Editors'Introduction

My Farewell to the Yellow House is a manifesto that aims to rethink the practical and theoretical bases of psychiatric care. To follow István Hollós' own words, it aims to break down the walls of the asylum. From the outset, we can read 'asylum' not strictly as an institution, a place, or a building, but as a psychic state, one where the demarcations between the 'sane' and the 'insane' are strong and unquestionable. The book also offers a sharp critique of society's gaze upon madness. Although it was written nearly a century ago, it pulsates with contemporary questions. It approaches the fear of madness as a socially and psychically produced phenomenon, leading to exclusion, splitting, and various forms of authoritarianism. Through this unusual book, István Hollós joins a long line of radical psychiatrists, who were keenly aware of the societal importance of studying the 'politics of madness'1: François Tosquelles, Ronald Laing, Franco Basaglia, Franca Ongaro, Franz Fanon, Félix Guattari, and Jean Oury, to name but a few. What brings together these otherwise very different thinkers is an emancipatory agenda in relation to psychiatric care, often drawing on various kinds of knowledge, from psychoanalysis, and psychiatry, to neurology, phenomenology, anthropology, philosophy, aesthetics, and social theory. To be alert to the politics of madness means to be able to ask unusual questions such as, in Hollós' words: 'How did the mentally ill influence wars and revolutions?' (p.111). It also means turning on its head the question of who needs to be healed and who is doing the healing. As radical psychiatrists have argued, it is the psychiatric hospital, or the asylum, or even the doctor-patient relationship that needs to be cured. Tuning to the voice of the patients, Hollós writes: 'We are the sick, but it is you healthy people who must be healed! Through us, the dreaming heroes, storytellers and lunatics, the axis of history creaks towards new, incredible cities and possibilities for life' (p.121).

With Hollós, the reader will experience in the pages of this book a series of shifts in perspective, reorientations, and even some temporary disorientations. All these are part of a politics of representation of madness, which necessarily involves forms of understanding that take *the other* seriously. The book you are holding in your hands is not one of psychiatric diagnosis, neither one of psychoanalytic theory, but one that weaves its own forms of insight, guided by psychoanalytic principles; and also guided by an orientation to the other and their enigmas, and by a capacity to be affected by the other, which amounts to 'social love'. As Hollós tells us:

As much as it pains me, my friend, I must also speak of things that are labelled scientific; but I do not do so in the interests of science. I have only one goal: to liberate the mentally ill. And for this, it is necessary to understand them. You must become conscious of the fact that the healthy and the mentally ill do not stand face to face like man and monster. This must be understood! And so the liberation of the mental patient is not a matter of humanism, but one of understanding (p.86).

My Farewell to the Yellow House is thus a unique writing, one that takes the risk of unfolding in between genres. It is neither memoir nor biography, although the vignettes that Hollós constructs for the reader are informed by actual episodes, encounters, and scenes of the asylum. In a memorable passage of the book (see 'Truth and Comedy'), the reader will come across the description of a visit to the asylum by a company of actors who were interested in how to accurately portray madness in

their theatrical performances. The actors appear rather disappointed by the fact that the patients do not present as 'mad enough' for their expectations. When the time of the public performance comes, they offer their audiences a caricatural and hyperbolic portrayal of the lunatics, which by confirming commonly held views, is met with great enthusiasm by the public. We know from archival sources² and a published diary³ that asylum visits by companies of actors actually took place, and so the scene that Hollós assembles for us is rooted in day-to-day experience in the institution. Despite not being a theoretical book in psychoanalysis, My Farewell to the Yellow House is quietly organised around psychoanalytic constructs, such as regression, and the life and death drives, in dialogue with Sigmund Freud; or betrayal, in resonance with Sándor Ferenczi and his idea of the confusion of tongues between adults and the child, fully articulated only later in 1933.4 Despite not being a book of clinical cases, the author talks in vivid ways about patients and doctors, and what is passed between them. In Hollós' book, the doctor makes mistakes, and is able to reflect on their own role and power position. Ultimately, Hollós resonates with many voices in radical psychiatry by treating the asylum as a symptom of societal repression and denial. As he writes: 'Each prohibition is a little vellow house unto itself. Then, all of a sudden, there are a great number of little yellow houses, and all those locked-in desires break out. That's why people built the big Yellow House. The Yellow House is itself a symptom in which the repressed, the forbidden returns' (p.144).

The book opens with the voice of a fictional character, Doctor Telemach Pfeiflein,5 who entrusts István Hollós the manuscript on the Yellow House for publication. The first name of the fictional character, Telemach, is a reference to the son of Odysseus in Greek mythology. For the educated reader of the age, the name might have also evoked the popular eighteenth-century novel The Adventures of Telemachus, written by Bishop François Fénelon, tutor of Louis XIV's grandson. This novel is a didactic work, a 'mirror for princes' describing the principles of wise governing through exciting adventures. The hero of Fénelon's book is Mentor, the tutor of Telemachus: the whole narrative is built around his expositions on the art of governing. Mentor is against war, luxury, and selfishness, while he proclaims the importance of brotherhood and the necessity of altruism. By choosing Telemachus as an alter ego, Hollós puts himself in the role of a disciple always seeking new insights. Hollós had significant experience with 'difficult cases' and he was able to reflect on his own development as a psychiatrist, and on the pitfalls of the psychiatric method of the time.

The small volume you are holding in your hands is also the fruit of immense struggle. It

is a text that carries the weight of the twentieth century, with its wars, persecutions, deaths, dislocations, authoritarianisms, and forms of silencing. As a psychiatrist, Hollós struggled against the dogmatic outlook of his times, and relied on psychoanalysis to arrive at new and less hierarchical questions about madness. In the third part of My Farewell to the Yellow House, Hollós is in dialogue with Sigmund Freud, showing his readers the importance of the death drive in psychic life. As a person of Jewish origin, Hollós knew many forms of persecution. In 1922, he lost his lead psychiatrist post, as a result of the numerus clausus laws. In a letter written to Paul Federn on 17 February 1946,6 Hollós recounts a chilling episode in which he and his wife were taken barefoot to the Danube, to be executed, as part of a group of around 200 Jewish people, only escaping through an unlikely intervention. In 1952, Hollós develops ideas of persecution and suffers a psychotic breakdown. He is treated in the Mental Care Department of the Public Hospital of the 13th District from 1952 until his death in 1957. In 1955, he resides in a private room of the Lipótmező, The Yellow House, as a respected visitor and a receiver of care.

To walk alongside Hollós and into the space of this book, it is important to discern some of the shapes of both psychoanalytic and psychiatric networks in Budapest in the 1920s and 1930s—two facets of Hollós' thinking and practice. In

these decades, psychoanalysis in Budapest was marked by an unusual pluridisciplinarity, based on intense exchanges of several avant-garde intellectuals, including writers, musicians. painters. psychoanalysts, medical doctors. anthropologists, lawyers, economists, and psychiatrists. Already in 1908, Sándor Ferenczi met Sigmund Freud, an encounter which was to mark the history of psychoanalysis. The same year, the fortnightly journal Nyugat (The West, 1908-1941) was launched, a publication which was transformative for Hungarian cultural life, and which offered a forum for both literature and science. Psychoanalysis had its place in its pages too. Forums of similar importance were the medical weekly Gyógyászat (Therapeutics, 1861-1944), and the sociology journal Huszadik Század (The Twentieth Century, 1900-1919). Hollós had a close relationship with the founders of Nyugat and with several noted contributors, including Ignotus (Hugó Veigelsberg), Frigyes Karinthy, Dezső Kosztolányi, Milán Füst, Sándor Ferenczi, and Róbert Berény-the latter belonging to The Eight, the avant-garde group of painters who brought innovations to pictorial art in Hungary. To borrow an image from Pál Ignotus (the son of the Nvugat founder mentioned above), this milieu was 'a Bloomsbury on the Danube', progressive and opposed to any restrictions to artistic creativity. As Pál Ignotus stresses, the imagination of the radical intellectuals of Budapest was linked to Latin elegance through nostalgia and to German culture through geographical links, while it also eagerly seized on all experiments in style and thought. Recalling scenes of his youth, Pál Ignotus comments on the leading role of literature in Hungarian culture as follows: 'So great was the power of literature over science, and of rhetoric over literature, in a Hungary forever linked to the memory of 1848, that without its trumpet-like conclusions even statistical analyses would have seemed shocking and meaningless to readers.' ⁷

Hollós was part of this plurisidisciplinary conversation. Just like Ferenczi, he published in Nyugat articles that offered a psychoanalytic interpretation of cultural phenomena. In his article 'Egy versmondó betegről' ['On a Patient Who Recites Poems'] of 1914, he wrote about the sources of poetic inspiration. In 'Nemzeti Géniusz és pszichoanalízis' ['National Genius and Psychoanalysis'] of 1929, he analysed Hungarian words and expressions related to dreams and sleep so as to demonstrate for Hungarian detractors of psychoanalysis that the Hungarian 'popular mind' seems to prove Freud's dream theory in its idiomatic creations. Ultimately, Hollós joins a number of thinkers who were not interested in being anchored by a single discourse, and were passionate about crossing disciplinary borders, about spaces between the public and the private, and about inter-forms and inter-genres of writing.8 In Hollós' My Farewell to the Yellow House, references to psychoanalysts Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi are present alongside those to the famous poets Dániel Berzsenyi (1776–1836) and Sándor Petőfi (1823–1849).

Hollós had an equally important connection with the psychiatric milieu. We can imagine the psychiatric model in Budapest in his time as a Janus-faced one. The two faces of the coin meant that on the one hand psychiatry in Budapest was somewhat 'delayed' in terms of the European standards of institutionalisation, and on the other hand it was progressive in showing a preference for no-restraint methods in the asylums.9 Gusztáv Oláh (1857-1944), a French-oriented, Pinel-respecting psychiatrist, and director of the Yellow House, advocated for taking psychiatric treatments beyond the walls of the big public asylums and hospital wards and into the community. Alienists such as Károly Bolyó, Jakab Salgó, Jenő Konrád, Károly Lechner, or Kálmán Páldy resonated with Oláh's approach. László Epstein, a well-known alienist who played an active part in the association of psychiatrists and alienists, claimed as early as 1907: 'Since we do not have raging wards, we also do not have raging patients'. 10 However, he also admitted that patient management was hardly possible without resorting to some sort of restraint or occasional use of the strait-iacket.

The no-restraint tradition in the Hungarian model emerged partly from the practices of the

respected private asylum, the Schwartzer Private Institute, operating in Buda in the 1850s, which was considered 'the cradle of the mental pathological studies in Hungary'. This private enterprise created the 'family world' of the asylum, mirroring the system of the bourgeois family, ruled by the charismatic and authoritative head of the household who protects and disciplines. At the biggest state public asylum, Lipótmező (Leopoldfeld, the Yellow House where Hollós spent most of his career), opened in 1868, the asylum alienist had decisive powers regarding admission, discharging and guardianship, or "custody and care" of incurable and dangerous patients from all over the Kingdom'.

For instance, according to Gusztáv Oláh's memoir, Gyula Niedermann, the charismatic doctor-director of Lipótmező between 1884 and 1899, was a caring and beloved despot: der Pascha von Leopoldfeld. These strong and revered asylum directors often confronted the psychiatrists working at the university clinic in Budapest. Here, the primary tasks were research and the education of medical students, while treatment was relegated to a secondary place. It was mostly the asylum alienists, the pater familias of the psychiatric institutions, who initiated reforms at the crowded state asylums. One of their most effective initiatives was the institution of family care, a system of treatment, mostly based on the model of the Belgian Gheel Colony and adjusted to the local features of the Hungarian psychiatric environment. Among its advocates we can see major mental doctors, e.g., Kálmán Pándy, Rudolf Fabinyi, István Zsakó, and István Hollós himself.

The institution of family care, launched in 1905 in Dicsőszentmárton/Târnăveni (situated in Transylvania, next to Nagyszeben/Sibiu), was centred on placing incurable patients in village households, or newly built colonies close to asylums, or bigger hospital wards, where the host families received income in return. The institution of family care proved to be an ingenious solution. Patients deemed incurable were revived in the fresh air of the countryside, surrounded by members of the community. The state paid lesser costs compared to asylum care. Often, the living conditions of the host families improved as well, in an attempt to comply with the regulations stipulated for 'receiving' the patients.¹⁴

In this landscape, István Hollós gained the reputation of an extraordinarily dedicated, patient-centred, and empathic psychiatrist. In 1922, in an exceptional letter held by the Ferenczi House Archive in Budapest, psychiatrist and asylum director Gusztáv Oláh has the task, within the predicament of the *numerus clausus* laws, to dismiss Hollós as chief physician. It is thus important to note that Hollós knew a forced farewell to the Yellow House, linked to political circumstances and the rise of fascism. The letter

vibrates with tones of deep professional recognition, collegiality, and tragic regret for this destitution. As Oláh writes: 'You as chief doctor managed the sensitive and demanding asylum ward not only with dedication, but with a style of artistic excellence, which, in addition to Your superior qualities as a psychiatrist, can only be made possible by Your love for the patients.'15 The professional relationship between Oláh and Hollós was a long-standing one: as a young doctor Hollós had impressed the senior alienist Oláh, during a short internship in the Angyalföld Asylum in the summer of 1898.¹⁶

Hollós' 'mark' as a psychiatrist was his extensive application of psychoanalysis to psychiatric treatment. He set the scene for the introduction of the 'open door system' in Hungary, which gave patients greater freedom and a better chance for recovery. 17 From 1908 onwards, Hollós focuses in his writing on assessing the conditions of mental hospitals and on the need for talking therapy, while also being aware of the obstacles to it. Analysing patient turnover at Lipótmező over a period of forty years, Hollós complained that a patient who did not speak Hungarian (because he/she had been transferred from a non-Hungarian speaking locality of multi-ethnic Hungary) had no access to the most elementary instrument of psychotherapy: the language his/her psychotherapist spoke.¹⁸ In the same article Hollós came to the conclusion that the biggest single obstacle to treatment and recovery was the very conditions in mental hospitals at the time. Hollós was also a supporter of the institution of family care, and he maintained this support even during the post-war years. At that time, partly because of the forced industrialization of the 1950s in the communist Hungary, the family care treatment was obliterated.

In the pages of My Farewell to the Yellow House, Hollós abdicates the role of pater familias. The psychiatrist of this book does not occupy a place of care and control, but one of questioning, which includes self-questioning. The imaginary of the book is an anti-patriarchal and anti-authoritarian one, where all-knowing fathers and the matrix of the traditional family dissolve and crumble. Indeed, we seem to exit the world of the traditional family, and take steps toward the 'chosen' family, either within the walls of the asylum, or outside it. It is a world of kinship. Rather than a biologically bound 'set' that is forced to live with madness, we meet a different 'set' bound together by a kind of acceptance of sharing the experience of mental breakdown and repair. This is perhaps what Hollós means by his enigmatic term 'social love'. In a world scarce of fathers, we meet more figures of mothers, sisters, and children; but also, importantly, diffuse figures that are not cast in familial roles. The perspectives shift, the inside becomes the outside, and invites new thoughts on society's gaze on madness. The doctor listens closely to the patients and tunes into their voices.

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In My Farewell to the Yellow House Hollós' voice is poetic and refuses to resort to the psychoanalytic or psychiatric registers. However, Hollós' psychoanalytic-psychiatric work had another side, anchored in the professional discourse of his time: between 1922 and 1933, he published a series of in-depth scientific papers. During this period, he was also close to Ferenczi. The Yellow House, therefore, offers a different entry into the issues that preoccupied him. Hollós' studies at this time were published predominantly in German. Several of them appeared in the top psychoanalytic journals of the time: Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse and Imago. Curiously, these studies did not appear in Hungarian even when they were written versions of Hollós' Hungarian lectures in Budapest. (By contrast, My Farewell to the Yellow House was published first in Hungarian in 1927, and only the year after in German.) In 1933, Hollós published the significant study titled 'The Work of the Dream and Mental Illnesses', in a volume commemorating Ferenczi's death. After 1933, Hollós published very little, either in German or Hungarian, which may be related to the grief Hollós had felt at the loss of Ferenczi.

His studies published in German around the time of the Yellow House were very significant. Some were comprehensive metapsychological studies. 19 Others were explorations of the presence of psychoanalytic ideas in the history of psychiatry.20 Others were psychiatric case discussions, but unlike the Yellow House, they were embedded in the psychoanalytic and psychiatric scientific discourses. One of these, 'On the Sense of Time' (1922), interprets the temporal delusions of psychotic patients related to their age and birth time, to arrive at a metapsychological formulation on the relationship between psychic and bodily visions of time and rhythmicity. In 1923, Hollós gave a lecture on 'The Psychoneurosis of a Premature Infant' at a meeting of the Hungarian Psychoanalytical Association, just before the publication of Otto Rank's The Trauma of Birth. The subject was the psychoanalytic interpretation of childbirth, and close to Rank's concept of it.21

In addition to the case histories and writings on the history of psychoanalytic therapy, Hollós also published substantial metapsychological summaries. In one of these papers, he examined the reality of the patient's self-interpretation, pointing to how 'a peculiar communication between the conscious and the unconscious takes place [...] where a "permeability" opens up, "permeability" of the conscious through the unconscious, which makes it possible for the

unconscious to be felt much more intensely than in the normal despite repression'.²²

The relationship between Ferenczi and Hollós was a vibrant one. Ferenczi supported Hollós' professional work, but they differed in one respect: Ferenczi's method started from neurosis and from there down to the narcissistic disorders and pathology. In contrast, Hollós began from the deeper psychological field of psychiatric pathology and tried to reach the everyday life and activity of his patients. Their metapsychological paths often crossed in this decade, culminating in a book jointly published in 1922 as a supplement to the 5th volume of the *Interna*tionale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse. The title was On the Psychoanalysis of the Paralytic Mental Disorder.23 The work, still excellent today, was divided into three parts.24 The first was Hollós' work on past examples of the relationship between the anatomical body and the psychic processes. The second, also by Hollós, offered detailed case examples. The third, a theoretical one, by Ferenczi, discussed the issues of the interconnection of the physical (the traumatic-real) and the pathological psychological (which is also the fundamental question of Ferenczi's 1924 book, Thalassa: A Theory of Genitality).25

The members of the Budapest School made an ongoing effort to make Freud's works available for the Hungarian-speaking audience. As well as Ferenczi and Vilma Kovács, Hollós also made a valuable contribution to the emergence of the Hungarian technical language of psychoanalysis. From the early 1920s he was engaged in the translation of Álomfejtés [The Interpretation of Dreams], published in 1935; and Az Ősvalami és az Én [The Ego and the Id], in 1937. During the translation works, Hollós consulted with Dezső Kosztolányi (1885-1936), celebrated poet, writer, journalist, and translator of his era. In his creative work. Kosztolányi was also inspired by psychoanalytic ideas. Kosztolányi and Hollós shared the project of compiling a Hungarian dictionary of psychoanalytic terms. While this project was not completed, some of the successful attempts they worked on include: consciousness [Das Bewusstsein], interpretation [Deutung], inhibition [Hemmung], Unconscious [Das Unbewusstel. transference [Übertangung].26

Among one of the most fascinating extensions of psychoanalytic thought by Hollós is his attempt to formulate a psychoanalytic theory of language, elucidating the instinctual bases of verbal language.²⁷ The main theoretical frame to examine the development of phonation was the Freudian psychosexual theory. Hollós characterizes sounds as labial-oral, anal, urethral, and genital, according to the dominant libid-

inal organ of the given developmental phase. Language development itself is interpreted as a kind of sublimation, displacement of the sound production from the libidinal organs to the apparatus of verbal articulation, found beneath the mouth. Parallel with this sublimation process, the sounds get denotations in the mother-child relation, as the mother satisfies the needs of the infant who expresses its frustration by producing sounds. The enthusiasm for Hungarian literature inspired Hollós to apply his 'psychophonetic' theory as an interpretative tool, by preparing statistical counts of the libidinally important sounds (which he calls 'birthmarks') present in prominent Hungarian poetic works, such as the poem Ode by Attila József.28

What emerges from Hollós' published work and from some of the archival traces he left behind is that he wished for his writings to circulate far and wide, to surpass the confines of both psychiatric and psychoanalytic jargon—ultimately to be accessible in a way that was profoundly open, crossing barriers of education, class, and even language. In a short pamphlet on the theme of alcoholism, published in 1908, he stages a dialogue between a member of the public interested in how to approach alcoholism in everyday life, and a doctor who is answering their questions in a playful but also very informative manner, engaging misconceptions and commonplaces of thought.²⁹ In a letter to another

psychoanalyst of the Budapest School of Psychoanalysis, Vilma Kovács, written in May 1946, Hollós mentions that he would be glad to see his Yellow House book translated into English and that a project for such translation had been in place since 1939; he also mentions he has plans to have it translated into French.30 It was a special event to come across this letter in the spring of 2024, just as the translation into English of the manuscript was being completed. Hollós' wish for a translation into English of his Farewell to the Yellow House was granted ninety-seven years after the initial publication in Hungarian and eightyfive years after the first uncompleted project of such a translation. The English volume will now exist alongside the German, French, and Italian translations 31

The Hungarian version of the *Farewell* was republished in 1990, one year after the Iron Curtain fell, and the hard dividing walls between the countries of Eastern and Western Europe were removed. The afterword for the 1990 Hungarian edition was written by psychiatrist András Veér, who in 1986 became the director of the National Psychiatric and Neurologic Institute (or Lipótmező, or The Yellow House). In 1988, on the occasion of the 120th anniversary of Lipótmező, András Veér invited an art historian to reinstall the valuable and fragile picture gallery preserved in the asylum. This old psychiatric picture gallery and museum of madness, which was created and

opened to the public in 1931, was thus revived. 32 It had survived the dark moments of the twentieth century and had been resting within the walls of the Lipótmező and Angyalföld asylums. This collection of asylum art already offers surprising shifts in perspective: portraits of doctors painted by patient-artists; portraits of patients painted by their fellow patient-artists. It seems that yet another perspective resurfaces from the pages of My Farewell to the Yellow House: it is the perspective of the outsider, of the visitor, of the public. Do the gallery of inmate pictures and Hollós' Farewell mirror each other? Is there an interaction, a mutual relationship, a triangular arrangement of perspectives? Is there a both textual and pictorial representation of changing viewpoints between the patients, the doctors, and their other—a third who is neither inside nor outside?

In the section called 'The Complaints of a Recovered Patient', Hollós writes: 'The gates of the Yellow House are a fateful meeting place: they divide people at the point where their solidarity should be most apparent.' (p.33). Inviting us to focus on a threshold, Hollós does important and subtle phenomenological work here: he explores a place of being neither inside nor outside, but in between, in a way that nearly substantiates the matter of what separate us. This usually invisible substance—which Hollós works to bring into our consciousness—is the fear of madness.

The preface to the French edition, which we reproduce below, was authored by psychoanalyst Eva Gerő-Brabant. We consider this preface a historical document in its own right. Written in 1986, it functions as a unique 'knot' of transmission of the ideas of the Budapest School of psychoanalysis. Published only one year after the French edition of *The Clinical Diary* of Sándor Ferenczi,33 translated by the same psychoanalyst who edited the Diary, Judith Dupont, the French Mes adieux à la maison jaune is part and parcel of a global 'revival' of the Budapest School, which started in the 1980s, and continues in our times. This strong revival came after nearly five decades of traumatic forgetfulness surrounding the work of Sándor Ferenczi and his collaborators and followers. Ferenczi was forgotten after a break with Freud, in 1932, which affected the psychoanalytic field very deeply. The preface by Eva Gerő-Brabant is important because it articulates what until the 1980s had been unspeakable in historicising the Budapest School: its wide-ranging and committed interdisciplinary outlook, or better-said, its porous nature in relation to other fields and discourses, from literature, to anthropology, to the hard sciences; its extraordinary radical voices, including István Hollós, who had strong projects, such as re-socialising madness and breaking down the walls of the asylum; its inclination to social issues, which is also an acknowledgement that psychoanalysis is (or can be) political. We recommend reading Eva Gerő-Brabant's preface alongside our own, as it gives its own useful punctuation of the richness of the Budapest School: it is charged with the unique energy of a moment when something that was not discernible enters our field of perception for the first time and gains shape.

Antal Bókay Monika Perenyei Raluca Soreanu Mónika Takács

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