

No sponsors, no virtual realities, no hirelings!

Written by Kaiser László

I don't know when László Németh wrote this - it's almost irrelevant - that a part of the Hungarian intelligensia is looking for sponsors and hireling's pay. Not only is this a bleak opinion, but a sadly and increasingly valid observation even today. Valid not only for those who walk and live with open eyes, or for those who are neither stupid nor pretend to be, but Németh's words gain tremendous weight if considered against the characteristically image-created world of today, with its fake virtual realities and sponsors whose money may well have come from shady, if not criminal, sources.

Those who jump on the carousal must give up not only the integrity of their intellectual, artistic, and cultural selves, they must cease being wholesome human beings as well. They become servants. They become soldiers in pay. Their chief master becomes pretense. They are owned by pretense. To make it perfectly clear: our age - and not only in Hungary - is not only not seeking the truth, it does not even wish to register it. From lies, half-truths and mundane, worthless truths are created interest-centered, anti-value driven virtual realities - and for this are needed the hirelings, the media and culture lads and lasses. Literature is a means to expose these. Literature is needed that does not seek favor from the manipulator illusionists. We need creators - literary ones - who are not accomplices of the merciless reality of this virtual world.

There is no other correct or truthful way, nor can there be any. However, the mere fact that something is true is not enough of itself. Truth has to be "functioning" as well. This is where culture comes in and, within culture, the love of reading, especially the reading of poetry and book reading. We need to foster and increase interest in reading. We have readers; we also have potential readers. All point in one direction: the books, the culture, the reading. With the aid of poetry let us see, and make it be seen what lies behind the lies, the reality behind the appearances, for without the truth we are all lost.

Those that speak the truth are our only real intellectuals, and they are not seeking hireling pay, they are not seeking to be owned. Is there hope? There is hope!

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