

KEMÉNY ZSIGMOND FŐBB ESZMÉI 1849 ELŐTT. By Gyula Barla. Irodalomtörténeti Füzetek, 67. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970. 172 pp. 17 Ft., paper.

AZ ÉLETKÉPEK (1846–1848). By Anna Tamás. Irodalomtörténeti Füzetek, 68. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970. 222 pp. 21 Ft., paper.

The scope of the series in which these two studies appear extends well beyond the narrowly defined limits of literary history suggested by its title. Published under the auspices of the Institute of the Theory of Literature of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the volumes of Irodalomtörténeti Füzetek include essays on the evolution of aesthetic thinking and style in Hungary (no. 71, on the interpretations of tragedy around the turn of the century), the impact of *Geistesgeschichte* on Hungarian historiography and literary history between the two world wars (no. 70, on the cultural journal *Minerva*), the significance of less well known individual writers (no. 73, on Zsigmond Justh and Minka Czóbel; no. 74, on György Sárközi), the tools of teaching literature (no. 72, on handbooks of literary history in sixteenth to eighteenth-century Hungary), or the foreign echo of Hungarian poetry (no. 60, on John Bowring's translations). Occasionally, new source material is made available—for example, the letters written by Baron József Eötvös to his close friend, the legal scholar and historian Ladislav Szalay (no. 55).

Like the last item, the studies by Barla and Tamás contribute some valuable data to our understanding of the personalities and atmosphere of Hungary's great Age of Reforms. Whereas the first describes the genesis of the major ideas of Zsigmond Kemény prior to 1849, the second focuses on the literary-political struggles of the last two years of the pre-March era by analyzing the changes that occurred in the development of the finest literary journal of the period, *Életképek* (*Genre Paintings*).

Publicist, novelist, and politician, Kemény, a member of an impoverished aristocratic family, hailed from Transylvania. In his formative years at the Calvinist College of Nagyenyed he became imbued with the enlightened and romantic liberalism mediated in part by his professors, the neo-Kantian philosopher Samuel Köteles and the legal scholar and natural scientist Károly Szász, and in part by the writings of Széchenyi, Wesselényi, and the admirer of America, Sándor Bölöni Farkas. During the early 1840s Kemény was a major figure of the Transylvanian opposition favoring progressive reform and union with Hungary proper. In spirit close to Széchenyi at first, he joined the small intellectual elite of centralists led by Eötvös and moved to Pest in early 1847. Independent-minded and widely read, Kemény was no uncritical follower of either Széchenyi or Kossuth. No revolutionary republican and well aware of the realities of European power politics, he supported the radical transformation of Hungary in 1848, even going along, albeit reluctantly, with the antidynastic war when there seemed to be no other alternative in defense of Magyarom. At the end of the year, however, he began to grope, along with other politicians, for a peaceful compromise with Austria, which appeared to him a more realistic solution than the complete separation advocated by Kossuth. It is the merit of Barla's study, and an achievement of recent Hungarian historiography, that the political profile of one of Hungary's greatest writers, distorted by the "dogmatic" writings of the 1950s, has been carefully restored in accordance with the requirements of scholarship and historical truth.

The author of the monograph on *Életképek* appears to be more mindful of the

need for *partinost'* and revolutionary romanticism in literature, and this makes her meticulously researched work occasionally less convincing. Taking as her point of departure the concept of "Young Hungary"—a term used by Metternich in the 1830s in reference to the rebellious and anti-establishment attitudes of the most progressive segment of the dietal youth—she contends, as Gyula Szekfű and Gyula Farkas did in the interwar period, that the democratic elements of the political program of "Young Hungary" began to take shape when the poet Sándor Petőfi and his circle, the Society of Ten, managed to give new direction to Hungarian literary life. This occurred in the spring of 1846. By the end of the year Petőfi and his plebeian friends found an outlet for their writings in *Életképek*, whose original publisher and editor was closely associated with the leaders of the Hungarian opposition. The appointment of the twenty-two-year-old novelist Mór Jókai, a chief promoter of "Young Hungary" and Petőfi's close friend, as editor of the liberal literary weekly in June 1847 was a further stimulus for the spread of radical ideas on the pages of the journal, which thus became one of the harbingers of Hungary's revolutionary transformation in 1848.

In addition to Petőfi, Jókai, the poets János Arany, Mihály Tompa, and a Pléiade of lesser writers, "Young Hungary" was composed of the most progressive wing of the university youth led by Pál Vasvári. Instead of putting patches on the worn sandal of the fatherland, to use Petőfi's imagery, this truly liberal and daring elite intended to dress it up from top to toe in new clothes. In accordance with this program, the hitherto underprivileged people was expected to take its place in both literature and politics. To show the trend toward democratization, a major portion of the monograph (pp. 36–127) is devoted to a detailed evaluation of the ideologically oriented articles which appeared in *Életképek* from 1846 until the March revolution of 1848. The section dealing with materials published by the journal on philosophical, social, and aesthetic questions gives a valuable insight into domestic literary-cultural debates revealing also the reaction of liberal and progressive Hungarian literati to European intellectual trends. Subsequent analyses of the columns on poetry, fiction, and miscellanea (pp. 157–211) are also informative. The concluding three pages contain a brief sketch of the revolutionary events on *Életképek* (which ceased publication at the end of the year) mirroring, in the opinion of the author, the "whole development" (*italics in original*) of the revolution as suggested by the split between Jókai and Petőfi (who became coeditor in late April) and also within the ranks of "the youths of March," some of whom persisted in their "plebeian-revolutionary consistency," while others took the road of the "renunciation of principles and of liberal opportunism."

GEORGE BARANY
University of Denver

A MAGYAR NÉP SZABADSÁGKÜZDELME 1848–49—BEN. By R. A. Averbuch [*Averbukh*]. Translated from the Russian by József Perényi. Edited by Erzsébet Andics. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970. 190 pp. 32 Ft.

The editor has attempted to condense and arrange the most important elements of Averbuch's numerous monographs on the Hungarian Revolution into a coherent pattern, with only limited success. Chapter 1, for example, is entitled "The Hungarian Revolution and the Vienna Uprising of 1848," yet events in Hungary and developments in Vienna are connected only in a superficial way and are left largely