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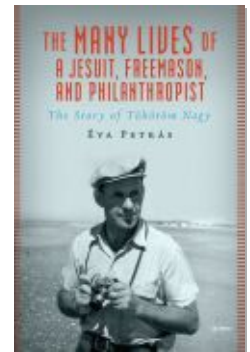
Epilogue

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EPILOGUE

So ended Töhötöm Nagy's life, in all its ambiguity. He never solved the mystery of who he really was. Perhaps, he was not a single person "behind multiple masks" and his personality was not simply molded by the circumstances. Taking on multiple identities and keeping all of them in play might very well have been his own decision. We can assume that this was the case, as he wrote about doing so in the new foreword to *Church and Communism*, which was slated for publication in Hungarian, but never made it to the presses:

[I]n my successive lives, I have never stripped off my former one, but in putting on the new one, kept the substance of the previous one. First, I was just a Jesuit, then I became a Mason, keeping everything worth keeping from my Jesuit past (principles, friends, contacts, and my love for the Society). Later, I took the first two [Jesuit and Mason], with their principles and connections, to the Communist world, while taking on everything from Communism that was good and progressive. I was like a river: it begins alone, and flows together with another stream, then a third one flows into it, and they go on together, ever richer, fuller, rolling with stronger currents, between wider shores.

I remained a Jesuit throughout, but inside, in fact, letting them inside of me and living it personally, I experienced Freemasons and Communists. They marched through me, and I watched, soaking up from both all that's true, eternal, and good. And I found so many positive things! Much more than I could have even suspected based on the great endeavor.

We will allow the reader's internal dialogue with Töhötöm Nagy's biography to make what it will of these lines: Identity construction after the

fact, a desire to exonerate oneself, a unique and arbitrary interpretation of an attempt at identification stemming from Jesuit historical roots, a risky and dramatic solitary venture, the gradual disorientation of a personality, its moral decay, and finally its disintegration, or just the opposite: the success of an attempt at the synthesis and consistency of intentions, the utopistic humanism; or, if you will, the faith of a historical actor with a strong sense of mission.

On the one hand, this book sets out to explore, document, and reconstruct the events, background, and contexts of a life while also striving to consistently use a narrative language capable of conveying the turbulent life and complex personality of Töhötöm Nagy. This is primarily achieved through the text, but perhaps also to some extent goes beyond the primary references included here. Parallel to this, we have also sought to help the reader by clarifying the criteria for forming an opinion, and by promoting the historical reception of Töhötöm Nagy. In this intentionally non-judgmental biography, the historian has done her best to relay that there is not a simple or single life story for anyone, let alone Töhötöm Nagy.