

PÉTER APOR

## Hungary

### Introduction

Oppositional culture is largely associated in Hungary with the emerging circles of intellectual dissent in the 1980s and the semi-legal non-conformist art which began to emerge in the 1960s.<sup>1</sup> Groups that cultivated non-communist and critical cultures were more numerous, however, and had existed practically since the establishment of the dictatorship in the country in 1948–49. In addition to groups which practiced or engaged in forms of (1) intellectual dissent and (2) non-conformist art, there were also (3) religious groups and (4) underground youth subcultures. These groups, on the one hand, show remarkable inner diversity and may be typified further. On the other, their frontiers were often porous, and participants often belonged to multiple networks and even organized common activities. In many ways, their borders were also relatively open towards official and mainstream institutions: members occasionally journeyed across the borders which divided these spheres and established complex webs of social-political critical activism.

The major turning points in the history of cultural opposition in Hungary are partly connected to political upheavals and changes in the country. 1948 and 1956 were years in which dictatorships were (re-)established, and these dictatorships suppressed alternative voices and, thus, triggered exile and forms of concealed domestic cultures. The mid-1960s (including 1968) was an important period in the emergence of novel forms of critical and alternative cultures in the arts, social thought, and popular culture.<sup>2</sup> These networks were instrumental in shaping the last decade of cultural opposition in socialist Hungary. At the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, novel genres of youth subculture,<sup>3</sup> social movements, and underground intellectual cultures appeared in Hungary, which now could link themselves to earlier alternative subcultures in a variety of ways.

Although cultural opposition in Hungary had a distinctive national trajectory (as was the case in other Eastern European countries), the pivotal moments of this trajectory were closely connected to transnational occurrences.<sup>4</sup> This was particularly true in the late socialist period. Beginning in the mid-

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1 Csizmadia, *A demokratikus ellenzék*; Klaniczay and Sasvári, *Törvénytelen avantgárd*.

2 Rainer, *Muddling Through in the Long 1960s*.

3 Horváth, *Kádár gyermekei*; Szőnyei, *Az új hullám*.

4 Mark and Apor, "Socialism Goes Global"; Harms, "Living Mitteleuropa."

1960s, Hungary started gradually to open up to contemporary Western culture. Furthermore, regional linkages, particularly links to the experiences of the Prague Spring and the Polish Solidarity movement, were established among many dissent groups. Even in the 1950s, when the country was more isolated from the West, groups which represented oppositional mentalities were not inimical to transnational influences. In particular, exile and émigré cultures impacted domestic religious and intellectual opposition at home in this decade too.

### Types of cultural opposition in Hungary, prominent individuals, and important turning points

Doubtlessly, the first major turning point in the history of cultural opposition in Hungary was the establishment of the communist regime in 1948–49. The creation of a Stalinist-type of government meant the suppression of forms and groups of cultures that the authorities considered non-communist. Attempts to centralize and closely monitor cultural activities in the country were particularly harmful for religious communities, urban middle-class intellectual cultures, literature, and the arts, which had been the backbone of pre-war national culture. Nonetheless, the militant cultural policy supervised by the Stalinist ideologue and cultural politician József Révai also marginalized alternative progressive and leftist traditions, particularly in the fields of philosophy, literature, and education.

The first non-communist dissent groups to oppose the Sovietization of Hungary were, arguably, religious communities.<sup>5</sup> They were typically non-conformist groups, meaning that they often were critical of their respective Church hierarchies as well or represented various exiled individuals and societies. Of these, the *Bokor* (Bush) Community played an exceptional role. Bokor was established in 1948 by Pious Monk György Bulányi. It focused on the spiritual values of poverty, non-violence, and love. Bulányi was arrested in 1952 by the communist authorities. Although he was released in 1960, his group remained under constant surveillance, and the official Catholic Church also refused to protect the group. Bokor maintained its influence as an important channel for the new religious movements of the 1960s and 1970s, and for a short period it became part of the network of grassroots and underground cultural initiatives ranging from leftist critical intellectuals to nationalist critiques of official socialism.

The outcome of the radical politicization of culture was that the revolution in October 1956 was, in many ways, an act of cultural opposition. Literary authors like the populist Gyula Illyés and the leftist Tibor Déry played spectacular roles in fostering the anti-Stalinist and anti-government atmosphere.

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5 Szabó, *Die katholische Kirche*.

The days of the revolution, in turn, witnessed the resurrection of various non-communist intellectual traditions in public. One of the most influential of these was the legacy of interwar critical sociology, which had focused on the poverty and marginalization of the working class in areas of the country outside of Budapest and, particularly, in the rural population. This tradition was illustriously represented by the distinguished poet Gyula Illyés. A nationalist culture focusing on the protection of the cultures of small nations was also resurrected in public, headed by the leading intellectual of the decades of the interwar period, László Németh. Besides, 1956 triggered the abrupt distancing of the young generation of postwar Stalinism from official socialism and accelerated their discovery of alternative leftist and progressive traditions.

The suppression of the revolution, therefore, meant a serious blow to cultural traditions of dissent in Hungary. Many people were forced into exile, particularly members of the younger generation of progressive intellectuals around Imre Nagy, the Prime Minister of the Revolution, for instance, as well as Tibor Méray, Péter Kende, or the young Miklós Krassó. Nonetheless, the revolution was not only important as a trigger of subsequent repressions targeting potentially anti-communist cultures. Sustaining the memory of the revolution itself became the heart of constructing dissent cultures. The democratic legacy of 1956 was embedded in several cultural traditions over the course of the subsequent decades. The values of autonomy, national sovereignty, and democratic participation were centerfold in the works of writers and political thinkers Árpád Göncz, who was jailed after 1956, and István Bibó, who was ousted from public as the repercussion of his participation in Imre Nagy's government. Another important figure in the preservation of the memory of 1956 was the former leftist freedom fighter György Krassó, the brother of Miklós Krassó, who lived in exile. 1956 served as a shortcut to a culture of dissent later on, too. In 1986, the editorial board of the Szeged cultural periodical *Tiszatáj* (Tisza Region) was removed because it had published a poem by Gáspár Nagy on 1956. That year, the dissent artist group Inconnu initiated an open-air exhibition to commemorate the revolution, but the exhibition was banned.

The mid-1960s was a crucial period that shaped the outlook of late socialist cultural opposition in Hungary. In this period, a new generation came of age which had been socialized during the first decade of socialist statehood in Hungary. More importantly, in this period Hungary, like Poland and Yugoslavia, was relatively open towards the West. Cultural transfers which mediated the spirit of New Left social criticism, novel forms of art (such as actionism and Fluxus), new forms of popular culture (like the hippie lifestyle and rock music), and new religious movements stimulated by the Second Vatican Council had a considerable impact on the young generation of Hungarians.

This impact was especially important in shaping the modalities of intellectual dissent. Intellectual dissent is a category which embraces a diverse array of groups, traditions, and trajectories. The most well-known group of

intellectual dissent is the network of Marxist heretics and leftist radicals of the 1960s. People like János Kis, György Bencze, and Miklós Haraszti developed criticism of official socialism based on an alternative reading of Marxist and broader leftist traditions and became the primary representatives of political dissent in the 1980s. For them, the experiences of 1968 were crucial as a prompting to develop new forms of intellectual criticism. Disappointment with democratic socialism was important, as it motivated them to explore non-leftist cultural traditions, particularly liberalism, and also opened them up towards the appropriation of the legacies of 1956. In this respect, their trajectories are similar to the careers of a somewhat older generation of 1968ers, like Ágnes Heller and Mihály Vajda. These former Marxist revisionists distanced themselves from socialism following the suppression of 1968 and started to embrace liberal Western philosophy. Heller eventually went into exile in 1973.<sup>6</sup>

Art was impacted by various forms of performance and action programs, which all concerned the social responsibility of the artist in a way. A central place for the creation of alternative and critical art in Hungary was the Chapel Studio of György Galántai by Lake Balaton. In this studio, important neo-avant-garde artists of the period met with representatives of intellectual dissent. Important performances by Tamás Szentjóbby (St. Auby), Gyula Pauer, and Katalin Ladik were linked to this 1968er network.<sup>7</sup> Theatre was also significantly impacted by the spirit of new global social and intellectual movements. The alternative theatre group Orfeo experimented with a commune in Pilisborosjenő and was centered on a strong ethos of anti-consumerism and the critique of social alienation. Péter Halász's street and studio theatre held performances which investigated the conditions of human freedom and power. Halász was influenced by contemporary experimental theatres like Jerzy Grotowski's Polish theatre, but also by events which were taking place in North America and Western Europe. Halász eventually had to go into exile, and he established a successful theatre group of his own first in Amsterdam and then in New York.

Important religious youth groups of the late 1960s and early 1970s, such as Bokor and Regnum Marianum (which had been created before the war), were led by the spirit of the Second Vatican Council to shape criticism of conventional Church practices in Hungary. They were interested in making Christianity an appealing and powerful social force again. For that purpose, they appropriated novel forms and religious practices, like religious beat and youth festivals. Thus, they engaged in two forms of cultural opposition: while they remained in conflict with Church hierarchies, they were also harassed by the state police.

The turn of the 1970s and 1980s witnessed the emergence of new, underground grassroots cultures of dissent. The turn had two important transnation-

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<sup>6</sup> Tormey, *Agnes Heller*.

<sup>7</sup> Hock, *Gendered Artistic Positions*.

al contexts. For intellectual criticism, the samizdat and illegal activism of the Polish and Soviet underground provided a powerful template. For a popular alternative culture, the protest music of punk and the birth of independent media and dissemination networks proved crucial. Through samizdat publishing and the meetings and activities held by the so-called flying universities the Hungarian dissent reached out to broader intellectual circles arriving from urban middle-class culture (Ferenc Kőszeg), youth subculture (János Kenedi), and critical academics in the field of economics (Tamás Bauer) and sociology (István Kemény). Their activities also overlapped with artistic non-conformism (for instance the work of György Galántai), and occasionally they also cooperated with religious groups like Bokor. Furthermore, the “democratic opposition” (as they tended to classify themselves) also established linkages to earlier traditions of intellectual dissent via individuals, for instance the “third way” intellectuals of the 1950s, István Bibó and Árpád Göncz.

In some ways, Göncz and Bibó exemplify the particularity of intellectual dissent in Hungary. The legacy of Marxism and especially the critical distancing from it played an important role in shaping intellectual dissent in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Hungary. Hungary, however, also produced a powerful agrarian intellectual tradition as well, which fuelled critical intellectual cultures throughout the period of dictatorial rule. The program of emancipating the rural peripheries was conducive to a distinct leftist tradition in interwar Hungary, which particularly, through the figure of the poet Gyula Illyés, was appropriated by the next generation of intellectuals in the 1960s. Poets like Sándor Csoóri and Gáspár Nagy were critical of official socialism, which they identified as an essentially imperialist system which suppressed small nations. The focus on the protection of authentic national cultures and indigenous folklore led them closer to ethnography, both as an academic discipline and as a broader intellectual culture. They were thus linked to previous, pre-communist traditions of ethnography which had been preserved by scholars like László Lajtha. Their focus on the protection of national minority cultures and the development of rural societies at home helped these intellectual groups institutionalize their criticism in the mid-1980s. The establishment of the Gábor Bethlen Foundation, named after a 17<sup>th</sup>-century Hungarian Transylvanian prince, was important as a means of solidifying the network and the identity of “populist-nationalist opposition,” in part in contrast to their “democratic” counterpart. The populist-nationalist language of dissent was easily accessible by intellectuals in rural areas. It also harmonized well with their traditional concerns with national culture and local development. This is pertinently illustrated, for instance, by the themes of the prohibited journal *Tiszatáj*, which was published in Szeged, a major provincial city.

Youth subculture is a similarly broad category which includes a colorful variety of topics and movements. The most eloquent forms of youth subculture were the punk and underground pop bands and their audiences in the late 1970s and 1980s. Even these music-centered groups were very diverse in

their makeup and genre. A few of them were real artistic projects, such as the famous *Albert Einstein Bizottság* (Committee), which was founded by non-conformist artists of the Lajos Vajda Studio in Szentendre. Links to contemporary art were apparent in Hungarian underground music, as illustrated by their homemade concert posters. These intellectually formed bands were not the only ones to tour the country at the time, however. Punk groups like *Beatrice*, *Auróra*, and *Qsss* represented a more working-class type of protest with their focus on experiences of social marginalization and poverty.

### The types, histories, and sociologies of collections

The trajectories of collecting alternative and countercultures ran parallel to the history of cultural opposition itself. Collecting began almost immediately after the communist takeover, as autonomous cultural forms and groups began to be persecuted. These activities did not necessarily mean the deliberate and purposeful collecting of material with regard to cultural opposition. Instead, they represented the will to preserve and save important material and forms of behavior with which groups which were then persecuted identified. The typical collections that were generated in this era were, hence, either materials gathered privately and often clandestinely or archives created by people in exile. Church and religious groups were particularly active in the area in this period. György Bulányi, the founder of Bokor, initiated the gathering of manuscripts and other unpublished materials created by the members of the community already in 1945.

The members of Bokor disseminated texts they had written as illegal samizdat publications, which constituted an important element of the life of the community. In the 1980s, Bokor tried to connect with the groups of the democratic opposition. In 1988, a demonstration was organized by Bokor members in support of the introduction of a professional military (in contrast with obligatory military service, which remained the system in Hungary for many years even after the fall of the communist regime). Bokor remains an active community today. Its archive was founded by the leadership in 2000. The collection is held in Bokor's common flat in Budapest, the so-called "*Bokor-porta*." The purpose of the collection is to save the documents for future generations and keep the papers together for possible later publications.

A similar role was played by István Viczián, who in his private apartment kept materials related to the activities of the Calvinist youth group in the Pasarét district in Budapest.<sup>8</sup> Members of the banned Order who remained in

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8 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Collection of the Calvinist youth congregation of Pasarét", by Kristóf Erdős and Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018; COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Archives of the Jesuit Order Hungary", by Béla Mihalik and Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 09, 2018, doi: 10.24389/10677



the country collected and preserved the records of the pre-war archives illegally. In addition, Jesuits in exile began to search for and collect relevant documents and objects, and they founded new archives in exile in Leuven, Nijmegen, and Vienna. In the first decade of the socialist state, the major form of cultural opposition consisted of efforts to safeguard pre-communist cultural heritage, as the religious collections clearly illustrate. Other secular traditions confirm this. Members of the interwar scout organization recreated their organization and recorded their activities in exile. These endeavors were largely dependent on the willingness and energies of private individuals, who made efforts to collect and preserve documents.

The anti-Stalinist revolt in October 1956 constituted an important turning point in the history of collections of cultural opposition. Several former participants who were persecuted after 1956 resolved to preserve the memory of the revolution and began collecting records and documents related to the event. In institutional terms, these collections were strikingly similar to their predecessors: they were kept by private individuals either in hiding or in exile. The most important people to create and maintain these kinds of private archives were Árpád Göncz and István Bibó. The leftist Marxist revisionary exile established the Imre Nagy Institute, an archive in Brussels. Collecting materials related to 1956 and forms of cultural opposition was a means of sustaining a positive identity by challenging the counter-identity which the authorities sought to prescribe with democratic, patriotic, and egalitarian values. It was a means of preserving a cultural heritage which the authorities demonized as tyrannical, anti-national, and anti-humanist.

The mid-1960s bore witness to the emergence of interesting new forms of collections. More and more intellectuals and artists began to realize that they had little or no chance of having any kind of public presence in the official sphere and, thus, of having ties to official institutions of memory. Several of them set out on their own paths and decided to create collections of material related to the (counter)cultures in which they were active. From the outset, György Galántai, the owner of the Chapel Studio, deliberately and conscientiously record the activities in which he and members of his group engaged related to the arts. Furthermore, many genres, such as mail art or the production of an underground art magazine, were themselves documents and works of art at the same time. They were forms of self-archiving, or as Galántai called his initiative, "living archives." In 1979, Júlia Klaniczay and György Galántai established Artpool, an alternative art institution which focused on innovative concepts of art at a time when the only works of art which appeared in public were compositions that harmonized with the principles of the official cultural policies. Artpool sought to break the isolation which had been imposed on Hungarian art at the time and to serve as a center for information in the field. Furthermore, it strove to document art events in the country which were marginalized by the cultural policies of the period. The archives, which are a product of these activities, make it possible for members of the younger

generations to examine the alternative art initiatives of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s in their original contexts.<sup>9</sup>

Somewhat similarly, when the alternative theatre group *Orfeo* moved to a shared house and studio which they filled with handmade furniture, stage design items, and masks, they also created a “living museum” which preserved the traces of their countercultural activities. Replacing formal institutions with everyday practices which combined creative activity with collecting, these groups produced their own counter-archives.

Possible counter-narratives also emerged in a few public institutions. In this period, some state museums started collecting non-conformist art. State museums and galleries regularly collected contemporary art, since they intended to depict the trajectories of socialist, modern, or progressive art. In the 1950s, this art embraced primary officially sanctioned works. Beginning in the mid-1960s, however, a few art historians and gallery personnel realized that the many genres of the neo-avant-garde were the most innovative and paradigmatic representatives of contemporary art. People like László Beke, Marianna Mayer, and Ferenc Tóth were important in shaping the modern collections of galleries, including, for instance, the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest and the Savaria Museum in Szombathely. Other institutions offered opportunities for alternative interpretations rather unintentionally. Museums, for instance the National Gallery, had no conscious policy of collecting neo-avantgarde. However, it occasionally bought and displayed works of art by artists who belonged to these genres as part of modern and contemporary exhibitions. The fact that non-conventional modernism appeared in public challenged official narratives of socialist modernism and opened up new ways of interpreting culture in late socialist Hungary.

In many ways, the silent cooperation of private individuals and state institutions remained the rule of collecting alternative cultural products in Hungary in the last decades of socialist statehood. There were concerned individuals who themselves were also part of the emerging underground and punk youth subcultures and who documented the performances and everyday lives of these networks. The young Gábor Klaniczay, who later became a distinguished historian of art and culture in the Middle Ages, was interested in various forms of counterculture and alternative lifestyles, ranging from Bread and Puppet’s experimental theatre to Patti Smith’s art punk. As he increasingly descended into the underground of 1980s Budapest, he preserved recordings and documents of performances by bands like Trabant, as well as samizdat publications like a book by Iván Szelényi and György Konrád, the heretic sociologists, which had been banned.<sup>10</sup>

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9 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Artpool Art Collection”, by Balázs Beöthy and Júlia Klaniczay, 2018. Accessed: October 07, 2018, doi: 10.24389/5123

10 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Gábor Klaniczay’s private collection”, by Heléna Hunák, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018..



Tamás Szőnyei, who toured the outskirts of Budapest in the 1980s, was also motivated by personal (private) interests to attend concerts by underground bands like *Kontroll* and *Európa Kiadó*. He started to keep their homemade posters, which gradually developed into a sizable collection of visual representations of contemporary underground culture. He received the first poster from his brother in 1978, and he was fascinated with the visual world of the new wave and art punk. Szőnyei became a journalist who commented on the events of the emerging new wave and punk subculture. Naturally, he was very much present in the underground scene. He took a little scalpel in his pocket wherever he went: he enriched his collection by taking the posters off the walls with this handy tool. He also was donated posters, but the majority of the collection is from the streets. He gave up systematic collecting with the evaporation of punk subculture in the early 1990s.

Similar activities also took place outside the capital. The photo journalist Ferenc Kálmándy in Pécs photographed performances by underground bands and works by experimental artists in his home town merely as part of the pursuit of his own interests. Kálmándy himself was also part of contemporary neo-avantgarde photography. More importantly in terms of collecting, however, he was employed by the Gallery of Pécs, which was headed by avant-garde artist József Pinczehelyi. As an institution, it often provided room and, thus, shelter for non-conformist culture.

The protection which was provided, at times, by state institutions was crucial in the genesis of many collections on dissent and protest, in particular in academic fields. Critical sociology flourished in late socialist Hungary because the Institute of Sociology was home to several research programs that eventually opened new ways of articulating subversive readings. István Kemény, Ilona Liskó, Péter Ambrus, and Pál Diósi collected interview and documentary material on marginalized social groups, the poor, prostitutes, and the Roma in Hungary. In and of itself, this activity constituted a form of criticism of the failures of socialist integration.<sup>11</sup> They were able to engage in social critical research because the party leadership itself was interested in obtaining relevant information on the social structures and lifestyles which prevailed in Hungarian society. Beginning in the late 1960s, research programs on social structures and the “socialist ways of life” was introduced and funded, and this prompted several researchers to pursue work in these areas. Nonetheless, as they realized the subversive potential of the official research program, the authorities clamped down on them. Kemény was forced to flee into exile, and others kept important parts of their research collections unpublished and private.

State institutions, in general, pursued a Janus-face policy towards collecting materials pertinent to cultural opposition in this period. On the one hand,

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11 COURAGE Registry, s.v. “Diósi Pál’s collection”, by Zoltán Pál, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018..

many of them were indifferent, so they allowed employees to gather and store related material within their walls. The party member and loyal communist director Ferenc Botka of the Petőfi Literary Museum even tolerated staff members (for instance György Gadó and Csaba Nagy) bringing samizdat publications to store in the Museum. Nonetheless, the Museum developed a politics of secrecy in this matter. The existence of such materials was not advertised, they were put on closed circuit systems, and if conflicts arose with the authorities, the institutional leadership did not always protect staff members. While Botka's authority in the Party provided a shield for Csaba Nagy and his colleagues for such activities, it divided the leadership of the Museum as some protested against collecting samizdat in a state institution. The actual size of the samizdat collection was revealed only after the regime change, when Csaba Nagy and his colleagues organized an exhibition of the materials. People then realized that the collection was one of the most significant samizdat collections in the country. This part of the former Closed Stack collection is now part of the regular collection.<sup>12</sup>

The collapse of state socialism constituted an important turning point in the history of the collections on cultural opposition in Hungary. Clandestine, hidden, secretly kept collections suddenly appeared as important assets which might well offer intriguing insights into the other side of socialist Hungary. It meant, first of all, the growing institutionalization of these kinds of collections. Many hidden collections suddenly became mainstream. Galleries and museums of fine art in particular realized that some of their previously marginal collections had now become mainstream and, indeed, could provide ammunition for carving out progressive and often also anti-communist identities.

The most spectacular and, in many ways, unexpected institution to open as a collection on cultural opposition was the Historical Archives of the State Security. The Archives, which began to function as a public institution in 1997, left researchers and the public inundated with oceans of unknown records on groups and individuals that the state police had once considered opponents of socialism. This act proved important in shaping the debates on cultural opposition in two ways at least. First, it revealed in abundant detail how the secret police itself was crucial in defining the meanings of cultural opposition. Second, in turn, it once again made it difficult for the voice of the underground to come to the surface. Histories of cultural dissent are written on the basis of the institutionalized sources created and/or used by the secret police. These sources, however, left little or no room for the counter-histories preserved in the private and alternative collections of former countercultural activists.

There are parallel attempts to institutionalize counter archives, however. One of the most important is the Blinken-OSA Archives (originally the Open Society Archives) at Central European Society. It is unique in two ways. First,

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12 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Samizdat Collection at Petőfi Literary Museum (PLM)", by Tamás Scheibner, 2017. Accessed: October 09, 2018, doi: 10.24389/5847

the activities of the Archives are funded by private donations, primarily by philanthropes George Soros and Donald and Vera Blinken. Second, the OSA is a regional archives that collects material relevant to counter cultures from all over Eastern Europe. OSA is a counter archives in two ways. First, its core collection contains the former research and records of Radio Free Europe, which had created counter archives itself by observing the Cold War other. Second, OSA actively collects material from participants in communist-era countercultural activists. Thus, OSA now holds parts of the records of Hungarian samizdat publisher Gábor Demszky and the documents of the Budapest international dissent meeting, the Countercultural Forum.<sup>13</sup>

OSA also hosts an important attempt to render relevant the heritage of dissent culture and make it available to the broader public. Voices of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is an endeavor undertaken at the initiative of sociologists in Hungary to collect, preserve, and make public the records of critical sociology of the socialist era.<sup>14</sup> Funded originally by the National Scientific Research Fund, Voices was established in 2009. The original motivation was primarily academic and was manifested in terms of methodology: Voices aimed to reveal and preserve the distinct heritage of a methodological school in Hungarian sociology, qualitative research based on oral interviews. Nonetheless, as this school, which emerged in the 1970s in Hungary, had both an ethos of protest and political implications stemming from its social critical content, the project inherently began to endorse the heritage of intellectual dissent, as well. The working group based at the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences examines and systematizes the interviews and other research materials which sociologists have produced on marginalization, exclusion, and deviance in socialist Hungary. Voices pursues a novel form of collecting: it actively contacts and encourages researchers to submit material. With its archiving experiences, OSA is a partner of the Institute of Sociology in this activity. The most important state institution that actively seeks ways to expand its collection on socialist era counterculture is the Archives of Budapest.<sup>15</sup> It focuses particularly on social movements and private diaries. At the moment, it is home to the records of the 1980s-ecological dissent movement, the Danube Circle,<sup>16</sup> as well as György Krassó's records.<sup>17</sup>

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13 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Open Society Archives", by Péter Apor, Béla Nóvé, and Zoltán Pál, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018..

14 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Voices of the 20th Century Archive and Research Group", by Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018..

15 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Budapest City Archive", by Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

16 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Documents of the Danube Circle's Association", by Zoltán Pál, 2017. Accessed: October 09, 2018, doi: 10.24389/16054.

17 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Documents of György and Miklós Krassó (1956–1989)", by Pál Zoltán, 2018. Accessed July 2, 2018.

In terms of ownership, the relevant collections of countercultural materials show a balanced picture. While a few organizations and institutions own several collections, there are also individuals who keep their records privately. There is even a relative balance in the size of their holdings. The art collections of museums are not necessarily larger than those of individuals like László Beke or Soft Geometry owner Géza Perneczky.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, in terms of funding, there are obvious disparities. State institutions can count on a relatively predictable budget, which covers their staff and storage costs, even though it is often insufficient to fund new acquisitions. Besides, the most important archives and museums, and in particular the libraries, archives, and museums in Budapest, perform relatively well in European Union and national application schemes. Private owners, in contrast, are more vulnerable to shortages of resources, including insufficient storage space and the lack of opportunities for applications.

Up to this day, there has been little effort to use counter-archives as sources in the writing of histories of the socialist period. Histories that were produced on the basis of cases of cultural opposition, for instance on Galántai's alternative art studio, remained within a more specialized audience and were not used to make the message broadly available. In fact, the typical users of collections on the cultural opposition are academics who are interested in pursuing their own research agendas. In other cases, for instance the archives of the secret police, individuals who were once subjected to surveillance form an important group of users. Museums and galleries can reach out to audiences who normally visit museums, typically tourists or school groups, beyond the usual consumers of art. There are many reasons for this. First, these collections resist nationalist framings of history-telling. They do not speak of victimized nations suffering under imperialist great powers. In contrast, they tell the stories of courageous individuals who dared to pursue their own agendas of creating and preserving culture, which were comparable in many countries and often also occurred in a transnational context. Second, these collections also often undermine the totalitarian framing of the socialist past which is often too quick to divide societies into victims and perpetrators. As the records of counter culture show, being victimized was not the only viable alternative: there were always individuals and groups who chose actively to defend their values and causes. Indeed, highly popular and well-promoted public representations of the socialist era, such as the House of Terror, do not use any records from these collections, and possibly no authentic records at all.

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18 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "The Soft Geometry Archives", by Balázs Beöthy, 2017. Accessed: October 09, 2018, doi: 10.24389/8039

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