

## ROBERT AUSTERLITZ

(1923—1994)

Integer vitae scelerisque purus  
 non eget Mauris iaculis neque arcu,  
 nes venenatis gravida sagittis  
 Fusce, pharetra,

sive per Syrtis iter aestuosas  
 sive facturus per inhospitalem  
 Caucasum, vel quae loca fabulosus  
 lambit Hydaspes.

Could you show me just one in the profession of Uralic linguistics who did not know this joyful person? Certainly not. He has been the most popular participant in Finno-Ugric congresses since more than three decades. We liked his jokes and anecdotes, and eagerly looked forward to his next lecture at the next congress. His lectures were rather theatrical appearances than lofty talks fitting to an academic, and were received by the public with applause and bravos unusual in lecture rooms and auditoria. He was a true entertainer with catchy entries and remarkable exits, smart punch-lines and the like, a star who knew how to address the audience and captivate its attention. And his audience was usually spellbound, except some stubborn philologists who tried hard to catch the juggler of tongue in some deceptive trick, but in vain. They failed, first and foremost, because Austerlitz was, even by the most scrupulous academic standards, not only an erudite philologist (which was acknowledged by several learned societies, among them the Finnish and the Hungarian Academies of Sciences and the Finno-Ugric Society in Helsinki, by electing him as honorary member), but also a person of exceptional capability (acquired, perhaps, from shamans in Sachalin or some "táltos" [medicine man] in Debrecen or a Gypsy witch-doctor wandering around in Transylvania) for opening up the minds of the most hard-headed Hun(garian)s — without trepanation — for ideas springing out of the head of their fellow human being who, to their surprise, happened to be nobody else but Austerlitz himself.

The merry entertainer was a busy and thorough philologist (though). The brackets here are used to indicate the artificial nature of the antagonism between enter-



tainment and philology: it is only in our pharisaic code of conduct that philology should exclude entertainment and vice versa. This "Romanian Gypsy" acquaintance of ours (as he used to introduce himself at a conference in Szeged some twenty years ago to some innocent bystanders who were amazed by his linguistic and/or entertaining talent) never obeyed the prescriptions of such a code and broke it wherever he could. Instead of boring professional articles, *exemplo gratia*, he wrote *virtuoso* essays in different languages — English, German, French, Finnish and Hungarian for the greatest pleasure of the profession. With his very first publication, "Gilyak Nursery Words"<sup>1</sup> in 1956 he already won the appraisal of the world of linguistics. "Brilliant analysis of the nursery words 'in the light

of the structure of Gilyak as a whole'". wrote Roman Jakobson about Austerlitz's *primum opus* (R. Jakobson, G. Hüttli-Worth, J. F. Beebe, *Paleosiberian Peoples and Languages. A Bibliographical Guide*, New Haven 1957). When Austerlitz thanked him for the flattering words, Jakobson said reassuringly: "I thought you may [find] it sometime". It so happened that, in spite of the fact that he had previously studied Hungarian linguistics at Columbia University and Finno-Ugric linguistics at Helsinki University and written his doctoral dissertation on Ob-Ugric versification in 1955 (titled "Ob-Ugric Metrics"<sup>2</sup> published in 1958), he became known at once in the profession through this essay on a Paleosiberian language he had come across on his first visit to Hokkaido, Japan in 1953—1954 where there were refugees from Sachalin at that time. Austerlitz's interest in Gilyak accompanied him throughout his life, and even became stronger with time: in the past few years he had been working hard on a Gilyak etymological dictionary, which he assumedly meant to be the summit of his oeuvre. Adding Austerlitz's Old Norse and Icelandic studies from his undergraduate years to the subjects above, we may only say he laid down the foundations of his lifework truly wide and deep.

Since Austerlitz's family background was woven from different languages and cultures (his father was an Austrian from Brünn, Moravia and his mother an American with Bohemian roots, he himself was born in Bucharest, Romania, but grew up in Kronstadt-Brassó-Braşov, Transylvania where his nanny was a "Székely" girl, Anna by name; as a boy he attended German elementary and Romanian secondary schools in the famous Saxon city which was for centuries Hungary's gate to the Balkans), one would think that he was — given his brilliant analytical mind — predestined to become a professor of linguistics at one of the universities of his native country in Kolozsvár-Cluj, Bucharest or Iaşi. History thought otherwise. In 1938, when Austerlitz was 15, his father saw it better for him to leave Romania (which was then on the way of becoming a fascist country) for New York where his mother lived then (she had divorced his father earlier and returned to her native country). It was due to World War II, whose active and passive partici-

pant he was, first as a soldier in the U.S. Army, then as a POW of the Germans in Bavaria, that he could start his university studies much later. Beside linguistics he studied philosophy at the New School of Social Research, where he got his B.A. in 1950. In the same year he obtained also his M.A. in linguistics from Columbia University, where his tutor and mentor and professor was John Lotz. It was certainly he who encouraged Austerlitz to work on Hungarian phonology and under whose guidance Austerlitz's thesis, "Phonemic Analysis of Hungarian" was written. The academic atmosphere of New York during and immediately after World War II was really exciting and intellectually very stimulating thanks to the refugees and emigrées from the Old World, among them André Martinet, Roman Jakobson and Uriel Weinreich. John Lotz, whom Roman Jakobson "allured" there from Stockholm joined them after the war. This "Linguistic Circle of New York" was a stimulating company for the young Austerlitz, where he could hear about the French and the Russian structuralism, the methods of the Vienna School and the Prague Circle and last, but not least — thanks to John Lotz — he could sense the spirit of famous Eötvös-Collegium of Budapest. In New York Austerlitz also had a chance to meet Béla Bartók, the great Hungarian composer and ethnomusicologist who, after having emigrated to the States from Hungary in 1940 (for the same reasons as Austerlitz two years earlier) found asylum also in Columbia University, where he was employed as a curator of the ethnomusicological archives. Bartók, who had an excellent knowledge of Romanian, while working on Romanian folk-songs from Máramaros-Maramureş County, Transylvania, ran into passage where he could not understand some words. He wanted to find someone who could help him. It was presumably due to the connections Austerlitz's mother had with the musical world that Bartók could have heard of the young man who had recently come from Romania, and so he asked him to come and help. Austerlitz, as he told me later, considered the invitation a great honour. He put on his best clothes, but in spite of his careful preparations was late for the appointment, because in his excitement he had got off the subway at a wrong place and had to walk

there. He was, nevertheless, received by a soft-spoken and polite gentleman, Bartók, who, without a delay, started to play the record in question. Much to his regret, Austerlitz could not help, since he did not know the dialectal/poetic word Bartók wanted him to explain. (Later, being a good philologist, he looked up the word *ömät* which turned out to 'snow'. At the time they met Austerlitz knew only the common words *zǎ-padǎ* and *nea* for 'snow'.)

From 1951 to 1953 Austerlitz studied general, Finnic, as well as Finno-Ugric linguistics at the University of Helsinki. Among his professors were Paavo Rivila, Lauri Hakulinen and Toivo Vilho Lehtisalo. In the early fifties Finland was still groaning under the burden of paying the Soviets war reparations. Food, fuel, nearly everything was rationed, poverty was general, but culture was held in higher prestige than ever. Austerlitz did not live better than the Finns around him, but he used his time effectively for educating himself. He learned not only Finnish, but also Swedish and found something in Helsinki of what he had left in Brassó: something of a European style urban life with literary salons, theatrical performances and concerts. (He told me that in home-concerts he was regular accompanying pianist to Lehtisalo who played the violin.) And the University of Helsinki with its classical style buildings, with its rich and well-ordered library, with its enlightened spirit, with its benevolent and learned professors who, nevertheless, kept the obligatory three step distance from the public, altogether gave the impression as if it were a relict of the last century. Although the two world wars, with a civil war and the "winter-war" in-between, took an extremely heavy toll in the life of the Finns, the social and political institutions (Church, Parliament, government, administration, parties, hospitals, universities, schools) remained surprisingly intact in the flames of these devastating events of history. Finland remained a reasonable and sober country amidst the sea of graziness that characterized Europe in those days. Moreover, she became in island of stability and cultural continuity in Europe during and after the war. This must have been perceived even in New York, since the war had dramatically changed the life-style and cultural set-up of America, too,

not to mention Austerlitz's native region in East-Europe. After the pragmatic and quickly changing ways of the Americans, the slow-moving, traditional and predictable Finnish way of life, the stability and efficiency of their institutions and the sense of comfort and reliability the academic life eradicated, certainly had their effect on the mercurial "American": he realized that moving around incessantly is a futile vagary in the academic world unless one has a stable and reliable background. Perhaps it is not too daring to suppose that also realizing the dangers of being unbound to anyone and by anything made him think of marrying Sylvi Nevanlinna, the daughter of a famous professor of mathematics at the University of Helsinki, Rolf Nevanlinna.

Shortly after his wedding Austerlitz hit the road again. This time he went to Japan where he spent two years (1953—1954) with the support of the Ford-Foundation. Looking back at his life now it is not an exaggeration to say that his journey to Japan was the "great adventure" of his life, since this was the place (the isle of Hokkaido) where he met an informant, a goldmine every linguist who does field work can just dream of, Mrs. Tijoko Nakamura, originally from South Sachalin who was born of a Gilyak mother and a Tungus father in the early years of this century and, through her, a field of study, the Gilyak language and culture which became a real life for him. The young man who was already familiar with the methods of comparative, as well as descriptive linguistics, and was versatile in the Euroamerican culture ran across a totally new world that differed thoroughly from what he had known earlier. He learned the new language and culture quickly and found his new domain of interest, his study for life, Gilyak. Meanwhile he was waiting his doctoral thesis on Ob-Ugric metrics from books (since field work in Western Siberia, or even a short visit to Leningrad in the hope of some "native people" from Siberia studying in the Herzen College was inconceivable for an American citizen in the early fifties). This being the case, it is more than understandable that working with a "native" Gilyak informant was a real compensation for Austerlitz for the then inaccessible Siberian field work. In his doctoral dissertation which was written in Japan (and pub-

lished in Helsinki in 1958) Austerlitz follows the best traditions of Finno-Ugric linguistics by relying on the works of Wolfgang Steinitz and John Lotz. The book is considered now a "classical opus" of European style philology, a model work for the profession all around the world. While he was busy in acquiring Japanese and getting acquainted with Japanese "high culture", Austerlitz engaged himself also in collecting Gilyak material, an unwritten Paleosiberian language. The intensive occupation simultaneously with three different languages and cultures (i.e. Ob-Ugric, Japanese and Gilyak languages, as well as philological tradition of Europe, "high" and "low cultures" in Asia) could possibly help Austerlitz realize what he had already learned from comparative linguistics: languages and cultures of the world are equally valuable and precious and represent unlimited variability. It is due to the training Austerlitz acquired through these simultaneous exercises that he was capable of not only displaying a benevolent and understanding attitude toward so-called "unwritten languages" and "intellectual activity of lower class people", respectively, as it is becoming a man of letters in this century, but also of the reverse of this, i.e. regarding "long cultivated languages" and products of "high cultures" as naïv and innocent natives do — sincerely and without biases of civilization. In the true spirit of Enlightenment Austerlitz had a predilection for the method of internal reconstruction also in the case of language with ancient written records and linguistic tradition. Applying the method of internal reconstruction for Finnish, he could detect also an ancient, long forgotten magic layer hidden behind the familiar façade of such everyday verbs like *luopua* 'to part from/with, to resign', *taipua* 'to lean, to incline to', *haipua/ häipyä* 'to disappear, to fade away'. The method was originally developed for detecting the historical-genetic background of Amerindian languages and Austerlitz was among the pioneers who "re-imported" this product of the New World to the Old One<sup>4</sup>. The method as we know it may be a new one, but the spirit in which it was conceived is certainly not — it was first applied by Socrates.

Equally unprejudiced Austerlitz's approach toward Vogul, Gilyak and Romanian folksongs-texts. Having gone through

his analyses, it is amazing to see how masterly and well are these so-called primitive compositions formed<sup>5</sup>. And also something else: unlike the usual (and regrettable) ways of the majority of linguists and folklorists of this century Austerlitz does not separate text from melody, or *vice versa*, but regards them in their mutual dependence and shows the configurations these two can form together<sup>6</sup>. The relationship of language to music and *vice versa*, their similarity as well as their difference kept the mind of the one-time "jazz-pianist" busy and he repeatedly returned to this topic later (John Lotz told me about Austerlitz's short escapade as a bar-pianist in New Orleans after World War II). The introductory words of "Meaning in music: is music like language and if so, how?"<sup>7</sup>, which was dedicated to the memory of Roman Jakobson, indicate the deep streams of thought that wash away the boundaries between the domains of language and music: "This tribute to Roman Jakobson issues only indirectly from his teachings on music or on art in general. It does issue directly from one of his most forceful and lasting statements "Shifters, verbal categories, and the Russian verb" (1956), in which music plays no role at all. That in itself ought to be a tribute to Jakobson's thinking. *Sapienti sat.*"

As his life was accompanied by certain particulars, it made some customs officers and other doorkeeping officials in the most different parts of the world go crazy. In Brasó he was "the Austrian boy who prefers to speak Hungarian", in New York "Oh, the young man who has recently come from Transylvania", in Hungary the "Romanian" (the linguist Dezsó Paizs, for instance, whose sarcastic sense of humor was surpassed only by his one-time fellow in the Eötvös-Collegium, Zoltán Kodály, one of the legendary sharp-tongues of the century in Hungary, complimented Austerlitz in Budapest in the early sixties by saying: "Listen, Austerlitz, not every Romanian is a troublemaker, but you are!"), in Finland he was the "Gipsy" (once in the early fifties he was not allowed to enter an elegant restaurant in Helsinki, possibly because of his black curly hair and oily skin. His mother-in-law, a stylish dame of Swedish origin, who was with him, argued in vain with the door-man, who was not exactly put to stand there to guard

the spirit of equality of all races of mankind. At last she started hysterically shouting at the stone-hearted Cerberus and threatened him with the interference of her powerful and influential husband, the then Rector of the University of Helsinki. This made the watsch-dog think if he should call for the police or, rather the ambulance), in Japan the "American", in his family in America the home-language was Finnish. Similarly, his scholarly activity is a cross-breed of most different methods and schools of the profession and full of configurations of intellectual currents that characterize no one else, but him. I have already mentioned above how Austerlitz applied internal reconstruction as a complementary and control method to the comparative method, how he added musicological analyses to his studies of Vogul and Gilyak folklore texts. Besides his Finnic and Hungarian linguistic studies<sup>8</sup>, Gilyak, this language-isolate, remained his main interest throughout his life. The series of his Gilyak studies begins with his very first essay, "Gilyak Nursery Words" (1956) and goes on with articles on various subjects, demonstrating the common origin of vocative and imperative through identifying the semantic components of pronominal system, analyzing the terminology of ethnozoology and ethnobotany and ending with the problems of religious terminology<sup>9</sup>. As culminating points of his Gilyak studies, in my opinion, two of his writings are worth mentioning: "Typology in the Service of Internal Reconstruction: Saxalin Nivx"<sup>10</sup> from 1990 where he traces down the present paradigmatic initial consonant alternations of Gilyak to earlier reduplicative processes, and "Finnish and Gilyak Sound-Symbolism — The Interplay between System and History"<sup>11</sup>, written presumably between 1985 and 1990, where we are blinded by his glimmering knowledge of phonetics as seen against a broad historico-typological background. (And although he was — as he put it speaking about his master and friend, John Lotz — a "true eclectic" who could make use of almost any discipline or school of learning, yet he considered only two branches of linguistics well-founded and coherent from a strictly logical point of view, namely, comparative linguistics and phonetics. "There is nothing else [that counts]", he said.) Concerning phonic means

available in language for descriptive purposes there seems to be striking similarity between these two geographically far away languages. The paper ends with a telling question: "Are the Finnish and Gilyak scenarios rooted in the nature of human phonation or, more specifically, in the cultural make-up of the North-Eurasian area?"

Like almost all of Austerlitz's writings, his papers on various Gilyak and Finnish subjects are also deep-drillings, i.e. thorough and exhaustive treatments of the subjects in question along the axis of time. His investigations of this kind are, on the one hand, summarized in the traditional frame of comparative linguistics, yet never without a personal touch like, for instance, his encyclopedia-article, "Uralic Languages"<sup>12</sup> and, on the other hand, characterized through a radically new approach, in the frame of the so-called long-range comparison where he extends his horizon in order to be able to include possibly all languages and language-families of Northern hemisphere. Austerlitz started these investigations partly as a criticism of the illusory-dilettantic language comparison, a revitalized fad in Eastern Europe and elsewhere now, and partly as an alternative for the terminology (*phylum*, *macro-family* etc.) used by Amerindianists<sup>13</sup>. Soon, the discipline began to live by its own right and gained ground as a new branch in the profession which I would call *global linguistics*<sup>14</sup>. After pointing out what kind of items can not be compared and in what cases comparison must not be applied Austerlitz finds those items and domains which can justly be subjected to comparison. This is a ground where his experience with microphilology in identifying the objects of investigation and in cleaning up the objects in question by "removing contamination" bears fruit — his witty speculations gain credibility through numberless empirical observations he made earlier.

Comparative microphilology and global linguistics are two aspects of Austerlitz's oeuvre that complement each other: with comparative microphilology he traces down linguistic processes along the axis of time, while with the help of global linguistics he can keep an eye on the spatial distribution of the very same processes. Either of these two approaches can but confirm his statement on language "as a larger-than-life sys-

tem". Sizing up the loftiness of language at a glance is a divine gift shared by only few, a present which is, for most of them, more of a curse rather, than a blessing. Austerlitz was among the elected, but unlike most of them, he was not struck dumb by the sight of "the burning bush" and became melancholic as Zoltán Gombocz, professor and mentor to Austerlitz's master, John Lotz did in his last years or turned to a merciless self-critic as the aforementioned John Lotz himself. He saw the immenseness of the task and the diminutive dimensions of Man, but did not revolt against this cast of roles. He accepted it as it is. In this way he could preserve the soundness of his ego, as well as his ability to act. He was a sceptic and he knew well the world would not let itself to be swallowed up at once, but it is not impossible to have a bit of it here and there in the hope of having a taste of the whole, "partem pro toto". In this respect his credo was radically different from the dominant trends of linguistics of our century, both from generative-transformational linguistics ruling mostly the Western World and from nostratic linguistics, a dominant trend among linguists of the former Soviet Union. It was the immodesty and the pretentious nature of these schools by which they wanted either to generate the whole language from one "germ of grammars" or to decompose the multiplicity of languages to one "original" that repelled him. For him any kind of "totalitarian" linguistics was unacceptable, he preferred "global" linguistics instead.

Identifying the objects of a study, regardless of whether they are Finnish morphophonemes, Gilyak folkloristic genres, cases of the European absolute superlative or language-families of Eurasia and North-America, is a central motif in his oeuvre. Moreover, it is not only the identification of the objects of his studies which concerns him, but also the clarification and maintenance of the concepts, "the instruments" we generally use for trapping and/or describing these objects. Let me mention only a few of his clarifying essays: "Remarks on Deixis", "Associating Freely about Repetition in General or Repetitive Matrix Studio-sa" and my favorite among his latest writings, "Myth, Play, Humor"<sup>15</sup>. In this latter he is bringing down — with plasticity unseen elsewhere in philology — a number of

concepts used both by the profession and the public to a common denominator.

He was a polyglott, unique in his kind in the profession, a uniqueness even in this profession, who, according to Ilse Lehisté, spoke 16 languages. When a Danish colleague, amazed by his gift of tongues, asked him how many languages he exactly spoke, Austerlitz answered evasively: "Jeg kender faktisk to: kærlighedens og blomsternes sprog". "Det vil sige, de alle andre er kun dialekter", wondered the Dane in resignation. His legendary command of languages was not just a free gift from the heaven, although almost since his birth he had close ties to three languages, German, Hungarian and Romanian. All the rest, i.e. the major part of them, he must have learnt like anybody else. And he really studied hard throughout his life. For instance, he was already an old man — this epithet is not at all fitting to his personality — when learned to speak Russian fluently. Language was for him, first and foremost, a vehicle of communication and he used it as such. His talent for communication was perhaps more amazing than his gift of tongues, or, maybe, there is a mutual dependence between the two: he was capable of learning so many languages because he was deeply and sincerely interested in the person fate made him meet regardless of what social status he or she had, whether he was a university professor or a Gipsy basketweaver: "He did not differentiate between linguistics and friendship", said Austerlitz about Roman Jakobson when he visited us in Aarhus, Denmark, in November 1991, and this statement characterizes him not less than the original hero of the sentence. He had friends everywhere around the world. He maintained friendly relations with linguists and folklorists, as well as with representatives of some other related professions from Finland to Japan (and almost all countries in between), not mentioning both Americas. Accordingly, he had friends in and outside Estonia. His friendship with the representatives of the great generation of Estonian linguists like Paul Ariste and Alo Raun is well known and shown also by Austerlitz's articles dedicated to these two Grand Old Men, respectively, on some jubilatory occasions. Friendship was evidently very important for him, so much so that most of

the written part of his oeuvre can be found in publications all over the world either as gratulatory articles dedicated to jubilating friends or as papers dedicated to the memory of late friends or as lectures addressing the audience at some congress (v. Selected Bibliography of R. Austerlitz's Opera at the end of this writing). His publications appeared spread all over the world, since it was not of his concern to build up his own monument while still alive. As a true humanist he preferred direct contacts, personal exchange of ideas and verbal communication to printed material (although he was an excellent stylist). His short appearances in Europe (I met him several times in Hungary, Finland, Denmark and also in New York) were characterized by high intellectual intensity: his witty comments, appropriate remarks and bon mots straightened out quite a few curves in the career of some of us. Let me cite here just one of Austerlitz's wise sayings not only because it reveals his sharp wit, but also because it is based on a poetic device, *parallelism*, which he was so attracted to. Describing the linguistic tradition of Hungary he said, "A magyar nyelvészetnek két hagyománya van: a gomboczság és a hólyagság". His friendly gestures were returned by the amicable company of his colleagues. In Hungary he was presented a "Festschrift" for his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday (appeared actually on his 70<sup>th</sup>) by his friends and with a Foreword by Péter Hajdú, "a Hungarian cousin of mine" as he used to refer to his colleague, two weeks younger than he (NyK 91 1990). Also a volume of his selected papers translated into Hungarian appeared in Hungary two years ago (Nyelvek és kultúrák Euráziában, Budapest 1992).

He was an excellent educator. I mention only two of those who were also formally his students because of their special ties to him. Daniel M. Abondolo, presently teaching Hungarian literature at the Institute of Slavic and Eastern European Languages, University of London, applied and extended congenially the morphonological approach to other cognate languages (Mordvinian and Hungarian), originally developed for Finnish by Austerlitz. In this context, specifically Abondolo's doctoral thesis is worth mentioning, since it can be truly regarded as a complementary opus to Aus-

terlitz's oeuvre (Hungarian Interfleccional Morphology, Budapest 1988). For Austerlitz, in spite of his familiarity with and good understanding of Hungarian linguistics and culture, and in spite of his strong sympathy for the Hungarians in general, did not publish much (how telling a silence!) on Hungarian topics. The other student of his I want to mention here is Carol H. Rounds who was the last among his doctorands and is presently teaching Hungarian at Columbia University. As a devoted student and faithful colleague he was a witness to Austerlitz's last years. Also Austerlitz was satisfied with his former students and colleagues (in addition to Abondolo and Rounds he mentioned to me also Aili Flint, lecturer in Finnish at Columbia University, with a specific affection) and felt lucky for having such good people around him at Columbia University, his working place for life. In spite of his mercurial nature, Austerlitz remained always loyal to his Alma Mater, Columbia University where he belonged to the staff of the Department of Linguistics since 1958 and became a professor in 1965. Speaking about his students he said once, "I have not many [students], but I don't mind, for if I had that would also be a cult". He practiced his profession as an educator also outside university campuses and class-rooms, in the most different parts of the world where he showed up for short visits to give a lecture at a symposium or a congress. He was a helpful participant of doctoral committees promoting the career of younger colleagues. In Finland Juha Janhunen, in France Jocelyn J. Fernandez and in Hungary János Pusztay had the honor of having Austerlitz as their opponent.

In the last three years of his life Austerlitz combatted cancer, but he did not let himself put down by it. He loved life and knew how to make it sweet. Having gone through two serious operations he was given a chance to lead a relatively unrestricted life that was worth living his remaining three years. He died after short, but intensive suffering in New York, on September 9, 1994.

I had already heard his name and read his work "Ob-Ugric Metrics" before I met him personally in Szeged during the last days of the bleak and ominous August, 1968. I was a student then, beginning my last year at the University of Szeged and was intro-

duced to him by my professor and a friend of Austerlitz, Péter Hajdú. I was helping to prepare a symposium on the typology of languages in Northern Eurasia. We were expecting participants from East and West alike. History again entered the scene and as a consequence only Eastern guests arrived, mainly from the Soviet Union. One of the few exceptions from the West was, of course, Austerlitz who did come. He burst in the place as if — so it seemed to us who

were filled with anguish in the wake of the occupation of Czechoslovakia — a comet had landed coming from another world of "a larger-than-human scale" and brought with him something we thought we had just lost forever — a breath of freedom. Time has come for him now to return into that world whose grandeur and magnificence we were fortunate to sense through his amiable personality while still in this world.

#### Notes or a Selected Bibliography of R. Austerlitz's Opera

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