

According to Irving Fetscher's interpretation of the brother Grimm's fairy tale, the princess Sleeping Beauty succumbs to the sexually repressive attitudes of her royal parents and is put to sleep after a protest of curiosity against her repressive education. The kiss of liberation represents 'overcoming the deflowering phobia.' Now life, stemming from Eros, in the kingdom could begin again, unleashing male aggression in the form of a cook resuming his boxing the ears of a helper.

Hungary is awakening after a 45-year slumber. At the library for the part of Eotvos Lorand campus in Budapest that houses the English and German Departments, the linguistics section reflects that slumber--hardly a work to represent contemporary directions in one of the most exciting and innovative disciplines today.

The city of Budapest itself seems overgrown by a thick underbrush. The blackened facades of the downtown buildings obscure but do not hide the beauty of the architecture. Walking through a woods in the hills of Buda I kept coming across a rusty iron fence, parts of it missing or bent or broken.

Nor is there a feverish building activity in Budapest. There are substantial changes in appearances, it is true, with a spate of Western European and American stores, billboards and products. But an acquaintance informs me that the building of new government housing stopped five years ago. The only way for a normal inhabitant to get an apartment is to wait for a relative to pass away. A simple two-room apartment in an undistinguished district of Budapest would cost one-and-a-half-million forints, with the average wage being 15,000 forints per month. Sleeping Beauty is stirring but not yet up and about.

It occurred to me that Hungary has experienced a series of cataclysms since at least the First World War and maybe since the revolution in 1848. And wouldn't the reaction be that of the Joseph Merrick being removed from his tormentors at Liverpool Street Station in Victorian England and put in the care of Treves:

The old hurts and haunting fears of spying eyes and whispered wonderings slowly began to heal and dissolve. The impulse to hide himself away from the world was changed into a reserved curiosity and a wish to reach out to grasp some of the small everyday experiences which were commonplace in the lives of ordinary people but hitherto as beyond Joseph's reach as if they were something to do with life on the moon itself (*The True History of the Elephant Man*, Michael Howell and Peter Ford, 1980, Penguin Books, p. 118)

Curiosity, the embracing of life are signs of an assertion, a propelling forward, Kierkegaard's notion of repetition, recollection forward, creating and forging one's identity out of the flux by renewing one's tradition and unveiling new potentialities.

People inform me of a nostalgia for the well defined parameters of the past. There is fear of Hungary delivering itself up to the market forces of the West, clean, high-tech and soul-less. The trembling foot at the threshold or an astuteness, an awareness that the West is pursuing its own gain?

It seems that it is not just Hungary that has been slumbering but all of Europe. Le Pen's party has dug out the program of the fascist Alliance France and is becoming a serious contender in French politics. Throughout Eastern and Western Europe ethnic-conflict and racism are back on the social and political agenda. Economic tension and base existential fear are gnawing away despite the prosperity of the past decades. In short, the climate of Europe around the war has been removed from a vacuum.

In retrospect the view we had of Europe was too simplistic. The horrors of the war were superseded by stable economic systems and the East-West conflict. It appears now that the core problems remained intact. If we are not able to solve them with mutual care and understanding, then the brave stirring of the Hungarian people will be met with yet another cataclysm and the curiosity will give way again to old hurts and haunting fears. The Elephant Man was an example of "the Protestant Ethic at its most perverse: "that material prosperity represented the natural reward of virtue. Joseph and those like him had no business to exist" (99. A British instructor at the University of Budapest who has lived in Hungary for a number of years stressed the Protestant democratic tradition in much of Western Europe and claimed that the Catholic countries would never be able to free themselves from the tradition of being shepherded to develop an individualistic approach to politics, which he defined as playing an active role in shaping one's immediate environment. This is essentially the Jungian notion of archetypes, which a South African colleague of mine, a conscientious objector, has labeled fundamentally racist. Another remark by a Hungarian educator seems to be more revealing about the neglect in Hungarian society that is symbolized for me by the rusting fence: that anyone who worked efficiently under communist rule was supporting a system which was uniformly hated.

I think I detect the same stirring in myself. My father met my mother in England during the war. She had briefly driven convoy trucks of wounded to hospital. And then she was wrenched into the farmlands of the Midwest, to stay with my Dad's parents before his discharge. I don't know what was more traumatic for my mother, the V-2s or the Midwest.

I have spent eleven years in Germany. The whole distance has been one of recovery. I think that it is only now that I am getting to the layer of pain, however, that brings us back to the war. The behavior of a Croatian friend often baffles me. I want to accuse her of a pettiness. It struck me not so long ago that we inhabit different worlds and the communication link between the two is sometimes disengaged. Beyond our individual differences, there is the one of environments we were raised in. Post-war America was a cushion for me of unending prosperity. When I was in college, I lived

off of \$50 per month with no financial reserves. Nor were any necessary. My view has been permanently tempered by this environment. Americans seem reckless to others, who regard security as an unstable, transient thing.

A German-American friend now lives in Australia. He took his last funds to finance the trip, bought a van and drove it until it ran out of gas. Fortunately it ran out of gas in front of a restaurant where he found work. The friend and others I have known like him are models for me. I, too, try to place my bets more safely and sense a lack of courage to put my last penny on my convictions.

Western Europe used the 70s and 80s to renovate and retool their economies while Eastern Europe (judging from my brief experiences in former East Germany and Hungary) fell further and further behind. My thought was that now they have broken with the old system, the dormant energy and hidden potentialities would burst forth in joyful song. The present difficulties, however, are too severe and as paralyzing as what preceded them. In fact, I suppose the current era of change does not look any different from the others that preceded it this century. What enables a country to look with hope and optimism towards the future, releasing the creative energy to accomplish that vision, or, alternatively, what allows a country to sink into abject despair, a resigned passivity? It is hard or impossible to separate such psychological factors from economic ones. An equally quick glance at Western Europe, the Third World and the United States shows that the current mood is global in nature: there is a world-wide recession; the situation of the poorer countries has deteriorated through drought and falling commodity prices. It is readily understandable, then, that ethnic groups will start to fight for their share of the shrinking spoils and that there is very little to be optimistic about from Liverpool to Belgrade to Lusaka.

All of which returns us to the original question of the parallel with the period around the Second World War and my own apparent preoccupation with Europe. Maybe there is something in me that believes that returning to and working through the pain of that period will lead me to a deeper understanding. The clue here is that the understanding is not broadly philosophical but psychological. I suffered greatly from my parents' relationship and difficulties. It gives me pause to admit that. Doreen's hysteria/paranoia were matched by George's non-communication. I don't dwell on this or go around pitying myself because of an unhappy childhood. I sooner feel guilty for belonging to a privileged class in a privileged country that has conditioned me into believing that anything is possible. My world has been a bountiful place where anything was there for the asking. But now I am compelled to admit that it was painful. And perhaps for me, the mystery of those forces awakening in Eastern Europe contains the key to the pain of my childhood. An idea worth exploring is that I suspected all along that my painless concept of the world was illusory, that Vietnam was more than an aberration. I can recall having the conscious thought during my brief residence in Hamburg in the fall of 1990 that I wanted to immerse myself in the pain of my environment and feel it, have it penetrate me so as not to

be removed from some fundamental aspect of reality. It did and I was able to observe that my own response is one of paralysis.

Let's imagine, then, as a possible scenario, that my optimism of the early 70s was based on an ignorance of my own pain and the pain of the world, a pain that led to my being created. (I have to assume that if there had not been a war my parents would never have met.). A further plank in such a theory would be that my compulsion to live in Germany was linked to a sense that there was something I was failing to grasp. My attraction to Eastern Europe would be a feeling of a kinship with people born out of the pain of the Second World War.

Ruth fits into the present discussion very well as she has always represented to me a premonition of some truth beyond our immediate ken. That concerns the pain of life as well as religious aspects. Concerning the former, she seemed conscious of a pain in the world that I was only darkly aware of and, I would say, afraid to confront. Concerning the latter, she has led her life searching for some deeper spiritual truth. An early poem for Ruth, written in my second year in Germany:

Would I descend with Orpheus, only prove incapable of finding the path out? One step beyond, an irreversible step that leads us through uncharted depths of our existence--a step into the unknown. I had to make the voyage with you, follow the fire in your eyes into myself, but not that superficial part that maintains a balance, checks every move by submitting them to social criteria. No, I travelled with you to where myth merges with reality, dreams with awakening moments. You led me through hidden caverns where Tolkien elves and goblins abounded. And then suddenly I was filled with an unspeakable horror and wanted to flee but was unsure of the road. I looked for you as the black despair of midnight enveloped me, immobile, uncertain. My forthcoming cry was aborted by a glimpse of your smile luring me, compelling me on. I approached you hesitantly, warmed, focusing on your smile until all else disappeared except for me and you and a soothing harmony that welled from within dynamically, crescendoing into a violent discord as a hollow abyss appeared before me, a trembling chasm that yawned open, pulling me, drawing me towards inexpressible fear and hurt and suffering.

Recently I participated in a super-learning methodology workshop. The facilitator of the workshop was also trained in NLP, neuro-linguistic programming. The major emphasis was on creating a positive learning environment. Not only were many concrete means for doing this discussed and tried, the workshop itself was designed more as an encounter session than a methodology workshop and so it was possible to experience personally the impact of a positive learning environment. First of all, only positive feedback was given. Even though I viewed this as artificial I noticed hidden aspects start blossoming in me. For example, I gave myself more over to drama in role-playing. In a poster-making session I was quite happy with the poster I made with a slogan, but when asked what my next work would be, I responded that I would

concentrate more on pure form, and I recognized that this was a part of my personality that I had never let develop or trusted myself to develop.

Later, at a dinner party's, an American architect who has recently come to Heidelberg to learn German and whose thesis project at Cornell was designing a school that would promote holistic learning by substituting dome-like edifices for the linear corridor of modern schools, remarked that if we suddenly started to draw pictures to express ourselves a completely different kind of communication would take place. He surmised that the only reason we did not engage in such dialogues which children do all the time, was because at an early age those with a special talent in design are singled out while the others focus on other aspects. I knew exactly what he meant after my experience in this workshop. Truly, one feels "the old hurts and haunting fears of spying eyes and whispered wonderings" falling away. And it wrenches the psychology, the attitudinal mind-set of the learner so that new possibilities are opened up. I found myself becoming conscious of new dimensions and new creative potentialities in myself.

After previously concentrating on the content of the language-learning classroom, I now feel myself branching out. A trivial example would be the business classes I am currently teaching, where a fuzzy ball to throw around and large yellow and purple dice are essential teaching props!

I claimed in a talk I gave at Eotvos Lorand University on the relevance of generative grammar to the training of future teachers that in addition to having something significant to say about the content of an ESL classroom, generative grammar also has an important contribution to make to other dimensions of ESL pedagogy: the commitment of the teacher to certain fundamental academic principles and the role of the teacher him or herself in the classroom. Concerning the first point, it is well known through the writings of Steve Krashen and others that an implication of generative grammar for second language learning is that students should have the opportunity to communicate. In fact, we can conclude from the principles of generative grammar that the traditional baggage of pedagogy is often detrimental to a second language learning environment. It seems to me that the same can be said for most classes. This puts generative grammar in the right ballpark, and therefore induces a commitment on the part of the teacher that is healthy for university structures. We expand our understanding of the world through the incorporation of as many different visions as possible. Let's call that the basic academic principle of post-modernism. And generative grammar stresses doing just that, fostering communication, allowing the students to stumble along (unconsciously) formulating hypotheses concerning the grammar and absorbing, assimilating the language. And finally the third dimension is the role of the teacher him- or herself in the classroom. The teacher has to liberate him- or herself from a lot of internalized norms, internalized pedagogical structures, in order to facilitate exactly the kind of learning environment that would be derived from the principles of generative grammar. I think this is a particularly exciting aspect of

language teaching of teaching period that has been too neglected and that is certainly finding resonance in many different areas. NLP and superlearning, for example, have already found wide areas of application in German industry.

So the psychology of nationhood breaks down into the subjectivity of the observer and the openness to new impulses that foster creativity or allow persons to access their creative potential. The role of education and the academic world specifically is only one piece of the puzzle in contemporary society. But it is clear that it can play a crucial role in the building up of confidence, the emergence of curiosity and the injured child and the unleashing of creative energy.

A key feature of the super-learning method is the implementation of relaxation techniques. This also had a special impact on me in the workshop. Through these 'centering' exercises, I was reminded of past learning experiences that I had, even though the centering was not guided in this regard. As a result I felt complete, like a complete wedge ready to part the waves of a new learning experience. I was there then with my whole being, and more fully conscious of myself. Our character is forged in the present through a repetition of our tradition together with our unrealized potential that is always a part of that tradition. Hence repetition is never exactly the same. Kierkegaard opposes this concept to the traditional notion of metaphysics that has us yearn nostalgically for a perfect past that we have lost.

University structures are not accomplishing the goals of education-- radical changes have to occur in order for these institutions to fulfill their task. Educators also have to undergo a similar transformation. As soon as we accustom ourselves to the fact that there is no turning back to a false nostalgia for the past, we can proceed along, with conviction. This links up as well with political and economic issues: Until we can finally overcome the notion of the 'other' who is excluded from the rights and privileges we enjoy ourselves, those dark spots in our history will continue to reoccur.