who actively took part in this movement and yet always in an intransigent fashion, striving for belonging together. Thus, for me to have reacted like this required a very serious ethical question on my part. I did not join forces with the bourgeois radical Kassák, but nor out of playfulness or selfish little Jesuit hypocrisy either, if this had offered me a more comfortable way of life, etc. My problem with Kassák has still not been resolved and perhaps it never will be. Because what he does is no longer my business, and it has become a much more general matter owing responsibility to a much broader layer. In a word, you, who stand outside things and even understand him in some respect for things that I will never understand him for, as long as I declare myself to be what I am today, I say that you will never understand me. I do not need any sort of bourgeois pat on the back, I do not need bourgeois radicalism as an authority or manoeuvring types at all. I am fundamentally past this point, and left with both feet facing left, but it seems that Kassák still has one foot in the bourgeois nest. He bangs on about this at length when it comes to what he's still doing there. I know that he has no business there, but he explains that he is preparing the world revolution, educating the masses and the new Europe. Those also complicit in such things naturally find in his favour, but as far as I am concerned, only those matter who are not complicit.

Dear Tibor Déri, while we are on the subject of complicity, let us admit that you too are a little complicit in such things, and otherwise there would be no conflict between us, but that alone is for me clearly enough to prevent the A.E. [*Akasztott Ember*] from writing purely from an ethical point of view. For at the end of the day, only that which one takes seriously and with which one documents – involuntarily, and as utter commonplace – one's life has any meaning.

I hope that you won't be angry at me for everything I have written here. In this hope, and with cordial greetings,

Sándor Barta

# The First Gathering of the Mad in a Garbage Bin

The first two issues of *Akasztott Ember* published Sándor Barta's cabaret sketch about the "Nyeherehe" magazine run by "Lajos Kollektív" [Lajos Collective] and "Jolán Egyszerű" [Jolán Simple] mocking the artistic views of the *Ma* circle. This Dadaist piece includes a caricature of Kassák and makes fun of the idiosyncratic performance style of Jolán Simon and of the other Vienna members of the activist group: János Mácza [János in the mists], Lajos Kudlák [Lajos the Second], Sándor Bortnyik [Alexander der Grosse], and Andor Németh [A quiet melancholic].

Sándor Barta  
Az örültek első összejövetele  
a szemetesládában (1. rész)  
[The First Gathering of the Mad  
in a Garbage Bin, Part 1]  
*Akasztott Ember*  
vol. 1. nos. 1-2, 1 November 1922  
Kassák Museum

**AZ ÓRÜLTEK  
ELSŐ ÖSSZEJÖVETELE  
A SZEMETESLÁDÁBAN**

VAGY  
NÉPSZERŰEK LESZÜNK NÉPSZERŰEK  
VAGY  
MI A KÜLÖNBÉG AKTIV ES PASSZIV HULLA KÖZÖTT  
I R T A :  
EGY IGAZI KÖLTŐ  
EIN WAHRER DICHTER  
EGÉSZEN NÉPSZERŰ NYELVEZETEN A JÓ POLGÁROKNAK  
ES JÓ FORRADALMÁROKNAK  
Á M E N

■ ■

**R Ö V I D E L Ő S Z Ó**  
azaz  
**az örültek gyakorlatibb jelszavai:**

1. A Nyeherehe az egyetlen lap, amely nem akar semmit.
2. Ennélfogva foglalkozik irodalommal, művészettel! társadalomtudománnyal, politikával és művészettel.
3. A Nyeherehe tagjai aktív hullák.
4. A Ny. olvasói ellenben passzív (büdös) hullák.
5. Ezt bizonyítani fölösleges.
6. A Ny. felszólítja az emberiséget, hogy rohogjon.
7. A Ny. tagjai jó suszterlegények is lehetnének.
8. A Ny. olvasóival megnyugtatótlanság közöljük, hogy tegnap reggel 5 jól kifejtett tagunkat táplálkozás kísérlete miatt felakasztottak.
16. A Ny. tagjai összesen 2 évesek.
18. A Ny. olvasói sohasem fogják a Ny. íróit megérteni, erről az igazgatóság állandóan gondoskodik.
25. De ez tulajdonképpen nem is fontos.
- X. Mindabból, amit ittag leírtam egy szó sem igaz.
- Y. És az ezutánból sem.
- Q. Viszont ez még senkitem jogosít fel arra, hogy túlbecsüljön bennünket.

100. El kell indulni!  
100. " " " !  
100. " " " !  
60. Aktív és passzív hulla között alapjában véve nincs is semmi különbség.  
00. Az egész csak egy rossz vicc volt.  
47-0-92. Csak univerzum van és aktivitás.  
A) Eljen!  
B) Hoch!  
C) Zsivió!

I. A NYEHEREHE EGY LYUK MAKARÓNI NÉLKÜL  
II. A NYEHEREHE TEHAT EGY LAP  
III. 2 NYEHEREHE AZ 2 LAP.

**Nyeherehe**  
világzemléleti és kozmetikai műinlézet  
KOLLEKTIV LAJOS & CO.

■ ■

**A DRÁMA SZEREPLŐI EGYBEN A SZATIRIKUS RÉSZ KEZDETE**

Kollektív Lajos . . . . . Játssza! Ugyanó! Azok a rémhírek, mintha Kollektív Lajost többi időben Egyszerű Jolán játssza, sajnos szörnyű tevédesen alapszanak, mert az igazság mélyen tisztelt emberiség az, hogy

Egyszerű Jolán . . . . . is csak Kollektív Lajos játssza, bizony ti jó urak és méla férfiak.  
Játssza: János az ember. Törtenék A Mount Everesten, a szellem neutrális zónában.  
Játssza egy szakképzett, örült, vegyészernő és kéjgaz.

Játssza: minden időben!

Játssza: Leonardó úr a híres fogszulyozó.  
Játssza: Delibát urbölgy a táv — író.

ELŐLRŐL !!!!!  
bármikor be lehet lépni !!!!!!!!  
Gyermekeknek féláron.

Játssza: Leonardó úr a híres fogszulyozó.  
Játssza: Delibát urbölgy a táv — író.  
? ? ?

Játssza: a jó Gáspár.  
Játssza: 5 Egyszerű lélek.

Játssza: Az igen tisztelt emberiség.

Az ifju Klein.  
Játssza: egy vörös háromszög sárga elpázsien

■ ■

**VIGYAZATI! ANTISZATIRIKUS OLVASANDÓ!**  
**A világ kezdete**

1. Kezdetben vala az individuum.
2. Mikor az Individuum megunt, hogy a kezdet ennyi ideig eltariton kezdődött az ember. (Az ember társas állat, Darwin.)
3. Aztán lett a forradalom. (A forradalom az egyetlen magyarnyelvű orgánium, Marx.)
4. Aztán lett a harc. (A harc az egyetlen, amivel az emberiséget meglehet változtatni, Mr. Lapalap.)
5. Aztán lett a „Le az egyéni imperializmussal“ (lásd a „Nagy mondások“ című folyóiratot)
6. Aztán jött AZ IGÉNYESSEG (használgon „Igényesség“ lelki keserűvizet).
7. Aztán lett a FÜL, föl az egyéni imperializmussal.
8. És aztán jött a képarchitektura.
9. Ez már összesen nyolc.
10. S aztán jött megint a harc.
11. Ekkor a világ már elkészült és a vitorlákat felhúzták a jöpolgári fészkek felé. (12.)

És most pedig jön

**A KIRÁLY**

című fejezet taglalása  
(de csak a legközelebbi számban mélyen tisztelt emberiség. Ja kérem, ilyen az élet és egy szatirikus folyóirat.)

■ ■

(b. s. 1921)

AZ ELETBEN NINCSEK MEG A LEHETŐSÉGEK AZ ONMAGUKERT VALÓ GÉSZTUSOKNAK. VAGY BEALLITHATÓK EGY A MAINAL MAGASABBRENDŰ ELETKONSTRUKCIÓERT FOLYÓ HARC VONALÁBA VAGY PEDIG CSAK A MAI ELETREND KISZOLGALASAT VEGIK. A KÖLÖNBÖZŐ ÖRÜGYEK ALATT VALÓ „LOGAS“ FORMAI TELJESEN MEGVILÁGOSODTAK ELOTTUNK S IDEJE, HOGY LESZAMOLJUNK VELÜK.

6





The First Gathering of the Mad in a Garbage Bin, or: We are going to be Popular, or: What's the Difference between an Active and a Passive Corpse

Written by:

A True Poet

*Ein wahrer Dichter*

In a popular tone for good citizens and good revolutionaries  
*Amen.*

~

Short Preface, or: The most common mottoes of the Mad:

1. *Nyeherehe* is the only magazine that doesn't want anything.
2. Therefore it concerns literature, art, social sciences, politics and art.
3. Members of *Nyeherehe* are active corpses.
4. Readers of *Ny.*, however, are passive (stinking) corpses.
5. There is no need to prove this.
6. *Ny.* prompts Humanity to laugh.
7. Members of *Ny.* could as well be good cobbler's apprentices.
8. We reassure the readers of *Ny.* that yesterday morning, 5 of our well-developed members were hanged due to their attempt to feed.
16. Members of *Ny.* are two years old altogether.
18. Readers of *Ny.* will never understand the writers of *Ny.*, this is taken care of by the directorate.
25. But that's actually not important.

X. Not a single word is true of everything I wrote.

Y. And not even the following.

Q. However, this doesn't entitle anyone to overestimate us.

100. We have to go!

100. " " "!

100. " " "!

60. Fundamentally, there is no difference between an active and a passive corpse.

00. This whole thing was just a bad joke.

47-0-92. There is only the Universe and activity.

A) Hurray!

B) *Hoch!*

C) *Zhivio!*

- I. *Nyeherehe* is a hole without macaroni.
- II. Therefore *Nyeherehe* is a magazine.
- III. 2 *Nyeherehes* are 2 magazines.

*Nyeherehe*

Institute for World View and Cosmetics  
Collective Lajos & Co.

~

The characters of the drama as well as the beginning of the satirical part:

Collective Lajos

Played by Himself! The rumours that Collective Lajos is being played by Simple Jolán are completely unfounded, because the truth is, highly esteemed Humanity, is that

Simple Jolán:

is also played by Collective Lajos, yes, good gentlemen and melancholic men.

János in the Mists:

Played by János, the Man. Happens on *Mount Everest*, in the neutral zone of the spirit.

Lajos the Second:

Played by a qualified madman, chemical engineer and lust gas.

A Quiet Melancholic, or the story of 5 years of perspective, propaganda movie:

Played by all the times!

This excellent copy was given as a courtesy from Sirius.

Again!!!!

You can enter at any time!!!!

Half price for children.

The Man Passing for Sober, *Sittendrama*, or the terrible laugh in the stomach:

Played by Mr. Leonardo, the famous tooth dumbbell.

The Realist Female Writer, or the choir ran out of the church without the priest:

Played by Lady Mirage the telegrapher.

Alexander *der Grosse*, or the first serious talent on Earth:

Played by ???



People, Suprematism, Subscribers, Dr. Cinquecento, Mr. Rodchenko, Quattrocento and Mr. Cylinder, or is a handsome *Hosenträger* more modern than an equally handsome suspender?

We will get back to this difference later.

Choir of translators:

Played by the Good Gaspar.

Choir of screamers:

Played by 5 simple souls.

Mass! Phew! *Alovani! Mars! Doßre Jano! Missis Grün!*

Played by the highly esteemed Humanity.

The one who carries the scenery:

The young Klein.

Revolution:

Played by a red triangle on a yellow ellipse.

~

Caution! Anti-satirical part. Should be read!

The beginning of the World

1. In the beginning, there was the Individuum.
  2. When the Individuum was tired of the beginning lasting so long, there was the Man. (The Man is a social animal. Darwin.)
  3. Then there was the Revolution. (The Revolution is the only Hungarian-speaking medium. Marx.)
  4. Then there was the struggle. (Struggle is the only way to change Humanity. Mr. *Laplap*.)
  5. Then there was the "Down with individual Imperialism." (See the magazine "Big Words".)
  6. Then there was EXACTION. (Use "Exaction" bitter water for your soul.)
  7. Then there was UP, up with individual Imperialism.
  8. And then there was the Picture architecture.
  9. Altogether this is eight.
  10. And then there was the struggle, again.
  11. But by this time, the world was ready and the sails were hoisted over the homes of the good citizens.
  - (12.) And now comes the discussion of the chapter entitled THE KING.
- (But only in the next issue, highly esteemed Humanity. Oh please, that's life and a satirical magazine.)

~

## The First Gathering of the Mad in a Garbage Bin, Part 2.

It was at night. You could still hear the guffawing of the moon. Under a street lamp I spied the garbage bin out of which a chorus of male bassos swirled upward like smoke.

I stepped over to the ventilation hole and my eyes saw a horrible sight.

2 marionette-like women and 5 men with matted hair sat with bulging eyes, leaning back against the wall of the bin, that makes 7 of them

The silence was ghostly. A dreamy daze. Stillness of night.

12 church clocks each struck 12 times = 144

A housemaid holding a bottle of lye sat upon Christ's shoulder. A streetcar conductor with blue trouser button eyes on his beer belly.

OH WOE!

WHEREUPON I ENTERED

The snoring of seals placed under the doorsill painted my face yellow.

A birdlike candle flame guttered in the middle, red ink blinked from a blue skullcup, and above the members

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

rusty, skinny gallows nails roosted, like crows

PSST!

AND THEN

Someone with a decidedly Slovakian accent raised his forefinger. At the same time some burglars who deserved better extracted with their pickaxes 13 maidens drowned in honey from the safe of an Argentinean millionaire (Daily Mail)

"THE KING," whispered a thin female voice, and there was adoration and there was a coffin, and only the labour unions of birds of paradise flourished throughout the cosmos.

And this was when Collective Lajos, while he aimed the soles of his feet at an acute angle toward the polar star of the rising Big Dipper, pronounced his historical Aphrodite:

The *Hosenträger* have died!

Long live the suspenders!

*Ho-o-senträger*, sang a thin female voice, *Ho-o-senträger*

...Only the story of Quiet Melancholic or the story of 5 years of perspective made a totally incomprehensible motion, and before

Collective Lajos could push the trouser button placed under his hairline, he pulled a hatpin from a hiding place next to his mouth, stuck it into every one of his fingers, extracting 2,452,678 cells, and began to speak at a rapid pace about the history of the graverobbers of Madagascar down to our days, while inscribing 48 little circles like this in the air and rattling nonstop: *[drawing]*

“Old grave-robber,” hissed The Man Passing for Sober through his teeth, while launching into an urgent exposé, of outward curves which he vehemently labelled the vile psychic constructs of the bourgeoisie, and then went on:

Fatheads! Bourgeois! Non-painters!

The straight soul does not recognize any geometric curves!

Death! groaned the assembly.

Down with space, the dimension of winter and the belly!

By now no one paid any attention to Quiet Melancholic; he was playing chess with his poor little cells off in a corner and he kept squeezing more and more of them out of his fingers.

The muttering and mumbling rose to a chaos pitch.

Collective Lajos asked permission to speak in order to explain his misunderstood words:

And he spoke:

Dear comp... *[circle]*!

My highly esteemed sirs!

This is not how we play, balls to the highly esteemed practical speaker before me – the cosmos we are talking about is on my side! Quiet Melancholic and The Man Passing for Sober for a good reason are two painters, but my good sirs, painting is “+” killed by life itself, dearly beloved fellow mourners (he faltered), that bestial Life which we kept capitalizing in our proclamatory lines. I however will bring it back to you again, ah, tread softly around it, its name, ah, is beautiful, but its ears, alas, are awfully full of spiders and linger disconsolately in the department store called twilight.

But it is the only one that does not want anything.

For “picture architecture does not want anything.”

Picture architecture exists because it can!

But painting does not exist for it is dead.

I am Collective Lajos.

My wife is the first Dadaist actress.

Sándor Barta is a genius.

And this will never end.

And now Simple Jolán stepped out of the closet bearing a condensing vessel tied with a blue ribbon upon her right palm and she too instantly announced that surely a-oo-da ba-oo-da hojo-modo-ho, and what's more it's snow, and then stood on two legs and her vo-o-o-ice so-o-o-oared (vvvvvvvvvv) and it was made of hedgehogs (vvvvvvvvvv) and tissue paper airplanes that tried in vain to mount the spiral stairway leading to the stars and kept crashing among the towers, amidst the simple-minded buttercups.

János, who at the time was imprisoned in Kosice, now suddenly appeared in a forest of shining coconut palms in the sky of the garbage bin, with dreadful clumps of hair hanging from his ears, and we quite distinctly heard as he nearly closed his parchment lips, probably meaning to say:

Ex, mex, lex,  
serpent, prunes, golden key,  
blue and not green curtain, moveable actors  
veiled sounds from the direction of the orchestra  
two or three more curtains  
a woman who pretends to be the backdrop  
a jaundiced eye floating to and from between the  
curtains  
yellow yellow yellow blue blue blue  
a church chord in underpants loiters in the middle  
(all curtains down)

"Antler, orange, bat ear," said someone in the ghostly night, the yellow spot we all carried on our foreheads, and we all saw Simon at the gathering of spiritualists, spookily scratching himself under the bed, his hair curtained to her spiritual eyes, his fingers in a plate fragment, he was conjuring up his favourite topic, the bird of paradise consumed for lunch:

O little bird, he stammered,  
will I be a meteorite?  
will I be a meteorite?

This was followed by a dreamy silence, then a soft murmur arose from the corners and Lajos the Second stood up to manage the following circular telegram to all the organized quadruped accord workers of Europe:

Fellow workers! Quadrupeds! Non-Jews!  
In Budapest the equality of cab horses and army

officers has been proclaimed!  
Death to them! roared the assembly.  
Arise and march in closed ranks to the House of  
Parliament!  
Guitars and bread and butter are required!  
Military band music all day Long! *Heurige* in the  
moving water pipes!  
*Nut fur Proletarier, die durch schamlose  
kommunistische Propaganda nicht Antiviehe sein  
wollen!*  
Bourgeoisie and Police are requested to stay on  
the sidewalk  
*und auf gegebene Zeichen mitsingen!*

The procession turned in front of the Green Hunter where  
excellent fodder is available for the highly esteemed *Arbeiterklasse*.  
ARISE! ARISE! ARISE!  
!FOR THE GREAT RUMBLE!

Pee-yew, said humanity, referring to Lajos the Second. *Ein wahrer  
Dichter nur* our Collective Lajos, even if Simple Jolán constantly  
wants to make the esteemed world order believe the opposite.  
But lo, the realist writer lady stood up, raising her two index fingers  
and said in the tense silence:

I'm still so little,  
But I'll soon grow up,  
In a year or two  
I'll write the new prose.

Upon this unexpected activity all eyes turned toward Alexander *der  
Grosse* lest he let on his already well-developed eccentricity, when  
he suddenly snatched off his hat and struck up the Activist anthem:

I, the universal man,  
greet you  
in the milk-headed cosmos!  
"Hallelujah," sobbed the chorus of voices.

And this is where the ritual ended; the members, in order to simplify  
transport, picked up the simple furnishings, and the procession,  
chanting psalms, wound its way into the cosmos.  
And at the head marched Collective Lajos with Simple Jolán by his  
side, followed by the Quiet Melancholic or the story of five years'



perspective, carrying the suicidal cells in his right hand, and by his side marched The Man Who Passed for Sober, carrying a placard that said:

Only a Thrill seeker!

and in his wake came János with a parachute and little angels on each side were carrying the blue, then came the realist lady writer carrying the sun on her finger together with all of its conveniences as well as an elevator, then came Alexander *der Grosse* with two light journals under his arms and a variety of posters appealing for money, just as Collective Lajos had described him in writing, and last came Lajos the Second he laughing gas and chemical engineer who kept mumbling:

gentlemen laugh laugh laugh

life is a carousel carousel carousel

Whereupon we arrived under a street lamp as tall as a giraffe, whose head, as we could clearly see, contained a box of diamonds between two grinder wheels. The procession came to a halt. Next, a horrible thing happened!

THE

documents of the tragedy or the break:

Collective Lajos suddenly halted under the gas lamp and his excellent X-ray vision discovered a new but nonetheless yellow artistic element.

"God's eyes can see all, do not steal my soccer ball," said the Quiet Melancholic, and before Collective Lajos could get there, he put his foot on the new but nonetheless yellow artistic element, which, at the time, was a bespattered streetcar ticket leading a profound psychic existence.

The opto-haptic orchestra especially hired for the occasion to play over the city laid an irreparable kibosh on the evening.

Collective Lajos instinctively stepped back.

A Suprematist square burst into flower under the Quiet Melancholic's nose.

And now it came to pass, yes, in spite of the fact that Collective Lajos had already set up all the typeface for the latest number of *Nyeherehe*.

Quiet Melancholic triumphantly bent down to touch upon the meaning of all creation, but Collective Lajos with a sweeping gesture and a mocking smile turned and flipped his cloak aside to let us see that alas his belt had already boasted of two hundred streetcar tickets swinging from a ring.

And in the frightened silence we could hear bursts of his mocking laughter all the way from distant *Amalienstrasse*.

THE END OF EVERYTHING  
AND OF THE FIRST GATHERING  
OF MADMEN.

*Akasztott Ember*, vol. 1. nos. 1–2, 1 November 1922  
and vol. 1. nos. 3–4, 20 December 1922.

(Part 2 translated by John Bátki in Benson – Forgács 2002, 328–332.)

## Éljen a gépművészet!



Ime a gép és az ember, aki felelőtlenül elkiáltja: Éljen a gépművészet! És abban a korban kiáltja el ezt, amelynek legjellemzőbb gép-alkotásai nem az élet felteremtésére, hanem összezúzására szolgálnak. És itt nincs különbség a cellakamrás felhőkarcoló és a páncélkonstrukciós cirkáló közt. Mindkettő ugyanannak az elátkozott kornak plasztikus monumentuma. És ebben a korban csak ilyen és hasonló célokat szolgáló gépművészeire van szükség. Ezt melegen figyelmebe ajánljuk a gépművészet magyar híveinek is.

### Bábjáték

A szín közepén egy mély háromszögbe vágott bányanyílás  
A nyílás fölött kis harangocska, mellette vöröslámpás ég  
A tárna mögül jobboldalt keskeny sín fut végig a színen  
Baloldalt ablaktalan munkásházak.  
A nyílás fölött most vékony hangon megszólal a harang  
A házakból elindulnak az emberek. Fejük helyén nagy csákányok  
ülnek. Karjaik végig szántják az utakat. Mellükből artikulá-  
látlan hangok szállnak az ég felé.

Harang csak énekel.  
Lépésüktől mindig nagyobbra nyílik a bánya szája  
S mellükből fájdalmasan sirni kezdenek a hangok  
A legfiatalabb csákányát megforgatja a levegőben és hirtelen föl-  
nyújtja a fejét  
Az egész menet egy pillanatra szótlanul megáll  
Elöl a legöregebb énekelni kezd: A gyerekeink ... egy ... kettő ...  
egy ... kettő ...

Ujra elindulnak  
Legfiatalabb vállára emeli a csákányt  
Mellükből újra felsirnak a hangok  
Legöregebb a harang melletti lámpást a nyakába akasztja  
A nyílás szája mindig kisebb lesz és lassan elnyeli őket  
Jobboldalt nagy ostorosember kis lovacskát állít a sín közepébe  
A lovacska fara mögé egy fekete vasszekret gurít  
Lovacska a gazdája elé fordul

Az ember kezében forog az ostor  
Lovacska föléll szeméből meleg kövek gurulnak a földre  
Ember a nagy szekeret a lovacska nyakába fűzi, aztán az ostorral  
égő csikokat éget a hátra  
Lovacska nyerítve a tárna mögé fut  
Baloldalt kinyílnak a házak kapui  
A küszöbön sápadt asszonyok ülnek nagy barna cserépfazekakkal  
az ölükben. Néha szájukhoz emelik a fazekakat, de karjuk  
fáradtan visszaesik

Az első ház küszöbén az asszony előtt gyerekek térdepelnek  
Elsőgyerek magasan szája fölé emeli a fazekat  
Másodikgyerek: kezével fájó fejét támogatja,  
Elsőgyerek: mama ... mamácskám ... én ... jó voltam ...  
Anya: sir, a gyerekek ujjait a szájukba rakja az ajtó elé fekteti őket,  
aztán az üres fazekakkal a falu felé röpül.  
A második házból egy öregasszony vizsgálja az eget, az udvaron  
álló köhöz tipeg és sietve a ház tetéjére rakja  
Jobboldalt a tárna háta mögül két kamasz csuszik elő  
Elsőkamasz: a szín közepén hirtelen elnyúlik:

Merre!?!?

Másodikkamasz: Egy percre ő is összecuslik aztán fölpattan:

JÁTSZANI!

Lovacska már harmadszor fut elő a tárna mögül, hosszan fájdal-  
masan fölnyerít  
Elsőkamasz: ijedten megforgatja a fejét  
Másodikkamasz: karjaira emeli a másik vékony testét és lassan elfut  
vele.

A lovacskának most összecuslik a lábai nyelvélvel kőrön a gaz-  
dája lábát nyalogatja

Kocsis kezében forog az ostor, forog, forog  
Lovacska sir testét újra föltilja és elindul  
A nyílás fölött megszólal a kis harang  
Az asszonyok ijedten kiforognak a házakból  
A bánya szája fölnyílik  
Emberk jönnek karjukon a legfiatalabb munkással.  
Az utakon asszonyok röpülnek.  
Legfiatalabb munkást: a földre fektetik.  
Egyik asszony elvágódik a lába előtt  
A haldokló még egyszer fölül:

MIÉRT!!

Aztán élettelenül visszaesik.  
A többiek csak állnak, szájuk hangtalanul mozog  
Valaki lassu templomi énekbe kezd  
A kocsis megjelenik a lovacskával  
Halottat az üres szekérbe emeli és kifut a színről  
A munkások újra visszacsuszna a bányába  
Az asszonyok elindulnak a házak felé  
Csak a halott felesége jajgat föl néha a közepén.

Újvári Erzsi

### Páris ég

(Részlet Iwan Goll époszából)

Chicagóban az utestre zuhan a közismert téglá  
Grönlandban felfordul egy foka  
Shantangban így dudol a pénzügyminiszter:

Van egy aranykoronám  
szép, tejszín fogamon

Van száz egypár részvényem  
A vasérc Olympuszon

S van mintegy huszezer évre  
Családi sírbitmon

Ó kérem  
Ó kérem  
Nem csak feggel, de délbe  
sőt este is arany van fogamon.

Mire beadja lemondását  
Távirat Moszkvából Gomorrhába:

#### FORRADALOM

Munkások a kék villamos tankokban elfoglalják a Louvret  
Az összes kávéházteraszokon viritanak a májusi kokárdát  
„Singer-féle varrógépek“  
A vasutasok sztrájkolnak  
Expressz vonatok elpihennek a fenyvesekben  
Négy napra  
De zümmögnek a Radiogrammák  
Az Eiffeltorony méhet  
A távolból felvillog a Mont-Blanci állomás  
Gyémántos jelzések  
„Vegyétek testvérek az Extrablattot!“  
Az eszmények eszménye  
Boxmatch Jersey-Cityben  
Az új század ököfjoga  
Mészárosrestültek küldöttségeket menesztenek az óceánon túlra  
Vigyáza! Első round!  
Európa lekezel a néger Zeusszal  
Kék-fehér-vörös az uszónadrágja  
Izzó-acélt boltozódik a férfi mell  
Morse szikrázik  
Négy körül dágasztja a világ becsületét  
Amerikában megálltak az összes óraművek  
A municiógyárak leálltak  
Az atlantióceánon megmerevedtek a gőzösök  
Negyedik Round  
Sziklák görögnek  
A bankokat kifosztották  
77 öngyilkosság  
300 gutaütés  
Knock out!

#### KUNCOG A SZABADSÁG SZOBRA

És gyászként minderre kirobban a háború  
Csontvázak verik a dobokat  
A cukorárak robognak a magasba  
Dijmentes tömegtemetkezések  
A marhavagyonokban rohög a felszallagozott hős  
Egy szív lityeg az okmánypapírok közé ragasztva  
Kóporsókból való D-vonatok vonulnak  
Roma és Stokholm között.

És ekkor  
az üres kávéházi asztal mellett  
egy GENIE  
feltalálja az emberszeretet!

In the middle of the stage is cut a deep triangle of mine shaft  
Above the shaft a small bell, next to it a red-lantern sky  
From behind the shaft, a narrow track runs from the right  
To the left, windowless workers' houses.  
Above the shaft a bell peals now thinly  
From the houses people are setting off. In place of their heads sit  
large pick axes. Their arms plough the roads. Inarticulate voices  
rise from their breasts towards the sky.  
The bell just sings.  
The mouth of the mine widens and widens with every step they take  
And in their breasts the voices start crying in pain  
The youngest rotates his pick axe in the air and suddenly lifts up  
his head  
The whole procession stops for a moment in silence  
The oldest in front starts singing: Our children... one... two... one...  
two...  
They set off again  
The youngest lifts his pick axe to his shoulder  
From their breasts the voices cry out once more  
Around his neck hangs the oldest the lantern next to the bell  
The mouth of the opening growing ever smaller and slowly swallows  
them up  
On the right a man with a great whip places a small horse in the  
middle of the track  
Behind the horse's tail he rolls a black iron cart  
Little horse kneels before his master  
The man takes the whip in his hand  
Little horse stands up from his eyes hot stones roll to the ground  
Man ties the great cart to little horse's neck, then with the whip  
burns burning stripes into its back  
Little horse runs whinnying before the shaft  
On the left the gates of the houses open  
Pale women sitting on their doorsteps with large brown earthen  
pots in their laps. They may raise the pots to their lips but their  
arms fall back tiredly  
On the doorstep of the first house children kneeling before the  
women  
First child lifts the pot high above his mouth  
Second child: supporting his aching head with his hands,  
First child: Mama... My Mama... I... was... good...  
Mother: cries, puts the children's fingers in their mouths lays them  
before the door then with the empty pots flies towards the village.

From the second house the old woman examining the sky, toddles  
towards the stone standing in the yard and places it hurriedly on  
the roof of the house  
To the right two adolescents crawling out from behind the shaft  
First adolescent: stretching out suddenly in the middle of the stage:  
Where to?!?  
Second adolescent: also collapses for a second then jumps up:  
To play!  
Little horse runs out from behind the shaft for a third time, whinnies  
long in pain  
First adolescent: turns his head in fright  
Second adolescent: lifts the other's thin body in his arms and slowly  
runs off with it.  
Little horse's legs now collapse his tongue licks his master's feet  
entreatingly  
In the wagoner's hands the whip is turning, turning, turning  
Little horse cries pulls his body up and leaves  
The small bell ringing above the shaft  
The women rushing out in fright from the houses  
The mouth of the mine opens  
People coming in their arms the youngest worker.  
On the roads women flying.  
One woman falls headlong over her feet  
The dying sits up once more:  
WHY!!  
Then falls back lifelessly.  
The others just stand there, their mouths moving without a sound  
Someone begins singing a slow church hymn  
The wagoner appears with his little horse  
Lifts the dead man into his empty cart and runs off stage  
The workers slip back again into the mine  
The women set off for the houses  
Only the wife of the dead man remains in the middle sporadically  
lamenting.

*Akaszott Emger*, vol. 1. nos. 1-2, 1 November 1922, 5.



# Keresztmetszet 1922 november

Egy munkásember felesége eladott egy disznót 30.000 márkáért, a pénzt azonban gondatlanságból az asztalon hagyta. Amíg kiment a szobából, hároméves kislánya a pénzt a kályhába dobta. Amikor az apa hazatért és meglátta a dolgot, annyira földhódolt, hogy kivitte kislányát az udvarra és egy fejszével mind a két kezét levágta. Az asszony csecsemője fiúrdette éppen a szobában. Gyanúsak tállva férje és leánya hosszú kimaradását, kinézett az udvarra és rémülve látta, hogy férje — nyilván megbánva tettét, — lólakasztotta magát. Amíg férjét a kötéltől levágni igyekezett, csecsemője megfulladt a fürdővízben. Ennyi sok csapást nem bírt ki az asszony, szívvelhűlés érte és holtan terült el.



Mussolini  
in der Pose Napoleons, ein in ganz Italien verbreitetes Foto von dem der ersten Regierung

„Az emberi társadalom Istenőt származik és két néposztályból áll: gazdagokból és szegényekből, akik a földet és a munkát képviselik. Ebből következik, hogy az emberi társadalom Isten akaratára szerint uralkodókból és alárendeltekéből áll, urakból és szolgákból, tanítványokból és tudatlanokból, tőkésekből és proletárokból.“  
(Diomedes Falconio pápai delegátus „Tőke és munka“ című előadásából.)

Don Juan másodszor megmentette  
Don Juan másodszor megmentette  
Don Juan másodszor megmentette  
Don Juan másodszor megmentette

Das Frauen, wunderliche  
Das Frauen, wunderliche  
Das Frauen, wunderliche  
Das Frauen, wunderliche

Don Juan Öngyógyáság  
Don Juan Öngyógyáság  
Don Juan Öngyógyáság  
Don Juan Öngyógyáság

Történekek vaslancolatok: a regénydsággal kalandorától a politikai ceszarómantáskúság, a pénz üvéssé válása alatt az ésszereskedő polgári család pszichéje és az osztálybüntetés Isten pózában, az osztályuraimat, az élet mai „rendjét“ beszentelő Egyház. Nincs önmagáért való!

Sándor Barta  
Keresztmetszet 1922 november  
[Cross-Section, November 1922]  
Akasztott EmGér  
vol. 1. nos. 3-4, 20 December 1922  
National Széchényi Library

## Cirkusz - kapitalizmus!



A HAZ. Ebben a sorozatban a lehetőségekhez mérten meg akarjuk mutatni a kor epidemiáját. Mert az a pszichikai és etikai társadalom, mely olyannyira jellemző a kapitalizmus rablógazdálkodásait, ezekben a házakban találta meg a legpatetikusabb és edényeit. Egy hétköz és nem a lakóipari „orvostudomány“ és nem a stílusban létező különlegesség a legjellemzőbb, de a ház bensőjébe, amely ott van a kíméletlen gonggokon és az egész roskadt kettészakított. Ezer meg ezer kis, egymással ellentétbe szorított világ él ezekben az emberkísérleti cellákban. A polgári lételevélről sorozott éretek, az ember és ember közé leeresztett falak, a legelőszobák adják azt a rendszert, amely, hogy a maga egyetemes kiszámítatlanságát fontartassza millió, és millió kis világra bontja az egyetemes világot. Ha most ezekre a kis kamrákba betekintünk a határos legelőszobákban: az apát, a maga horaribusus hatalmával, és az asszonyt, aki az anyaság és a 18 órási robot világtalanságába vergődik a nyugvóhelyi sparthetek körül, a gyerekeket, akik rossz másai lesznek a szülőiknek, akkor itt áll előtérbe előtérbe: a legelőszobák: megállóság és tehetetlenség: a polgári család.



Az új művészet maga része nem érzi ennek a szükségességét. Nem érzi meg a művészetet, mert nem érzi elismerés nem érzi okból terem. Nem érzi másodszor, mert címlet művészetet csinál és magasabb egyének tekintni a művészetet az életet.

Sándor Barta  
Cirkusz-kapitalizmus, 1-3. rész  
[Circus-Capitalism, Parts 1-3]  
Akasztott EmGér  
vol. 1. nos. 1-2, 1 November 1922, vol. 1. nos. 3-4, 20 December 1922 and vol. 1. no. 5, 15 February 1923  
Kassák Museum and National Széchényi Library

## Cirkusz-kapitalizmus 2.

A MOZI. Ellenében azokkal a dogmatikus történelmi, materialistákkal, akik a szocializmusról folyó harcban agadják a kulturális erők jelentőségét, a jót és logikus kapitalizmus igen fontos területet lát a kultúrában, a maga beigazolására, uránának növelésére és elterjedésére.



uralmát. Már nemcsak hídeg zsarnoksággal, az érzetek szocializmusával és beállítással keveri el önmagát a kultúrások uronormáljában.  
Deják lerózik, hogy belülről omlással szét: autotulán örökös lézárással, forradalmat.  
Igen, az állomány hajóban a merveve illórti maszra leír, ha az óra leírja, a a hídeg, idetes léz kszakija csakról az illúzió költőszándóját.  
Mert reggeliük, az álomkérből is megéri a sok. A cél a munka, a robot. S minden egyéb csak eszköz.  
A számítás halálban hídeg és pontos. Mert ha újra esteleket, nézünk csak, mint a holdfényes felkelésnek a szegyelek, síri omlatában meztelenben vonulnak: az este mézszereket él: a kapitalizmus narkózis verembe.  
Es zászlatlan mentek fölött ott lobognak a táblák:

EHEZUNK  
DE LEGALABB „SZEP“ ALMAINK  
VANNAK.

A kévtárosok alakbágyai a szakadatlanul lövőgő kőrök között egyetlen meleg fejszéként kialszók és virákosnak a kapitalizmus templomai: a muzik, és a meztelen, a lélektörténeti mentek, az este mondályban kinyílódd meztelen lélektörténetek ott lórták testükkel, ki nem élt éjszakai a szűcszorgó lampónak és verev kővelkel lezörgő szenzió-bilványok alatt.  
A perzsa filmozásigat pedig szép eszében a perzsa szánk két a hírtörő harmonikában rakászorgnak loboztatnak eszükre, belelöknek a verükbe, megpályosítják a modorú akartó libakot és lórták az állóit kezékről.  
A film zörgő kiapadással, megmutatja a kapitalizmus ideálját, mint egyetlen létezésre jellemzőt. A bírgazdó bonnyiban hozzával az emberek szűcsöz, megformálja akasztókat és céljait, melyek mind az ő leteketlen szájába bonyolodnak.  
Emberesetek, emberipponok, maszák számít, léli törvényességét alakítja (hogy törvényességére alapozza

## Cirkusz-kapitalizmus 3.

### A GYERMEKERT.

A humanizmus nem halt meg csak elszunnyadt a szociálpolitikusok szivárványai: a lezúrt bolok és lelökési kerekék fölött ime olvasókat: gyermekert.  
Az otrómba és látszó gyérkények alatt a a nyalak kis ósáratonot úregi közt virágnak meg a kapitalizmus szivárványai: a gyermekkertek.  
Fény, friss zamatos lüvet és meleg dombolat tartogatnak gyerekeknek a madozati cerebe csupán csak azt kívánják, hogy reggeliken postósan megjelejenek a katógó szíjjak és zrnáló dugattyúk előtt a szentesítetek a robotban: kegyértelomszűcsök rendjét és igazságot, ma és mindörökké.  
Kastások, kapáljak és araszni járdák mind a tükre, tükre a kultúrának mézsporos, beherített



Istoriái és tükre a körösműi garatja a képreparált papírmassze pálmákkal Tükre az országos erők olajajomatai ágyaitok fölött, a grundok tisztóra a a tuberkulózis csírái a levegőben és lezkek alján.  
Tükre az erők törzsi a kőzetek körül, a gázlángok saponómból, a pallások peszes kőkorcsinai a minden szegényeknek virágai. És az erők, amelyek ott ülnek szemétkében: az ósága és lebére dsabb élet lázalmi: a friss zamatos a bacillusmentes legáramlatok, a zúld elveverésű mezők a gyerekekönözre: áll a a viendőrtató erők időtlenége kamuzatnak és lányainak ledve él, a napos szűcsömbök hízik és sárge eltipusba játékművek: mind csak az úreges, köcserepedett szemétek lázálmaiban ének a TI számotokra s bizony csak karjalók dorongóival a römör és kemény csapat-testeik rohamával: viltátnak egykor valóra.

The wife of a worker sold a pig for 50,000 marks, but carelessly left the money on the table. As soon as she left the room, her three-year-old daughter threw the money into the oven. When the father returned home from work, he was so angry that he took his daughter out into the courtyard and cut off both her hands with an axe. At the time, the mother was bathing the baby in the bathroom. Finding her husband and daughter's long absence suspicious, she looked out into the courtyard and was horrified to see that her husband – clearly regretting his crime – had hanged himself. While she was trying to cut him down from the rope, the baby drowned in the bath water. Unable to withstand so many blows, her heart failed and she dropped down dead.

“Human society comes from God and consists of two classes: the rich and the poor, representing capital and labour. It follows from this that human society is, according to God's will, composed of rulers and subjects, masters and servants, educated and ignorant, capitalists and proletarians.” (From the lecture *Capital and Labour* by papal delegate Diomedes Falconio.)

An unbreakable iron chain of stories: from the adventurers in the literary jungle to the political megalomaniacs, the psyche of the bourgeois family disintegrating under the roaring idol of money and class supremacy posing as God, the Church consecrates class rule and the 'order' of life today. Nothing for its own sake!

*Akasztott Ember*, vol. 1. nos. 3-4, 20 December 1922.

*The House*

In this series we want to present the epidermis of our time as best we can. For the psychic and ethical contents that so characterises the ruthless exploitation of capitalism has found its most plastic vessels in these houses. This is a tenement house and most characteristic is not the worn 'ornamentation' of the walls or the outward appearances in style, but the inner soul of the house there which writhes along the half-metre walkways and along the entire ramshackle cage system. Thousands upon thousands of small conflicting worlds live in the cells of human mush. These are the orthopaedic constraints of middle-class spiritual education, and the walls cast between man and man are the most complete representation of the system which, in order to maintain its universal exploitation, breaks universal reality into millions and millions of small worlds. If we now imagine in these small chambers and also on the gravest of furniture: the father with his hierarchical power, and the mother, toiling around the square kitchen range in the blindness of motherhood and her 18-hour working day, and the children, who will be pale imitations of their parents, then what we have in front of us is: the most desperate: the middle-class family.

Collectivity, they say, means uniformity as opposed to the individual 'richness' of today.

There is no more desperate poverty than what happens in these 'individual' spiritual and material cells.

Collectivity means pure, broad and friendly communities and its forms of collective life frameworks. It means reducing the cells and progress towards shared halls, parks, works and pleasures.

It is not our fault that we cannot confront the objectivization of this collective urban construction with the present reality, even if only in teaching and demonstration models.

Most new artists do not feel the need to doing so. They do not feel this because they do not create primarily for *human* reasons. They do not feel this secondarily because theory produces art and considers art a higher unity than life. Hence this question mark.

We look forward to hearing from those who will give their lives today in the fight for life and not for theories.

*Akasztott Ember*; vol. 1. nos. 1-2, 1 November 1922.

*The Cinema*

Contrary to those dogmatic historical materialists who deny the significance of cultural forces in the struggle for socialism, sober and logical capitalism sees culture as a very important domain for its own justification, for the perpetuation and masking of its domination.

On the outskirts, among the mountains of windows and incessantly whistling exterminators, the only warm nest on offer and in waiting are the temples of capitalism: the cinemas. And the processions, the worn-out processions, the processions knocking about in the swill of the night line up with their dead tired bodies and their un-lived lives, beneath the dribbling paper lanterns and the sensational icons loitering with bloody knives.

The winding cinematic roads however meander, nice and quietly, through the drizzle of scents and the wail of the accordion, into their helpless minds, settling down into their bloodstreams, deadening their twitching legs and crushing the fists out of their hands.

The film pours forth inexhaustibly, presenting the ideals of capitalism as the only possible maximum of life. In the oppressive gloom it reaches for people's hearts, forming their wants and goals, all of which pile up in its bottomless sack.

It shapes the spiritual legitimacy and types of human fates, human types and masses (in order to legitimize its domination). It blends itself into the wretched of the outskirts no longer with just cold journalism, the sentimentalism and bestiality of emotions.

It now enters them to disintegrate them from within: into an unconscious permanent revolution, their revolution. Yes, in the ship of the pious, the trapped masses cry out when time is up and the cold, business-like hand cuts the umbilical cord of illusions from their minds.

Because it is morning, and the sleeping sickness has also been too much of a good thing. The aim: work, drudgery. And everything else is merely an instrument.

The settling of accounts is fatally cold and precise. Because when night falls again, just watch as the poor set off like sleepwalkers, marching in dense, insoluble processions: to the meat market of the night: into the narcosis pits of capitalism. And above their flagless processions the banners are flying:

WE ARE HUNGRY BUT AT LEAST WE HAVE "BEAUTIFUL" DREAMS.

*Akasztott Ember*, vol. 1. nos. 3-4, 20 December 1922.

*The Kindergarten*

Humanism is not dead, it has just dozed off on the pillow-shaped hearts of social politicians: above the soaking bushes and drooping fences, we read: children's garden.

Beneath the clumsy smoking factory chimneys and between the small cavities of the firewalls, even the heart chambers of capitalism can blossom: the children's gardens.

They offer your children light, fresh succulent grass and warm hills, and all they ask in return is that you present yourselves punctually every morning in front of the clattering belts and firing silver pistons and sanctify yourselves in drudgery: the order and justice of bread distribution, today and forever.

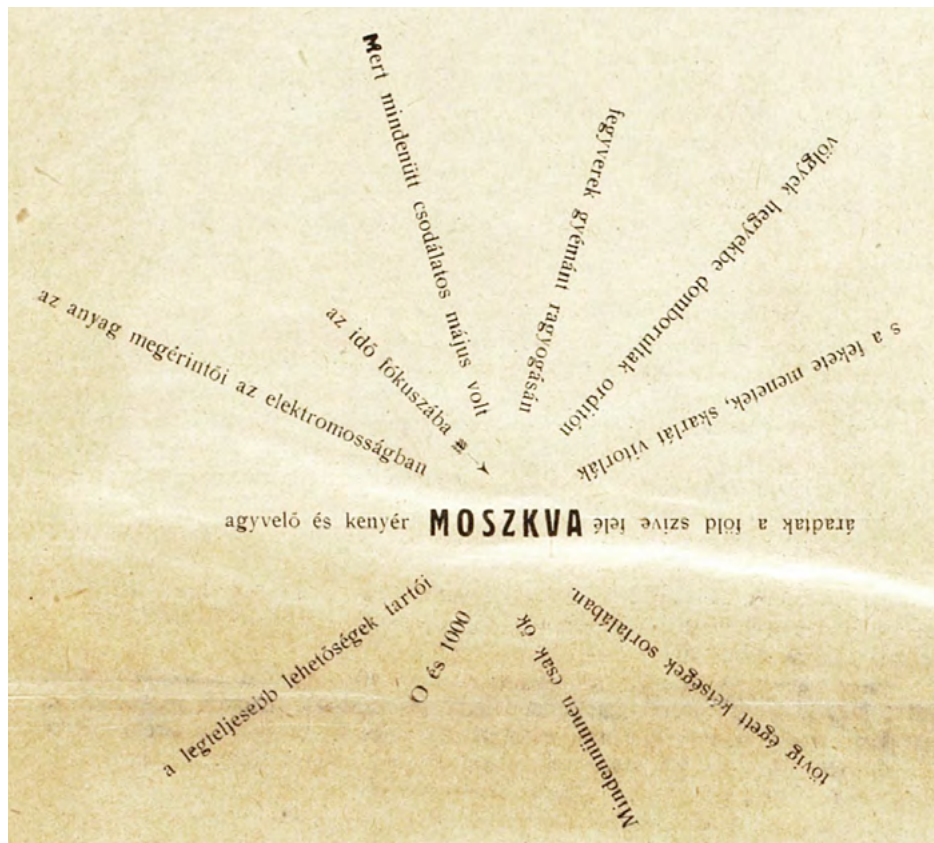
Canals, gateways and pavement spans are all yours, yours are the fenced-in, lime-coated avenues of the outskirts, and yours are the gullet of pubs with their ready-made papier maché palm trees. Yours are the oil prints of oxygen-rich forests above your beds, the flour-dusty empty lots and the tuberculosis buds in the air and at the bottom of pots. Yours is the forests' torsos around the lavatories, the sun-globes of gas flames, the mouldy windflowers in the attics and all the flowers of your poverty. And the forests that sit there in your eyes: the fevered dreams of a life richer in oxygen and protein: the fresh flavours and bacillus-free currents of air, the lazy green fields under the youngsters' bronze bodies and the timelessness of wandering forests for the sake of your adolescents and daughters, the sunny, broad-domed houses and yellow elliptic games fields: all live for YOU in the fevered dreams of your hollow, cracking eyes and surely only with the bludgeoning of your arms and the surge of your solid, hard team bodies: can they one day come true.

*Akasztott Ember*, vol. 1. no. 5, 15 February 1923.



## Crystal of Time: Moscow

One of Barta's last experimental, avant-garde pieces of writing in his Vienna period appeared in *Ék* in 1923. Unlike his socialist-realist reports about Moscow and the direct propagandist tone of Újvári's 1929 poem *A vörös Fekete tenger partján* [On the Shores of the Red Black Sea], the story *Idő kristálya: Moszkva* [Crystal of Time: Moscow] is not an analysis of a specific geographical place. In a rapid succession of expressive, condensed, film-like images, it speaks of humanity suffering under the capitalist regime and the symbolic space offering the only refuge from this world – post-Revolution Moscow. *Idő kristálya: Moszkva* combines the fable-like narrative of Barta's Expressionist work with the linguistic experimentation of his Dadaist manifestos and its plot presages the science-fantasy narrative of *Csodálatos történet* [A Wonderful Story] published two years later.



Sándor Barta  
*Idő kristálya: Moszkva*  
[Crystal of Time: Moscow]  
*Ék*  
vol. 1. no. 2 (7), 15 May 1923  
Kassák Museum

Visions of a two-eared man in 1923  
on the plantation owners of life  
of destinies burned to the quick and which burn  
of bakers whitewashed white, who wilt black  
around bonfires of joy  
of withered road menders whom nobody can any longer distinguish  
from the roads'  
wilted fruits  
of desperate suicides transported towards the flag-bedecked  
crematoria by  
the acrobats of free thought  
of trollops who sail through their lives in the green lavatories of the  
boulevards  
the seas obfuscating everything  
of simpleton lamplighters who wandered above the trenches with  
their broken hearts  
of catastrophes around which the most abject nonsense passes out  
and the blue bushes of alcohol are planted beneath the miners' eyes  
of processions of 17-year-old girls streaming towards the factory  
districts  
and flow into the hygienic basins of corpses  
of doorsteps, from which the tormented  
set off for new aims  
and of doorposts under which their broken hearts  
the unhappy of the roads and aims are converted  
of the houses which like the salt pillars of life just stand immobile  
and embrace the fevered dreams of the young and  
unmask the pseudo-childishness of the old  
of the silence and the syrup that envelops all our bodies  
and if we move without a trace it will absorb and fill our place  
of the wretched and the brides who meet first for the first time  
beneath the golden corpses of church pillars  
and then never see each other again  
of the quiet alleyways of the convulsing boulevards  
of the trains running on snow charges which sing the intersections  
of brains and speed  
apart on the peaks – and transport the American dollar kings  
towards the petroleum sources  
and of the good people too who cry themselves sorrow  
before the silver platters of democracies  
and I know that all the while the corpses of objectivity will fire up  
the lanterns

of their obsessions  
but I will then humbly smile  
and lift up my palm which will be empty and pale  
and there will be a flower from the ranks of the lowest of the low  
from whom I burst out  
and for whom I always reached for the lymph of things and  
for the panopticon of life as for the sole deep and human mass  
every time I had to reverse my pilgrimage.  
I am one with them because they carry me and I carry them  
and because in their cement nervure and air-liquor heads  
the candles of the most complete possibilities are loitering about.

*It happens: despite every contrary impression on earth. Also acting:  
angels, cockerels, dung flies, church bells, a house in the alleyway, a gin  
palace with 14 tramps, newspapers that flutter in the morning, a hansom  
cab nag who wishes to make known his most recent observations, a  
parliament in which the president poses various questions to those  
assembled, and who find it not in the least remarkable that all of the  
questions end in an answer; a concert hall in which the entire congregation  
led by a panther-haired virtuoso flutters into social harmony, and it is  
no coincidence that even in religion classes the Artist is a man who has  
almost made sense of things, but then suddenly pulls the planks out from  
underneath himself – to develop further; and even more people who tied  
themselves to the planks which despite this slipped out from underneath  
them. And let there be an evening for all of this, for it is then that the  
silence sketches out the tired rhythms and fevered twisted nerves of the  
living onto the walls and firewalls, the trudging of horses and the simple-  
minded smoke columns of the canals.*

Only the earth turns ceaselessly.

*And then a bell begins to sing in the province of Omsk which collapses  
white under the sky with the dark arms of houses, and sings of 400  
students who were crucified in 1917 by bourgeois humanism on the balcony  
of a tsarist general:*

O woe like the sandbags like the hunchbacked sandbags  
they filed silently into the trenches  
and o woe like the straw sacks like the smooth straw sacks  
they flatten under the earth!

*At this moment beneath the buttoned-up towers someone mused:*

O my little friend whom we elevated about us as the eternal lantern  
of the spirit and thus it seemed we had killed onceandforever  
daylight between the houses and simplicity in men  
O my little friend whom we formed to snigger at the poor when they  
try to seek the meaning of life in the love of material  
and o you who crucified the most dangerous dreamer among us in  
front of credible eye witnesses and they threw buffalo dung at him  
O woe you have destroyed everything within us  
we are not clean only from the banal motifs  
and the wanderers of the roads alarm us unceasing in the  
wandering of the years.

O who knows who wanders the roads at this moment and which  
fates wander within us towards us like the epidemics before which  
we exhibit on the borders to no avail our peasants with pitchforks.  
What they were called until now and where and in which direction  
they ploughed up the hearts of the wretched I don't know  
but woe I tell you that someone called Nikolai Lenin is only as tall  
as a post  
arriving between your broken lanterns and sick flocks.  
He came on cattle wagons  
in which your priests and officials rolled your blue-eyed and inane  
peasants with the seal of approval towards heaven –  
o in this moment nobody knows whether he was Jewish or Christian  
but those who nosed around his post-sized body say it has little to  
do with your upended blue-eyed friend who was crucified in front  
of credible witnesses 1917 years ago while the people threw buffalo  
dung at him and he turned the other cheek.

*O woe a peasant who saw him only said this:*

He lives on herring as we do my friend but he preaches the farming  
of bread and electricity since the soul of man is speed and warmth  
since light and iron are brothers to men and it is not in mud and  
reeds in which we keep vigil our whole lives.

*An old man saw him and said:*

He is a child my brother and he dreamed our children's dreams  
since he wants to give them the sea and the daytimes while for  
himself he chose the night and the cold.

*A servant saw him and said:*

He is a flower my brothers as you will be those who in the troughs of the houses will begin to understand towards the sun because he wants to give the women back to themselves but he cut out his hereditary disease in order to create the balance of the world.

*A cow saw him and said:*

He is a foolish heifer because he wants to push the pastures out to the seas while for himself he chose bread and plants as nourishment.

O woe my friend cover my face with seaweed  
because I do not dare pass by their houses which stand waist-high  
in madness and from which bottles and ovens glow from the praise  
of their choirs  
o I do not dare swing my head round because they are loitering  
there with their candle-like eyes behind the curtains and in the  
stable doors  
o cover the holes in my roofs with your palm  
because I do not now dare to lift the whiteness of bread to  
my mouth for on their tables lie criss-cross the inedible and  
indigestible herring cover my house with forest  
or even with oil lamps before which they fall to their knees and cast  
their eyes to the dust  
or even with walls that end in your country  
or with the whistling of your birds and these should be little owls  
with the moon so their senses should not bear it  
because I hear night and day their unsingable psalms from the  
sinking houses which like coffins are already ensconced in the  
earth up to their chests with their petroleum candlewicks  
and beware of the roads my friend the roads  
because they lead and twist everywhere  
and all the roads find each other  
and they avoid the hills and the ravines alike  
and upon them are the vagabonds of the roads  
with their red flowers on their breasts and burning briars in their  
hearts  
and if earlier they were mocked as saints or highwaymen and they  
wandered lice-infested from straw with human blood with lilled  
hands through ancient empires -



burning-eyed agitators they are today and maybe they carry bloody knives and filthy blunders in their blood once more and maybe they cut down the highest poplars once more before the speaker but woe there is fire and will within them for themselves and there is water and powerlessness within them against others.

*Under the felled forests the milk teeth of fresh grass were already fermenting,  
and at the same time, in the alleyways of a dark and alien metropolis the conversation between the houses and hansom caß nags could clearly be heard.*

*And the hansom caß nag said:*

They're talking about bread and light. Outside it was pouring with rain a single candle shining down between them on the straw bundles where they sat and she dropped her head into his lap. About the bread and the light that hide in the spirit from the mouths of the poor and the man then raised his arm and only I saw it with my two mortared-in eyes – stars phosphoresced on his fingertips. This is how they sat motionless and withered in the dark the man and the woman with her head down. Who were they my friend? Travellers from the endless highways They wandered eastward and reached my windowless shed to shelter from the storm Time is now incredibly strange and the sulphur-smelling poor hightail it from their basement doorsteps and wander eastward with a single burden in their hearts. Must be a wonderland my friend said a lame mare who was raised there on the Russian hillsides snowflakes and herring are the only thing people eat there. Who can understand them the hightailers the vagrants the flood obstructing the roads, what is pulling them?

*In the alleyways the houses just stood futile and speechless, like pillars of salt. And yet the hansom caß nag ambled on with his basket load, but in his two hollow eyes irradiated the embers of pleasure, and wherever he ambled with his rhymical beat, the ragpickers awaiting the Messiah flocked into the houses' round eyes.*

*Beneath the sea-high factory chimneys in the heads of a few clear-minded coppersmiths the germs of a new world were already beginning to shine, and yet underneath a lake the size of a country a weighty flock of dung flies*

*could clearly be seen pulling away on enormous blue pies and reflecting flatly. They came from the south, from the gulfs of Africa and Asia, for here too the heavy bonds of religion and powerlessness had split open, and from between the cupolas and mud tents some mordant colour occasionally broke through, and it was no coincidence that this colour was red. In their eyes they brought the terror of disintegration and collapse, but woe, they could not find a palmful of earth on which to rest.*

O they did not know that they were living in the year 1923 in which there is nothing more miserable than to be human and nothing more joyful than to be human

*Ék*, vol. 1. no. 2 (7), 15 May 1923.

A Vörös Fekete tenger partján  
[On the Shores of the Red Black Sea]

Erzsi Újvári

We sit on the shores of the red Black sea,  
the workers wishing a Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov, Kiev sun.  
The Soviet looks after us, we are born of his heart,  
When we tire, he lifts us up from behind the weaving machines,  
Our Soviet!  
Certainly brother, we are in charge here,  
On the Caucasus mountains, the fir tree gathers its scent for us.  
The medicinal spring of Russia is Narzan,  
Until now you've been nursing czars and the bourgeois,  
Under your warm spring now we spoon out your strength for our  
tired members.  
The northern wind throws silver cloud towers into the sky,  
Look, boys, the sea has given birth to the sun again!  
Above red Russia even the sun rolls red in the sky.  
Towards it we form cones out of our hands.  
- Hey! Hey, you're also one of us! -  
The warships on the horizon greet the shore with their cannons,  
Four letters burning on their masts:  
  SSSR.  
Comrade Surikov, have you read that Voykov was killed in Warsaw?  
Brother, the bullet was not for Voykov,  
The English lords are spinning and weaving a whip against the  
workers' power  
They know that ever more of the world's poor are hanging  
Lenin's picture over their tables.  
They know that for ten years we have been studying literacy, for  
ten years production has been in our hands.  
With electricity and with radio we are building the workers' power.  
They know that the Soviet is being built, it is growing.  
It stands in front of the world's proletariat, encouraging:  
"Be strong like us!"  
And this is why, underneath the skyscrapers of America, on the  
reed islands of China, all over Asia, and across Europe, all the way  
down to the Romanian villages,  
they are killing the proletariat, preparing the gas, the submarines,  
the new war.  
Vayka, read out loud today's Pravda:  
"Our response to Chamberlain."  
The workers of the land give their one day's wages for the  
construction  
of aeroplanes and tanks.  
Chamberlain do you like our response?

Watch out!

Your supposedly solid power can be damaged by the Russian proletarian, the red soldier.

The red soldier, Moscow's native and nurse, the power of the workers.

Who knows no God and no mercy for you.

Who made his pledge not on the church-smoky banners of the lords.

Who made his pledge to the world's proletariat, its tortured and imprisoned

Under his kerchief, the red flag.

*(Censored)*

Boys, the warships are approaching!

Silver-skinned dolphins jumping in the ship-beaten foam.

The textile factory pioneers came down from the mountain.

In front of the ships, sturdy-armed sailors wave the red flag towards us,

and we, the calloused workers of the factories and the pioneers of the mountains

sing towards them as with one single wide open mouth:

*(10 lines redacted by the censor)*

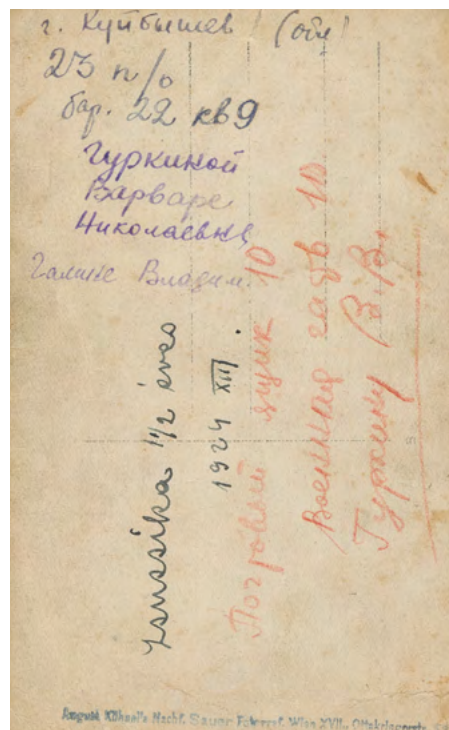
*Munkás- és Parasztnaptár* [Worker and Peasant Calendar],  
Košice, Kassai Munkás, 1929.

## Zsuzsa Barta's Birth Date

Zsuzsa Barta did not know her exact birth date. From family photographs, she knew it was some time in summer 1923. That was when Barta and Újvári were planning to move to Moscow and raise their child in the Soviet Union.



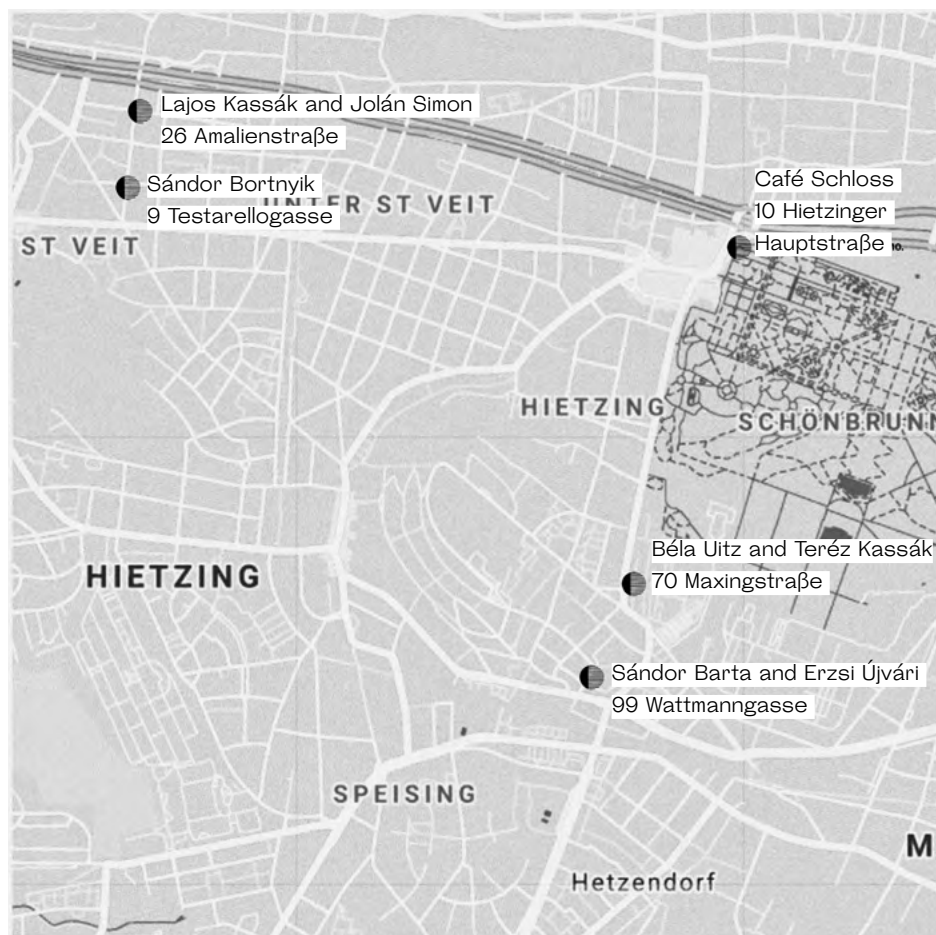
Zsuzsa Barta, four months old  
Vienna, 1923  
Kassák Museum



Zsuzsa Barta, one and a half years old  
Vienna, December 1924  
Kassák Museum



In the period of exile, 1920–1925, members of the Kassák circle lived in small rented flats in Hietzing, a suburb of Vienna. They lived close to the Schönbrunn castle gardens and so frequently met in Café Schloss, where they edited the magazine and held performance evenings. In the late 1980s, Zsuzsa Barta, on a scholarship in the Collegium Hungaricum in Vienna, visited her birthplace, Barta and Újvári's former rented flat on the first floor of 99 Wattmannngasse.



Zsuzsa Barta's photo of the façade of 99 Wattmannngasse  
1980s  
Kassák Museum

# The Death of Lenin

After Lenin died on 21 January 1924, Barta, in late February, published the last issue of *Ék*, dedicated to Lenin. This included a report from Moscow by János Mácza and translations of several Russian articles and poems in praise of Lenin by Hungarian Proletkult writers.

*Ék*  
Lenin Issue, 25 February 1924  
Kassák Museum



„Ma temetjük Lenint!”

## 1924 január 24

Hat nap óta: ahogy az emberek lépnek, beszélnek, néznek, ahogy harminc fokban hidegben átkátra nyúló sorokba sorakozva indulnak, hogy bacsut vegyenek a proletariátus forradalmának legnagyobb vezéréből, ahogy ma, a temetés napján itt, együtt, utcán van egész Moszva és tízezeres létszámában dolgozók egész Oroszországa, ahogy a vérszínű koporsó lemagasodik a vérszínű tribúnán és maghóznak előtte a vérszínű zászlóterületek; ahogy forró gondolatokkal jegye dermedve állnak széksorokat a vöröskatonák ezrei a Vörös téren és ahogy reggeli kilencöt késő esig pillanatnyi megszakítás nélküli zuga harsog az Internacionale!

ahogy így minifnyájan, napoknál, évekkel keresztül együtt vagyunk, főmeg vagyunk, hullám vagyunk a nemzetközi proletariátus végzetlen hullámverésében, nem legenda az, nem ünnepes szentavatás, nem misztérium; harsogó realitás!

Meghalt Vlagyimir Iljics De-él LENIN!

Ahogy délután negykor feleltek Lenin koporsóját s öt percre megáll minden csak Moszva szászvesztés kerületében szikongának, zúgnak, harsognak bossza perében keresztül az összes újászaléttal gyászzenék, gyárkürtök, sípok és a munka ezereji hangja, átvölgyölő, összefolyva valami csudálatos, nagy, nagy szonfionában — nem tenészt ez:

az élet jele, mely elindult 1917-ben s ma már, ebben az ezer mérföldekre nyújtott agrárszágban az ipar, a felszabadult gép, a megezerszerelt mozgás és fölértélt dinamika diadalát hirdeti;

nem szimbólum: realitás;

realisabb, keményebb, igazabb minden realitásnál, mert lezabaddul, mert előrelendülő, mert a jövő századok helyes taktika szerélt teremtő motorja!

## Nikolaj Bucharin: Elvtárs!

Meghalt Lenin. Többé nem látjuk már ezt a hatalmas homlokot, ezt a csudálatos fejet, amelyből minden irányba sugárzott a forradalmi energia; átható, figyelő szemét, erős, kemény kezét és az egész erős, acélos figuráját, amely az emberi történelem fejlődésében két korszak határán állott. Mintha csak benne mozdult volna meg a proletariátus ezének akaratának és értelmének centrális állomása, amely sohanemlött áramlással ömlött el a planétánk minden zugába, ahol munkásszív dobog, ahol kovacsoklik a nagy osztály öntődája, ahol éleltek felszabadulni harcaik legyereit.

Drága! Felejtethetlen! Örös!

Lenin elvtárs egyetlen és megemlékeztető volt a marad évszázadokon keresztül.

A természet és történelem egyesítette benne a hatalmas elmét, az emberlelleti akaratot, az egyéni bátorságot és azt a ritka emberiségét, amely csak a kiválasztottaknak adatott meg. És ezeket az erőket a kombinációja adta nekünk Vlagyimir Iljics zsenijé.

Lenin elvtárs mindenekelőtt vezér volt, olyan vezér, amilyenekkel csak évszázadokint ajándékozta meg az emberiséget a történelem és akinek nevével számítják aztán az új korszakokat. A legnagyobb tömegszervező volt. Mint egy óriás ment az országát, irányította a mozgását, az emberi egységek sokaságából megteremtette a munkáit legyereit, melyben harca dobott, hatalmas ezének fénykorával az új egyeztetés és a szót zaskutáit, amerre el kellett döngölni, a lázadó vörös zászló alatt a fekete munkásszerekek kiemelt lépéseinek.

Mit tette Lenin a milliók oly zsenialis kifejezőjévé?

Mindenekelőtt rendkívülül érezte a tőregek kívánságaival szemben. Mintha csak valami, előtünk ismeretlen, hatólik érezte lett volna Leninnek, amely lehetővé tette számára, hogy csudálatos hallással meghallgassa, hogyan nő a föld alatt a fű, hogy futnak és bugyognak a földalatti forrásvizek, milyen gondolatok és érzések forrnak a föld megszámlálhatatlan dolgozóinak a fejében. Úgy tudott meg a h a l l a n i, mint semki más. Türelmesen és figyelő szem hallgatja a régi hadsereg katonáit, a távoli területen parasztját, a vasutasokat. Valami falusi őregasszonyjal felvívottuk minden beszélgetésből kikapogatta az egész parasztág érvényét. Valan-oly véletlenes egyetlen négyülsi közbeszólásból ő, pártunk bölcsé, megállta és megérezte milyen színen futnak a dolgozó osztály gondolatjai. Minden egyes emberből, valami, csak neki adottott képességgel, ezért szálát, egész gombolyogást buzika ki a szociális viszonyok összefoglalóként fonádkáinak — s előtte állt a felérhetetlen országban élő milliók életének s az összes osztályviszonyoknak a képe. Különös tehetség volt

Igen: tömegben: együtt: proletárok, parasztok, vöröskatonák, diadalmas és harcra kész legyerek, diadalmas és harcbanálló gyarak, induló traktorok és aratógépek, fölöttünk az Internacionale és bennünk a Vörös Vezér: telt, melyre nem volt példa még.

Igen: a sorok között már felviszkének a tegnapi ringatózott álmódok és ideges cimpákkal szagolják a meg nem létező misztikus szagokat, a sápadt szimbolumvirágok lábtól szagát; a sorok mögött már megzavartodott fantáziával bátorodnak elő a tegnapi gondolat és érzésvalóának megrögzösödött formáival operáló szegények, hogy legendái költsenek szimbólumot sirjának és misztériumokat imádkozzának a leglátalmasabb tétből.

A legenda készült. Feltarthatatlan!

A kis, építő-fő gesztusok hatalmas szimbólumokba tettefélenednek. Fel-

tarthatatlanul!

Es a vassal, vérrrel, amiót csalással lélekebe gyökerezett misztikus haj-

landóság is megteremk a maguk kisföldi „szépegeit”. Feltarthatatlanul!

Ez a történelem megmunkálhatatlan dialektikája. Ez is realitás. A tegnapi,

igaz, de mi harcosok vagyunk!

Es mi mégis együtt vagyunk, tömegben, milliók, proletárok, parasztok,

vöröskatonák, gyarak, legyerek, görzék és Lenin teremő realitás, teremő

akarat — mely továbbra is, holnap is élő, eslelvő, teljes akarat szászerejni

lázadó lelgyaládi vérben, motoros agyában!

Tett és realitás! Lenin!

Lenin, igében. Lenin tetiben.

! Mi tesszük az igét. Mi tesszük a tettet!

Felkoozott realitással: vagyunk! Élünk!

Moszva. MACZA JANOS.

Leninnek az emberekkel való beszélgetéshez, ahhoz hogy olyan közel, olyan intően közel menjen az emberekhez, hogy azok aztán őt keressék fel minden kétségükkel, bajjukkal és kérdésekkel Lenin mindenkihez a saját nyelvén tudott szólni. A munkásszótly ellenségével, akéket hatalmas felének minden erejével gyűlölt, hátróztatott, keményen és élesen végzett s ugyanakkor tudta meggyőzni, s türelmes magyarázatokkal felvilágosítani a munka harcának embereit. Ezért volt Leninnek olyan hatalmas varázsa. Megfogta az embereket. S az emberek, nem mint feleletkélők, nem a proletár seregek lejtébe, menek hozzá, hanem mint a legjobb barátok, elvtársok, a legigazabb, legbölcsőbb, legkísérletesebb tanácsadók. S ő olyan cementsel falazta maga köré az embereket, ameyet semmi féle erő nem volt képes szétverni.

Az igaz tehát: a történelemben még egy olyan vezér, akit annyira szerettek volna a körülötte levők, mint Lenint. Mindenkinek valami különös érzése volt Leninrel szemben. Szerették. Nem csak becslék hatalmas legyereit és erős kezét. Nem. A legintimébb szalacsák kötelevével kötözte magához az embereket; természetes, őnmaga volt, közvetlen, rokoni ís a legteljesebb értelemben elvtárs — ennek a nagy szónak minden jövőjével. Ilyen lesz majd valamikor az egymáshoz való viszony az összes emberknél.

Ez a nagy egyszerűség volt Lenin politikájának alapvonása is.

Nem a nagy emberek egyszerűsége ez. A zseni egyszerűsége. A legbenyolultabb feladatokban is megtalálta a legegyszerűbb szavakat a legegyszerűbb emberek számára, s a legegyszerűbb megoldást. Mi sem volt idegenebb Lenin számára, mint a „nyakalékterület”, pól és „bölcselkedés”. Gyűlölte mindent gumyolva a régi világnak ezeket az ákos örökségeit, akik még rántékúterek. Ő jól tudta a cselekvés értékét s elkeseredett ellensége volt mindenféle hiábavaló fesse-gésnek.

Ezek mellett energikusan vezette a pártot s rajta nyugadt az összes dolgozókat. Diktátor volt a szó legjobb értelmében. Egyesítve magában az élet minden áramlatát, fíradhatatlan erejének laboratoriumában feldolgozva az emberek százának, ezének tapasztalatait, bátor kézzel vezette őket, mint a hatalmas lesteményese, mint lelkinty, mint hatalmas vezér. Sohasé bibelődött a mardokokkal, soha passzívan nem „regésztrált”. Félkérhetetlen temperamentsának minden erejével tudott menni az ár ellen. És ilyenek kell lennie a tömegvezérnek.

Lenin elvtárs elment tőlünk örökre. Elment örökre. Vigyük át az iránta érzett minden szeretetünket az ő édes gyermekére az ő örökösére — a mi utótrunkra. Legyen az élő az ő lelkevel, az ő lelkevel, az ő akaratával, az ő rettenthetetlen bátorságával, az ő odaadással a munkásszótlyhoz. Mi mindnyájan hallgassuk olyan figyelmesen a tömegeket, mint ahogy ezt Lenin tudta csinálni — Lenin, a mi közös vezérünk, a mi bölcs tanfőmesterünk, a mi drága, a mi pótolhatatlan elvtársunk.

The earth nurses a single dead  
and man has never been less illuminated.  
Lenin, the poor, sickly-hearted man,  
with fire-eating poppies under your granary-sized dome  
a thousand fold cursed and spat upon, you "cold machine man," you  
"logical selfish calculator," you "red czar," "choirmaster of gallows,"  
"forfeiter of lambs"  
*Oh you who nursed the oppressed of the whole world in your palm-sized  
heart,*  
you burned wretched in death.  
Oh, in the lap of snowstorms wail the hovels in vain,  
and the big cities' factory belts burst out crying in vain,  
and your peasants with their choicest wonder herbs march  
towards you in vain,  
and the rivers roll their finest sands before you in vain,  
and the winds the sighs of the southern seas,  
you just lie about motionless with omniscient brow, with your palms  
between cast off granite columns,  
and the ripe fruit of your eyes we shall pronounce forever from our  
fevered hands.  
Now we just stand, billowing up in immeasurable rivers to the armpits  
of palaces,  
and the sky on its raft billows above us,  
and only the moon bell rings, because measured, cold complaints.  
The clock hand has dropped off.  
But time spins onwards.  
In it us,  
and in us You.

*Ék*, Lenin Issue, 25 February 1924.

## Miniatures from Red Moscow

Barta's surviving handwritten diary from 1926–1928, later published as *Miniatűrök a Vörös Moszkvából* [Miniatures from Red Moscow], was written shortly after the family arrived in Moscow and presents the Soviet capital as a rival to the 'wonders' of the American metropolis, and as a living space that served the needs of the workers.

In the imagination of the international left, the Soviet Union of the 1920s, and Moscow in particular, represented more than a concrete social space. The Soviet metropolis currently under construction became the fictional space of collective utopia, in which the various avant-garde and Proletkult movements hoped their own social agendas would be vindicated. In the early years, the organs of the state still tolerated the members of the Russian avant-garde who were loyal to the Soviet leadership and who sought to shape the new, urban Soviet culture by taking into account the everyday experience of the urban masses.

By the 1930s, the Stalinist dictatorship and the extensive industrialisation of the Soviet economy had changed the discourses on urban spaces: the new factories springing up like mushrooms became the new yardstick of urban development. The workers' everyday needs and issues of collective coexistence were increasingly pushed into the background while the resulting gap was filled by the aesthetics of mass parades and marches.

And how different the streets of Moscow are! (True, I was not seeking the “wonders” of America here, but the changed face of life.) Because the living conditions created by the workers’ state strike one’s eyes everywhere, they are alive in the houses, but also mingling on the street in front of you. The lumpenproletariat is dying out, the everyday life of the working masses gushes forth on the street, not in ornamented fashion, no longer in rags; Moscow dresses seriously, often sparsely, but with refreshing simplicity and abandon.

Three thousand workers doing their jobs under glittering arc lights in the new telegraphic centres, the chandeliers in the reading rooms of the serious Lenin Palace on Soviet Square have just been lit for the first time, and across the length and breadth of the city’s outskirts, newly-housed workers are marching under the red flag into their new apartment blocks: clinics and schools are being built, running tracks and parks, and in the forests just outside Moscow, roads are being carved out for the new workers’ garden city. Yes, we must hurry to rescue life from the crumbling dens and damp basements of czarism, from the crumbling houses of the civil war. It must be rescued from the clutches of tuberculosis, from the clutches of death trapped here by absolutism; because this was the only accommodation czarism provided for workers, children and women.

Spaces must be carved out from between the noxious grey tenement slums, the hopeless streets stuck in the past must be planted with green grass and lively shrubs. Churches must be demolished to make way for playgrounds with yellow sand and flying ring rides, rivers must be regulated to give Moscow’s musculature a new lease of life.

A hundred thousand more cars and a million more machines, five thousand more factories, even more aeroplanes in the air, tractors in the villages, electric lights in the shacks, locomotives on the tracks, ships on the water, and cranes, elevators and silos on the shores, and heavy-footed, clumsy muses mock America.



The magazine *LEF*, edited in Moscow by Mayakovsky and Osip Brik and published between 1923 and 1925, was primarily a forum for the Russian Futurist group and for Constructivist artists. It aimed to spread the new literature and the new art as widely as possible – and to put it to use – in Soviet society. The covers featured propagandistic photo-montages by Aleksandr Rodchenko, and its illustrations included “Productivist” set and textile designs by avant-garde artists.

*ЛЕФ – Журнал Левого фронта искусств*  
 [LEF – Journal of the Left Front of the Arts]  
 Cover design: Aleksandr Rodchenko  
 vol. 1. no. 2, April–May 1923  
 vol. 1. no. 3, June–July 1923  
 Kassák Museum

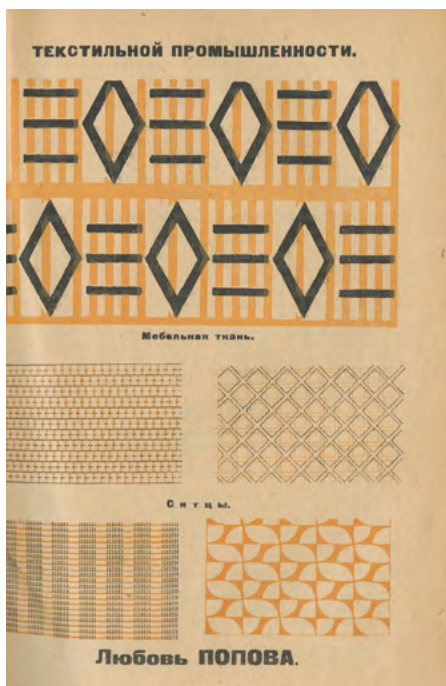


"We are fighting against the old way of life.  
 And we will fight against the contemporary remnants of that way of life.  
 Against those who exchanged the poetry of their own small house  
 for the poetry of the housing committee.  
 Before, we fought against the bulls of the bourgeoisie. We terrified  
 them with yellow blouses and faces painted bright.  
 Now we are fighting against the victims of these bulls, in our  
 Soviet system.  
 Our weapons: example, agitation, propaganda."

Vladimir Mayakovsky: *Whom does LEF Bite into?*



Paul Citroen: Metropolis, and Liubov Popova: Set design for Sergei Tretyakov and Vsevolod Meyerhold's play *Earth in Turmoil*  
 ЛЕФ – Журнал Левого фронта искусств  
 [LEF – Journal of the Left Front of the Arts]  
 vol. 1. no. 4, August–December 1923  
 Kassák Museum



Liubov Popova: Textile designs  
 ЛЕФ – Журнал Левого фронта искусств  
 [LEF – Journal of the Left Front of the Arts]  
 vol. 2. no. 2, 1924  
 Kassák Museum



Vladimir Mayakovsky, one of the central figures of the Russian avant-garde, supported the Soviet system in the 1920s, although he stood up against the censor even then. His epic poem *Хорошо!* [All right!] published for the tenth anniversary of the Revolution combines a heroic and propagandistic narrative of the events with an ironic stance. El Lissitzky made the book's Constructivist cover design.



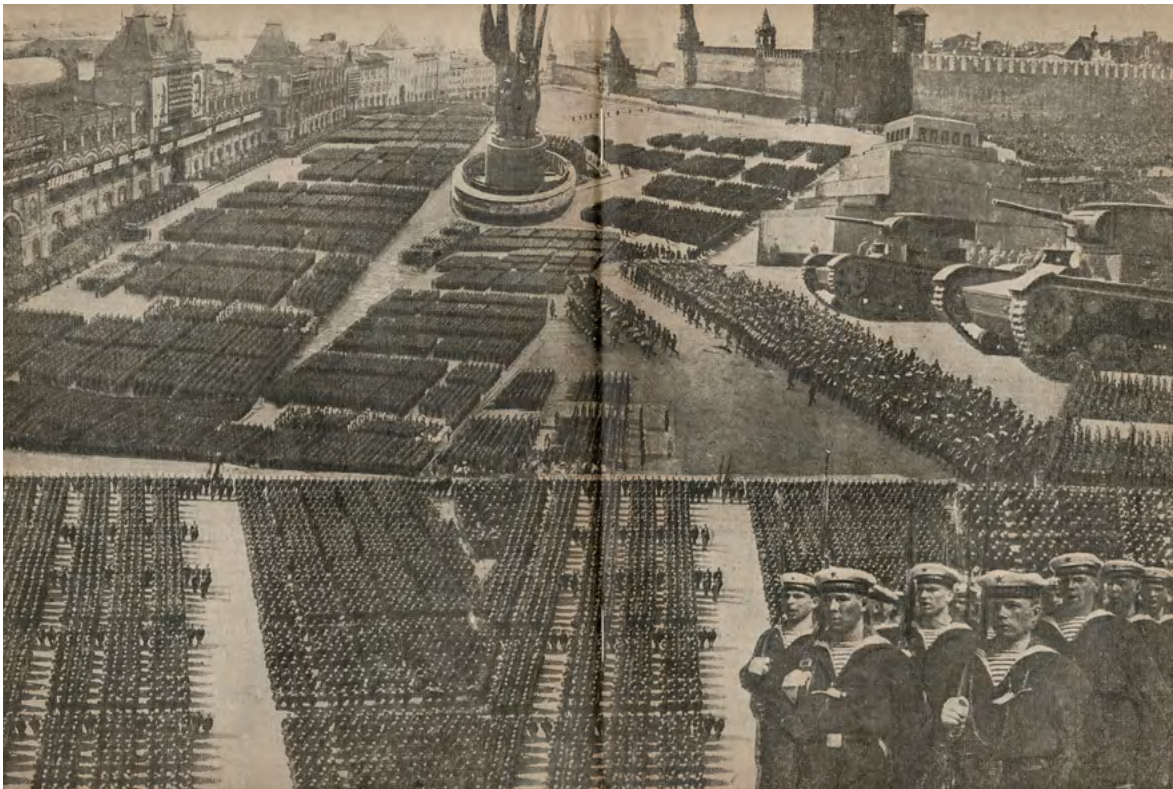
Vladimir Mayakovsky  
*Хорошо! Октябрьская поэма*  
[All right! An October Poem]  
Cover design: El Lissitzky  
Moscow, Gosizdat  
1928  
Kassák Museum

The book by Balogh and Révész consisted of reports on modern industrial and agricultural operations (the Dynamo Factory and Angara Works in Moscow, the Stalingrad Tractor Factory, the Turkestan-Siberia Railway, the Gigant agricultural cooperative, etc.) and new cultural developments in the Soviet Union. It was one of the Hungarian-language books in the *Sarló és Kalapács Könyvtára* [Hammer and Sickle Library] series that extolled Soviet developments. Others were Ferenc Münnich's *A szocialista építés ötéves terve* [The Five-Year Plan for Building Socialism] and Balogh's *Két szovjetgép* [Two Soviet Machines], which specifically covered the accomplishments of tractor manufacture and steelmaking.



János Balogh and Imre Révész  
*Az épülő szocializmus. A Szovjetunió mai képe*  
[Socialism Under Construction. The Image  
of the Soviet Union Today]  
Moscow, Centrizdat, 1930  
National Széchényi Library





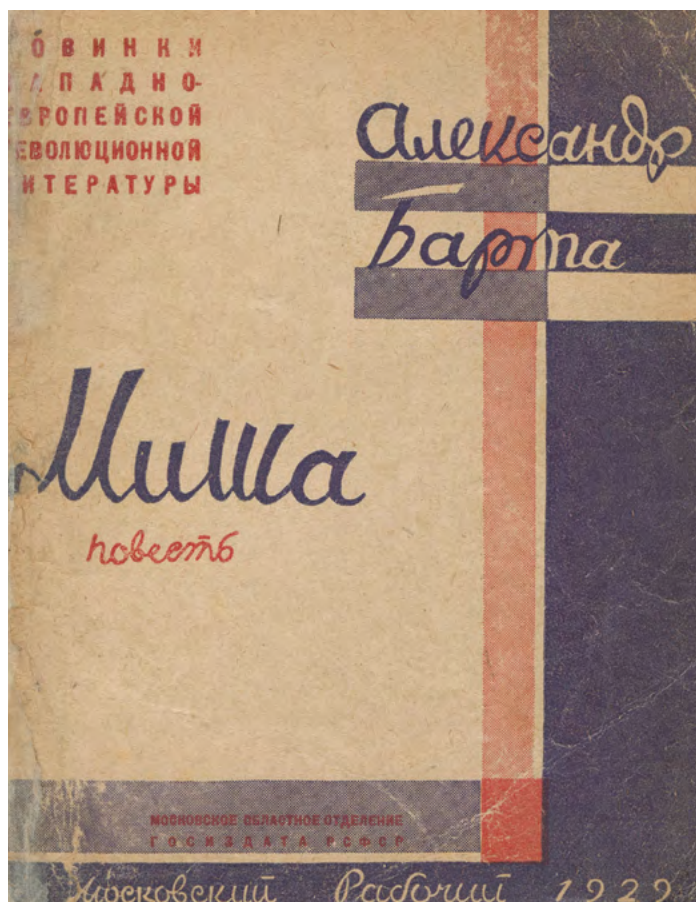
Az ünneplő Moszkva [Moscow celebrating]  
*Sarló és Kalapács*  
vol. 5. no. 6, June 1933  
Petőfi Literary Museum

A XVI. vörös október [The 16<sup>th</sup> Red October]  
*Sarló és Kalapács*  
vol. 5. no. 12, December 1933  
Petőfi Literary Museum

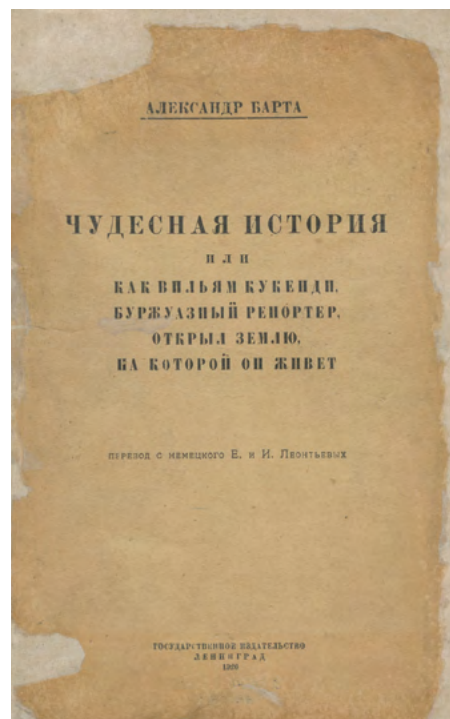




# Sándor Barta's Books Published in the Soviet Union



Sándor Barta: *Миша* [Misha]  
Moscow, Moskowskiy Rabochy, 1930  
Petőfi Literary Museum



Sándor Barta: *Чудесная история*  
[A Wonderful Story]  
Leningrad, GIZ, 1926  
Petőfi Literary Museum

Sándor Barta: *Паника в городе*  
[Panic in the City]  
Moscow, Ogoniok, 1930  
Petőfi Literary Museum

Sándor Barta: *350.000. Рассказ-хроника из жизни страны австромарксизма*  
[350,000: A Story from the Country of Austro-Marxism]  
Moscow – Leningrad, GIZ, 1931  
Petőfi Literary Museum







Sándor Barta: *Право убежища*  
[The Right to Asylum]  
Moscow, Ogoniok, 1931  
Petőfi Literary Museum

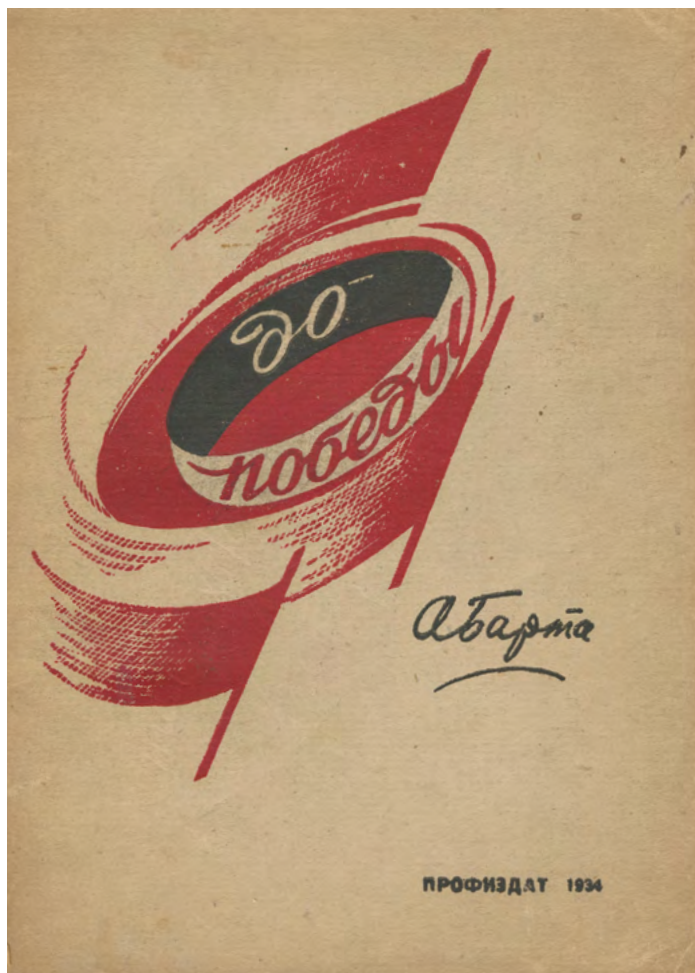
Sándor Barta's portrait  
Moscow, c. 1931  
Kassák Museum



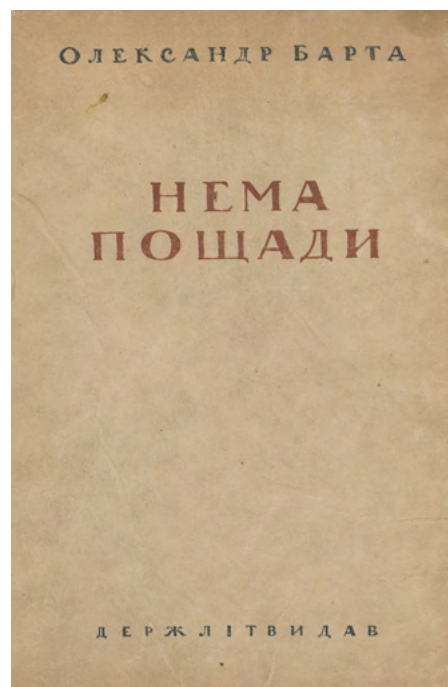
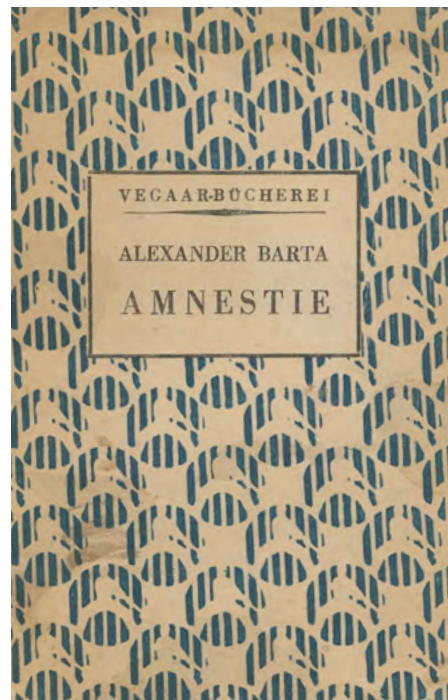
Sándor Barta: *Дважды два — пять*  
[Two Times Two - Five]  
Moscow, Ogoniok, 1934  
Petőfi Literary Museum

Sándor Barta's portrait  
Moscow, c. 1934  
Kassák Museum





Sándor Barta: *До победы* [Until Victory]  
Moscow, Profizdat, 1934  
Kassák Museum



Sándor Barta: *Amnestie* [Amnesty]  
Moscow, Verlag Genossenschaft  
Ausländischer Arbeiter in der UdSSR, 1936  
Petőfi Literary Museum

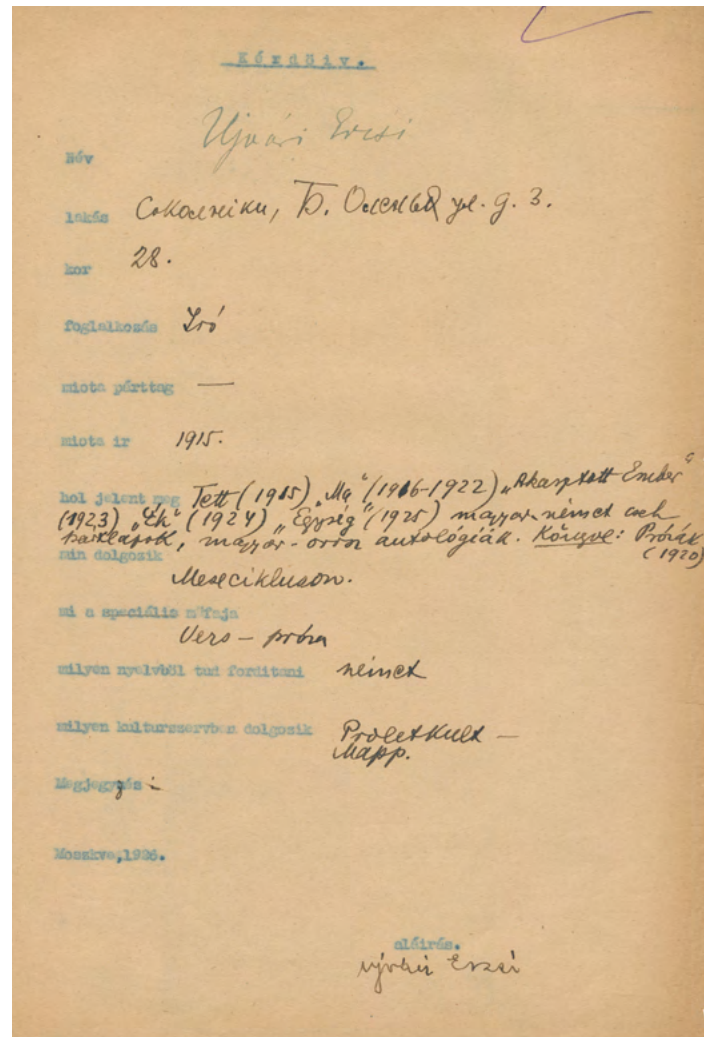
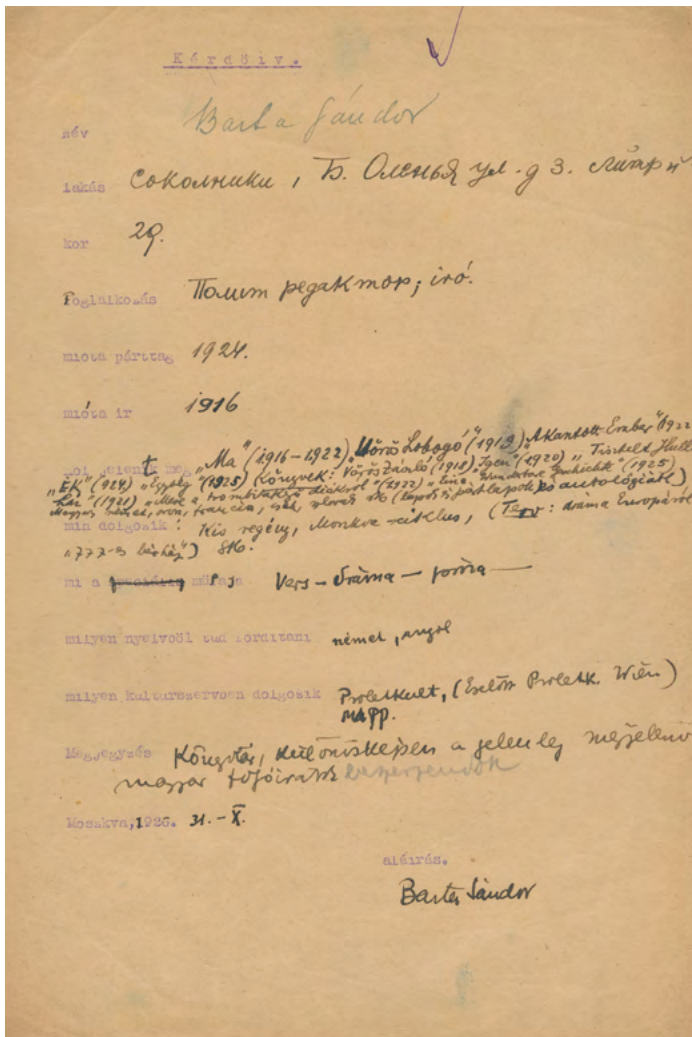
Sándor Barta: *Нема пощади* [No Mercy]  
Kiev, DerzhLitVidav, 1938  
Petőfi Literary Museum



# The Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists in the Hungarian Language

Barta and Újvári were founding members of the Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists in the Hungarian Language formed in Moscow in May 1926. The members of the association were selected from the Hungarian section of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (RAPP) but communist writers in Berlin, Vienna, Paris and Hungary could also be members. In 1929, the Association launched a Hungarian magazine in Moscow, *Sarló és Kalapács*, to which Barta and Újvári were regular contributors.

Questionnaires of Sándor Barta and Erzsébet Újvári for the Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists in the Hungarian Language  
Moscow, 1926  
Petőfi Literary Museum





# Taglista

Tagnévsor:

Moszkva.

1. ~~Barta Sándor~~
2. Bogdány Rozsi -
3. Andics Erzsébet -
4. Berei ~~Udula~~ -
5. Balogh István -
6. Hajdu Pál -
7. Hidas Antal -
8. Greiner József +
9. Illés Béla -
10. Jankovics József +
11. Karikás Frigyes -
12. Kiss Lajos -
13. ~~Kecsetz Péter~~ +
14. ~~Lányi Sarolta~~
15. ~~Lányi Iván~~
16. Lányi Sarolta
17. Madarász Emil -
18. ~~Mály Elvadar~~
19. ~~Ráodor Béla~~ +
20. Matheika János -
21. Müller Ernőné -
22. Szűcs József
23. ~~Simonyi József~~ +
24. ~~Török Zoltán~~
25. Ujvári Erzsébet +
26. Zalka Máté -
27. Szilágyi Ica
28. ~~Ujvárdix József~~
29. Weisz +
30. Uitz Béla +
31. ~~Kisvári~~ +
32. ~~Köten Jozsefne~~ +
33. ~~Klauber~~
34. Schneider +
35. Toth István ~~Ujvári~~
36. Griffel László - ~~Ujvári~~
37. Leicht Mimi - ~~Ujvári~~
38. ~~Ujvári János~~
39. ~~Ujvári Andor~~
36. Gábor Andor
37. Komjáth Aladár
38. Singer György
39. Szűcsics Mária
40. Rona Irén
41. Székely János
42. Kádár Erzsébet
43. Haj László
44. Kenyeres Julia
45. Gibárti László
48. Szilágyi Jolán
49. Leicht Sándor
50. Péri László
51. Bernáth Aurél
52. Krausz Teréz
53. Weiss Pál
54. Lippay Zoltán
55. Réz Andor
56. Bolgár Elek
57. Georg
58. Boros F. László
59. Seidler Stella
60. Stefán J. Klein
61. Kemény Alfred
62. Csircs Kriszta
63. Ripper Bortválné
64. Tuscherer Ernő

Berlin.



In the 1920s, Hungarian exiles in Moscow collaborated with the staff of the Hungarian-language communist daily newspaper in New York, Új Előre. Barta had also sent work to New York from Vienna, but after he arrived in Moscow, Sarló és Kalapács became his main channel of publication. By contrast, Újvári's name appeared more frequently in Új Előre than in Sarló és Kalapács, the official Moscow periodical of the writers' association. Independently of the Moscow writers' association and RAPP directives, Új Előre accepted essays that openly discussed the hard living conditions of urban working-class families and their children in particular.

Harcot az amerikai nagytőke kínai háboruja ellen!

ROVÁS Minden Hatalmat a Munkásoknak ÚJ ELŐRE Dilid Proletárjai Egyesületek

Beállítások stencel szed... Minden Hatalmat a Munkásoknak... ROVÁS... Dilid Proletárjai Egyesületek

MACDONALD TÁRGYAL AZ AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR VEZÉREVEL WASHINGTONBAN

WASHINGTON, április 20. — Az American Federation of Labor vezetői ma délutánról rendezték MacDonalddal, az angol munkások szövetségének elnökével. Az angol Labor Party konferenciájának néhány nappal ezelőtti halálára az, hogy nem jött újra MacDonalddal a Labor Party pártirányító testületére. MacDonald most valószínűleg kifejezte, hogy Gruevich elutasítására bírja az amerikai szövetség, hogy ne adja a "baloldali" egyeztetést Angliában visszatérő katonáknak, mielőtt Gruevichot megértenék az amerikai szövetségben a reaktív irányzatot.

McGrady kizárhatja a harcos szücsöket

A munkásférek egy gyárosoktól ezer szücsöt léptettek le... NEW YORK, április 20. — A gyárosok szeretnék megakadályozni, hogy "nem szücsökön a szücsök behatolására", az A. F. of L. kizárja az a jobbjánál reaktívus katonáknak. Az amerikai szövetség 1919 óta kizárja a harcos szücsöket, mert az a gyárosoktól ezer szücsöt léptettek le.

MINDELKÉppen L. 12. április 20. — A szövetség vezetői ma délután a Vörös Front Tiszvics... McGrady kizárhatja a harcos szücsöket

Manescher a tanúsok... Manescher a tanúsok... Manescher a tanúsok

Három havi börtön egy gyarmatisztas alapján... Három havi börtön egy gyarmatisztas alapján

Távlatok Goldnak a szücsöktől... Távlatok Goldnak a szücsöktől

Legujabb... Legujabb... Legujabb

Tilaknak Európa Saccok... Tilaknak Európa Saccok

Chiang elcsapása után nyílt háborúval akarják vérbefojtani a forradalmat

LEFGYVERZIK CHIANG KATONAIT. Fung Juh elcsapása után nyílt háborúval akarják vérbefojtani a forradalmat



Fung Juh elcsapása után nyílt háborúval akarják vérbefojtani a forradalmat

A kínai paraszt union irányítja Wuhot... A kínai paraszt union irányítja Wuhot

Minket megölhetnek de ügyünket nem... Minket megölhetnek de ügyünket nem

Japán válsága élezi a háborus veszélyt... Japán válsága élezi a háborus veszélyt

Távlatok Goldnak a szücsöktől... Távlatok Goldnak a szücsöktől

Legujabb... Legujabb... Legujabb

Tilaknak Európa Saccok... Tilaknak Európa Saccok

Chiang táborkor már átvette a kantoni seregek irányítását... Chiang táborkor már átvette a kantoni seregek irányítását

HANKOW, április 20. — A kantoni forradalmi kormány Fung Juh elcsapása után nyílt háborúval akarják vérbefojtani a forradalmat

LONDON, április 20. — Mindezt Chiang az Ázsiában... Chiang táborkor már átvette a kantoni seregek irányítását

SZINGHAI, április 20. — A forradalmi kormány... Chiang táborkor már átvette a kantoni seregek irányítását

NEW YORK, április 20. — A kínai paraszt union... A kínai paraszt union irányítja Wuhot

NEW YORK, április 20. — Wuhot... A kínai paraszt union irányítja Wuhot

NEW YORK, április 20. — Japán válsága... Japán válsága élezi a háborus veszélyt

LONDON, április 20. — Távlatok Goldnak... Távlatok Goldnak a szücsöktől

NEW YORK, április 20. — Legujabb... Legujabb

NEW YORK, április 20. — Tilaknak Európa... Tilaknak Európa Saccok

LONDON, április 20. — Tilaknak Európa... Tilaknak Európa Saccok

NEW YORK, április 20. — Tilaknak Európa... Tilaknak Európa Saccok

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Új Előre 22 April 1927

Outskirts. Smoking factory chimneys. A vacant plot of land in front. All the waste and dirt of the neighbourhood has been dumped here in a pile the size of a house. In the still vacant part of the plot, benches have been knocked up out of rafters. In the middle is a children's playground. Rubbish carts with rotting poultry innards, mouldy leftover food scraps, scattering the germs of stomach typhus and tuberculosis into the air of the poor.

Children who wish for death from beneath eternal hunger, who every day drag their lives along, are made to grow older by one long, joyless year. They come here with sacks and little stools in their hands.

Eight-year-old child: Only ragged trousers clothe his body, a sack in his hands, he scans his surroundings then starts digging around in the rubbish. He stashes pieces of iron, coal and rags in the sack.

From the other side: A half-paralysed worker drags herself along, four tiny children clinging to her skirts. The smallest is three years old, his pipe stem legs barely able to carry his rachitic head. He takes two-three steps then sits down. Then another two-three steps. He sits down again. Their mother has just reached the bench and settles herself down. Her children stand around her. The oldest, who is six, brings a bottle out from a ragged bag and cleans it. – He puts the bottle back in the bag, then he too runs off to the rubbish heap. Children coming from everywhere. They swarm over the rubbish heap with their weightless bodies, like hungry flies. Mothers arrive with babies in their arms. Legless cripples with burnt-out eyes. Child prostitutes with blood-red roses on their cheeks. They sit down on the benches, bury their faces in their hands, or breathe in the sun open-mouthed into their tubercular chests.

It is possible to know their misery! No! One must be born with them, breathe their air, bear the drudgery with them from morning till night, only then can one cry with their pain, be one with them.

A shrill scream from the rubbish heap. Two boys scuffling. They want to knock each other to the ground, the others step aside.

11-year-old: I saw it first! It's mine!

12-year-old: But I picked it up first!

11-year-old: No, I won't let you! He scratches the other one's face until it bleeds!

12-year-old: Blood gushes from his nose.

The children: Screaming. Let him go! Let him go!

An older man approaches them from the benches and separates them. The two children dust themselves off shamefully.

Older man: Now, what was that about?

11-year-old (crying): He stole it from me...

Older man: So, show it here, what was it?

12-year-old: Fearfully pulls out a used corkscrew from his pocket.

11-year-old: Jumps and tries to grab it but falls to the ground on his stomach.

Older man: Lifts him up, grabs both of them by the shoulders. Aren't you ashamed of yourselves?

11-year-old: Well... it's just because... my mum's legs swelled up... she can't walk any more...

12-year-old: Almost proudly: Well and what about my dad? He's been spitting blood for half a year! (To the child standing next to him) Isn't that true?

Child standing next to him: Uh-huh.

A boy of around eight steps out of the line. To the 11-year-old: Here you are! (Holds out a new nail to the boy.) I don't have a mum or a dad. My landlords kicked me out anyway. Here you go, take it home.

All: Standing with head hung low.

8-year-old: Puts the nail in the 11-year-old's pocket and starts digging around in the rubbish again.

Older man: Returns to the bench with his head hung low. Children take their earlier places without a word.

Crippled woman: Inarticulate sounds erupt from her breast. One of the children steps up to her, wipes her forehead, gives her a drink, sits her upright on the bench, then re-joins the other children playing.

Prostitute: To the woman sitting next to her: I haven't eaten anything today.

Woman: A child in her arms, looks the prostitute up and down: You?!

Prostitute: You looking at these rags?! My last lord and master bought them. (Unbuttons her blouse. Hysterical laughter.) I also got these lovely bruises from him too!

Woman: Pulls her child closer, retreats.

Prostitute: Don't worry, I'm leaving now. Just in case anyone happens to pick me up tonight. (Takes out her paints and spreads bright red roses on her cheeks. Then she gets up and moves slowly towards the town.)

Woman: Stares after the prostitute, shaking her head. Pulls the child even closer, kisses him happily, singing a mindless song into his ear: My sweet little dove...

You'll have it all

You'll play ball in the sun

Sleepy-bye... sleepy-bye... sleepy-bye...

On the opposite bench: Two cripples and an unemployed man are talking.

Blind cripple: With terrible burn wounds on his face: Sure thing pal,

last time I saw the blue sky was up the Italian mountains. Since then I've made peace with everything. Only my woman... Only my woman got the chills when I lay down next to her... She went back to our village to bind sheaves... and through the murderous nights I can still hear her singing at home all the way over here...

2<sup>nd</sup> cripple: What can we do about it? It's our fate.

Blind cripple: Like puppets, the lords and masters order us about here and there. They threw us into foreign cities to kill! To kill!

Mercilessly! ... Now they want peace! (He stands up with his hands spread out as if he wanted to grab somebody.) What can we do against them? Stick them in the firing line! Cannons against their palaces! (Ecstatic.) Set everything on fire in front of them!

Unemployed Man and 2<sup>nd</sup> cripple: They take the invalid under the arms and set him down carefully.

Blind cripple: Slumps down quietly. All this suffering must still be reckoned with.

Unemployed Man: There'll be less and less bread on our table.

Thousands, hundreds of thousands starving. Thousands, tens of thousands thrown out on to the street... Fear not brother, our time will come. More and more of us are meeting in class hatred.

Policeman: Hears the entire conversation from nearby, steps up to the Unemployed Man. Alright enough of that! Get yourself home!

Blind cripple: It's forbidden to talk now too?!

Policeman: Move it! Move it!

Unemployed man: What did I do?!

Policeman: Turning crimson. Get away, damn it! (Because none of them move, he grabs the Unemployed Man and pushes him forward.)

Unemployed man: Wants to free himself.

Policeman: Kicks the Unemployed Man from behind. Move on, you vagabond!

People run to the scene from the benches: He didn't do anything! Let him go!

Policeman: Whistles.

Crowd: Let's get him out!

A worker in the crowd: Jumps in front of the policeman. Let him go or else... (grabs the policeman's sword.)

A police battalion arrives. With their swords drawn, they beat the crowd back, while at the back, two policemen drag the Unemployed Man away, beating him with their swords.

Blind cripple: Stands up uncertainly and shouts loudly: Hang in there brother, we're coming for you soon!

*Új Előre*, 24 May 1926.

One of the children is always crying at József Csiga's house  
– so say the neighbours.

No wonder, the poor things were once better off.

Their father was a mechanic; everyone in this region knew him well.

Every evening he would go door to door with party publications.

The poorer the person who opened the door, the lower he doffed his cap.

– Get ready brother – he would say. Our struggle is coming to an end. We need safe hands to hold onto our gains.

Then one morning his dead body was pulled out from under the power generator.

– He was our best comrade – said the workers.

The whole factory ground to a halt. An inspection was demanded.

Committees arrived. Doctors, who allegedly treat every human life

the same. They proved that he had been drunk; him, the book worm.

His pals knew that it was all lies, their fists clenching even tighter.

His four orphans stood guard at his coffin.

Ferenc, Péter, Mariska and Jani.

~

Since then one year has passed. Jani's mother goes to work in the factory. His siblings run delivering newspapers at dawn. Then, tired after the factory whistle has sounded the start of the shift, they too are swallowed up by the dark workshop doors.

Of the little family, only Jani stays at home. He should be in school, underneath the pictures on the walls. Jani would have liked to go, but his shoes have worn out like creased sled runners. Yet Jani is a good child, he doesn't eat all the family's precious bread. If you ask him nicely, he can recite his lessons for the whole year without a book.

For a week now he's been leaning on the window weeping for all those going to school.

Today, it's particularly painful to stay at home. At school today it's singing, gymnastics and geography. Geography class, where you can recite the names of the towns, mountains and rivers with great gusto.

This is why, when he woke up this morning, his face turned white from his heartbeat.

– Don't wake me up mother... I can't go to school anyway – he stuttered...

– My Janika... my youngest child... Feri will be free soon... I'll definitely



buy you shoes for Christmas – his mother consoled him.  
Jani's little heart was soothed and calmed as if in a warm bath from his mother's consoling words. His body shook with pleasurable crying.

– There, there... just cry it all out, my boy – said his mother. She put on her scarf, kissed him and replied from the doorway:  
Then she left. Leaving her crying son here.  
Since then, leaning against the window, Jani's eyes have followed his friends from afar, hurrying with their schoolbags in their hands. He whistles in vain and cannot drive his thoughts away.  
Today it's geography, gymnastics and singing.

– Maybe it's not that cold, maybe I could run barefoot – thought Jani suddenly.

But his mother's words are ringing in his ears:  
– Look after yourself son ... if you're ill again, I don't have anything left to sell to help you.  
And then the words start dancing around his head again.  
Singing, gymnastics, geography, singing.  
Trembling, Jani looks for his books.

– I just need to reach the school – Jani says to himself – they'll surely give me some there... there are so many children with good shoes there. Just hurry, hurry Jani – he encourages himself, don't be late.

Jani's feet, frozen and blue, run through the houses, he barely feels the cold. His breast flutters with joy as he eclipses the grey tenement blocks before him. There's just one thing in his vision. The red bricks. The redbrick building. The school, where his many tears and sorrows will be wiped from his brow, wiped away like the wrong numbers on the blackboard.

– I'll be there soon – he thinks. His anaemic heart leaps in his weakened chest.

– Just run... run... Jani urges himself on.  
You know that if you're late for prayers, you can stand on the cold stone in the corridor for an hour.

– Hurrah... hurrah! Jani greets the school's red bricks. He embraces its gateposts in tears. One more minute, and happily, as if his mother's outstretched arms were waiting for him, he runs in through the gate.

Jani doesn't even notice that at the end of the corridor, the school director is already hurrying towards him. He's just about to step into the classroom when he's grabbed roughly by the shoulders.

– Child, have you gone mad? You want to come to school barefoot in this weather?

Jani starts to shiver, everything goes dark before his eyes.

– Mr Headmaster Sir, please – he stammers.

Seeing the child's pain, the headmaster speaks to him more softly:

– Go home, son.

Jani kneels down, wraps his arms around the headmaster's knees and, because he could be turned away, completely loses his mind.

– Uncle... Mr Headmaster please – he begged – maybe someone will have a pair of shoes... I'll be very good... I even learned the lesson that was given to the pharmacist Gyuri.

The headmaster, for whom the child's crying was uncomfortable, lifted up Jani:

– Listen here son... here's a sixpence, now go home. We can't allow you to come to school barefoot in such cold weather! Here's the sixpence, go home. – If you behave properly, you can become a good and hard-working person even without school.

He pushes the child right the way up to the school gate, presses the sixpence into his hand, then closes the heavy iron door behind him.

As if the air had been cut off from him, Jani grasped his throat in fear. The cold was now aching in his bones. He feels his body being crushed by a stone. He holds onto the fence so as not to fall. And then he set off home, stepping as if to measure his years.

Jani is already dragging himself past the walls of the neighbour's house when, from behind the warm school windows, he hears the song:

“The school is a beautiful field  
With beautiful flowers within  
The studies.”

*Új Előre*, 22 April 1927.

# The Collectivization of Agriculture in the Soviet Union

In November 1929, the Central Committee decided to accelerate the collectivization of agriculture as part of the Five Year Plan in kolkhoz (collective) and sovkhoz (state) farms. Peasants who were unwilling to join voluntarily were persuaded to cooperate by increased taxes and forced labour. To promote collectivization, the party decided to send 25,000 industrial workers to the countryside. The reallocation of industrial workers to the collectives shows the contradictory economic policy of the First Five Year Plan. The Party's primary aim was rapid industrial modernization. The factories had to raise their production while being obliged to release some of their workers for months to do voluntary work in the state and collective farms.

A szovjetmező új hadserege: a „szubbotnyik”  
 [A New Army on the Soviet Fields: the  
 “Subbotnik”]  
 Sarló és Kalapács  
 vol. 4. nos. 8–9, August–September 1932  
 Petőfi Literary Museum



**Rohambőrdős a kolkhozban**

ban, tudományos intézetekben és gyárakban levő helyi szervezeteket értesíti hol, mikor és hány munkásé lesz a szilveszter. A helyi szervezetek aztán nemcsak tagjait, hanem az önként jelentkező összes dolgozókat közül kiválogatják a megfélemlítőket és megjelölik a gyülekezőhelyet. Mindenki szívesen megy, szívesen áldozza évenként 4–5 szabadnapját a kollektív gazdaságok részére, hiszen azok már szocialista gazdaságok, ahol a termelési eszközök legnagyobb része társadalmi vagy.

**Az indulás**

Rendészert korán reggel, a vasúti állomáson gyülekeznek. Az óriási gyárak és munkahelyek munkásai nagy tömegben zászlókkal, dalolva vonulnak fel. A kisebb intézetek dolgozói apró csoportokban, vagy egyenként mennek az állomás elé. Mind jókedvű. Tréfálva, nevetgélve, vidáman jelentkezik a helyi szervezet vezetőjének, aki a kerületi szovjet megbízottjának leadja jelentését, aztán megkezdődik a beszállás a különvonatba zenezés mellett. A különvonat megtelik, a zenét néha váltja fel.

A zóldágakkal felhúzott mozdony hatalmasan fűtytelve indul a szovjetmezőkre igyekvő munkásokkal.

**A megérkezés**

A kis falusi állomás előtt a kollektív gazdaságok dolgozó vezetői várják az ezernyi munká-

kezet... A gyárak, gazdasági akadémiák, hivatalok, munkahelyek népe leszáll a vonatról. Kettős rendbe sorakozik és indul a kollektív gazdaság felé. Az uton a falusi nép csatlakozik hozzá. Most már még vigabban vonul a meztől egész a gazdaságig, ahol reggeli: tej, vaj, puha kenyér várja az újajta mezei munkásokat. Most már ingyen, nem úgy mint a szubbotnyikok kezdetén. Mikor elfogy az étel, megkezdik a munkát. A gazdasági akadémia hallgatóival külön szakértő jön a városból, aki munka közben magyaráz nekik, oktatja őket. Bennünket a kollektív gazdaságok tagjai vezetnek. 10–15 emberből álló brigádokat alakítunk. A kollektív gazdaságok tagjai megmutatják a munkát. Aztán dolgozunk! Amikor a városból a gyorsvonatok óriási mozdonyai kiroboznak, a sok száz hektáros cukorrépa, káposzta és veteményes táblákon különös „napszamosok” látnak az utazók. A „napszamosok” arcát és karját nem barnította meg a nap. Ruházatuk nem mezei munkára szánt. A nők fején piros kendő.

**A városokból sokszázezer ingyen „napszamos” dolgozik a szovjetmezőn**

Gyomlál, szénát gyűjt, gyümölcsfát tisztogat. A brigádrosok előlárának a munkában, oktatnak, tanítanak és figyelnek. Magam is brigádros vagyok. Brigádom többsége újonc cseremisiz. Ravaszul nekem adták az apróterméti népet. Mégis ég kezünkben a munka. A nap lassanként leszedi rólunk a ruhát. A cseremiszek, akikre ez a név csak nyugtató ragadt a régi időben, igazi nevéikön mariok, a rokon magyar parasztok felől érdeklődnek. Szeretettel vesznek körül, jönnek utánam, nem haragszanak, ha néha figyelmeztetem őket, hogy a répa palántára vigyázni kell, mert aki egyet kitép, az 10–12 kopek kárt okoz a kollektív gazdaságunk. Nevetve és dalolva dolgozunk. Munkánkban észrevesszük, hogy az „erősek” le akarják győzni. Az én atyafiainak, motollaként jár a kezük és egyszerre vezetni kezűnk, a vezetést többé nem tudják elragadni tőlünk.

A déli nap már magasan jár. Megérkezik a husos sesi (leves) és a burgonya. Pihenő. Fűrés és a tiszta patakban, ebéd s aztán újra neki az óriási takarmányrépa tábláknak. Halljuk a munkát! A szocialista verseny kötelez. Burgalmunkban tulleptük a kollektív gazdaság határait s a szomszéd egyéni gazdaság tábláját kezdjük gyomlálni. Vezetőnk nevetve figyelmeztet, hogy ez nem a mi dolgunk.

Visszakozok!... Megyünk a magunk földjére. Polytatjuk a munkát délután 4 óráig. A vonat 5 órakor indul.

Indulás előtt oszonna, tej, vaj, sajt, pohárkenyér, aztán az eredmény megbeszélése. Dicséret a jó munkáért. Bucsuzás és utána nótázóval vissza az állomásra. Mindenki büszkén halad. A vonatban sem látjuk a fáradtságot. Csak másnap a munkahelyen érzik az emberek, hogy szokatlan munka volt. Önmaguk racionalizálják a mozdítást, ahol lehet elkerülik a felesleges felállást a székéről. De fáradtságról senki nem be-



**Jakovlev elvtárs, földművelésügyi népbiztos, egy kankarszi szovhoz vezetőivel tárgyal**

szel. A gépirónók sem panaszkodnak, csak egyik a másiktól kérde, hogy nem fájt-e a dereka... Természetes, hogy nem... talán ő legyen rosszabb, mint a kérdező!... Aztán arról beszélnek, mikor lesz a másik szubbotnyik. A szovjetmező segítők munkáját testvéri szeretettel dolgoznak a kollektív földeken. Segíténeket legyőzni a munkások hiányát szubbotnyikkal, szocialista versenyben. Jutalmuk a Jótéremés, a szocializmus győzelmében, a hatalom birtoka és az egyre javuló élelítés.

A régi nehéz szubbotnyik, a polgárháború idejének harci szubbotnyikja ma már magasabb fokra fejlődve az öt éves terv vidám győzelmű szubbotnyikja lett. Felnőtt gyermekei: a szocialista verseny és a rohammunka is. B. J.



**Ebédszünet a traktorállomáson**

*To the Moscow emigres,  
the number one blacksmith's workshops  
of the new Hungarian revolution.*

Prisons,  
gallows,  
internment camps,  
lunatic asylums,  
the bloodmill of  
white years ground  
on our unbending bones.  
They believed,  
made those believe  
who didn't believe, fooled them by  
feeding them social-democrat rot as divine grace and favour.  
For how many years?! How many years?!  
That the land is now free prey  
now  
the factory.  
Our bread,  
our doorsteps,  
our fists,  
were leased out  
above a pact, under a pact  
the fraternal seal of scythe and hammer  
handcuffed.  
And they believed  
made those believe  
now  
eternal prey, compliant coolie  
poor peasant and proletarian.  
But the Party, the Party  
like the gravel on hills  
set off, rolled  
for things to be different.  
And from the villages and beneath the factories  
our passion, oh, fire and hatred,  
fight, faith, strength and revenge cleaved off,  
bloating into glowing boulders.  
Like a magnetic cloudbank that grew into a hill,  
trotting along the country's lanes,  
gathering up all the land's diligent hands

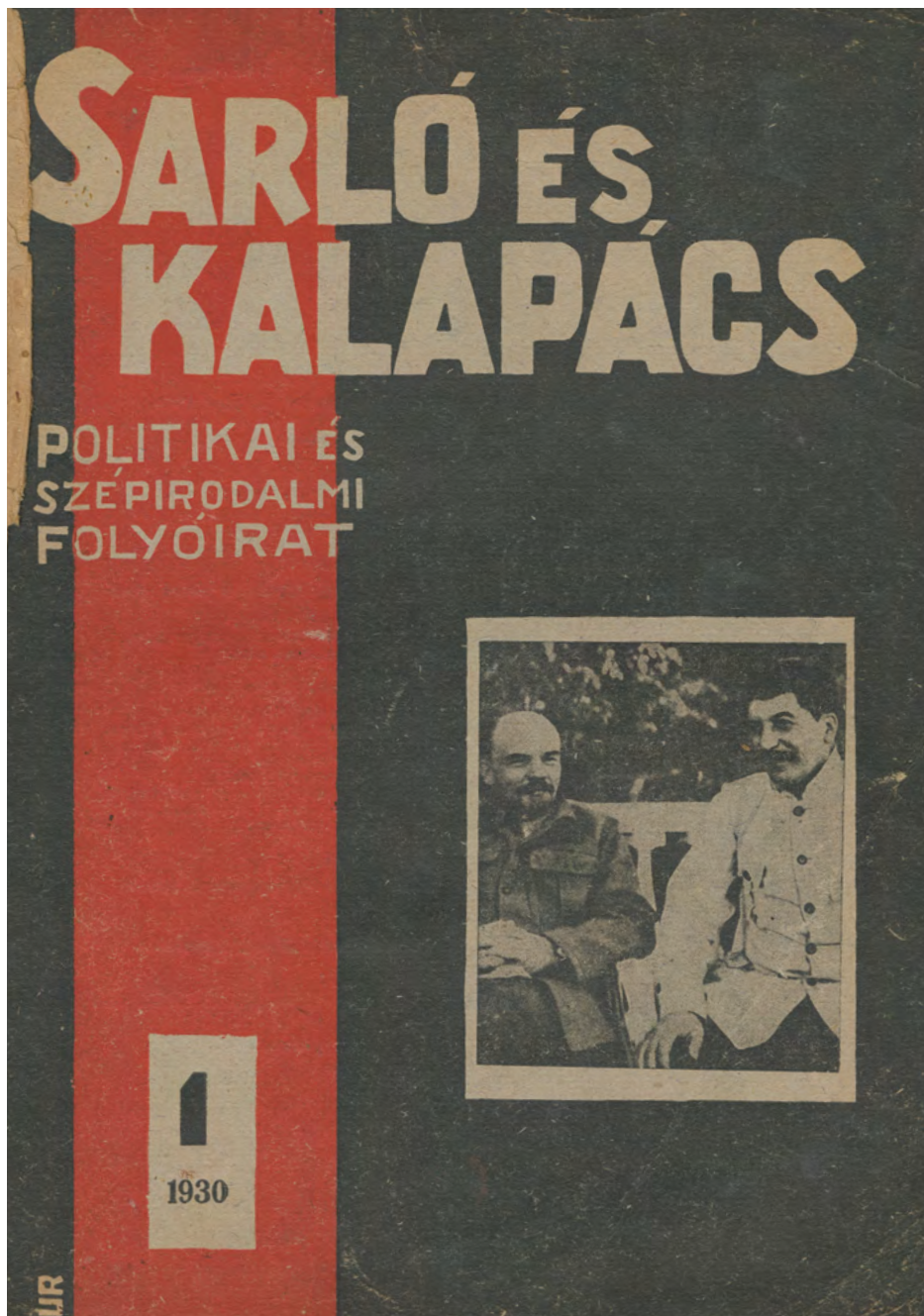
and the factories' battered proletarians.  
The word from beneath the gallows yesterday  
is today uttered by from the thousands of factories.  
And if there was a handful of vanguards yesterday,  
today they lead the forefront of the fate of thousands.  
Drilling, irrigating, hoeing in a hundred junctures,  
when throttled here, arising there.  
And there is no force that can contain it again,  
oiled by blood and the faith of millions.  
Today it teaches, organises, shows the way,  
but tomorrow it sets up and gives fresh orders.  
And whatever we won on the cheap, on a bevy of errors,  
we shall buy on the victuals of our hearts.  
We shall buy on the jailtime, ten thousand years,  
on the dead, on the fatherless,  
on our best men destroyed.  
Serf and worker,  
out from under the earth!  
Singing in red, the disc of the sun  
there is no one left to break down your fists,  
factory, barn and frontier to merge as one.  
The earth gasps for breath,  
the factory hammers,  
the Party hammers on the gates.

*Új Előre*, 25 March 1929.



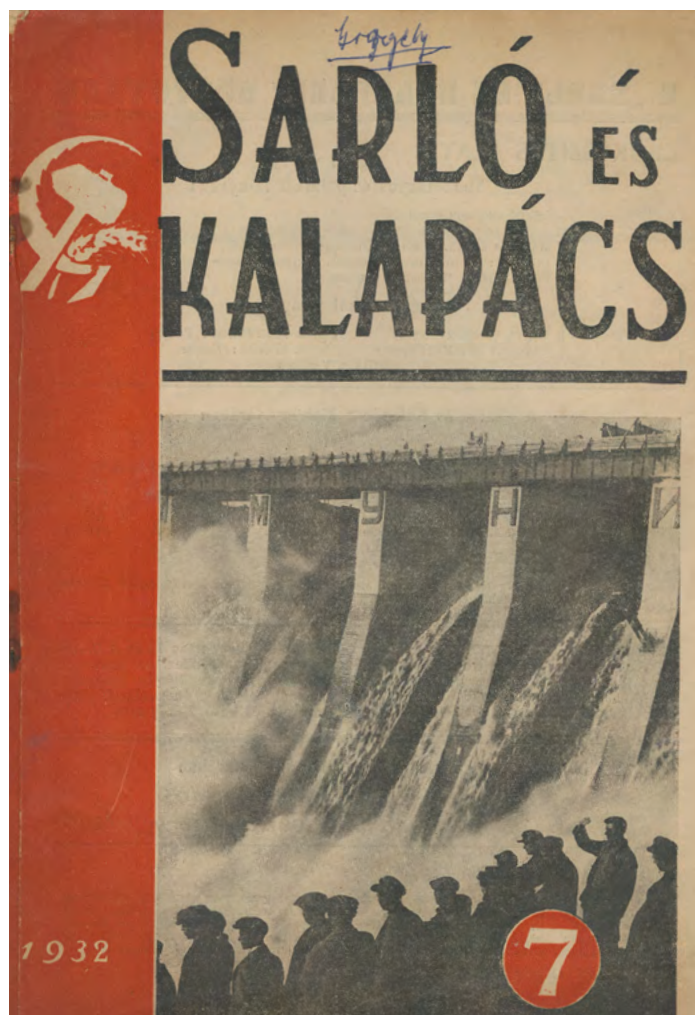
## The *Sarló és Kalapács*

*Sarló és Kalapács*, published in Moscow between 1929 and 1937, was “the magazine of Hungarian-speaking workers living in the Soviet Union” and its authors were initially mainly members of the Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists in Hungarian Language. It included literary pieces and reports on Soviet and international political and economic affairs. It paid particular attention to the situation in Hungary and was illegally disseminated in Budapest. In the first few years, its covers had a similar style to avant-garde magazines.



*Sarló és Kalapács*  
vol. 2, no. 1, January 1930  
Petőfi Literary Museum





*Sarló és Kalapács*  
vol. 3. no. 7, July 1931  
Petőfi Literary Museum

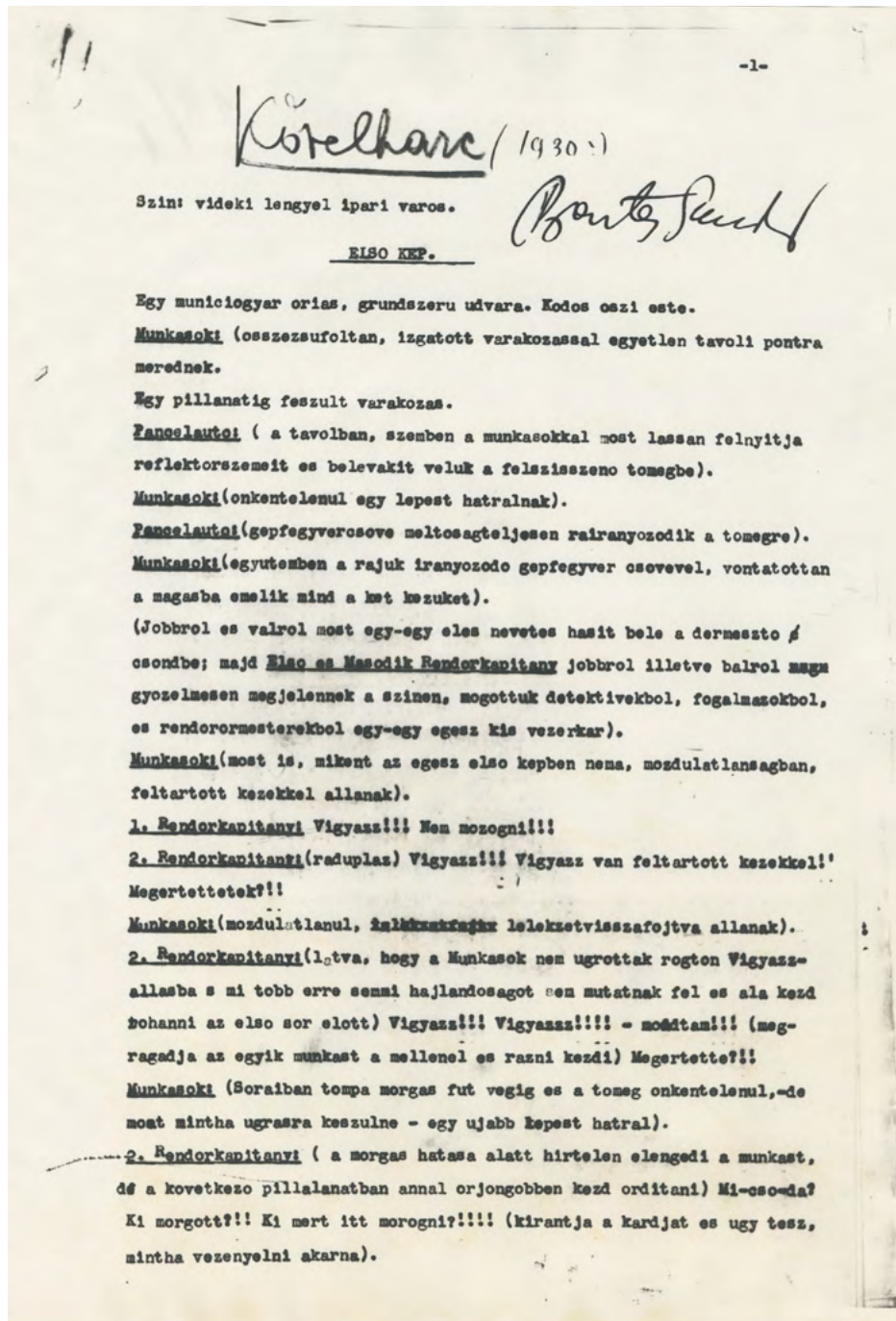
*Sarló és Kalapács*  
vol. 4. no. 7, July 1932  
Petőfi Literary Museum

*Sarló és Kalapács*  
vol. 5. no. 11, November 1933  
Petőfi Literary Museum



# Sándor Barta: Pell-mell

Sándor Barta's drama *Közelharc* [Pell-mell, or Close Combat] is set in Łódź during the general wage strike of 1928. The local trade unions succeeded in stopping nearly all services in the city. Several issues of Hungarian newspapers and *Új Előre* covered the strike, which paralysed the city. Barta had personal experiences related to the demonstrations and police violence against demonstrators. In his childhood, he had been part of the great Budapest mass demonstration of 23 May 1912, where he was beaten by the police and spent a night in jail. His short story *Misa* [Misha] and his novel *Aranyásók* [Gold Diggers] also document the strike movements and the violent police action against the strikers.



Sándor Barta  
*Közelharc* [Pell-mell, or Close Combat]  
Photocopy of a manuscript  
11 February 1929  
Petőfi Literary Museum

Next page:  
Reports on the Łódź strike in Hungarian-language newspapers

*Új Előre*, 15 October 1928  
*Magyarország* [Hungary], 16 October 1928  
*Munkás* [Worker], 18 October 1928  
*Népszava*, 23 October 1928



Sarló

MUNKÁS

Minden földmunkát végző megveszi 8koronáért a Munkás- és Parasztnaplárt!

...TÁK CSEHSZLOVÁKIAI PÁRTJÁNAK /A III. INTERNACIONÁLE SZERCIÓJA/ NAPILAPJA

s proletárial egyesültek! 1928. október 18. csütörtök

MAGYARORSZÁG

rájkat!



Változatlanul tart a textilmunkások harca

Tovább terjed az általános sztrájk

Vasár, október 17. (Tel.)

Az előző általános sztrájk változatlan erővel tart, csütörtökre a munkások és munkások konferenciáját hívták egybe...

Százezerpengős rablás az FTC igazgatójának lakásában

(A Magyarországi Tudósítójától.) Szeged, a Ferencvárosi Törvényszék elnöke, az elnöki lakásában...

folyamán a fasisztákos béméletést követően...

Ludendorff újjaszervezi Kína hadseregét

(A Magyarországi Tudósítójától.) London, október 15. Ludendorff tábornok...

A bányászok szava a zöldségasztalhoz

Tüntető-sztrájkok az ostromra kerülhetnek

Mor. Osztrav tárgyalások előbbre...

Megegyezés

Krakó, október 17. (Tel.) A szénbányászok...

Kérelmet a király...

...a királyt való megolvasás céljából...

Ludendorff újjaszervezi Kína hadseregét

...Ludendorff tábornok...

Általános sztrájk Lodzban

...Vasár, október 15. Lodz városában...

Cseh bányamunkások sztrájkja

...Prága, október 15. Csehországban...

Anglia és az amerikai imperialisták

...Lengyelország általános sztrájk előtt...

Tegnap 3 kerületben tartott konvenciót az új bányász unió

...Közpénnyal, W. Virginia és Illinois építik az új uniót...

Pittsburgh, okt. 14.

...Vasárnap három kerületben tartotta első konvencióját a National Miners Union...

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Minden Hatalmat a Munkásoknak

VOL. XXV. ÉVFOLYAM. No. 5835.

Veszélyben Gitlow kommunista

Ma érkezik meg a Zeppelin

EGY SZTRÁJKTÖRŐ MEGHALT, 200 MEGSEBESÜLT AZ ARGENTINAI RAKODÓMUNKÁS SZTRÁJKBAN

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UJELŐR

NEW YORK

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Atlanta, Ga. (Levélben érkezett)...

Igen sikeresek Foster gyűlései a déli államokban

Atlantaiban autótüntetés volt a kommunisták mellett

Atlanta, Ga. (Levélben érkezett)...

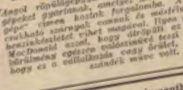
Foster elvtárs gyűlésein 500 főre is nőtt a munkások...

Atlanta, Ga. (Levélben érkezett)...

Washington, D.C. (Levélben érkezett)...



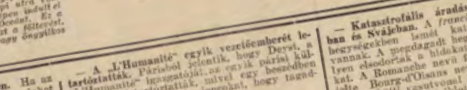
A géplap...



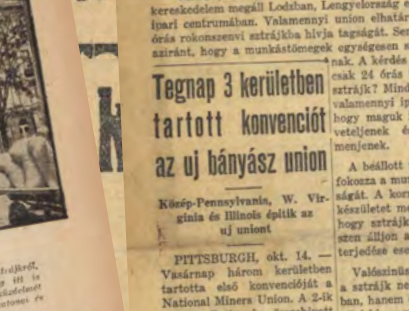
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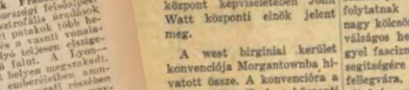
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A total sztrájk...



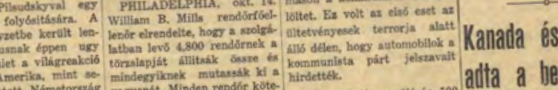
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A total sztrájk...



A total sztrájk...



# Erzsi Újvári: *The Bell*

After 1930, Erzsi Újvári's short stories about workers' children became increasingly schematic and propagandistic. In her story *A csengő* [The Bell], a group of proletarian children grieve the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and symbolically bury the child-related government measures introduced during the dictatorship of the proletariat.

A Performance of Proletarian Children at Tripolisz  
*Színházi Élet* [Theater Life]  
 vol. 8, no. 11, 16 March 1919  
 National Széchényi Library



**SZÍNHÁZI ÉLET** 31

**Proletár gyermek-előadás-son a Tripoliszban**

Bizonyára megrökönyödéssel olvasod el a címet és valami Afrikából keltezett hamis táviratot vársz alatta, amely mintha a napilapok régi, jóvilágbeli „Vegyes” rovatából csöppent volna ide. Nem, drágám, mindenki, aki tudja, hogy Pesten hol van a Tripolisz, az mind őszinte szívből kívánja azt, hogy bár Afrikában volna, bár ne volna itt. Pedig sajnos és szomorú, de ez a Tripolisz itt van Budapesten a hatodik kerületben, a Váci-ut jobboldalán és egy csomó barakkból áll. Itt laknak az élet hajótöröttjei. Egészen letört emberek. Az északfelé esőkben inkább iparosok, a dél felé esett emberek, tévtra tértek és a két szélsőség között szerényen húzódik meg egy keskeny sávon az igazi nyomor. A leghelyesebb kifejezés talán az abszolút nyomor. Ebben a keskeny sávba esik az elemi iskolai épület is, melynek nagytermében vasárnap délután előadást tartott a *Színházi Élet* Gyerekszínháza a Munkások gyermekbarát egyesületének 28. számú helyi csoportja javára, természetesen ingyen. A nézőteret mintegy háromszáz gyerek, néhány mama, tanítónéni töltötték be.

A műsor előtt Szervey György iskolaigazgató, a helyi csoport elnöke mondott néhány szót, majd Mihályi Vilcsy adta elő a prólogust. Utána Szalontay Ferike csinált nézőtéri mókákat, mely alkalommal rendkívül sok szép ajándékot osztott szét, majd labdázott a gyerekekkel, akik még a szám végeztével is meleg ovációkban részesítették, legtöbbször azt kívánták, hogy a számot ismétlje meg, persze újabb ajándékokkal egybekötve. Azután a „Hintatal” következett, melyet Halmay Vilmos és Mihályi Lucy

adtak elő. Ez megint olyan szám volt, amelyen a gyerekek is részt vehettek a mókában és tömegesen jelentkeztek a hintázásra.

A pódium körül már ugyyszólván életveszélyes volt a tolongás, mikor Szervey igazgató egy ujjmutatással elintézte a dolgot. Utána a „Ferkó a moziban” következett, amin nagyon sokat mulatott a kis közönség, Szécsy Ferenc, Mihályi Lucy, Halmay Vilmos és Imre egyaránt nagy sikert arattak. Azután Glaser J. Emil „Bergengócia” című mesejátékát játszották. A szép és jólmegírt darabnak is megvolt a hatása. Idősebb és ifjabb Lubinszky Tibor és Lilly és Bársony Rózsikának bő részük volt a tapsban. Majd Mihályi Vilcsy énekelt el két dalocskát nagyon sok érzéssel. Azután Bársony Rózsika következett, aki a „Taps-nóta”-t adta elő. Mondanom sem kell talán, hogy a legtöbb tapsot ő kapta, mert a gyerekek az előírás szerint az egész refrén ritmusát végig tapsolták. Az utolsó, egyszersmind talán a legsikerültebb szám „A rendőr, a suszterinas, meg a köztársaság” volt, melyben Halmay Vilmos, de különösen a fia, Imre brillirozott. A kis gyermekhad valóságos végigtombolta ezt a számot, melyben a kis Imre olyan érett színészi készséget, különösen pedig olyan határtalan találatkonyságot, a helyzethez való alkalmazkodást árult el, hogy magukat a színház embereit is bámulomba ejtette. Az előadás után pedig Szervey igazgató megköszönte a színészek fáradozását és a színház igazgatóságának szociális érzéseért és hogy az előadás tartalmasságára olyan nagy súlyt helyezett. A beszéd végeztével az iskola udvarán felállították a gyerekeket és lefotografálták őket.

Már erősen sötétedett, mire nagynehezen elhatározták magukat a hazamenetelre. A közönség is, meg a színészek is. (id)

A „Tripolisz” gyerekei a *Színházi Élet* Gyerekszínházának előadásán.  
 Papp Rezső főtétele



Proletarian Children at the Margaret Island  
 and the Károlyi Garden  
*Új Idők* [New Times]  
 30 April 1919  
 National Széchényi Library



On the vacant plot of Visegrádi Street and Sziget Street leading towards the Danube, the local children's group would meet in the evenings. Two boys stood guard by the board fence opening and only allowed in those who were members of the school committee or the children's group.

In one corner of the fence sat the meeting organiser, Béla Boross, on a barrel of coconut oil. His eyes burned restlessly, his wax-white face and shaking hands betraying his sleepless nights at home. He kept his hands in his pockets, clutching onto a bell and a sheet of paper.

The children had never been so punctual. By five thirty, the corner was full. All stood around the barrel with respect and some sort of pleasant trembling, waiting for Boross to say something reassuring. Not one of them was thinking of starting on the fellow next to him and rolling him around in the soft sands.

No, today they were quiet.

Quiet and silent, just like the adults back at home. They didn't hear the dog catcher walking down the street, or the escaped canary singing on the next door house's wall, and the catapults lay forgotten in their pockets.

One of the children standing guard now whispered something to his companion, who passed the message on until it reached Béla Boross sitting on the barrel.

Béla Boross looked around once more, then pulled the little bell and crumpled sheet of paper from his pocket. Quietly, so that the bell wouldn't make too much noise, he rang it.

Every child's eyes turned towards him.

– Boys, we've received a motion to start the meeting. Is everyone here? – asked Boross.

– We're here! – from several directions.

– I don't think we need a chair or a clerk any more – said Boross. All remained silent.

Béla Boross rubbed his hands, his eyes fixed on the ground.

– Boys, I think all of you know – he began – that the dictatorship has fallen and with it our school committee, and the children's group... I've called you all here to hand over the minutes of the last meeting and the group's bell... I've been keeping it in a bird's nest... so that the detectives couldn't take it when they took my father away... we may need it soon... to show to the adults... to my father and your fathers... to all the comrades, to show that we weren't scared, that we persevered...

Béla Boross was the first speaker and that's why the words rattled off his tongue with some difficulty. He wanted to say something nice about sticking together, about the comrade fathers taken prisoner, but the sounds got lost in his throat.

He climbed down from the barrel.

There was silence for a while, then one of the boys stood next to the barrel, fiddled nervously with his coat button, then suddenly raised his head and began to speak:

– Fellow children, I came to this meeting to say goodbye to you. My father had enough time to escape to Vienna... My mother was interned... one of these evenings we'll sneak [across the border] after him too... don't think I'm a coward. I'm going because I'm taking my two little brothers... But we'll be back soon and I'll bring the group a new trumpet... That's all I wanted to say.

A really small boy stood next to the barrel and started speaking loudly, as none of the others had dared to do:

– My father was also taken away... but that's nothing... but today, as I arrived at school, the reverend came and the children kissed his hand... and I spat behind his back... The lessons started with prayers again, just like before... I didn't pray either... My mum told me off for this at home... but I... I still won't pray. Boys, I suggest we take action... I won't listen to my mum on this... on this, you have to decide how we have to behave at school... this is what I'm asking you – and with that he stepped away from the barrel.

Now the eldest of the group stepped up to the barrel. He picked up the bell, stroked it, and then put it back in its place, confused.

– Feri Barna asked – he began speaking faintly – asked how to behave in school. This is a very difficult question boys, since you also all know that they hate us to death there. So be on guard, I also think that you have to stand up during prayer... Act like you are praying, but recite some poem among the group... I can't give any other advice... there's nobody to give advice...

– Right! That's right! We don't have to pray – shouted the children.

– No need to obey, only obey a communist.

– Right! That's right!

Another child jumped up to the boy standing next to the barrel. In all the noise it was impossible to hear what he asked him. Then he jumped on the barrel and started to speak.

– Boys, I've written a new list of ten points for the group. I suggest we stick to this as strictly as possible.

– Let's hear it! Let's hear it! from all directions.

The child standing on the barrel read out loudly from a piece of paper:

1. Stay principled!
2. Don't pray!
3. Don't obey anyone except your comrade!
4. Share your money with those who have none!
5. Don't spare the bourgeois window with your catapult!
6. Fight as many 'yellow' boys as you can!
7. It is your duty to pee on the door of the informers in the house once a day!
8. Fear nothing in the fight against the bourgeois!
9. Whoever becomes a traitor among us should not dare to step foot in the street!
10. During the National Anthem, hum the Internationale instead!

– Hurrah!! Hurrah!! – shouted the children's battalion.

– Accepted! Long live Molnár!

And countless children's hands were raised to show they agreed with the proposal.

The oldest in the group, who wanted to say something, couldn't get a word in with the children, who were still gesticulating and shouting.

Béla Boross rang the bell.

All at once, the children fell silent.

The group elder started talking.

– Boys, pay attention! I suggest we accept the new ten points, but be careful, because the bourgeois will take revenge for these four and a half months, maybe they won't even let us in the school... Hang in there boys, my father said, we'll be back soon... Hang in there! Meanwhile, he picked up the bell and raised it above his head.

– And now we have to bury the group's bell with the minutes.

The children stood with downcast eyes, some of them started whistling to keep from crying.

– Boys, discipline! Let's line up! – Ordered the group elder – Béla Boross, the group chair will bury the bell and the minutes.

Béla Boross stepped before the group and took the bell and minutes in his hands.

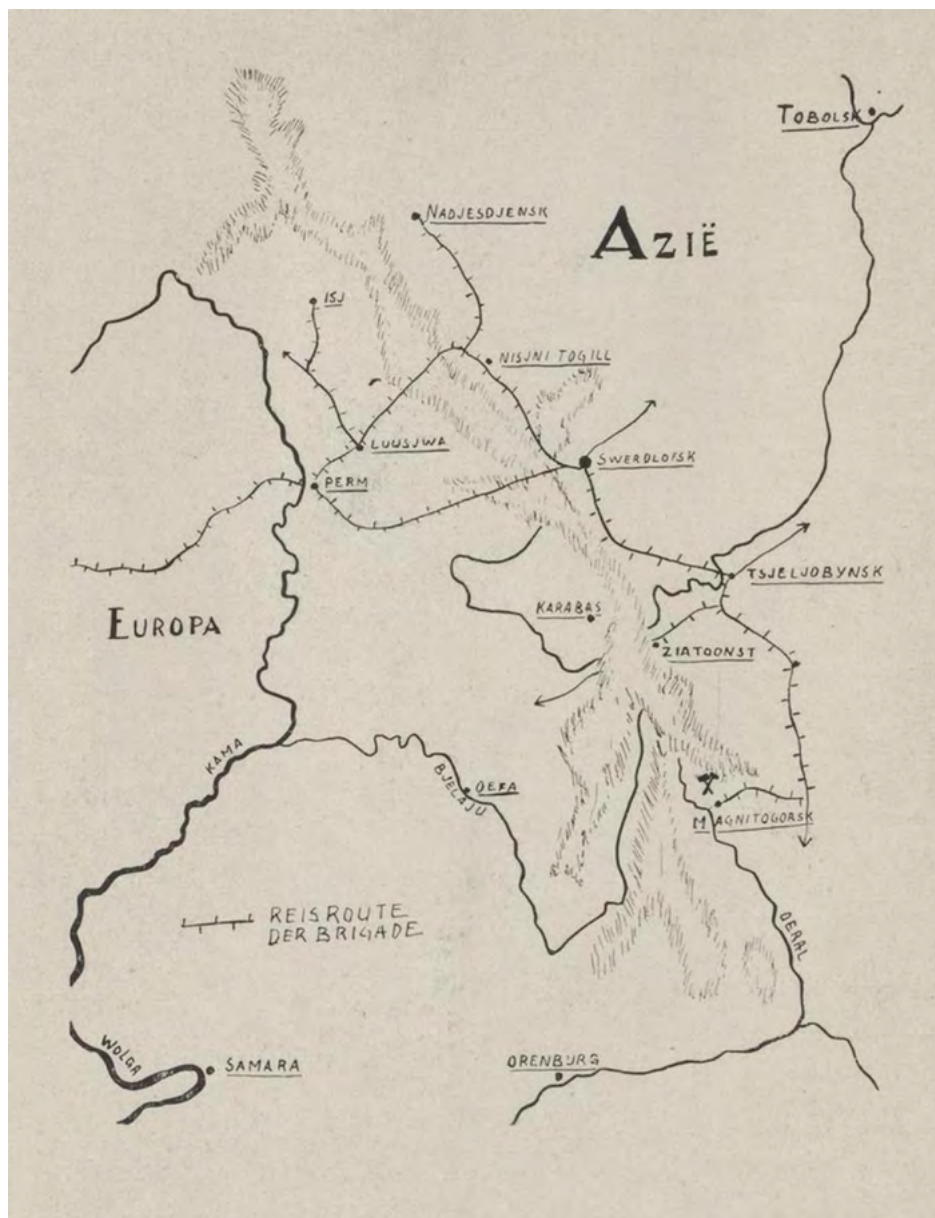
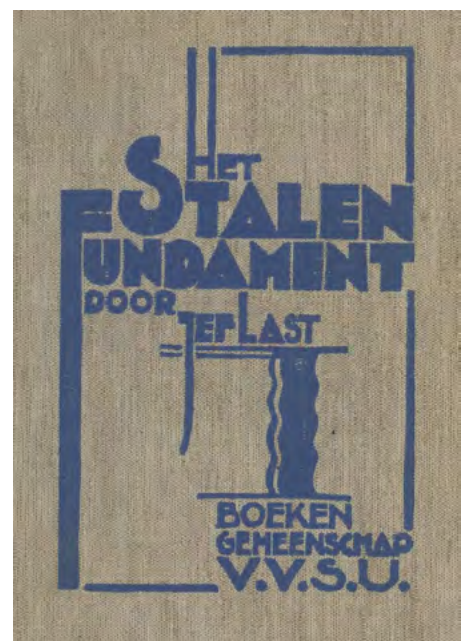
The whole group saluted. Boross rang the bell softly one last time, and then carefully tied it in a handkerchief.

One of the boys brought a spade from somewhere and started digging in front of the line of children. Boross knelt down and when the hole was big enough, he carefully placed the small package inside. And while Feri Barna and the group elder filled the hole with sand to make it level with the ground, the children began to hum, quietly and falteringly, the Internationale. Bitter tears ran down the children's burning faces before the filled-in hole. And when they stepped through the fence opening, the whole group of little children knew that they had not buried only the bell, but everything before them that was beautiful and good. The praise from their comrade fathers, the school debates, the free cinema, the larger slice of white bread, the pleasures of newly bourgeois Margit Island, and everything that the dictatorship of the proletariat had opened up for them for four and a half months.

*Sarló és Kalapács*, vol. 3. no. 11, November 1931, 59–60.

# The Ural Journey

In summer 1932, Sándor Barta made a forty-day tour of the Soviet Urals as part of an international writers' brigade going through Magnitogorsk and Yekaterinburg. They visited factories and attended meetings with Soviet writers and workers. Among the international brigade were Louis Aragon and his wife Elsa Triolet from France and Jef Last from the Netherlands. Barta wrote about his experiences in the Urals in reports and poems published in *Sarló és Kalapács*. Aragon published the cycle of poems *Hourra l'Oural* [Hurrah Urals] in Paris in 1934. Jef Last covered his Soviet Union travels in two books in 1933 *Het Stalen Fundament* [The Steel Foundation], a report novel illustrated with photographs and a cycle of poems, *Twee werelden* [Two Worlds].

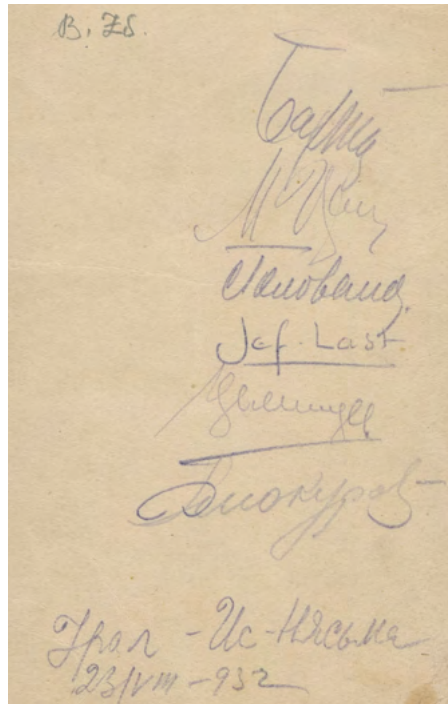


Louis Aragon: *Hourra l'Oural* [Hurrah Urals] Paris, Denoël et Steele, 1934

Jef Last: *Het Stalen Fundament. Reportage over 2500 K.M. Zwerftochten door de Oeral* [The Steel Foundation. Reportage about a 2500 KM Journey Through the Urals] Amsterdam, Boekengemeenschap der Vrienden van de Sowjet-Unie, 1933

Jef Last: The Route of the International Brigade *Het Stalen Fundament*, 1933





Sándor Barta, Jef Last  
and five men with guns  
Ural, 23 August 1932  
Kassák Museum



Szovjet gigászok [Soviet Giants]  
Sarló és Kalapács  
vol. 5. no. 1, January 1933  
Petőfi Literary Museum

We were beyond Europe,  
deep into Asia,  
where the Kingiz cower  
in their rickety yurts,  
hovels made of earth reaching only your shoulders,  
and jutting into the sky with sleepy, sunken eyes.

The train dashed,  
hours,  
days,  
clickety-clack,  
taki-tak,  
taki-tak.  
Flat steppes to the right,  
to the left, dry stalks of  
puszta  
in Hungarian: puszta  
in Russian: styep,  
yellowish-grey, endless, impassible  
motionless styep.

Here a horseman  
with a rifle on his shoulder,  
– above him circles the hawk –  
there a gaping herd of cows,  
and over there a thousand  
black sheep grazing,  
and as far as the eye can see,  
inhuman, bleak styep-sea.  
This happened in twelve hours,  
as the sun rose  
then set again.

Only the train clickety-clacked on,  
Tiki-tak.  
Tiki-tak.  
Tiki-tak.

But in the morning,  
like some barge swimming between the clouds,  
the sun emerged  
before us anew,

and in its sway  
the train  
– Tiki-tak, tiki-tak, tiki-tak –  
sped  
taking us  
– around us people already packing –  
– taki-tak, taki-tak, taki-tak –  
two German engineers in heated argument,  
one more hour and the ironworks come,  
one more hour, but he's already sent his breath  
and wherever you look  
rails running,  
coaches rushing,  
– tiki-tak, tiki-tak, tiki-tak –  
barracks file past,  
hovels hollowed out of the earth march past,  
going,  
going  
to the horizon,  
running,  
hurrying  
to Magnitogorsk.  
– Taki-tak, taki-tak, taki-tak –  
The train is flying,  
and now all at once the track turns  
and there before us stands  
on Asia's sleepy styep-face,  
mixed in black soot and fire,  
with the glowing pupils of its coke ovens,  
in its scruffy, ruffled smoke-hair  
with the sun's bronze buckle,  
Magnitogorsk.  
And its blast furnaces draw into helical embrace  
the glowing iron and cinder,  
like the pregnant mother embracing  
the stirring embryo.

We have arrived.  
Music in the railway station,  
on a narrow platform  
stands the shock troops of electrical workers,  
in blue work tunics

and under a heavy velvet flag,  
in worn-out leather jackets, their brigadier  
never takes his hand  
from the flagpole  
as he speaks:  
– Comrades! The shock workers of Magnitogorsk send their  
revolutionary greetings  
to the proletarians of the world! –  
– Hurrah! – the *Internationale* rumbles and roars,  
our words swallowed by the song,  
while the masses swallow us,  
then merging as one  
song and masses,  
and the march  
winds onward  
along the broad road,  
pioneers at the front,  
blast furnaces rumbling from afar  
and all around them the Cowper stoves  
like organ pipes.

A pale worker in a Russian shirt elbows his way towards me,  
his eyes so deep, so afraid,  
his face stands out from the crowd  
– Comrade! – he says in Hungarian  
– Have you read today's *Pravda*? –  
All over my face it is written that I have not.  
His hands are shaking, my hands are shaking.  
We open the newspaper  
both of us.  
He points,  
dead pale, choking up and says:  
– Comrade, read this!  
.....  
.....

That evening  
we sit together,  
hunched over,  
wounded together.  
He mixes in words from Russian:

- In nineteen,  
in Budapest,  
we came from the Gólyavár, protesting together with the social  
democrats,  
against the rightists,  
the march split in two at the corner of Rákóczi Road,  
the social democrats stuck with *People's Word*.  
We stuck with *Red News*,  
not many of us: two thousand.  
I stop and watch, how they march with guns over their shoulders  
five thousand, ten thousand, twenty thousand, workers, soldiers to  
Conti Street.  
I shook with rage. I set about one, grabbed him and shouted:  
- You blind prole!  
Where are you going?  
And then Sallai comes along  
takes my arm:  
- Comrade, stand in line:  
Perseverance,  
Discipline,  
Calm.  
The revolution is not yet over, it's only just begun!  
Outside night was falling  
in front of the barrier  
flickering in the large glass windows of the electric light factory  
and the soft, monotonous hum of the blast furnaces.

Did you know, Comrade, what his last words were?  
Standing there under the gallows, he spat out:  
"My comrades will avenge me!" -

In Magnitogorsk they just stabbed the  
heart of the young worker and of  
the blast furnace  
bearing the name Molotov.  
Pouring their blood incandescent  
into cement-veins  
and from on high the iron gushes forth, throwing out sparks  
into enormous crucibles.



Hungary also had casting.  
The blast furnace heart of the KMP was punctured,  
iron gushed out bleeding,  
turning into  
unbreakable  
steel  
in the hands of the Party and the hundreds of thousands.

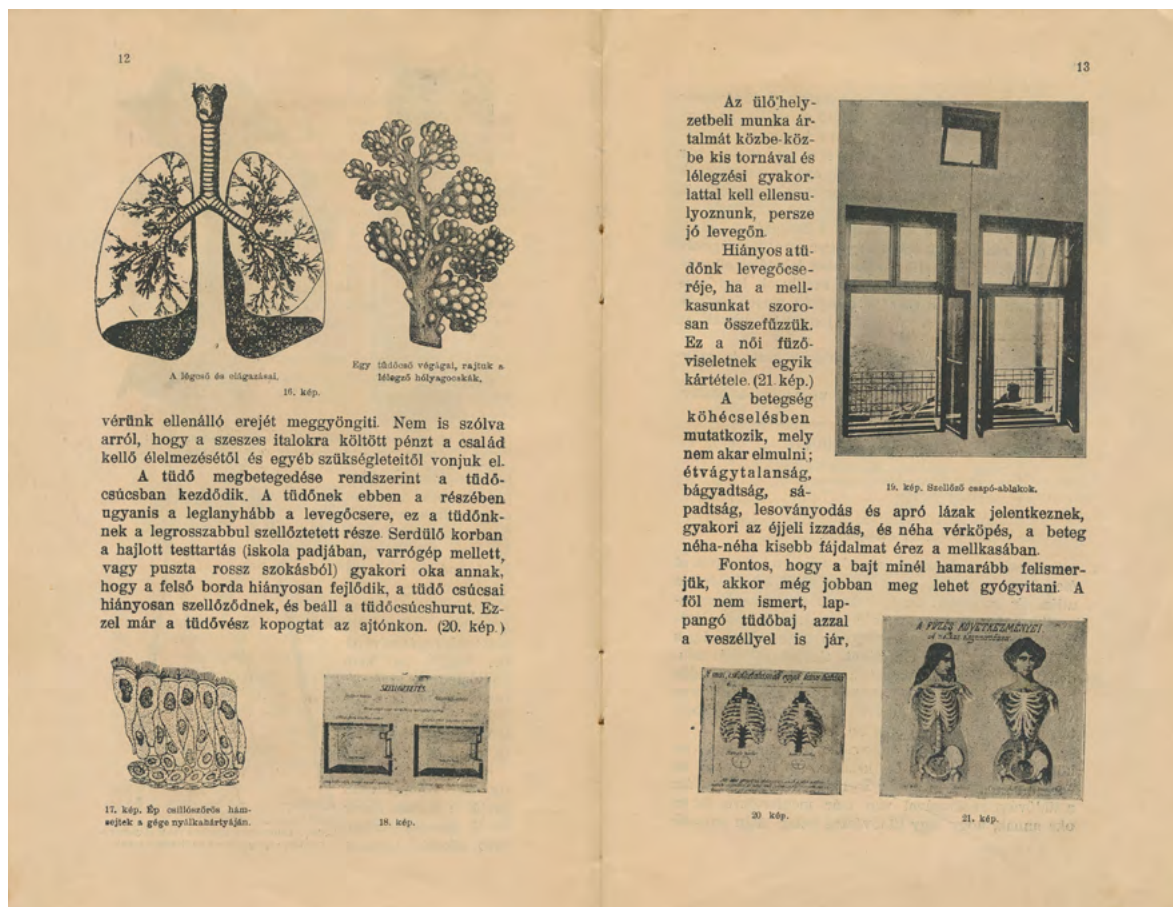
The country saw it,  
all the workers' districts,  
the village saw it,  
the earth shook,  
so that there was only casting,  
bloody, incandescent casting  
merely  
so that the blast furnace stands,  
it roared,  
it is aflame,  
glowing  
onwards!

*Sarló és Kalapács*, vol. 4. nos. 10–11, October 1932, 26–28.

# Tuberculosis

In 1930, documenting the industrial accomplishments of the Soviet Union became the central theme in the programme of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (RAPP). Barta subsequently made several series of reports on Soviet economic successes. On a train during his tour of the Urals, he met a doctor who worked in Perm and asked her about the treatment of tubercular children. It was a question important to Barta, because he had suffered from tuberculosis since his childhood, and in his 1933 report he describes the medical treatment of the soviet children as a clear success. Perm (later Molotov) lies in the eastern region of the Urals, about 1100 kilometres from Moscow. Mass BCG vaccinations started in the town in 1939 but the first vaccines arrived months late. Perm had not sent the payment in time to the Sverdlovsk laboratory that produced them and the laboratory did not know the address of the maternity homes in Perm. In summer 1940, the Sverdlovsk laboratory was closed for renovation and the supply of BCG vaccinations was held up again. At that time, new consignments were ordered directly from Moscow. The intervention from Moscow resulted in a higher rate of vaccinations but the local production and supply problems persisted, as manifested in the vaccination campaign in large cities. (Bernstein – Burton – Healey 2010.)

Menyhért Szántó  
*A népbetegségekről. Tüdővész*  
 [On Common Diseases. Tuberculosis]  
 Budapest, Társadalmi Múzeum  
 [Social Museum], 1919  
 Kassák Museum





# FIGYELMEZTETÉS!

1.  
A TÜDŐVÉSZ LEGFONTOSABB TER-  
JESZTŐJE A KÖPÉT ÉS A POR. MEG-  
ELŐZŐJE A TISZTA LEVEGŐ.

2.  
A HELYSÉGBEN A PADLÓRA KÖP-  
NI TILOS. A KÖPKÖDŐ EMBER EM-  
BERTÁRSAI ÁLLANDÓ VESZEDELME.  
CSAKIS A KÖPŐCSÉSZÉBE SZABAD  
KÖPNI, AMELYBEN ÁLLANDÓAN  
TISZTA VIZ LEGYEN.

3.  
TILOS A SZÁRAZ SÖPRÉS. EZ A LEVE-  
GŐBE HAJTJA A PORT, MELY TELVE-  
VAN A TÜDŐVÉSZ CSIRÁIVAL. SÖPRÉS  
ELŐTT FEL KELL LOCSOLNI, VAGY VIZES  
FELMOSÁST KELL ALKALMAZNI!

4.  
AZ ABLAKOK LEHETŐLEG ÁLLAN-  
DÓAN NYITVA LEGYENEK.

MUNKAÜGYI ÉS NÉPJÓLÉTI NÉPBIZTOSÁG  
RÁDÓ BUDAPEST, SZEMERE U.19.

Ustchay

Figyelmeztetés! [Warning!]

Munkaügyi és Népjóléti Népbiztosság

[People's Commissariat for Labour and Social Welfare], 1919

National Széchényi Library

*Female doctor*

We'd hardly slept a few hours when the door opened again. A frail, bespectacled woman aged around thirty entered with a swaddled baby in her arms. Behind her was a short man wearing breeches bringing with him a suitcase and a wicker basket containing milk bottles wrapped in rags and children's belongings. He deposited the luggage, exchanged a few quiet words with the woman, then left. She notices that I'm upstairs and quietly apologises for disturbing us. I can't sleep any more anyway, so we start talking.

I learn that she's a health worker, a school doctor in Perm. She had four months' maternity leave and one month ordinary leave. Her husband – who brought the luggage into the carriage – and who was travelling in another car because they hadn't managed to get a seat together – is an agronomist on a Soviet farm. She has two jobs and earns three hundred and seventy-five roubles, her husband earns two hundred and fifty, and her father receives a pension of seventy-two roubles. They have a two-room flat for which they pay eight roubles a month. She tells me that supplies were low in spring, but now that the kolkhoz markets have opened, the situation has improved. They regularly receive bread, sugar and everything else on the ration card. They receive sixteen kilos of flour per person per month.

We talk about the schools.

- Are the children healthy?
- Many of the children are prone to tuberculosis but unfortunately we couldn't manage to send them to a sanatorium.
- How many of the children are tuberculosis-prone?
- In one school with nine hundred children, the vaccine produced a reaction in *forty*. Mostly among the children born in (the civil war years) nineteen twenty and twenty-one.
- That's exactly four and a half percent, and do you think that's a lot? In our country it's at least twice as much, if not three times.
- But *we* think it's *too high*. We sent twenty-three of them to the sanatorium, and from the autumn, all forty will be attending schools in the forest.
- What kind of treatment do the sick children receive at school?
- Mostly better nutrition. As well as a proper hot breakfast, which every child receives, they can also have lunch for seventeen kopecks. If their parents earn less, it's free.
- Does it happen that children are not allowed to attend school because of a lack of shoes or clothes?

– That can't happen here. Rather, an adult might not have shoes, but it can't happen that a child misses school because they don't have shoes. A special commission deals with making sure that children have clothes, in particular shoes and galoshes.

– How do you explain the fact that we still see, even if only occasionally, *bezprizornij* (vagrant) children in the cities and on the railways?

– As soon as spring comes, some of them run away [from school] despite the most careful supervision. Believe me, the explanation for this is mostly psychological. Ninety percent of those who end up in factory schools are saved. It is only work, and exclusively work, that can save them. And here there is work for everyone.

– What does the population think about the war?

– Nobody wants war. You will understand that in a country where construction is taking place everywhere, nobody is thinking of starting a war. I was born in Perm. This quiet town is no longer recognisable. Everything has been torn up, everything has changed. Everything is half-finished. Have you ever seen a farmer in a half-built house think about smashing his neighbour's windows in, thus bringing the entire village down on himself?

– No, I truly haven't seen anything like that. But does the population know that war is in the making against the Soviet Union?

– The men and the working women know, but unfortunately in the villages there are still women who don't read the newspapers or attend meetings, and thus they are unaware of the threat of war.

– In your opinion, what will the population's attitude be if the Soviet Union is attacked?

– Allow me to return to my earlier analogy. We will defend ourselves with the same ultimate determination as the farmer building a house who is robbed by bandits during its construction.

We arrive in Perm. It's already growing light. A wide river lies before us, the Kama. Large warehouses line the shore, and there are barges on the water. The female doctor alights with the help of her husband, and I alight too. The train wagons are cleaned with liquid disinfectant. I go into the dining hall. There is milk, eggs, salad and black bread on the counter. All the tables are occupied. Female servers in white aprons bring out the soup. At one table, thirty school children are eating. Seated with them is a blonde leader in a leather coat. They all eat lunch. I learn that they have been on a six-day excursion to Moscow. They are formerly homeless children from the "children's city", where five hundred children live.



They were hand-chosen by the children themselves. They are the best students and the best social workers. The distance between Perm and Moscow – I was told, although I cannot check this any time soon – is around one and a half thousand kilometres. I go out to the platform, where I find a sign offering work opportunities in Yaroslavl. All along the platform, inside the waiting halls, entire peasant families are sitting with sacks and parcels. They are also eating too. I look at what they're eating. In an earthen brown cloak, with their feet wrapped in rags, an entire family is sitting in matted moccasins around a tin plate, eating pickled cabbage with wooden spoons and black bread to go with it. Next to them, a ten-year-old child is lying on a stuffed sack eating a thick slice of black bread with wild strawberries. Outside on the platform, a young man who looks like a worker is sitting on a wooden crate eating generously buttered bread. Next to him are three young men who look like peasants, wrapped in rags with wide saws on their backs, eating hard-boiled eggs, black bread and green onions. Most people are eating black bread with tea, the children are eating black bread with fruit. I saw meat or bacon on the bread only twice. I ask one group where they're travelling to. – For work – they reply. To Magnitogorsk. I hear the same answer from the other group. They're going to work, to Tagil.

*Sarló és Kalapács*, vol. 5. no. 1, January 1933, 29–30.

## “The Mutter” in Moscow

Lajos Kassák's mother, Erzsébet Istenes moved to Moscow in 1935 to stay with her daughters – Mária, Teréz, and Erzsébet – and spent two years there. She mainly lived in the flat of Sándor Barta and Erzsi Újvári but her letters to Kassák reveal she was racked by homesickness and doubts. In 1936/1937, Kassák published fictive letters to his mother in Budapest journals *Nyugat* [West] and *Pesti Napló* [Pest Diary], from which he compiled a highly successful book *Anyám címére* [To my Mother's Address].



Erzsébet Istenes  
with Tobias the pigeon, 1930s  
Kassák Museum

Kedves Gyermekem,  
 Szerencsén meg  
 érkezünk minden  
 nehézség nélkül  
 eddig minden  
 nagyon jó  
 és minden van  
 és sok nem van  
 abból amit mon  
 darsak

Byggaum | Kassák  
 Bessend | Budapest  
 Byggaum | Bulevaru 19.  
 Kammat U. Mokolca. 55. III. Budapest  
 nep 12/12 KB332



Letter of Erzsébet Istenes to Lajos Kassák  
 6 July 1935  
 Kassák Museum

"My dear children,  
 Luckily we arrived without any problems so far  
 everything is fine and we have everything and  
 much of what they say is not true..."

"It's no use, however much I want to, I cannot stay. It's awful to be among strangers. I get on best with Terus, but she has a lot of difficulties with her husband [Béla Uitz]. I can't say that Sándor [Barta] is nice to me, but he's also happy to have escaped home. Bözse [Erzsi Újvári] is not anxious, but completely mad. Over at Mariska's there are lots of arguments because of the children. I don't know what I should do!"

Letter of Erzsébet Istenes to Lajos Kassák  
 November 1935  
 Kassák Museum

Kedves fami es kedves Jolán! <sup>nyomtatott</sup>  
 Gondolom, hogy sokszor el- <sup>em letet</sup>  
 mondham már. De még <sup>levegő</sup>  
 az is nem mondham el <sup>szóval</sup>  
 benn igazán. Kedves gyé- <sup>sz</sup>  
 reheim nagyon megfeszít- <sup>és</sup>  
 len, hogy azt fogjátok <sup>szóval</sup>  
 mondani, hogy olyan <sup>szóval</sup>  
 vágytál miután a nagy <sup>szóval</sup>  
 nyári volt. De mind <sup>szóval</sup>  
 den önérzetű emberben <sup>szóval</sup>  
 meg van az hogyha <sup>szóval</sup>  
 valami büntetést <sup>szóval</sup>  
 büntetése nagyon fog <sup>szóval</sup>  
 az neki. Józan még <sup>szóval</sup>  
 a nehéznek voltam <sup>szóval</sup>  
 nem élttem igazán <sup>szóval</sup>  
 meg van az a pénz a két Pella <sup>szóval</sup>  
 a pénzügyi a szöveg nem is meg <sup>szóval</sup>

Letter of Erzsébet Istenes to Lajos Kassák  
 November 1935  
 Kassák Museum

"My dear Mutterka in your last letter you were certainly not in the best of spirits. I find it hard to understand how difficult it is for you to get used to it there. After all, it's a long time since you left, and you could have got used to the place and to your children again. It seems that the differences in how you feel and think are so great as to be eternally unbridgeable. It is astounding how a mother and her daughter can be so different from one another. She writes that she'd like to come home. Mutterka, please do as you see fit. [...] But I should say that if she decides that she wants to come to us, we shall be most happy to welcome her. [...] You may remember that I did not encourage you to leave, I suspected that everything would not be as sweet and blissful as your daughters so callously promised, and I cannot now encourage you to return because I do not know if you would find the peace here for which you yearn."

Letter of Lajos Kassák to Erzsébet Istenes, 18 July 1936  
 Kassák Museum



Kedves fiám ha lehet küldj  
fel fényképet magatokról  
legelőbb fényképek lassabban  
kellhetnek. A Böske  
van egy kedves kis fia au-  
mah meséltem a galamb-  
ról hogy milyenször ismét  
engemnek hogy olyan ne-  
kedt hogy nyit a galamb  
ról hogyan játszik.  
Jó őrök ny egy pár gáram  
beszél a galambról hada  
öröklőm és a kis gyereke  
Most nem őrök sokszor  
csodálom bevezeték  
szerető anyjátok -  
Magyaroktól levelem  
írjátok mindjárt.  
Erzsébet és Flóriának  
né. anyján

Letter of Erzsébet Istenes  
to Lajos Kassák  
16 December 1935  
Kassák Museum

"My dear son,

If possible send me a photo of yourselves so at least I can see you  
in a photo. Böske [Erzsébet Újvári] has a sweet little son and I told  
him about the pigeon how clever he is and he asked me to write to  
you about the pigeon and how he plays. If you write a few wicked  
things about the pigeon, let the little child be happy."



“You ask after Tobias. My dear Mutterka, Tobias is just a dove from England, which is why our relationship is much more harmonious than with people in general. He doesn’t bother us, and we don’t bother him. He likes to hang around near us, and sometimes he’s so exuberant that one might mistake his chirping for a burst of laughter, at other times he jumps up and down in front of us to make us laugh, and then we are truly grateful for his attempts to please us. We feed him broken up corn, white millet, canary seeds and rapeseed, which he nips at from our palms while he displays his ochre yellow, terracotta brown and silver grey tail feathers, and the down on the top of his head sticks up as if he had a crest, while he twists his neck slightly to one side, as if he were winking at us mischievously with one of his eyes, either the yellow one or the brown one. I don’t know if you remember that his eyes are different colours. The right eye is light yellow, its lens a black spot in the middle, while the left one is dark brown, like a strange metal button, and only when it looks toward the sun does it flash with some iridescent light, as if a fire were burning at the bottom.”

Lajos Kassák: *Anyám címére* [To my Mother’s Address]  
Third Letter (Excerpt)

“My dear Mutterka, until Jolán [Simon] can visit you in person, don’t neglect our correspondence. We don’t want to be completely separated from you in this life. [...] The Haars have enlarged one of their photographs of you, and it is now framed in my room next to my picture. We’ve arranged the room so that I see your photograph first thing when I wake up in the morning, and when I go to bed at night, it is the same picture I see before I go to sleep. We’ll have a photograph taken of ourselves and then send you a picture.”

Letter of Lajos Kassák to Erzsébet Istenes, 1936  
Kassák Museum

M e l l é k l e t

1897-ben születtem egy kis munkáscsaládban, Budapesten. Egyidejűleg inaskodtam és tanultam, de tanulmányaimat nem tudtam és nem is akartam befejezni. Nem akartam jogász lenni, legkevésbé abban az államban, amelyik ellen kora gyermekésemről kezdve harcoltam.

Irodalmi tevékenységemet 1916-ban a Ma. c. baloldali radikális folyóiratban kezdtem meg, amelyik az imperialista háboru ellen küzdő értelmiség gyűjtőhelye volt. Verseim Vörös Zászló címen jelentek meg (1918); később áttértem a prózára is. Eddig 11 könyvet írtam, ezek különböző nyelveken jelentek meg (egyesek oroszul: Csodálatos történet, 1927, Pánik a városban, 1928, Misa, 1929, Háromszázötvenezer, 1931, Menekéjog, 1932). Most egy regényt dolgozom a magyarországi gazdasági válságról, és azt az értékes anyagot rendezem, amit másfélhónapos uráli utazásom alatt gyűjtöttem. Erről három kötetet szeretnék írni:

- 1) egy riportsorozatot
- 2) egy nagy epikus munkát
- 3) egy elbeszéléssorozatot.

Ez az utazás minden másnál inkább közelebb hozott engem a szovjet valóság megértéséhez. Művészi fejlődésem szempontjából sem ment el haszontalanul.

A munkásmozgalommal már 1912-ben kapcsolatba kerültem, amikor a "vörös esütörtökön" a rendőrök elfogtak és megverték. 1919-ben aktívan részt vettem a vörös diktatúrában Magyarországon és ennek leverése után emigrálnom kellett. Emigrációban éltem külföldön. Két folyóiratot adtam ki. Az utóbbi években a Szovjetunióban élek. A párt tagja vagyok 1924 óta.

1938. Barta S.

1959.

hímebből fordította Váry Zoltán

I was born in 1897 to a small working class family in Budapest. I was an apprentice at the same time as being a student, but could not and did not want to finish my studies. I did not want to be a lawyer, least of all for the state, against which I had been fighting since childhood.

I began my literary activities in 1916 for the radical left-wing journal *Ma*, which was a meeting point for intellectuals fighting against the imperialist war. My poems were published under the title Red Flag (1918); later I started writing prose as well. To this date, I have written 11 books, which have appeared in various languages (some in Russian: A Wonderful Story, 1927; Panic in the City, 1918; Misha, 1929; 350,000, 1931; The Right to Asylum, 1932). I am now working on a novel on the Hungarian economic crisis, and am organising the valuable material I have collected during my one-and-a-half month trip to the Urals. On this I intend to write three volumes:

1. A series of reports
2. A major epic work
3. And a series of short stories.

This trip, more than anything else, has brought me closer to an understanding of Soviet reality. From the point of view of my artistic development, it was not fruitless.

I first came into contact with the workers' movement in 1912, when I was arrested and beaten by the police on 'red Thursday.' In 1919 I was actively involved in the red dictatorship in Hungary and had to emigrate after its defeat. I now live my life in exile abroad. I have published two journals. In recent years I have been living in the Soviet Union. I have been a member of the Party since 1924.

Me ml é k l e t .

Irodalmi tevékenységen 1916-ban, a Ma e. antimilitarista, baloldali folyóiratban kezdődött, 1919-től kezdve hivatásos író vagyok. Tizenkét *könyvet* és több mint 10 színművet írtam (mindegyikük megjelent vagy színpadra került), négy jelentősebb irodalmi folyóirat szerkesztője voltam Magyarországon és az emigrációban, a könyveken és darabokon kívül írtam több tucatnyi elbeszélést, novellát, verset, kritikát, riportot stb. különböző folyóiratokba, irodalmi almanachokba és gyűjteményekbe. Több művet lefordítottam.

Néhány munkámat több nyelvre fordították.

Műveim felsorolása:

- 1) Vörös Zászló, 1918, Budapest, versgyűjtemény, a Ma kiadása
- 2) Igen, 1920, Bécs, tragikomédia, A Ma kiadása
- 3) Tisztelt Hullaház, 1921, Bécs, szatirikus elbeszélések gyűjteménye, a Ma kiad.
- 4) Mese a trombitakezdő diákról, 1922, Bécs, elbeszélés-gyűjtemény, a Ma kiad.
- 5) Csodálatos történet, 1924, Kassa, Regény, A Kassai Munkás kiadása
- 6) Pánik a városban /Páholyjegy; Jegy a menyországba/ (elbeszélés-gyűjt.). Orosz nyelven megj. 1928-ban az Ogonyok kiadásában, (Ugyanezek az elbeszélések magyar, német, cseh, francia, ukrán nyelven)
- 7) A Misa (elbeszélés) 1929. A Moszkvai Munkás kiad. Ugyanez német, svéd, ukrán, héber, magyar nyelven.
- 8) Fred Parkins Fordwagen (tragikomédia) Lipese, a Die neue Bühne kiad. 1929.
- 9) Menedékjog, Elbeszélés, az Ogonyok kiad. 1939. Orosz, német és magyar nyelven.
- 10) 350000 (elbeszélés) 1931, a GIHL kiad. Orosz és német nyelven.
- 11) A gyűzelemig (novella), 1933, Profizdat kiad.
- 12) Nines kegyelem. Regény, 1934, GIHL kiad. Magyar nyelven: 1933; az Inoszt rannij rabocsij kiad.
- 13) A vizsgálat. Elbeszélés-gyűjtemény. Kiadás alatt.

Ezen kívül a következő nemzetközi gyűjteményekben:

- 1) Les Cinq Continents, Párizs, 1923
- 2) Anthologie prosaie Hongroise, Paris, 1927
- 3) Anthologie poésie Hongroise, Paris, 1928
- 4) Dichter der Weltliteratur, Bécs, 1929
- 5) Szbornyik vengerszkih revoljucionnih poétov, Moszkva 1926.

Ezen kívül az alábbi újságokban, folyóiratokban:

Clarte, Monde, Communice (Franciaország); Die Menschheit, Das neue Russland, Die neue Bücherschau, Rote Fahne (Berlin); Rote Fahne (Bécs), Das Wort (Halle); Internazionale Presse Korrespondenz, Welt am Morgen, Welt am Abend stb. (Németország és Ausztria); Reichenboger Vorwärts, Neue deutsche Blätter; Munkás, Némunkás stb. (Csehszlovákia).

Ezenkívül elbeszélések stb. svéd, cseh, ukrán, héber nyelven, természetesen magyarul is. Ezek részben Magyarországon, részben másutt jelentek meg, ahol van forradalmi, magyar nyelvű sajtó.

Jelenleg egy a szocialista forradalom korszakát ábrázoló regényen dolgozom; ennek első kötetére szerződéses van az IHL-lel.

A felsorolt műveken kívül több műfordításom van Walt Whitman, Upton Sinclair, Gyemján Bednij, Majakovszkij, Gogol, Tolsztoj és több német forradalmi költő műveiből.

1924 óta a Kommunista Párt tagja vagyok. A Szovjetunióban és külföldön lehetőséghez képest aktívan veszek részt a forradalmi irodalmi életben, csakúgy mint régen is tettem.



My literary activities began in 1916, in the anti-militarist left-wing journal *Ma*. From 1919 onwards I have been a professional writer. I have written twelve books and over 10 plays (all of them published or staged), and have edited four major literary journals in Hungary and in exile. In addition to the books and the plays, I have written dozens of short stories, novellas, poems, reviews, reports etc. for various journals, literary almanacs and collections. I have translated many works.

Some of my works have been translated into many languages. [...] Short stories etc. into Swedish, Czech, Ukrainian, Hebrew, and of course Hungarian too. Some of these were published in Hungary, others elsewhere where there is a revolutionary Hungarian-language press.

I am currently working on a novel depicting the socialist revolutionary period, the first volume of which is contracted to IHL.

In addition to the aforementioned works I have also undertaken many literary translations of works by Walt Whitman, Upton Sinclair, Demyan Bedny, Mayakovsky, Gogol, Tolstoy, and many revolutionary German poets.

I have been a member of the Communist Party since 1924. I have taken part as far as possible in revolutionary literary life in the Soviet Union and abroad. Just as I used to do.



# Sándor Barta and *Új Hang*

In the late 1930s, immediately after György Lukács took the position in the Expressionism debate that Expressionist abstraction and the avant-garde were incompatible with the goals of proletarian literature, Barta resumed writing in the Expressionist style. The short story *Gerdő-ország* [Gerdő Country] is a parable of the oppression and revolt of the proletariat, which in contrast to the folk-like, messianic tenor of Barta's early avant-garde tales, retells the mythical story of the organisation and resistance of the workers in a style reminiscent of Tolstoy's and Aesop's fables.

*Új Hang*

vol. 1. no. 1, January 1938

Petőfi Literary Museum

| TARTALOM  |             |
|---|-------------|
| Felhívás  | 3. oldal    |
| Gábor Andor: Versek   | 4. "        |
| Barta Sándor: Gerdő-ország (Elbeszélés)   | 7. "        |
| Petr Bezruč: Falu az Osztravica partján (Vers)  | 16. "       |
| Balázs Béla: Versek   | 17. "       |
| Hagy Gyula: Isten, császár, paraszt (Színmű)  | 20. "       |
| Petr Bezruč verseiből   | 35. "       |
| Gergely Sándor: Mészáros Lőrinc csatája (Regényrészlet)   | 38. "       |
| Emílio Prados: Üzenet Franco zsoldosainak (Vers)  | 46. "       |
| José Herrera Petere: Hídeg a hegyek közt (Vers)   | 48. "       |
| Rafael Alberti: Szevillai rádió (Vers)  | 49. "       |
| Emi Szjódó: Ültél az óral   | 50. "       |
| Jurij Janovszkij: Levél az örökkévalóságba (Elbeszélés)   | 52. "       |
| Karikás Frigyes: Újví eselédfoház (Vers)  | 56. "       |
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| Lukács György: Liberalizmus és demokrácia harca a német antifasiszta történelmi regény tükrében | 69. "       |
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| MAGYAR ÉLET   |             |
| Késmárki Endre: Az intelligencia és a népfront  | 86. "       |
| Gergely Sándor: József Attila halálára <i>hall</i>  | 90. "       |
| K. F.: Egy magyar szabadsághős ünneplése  | 91. "       |
| Szabó Ferenc: Az új magyar zeneművészet és a márciusi front                                     | 93. "       |
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# UJ HANG

IRODALMI ÉS TÁRSADALMI FOLYÓIRAT

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Felelős szerkesztő:  
BARTA SÁNDOR

Főmunkatársak:  
Balázs Béla, Böllöni György, Fábry Zoltán, Forbáth Imre,  
Gábor Andor, Gergely Sándor, Lukács György, Madzsar  
József, Vass László

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MEGJELENIK HAVONTA EGYSZER

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1938 Január      Első évfolyam      Első szám

Gábor Andor: Versek

PESTI KIRAKAT

*Van minden. Kirakat mögött.  
Odadugták az ördögök.  
Orrod az üvegbe tapad:  
Még nézned sem soká szabad.*

*Csak vékony héjj a kirakat,  
De zárja iszonyu lakat.  
Eltárja lent, elzárja lent,  
Ugy híjják: társadalmi rend.*

*A kirakat magában áll,  
De onnan száz meg száz fonál  
Víz messzivé, látatlanul,  
Csengőket huz, ki odangul.*

*Ha odanyulsz riadva cseng  
Az egész társadalmi rend:  
A gyár, az üzlet és a bank,  
Puska, gépfegyver, ágyu, tank.*

*Hogy az csak egy falat kenyér?  
Hogy az három fillért sem ér?  
Hogy éhen pusztulsz nélküle?  
E rendnek arra nincs füle.*

*Csak szeme van. Őrzésre csak.  
És karja van, mely rád lecsap.  
Van ellened érctenyere,  
De nincs számodra kenyere.*

*Minden van. Kirakat mögött.  
Le kell gyürnöd az ördögöt.  
A száz fonál mind elszakad;  
És kinyílik a kirakat.*

Gábor Andor

Barta Sándor:

GERDŐ-ORSZÁG

Volt egyszer egy gyönyörű, mélységes-szélességes gerdő. A gerdő akkora volt, hogy tulajdonképpen más nem is volt a világon. A gerdőnek tehát nem volt se vége, se hossza, kerek volt és ezért el is nevezték kerek-gerdőnek.

Unalmas volt talán a gerdő? Nem, a gerdő nem volt unalmas. Óriás, kék-vizű tavak terpeszkedtek benne, folyók cirogatták a hegyek bokáit — öreg, nagyon öreg hegyek voltak ezek, jóval túl a csiklandós koron és csak méla mozdulatlansággal néztek le a ficánkoló hullámokra. A síkságok gazdagon és barátkozón nyújtóztak ki az ég aljáig és ha kisütött a nap, az élet minden színében tündökölték.

A gerdősök tulnyomó többségben harkályok voltak s kilentizedét tették ki a lakosságnak. Az egytized pelikán volt, de ezek is megoszlottak kövér, mégkövérebb és nagyonkövér pelikánokra s ezen belül még magpelikánokra, hánspelikánokra és sárgaporpelikánokra. Tudni kell azt is, hogy a gerdősök szétszórvá éltek a gerdőben. Hogy miért szóródtak szét és telepedtek meg, ezt most nehéz lenne eldönteni, de tény, hogy erre vonatkozóan minden csoportnak hajszálpontos és hiteles feljegyzései voltak, amelyek minden tekintetben elütöttek a szomszéd csoport feljegyzéseitől és éppen ezért átmentek a köztudatba. Továbbá, miután a gerdő végtelen és egységes volt, a gerdőlakók elkülönítették a gerdőt. Evégből az okos gerdősök befestették a fákat. Csakhogy a fák tavasszal mind kiszökdültek, ősszel meg mind megkopaszodtak. A gerdősök erre magukat festették be valamilyen olyan színre, amelyik különbözött a legközelebbi szomszédjaik színétől és nem volt összececerélhető a legtávolabbi szomszédok színével sem. Mivel azonban annyi szín nem volt, ahány csoport, az egyes csoportok más színűre festették a kobakjukat, a hasukat és másra s karmaikat. Am, hogy a tévedés mindenképpen kizárassék, az egyes terület lakói egymást nem gerdősöknek, hanem egerdő, begerdő, kegerdő, megerdő, tegerdő és hasonló nevű lakóknak nevezték el és ezt olyan szigoruan vették, hogy egymást csak sértő szándékkal cserélték össze. De mivel az egyes egerdősök, begerdősök, kegerdősök még így sem voltak egészen biztosak abban, hogy az egerdősök nem kukkantanak-e majd be a begerdősök fái közé, amikor azok éppen szép begerdő-aszszonyaikkal és gyermekeikkel foglalatkoskodnak — ezért minden egyes gerdő-ország akkora falat épített maga köré, amelyet még a legjobb röptű begerdős vagy kegerdős sem tudott átrepülni. Am mivel egyetlen gerdő-ország sem kívánt a másik mögött elmaradni — sőt mindegyik túl akart tenni a másikon — az egyes gerdő-országok pontosan félméterrel magasabbra építették a saját falukat, mint a szomszédos országok. S mivel minden ország, másik ország is volt egyben és mindegyik szomszédja a szomszédjának, a falak folyton nőttek és a falakon folyton dolgoztak és a falak alatt folyton szónokoltak, hogy: Kicsi a falunk! Meg kell toldani egy félméterrel!

De hát ez már csak így volt. A viszálykodás, szónoklás, falépítés mindennapi dologgá vált, nem volt ezen már semmi különös s ettől a gerdősök, kegerdősök begerdősök már egész jól megélték, sőt! A viszálykodás állandósítására külön követeket tartottak fent egymás tisztásain.

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Andor Gábor: Pesti kirakat [Pest showcase]  
and Sándor Barta: Gerdő-ország [Gerdő Country]

Új Hang

vol. 1. no. 1, January 1938

Petőfi Literary Museum



# The Great Purge

In 1936, to consolidate his power, Stalin started off the Great Purge in the Soviet Union. The official reason for the politically-motivated imprisonments and executions was to rid the country of spies and saboteurs but most of them were based on trumped-up charges. The first major show trial took place in Moscow in August 1936. In the "Trial of the Sixteen", Stalin dealt with many of his political rivals. The execution of two ideologues among the leaders accused of Trotskyist counter-revolutionary organisation and acts of terrorism, Grigory Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev provoked a vehement international reaction. The show trials continued with those of the "Seventeens" (Piatakov and Radek) and the "Twenty-Ones" (Bukharin). Stalin was helped by the Soviet Chief Prosecutor Andrej Vishinsky, who argued that the accused did not warrant assumption of innocence and all that was needed for a judgement was their confession. The presentation of material evidence could be waived.

*Sarló és Kalapács* repeated the official Party line, but in his analysis in *Népszava*, Lajos Kassák took a critical tone towards the executions: "The troubles that have suddenly emerged and become visible do not have their roots in the dark souls of the 'rabid dogs' Radek, Zinoviev, and company but in the degraded system that denies and sacrifices its future for its present position of power." (Arccal Moszkva felé [All Eyes on Moscow], 2 February 1937).

Fokozzuk az éberséget!  
[Increase our vigilance!]  
*Sarló és Kalapács*  
vol. 8. no. 18, 15 September 1936  
Petőfi Literary Museum



# SARLÓ, ÉS KALAPÁCS

A SZOVJETUNIÓBAN ÉLŐ MAGYARNYELVŰ DOLGOZÓK LAPJA

9. évfolyam

1937 március 1.

4-5. szám

VISINSZKI A. J.  
a Szovjetunió ügyésze



## A TROCKISTA SZOVJETELLENES KÖZPONT PÖRE

### A nép ellenségei

Január 30-ának kora hajnali óráiban hirdette ki az ítéletet a Szovjetunió Legfelsőbb Bíróságának Katonai Kollégiuma a szovjetellenes párhuzamos trockista központ pörében. A bíróság a tizenétt vádlott közül tizenháromat halálra, négyet súlyos börtönbüntetésre ítélte. Az igazságos ítéletet végrehajtották. Az aljas árulók, kémek, diverzánok, kártevők — egyszóval trockisták — elvették méltó büntetésüket.

A pör — és ebben rejlik hatalmas jelentősége — végleg letépte az álarcot az ellenforradalmi trockizmusról, Trockiról, a fasisztáról és cinkostársairól. A pör föltárta a fasiszták bel- és külpolitikai programját. A pör megmutatta, hogy Trocki álláspontja, mely szerint egy országban a szocializmust felépíteni nem lehet, a kapitalizmusnak a Szovjetunióban való visszaállításához vezet. A pör megmutatta, hogy Trocki tudatosan a kapitalizmus restaurációjára törekszik, e célja érdekében a szovjethatalmat minden eszközzel meg akarja dönteni és Sztálin elvtársat, a világproletariátus szeretett vezérét, s a párt és a kormány többi vezetőit meg akarja gyilkoltatni. A pör megmutatta hogy Trocki a szovjetellenes háborús beavatkozás előkészítésére a legsúlyosabb reakció hatalmaival, az állati német és japán fasiszmusmal lépett szövetségre és mindkét hatalomnak Európában, illetőleg a Távolkeleten való terjeszkedésük számára szabad kezet biztosított. A pör megmutatta, hogy Trocki, a Szovjetunió háborús veresége érdekében, a szovjetellenes trockista központban levő cinkostársainak egész sor kártevő és diverziós cselekmény elkövetésére: gyárak és bányák felrobbantására, vasuti katasztrófák előidézésére, a munkásosztály legjobb fiait tömeges kiállítására egyenes utasítást és utmutatásokat adott.

A trockisták gyilkos kártevő és diverziós munkájukat Németország és Japán fasiszta pártjainak vezetőivel, kémszervezeteivel és titkosrendőrségeivel való szövetségben folytatták. A Szovjetuniót és az egész világot vértengerbe akarták fojtani, hogy a nagy okéberi forradalom és a szocialista építkezés vívmányait likvidálják, a kollektív- és szovjetgazdaságokat föloszlássák, a német és japán kapitalizmus számára a Szovjetunió munkásságának, természeti kincseinek és ipari óriásainak kizsákmányolását lehetővé tegyék és szovjethazánk hatalmas területét elkufárkodják.

Az egész világ dolgozóinak, dolgozó intellektueleinek és haladószellemű polgárságának színe előtt végérvényesen lehullott a lepel Trockiról. A politikai banditát, hazaárulót Judást és közönséges gonosztevőt minden becsületes ember halálos gyűlölete és utálatja kíséri. A rothadt politikai dög a történelem szemétdombjára került.

A szovjetellenes trockista központ pöre megmutatta e gonosztevő banda politikai programját, harci módszereit és fegyvereit s ezzel lehetővé tette számunkra, hogy az ellenség gyalázatos támadásai ellen védekezzünk. A pör megtanított bennünket arra, hogy Sztálin elvtársnak és a pártnak utasításait maradéktalanul végrehajtsuk, éberségünket hatványozottan fokozzuk. Sztálin elvtárs megtanított bennünket arra, hogyan lehet az ellenséget — akármilyen álarca mögé rejtőzik is — fölismerni, hogyan kell elene harcolni.

A szovjetellenes párhuzamos központ pöre megmutatta, hogy a trockista kártevők és diverzánok — ha sikerült is nekik sorainkba befurakodni, sőt olykor fontos állásokba is befurakodni s érzékeny kárt okozni — a Szovjetunió szocialista építését győzelmes előrehaladásában fel nem tartóztatják, meg nem állíthatják. Fel nem tartóztatják, meg nem állíthatják, mert vezet bennünket a párt, a bolsevik párt, élünkön Sztálin elvtárs halad, a világ dolgozóinak nagy vezére, tanítója és barátja, akit mindnyájan szívvel-lélekkel követünk.

A „Sarló és Kalapács” mai számában közöljük — amennyire lapunk terjedelme megengedte — a pöranyagot. Kívánjuk, hogy olvasóink ezt az anyagot, a trockista gyalázat e dokumentumát, — mely azonban egyben ama éberség és lelkiismeretes munka dokumentuma is, amit a szovjetállam biztonságai szerez, Jezsov elvtárs vezetése alatt kifejtettek — áttanulmányozzák, alaposan földolgozzák és a dolgozók ügyének, Marx-Engels-Lenin-Sztálin ügyének érdekében hasznosítsák.

A nép ellenségei [Enemy of the People]  
Sarló és Kalapács  
vol. 9. nos. 4-5, 1 March 1937  
Petőfi Literary Museum



# Politikai gyilkosok társasága

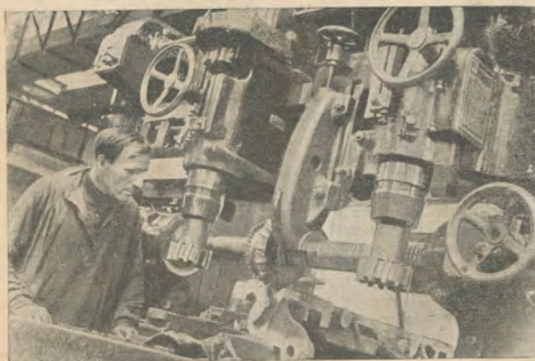
A trockista-zinovjevista banditák elleni vádirat

A Szovjetunió és az egész világ dolgozó lélegetviszafajtva követték a trockista-zinovjevista gyilkos, terrorista banda elleni pör minden mozzanatát, amely a világtörténelemben aljasságában egyedülálló politikai banditizmusról rántotta le a leplet. Már a pört megelőző vizsgálat minden kétséget kizáróan megállapította, hogy Zinovjev, Kámenyev és társaik, akik több mint egy évtized óta minden megengedett és meg nem engedett eszközzel kiméletlen harcot folytattak a Szovjetunió Kommunista (bolsevik) Pártja és a szovjetkormány politikája ellen, a legutóbbi évek folyamán oltathatlan hatalmi vágyukban az erkölcsi züllésnek olyan mély fokára süllyedtek, hogy a nemzetközi kapitalizmus védelmét élvező Trocki vezetése alatt és a német fasizmus politikai titkosrendőrségével szövetkezve, terrorista merényleteket szerveztek a Szovjetunió népei és a világproletariátus szeretett vezére: Sztálin elvtárs, valamint pártunk és a szovjetkormány többi vezetőinek a meggyilkolására. Minden kétséget kizáróan bebizonyosodott az is, hogy Kirov elvtársunknak 1934 december 1-én történt gaz legyilkolása is Zinovjev és Kámenyev és az „egyesült trockista-zinovjevista központ” egyenes utasítására és vezetése alatt lett végrehajtv.

Ennek a feneketlen gazsággal kieszelt bűncselekmény-sorozatnak hű képét adja a Szovjetunió ügyésze, Visinszki elvtárs által megszerkesztett vádirat. Ez a történelmi jelentőségű mesteri okirat a megdönthetetlen igazság meggyőző erejével, maguknak a vádlottaknak a vizsgálat folyamán tett — és a nyílt bírósági tárgyaláson később megismételt — beismerő vallomásaival illusztrálva, megdöbbentő világossággal és drámai tömörséggel tárja elénk a romlottságnak és erkölcsi züllésnek azt a szinte elképzelhetetlen állapotát, a hazugságnak, csalásnak, képmutatásnak és kétkulacsosságnak azt a gonosz szövevényét, amellyel Trocki, Zinovjev, Kámenyev és cinkosaik, ezek a minden emberi mivoltukból kivetkőzött vérszomjas bestiák pokoli terveiket előkészítették, megszerverték és — részben — végre is hajtották.

Megafelfedhetetlenül mutatja ki a vádirat, mint egyesültek a földalatti trockista és zinovjevista ellenforradalmi csoportok egy egységes blokkba és hogy ennek az egyesülésnek az alapja minden politikai tartalom híján, kizárólag a Szovjetunió Kommunista (bolsevik) Pártja és a szovjetkormány elleni közös állati gyűlölet, valamint a párt s a szovjetkormány vezetői elleni terrorista merényletek szükségességének a kölcsönös elismerése volt.

Megdöbbentő erővel bontakozik ki a vádirat sorai közül a gyilkos terrorista banda főkomposzának: Trockinak a képe, aki külföldről, a nemzetközi kapitalizmus védőszárnyai alatt, szervezi a Szovjetunió Kommunista (bolsevik) Pártja és a szovjetkormány vezérének a legyilkolását és a Szovjetunió elleni ellenforradalmi imperialista háborút. Napnál világosabban bebizonyosodott, hogy Trocki — Hitler nemzeti „szocialista” pártjával és a Gestapo-val, a német fasizmus politikai titkosrendőrségével szövetkezve — csempészte be a Szovjetunióba terrorista ügynökeket és szervezte Sztálin, Vorosilov, Kaganovics, Kirov, Zsdánov, Ordzonikidze, Koszior és Posztisev elvtársak meggyilkolását. Kétségtelenül be-



Sztachánovista a frézélgép mellett

3. oldal SARLÓ ÉS KALAPÁCS

igazolódott, hogy Trocki és cinkostársai a Szovjetunió elleni imperialista háborúra és ebben a háborúban a Szovjetunió vereségére tettek fel szennyes kártyájukat.

Egyenesen hajmeresztően hat a vádiratnak az a megállapítása, amely arról tanuskodik, hogy ezekből a vádállatokból kivезett még annak a zsványbecsületnek az utolsó szikrája is, amely megvan a legelvetemültebb közönséges gonosztevőben is. Trocki, Zinovjev, Kámenyev és társaik ugyanis tervbe vették, hogy gaztetteik minden nyomának eltüntetése céljából elpusztítják saját cinkosait és eszközeiket, a gyilkos merényleteket közvetlenül végrehajtó terroristaikat is.

A vádiratot olvasva eszünkbe jutnak azok a vádiratok, amelyeket a fasiszta országok ügyészei szoktak összetakolni a karmaik közé került kommunista forradalmárok ellen és önkéntlenül is párhuzamot vonunk a kettő között. Mig az utóbbiakban a „vád” alapját kivétel nélkül szerzőiknek szegényes fantáziával párosult tudatlansága képezi és lényegbeli tartalmuk a forradalmi proletariátus elleni veszett osztálygyűlöletre szorítkozik, addig a trockista-zinovjevista banditák elleni vádirat ténybeli megafelfedhetetlenségének lenyűgöző hatása alól még az osztályellenesség sem vonhatja ki magát. És ezeket a ténybeli adatokat számszázalékosan megerősítik a vádlottak vallomásai. Nem az ösztinte megbánás eredményei ezek a vallomások. Az összes vádlottak, amíg csak erre módjuk volt, a legmegátalkodottabb módon hazudtak, csaltak és tagadták bűnösségüket. Csak a megdönthetetlen bizonyítékok halmazának sulya alatt törték meg és fogsíkkorgatva, a gyűzemes szocializmus elleni veszett gyűlölettel eltelve vallották be ezek a zsákucuccába került fasiszta banditák irározatos bűneiket.

Lapunk szűk terjedelme — sajnos — nem enged meg, hogy a trockista-zinovjevista gyilkos banda elleni vádiratot egész terjedelmében leközzöljük. Ezért kénytelenek vagyunk arra szorítkozni, hogy ezt a nagyfontosságú okiratot néhány szemelvényben ismertessük olvasóinkkal.

## A trockista-zinovjevista egyesült terrorista központ

„Megállapítást nyert a vizsgálat során, hogy a zinovjevisták bűnös terrorista működésüket a trockistákkal és a külföldön tartózkodó Trockival alkotott közvetlen blokkban folytatták...

Zinovjev, Kámenyev, Jevdokimov, Mracskovszki, Bakájev és a jelen pör több más vádlottjainak vallomásából minden kétséget kizáróan kiderült, hogy a trockista-zinovjevista blokk megszervezésének egyedüli indítóoka a hatalom megragadására irányuló törekvés volt és hogy ennek a célnak az elérésére, mint egyedüli és döntő eszközt: a párt s a kormány legkiválóbb vezetői elleni terroriztikus cselekedetek szervezését választották...

„Zinovjev vádlott, makacs tagadás ellenére, a nyomozó hatóságok által elébe tárt bizonyítékok nyomasztó sulya alatt kénytelen volt bevallani, hogy: »... A trockista-zinovjevista központ legfőbb feladaatú a Szovjetunió Kommunista (bolsevik) Pártja vezetői és elsősorban Sztálinnak és Kirovnak a meggyilkolását tűzte ki.«

„Rendkívül jellemző Kámenyevnek erre vonatkozó vallomása. »... Mi, vagyis az ellenforradalmi szervezet zinovjevista központja, amelynek összetételét fentebb megjelöltem, valamint a trockista ellenforradalmi szervezet: Szmirnov, Mracskovszki és Ter-Vaganyán személyében, az 1932. évben megegyeztünk abban, hogy egyesítjük mindkét, vagyis a zinovjevista és a trockista ellenforradalmi szervezetet a Központi Bizottság vezetői és mindennekellát Sztálin és Kirov elleni terrorista cselekedetek előkészítése céljából.«

»... A leglényegesebb az, hogy ugy Zinovjev és mi: én Kámenyev, Jevdokimov, Bakájev, mint a trockista vezetők: Szmirnov, Mracskovszki, Ter-Vaganyán, 1932-ben arra az elhatározásra jutottunk, hogy az egyedüli eszköz, amelynek segítségével remélhetjük, hogy hatalomra juthatunk — terrorista merényletek szervezése a Szovjetunió Kommunista (bolsevik) Pártja vezetői és elsősorban Sztálin ellen. Ezen az alapon: a Szovjetunió Kommunista (bolsevik) Pártja vezetői elleni terrorista harc alapján folytak a tárgyalások közöttünk és a trockisták között az egyesülésről.«

»... Az ország által átélt nehézségek leküzdhetetlenségére, a gazdaság válságos állapotára, a pártvezetők gazdasági politikájának összeroppanására épített számításunk az 1932. év második felében már nyilvánvalóan összeomlott.

Politikai gyilkosok társasága [Society of Political Assassins]

Sarló és Kalapács

vol. 8. no. 18, 15 September 1936

Petőfi Literary Museum



## The Life of Zsuzsa Barta

Zsuzsa Barta was born in late 1923 in Vienna. She moved to Moscow with her parents and finished secondary school in 1941. After the death of their parents, Zsuzsa and her brother György were taken care of by the sisters of their mother also living in Moscow. During the Second World War in 1941, they were evacuated to Chistopol. Zsuzsa became a nurse and served on the front line on a military hospital ship. After the war, she moved to Moscow and graduated as an actress. During a short period, she worked in the Theater of the Red Army. In 1948, she moved to Budapest with her brother and worked in the Madách Theater as art director. In Moscow, she married a soldier (Nikolai), whom she had to leave when they moved to Budapest. Later she married the journalist László L. Szabó. From 1951 on, she worked in the Hungarian National Theater as a director. In 1955, she graduated in Moscow as a theater director as well. After the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, she worked with smaller companies and theaters as a director. During her retirement she researched the legacy of her parents in Budapest, Vienna, and Moscow. She actively participated in publishing her parents works in Hungarian. She died in 1992.



Zsuzsa Barta's graduation photo  
Moscow, 1941  
Kassák Museum

Zsuzsa Barta at a university play  
Moscow, 1940s  
Kassák Museum



Zsuzsa Barta among actor students  
Moscow, 1940s  
Kassák Museum



Zsuzsa Barta recites a poem  
Moscow, 1940s  
Kassák Museum



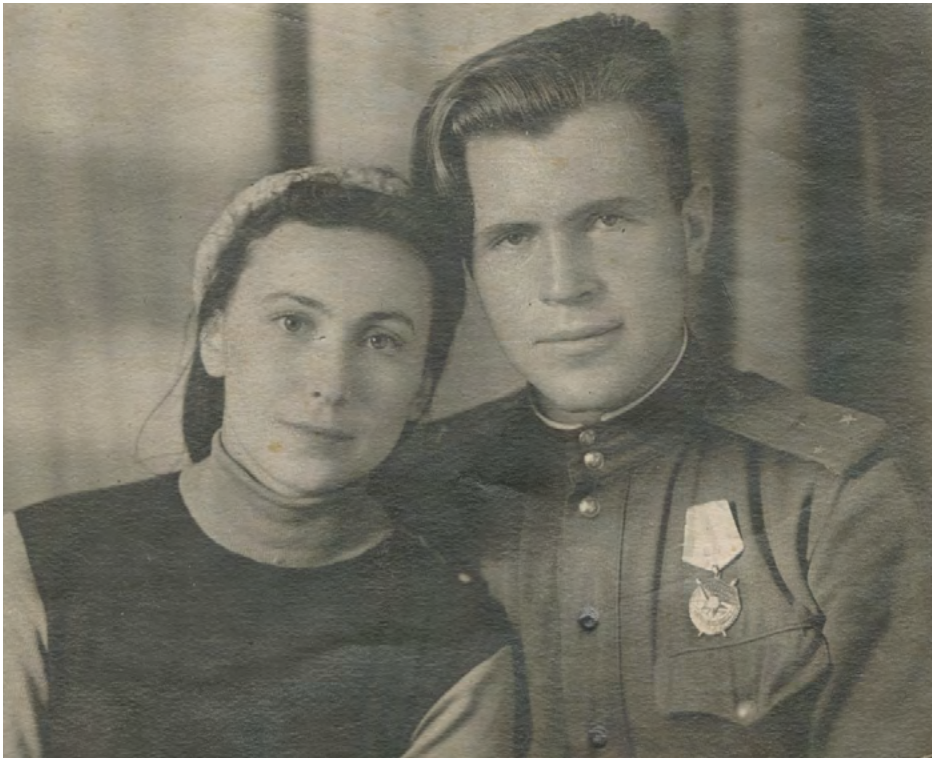


Portrait of Zsuzsa Barta  
Moscow, 1940s  
Kassák Museum



Portrait of Zsuzsa Barta  
Moscow, 1940s  
Kassák Museum





Zsuzsa Barta with her first husband, Nikolai  
Moscow, 1940s  
Kassák Museum



Zsuzsa Barta with her second  
husband, László L. Szabó  
Budapest, early 1950s  
Kassák Museum



Zsuzsa Barta at the May Day parade  
Budapest, 1950  
Kassák Museum

## The Life of György Barta

György Barta was born in Moscow (Sokolniki) on 3 September 1930. After losing his parents, he was placed in several orphanages during the Second World War. After the war, he moved to Moscow with his sister, Zsuzsa Barta. He graduated from secondary school in Moscow in 1948. They moved to Budapest in 1948 and by 1952, György Barta graduated as an architect. He spent a year in (North) Korea in 1954–1955 as a member of an international architect group. He worked in Hungarian industrial companies as an architect (Uránterv, Oljaterv, Szövterv). He died in 1993.



György Barta at the Dubki orphanage  
Page spread from György Barta's photo  
album, 1947  
Kassák Museum

DUBKI, CHERMEKOTTHON







1944, DUBKI



1944.

# Rehabilitation of Sándor Barta

Sándor Barta, sentenced to death on trumped-up charges during the Stalinist terror, was politically rehabilitated in 1957 at the request of his daughter Zsuzsa Barta. His novel based on childhood experiences, *Aranyásók* [Gold Diggers], written in the 1930s, was also published that year. Zsuzsa and György Barta had brought the manuscript with them from the Soviet Union to Hungary after 1945, together with other manuscripts and books by Barta and Újvári. Part of that collection came into the Petőfi Literary Museum in the 1970s.

On 7 October 1977, on the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Barta's birth, a memorial plaque was placed on the front wall of his former Budapest home at number 22 Tanács (now Károly) Boulevard. At the unveiling ceremony, the writer Aladár Tamás gave a speech and representatives of the Ministry of Culture, the Hungarian Writers' Association, the Arts Fund of the Hungarian People's Republic, the 5<sup>th</sup> District Council and the Petőfi Literary Museum were in attendance. In 1987, Zsuzsa Barta planned a memorial exhibition of her father's work in the Young Artists' Club but it did not materialise.



Sándor Barta: *Aranyásók* [Gold Diggers]  
Postscript: Sarolta Lányi  
Illustrations: Miklós Rogán  
Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1957  
Collection of the Braun-Barta Family



Inauguration of the memorial plaque  
of Sándor Barta  
Budapest, 7 October 1977  
Kassák Museum



1897



1987

**BARTA**

**EMLEK**

**KIÁLLI**

**TÁS**

FIATAL MŰVÉSZEK  
KÖZTARSASÁG U.  
112.  
A FIAI KLUBJA

**SÁNDOR** megnyitő  
87 OKT. 9-19 h

MEGTEKINTHETŐ OKT. 9 – OKT. 23-IG  
NAPONTA 18-24 ÓRÁIG

A KIÁLLITÁST MEGNYITJA: LADÁNYI JÓZSEF  
MŰVÉSZETTÖRTÉNÉSZ  
KÖZREMŰKÖDIK: BÍRÓ JÓZSEF KÖLTŐ

Zsuzsa Barta  
Poster design for the Sándor Barta memorial exhibition  
Collage  
1987  
Kassák Museum

## The Books of Erzsi Újvári and Sándor Barta after 1957

After the publication of *Aranyásók* [Gold Diggers] in 1957, selections from Sándor Barta's written legacy were published in several books. Among them were the Hungarian versions of his writings originally published in Russian or German. The collections of his short stories and poems ran to two editions but the greater part of his written legacy remains unpublished. The first and so far the only anthology of Erzsi Újvári's poetry was published thanks to the efforts of Zsuzsa Barta, with an essay by György Kálmán C.

Sándor Barta: *Ki vagy?* [Who are You?]  
Selected poems  
Introduction: Gyula Illyés  
Selected by: Erik Vászoly  
Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1962  
Petőfi Literary Museum

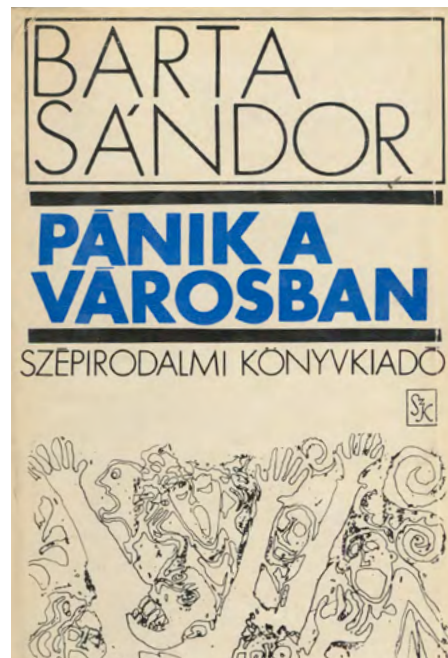


Sándor Barta: *Pánik a városban*  
[Panic in the City]  
Selected short stories and prose  
Selected and introduced by:  
Mrs. Lajos Varga  
Cover design: Réber László  
Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1959  
Petőfi Literary Museum

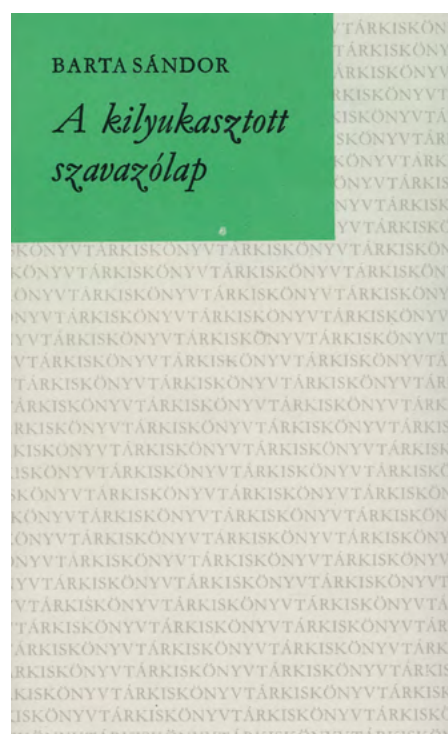
Sándor Barta: *Aranyásók* [Gold Diggers]  
Novel, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
Postscript: Sarolta Lányi  
Budapest, Kossuth Kiadó, 1977  
Petőfi Literary Museum



Sándor Barta: *Pánik a városban* [Panic in the City]  
Selected short stories and prose, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
Selected and introduced by: Katalin Varga  
Cover design: János Zörgő  
Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1972  
Petőfi Literary Museum

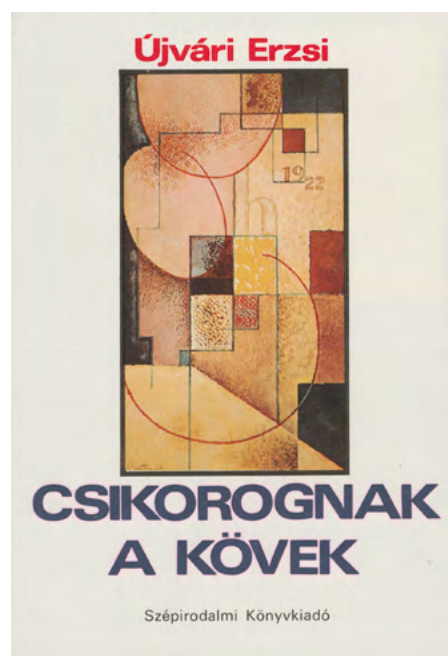
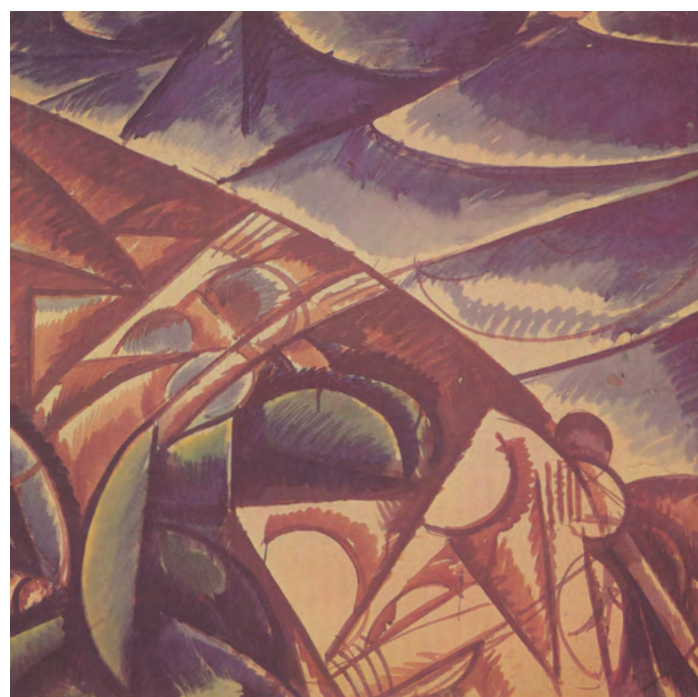


Sándor Barta: *A kilyukasztott szavazólap* [The Pierced Ballot Paper]  
Short stories  
Selected and edited by: Katalin Varga  
Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1981  
Petőfi Literary Museum



Erzsi Újvári: *Csikorognak a kövek* [The Stones are Creaking]  
Selected and introduced by: György Kálmán C.  
Cover design: Marianne Kiss  
Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1986  
Petőfi Literary Museum

Sándor Barta: *Ki vagy?* [Who are You?]  
Selected poems, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
Introduction: Gyula Illyés  
Selected by: Erik Vászoly  
Cover design: Ilona Dobrovits  
Budapest, Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1987  
Petőfi Literary Museum





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*Ék* | Wedge

*Kassai Munkás* | Košice Worker

*Ma* | Today

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*Új Előre* | New Forward

*Új Hang* | New Voice

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A Wonderful Story?

An Avant-Garde Artist Couple: Erzsi Újvári and Sándor Barta

Kassák Workshop 2.

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