

Lajos Nagy: the „Man in Revolt” against Psychoanalysis, and a „Man Fleeing” from and into the psychoanalytic spell¹

The Patient and Confessor (Part 1.)

György Péter Hárs

harsgyp@gmail.com

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Abstract

In this first part of my study on Lajos Nagy I deal with his personal and intellectual relationships with the representatives of different schools of psychoanalysis, with the attempts of his psychoanalytical treatment, and with his attitude towards the institution of psychoanalysis as academic science. Besides, through the life and thinking of Nagy we can get acquainted with most of the significant figures of Hungarian psychoanalysis.

Kulcsszavak: pszichoanalízis, Ferenczi, Gartner, Hollós, viszonyok

Keywords: psychoanalysis, Ferenczi, Gartner, Hollós, relationships

I think, that - with the exception of the possibly few psychoanalysts (amongst them the Hungarian ones) who are familiar with the Hungarian literature of the first half of the 20th century- the name of Lajos Nagy may be quite unknown in connection with the psychoanalysis, unless someone had read Géza Róheim's article about patriotism published in the American Imago in 1950 (Róheim, 1950). I would be glad to learn, that this assumption of mine was incorrect.

In his study Róheim quotes repeatedly from one of Lajos Nagy's sociographical works, *The Mask of a Village* (Nagy, 1937) and analyses it in detail. Róheim argues: „The author has been analyzed and as far as I know this is the only book in which a European (or American) village is looked at from the psychoanalytic point of view.” (Róheim 1950, p. 11.) This statement alone is strong enough to indicate Nagy's contribution to Psychoanalysis. But this is not the only link between the Hungarian writer and the Psychoanalysis.

Lajos Nagy (1883-1954) was a pioneering author in the renewal of the Hungarian prose in the last century. Besides his autobiographical writings (Nagy, 1949, 1954, 1965, 1989) he published several romans, novels, sociographies and journal articles. His diaries and correspondence have not been published yet but they are available for research in the manuscript repository of the Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum (Petőfi Literary Museum) in Budapest. Nagy „considered himself a socialist, but not a ‘socialist writer’” –emphasises Czigány – and this is „a subtle distinction” (Czigány 1984). I offer another distinction as well, that is Lajos Nagy was not simply a socialist, but a freudomarxist thinker, just as his younger compemporary: a poet and a friend of his, Attila József. While Attila József's psychoanalytic experiences and psychoanalytic readings of his work are well-known², profoundly scrutinized and documented, this side of Lajos Nagy's life and work is

¹ In the title of my paper I combined the titles of Lajos Nagy's two autobiographical works: "The Man in revolt" and "A man fleeing" (or A Man in Flight) (Nagy 1949, 1954).

² Attila József was treated by several Hungarian psychoanalysts, amongst them Róbert Bak (1908-1974), Edit Gyömrői (1896-1987), Samu Rapaport (1888-1970), Géza Róheim (1891-1953), possibly József Mihály Eisler (1882-1944), Pál Gartner and István Kulcsár. (About Gartner and Kulcsár find more details later.) As we see, amongst his analysts there were equally

considerably neglected. It is the more surprising if we consider that he was also an associate member of the Hungarian Association of Independent Medical Analysts.

I. Personal circle of acquaintances. From Lajos Nagy's writings, diaries, correspondence and his editorial work we can get acquainted with the most important and famous figures of the first decades of the Hungarian psychoanalysis. Some of them were his analysts, others were his friends and there are some with whom – as far as we know – he had no personal contact, he only mentions them tangentially. The latter is the case of the foreign psychoanalysts as well. But we can use another form of classification to get a clearer picture: in his works he mentions the names of Freudians, Adlerians, as well as Stekelians. First I offer a list of the Hungarian psychoanalysts who were alluded to in his writings and diaries in alphabetical order, and temporarily without comments. They are: Endre Almássy³, Imre Décsi⁴, Sándor Feldmann⁵, Zelma Ferber⁶, Sándor Ferenczi, Pál Gartner⁷, István Hollós⁸, Vilma Kovács⁹, István Kulcsár¹⁰, Lajos Lévy¹¹, István Máday¹²,

Freudians, Stekelians and Adlerians too.

³ Endre Almássy (1900-1956): member of the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society. He attended Ferenczi's lectures in 1919 as a medical student and was trained by Vilma Kovács. From 1931 he was the head physician of the clinic belonging to the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society. He was also the president of the Society from 1941 to 1947. (The cause of the change were the Anti-Jewish laws, as Almássy was not a Jew, he was regarded as an Aryan.) His circle of friends included many Hungarian writers, such as Sándor Márai, Dezső Kosztolányi and Frigyes Karinthy.

⁴ Imre Décsi (originally Deutsch, 1881-1944?): neurologist, psychiatrist, publicist. Member of the Hungarian Association of Independent Medical Analysts.

⁵ Sándor Feldmann (1890-1972): psychoanalyst, from 1919 to 1923 member of the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society. In 1925 he founded the Hungarian division of the Association of Independent Medical Analysts and was the first president of it.

⁶ Zelma Ferber (?-?): member of the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society.

⁷ Pál Gartner (1900-1975): psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, member of the Association of Independent Medical Analysts. From 1936 to 1939 he was the head physician, rector of the Swartzer Institute, between 1945 and 1946 the head physician, rector of the Országos Elmefigyelő Intézet (National Institute for Mind Monitoring), from 1946 honorary professor, till 1948 the president of the Medical Union. He was a contributor to Rezső Szirmai's book titled *Fasiszta lelkek* (Fascist Minds) as an interviewer of the war criminals (Szirmai 1946.).

⁸ István Hollós (1872-1957): psychiatrist, psychoanalyst. Founding member and vice-president of the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society in 1913, between 1933 and 1941 its president.

⁹ Vilma Kovács (1880?-1940): *Alice Bálint's mother, Ferenczi's closest colleague.*

¹⁰ István Kulcsár (1901-1986): gynecologist, individualpsychologist, the poet, Attila József's friend (1905-1937), member of the Hungarian Association for Individual Psychology. In 1950 he emigrated to Israel, became the director of the psychiatric hospital in Akkó, later the leader of the psychiatric department of Tel Hasomer (the clinic of the medical university of Tel-Aviv). He carried out the psychiatric assesment of Adolf Eichmann.

¹¹ Lajos Lévy (1875-1961): *physician, psychoanalyst. He was one of the five founding members of the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society, Ferenczi's friend, and Freud's medical adviser. During World War II, he gave medical help to people in the cellars of the bombarded Budapest. He was not only a friend but the doctor of a lot of famous Hungarian writers like Gyula Krúdy or Sándor Bródy. Krúdy characterizes him as „the doctor of writers” (Krúdy 1963, p. 173.).*

¹² István Máday (1879-1959): psychiatrist, psychoanalyst. In 1910 he was a member of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society on the proposal of Adler, but he resigned in 1911, together with Adler. He was the founder and the president of the Hungarian Association for Individual Psychology (1927).

Lili Pataki¹³, Erzsébet Révész¹⁴, Gyula Szüts¹⁵ and Lipót (Leopold) Szondi. The contexts of the references of these names are varying in time and they are dependent upon the type of the text.

From the listed analysts „Freudians” were: Almássy, Ferber, Ferenczi, Hollós, Vilma Kovács, Lévy, Erzsébet Révész and Szüts. Feldmann also started in the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society, but he was expelled in 1923 and in 1925 he founded the Stekelian Association of Independent Medical Analysts. Décsi, Gartner, Lili Pataki and also Lajos Nagy, himself were members of this association. Kulcsár and Máday were Adlerians, members of the Hungarian Association for Individual Psychology. Szondi was implicitly a „Szondian”.

Lajos Nagy was surely treated – psychoanalytically as well – with neurotic symptoms from the early 1910s all along his life. The first document we know is his letter to the director of the national Betegségélyző és Balesetbiztosító Pénztár (National Fund for Illness Benefit and Accident Insurance) from 1911. Nagy writes: „The cause of all my failures and of all the misfortune that has hitherto befallen me is an extraordinarily serious, complicated neurosis and some other ailments and furthermore the financial misery. The certificate attached to my application for Illness Benefit [...] verifies my condition. It is written by Dr. Imre Décsi, an employee of your company, who have treated me gratis on a nearly daily basis for months driven by pure altruistic goodwill. My illness dates back a long time. [...] It can be verified by Dr. Sándor Ferenczi, a registered doctor with your company, and Dr. Imre Décsi [...] it is also true that by now I have recovered from both ailments. It can be corroborated both by Dr. Ferenczi and Dr. Décsi.” (Nagy 1911, pp. 44-45)

Besides its biographical revelations this letter is also interesting from the perspective of the history of the Hungarian psychoanalysis¹⁶ from at least three aspects. 1. As far as we know this is the first time when Nagy mentions the name of Ferenczi. We are two years before the founding of the Hungarian association in 1913 and three years after the beginnings of Ferenczi's relationship with Freud. But we do not know if Ferenczi spoke about psychoanalysis to Nagy nor we know details of their personal relationship. 2. In the letter Ferenczi and Décsi appear as colleagues at the same workplace. However, they were rivals at that time as doctors with psychoanalytical interest. Both of them became acquainted with psychoanalysis around 1908, maybe Décsi earlier than Ferenczi. This rivalisation played a role in the fact that Ferenczi did not want Décsi to be a member of the Hungarian association.¹⁷ 3. We know from the letter that it was Décsi who treated Nagy at that time. But we know nothing about the specifics of the treatment. Could it be a psychoanalytic one?

Our next data stem from the autobiographical book of Lajos Nagy, *A Man Fleeing* (or *The man in flight*) (Nagy 1984). It reveals that Erzsébet Révész was his first analyst. Although we do not know exactly the time of the analysis, we may deduce from this reference and from the date of Révész' death that it happened sometimes between 1921 and 1923. His connection to her was Ferenczi, of course. Nagy remembers: „I suffered from various symptoms. [...] One of these days that I was feeling so miserable, I run into Sándor Ferenczi. He said that my symptoms were of neurotic origin and I should leave the prescribed diet. 'Eat cabbage rolls this very day' – he offered with laugh. Well, I did take his advice and I gorged myself on cabbage rolls that night [...]. My stomach problems had already eased for the following day. [...] While talking about

¹³ *Lili Pataki* (?-?): psychoanalyst, *Pál Gartner's* wife.

¹⁴ Erzsébet Révész (1887–1923): psychoanalyst, her brother, László Révész (?-1944) was also an analyst. She was friends with Milán Füst, the writer who was Lajos Nagy's close friend.

¹⁵ Gyula Szüts (?-?): neurologist, psychoanalyst, member of the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society.

¹⁶ See more about this: Erős 2011.

¹⁷ Another aspirant for being pioneer in the spreading of psychoanalysis in Hungary was József Brenner, alias Géza Csáth, the writer (1887-1919).

my stomach ailments, Sándor Ferenczi offered something else as well. He sent me to a psychoanalyst, to Dr. Erzsébet Révész, to cure my most acute symptoms. Of my neurosis I enumerate only the symptoms, their variety: anxiety, phobias, mental depression, fatigue, feeling of inferiority. Erzsébet Révész started my treatment, I was going to therapy with her for a year, the length of the treatment was one hour per day, without any results. I have no opinion whether I was incurable or the cure was inefficient. However, I can say that Erzsébet Révész was inexperienced and weak in her profession. Anyhow the hopeless treatment ended because the young doctress had died. She was a very friendly, nice and kind creature, her death is a sorrowful memory for me.” (pp. 117-118)

The next analysis we know he undertook was with Vilma Kovács in 1926 or 1927. The period between the two analysis is not documented from this aspect in the autobiographies and biographies. However, about the therapy with Vilma Kovács we can gather information only from the diaries. Dated the 18th February 1927 we find this note: „Tomorrow analysis which is very unpleasant” (PIM1) Although he does not reveal what was unpleasant about it – the treatment itself, and if so, why; or was it only about some kind of pressure: the mere fact that he had to go there instead of going somewhere else – in addition he does not identify his analyst, we can infer that it was in fact Vilma Kovács from another note. On the 30th of December 1940 – the year Vilma Kovács died – Lajos Nagy writes: „The most blissful period of my life were those 8 days I spent in Vienna eighter in '26 or '27 – I do not remember exactly when. However, at that time I was in analysis with Mrs. Kovács. Mrs. Kovács is one of my saddest memories. I loved her and I feel sorry for her. Poor woman. I would like her to be alive and would like to kiss her, I would like to kiss her hand. But then – it is a belated fervor. Anyway it is not my fault that we were unsuccessful, but it was hers, she was weak for analysis.”(PIM1) Another entry, also from this year (19.12.1940), suggests that Nagy wanted Kovács to be the analyst of his wife as well. It is very surprising considering the last words of the previous note: „[I/She/It] [?] should have been analysed. However, no one undertook the task. I was not able to accomplish much with the analysts, in spite of my literary merits and my personal acquaintance with Mrs. Kovács, Hollós, Révész and Almássy.” (PIM1) If Nagy speaks about his wife here – this is not clear from the context – it is not understandable why he mentions Hollós, who – as we will see – was in fact his wife's analyst. (Another interpretation may be – although it is surprising, but not ungrounded – that the subject of the entry is Nagy himself, and it refers to his wish to be an analyst. Anyway many of his writer friends, amongst them Karinthy as well as Milán Füst, also flirted with this possibility. Some – later cited – passages of his autobiographical books seem to confirm this interpretation. It is also possible that the note refers to one of the symptoms Nagy suffered from – but if it would be so, the cause of rejecting his analysis is not understandable.) The last time he mentions Vilma Kovács in the diaries is an entry dated the 17th of February 1941 – in a peculiar context characteristic to Lajos Nagy's social interest. „I have to note that in individualpsychology I have read about public wrong and social measures. Not only I have never read about this in psychoanalysis, but also Vilma Kovács for instance denied its existence and importance. Hollós – during a later analysis – acknowledged it, Feldmann too.” (PIM1)

The next analysis Nagy underwent was most likely with Hollós indeed. From the time between his analysis with Kovács and the analytic sessions with Hollós we have no documented information regarding to any type of psychoanalytic treatment. But we know about a peculiar interlude during this time, which happened at the Siesta Szanatórium¹⁸ (Sanitarium Siesta) in 1928, and it does in fact confirm my suspicion about Nagy's inclination to become a psychoanalyst himself. „I have not resorted to any medical treatment because I knew that the doctors were powerless against neurosis. Rather I meddled in the healing of hysterical women, the illness I saw through well. However, the doctors asked me to leave their patients alone, let them

¹⁸ *Siesta Szanatórium* (formerly *Swartzer Szanatórium*, founded in 1852) was a patient-oriented clinic in Budapest sensitive for new healing methods. Doctors with psychoanalytical interest worked there as well. Several famous Hungarian poets were treated there, among them Gyula Juhász (1883-1937), Mihály Babits (1883-1941) and Attila József.

be treated with medicines, and not to instigate them against the conservative treatment. There was – for example – an already not quite young, abnormally fat woman amongst the patients, who was still a virgin, but she turned semi-mad because of her unsatisfied erotic wishes. She was kept on injections instead of offering her proper help and support to lead her in the right direction.” (Nagy 1984, p. 247.)

Hollós appears in Lajos Nagy's diaries and correspondence in 1932 – however as the analyst of Nagy's wife. The beginnings and the specific date of the acquaintance which subsequently turned into friendship is unknown. We have three documents from the 1930s: two letters written by Lajos Nagy to his wife and one postcard from Hollós to Nagy. The first letter to his wife is dated 08.04.1932. Perhaps it is about the beginning of the wife's treatment. „I have intentionally not written about the Hollós-issue in my last letter, because if someone must be forced, it is not a good case. [...] I had not written about it, but I kept in mind that the visit was due on the 4th of April. Since you do not mention a single word about the matter, I have a hunch that the evil won and you did not go. If it is true, it is a very big problem. First of all because I do not believe that Hollós would be willing to talk to you in the future. [...] Well, write me, I am curious about this Hollós-issue, but, unfortunately, I am 99 percent sure that you did not go.” (PIM2, score V.4340/48/3) However, Nagy's wife did go to Hollós, and the treatment started. Three months later, on 20.07.1932 Nagy's trust and eager words has already been diminished: „You are getting on with your analysis very well, an example of it is the angelic way you can word some things, like: suck up to the tracks. When we are ready with the analysis, then you will not write such things. But it is better to write than not to write out of pure prudery.” (PIM2, score V.4340/48/9)

We have no information about the later progress of the treatment, nor about the results of it. About Hollós we hear again four years later, from a postcard, dated the 26th of August 1936, mailed from the High Tatra. „With kind regards, Dr. Hollós” (PIM2, without score) I suppose that the intonation of the postcard, the fact that it was written during a period of recreation, that is from the private sphere and the sender is the „doctor” himself, let us conclude that the relationship between Hollós and Lajos Nagy had turned into a friendship by this time. But from the end of 1940 it became an analyst-analysand relationship as well.

From December 1940 to the end of August 1944 – with a break in 1942 and 1943 – Hollós is one of the protagonists of Nagy's diary. One part of the notes is a cry for help of an ill person: „Dr. Hollós. I should call him.” (PIM1, 05.12.1940.); „Must speak with Dr. Hollós.” (PIM1, 27.02.1941.); „2 a.m. must go to Hollós. New trouble. My wife has turned against me.” (PIM1, 08.03.1941.); „Morning, waiting for Hollós.” (PIM1, 18.08.1944.), and three times in one note: „Call Hollós.”, „Or: Berta must go to Hollós.”¹⁹, „I should call Hollós” (PIM1, 24.08.1944.).

There are also notes which are about the treatment itself. It seems that it was the most intensive in August 1944. We can see an almost daily contact. It must be mentioned that we are during World War II, when personal (psychical) tragedies are tightly interwaved with the tragedy of Hungary – inside Budapest as well. In chronological order we can read this: „I have been at Dr. Hollós. Yesterday, at 1. He bore himself very well, he was very clever. It seems that he was right in everything. It is unnecessary to force independent views regarding the illness. As a cause – besides analytic causes – he determined abstinency.” (PIM1, 08.08.1944.) „I have been at Hollós, he treated me analytically. This had a good effect on me and calmed me down, raised hopes in me. I have felt myself quite well till the evening.” (PIM1, 14.08.1944.) Something must have happened after this, because five days later the trusting and optimistic tone of the notes turned desperate and dubious. „So to speak, I have reclined upon Hollós. The sense that I am not left to myself, that I am treated by him, helps me. But what would this be without the illusion? Will he be always my support without whom I am not able to live? [...] from where will I get help, if perhaps one day he is not

¹⁹ Berta: the nickname of Boris Szegedi (1895-1967), authoress, the wife of Lajos Nagy.

going to be there any more for me? Some help is always needed.” (PIM1, 19.08.1944.) We know that in 1944 Hollós, together with his wife was dragged away by the the Hungarian Nazis to the Danube, to kill them, but he escaped. These notes may have been written in those days. This is imaginable also because the next entries mentioning Hollós are calmer in their mood. „Analytical treatment must be continued, perhaps another therapy.”(PIM1, 23.08.1944.) „I have slept till the morning. There was no trouble. I have spoken with Hollós by phone. [...] The excitement was smaller because I can go to Hollós in the afternoon. [...] During the analysis I was protected, so I felt at ease.” (PIM1, 25.08.1944.) The last note about the analysis: „I would need consolation, calmness. The trouble is that I can rarely go to Hollós. [...] So, what I must ask Hollós is if I have paralysis. Or some other insanity.” (PIM1, 26.08.1944.)

As we see, the war also influenced the process of analysis. This aspect leads us along – out of the context of the analysis and back to their friendship. In the quoted note from 23.08.1944 – maybe referring to the fortunate escape of Hollós – Nagy also writes this: „Perhaps Hollós is thinking that he will be an exception. I wish he was.” (PIM1) This motive of the carefully protecting friendship will return in the Cellar Diary (Nagy, 1965) as well. The diary is about the first weeks of 1945. „But I wonder what happened with my friends? With Dr. Hollós [...]?” (Nagy, 1965, 50.) „I think of dr. Hollós a lot. He is such an excellent man, that he must have luck as well. I have faith in his good luck.” (Nagy, 1965, 61.) „I said that in a house in the Hernád street, where Dr. H. lives too, a typhus-case happened.” (Nagy, 1965, 70.) Lajos Nagy's intuitions were right again. Hollós survived the war.

Another type of notes reveals some details about the atmosphere of the psychoanalytical life in Hungary, and Nagy's relationship with other psychoanalysts and also their relationships to each other. First something about the „civil” relationship between Nagy and Hollós. „Yesterday I was at Dr. Hollós. We were talking about a lot of things. [...] Hollós read one or two details from a Nietzsche-book. As I saw, the title of the book is: Ecce Homo. Some points were against antisemitism. Others against Germans. Hollós is biased in this question as well. But obviously I am biased too, and kindly sympathize with him.” (PIM1, 11.12.1940.) And when speaking about Völgyesy²⁰, Nagy thinks about Hollós again. „A 600 pages book of Dr Ferenc Völgyessy [sic!] will be published. [...] If István Hollós wrote a book, it wouldn't be published. And, supposing that a book of Hollós would be published, the public would not buy it, like that of Völgyessy. It seems, the triumph of folly is perfect.” (PIM1, 05.12.1940.)

And we have two other notes revealing that Hollós's opinion about the works of other analysts was very important for Nagy – although or especially as they are from another school of psychoanalysis – on the one hand, and that Nagy functioned as a personal clip between the different tendencies on the other hand. „In the evening I read Máday. I found in it something good as well. A confused issue. [...] I cannot write about individualpsychology, it would be a lot of work. I would speak about this matter both with Hollós and Gartner. As I see, it is more social than psychoanalysis. So I found something nice in it at least.” (PIM1, 17.02.1941.) And: „Yesterday I was at Gartner, I took him the book of Hollós.”²¹ (PIM1, 08.03.1941.) And from the diary we also know that Nagy Lajos, being at the nadir of his illness, on the day when he

²⁰ Ferenc Völgyesy (1895-1967): physician, worldwide acknowledged Hungarian pioneer of hypnotic healing. According to some sources he was the „chief hypnotist“ of Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmler (Lockot 2002, 268.) Other sources reports about that he was one of those who applied hypnosis during the interrogation of cardinal József Mindszenty (Streatfeild 2007, 152..). The book Nagy refers to is Everything is the Soul (Völgyesy 1940). About this book Nagy notes: „I am reading from the book of Ferenc Völgyessy (sic!): everything is the soul. He may be just the real swindler. What kind a book! A terrible set of ignorance, stupidity and vileness.” (PIM1, 1940.12.17.) This is not the only place where Nagy mentions Völgyesy. Just before the publication of the book, before reading it, in the quoted note from 05. 12. 1940. Nagy already fudges: „Everything is the soul – this is the title. What a set of stupidity it may be! I do say – knowing Völgyesi (sic!).” From this remark we can know that Lajos Nagy knew Völgyesy personally as well. This idea seems to be reinforced by another note (PIM1, 17.12.1940 – quoted later), where he speaks about someone among his friends who is Völgyesy's patient.

²¹ Hollós 1928.

wished to reach Hollós three times as well, thought about other help too. He gathered names of doctors with addresses and phone numbers, amongst them: „Kulcsár István – Katona József u. 41. – 122-981, Máday István – Petőfi Sándor u. 11. – 189-688, Szondi Lipót – Anker köz 1. – 427-158” (PIM1, 24.08.1944)

In this crisis and unsettlement Nagy's doubt in the efficiency of the analysis and in himself as well played a great role. „But what is it about this damned neurosis? Why does not invent someone at last the mode of curing it? How good it would be if a part of the brain was identified somewhere, where it is dwelling and it could be cut out. [...] Things must be so far as psychoanalysis tells it. But this only comes near to reality. And does not heal the illness.” (PIM1, 03.08.1944.) In spite of all these, Nagy makes up his mind for continuing the analysis. „The analytic treatment must be continued, perhaps another therapy. [...] in analysis I relieve myself soon and then the big troubles do not come to my mind, I do not speak about them. I insist more on illusions and dislike to get into wrong things, my bad memories, love, delusion do not come out [...] It is not possible to live together with this illness. It is not only unmeritorious, but impossible. Is healing possible?” (PIM1, 23.08.1944.)

The last analyst of Nagy whom we are informed of is Pál Gartner. His role in the life of Nagy as a psychoanalyst is only known by Zsuzsa Gordon, the daughter of Gartner, who states that Gartner treated Attila József and Lajos Nagy as well.²² If it was so, it must have been after the war because in the diaries Gartner plays another role, and in the autobiographies he is not even mentioned. On the list for help cited above, the name of Gartner is not even present. As it is missing from another list in the diary, when – before his analysis with Hollós – Nagy is thinking about the potential analysts for himself because of problems with drinking, fear and restlessness: „I wonder what to do against this. Shall I speak with Máday? Or with István Kulcsár? Kulcsár may be a Jew as well. Or with Gyula Szüts?” (PIM1, 03.08.1944.)

Gartner appears in the diaries as a friend or a member of a closer acquaintanceship, and almost always with his wife, Lili Pataki. However, the picture is not too favourable for them. It seems that there was an accustomed circle consisting of the Nagy couple, the Gartner couple and the Sztrókay couple²³ who regularly met each other. The name of Gartner probably first occurs in one letter of Nagy to his wife, without date (PIM2, V.4340/48/34). In this letter he reports about two books he read, one by Gartner and another by Kulcsár. But there is no allusion to personal connections. In his diaries Nagy first mentions Gartner in 1940, with some irony: „I have phoned to dr. Gartner to remind him of our meeting on Saturday evening. Gartner said that they would be only late, at about 10 at Mándies' house²⁴. The so called analysts are incurable, they take on so much work that can not be done well and that is already harmful.” (PIM1, 13. 12. 1940.) After the meeting Nagy writes a detailed and long note about the party which turned to an affair. „A nasty, uneasy case happened at Sztrókays' place. Teréz Mándi was keeping herself busy with asking if Gartner knew or not that she was Völgyesi's [sic!] patient, and if he knew about it, then from who he knew it, that at last she came up with the case. Then a terrible ruction took place. It turned out that Gartner knew nothing, that Berta had told the thing to Lili, that is to Mrs. Gartner. Berta got embarrassingly confused, she was ashamed. The whole company wanted to amerce her in sin, they wanted to exult over her. And then I got into a thoroughly uneasy situation. But I was flooded with anger and I got at, I dressed the whole gang down and said that it was enough, they should stop it because I was disinclined to participate in such a dirty and dumb affair, I had to defend my wife and I was going to protect her and I demanded them to shut up. Everybody was surprised, they would have shut up, but Lili kept talking. She was arrogant and aggressive, she attacked my wife, wanted to heighten the triumph because she is a saint, she had not gossiped, she is a doctor, never speaking about her patients, bespeak nothing to noone. So this is the confused frame of the events, and supposedly I was rude, Lili got sore

²² Cf. teremtuccse.blogspot.com/.../boldog-szuletesnapot-gordon-zsuzsa.html

²³ Kálmán Sztrókay (1886–1956): writer, science propagator, translator.

²⁴ Teréz Mándi (Mándy, Mandl, 1906–1978): journalist, the wife of Kálmán Sztrókay.

enough. It is all right. However we will dismantled our connection just as with the Sztrókays, as with the Gartners. [...] Gartner proved to be dumb and charlatan [...]. Lili Pataki was astonishingly cheeky, Gartner is a liar, a worldly, advertising, handlés [Handleh] mislearned Stekelist, a charlatan, who does not understand analysis [...]. Lili Pataki is nice and a whore of the worst kind, she had a liaison with an old teacher of her, belike she even has, as Mrs. Gartner, she professes prostitution, she shows off her dresses and jewels, she is interested in nothing but whoring. Well, this company reinvestigated there and hold a court. [...] Lili! [...] She, who dares to 'analyse' – without being previously trained! She regards psychoanalysis as silliness. Mr. Gartner brings women under analysis to himself, the young men to Lili.” (PIM1, 17. 12. 1940.) Some days later Nagy notes new informations, but now he is more forgiving. „I came to know from Sztrókay that ladyship Teri was the patient of Lili as well. Gartner-like bulk manufacture. Well, there is some humbug in this. However, both of them are defensible.” (PIM1, 19. 12. 1940.)

We do not know how the relationship of Gartner and Lajos Nagy was formed thereafter but the other two notes in the diaries are without passion, only with some irony. We can find only two records, from 1941. The first is about articles that Nagy was asked to write: „I owe with several critiques to acquaintances. [...] Dr. Gartner was in the shop yesterday. We chatted so long that it turned out at last that he was writing a book. Maybe he wants a critique too? Woe!”²⁵ (PIM1, 01. 03. 1941). The other note is about two themes. We can know – as from other writing of Nagy as well – that the psychoanalysts from different schools were interested in the work and read the books of each other. Besides, we get a picture about how the psychoanalytical „business” was going on at Gartner – according to Lajos Nagy. „Yesterday I was at Gartner's home, I took him the book of Hollós. Their krajzleráj²⁶ ocularly goes well. Patients come and go. Lili has a nice face. And she is clever. This plate stands under their portal: Dr. Lili Mária Pataki. So, this too.”²⁷ (PIM1, 08. 03. 1941.)

Other psychoanalysts played a role in the life and work of Nagy not as his therapists, but as people important for him from various aspects. We can know from only a (formerly cited) note that Nagy was in „personal acquaintance” with Almássy. (PIM1, 19.12.1940.) This connection must have been not too close because the name of Almássy had never more occurred in the writings, correspondence or diary notes of Nagy.

The name of Gyula Szüts is also only mentioned in 1944, during one of the mental crises of Nagy, when he was thinking about finding a proper analyst for himself. The name of Szondi was put down on one occasion in the notes, in the same context. (PIM1, 24.08.1944) The list Nagy made contains the names of Kulcsár and Máday as worth considering, the two individualpsychologists are to be found in an other quoted record. (PIM1, 03.08.1944; 24.08.1944) The mentioning of their names – as Adlerians – may be surprising in this context knowing the ambivalent attitude of Lajos Nagy to individualpsychology.

But before briefly discussing this topic I must mention another important figure of psychoanalysis. The fact that Nagy knew Lajos Lévy and their relationship was a friendly one we know only from a note of the Cellar Diary, from 14.01.1945. It is worth to be cited in toto, because it adds important details – not to the

²⁵ Nagy set up a bookstore in 1940. The note contains a complete list of the books to be reviewed by Nagy: „One Sztrókay 2 Fazekas, 3 Leleszy 4 Máday.” „Fazekas”: maybe Anna Fazekas (1905-1973): writer, editor and teacher. If this is the case we can not identify her book. Another possibility is that Nagy speaks about the book of István Fazekas, titled *Az új életelixír története* (The History of the new Elixir of Life), published in 1940 (Fazekas 1940). István Fazekas (1895-?): physician, paediatrist. „Leleszy”: Béla Leleszy (born Kovách, 1887-1977) alias Béla Lellei: writer, publicist, one of the pioneers of the Hungarian science fiction. We can not know which book of him Nagy referred to, because in 1940 he published 10 books as well. We could not surely detect which book of Gartner Nagy thought here of. In 1940 Gartner published only the second edition of a book from the year before (Gartner 1940).

²⁶ „Krajzlráj”: a Jiddish word for little grocery stores in Middle Europe even in the first decades of the last century.

²⁷ „the book of Hollós”: from the date of the note we can suppose that it is Hollós 1940.

figure of Nagy and his relation to psychoanalysis and analysts, but – to the figure of Lévy, who used to be mentioned before in the history of psychoanalysis as „the doctor of writers” and „the curative adviser of Freud”. „Who has been wounded, God knows how long must wait for medical help. However, dr. L. L. who I have not found at home for days, is going to the cellars all day and visits patients. I met him at last on the street. He just came out from a cellar of the Nagymező street. He operated a traumatic leg. The operation happened at the light of four candles. The wound originated from a bomb splinter. When he was called to the patient, the wound had already been in a horrible state. He had to take out the splinters and scrape out the purulence from an infected, rotting wound. The binding itself lasted for two hours. He also told me that recently a mortar-bomb had exploded near him. The blast had pecked him at the ground and he had even been wounded.” (Nagy 1965, p. 82.)

The names of Kulcsár and Máday are mentioned only in the diaries and Kulcsár is also mentioned in a letter. Let us start with Kulcsár. Nagy Lajos writes about him in the same undated letter to his wife that I had cited in connection with Gartner (PIM2, V.4340/48/34). I think this is the first known time where Nagy refers to individualpsychology. „I have read the book of Dr. Kulcsár. Conclusion: I do not accept individualpsychology in its entirety. [...] It is surprising in the describing details at many places. But the key to the phenomena is absent.”²⁸

The name of Máday occurs – yet in the diary – first in a reference to a book again. „The Pantheon²⁹ publishes one book of Dr. István Máday as well. Freud, of course, is not coming out.” (PIM1, 05.12.1940)³⁰ And Lajos Nagy starts reading the book soon – and, as we will see, it became a daily reading for him. „I have read the book of Máday – individualpsychology. It seems to be a great bullshit. This stands on the cover: Marosy Máday István. Well, from Maros, long live! I note that his preface is 'kind enough'.” (PIM1, 09.02.1941) Next day Nagy puts a note about this theme again: „Last night I was reading Máday. The whole book seems a rubbish. Neither the books of Freud, nor those of Ferenczy [sic!] had ever made similar effect on me. – The problem of the book and of individualpsychology in general is only that it wants to know more than possible. And it does know, it knows everything about the psyche, but painfully misconceivedly. The whole is full of arbitrary statements.” (PIM1, 10.02.1941) Some days later Nagy's opinion is just the same: „I have read some from Máday. He is henceforward antipathetic. Unlike Freud, ind[ividual]psyc[ology] is very rakish, unworthy, smarty. About Stecker [sic!] there is not even a word in it. Leastwise I have not seen the name of Stecker. This is also not right.” But later in the same note, Nagy reports about another impression made on him not by the content of Máday's book but by the personality of Máday – as he perceived it from the book. „Marosi Máday István [Stephan Máday von Marosi]! The general usage of title of gentility should be introduced. Idevalósi és odavalósi bugacy [Von Here and von There von Bugac³¹]. And who has no title, is from nowhere, so it should be put down: von Nowhere. This would be an original Hungarian thing.”³² (PIM1, 13.02.1941) To understand the passions of Nagy we must know that he is from a very poor family from the boondocks, was born as a chance-child, who had never ever known the person of his father. This personal involvement in the evaluation of the work of Máday is deepening in the next days, when he reads about Máday's opinion about neurotics. „I was reading Máday at night, it is disgusting. He blames every wrong on poor neurotics, but the healthy man is an angel. Whereas all the artists, writers, poets are neurotics [...], Flaubert, Gorky [...]. It is stunning that after the work of Freud and as a reaction to it, such a degenerate fantasy

²⁸ For the book mentioned see: Kulcsár 1932.

²⁹ Pantheon was a Hungarian publisher.

³⁰ Cf. The case of Völgyesy versus Hollós in the same note. For the book in question see: Máday 1940.

³¹ Bugac: a little settlement in Hungary.

³² The letter „y” at the end of Hungarian names usually refers to gentility and the origin from a place. The same is true to the titles similar to the German „von”, that is „from” somewhere.

could come about. However, it seems that today noone takes indi[vidual]p[psychology] seriously.” (PIM1, 16.02.1941) This riot has two other roots in the personality of Lajos Nagy. First, he also was a neurotic, and, second, he was also a writer – so the listing of neurotic writers could be continued with his name too.

However, as he moves along in reading, he has been confused just already the next day. „I have read Máday in the evening. I have found good things in it as well. It is a confused case. [...] I cannot write about ind[ividual]p[psychology], it would be too much work.” (PIM1, 17.02.1941) The last quoted sentence of this note seems to refer to the fact that Nagy was asked to write about the book of Máday – but by whom? Maybe by Máday himself? So they must have known each other personally too. A note from two weeks later supports this idea: „I owe with several critiques to acquaintances. [...] Máday.” (PIM1, 01.03.1941)

The book of Máday was so important for Nagy that he felt the need to discuss it with others. „I have read Máday. Kodolányi says: why do you read it? Noone reads individualpsychology any more. And if one does so, then he/she reads Adler.”³³ (PIM1, 15.02.1941) However, Nagy felt it necessary to discuss the book also with psychoanalysts, with Hollós and Gartner (see PIM1, 17.02.1941, quoted formerly). What was confusing for Nagy, was the social aspect of individualpsychology.

However, the evaluation of Adlerism by Nagy had not changed while reading the book. „What Máday tells about the Oedipus-complex, seems not to be right. They were, who did not perceive it! - he says. Of course, not. But it does not mean that it does not exist. They did not want to perceive it and, therefore, were not able not perceive it. József Kovács did not perceive it either.”³⁴ (PIM1, 18.02.1941)

What Nagy perceived in – Hungarian – individualpsychology, as I said, was its commitment to social problems. The journal of the Hungarian Association for Individual Psychology, *Emberismeret* (Understanding the Human) had freudomarxist ideology. Its editors were Kulcsár and Béla Székely³⁵. *Emberismeret* opened the door for writers and poets, who spoke about problems psychoanalysis was also interested in. There were special issues, like *The suicidal* in 1934, *Pro and contra psychoanalysis* in 1935, or *The mass and the Love and instinct-life* in 1936 where lots of Hungarian writers and poets could tell their opinion on the matter in question. In the issue *The suicidal*, for example, beside analysts like Décsi, Gartner, Kulcsár and Székely, Milán Füst, Attila József, János Kodolányi, Dezső Kosztolányi³⁶ and Lőrinc Szabó³⁷ also told their opinion. The situation was similar with the *Pro and contra psychoanalysis*, while here the writings of famous foreign figures – Freud himself, Wilhelm Reich and Thomas Mann – were published as well. The Hungarian psychoanalysis was represented by Kulcsár, Máday and Székely. Among the writers can be found Füst and

³³ János Kodolányi (1899-1969): writer, publicist.

³⁴ „József Kovács”: this is not the name of a real person, but a common term for the everyday layman in Hungarian language.

³⁵ Béla Székely (1891-1955): individualpsychologist, journalist. In 1938 he moved to Argentina.

³⁶ Dezső Kosztolányi (1885-1936): poet, writer.

³⁷ Lőrinc Szabó (1900-1957): poet.

Kodolányi again, and there are György Bálint³⁸, Lajos Kassák³⁹, Aladár Komlós⁴⁰, András Komor⁴¹ and Béla Zsolt⁴².

In the issues *The mass and Love and instinct-life* we can not find articles from wellknown Hungarian writers.

However, Nagy was never among the invited authors – or did not want to publish in the journal, although it can be regarded as a freudomarxist one and serves as a good example for the interweaving of literature and psychoanalysis.⁴³

It is not too surprising however that the name of Feldmann, when mentioned in the diaries – only one time – is in connection with the Adlerians and their social interest (see PIM1, 17.02.1941, quoted twice earlier). Sándor Feldmann and Zelma Ferber were among the authors of the journal *Együtt* (Together), edited by Lajos Nagy. So I will speak about them in the second part of this study, dealing with the (psychoanalytic) content of the journal. And another name also appears in the context of Adlerians, namely in the journal *Emberismeret* – the name of Wilhelm Reich, who substantially impressed Nagy.⁴⁴

II. Two crucial protagonisms in hard times (1913, 1919). Standing up for Ferenczi and psychoanalysis. While Lajos Nagy was often critical of psychoanalysis (in general) and mainly of its vulgar, popularized versions, of the fashion of psychoanalysis, he stood up for it when it was in trouble. There are two articles of Nagy which we can be regarded as first reports in the Hungarian press about two crucial events of the Hungarian psychoanalytical movement.

These writings get a particular shine if we see the contrast in the work of Lajos Nagy between speaking of the „real” psychoanalysis and psychoanalysts and those who spoke about and in the name of it only in order to seem to be up to date. It is enough to cite here three notes: one from the excellent writer Józsi Jenő Tersánszky⁴⁵, a friend of Lajos Nagy, another from Nagy himself and a third one from Milán Füst, also a friend of both of them. The reminiscence of Tersánszky leads us back to the 1910s and paints a vivid picture

³⁸ György Bálint (1906-1943): writer, publicist, critic and translator, a close friend of Attila József and Miklós Radnóti (1909-1944), and a committed devotee and propagator of psychoanalysis. Bálint was analysed by Géza Róheim.

³⁹ Lajos Kassák (1887-1967): writer, poet, translator, graphic artist. One of the greatest pioneers of the Hungarian avantgarde, founder editor of the avantgarde journals *Tett* (Action), *Ma* (Today), *Dokumentum* (Document) and *Munka* (Work).

⁴⁰ Aladár Komlós (Born Kredens, alias Álmos Koral, 1892-1980): writer, poet, translator and literary historian.

⁴¹ András Komor (1898-1944): writer, poet.

⁴² Béla Zsolt (born Steiner, 1898-1949): writer, publicist, politician.

⁴³ The journal *Emberismeret* had altogether six published issues. The first two were not thematical ones. – The relationship between the writers and the editors was not always cloudless, but the causes were not ideological or theoretical ones. For this we can find an example in Füst in connection with the issue *The suicidal*: „Dr. K. I. asked my allowance for the journal ‘Emberismeret’, edited by Dr. István Kulcsár and Béla Székely to publish one of my old articles. [...] I worked it through, I took it and asked to send the royalty to my flat by phone. He: he can pay only after it is published. I accepted this. The article was published in November 1934. [Kulcsár] has not answered my two warnings. Fifty pengő [old Hungarian money] royalty is suitable: the article is five and a half pages and it was an *extremely hard* work. I think his partner must be sued too, because this stands on the cover: edited by Dr. K. I. and Béla Székely [...]. By no means I allow of nothing and will no wait. I think, it is not necessary to write a collection letter.” Shoulder-note of Füst: „He withdrew his statement by phone: let's wait.” (Füst 2002, 289-290. – Füst's italics) Besides materials another possible cause of oppositions might be the reaction or not reacting to the literary works by the analysts, as in the case of Füst, again: „But not even this Béla Székely has written a word about my collection of poems [...]” (Füst 2002, 656.)

⁴⁴ Reich will be discussed in part II of this study among the foreign analysts, who formed Nagy's thinking.

⁴⁵ Józsi Jenő Tersánszky (1888-1969): writer.

both about the significance of psychoanalysis among Hungarian writers of those days and the attitude of himself and Lajos Nagy toward this phenomenon: „The group of the arguers [in the New York Cafe⁴⁶] turned to the question of the role of inhibitions discovered by the Freudian psychoanalysis. Namely that of the interconnections of indigestions, the motions of inhibitions of subsistence and love on the level of the instinct for survival of the species. We two, underhand like criminals, left the gallery and went to the Apolló Cinema to the despair of the serious Muse.” (Tersánszky 2002, 237.) They watched a boxing match movie. Nagy recalls another event characteristic of the state of psychoanalysis in the public opinion. „However, on a psychoanalytical discussion eve someone held a lecture on the origins of clothing and while he explained the genesis of the first cloth with several psychic causes, a woman interposed: but there was cold weather too sometimes! – well, the whole room started to laugh on this interposing bid, as much that they could hardly calm down. So even naifs like her can exist in the century of psychology!” (Nagy 1937, p. 321.) The picture is modulated further by Milán Füst, who wrote for example the following about the general circumstances, and this time about the psychoanalysts themselves: „You say something and they flash their eyes on each other with arch faces: they already know what to think. And even they stigmatize you – libido! – they are shouting, and you can do what you want to.” (Füst 1977, p. 427.)

As in contrast to these remarks cited above – which are right, I think – let us see the stance of Lajos Nagy on the question of psychoanalysis in crucial times, but in the same spiritual atmosphere. The first one – and at the same time this is the place where Nagy first puts down the name of Ferenczi in print! – is a report on the 4th Psychoanalytic Congress in Munich, September 7–8, 1913 in *Pesti Napló*.⁴⁷ About this event there was published only one short piece of news in the same journal⁴⁸. Other newspapers, however, did not mention the congress, although it was for Hungarian psychoanalysis a significant event from two aspects as well: the participation of the members of the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society on the one hand, and the formation of this society just in the same year on the other.⁴⁹ In his report Nagy emphasizes: „the reason why we, Hungarians are especially interested in this congress is dr. Sándor Ferenczi, who has been a disciple of professor Freud for a long time and is the most eager and most dedicated carer of psychoanalysis in Hungary, held a lecture on 'the psychology of conviction'.⁵⁰ Ignotus⁵¹, member of the psychoanalytic society, also participated in the congress – he is an excellent connoisseur of psychoanalysis and he not only keeps tabs on the new science in all of its the phases and the conquering reservation of space everywhere where the scientific examination of human mind is dealt with, but he is an effective propagator of psychoanalytic doctrines in his writings as well.”⁵²

Here I must take an interjection. The name of Ignotus is also mentioned in the mentioned short news and we can not understand the special characters of the Hungarian psychoanalytical movement – distinguishing it from those of all the other countries – without understanding his role. This particular feature

⁴⁶ New York Cafe was the gathering place of the writers and poets around the literary journal *Nyugat*.

⁴⁷ Nagy 1913.

⁴⁸ See: „*Pszichoanalitikus kongresszus Münchenben*”: „Today opened in Munich – as we are informed from there – the IV. psychoanalytic congress, where professor Freud from Vienna, professor Jones from London, Jung and Flourloy from Switzerland, from Budapestről Ferenczy (sic!) and Ignotus, furthermore many scientists from America, Holland, Deutschland and Russia attend among others. On the first day the discussion was about the dream theory of Freud and the conception of the Zurich school.”

⁴⁹ The Hungarian group was founded on 19. May 1913 with five members. Ferenczi, Hollós, Sándor Radó (1890-1972), Lajos Lévy and Ignotus.

⁵⁰ Dr. S. Ferenczi: "Glaube, Unglaube und Überzeugung". Populäre Vorträge über Psychoanalyse. (Ferenczi 2000)

⁵¹ Ignotus (born Hugó Veigelsberg, 1869-1946): writer, poet and chief editor of the journal *Nyugat*, a close friend and former patient of Ferenczi.

⁵² Nagy, 1913.

was the vivid involvement of writers and actors in the psychoanalytic community, moreover their affiliation in the association(s). As we see the two Hungarian participants of the Munich congress were Ferenczi and Ignóty – two members out of the five of the Hungarian Psychoanalytical Association, one of whom is a writer and editor. Next year, in 1914 the association was increased in number from 5 to 7⁵³: with Jenő Hárník⁵⁴ and Géza Szilágyi⁵⁵. The latter one was a writer again.

So if we review the history of psychoanalysis in Hungary in the first half of the 20th century, we will find that speaking about the interwovenness of psychoanalysis and literature is unavoidable. The main figure in this symbiosis is Ignóty, who was not only one of the writer members – and what is more, one of the founders – of the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society, but as an editor and writer did a lot for spreading it inside and outside the writer and artist society. In the journal *Nyugat* he gave ground for the representatives of all psychoanalytic schools. In *Nyugat* more than fifty psychoanalytical articles were published. Among the authors psychoanalysts were: Freud, Eisler, Ferenczi, Hermann Alice, Hollós, Róheim, Szilágyi Géza (Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society); Gartner (Association of Independent Medical Analysts); Béla Székely (Hungarian Association for Individual Psychology). Ignóty himself translated the Autobiography of Freud and wrote two afterwords to it.⁵⁶ Beside these he had three other psychoanalytic publications⁵⁷ and also a poem dedicated to Ferenczi⁵⁸.

On the other hand, Ferenczi published eight studies in *Nyugat*⁵⁹, the last one is just about Ignóty; Hollós has also four studies⁶⁰. (See more: Hárs 2008b)

Returning back to the report of Nagy about the Munich congress, we can find his opinion about and his expectations from psychoanalysis already in this short article. He writes: „We report about the congress principally because the teachings of Freud's psychology are rapidly spreading in our country, and not only among those who are interested in it, who suffer from psychoneuroses, who expect from 'lélekelemzés'⁶¹ their healing, but the knowledge about human psyche and its mysteries begins to permeate our literature as well. [...] psychoanalysis today is already a real scientific psychology in the first, and a curing method only at the second place [...] About the social aspect of psychoanalysis Freud himself declared on a public conversation: 'At this point the responsibility is on the society, which does not even provide a way for the poor to get themselves healed, if they are ill'.” (Nagy 1913)

The next – 5th – international psychoanalytic congress was eventually in Budapest in 1918. For a short period the psychoanalytic treatment of the poor also seemed to be available. What distinguished this congress from the former one in time and in spirituality, the atmosphere of the coming revolution (which resulted in the Hungarian Council Republic in 1919) after the world war and after another – private – war, the fluctuations inside the psychoanalytical movement – that is the marking out of the Jungian, the Adlerian and the Stekelian

53 On 1. January 1914.

54 Jenő Hárník (1889-?): neurologist, psychoanalyst.

55 Géza Szilágyi (1875-1958): poet, journalist. He wrote first about the psychoanalytical literature in Hungarian (Szilágyi 1920).

56 See Freud 1925, Ignóty 1925a and 1925b.

57 See Ignóty 1911b, 1926 and 1928.

58 See Ignóty 1911a.

59 –See Ferenczi 1913a, 1913b, 1914, 1918a, 1918b, 1922, 1924a and 1924b.

60 See Hollós 1914a, 1914b, 1929 and 1933.

61 Here the word „psychoanalysis” is in its original Hungarian form in the text and in quotation marks, although it was usually used in form: „pszichoanalízis”.

schools. However, the Hungarian group seemed to be stronger than ever before. These were the circumstances at the time of the publication of the other important article of Nagy. This is possibly the first report on the first psychoanalytical department all over the world and also the first one, which names Ferenczi a university professor. Besides, this is the second place where Lajos Nagy mentions Ferenczi in his writings. The article came out only three days after the petition for the appointment of Ferenczi had been sent to Kunfi⁶², the commissar of education during the Council Republic (between 21. March and 1. Augustus 1919)!

The article starts with this: „Competent circles see it necessary to refresh the university, the professorial staff of this owlery of the servile pseudo-scientists of the old Hungarian feudal state. The competents – first of all minister Kunfi – want to unseat the ignorance and the lying from the chair; it is a right effort, the recognition of an important obligation. During this purifying, repairing, supplying work the turn of psychoanalysis also came – as a new science and healing method, which has still no department. The professor-candidate is dr. Sándor Ferenczi. But the scientists – as we hear – violently stand against psychoanalysis being taught at university.”

After this brief summary of the situation Nagy dwells long upon the impetuous, ironic and sarcastic picturing of the traditional psychiatry. However, he does so not from a psychoanalytic point of view, but from the angle of the patients! He lists the „healing” methods of the old psychiatry – „smiling reassurances”, „charitable declamations”, „bromide”, „water- and electric cures”, and gather in a bunch some trite conclusions and advice: „you have no serious problem”, „I do write some medicine”, „go to water-cure!”, „pull yourself together!”, „live a regular life!”. If someone knows Nagy Lajos's life, he/she must notice that behind the curtain of irony there are his own experiences, the suffering of neurotics he himself also experienced. The next places might stem from the diaries of Nagy as well: „as it would change anything in the mental illness squirming in the most terrible psychic obstruction, pinched to half-madness by obsessional thoughts, has very complicated origin and is complicated in its endless procession [...] suggests moreover to the sleepless, and if he falls asleep about morning, ploughing through the night, he can be begged out, beaten out of his bed after many-many hours, still tired”. (Nagy 1919)

However, Nagy quotes a part from a lecture of a „famous professor” (unfortunately, I could not identify him), and adds: „This is conservative psychiatry. If a little girl is brought to me by her mother, and the little girl complains about vertigo and head-ache, the mother must be told that it will pass away when the girl is married; if the patient comes as already married, she must to be encouraged that it will pass away, when her baby is born and so on, she always must be flattered with some hope.” The manifestations like these in lectures and in the press, the personal experiences of Lajos Nagy and the experiences of people he talked with or read about, led him to the conclusion: „All handling of the neurotic by the professional psychiatry is false, founded on the not-knowing of the illness and inefficient. The neurotic professors are writing their fattish and useless works, they teach their pupils into donkeys, bleed their purses, earn richly, live from pseudo-science, their whole being is already dangerously similar to quackery”. (Nagy 1919)

This criticism is just as much the sound of the patients as the sound of the thinker feeling himself responsible for others. When Lajos Nagy writes that the devotees of the old theories and methods „protect their science like kings their country” he speaks on behalf of patients, psychoanalysts and social critics as well. A kind of benevolent „diplopia”, although later proven to be delusory, which requires (mental) illness to be a social problem and, in parallel, from psychoanalysis to become a power contributing to the change of society. This double is behind the demand, where the „they”, I think, means more than university professors, psychiatrists, neurologists, but all of representatives of the conservative social and intellectual order: „They

⁶² Zsigmond Kunfi (1879-1929): politician, literary historian, editor, journalist and translator.

had the examination and failed, the interest of science urgently requires teaching psychoanalysis at university.” (Nagy 1919)

This article of Lajos Nagy has a unique place between his writings on or respecting psychoanalysis. On the one hand, it seems to close the period of time when Nagy was thinking about psychoanalysis as a medical science – there is no word about revolutionism in this text. In his later writings psychoanalysis appears „only” as a possible way of looking at the human being and society. But here it is a „new science and healing method”, moreover, „the only science in this profession, even together with its accidental imperfections, exaggerations and fluctuations”. For „Sigmund Freud Viennese neurologist got wise to the real causes of illnesses, invented and worked out a method, which cures the illness itself by detecting the causes of it.” The other characteristic of this article is that there is no word in it about psychoanalysis beside these few ones. Nagy does not review psychoanalysis, does not argue for it, instead he rather gives the criticism of the „old” official psychiatry. This – both in its intellectuality and methods – „conservative neurology” „has never healed psychopatics so far”. Namely because „all handling of the neurotic by professional psychiatry is false, founded on the not-knowing of the illness and inefficient”. The ones who practice it, live „from pseudo-science, their whole being is already dangerously similar to quackery”.

In my eye, there are three factors that had to knock against each other in Lajos Nagy for realizing this writing: his psychoanalytical knowledge had to firm – emotionally as well –, the idea of revolution wished by him so much, had to be realized, and, supposedly, his own illness and the knowledge of this illness also contributed to it. These three factors were again that met in his later change of attitude – that is, that the medical aspect of psychoanalysis will lose its grandeur at least, but its social significance will deepen. For this, the following three things were necessary: the broadening of his psychoanalytical knowledge with new and fundamentally different elements (like the schools of Stekel and Adler, Reich and other freudomarxists), the fall of the Commune and his long-lasting or interrupted therapy (see his unsuccessful analyses).

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