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Rabindranath Tagore and Hungarian Politics

Since the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978 there has been a dramatic increase in the studies of the western perception of the Orient. While studies of this field appeared before and parallell with *Orientalism* and the limitations of Said's approach have been discussed widely, his book is still the fountainhead of postcolonial studies. Its importance lies in the fact that it reminded its readers how much the historical situation and the social politics of western societies determined scholarship about the Orient. While one of Said's major shortcomings is the absolutising of the West and the Orient and underestimating the diversity both within western and eastern societies, one cannot deny the fact that a study of the perception of the Orient in connection with the history of the perceiving society is an important enterprise, especially if one breaks down the monolithic perception of the "West" and the "Orient".[1] A way forward in this field is the study of the cultural encounter between East-Central Europe and India, or breaking it further down, as I have done in my monograph, the encounter between communities producing literary cultures, such as between Hungarians and Bengalis.

In western eyes East-Central Europe, this buffer zone of some dozen smaller or bigger nations between or under the great powers of Germany, Austria, Russia and the Ottomans in history, has not always been unequivocally accepted as part of the West. Although geographically part of Europe, some countries of the region, such as Greece, Hungary and the countries of the Balkans, the eastern half of the route of the Paris-Istanbul "Orient Express", were often perceived as part of the Orient.[2] Indeed, for varying periods of time these countries or substantial parts of them were under the Ottoman rule and were perceived as parts of an Oriental empire.

It was not only western awareness that now and again relegated these countries to the Orient, but sometimes also their own self-perception. The attitude within these countries was swinging between a marked western identity and the realisation that the West did not consider them to be on an equal footing, and, therefore, they would emphasise their difference from the West. Especially during the Romantic period many of these societies constructed a Scythian, Turkic, Indic or Hun past for themselves.[3] The depth of this Oriental self-awareness, however, varied according to nation and time; while, for example, it was strong in Hungary priding itself with a Scythian and Hun past, it was less marked, for example, amongst the Czechs, even if they sometimes affiliated themselves with the Indo-Aryans.

In this article I am going to examine the reception of Rabindranath Tagore in Hungarian literary culture. Although my study started out to be a literary enterprise about a poet who was present almost exclusively by means of his literary writings in Hungary, I was myself surprised to find out during its course how much Tagore's reception was determined consciously or unconsciously by the actual political atmosphere. On a superficial view the Bengali poet's reception shows similarities in most East-Central European countries with that in Germany; still a closer look results in substantial differences as can be exemplified with the differences of his reception on his trips to Central and Eastern Europe.

It is a shared feature of Tagore's journey to this region that he visited almost exclusively the cosmopolitan capital cities which gave him little scope to appreciate the diversity and rural richness of a specific country. When he accidentally moved away from the capital he was always enchanted, as happened when he heard some flute music on the border of Serbia and Bulgaria in the middle of the night[4] or when he was in a sanatorium on Lake Balaton in Hungary, surrounded by villages. Yet, in Prague, the only capital in the region that he visited several times, he had to give parallel talks to his German and Czech audiences. In Budapest he was received with extreme adulation as a relative from the Orient, where the ancestors of the Hungarians lived. At his lecture in Zagreb, a group of young poets staged a demonstration against Tagore's stand in the Indian liberation struggle.[5]

There is no Indian poet so well known in any European country as Rabindranath Tagore. Although his visits to almost all the capitals of the continent contributed largely to his fame, his popularity is primarily based on his writings. His works have been extensively transcreated and translated into English and then into further languages and innumerable articles and books of criticism have appeared about him. His contact with many countries has also been the subject of several publications. There are separate volumes on Tagore and Germany[6], Czechoslovakia[7], Romania[8] and articles on his contact with several other countries.

The fame of few poets has undergone so many drastic changes in the western world as that of Tagore. He burst into sudden fame with only one book of poems with which he acquired the Nobel Prize in 1913. In the twenties he was celebrated as poet, sage, prophet and even a Saint from the mystic East, then to be relegated into a mystic pseudo-literature in the following decades and emerge again slowly from western oblivion.

In spite of many similarities in his reception in the western world, each country has a peculiar Tagore-image. The several metamorphoses of the Hungarian Tagore also accord with major trends in Europe. This was especially true at first with regard to Germany and later to countries in the communist block. At the same time the specificities of Hungarian literary culture at a given time also shaped the reception of the Bengali poet. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the beginning of the twentieth Hungary was part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. It achieved equal rights with Austria in the 1867 Compromise after a lost war of independence (1848-49) and a successful passive resistance. Hungarians, however, were reluctant to concede any nationalist rights to its many ethnic minorities that constituted more or less half of its population. Hungarian literature was dominated by an outdated folklorist nationalism, and the essence of the nation was claimed to be lying in the pre-Christian Hungarian culture of the Eurasiatic steppe. In the first decade of the twentieth century a new literary movement centred around the literary magazine *Nyugat* (West) that shaped the literature until the second world war. The ideals of the *Nyugat* circle were to move away from the national folklorist literature and to introduce the achievements of modern western literature into Hungarian. They concentrated on the European heritage rather than emphasising the oriental ethnogenesis of the Hungarians. This led to the idea of literature becoming limited to the literatures of Europe and its extension, the United States. In this atmosphere it is not a surprise that no leading writer in Hungary took lasting inspiration from Tagore. At the same time there was a different reception by writers who opted to remain outside the political borders of "truncated" Hungary after the first world war. They felt more closely the unjustness of European powers and turned more earnestly towards alternatives in the twenties. During the early years of communism, in the late forties and the early fifties, Tagore was deliberately forgotten since his ideology did not fit into the framework of dialectical materialism. He was, however, discovered as an emblematic literary figure of the emerging third world nations fighting against western imperialism and was celebrated as such around the year of his birth-centenary (1961). After this year his work fell into relative oblivion although his visit to Hungary emerged to be one of the central points of Indo-Hungarian friendship. As can be judged from the number of publications, interst in his writings increased after the nineties but he is still not as well known as most classics of western literature.

In Hungary, as in other countries, Tagore emerged from total anonymity with his name misspelt in the first reports. After the lost war and the revolutions, he acquired immense fame among a wider public. Numerous writings appeared for or against him or with ambiguous feelings. At the culmination of his Hungarian cult, the Bengali poet visited the country in 1926. In the years that followed he fell into oblivion. The situation did not seem to change with the coming of communism, in the early years of which, considered as an idealist, Tagore was neglected. By his centenary in 1961, however, he was rediscovered as the Indian representative of the anti-imperialist struggle and a preacher of peace who condemned nationalism. At that time this reinterpretation focused more attention on Tagore in the communist block than in

Western Europe.[9] There has been some moderate interest since the centenary, which intensified after the fall of communism.

Hungarians heard of the Bengali poet only with the news of the Nobel Prize. All the major newspapers reported this.[10] He had been so unknown earlier that the first article about him misspelled his name and, apparently, confused him with the musicologist Raja Sourindra Mohan Tagore (1840-1914):

> The Nobel Prize for literature, this year, was awarded by the committee to Rayen Dranatto Tagore. Tagore is a musical composer and a historian of music. He lives in Calcutta and he is eighty-two.[11]

Within a few days, however, the correct details arrived and two weeks later a leading poet, Mihály Babits, published the prose translation of three poems from the English[12] and wrote an article about Tagore.[13]

After the Nobel Prize the strange-sounding name of Rabindranath Tagore started to feature in Hungarian life. So much so that to pronounce the poet's name became a way of testing drunkenness: the person who was able to do it was proven not to be drunk.[14] His English books reached Hungary quickly.[15] There were, however, people who considered Tagore to be destructive of the exotic and the mystic by widening the cultural horizon of Europe,

> The world, or rather, the general European culture thinks only of the European-American white world when speaking of mankind… Suddenly the Stockholm Academy with a striking confidence compares a master of Bengali literature to the great writers in European eyes and gives him a superior position. It means the widening of the world… Tagore's Nobel Prize and the self-evident way he was given signify the loss of something exotic. Is it, however, a real loss when the exotic gives way to the reality of belonging to the world?[16]

Two other aspects in Tagore's poetry were instantly recognised: the synthesis of the cultures of East and West and the author's mystic attitude.[17] In an appreciative article by Sándor Kégl (1862–1920), the first professor of Persian at the University of Budapest, the latter was praised but also considered a limitation in his art,

> It is obvious that he did not read European poetry in vain, yet he is following the way of his ancestors. Although it gained enrichment, Tagore is strongly permeated by the spirit of old Indian poetry. He is almost completely occupied with that one strong feeling, the deepest possible for an easterner: religious mysticism. This makes the reading of his poems tedious for a European, and they will mostly be enjoyed sporadically in anthologies.[18]

Although a volume of Rabindranath's poems[19] translated from the English appeared in Hungarian in 1914, interest in his works was somewhat weakened during the years of the war. However, after defeat, the turmoil of revolution and the partition of the country, Tagore acquired immense popularity among disconsolate Hungarians.

After the war Tagore was considered an outside observer who fought against those European 'obsessions' that lead to war and the oppression of one nation by another. An editorial in a paper said: "Rabindranath Tagore sets his face against the standard-bearers of civilisation by saying that their hands are not fit for these colours… and in the silence following this statement, the conscience of the whites is embarrassed and ashamed."[20] At the same time he was a prophet, who spoke of another world of peace, unity and harmony. Although for the disappointed middle-class

Hungarians it was an escape, Rabindranath's works helped them to rediscover and reconfirm universal human values that seemed to be lost in the war.

Tagore's popularity abroad might have been instrumental in rediscovering the poet and establishing his prestige in Hungary in the early twenties. The Hungarian press naturally paid attention to Tagore's reception in other countries, especially in Germany, and reported both its negative and positive aspects.

In a leading Hungarian journal from Czechoslovakia, the *Kassai Napló*, Sándor Márai, one of the best Hungarian novelists, whose novel *Embers* has become a success in recent years in the English-speaking world, also published a short writing on Tagore. He attended one of Tagore's lectures in June in Darmstadt at Keyserling's 'School of Wisdom' and in his article he expressed his puzzlement with regard to the poet, whom he found full of deep knowledge and sadness but also thwarted by the adulation of eccentrics and by people making business of him.[21]

In 1925 a review of the French translation of the novel *Caturanga*[22] was published by the writer and critic Miklós Kállay (1885–1955), translator of the *Thousand and One Nights*. Kállay compared Tagore's poetry to the early visionary works of the German Nobel-laureate, Carl Spitteler (1845–1924), whose mythological epics were rooted in the author's asceticism. The reviewer mentioned that Tagore was unsurpassed in depicting female characters with spiritual qualities. According to Kállay, the novel's excellence lies in its presentation of souls with inscrutable depth:

> Perhaps not even in the greatest Russian writers can souls be found with such mysterious and inscrutable depth. It is precisely this inscrutability of the souls that again and again results in surprising unforeseen turns that render the plot the most interesting and eventful. In addition, the sentimental drama is permeated by the deep and mystic wonder of Tagore's primordial forceful poetry, which makes this short novel not only a thrilling reading but also an inner poetic experience. A more beautiful poetic monument has never been erected to lofty and ethereal love free from every carnality, to the chiming harmony of the mysterious attraction of the souls and to the heart-gnawing agonies of yearning desire.[23]

An article in the magazine *Diogenész* in 1924 indicates why Tagore was so popular at that time:

> Tagore is a descendant of Brahmins brought up on old humanist morals… He is a brilliant writer who took the style of his writing, the structure of his conceptions, the problems, the human conflicts and even the nature of his characters from the framework of European culture. However, he is penetrated by philanthropy, which is nobler, warmer, truer and more radical than that of the Europeans. So I am unable to read a line of his without great joy or without deep blushing… Rabindranath Tagore is the heir of the ancient Brahma wisdom whom contemplation made capable of unutterable sensitivity and has a capacity of differentiation.[24]

The author of a leader in the cultural magazine *Képes Krónika* also expressed appreciation for Tagore but suspected a colonialist agenda behind Tagore's success amongst the British, whom he handled with some antipathy.[25]

Besides the articles, some books of criticism appeared about Tagore. Ervin Baktay, a learned admirer of Indian culture, wrote two books on the poet. A small biography was published in 1921[26] and a year later it ran into an enlarged second edition entitled *Rabindranath Tagore, the Man, the Artist and the Sage*.[27] The latter is an appreciative survey of Tagore's life, works and ideas. A review stated that "The love with which he spoke about Tagore shines forth as a magic force from the pages of the book."[28]

Personal contacts with Hungarians were also established. Ervin Baktay[29] was introduced to the poet in April 1922 by the father of the painter Amrita Sher-Gil, Umrao Singh, Baktay's Indian brother-in-law[30]. In July Baktay sent a courtesy copy of the second edition of his book to Santiniketan. This signed volume in the Rabindra Bhavan Library indicates the extent of his high esteem of the Indian poet:

> As the worshippers offered fruit and rice to the Higher Spirits who could not make any practical use of those things – just so I send to you this modest work of mine, which you cannot read, only as an offering of my deep veneration and love for you, áchárya.

In 1926 in Shimla, Baktay also met C. F Andrews, one of the closest associates of Tagore,[31] and presented him with the same book as the signature in another copy in the Rabindra Bhavan Library shows.

Apart from the opinion of Hungarian and German journalists and writers, during the twenties the ideas of Romain Rolland[32] and Mahatma Gandhi[33] about Tagore became also available in the Hungarian language. However, at that time the differences between the two great thinkers of India were not given much attention. Baktay, for example, explained it as an uninformed or vicious exaggeration of the British press and showed that persons like Andrews served both without any conflict.[34]

Between 1920 and 1925 thirty different volumes of Tagore-books were published.[35] Seven appeared in 1920, eight in 1921, twelve in 1922, two in 1924 and one in 1925. (Here only the first editions are counted, including different translations or different selections of works published earlier.) Between 1925 and 1941 no new book of Rabindranath appeared.

Most of Tagore's works available in English were translated. Among his different writings, naturally, his poetry was the most popular in Hungary (*The Gardener, Gitanjali, The Crescent Moon, Fruit Gathering, Lover's Gift, Stray Birds, Crossing* – the first three of them having two or three different full or partial translations). At the same time four dramas (*Chitra*, *Sacrifice, The King of the Dark Chamber, The Post Office*), three novels (*The Home and the World*, *The Wreck, Gora*), four collections of short stories (*Mashi*, *Auspicious Moment*, *Hungry Stones*, *Homecoming*) with some twenty stories in total, three essays (*Sadhana*, *The Inspiration of the Soul*[36]*, Nationalism*) as well as *My Reminiscences* came out in Hungarian. According to Gyula Wojtilla, the number of copies fluctuated between hundreds and two thousand.[37] The volumes were produced fast and they normally lacked introductions and notes. Their most prolific translator was the lacklustre Zoltán Bartos. In some books his translations were complemented by those of Márton Sármay. Publishing Tagore-books in the early twenties was a good business and Bartos and Sármay faced competition from others, such as Ödön Wieldner. The competition sometimes resulted in publishing two translations of the same work in parallell, as was the case with some poems and short stories.

The books listed above, however, do not represent the entire range of works by Tagore read in Hungary. Because at that time the Hungarian middle class read also German and as noted by Wojtilla, a considerable number of German translations of Tagore were current in Hungary.

The circulation of the essays published in Hungarian varied enormously. *Nationalism*, for example, was translated by a young socialist emigrant, Sándor Barta (1897–1938) outside the country and only a few copies were brought into Hungary.[38] (Nonetheless, people could read it in German translation and the book was also reviewed in some literary magazins.[39]) Whereas, the volume *Sadhana* ran into several editions and was often quoted to illustrate Tagore's philosophical ideas.

In contrast with the other Tagore volumes, the Hungarian *Sadhana* published in 1921 had a foreword. Its author was Mihály Földi (1894-1943), who, starting as an author experimenting with psychological insight in his writings, published several short stories in the leading literary magazine, *Nyugat*. In the thirties he produced several bestsellers with superficial religious

messages. In his foreword Földi emphasised that Tagore's teaching about love and the harmony of man and nature was not a new idea but rather something that was forgotten again and again and that mankind needed to be reminded of it:

> This is the teaching of Buddha and this is the core of Tagore's worldview. This teaching of the Hindu sage is several thousand years old and in all probability it is an eternal treasure of humankind…
>
> This religion of love that Tagore brought to us from India is not unknown to us. This is the religion of the great prophets. This was radiated into the world by Christ and this was unravelled from the Gospels for our moral philosophy and guideline for life by the Russian prophet, Tolstoy. Tagore's ideas contain the bible for a right and truthful life.[40]

The central theme of Földi's writings in the twenties is the conflict between an intellectual and a spontaneous life, between morals and instincts. In his foreword he treats at relative length Tagore's efforts to conciliate the fundamental antagonisms of life. Although both publisher and reader expect a foreword to be appreciative of the book and to emphasise its important points, yet when treating this question, and especially in the conclusion written in a language full of biblical expressions, Földi presents his doubts:

> Are people in India happy and equanimous?... How can India as a state-creating nation be compared to the stout and pertinacious European race?... But will love be realised on Earth?... The suggestive force of god-men so far proved to be too weak.
>
> Both European culture standing on reason and Indian culture hovering over the bodings of the heart are imperfect. Tagore… wants to unite humanity's mind with its heart…Look at him, here is the man in whom fire and water, heart and mind, strength, knowledge and love and peace are in union. Will stones be moved, will walls collapse? Will these two lands reach union through all the oceans of terrible traditions? This prophet was sent by "kind" nature, and all the creatures of this happy and happy-making God — after so many prophets, after so many disillusionments — watch in hopeful suspense for the result of this new experiment.[41]

During his European tour in 1926, Tagore stayed in Hungary between 26 October and 12 November. In Budapest he gave a lecture on Indian philosophy, met Hungarian writers and scholars, and was received by Regent Miklós Horthy. Nevertheless, the first few days of the visit might have been an unfortunate introduction for the aged poet without his realising it. He was treated with an intense adulation from which he had to escape. In his hotel, he was besieged by enthusiastic people carrying his books and wishing him to sign them or at the very least to have a glimpse of him. Even an overtaxing programme did not enable him to encounter the best elements in Hungarian literary life. Moreover, his Hungarian guide, Ferenc Zajti, was an unhappy choice. He seems to have been more interested in convincing Rabindranath of his theory of the existence of a racial link between Hungarians and Indians than to pay attention to the needs of the exhausted guest. He influenced Tagore to such an extent that the poet also started to speak about the Hungarians as relatives.

The aged poet was already tired; his health gave way and he fell sick. He left Budapest for a sanatorium in Balatonfüred near Lake Balaton. The ten autumn days he spent near the second largest lake of Europe made a deep impression on him. After his recovery he sent greeting cards every year to the head of the sanatorium and always spoke with affection about Hungary.

Several Hungarian intellectuals, among others Ervin Baktay, author of two early books on the poet, visited Santiniketan in January 1929. Although his visit was a disappointment, he appreciated Tagore as a poet and tried to find an explanation for the discrepancy between his life and his writings that had generated in him so much enthusiasm a decade ago.[42]

Tagore's mass popularity in Hungary also raised opposition to the poet. This opposition came from all directions and there was no organised political or ideological group behind it. There was opposition, for example, from the Church, both Catholic and Protestant. In a review of Baktay's first book about Rabindranath Tagore,[43] the influential Jesuit writer, Béla Bangha, wrote that "his enthusiasm makes Baktay obscure and one-sided." According to Father Bangha:

> Certain admirers of the heathen East make efforts to introduce this pantheistic cult of nature, erring in its concept of beauty and badly underdeveloped, as a new light predestined to renew Europe's spiritual and moral life.[44]

Béla Bangha attacked only those who wanted to show Tagore as a prophet, a bearer of a new ideology, but recognised him as a poet: "Rabindranath Tagore is a true gem and we are free and right to study him as we do with the pagan poets of the Ancient Age." Another Catholic theologian, István Záborszky, wrote a book about Rabindranath.[45] His apologetic work countersigned by a diocesan censor is in line with Christian criticism of Tagore published in different languages.[46] Unlike other ecclesiastic responses to Tagore that analyse him along with other 'Oriental Saints', Záborszky's book is concerned only with the Bengali poet. He examined Tagore's ideas, interpreted them in terms of western philosophy and theology and rejected the tenets that contradicted the teaching of the Catholic Church (e.g. pantheistic monism, salvation without the help of God, the refutation of intellectual speculation as well as of dogmas and of the authority of any church in searching for God). Záborszky compared the "Indian sage's" ideas to "the Undogmatic Christianity of liberal Protestantism"[47], and found that the liberalism, the desire for mysticism and sentimentalism in Tagore made him similar to the most forceful literary movement of pre-war Hungary in the circle of the magazine *Nyugat*.[48] Záborszky also observed that even the Bolsheviks used Tagore's ideas.[49] Nevertheless his book appreciated the noble features of the Indian poet's approach. Although he was aware of the variegated nature of Hinduism, he considered the Indian poet as its best representative, who had reached the highest spiritual stages and he valued Tagore's notion of love, optimism and spiritual depth.[50]

The importance of this book is that it expresses in detail the Catholic approach to Tagore's philosophical ideas, although it has a serious shortcoming, namely the author's limited acquaintance with the writings of the Indian poet. Apart from Tagore's most popular works published in Hungarian, Záborszky read only Baktay's book and a German article by M. Groener.

István Záborszky's work was published in the popular Catholic series *Szent István Könyvek* and was welcomed in almost all Catholic journals. A review stated:

> Certain lines of Tagore remind us directly of the Gospels… [Záborszky] did a thorough work because our way of thinking, trained as it is in Aristotelian logic, is not acquainted with Tagore's monistic pantheism full of contradictions. We even more need a guide here since his many expressions that we are familiar with in Christianity have an entirely different concept for us.[51]

This review emphasises an important point in translation, namely that since prior to Tagore the Hungarian tradition of translating Indian philosophical texts was not developed, Rabindranath's prolific Hungarian translators could not escape the Christian terminology of which, to a certain extent, the English versions already reminded them. The same review found Tagore's philosophy inapplicable to the life of the common people:

> Tagore does not know about original sin; according to him human nature in itself is good. His teaching is only for privileged souls, but does not regard the great masses of humanity. His asceticism is only for the perfect ones.[52]

It is a common feature of almost all Catholic reviews that they reject the philosophy they think the 'Hindu sage' propagates, but they appreciate Tagore as a person or as a poet. A similar approach can be seen in the case of the Protestant bishop László Ravasz, who observed that Tagore's worldview overlooked change and historical insight: "Although he has a strong spiritual experience he is ignorant and naïve when he speaks of history, historical progress and social laws." [53]

Rabindranath received the strongest attack from a person who was far from sharing the ideas of the Church, Georg Lukács, who after the fall of a short-lived Hungarian communism in 1919, lived in Austria and Germany. He read *The Home and the World* and in a German article published in 1922 from Berlin in the magazine *Die rote Fahne* (The Red Flag),[54] he wrote:

> Tagore's enormous celebrity among Germany's 'intellectual élite' is one of the cultural scandals… a typical sign of the total cultural dissolution facing this 'intellectual élite'… Tagore himself is… a wholly insignificant figure. His creative powers are non-existent… He survives by sticking scraps of the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad-Gita* into his works amid the sluggish flow of his own tediousness – and because the contemporary German reader's instinct has become so unsure that he can no longer recognise the difference between the text and the quotations. As a result these scanty leftovers from Indian philosophy do not annihilate the unworthy material which frames them.

The Home and the World was labelled as, "a petit bourgeois yarn of the shoddiest kind" and his international fame was explained as political**:**

> The British bourgeoisie... *is repaying its intellectual agent in the struggle against the Indian freedom movement.* For Britain, therefore the scraps of 'wisdom' from ancient India, the doctrine of total acquiescence and of the wickedness of violence — only, of course, when it relates to the freedom movement, have a very concrete and palpable meaning.

According to Lukács, "Mr Tagore… is, after all, a philosopher, a moralist only concerned with 'eternal truths'… [whose] *task is to save the Indians' spirituality and to protect their souls* from the dangers posed by violence, deceit etc." Although in what he has written he was clearly biased against Tagore, some observations might be valid, as for example, that about the identity crisis of German intellectuals after the war. It is precisely this point that gives us a clue to understand Lukács's bias, or rather, anger. The poet's message of peace attracted many people who were dissatisfied with existing ideologies and, in Lukács's eyes, could have allied themselves with the communist movement. It should be noted at this point that many of Lukács's aggressive arguments lack any basis. It is difficult to say, for example, how Rabindranath was able to depict Gandhi in a novel written before Gandhi's appearance in the political life of India[55] or how much *The Home and the World* is based on the *Upanishads* and the *Gita*, and it is yet more difficult to find out how, in Lukács's arguments, the *Gita* would be linked to the ideology of non-violence. Furthermore, those who are at least a little acquainted with Rabindranath's life would experience difficulties in finding out how he was an agent of the British bourgeoisie or only concerned with 'eternal truths'. Lukács's attitude shows as much of his superficial understanding of Indian culture as his seeing in Tagore a rival to the communist movement.

Lukács's idea of taking the differences between Tagore and Gandhi to the extreme was not an isolated phenomenon in Central Europe. At Tagore's lecture in Zagreb, a group of young

poets staged a demonstration against his stand in the Indian liberation struggle.[56] The conception of Tagore's pro-western bias as opposed to Gandhi's unfriendliness to the West, found in many European writings, probably derived to a great extent from Romain Rolland's book, *Mahatma Gandhi*.[57]

There were journalists independent of the Church or of communism, too, who criticised the Bengali poet. Zoltán Szász was the most interesting of them. Szász's independent and biting journalistic writings resulted in his being arrested during the Hungarian Commune and earned him a prison sentence later when he protested against the 'white terror' of those who oppressed the Commune. After Tagore's lecture Szász wrote that the Indian sage belonged to the "type of the travelling apostle-poet of exotic origin or at least of bizarre spirituality." As the spirit of the man who is wounded and has lost blood is less agile and less immune, so the spirit of Europe wounded in the war is less immune to bizarre ideologies. Szász attacked with irony what he perceived as Tagore's irrationalism and considered him a mediocre writer.[58]

While Szász criticised Tagore's literary and philosophical output, there were journalists who mocked Tagore in order to attack the conservative politicians who had invited him to Budapest. In his article *Tagore's failure*[59] the liberal journalist Béla Zsolt wrote with biting irony that Pest (i.e. the intellectual elite of Budapest) was not interested in Rabindranath Tagore and thus his visit was restricted to an official setting and shrank to being a private affair of the organizers.[60] "And all this was topped off with the conference of psychiatrists where one of the speakers considered enthusiasm for Tagore's Bengali poems as a mental pandemic." Béla Zsolt wondered why Tagore was not able to find a more exclusive place for rest than Balatonfüred while in Europe. He also contrasted ironically the views of fascists with those of Tagore: "Enough of sermons, of faith, of enthusiasm. Our time requires active art and philosophy: Mussolinis in philosophy and in literature."

It is true that most of the outstanding Hungarian writers were absent from Tagore's lecture and Szász rightly observed that many people were enthusiastic about the Indian sage without understanding what he was saying. Was, however, Béla Zsolt right in stating that the intellectual elite of Budapest did not take interest in Tagore? Can it be said that the enthusiasm of those who were interested was due, if not to 'a mental pandemic', but at least to a lack of critical understanding? Can these opinions foreshadow the dramatic setback in Tagore's popularity after the 1920s?

There were elements of the Hungarian intelligentsia, whether or not present in the lecture, who appreciated Tagore and cannot be said to be lacking 'critical understanding'. Baktay who in the early twenties wrote enthusiastic books about the Bengali poet was the leading advocate of India in the last century. Sceptics, however, may explain away his admiration for Tagore and Gandhi by his affection towards India. Moreover, Baktay wrote from a scholar's point of view. What influence, if any, had Rabindranath on Hungarian high literature? It was both his works and his visit that inspired some Hungarian writers. Some of the finest poets undertook the translation of one or two of his poems and a few like Mihály Babits and Dezső Kosztolányi, the two leading poets in the twenties, also wrote about their ideas. Babits in his first enthusiasm in 1913, building on Yeats' *Introduction* to the English *Gitanjali*, compared Tagore to Saint Francis and celebrated the simplicity and acceptance of life in his poetry. At the same time he was aware of modern influences on the 'Indian saint'.

In the early twenties both Sándor Márai and Zoltán Fábry, two authors from the northern town of Kassa (Košice), which has become part of Czechoslovakia, expressed their mixed feelings about the unprecedented literary cult of the Bengali poet, but eventually recognised his human value and his poetic achievement. In a similar way, in 1926, writing about his impressions of the Indian poet's lecture in Budapest, Kosztolányi, though sceptical about Tagore's philanthropic message, recognised him as a great poet.[61]

Two authors from Transylvania, Aladár Kuncz (1885-1931) and Jenő Dsida (1907-1938), celebrated Tagore unreservedly in the early 1920s. The novelist Kuncz was one of the most active people to reorganise Hungarian literary life in Transylvania after it became part of Romania. His novels are characterised by psychological interest and a realisation of solidarity in suffering. Comparing the most influential poet of his times, Endre Ady, to Tagore, Kuncz wrote[62] that one of the fundamental characteristics of Ady's poetry was a constant emotional awareness of community with the world and with life, and consequently, in his poetry concepts such as Nature and Self, Life and Death live in unity. According to Kuncz this realisation of unity is no different from the Indian idea of "tat tvam asi", where the self recognises itself in everything. In this regard, he considered Ady similar to Tagore; but while Tagore wrote about the unity of life as the basic tenet of Indian philosophy, Ady did this on intuitive and emotional grounds.

Kuncz also wrote a short story entitled *"The tree that set forth. To the melody of Tagore"*.[63] There is no plot in the story; it is about the thoughts of a person walking with a beautiful village girl who had been abandoned by her fiancé. This person contemplates the beauty of Nature and Tagore who "is the tree that set forth to us from the distant East to bring us the wisdom of the trees… the trees, the ever still great lives…" People were fond of their own lives instead of Life, and this caused the war. "When instead of the desired peace the killing peace came… the high-grown tree tore out its immense roots from the earth and set forth from East to West."

Dsida's early poem *Towards the Eastern Sunrise*[64] is an example of attitudes that made Hungarians disappointed with the West and turn towards the East. Loaded with political allusions towards the winning powers of the war, the poem expresses the author's disenchantment with western civilisation, which had destroyed the magic of story-telling in the world, and salutes a new attitude of turning towards the Orient, which is also the ancient homeland of the Hungarians. In this poem the West is symbolised by 'Paris and the cynicism of Anatole France', while Tagore is hailed as the representative of the brightness of the East.

With face covered we silently weep
on the black crypt of our dead tales:
they have been killed by materialism,
great cold autumn and dark war,
and now our teeth chatter in solitude.

Strange is the fate of poor Hungarians:
they were encircled by the shadows of Paris
tempting with glorious, eternal songs,
but what was it that they furtively wanted? —
to bury a steel blade into the heart of dreams.

They killed all our wonderful eastern longings,
instead of hearts they gave us buzzing machines,
and instead of tales, the disillusioned cynical air-blast
from Anatole France's novels,
which almost brought us to death.

But it is enough! Dazzling headlights
expose the false romanticism,
and now the lights of Paris can go to sleep;
they cannot resuscitate with their untruthful spirits
the insentient mass of our dead tales.

Weeping and weeping, our heads turned grey
and in the autumn we long for the Eastern Sunrise.
Instead of the repulsive parks of the West

let the Dream of the Jungle come to wake us,
and let him be ours and of God's!

Let Tagore's radiant world come
and shine over the host of cemeteries, —
let our old faith, our old homeland
come and teach us to sing:
world with kisses of fire, burning Eastern Sunrise!

In the 1920s, Tagore's ideas received responses from authors who were born or lived in regions lost after the World War. The reason for this is not simply that apart from Budapest the centres of Hungarian literary life fell outside the new bounderies. Even from among the Budapest-based writers it was the ones whose hometowns had been 'lost' who wrote about Tagore. They had an additional motivation to perceive the irrationality of western thought that led to a war and then to a peace that they considered unjust. Their disillusionment urged them to examine whether Rabindranath would offer an alternative to western thinking.

After the twenties, as in the other countries on the continent, Tagore's fame declined and even people who had earlier appreciated him became critical. Ervin Baktay, who had written two sympathetic books on the poet, had also lost his enthusiasm by the thirties. During his stay in India he visited both Gandhi's ashram and Tagore's university. In an article comparing Gandhi and Tagore[65] he admitted that both of them had the most useful role in society, but he also wrote:

> Tagore is first of all an artist, a poet who gratifies his ideas rather in the work of creative expression, in his writings and words, than in the practical acts of leading and organising the people. Even though his aims are universal and he does not stop at the game of art for art's sake, the artist always lives somewhat in an ivory tower and instinctively retires from the great masses… He lives in harmony with himself and with his spiritual aims as long as he sits at his desk or wants to realise his ideas in a small circle – that is against less resistance. However, when he takes on the role of a prophet, of a practical, immediate teacher, he will automatically confront himself and will be involved in contradictions.

Baktay blamed the setback in Tagore's reputation partly on the poet's unfortunate involvement in practical affairs, partly on his world fame, and partly because of poor translations.[66]

According to Gyula Wojtilla, Baktay's praise for the paintings of his niece, Amrita Sher-Gil, might also have alienated him from Santiniketan since he commented very acidly on the rival Bengal school of painting and regarded it as uprooted from reality.[67]

Julius Germanus, the scholar of Islamic studies, returned from Santiniketan in 1932, disappointed with Tagore and India.

A typical expression of the decline of the Bengali poet's fame is in the most influential Hungarian history of world literature by Antal Szerb (1901–1945), which was published in 1941. This synthesis considers world literature as a coherent process in which great writers and works influence and inspire each other, transgressing time and geographical borders. As a clear illustration of this process, his work was influenced by Spengler's philosophy. The force of Szerb's history of literature is in its sharp characterisation and ability to summarise in a few lines even the greatest authors and put them into their historical and cultural context. Even today, his work is the most popular Hungarian book on the history of world literature. His judgement on Tagore must have influenced innumerable people. Szerb wrote two paragraphs on Tagore in the chapter about the English and American literature at the turn of the century (!). Jack London and Tagore appear at

the end of the chapter as two popular literary curiosities of dubious value. Unlike with other writers, here Szerb's statements are not based on thorough study and are full of surprising mistakes. In one paragraph he explains the popularity of the Indian sage exclusively with reference to political motivations:

> The British welcomed the young (!) Hindu poet and sage who did not preach resistance to his fellow-countrymen but peace and understanding. They made him the Hindu showpiece of the British Empire and having his peaceable character honoured by the Nobel-committee in 1913, they knighted him in 1914. When in 1919 the British forcefully smashed an Indian uprising, he renounced his knighthood and left India in despair. From that time, naturally, we hear less about him. During this time his popularity reached its zenith in Germany but soon he was forgotten even there.[68]

Of Tagore's literary output Szerb concluded: "all these have in common the usual Indian musings and a certain sanctimonious mysticism that also found its way to the heart of the undiscriminating in the world of European literature." From his list of Tagore's works it seems that he was only acquainted with those books of the Indian poet that were available in poor Hungarian translations. He disapproved of Tagore probably because his fame had overshadowed that of the writers whom he still admired, therefore he did not even take the pains to study Tagore properly.

During this period a very limited number of new translations of Tagore appeared. Shortly before the Second World War some of his prose works came from outside the borders of Hungary. The magazine *A Híd* from Subotica (Szabadka) in Yugoslavia published Tagore's writings to help the antifascist cause. Excerpts from *Nationalism*[69] and a letter to Yone Noguchi on the Japanese aggression against China under the title of 'Letter to a Japanese Poet'[70] were published, as well as a gloss about 'Rabindranath Tagore crying out against fascism in favour of the Spanish people.'[71] In addition, an anthology of Tagore poems[72] came out in Hungary in 1941.

A few years after the war, communists came to power in Hungary and introduced a strict literary code. Tagore, considered an idealist and irrationalist, had to be rejected in the early years of communism in the fifties. During these years of Stalinism until Khrushchev's visit to India, India was not considered to be a friendly country in the communist block but rather a semi-independent country betrayed and exploited by Gandhi and the Congress bourgeoisie. Tagore was silenced, although there were no attacks on him, as there were on Gandhi. The only acceptable factor in India was its Communist Party and the only publishable writings from India were those of the progressive writers depicting in realist style the exploitation and the struggle of the poor. Since capitalist exploitation in poor countries like India could be presented more forcefully than in contemporary western countries, several Indian works were translated into Hungarian in this period. Tagore, however, was not present with any short story in the two anthologies of Indian stories published in 1953.[73]

Among the Hungarians emigrants Tagore again became a figure on whom attention was focussed. In the same year, 1953, the American Hungarian Publishing House came out with a short volume by countess Beatrix Széchenyi about the poet. To the countess who in her exile was reading the Bengali poet in German translation Tagore was a distant and mystic phenomenon whose world became an unreal world. She mentions that flowers on Tagore's tomb (!) are always fresh[74] and speaks about the imaginary sources of his inspiration:

> Tagore travelled in Europe several times on the waterways of Europe and Asia to study the undecipherable hieroglyphs of the secrets of the souls in perfumed saloons, in rambling alleys of foggy worker districts, in small port pubs dimly lit by paraffin lamps and in cloisters with corridors penetrated by the scent of incense. This mysterious journey

> into the mining galleries of souls resulted in a literary Nobel-prize in 1913. He really knew the secrets of all of us. [75]

The author of the book did not want to present a matter-of-fact study and the book, consisting mostly of quotations from Tagore, is penetrated by an impalpability typical of many European Tagore-translations. The countess was inspired by Tagore's universality, lyricism and philosophy,[76] but for her it was the religious depth that characterised the poet in the best way:

> If one studies Tagore's literary or philosophical works, in almost every chapter one finds Brahmanical or Buddhistic aspects… Not only do stars of ideas shine from Tagore's works, but also the pure wellsprings of a religious soul burst up as invincible geysers. They spring up from the depths to the heights. Those who want to bathe in these geysers gain cure for their illnesses.[77]

Just as in the twenties, Tagore's thoughts urging for introspection became a solace for an irretrievable historical loss for an emigrant countess.

The way Tagore was perceived took different turns in the countries under the control of the communist literary code. In 1953 József Balskovits, the co-translator of two Bengali volumes, was only able to mention Tagore in a few lines, stating that "Rabindranáth Thákur… was the great enemy of frozen traditions and of fascism, the friend of the Soviet Union and a sharp critic of British colonial oppression."[78]

This image changed drastically around 1956 in Hungary. In February 1956 paintings of his were included in a representative exhibition of Indian art, which was inaugurated by the Cultural Minister, and in early October a bust of Tagore by Ram Kinkar[79], an artist from Santiniketan, was donated by the Government of India and was unveiled in Balatonfüred by A. K. Chanda, Deputy Foreign Minister of India, formerly the secretary of the Bengali poet. This act concentrated attention on the friendship of Hungary and India rather than on Tagore's literary achievements. Before this, in May, an article in the cultural magazine, *Művelt Nép*, cleared the way for a communist reinterpretation of the Indian poet, presenting him as an advocate of the oppressed and a major figure in the anti-imperialist struggle. Naturally, nothing was mentioned about the *Gitanjali* and Tagore's 'mystic' poetry that had earned him unparalleled fame a few decades earlier.

> With his politics of peace and patience seemingly playing into the hands of the English colonisers, he was given the status of a British noble in 1915. However, the Indian people understood better the progressive anti-imperialist character of his works and considered him to be their spiritual leader. In the very same year the British were driven to intern their recently honoured... In 1919 when the English bloodily oppressed the popular uprising in Punjab... he resigned his nobility. In spite of his life full of contradictions, his literary, cultural and social activities eventually served progressive forces.[80]

The year 1961 was declared by the World Organisation for Peace as a year of commemoration for the centenary of Rabindranath Tagore. This gave an opportunity to introduce a communist reinterpretation of Tagore who fought against the remnants of feudalism in India and for the freedom of his homeland. A book of new translations of his poems was published[81], as well as a collection of his short stories translated partly from German and partly from Russian.[82] The latter was a rather slim volume, considering the fact that a whole group of people worked on its preparation.[83] The publication of these two volumes was a real breakthrough since apart from a collection of poems in 1941, no book with new translations had appeared since 1925.

In the same year a Tagore exhibition was organised in Balatonfüred. Around May, the month of Rabindranath's birth, articles appeared on him in innumerable papers both in Budapest and in other towns. Many of these articles searched for similarity between Tagore's ideas and communism. The great poet "in his short stories fought against feudalism and colonialism"[84] and "flayed with biting irony the barbarian remnants of feudalism and furiously condemned the colonial rule."[85] "In 1913 he was awarded the Nobel Prize… Notwithstanding the public recognition, the British imprisoned him in 1915 because of his anti-colonial behaviour."[86] This writing is a striking example of journalistic tendentiousness, considering the fact that not many Hungarians were at that time able to check the factual truth. Contrary to being imprisoned, Tagore was knighted in 1915, and the Governor of Bengal visited Santiniketan. The translator Zoltán Franyó's article is the best example of how the Bengali poet can be shown as a person developing towards communist ideas:

> The way that Rabindranath Tagore later found viable was not the cloud-adventure of transcendentalist denial of life. He again made a commitment against colonial tyranny and threw his previously acquired knighthood down at the feet of the British. During a visit to Germany and Italy Rabindranath Tagore recognised with disgust and dread that Fascism was the greatest danger threatening mankind and leading to war. At the same time his visit to the Soviet Union made him a friend of the Soviet people… In his articles and poems he protested against Fascist aggression in Abyssinia and China… Tagore had come a long way from the Brahmanical thought to realise that the only possible way that the writer, the artist could materialise his dreams about peace was by joining the international front of people with his talent, with his enthusiasm and with the persuasive force of his art.[87]

Most of the articles emphasised Tagore's love for peace, and some of them under the protective garment of some communist catchwords expressed a deeper desire for freedom:

> The unquestionably pure, upright and lofty thoughts of Tagore are permeated by the idea of peace, mutual respect and understanding. He raises his ideas against blind, vindictive and partial rationalism… we should quote the words of the heroine of his novel *Gora*, 'It must not be expected that people are forced to renounce their faith, ideas, or community just in order to be together with people who are different from them.'[88]

There were only a few writings that dwelt on the parlous matter of Rabindranath's poetic activity. An article in the magazine for foreign literature, *Nagyvilág*, makes an attempt to analyse his literary development, combining the ideological approach with incredible blunders:

> He definitively discards the rhyming form... and in this way is born the [book of] *Sandhya-sangit*... His narrow, discontented mysticism gives way to concern for the problems of mankind... His fame reaches Britain and Yeats becomes especially fond of his poem, *Song offering*... His mystic poetry condemns asceticism and 'sluggard' religiosity...[89]

Notwithstanding its communist phrases, the best article about the Bengali poet in 1961 was that by István Sőtér. Sőtér wrote that a new influence of Tagore was emerging, which this time was not based on fashion and deception as in the first decades of the century, but on a historical fact: the emergence of the peoples of the former colonies in Asia and Africa.[90]

A similarly learned and appreciative study is the indologist Edit Tóth's afterword to the new volume of Tagore's short stories. While presenting Tagore's life, Tóth points out the progressive nature of his ideas by emphasising the literary struggles Tagore had to fight aginst conservative critics. It was important to note that Tagore brought novelty not only to Indians but also to his European readership by becoming the authentic voice of modern India. In his stories,

> A new world unfolds in the eyes of the reader, which is the world neither of the idealised heroes of the epics nor of the primitive "natives" presented through the glasses of British superiority. This is the world of people full of emotions, desires, joys and sorrows who are longing for love but again and again clash with the barbed fence of outdated social institutions. [91]

The Home and the World, so strongly attacked by Lukács a few decades ago, is a work of progressive nature in the eyes of Tóth:

> The yarn presented within the framework of the Indian freedom movement contrasted a worldview searching for peace and understanding. with nationalism wallowing in blood… Tagore considers peace to be the prerequisite of human progress. [92]

Tagore endeavoured to find harmony between the cultural values of the past with the achievements of progress.

> [Tagore] did not recognise any other conflict than that between progress and ossified obscurantism, between the noble truth and vileness, and between love and hatred..[93]

After the centenary Tagore lapsed again into relative oblivion. There is not much mention of him in the coming decades. In the early seventies most of the old Tagore-translations were reprinted in a limited number in a series of small hardback volumes. In 1979 a new translation of the *Crescent Moon* and *The Gardener*[94] by Margit Kopácsy was published in an edition of ten thousand copies. These translations do not seem to have received any reviews. In 1983 Gyula Wojtilla, a scholar of Indian Studies, came out with a book about the Bengali poet and his contact with Hungary, *Rabindranath Tagore in Hungary,*[95] which has also been translated into Bengali.[96]

As in his centenary in 1961, in 1991, the fiftieth anniversary of Tagore's death was commemorated by an exhibition. This time, however, the exhibition was not held in a provincial town, but in the National Széchenyi Library. The great interest in this exhibition marked the beginning of a new popularity. In recent years many editions of old Tagore-books appeared and occasionally some new translations were published. The most important Hungarian translations are also available on the internet in the Terebess Ázsia E-Tár. [97]

The political exploitation of Tagore, which started in the 1920s, did not stop with the Tagore-centenary. Commemorating the 75th anniversary of the poet's visit to Hungary, an article in the leading daily *Népszabadság* ridiculed the conservative circles that presented the Hungarians as kinsmen to the Indians although they had no acquaintance with their culture.[98] Another instance of political utilisation is a recent book in Hungarian that published a pirated translation of an early version of this chapter omitting the passages relating to the communist discourse on the poet.[99]

It was not only Tagore's writings that drew the attention of Hungarian scholars, but also his paintings and his musical compositions. An article on Rabindranath, the musician, is included in the Hungarian version of the *Encyclopaedia of Music*.[100] Translations of his poems were also set to music in folk[101] or classical style[102] and inspired pop-music compositions. [103] Valéria Dienes (1879-1978), and Mária Mirkovszky (1896-1987)**,** pioneers of modern dance in Hungary, prepared dance compositions to Tagore's poems.[104]

Tagore, the painter, was presented to the Hungarian public in an exhibition in Budapest in 1956 and in an article by Edit Tóth[105], a scholar of Indian studies and a close associate of Ervin Baktay in the Ferenc Hopp South-East Asian Museum. In her writing Tóth said that "the experiments with rhythm and the poet's individual problems, fears, desires and visions took the form of paintings… Actually they are confessions from the periods of solitude." The author

concludes that Tagore "as a poet consciously followed the problems of his times and could not detach himself from them as a painter, though this process took place in him, *unconsciously*."

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[1] Serebriany 1997 p. 92. On the specific Soviet paradigm see Serebriany 2005 pp. 93-138. According to Serebriany, the Soviet paradigm is marked by a naive, uncritical and simplistic approach to the language. (p. 116).
[2] Cf. Staud 1931, p. 17.

[3] Naturally, hypotheses of oriental connections existed among other nations that felt marginalised by the West, namely, amongst the Germans (Aryans) and the Scandinavians (Scythians). For an analysis of the various hypotheses on ethnogenesis of some nineteenth-century East-Central European historians, see the chapter on 'National Antiquities' in Baár (forthcoming).
[4] Mahalanobis 1985 p. 48 (English section) and p. 161 (Bengali section).
[5] Petrovic 1970 p. 23 (note 4.)
[6] Saha 1986, Kämpchen 1991 and Kämpchen 1999.
[7] *Tagore and Czechoslovakia: Exhibition September 8 to September 16, 1956*, Rabindra-Bharati-Bhavana, Calcutta, 1956 pp. 1–8.
[8] Neacşu, Daniela (ed.): *Tagore: Romania Remembers*. Editura Paideia, Bucharest, 1998.
[9] His works were translated, for example, more in the communist East-Germany than in West-Germany. (Personal communication from Dr. Martin Kämpchen.)
[10] Just to mention a few: *Világ* 14 Nov. 1913, *Világ* 16 Nov. 1913, *Világ* 20 Nov. 1913, *PH.* 14 Nov. 1913, *PH.* 15 Nov. 1913, *Mo.* 15. Nov. 1913, *Esti Újság* 15 Nov. 1913.
[11] *Világ* 14 Nov. 1913. (The same news was reproduced by another daily, the *Pesti Hírlap*.)
[12] Babits 1913 (Rabindranath).
[13] Babits 1913 (Két szent).
[14] *Világ* 5 March 1914. This custom survives till the present day.
[15] I have, for example, seen a copy of *The Crescent moon* (London, Macmillan, 1913) in the private collection of the Kolozsvár/Cluj-based Calvinist theologian Lajos Imre (1888–1974) with an inscription showing that Imre acquired the book in February 1914.
[16] *Világ* 15 Dec. 1913.
[17] Babits 1913 (Két szent) pp. 733–736, Kégl 1914 p. 453.
[18] Kégl 1914 p. 453. One should, however bear in mind that Kégl's statements were made on the basis of only one volume of poems.
[19] Kelen 1914.
[20] *Az Est* 3 June 1921.
[21] *Kassai Napló* 3 July 192.
[22] Tagore 1924.
[23] Kállay 1925.
[24] *Diogenész*. 1924/25.
[25] *Képes Krónika* 31 Oct.
[26] Baktay 1921.
[27] Baktay 1922.
[28] Melléky 1923.
[29] About Baktay see Bethlenfalvy 1990. In Bengali: Som 1998.
[30] See Umrao Singh's letter to Rabindranath, dated 12 April 1922. (Baktay sent his first letter to Tagore on 18 April 1922. Both letters are found in the Hungary file of the Rabindra Bhavan.)
[31] Baktay 1932 p. 111.
[32] Rolland [1924] pp. 88–113.
[33] 'A költő aggodalma' (The doubts of the poet). In. Baktay [1926] pp. 138–145. (The original was written in June 1921) However, the famous article, *The Great Sentinel* (originally published in Oct. 1921) was not published until 1969. (See Pilát 1969, pp. 192–198.)
[34] 'A költő aggodalma' See Baktay [1926] pp. 138 note 1.
[35] For a bibliography of Rabindranath's work translated into Hungarian see Puskás 1991 pp. 418–424. For a survey of the translators and of the publishers see Wojtilla 1983 pp. 35–38.
[36] Bartos 1922. This book is a translation of *Thoughts from Rabindranath Tagore,* first published under the title *Thought Relic* in 1921.
[37] Wojtilla 1983 p. 38.
[38] Ibid. p. 50.
[39] (Reményik Sándor?): 'Rabindranath Tagore: Nationalismus.' *Pásztortűz* 1921/33 pp. 628–629. Aut-aut: 'Rabindranáth Tagore nacionalizmusa' (Rabindranath Tagore's Nationalism). *Cél* pp. 50–67.
[40] Földi 1921 pp. IV, VII.
[41] Földi 1921 pp. VIII.
[42] Baktay In.: *Nobel-díjas írók antológiája*. Budapest: Káldor, 1935 pp. 226–227.
[43] Bangha 1921.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Záborszky 1927. (The book has 1927 as its date of publication but it was reviewed in several papers in the autumn of 1926. The *imprimatur* is given as 31 August 1926.)

[46] Just to quote a few examples: Nicol Macnicol: *The Making of Modern India*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1924; Henry Massis: 'Les appels de l'Orient' (The calls of the Orient) In. *Les cahiers du mois*. 9/10 Paris, 1925; Friedlich Heiler: *Christlicher Glaube und Indisches Geistesleben: Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya, Sadhu Sundar Singh* (Christian Beliefs and Indian Spiritual Life: Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya, Sadhu Sundar Singh). München, Ernst Reinhard, 1926. All these books are concerned with comparing western thought with different representatives of the East.
[47] Záborszky 1927 p. 45 and p 92.
[48] Záborszky 1927 p. 92.
[49] Záborszky 1927 pp. 93–94. See his simile about the egg on p. 74.
[50] Záborszky 1927 p. 77.
[51] Michel 1926.
[52] Ibid.
[53] *PH*. 29 Oct.
[54] An English translation of this article entitled *Tagore's Gandhi Novel: Review of Rabindranath Tagore's The Home and the World* can be found in Lukács 1983 pp. 8–11.
[55] *The Home and the World* was first serialised in a magazine in 1915, just a few months after Gandhi's return from South Africa. Its English translation, however, appeared only in 1919.
[56] Petrovic 1970 p. 23 (note 4.)
[57] Ibid.
[58] Szász 1926.
[59] Zsolt 1926.
[60] The author of the present article checked all major Hungarian journals and magazines published around the time of Tagore's visit, but was not able to find any of these mocking articles apart from that of Zoltán Szász.
[61] Kosztolányi 1926.
[62] Kuncz 1922.
[63] Kuncz 1923.
[64] Dsida 1925.
[65] Baktay 1930, p. 598. See also Baktay 1932 p. 116.
[66] *Nobel-díjas írók antológiája* (Anthology of Nobel Prize Winning Poets). Káldor, Budapest, 1935 p. 227. Translation by Wojtilla in Wojtilla 1983 p. 42.
[67] Wojtilla 1983 p. 43. For Baktay's comments on the Bengal school see Baktay 1932 p. 114.
[68] Szerb 1957 II. p. 381. Tagore received the knighthood in 1915.
[69] Laták 1935.
[70] Fekete 1939.
[71] *A Híd* May 1937 p. 24.
[72] Kelen 1941.
[73] Blaskovics & al. 1953 és Blaskovics & Zbavitel 1953.
[74] Széchenyi 1953 p. 10. (Tagorét hindú szokás szerint nem temették, hanem hamvasztották.)
[75] Széchenyi 1953 p. 21.
[76] Széchenyi 1953 p. 7.
[77] Széchenyi 1953 p. 14.
[78] Blaskovics & Zbavitel 1953 p. 7.
[79] The name of Ram Kinkar, a renowned sculptor from Santiniketan, is mentioned by Kshitish Roy (Roy 1959–60 p. 33), while Wojtilla (Wojtilla 1983 p. 21) erroneously says that the artist's name was Salakti Sankar.
[80] *Művelt Nép* 13 May 1956.
[81] Kopácsy 1961.
[82] Karig 1961.
[83] The stories were selected by György Káldor and translated by Sára Karig. The notes were prepared by Tibor Csernus and the *Afterword* was written by the Indologist Edit Tóth. The pocket sized book has 241 pages.
[84] *Napló* 7 May 1961.
[85] *Fejér Megyei Hírlap* Székesfehérvár, 25 May 1961.
[86] *Hajdú-Bihari Napló* Debrecen, 7 May 1961.
[87] *Kisalföld* Győr 4 June 1961.
[88] *Pest Megyei Hírlap* 7 May 1961.
[89] *Nagyvilág* May 1961 pp. 724–6.
[90] Sőtér 1961.
[91] Tóth [c.2000] p. 318-9.
[92] Tóth [c.2000] p. 324.
[93] Tóth [c.2000] p. 326.
[94] Kopácsy 1979.

[95] Wojtilla 1983. A review of this book can be found in the *Statesman* (Delhi) 8 Sept 1985.
[96] Kar 1984.
[97] www.terebess.hu/keletkultinfo/tagorevers.html.
[98] *Népszabadság* 26 Oct. 2001 p. 36.
[99] Ubornyák 2004.
[100] Dahlhaus & Eggebrecht 1985 p. 482.
[101] György Káldas's composition can be found in the 'Hungary' file of the Archives of the Rabindra Bhavan.
[102] As was done by the modern composer Sándor Balassa in his cantata *Golden Age* (op. 4) and by the violinist Miksa Eisenkovits. See 'Dr. Eisikovits Miksa hegedűművész szerzői estje' (Authorial evening of violinist Dr. Miksa Eisekovits). *Ellenzék* 19 Febr. 1933 p. 16.
[103] János Karácsony, member of the popular band LGT, included his composition *Tagore Válasza* ('Tagore's Answer') in his solo album *Az időn túl* (1986).
[104] On 18 May 1930 Dienes' choreography to Tagore-poems under the title *A végtelen út vándora vagyok* (I am the traveller on an infinite path) was performed in the Belvárosi Színház in Budapest along with choreographies to poems by two Hungarian poets.
[105] Tóth 1961.