

## Remembering Paul Olchváry

### *Hungarian Cultural Studies* Editor-in-Chief, 2023-2024

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*Hungarian Cultural Studies*

"You do not need to know precisely what is happening, or exactly where it is all going. What you need is to recognize the possibilities and challenges offered by the present moment, and to embrace them with courage, faith and hope."

— Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*

With this issue of *Hungarian Cultural Studies*, its publishers enter their seventeenth year of consecutive publication. Paul Olchváry became the second editor-in-chief of the *Hungarian Cultural Studies Journal* in 2023. To our great sorrow, Paul Olchváry served for one year only; Paul passed away suddenly at his home on February 14, 2024. He was the publisher of New Europe Books for a decade, translated numerous volumes of Hungarian prose, and spent many years writing about academic books. He had spent his young adulthood in Hungary where he reinforced the native Hungarian fluency he had acquired in his childhood within a Hungarian family near Buffalo, New York. While in Hungary, he founded the English-language news digest *Hungary Around the Clock*. He earned an M.A. at Indiana University, Bloomington, in the late 1980s and cultivated friendships with academics, including scholars of Hungarian studies. This background positioned him perfectly for the role of editor-in-chief of our Journal. During his short tenure, he carried out his responsibilities with distinction. He served as an effective ambassador for the Journal and earned the respect of scholars in North America as well as in the Carpathian Basin. He played a major role in finding reviewers, a task that is ever more challenging as our journal becomes more multidisciplinary and manuscript topics are increasingly specialized. He was persistent and polite in encouraging submission of late reviews; he was diplomatic in assisting authors in tightening up their papers and generous with his time in helping authors clarify their arguments.

Paul worked behind the scenes giving credit to others for his work. Indeed, his skills as a copyeditor were unparalleled; he was most helpful to our international authors with limited experience publishing in English. He supported them tirelessly with encouragement and hands-on recommendations to produce excellent manuscripts. Paul embraced the transition to electronic submissions and corresponded with authors through e-mail. Paul relished the flexibility that direct e-mail correspondence with reviewers and authors made possible. Paul flourished in addressing communication with authors on an individual basis, accommodating the

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authors' preferences. The transition to an Internet-based editorial management system also worked for him. He worked tirelessly to design a new look for the [Journal's home page](#).

Paul will be remembered for expanding the associate editorial team to include ten noted scholars on two continents (as he announced proudly in AHEA's Newsletter last year). They include associate editors János Csapó (University of Pécs), Zsuzsanna Cselényi (translator and editor at *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica*), Paul Hanebrink (Rutgers University-New Brunswick), Sarah M Lucas (Texas A&M University-Kingsville), Andrew Ludányi (professor emeritus, Ohio Northern University), Judith Kesserű Némethy (professor emerita, New York University), Andrea Parapatics (University of Pannonia), Balázs Varga (Eötvös Loránd University), and Kristóf György Veres (Migration Research Institute, and, currently, Andrassy National Security Fellow at the Center for Immigration Studies, Washington, D.C.). What is more, he recruited not one book review editor, but two: Ákos Farkas (Eötvös Loránd University), who focuses primarily on books published in Hungarian or in Hungary; and E. M. McQueen (PhD candidate in comparative literature at the University of California, Davis). He also recruited three first-rate copy editors: husband-and-wife team John Puckett (freelance copy editor, Central European University Press) and Andrea Thürmer (Department of English Language Pedagogy at Eötvös Loránd University) as well as Matt Henderson Ellis, novelist, editor, writing instructor.

Paul will also be remembered for his role in securing the agreement between the American Hungarian Educators Association (AHEA) and the National Széchényi Library (OSZK) in Budapest, Hungary, enabling the content of *Hungarian Cultural Studies* to be archived, cataloged, and distributed via the OSZK's Electronic Periodicals Archives (EPA). This agreement renders the Journal more visible and accessible.

Paul will be remembered by colleagues for the professionalism and goodwill that he brought to bear in producing the Journal's high-quality content. He was consistently diligent, friendly, polite, and respectful of everyone associated with the Journal, a role model to which all of us on the editorial team can aspire.

We look to build on the partnerships Paul initiated and introduce new initiatives to expand thinking around Hungarian Cultural Studies. The present moment presents challenges—both in the transition of our Journal and in society at large—however we move forward with optimism and faith in the power of high-quality scholarship in changing the world. So, as he would write, "on we go!" Our Journal's next chapter now begins with hope, believing the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "In the midst of untruth, truth persists. In the midst of darkness, light persists."

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