

4. Summary

I feel that the Fulbright scholarship in 2002-2003 is a defining moment in my career. I started my own independent research with great success, I began international collaborations and was invited to a number of universities other than my host institute. After an eventful year as a Fulbright scholar, I returned to Hungary determined to continue my research and my work as a university faculty member and at the same time staying in close contact with those who helped me so much in the United States.

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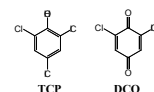
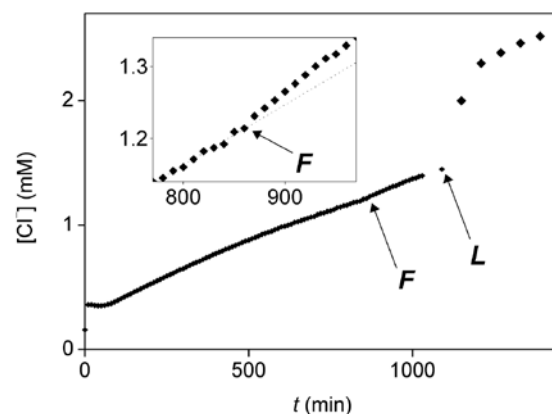


Figure 1. Chemical formulas of 2,4,6-trichlorophenol (TCP) and 2,6-dichloro-1,4-benzoquinone (DCQ)

Figure 2. Effect of light on the formation of Cl⁻ during the oxidation of 2,4,6-trichlorophenol (TCP) by hydrogen peroxide catalyzed by Fe(TPPS)⁺. [TCP]₀ = 0.83 mM, [H₂O₂]₀ = 50 mM, [Fe(TPPS)⁺]₀ = 5.0 μM, T = 25.0 °C, μ = 0.1 M (NaNO₃); F = fluorescent room light turned on; L = halogen lamp turned on. Inset: part of the curve between 770 and 1000 min showing the accelerating effect of room light.



BONDS

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Abstract

In my paper I will talk about the personal connections I have developed over the years. I was lucky to have met people who were just as interested in Hungary as I was in the United States. It took me a lot of thinking to decide whether I should (could) write about such, non-academic, things. As I taught in two different schools, and teach in a third one, it could have been an obvious choice to make a comparative study on the educational institutions I used to work and work now. Yes, it might even have been interesting. However, I believe that developing relationships – bonds – amongst people was one of the main ideas Mr. Fulbright was thinking of. The experiences the characters of my little writing had – an in some case have – had an enormous impact on their lives. Having concluded my first year in America I became a different person, nine years later my wife had the same experience. James, my first exchange partner, found the relatives of his ancestors and found love. Andy, my former student, saw Europe when he was only fifteen. And finally, Alicia and Ben are here in Hungary at the moment and plan to teach English in my hometown, Pécs, from September. Two years ago, sitting on a porch in Providence (RI), we were joking about them becoming the godparents of our first-born child. The baby is coming in September.

Bonds

Arriving

And there I was at seven in the evening, just stepping out of the main building at Dulles Airport, again. For years I'd been wishing to experience this feeling again, this hot and sticky ocean-born air that surrounds you as if you've fallen into a hot bathtub. Nine years ago I loved that first experience of America and, I have to admit, there was a touch of sentiment attached to it. I like this weather, when you are never, never cold, even in the middle of the night. To my great dismay the Americans were (are) not so keen on this feeling, so they kept forcing me into *very* air conditioned spaces where I felt highly uncomfortable and had to acknowledge that, yes, the Americans do indeed have different ideas about comfort. They like wearing long jeans, closed shoes and tucked in shirts in such hot weather and largely spend their time inside in air-conditioning, which necessitates the operation of lot of machines; consequently the capital city in summer sounds like an enormous bee, creating a continuous buzzing background noise colored by the sound of an unlimited, to European eyes, number of cars. That's it, I thought: I am experiencing the same country, nothing's changed, this is what I wanted. And this time my wife will see the same.

James

James was almost two meters tall, a one-hundred-and-thirty-kilo football and wrestling coach, and a teacher of History. He was to become my exchange partner for the year 1993-94. A formidable fellow, I thought first; though as it turned out later, he was also a really kind and caring person. As it is an exchange program we switched schools and positions. He taught History and English, being a native speaker, and I taught History and Geography. I even became an assistant soccer coach, being somebody „from Europe, where people play soccer all the time”. He picked Hungary. He deliberately wanted to come here. I have to emphasize this as not many teachers who come to teach in Hungary put our dear country at first place. They mainly choose England, where they are comfortable with the language, then Spain, or Turkey, or maybe France. James Nemeth put our little country at first place. Why? Because his father was a Nemeth. He had a Hungarian name! It was so obvious that I did not realize it until we met. Yes, James went to visit the country of his ancestors, the country whose language his great-granddad once spoke when he proposed to his great-grandma. I, on the other hand, went to the US for completely different reasons. I wanted to see the world and to try myself as a teacher in another system. To me that year was rather a way to get to know myself, to gain confidence, and to learn as much as possible. (I had only taught two years before I arrived at Dulles.)

Soon after arrival James was introduced

to my family. We exchanged flats, too, so my parents showed him around, and invited him for lunch and dinner. They – especially my dad and the quiet American – became friends. Months passed, James liked the school and the kids liked him. He went to a ski camp with one of the classes in the winter. I also enjoyed my school and coaching, and was on good terms with the kids. When they heard that my plan was to travel extensively in the States, they collected money and handed it over to me at Christmas. For gas – they said. – To see more! So, everything was going well, as Mr. Fulbright had once imagined.

My father worked for the city council at that time. In the second semester James approached him and asked for help finding his relatives. He had some kind of document with him, so my father started to make phone calls. By the end of May he succeeded. The relatives were found and plans were made to travel there. After school ended James and Dad took the train and went to the Nyírség, a distant part of Hungary to meet with the relatives. James found what he was looking for, his roots. And he found more! At a meeting organized for the exchange teachers he met a Hungarian teacher who had also had an exchange a year before.

In the spring 2003 I visited them. They live near Annapolis (MD) and have three kids. James is a principal of a small high school just across the Bay-Bridge.

Andy

Andy was one of my students in Archbishop Spalding High School in Severn, Maryland. It was a Catholic high school that had just

been awarded the Blue Ribbon by the Department of Education. Best school of the region, I was told. Academically, they added. That was to be my school for the year 1993-94. Looking back now, I think, I could not have been luckier. The staff was supporting, discipline was good, and the school ran smoothly.

I spent the first three weeks preparing my Course Outline for the year. It included the objectives of my course, the requirements, my expectations and the grading policy. In the last week of August, the soccer training began, and I already met some of my future students. Andy was one of them, though I did not get to know him at that time.

School started and I was a „big thing”: The guy from Europe. The first weeks went mostly all right, but then I began to have problems. I was more used to lecturing; they were more used to activities. That was a problem I sometimes managed to solve well, while other times I failed. However, all in all we, the kids and I, had a good time, and there was teaching and learning involved.

Andy was in one of my honors World History classes. He and his closest friends were smart, sharp and funny (Andy's full name is Andy Eye, so whenever he said his name at first the others went: „we do realize that *you* are Andy but what's your surname?”). I am a teacher who likes a laugh, so we sort of had a bit more in common. The problem was, at least to me, that the school only had four-minute breaks. What can you do in such a short time? If you are a teacher, you stay in your room; students walk from one classroom

to another. There is simply no time to have long conversations with the students.

Fortunately Andy was a soccer player, so we were together in the afternoons, playing and talking, joking and running, and developing a friendship. Towards the end of the school year he asked me to join him playing soccer in an indoor league, where we came out as winners in the end, if I recall it well. Also towards the end of my exchange my students kept telling me that they would come visit me in Hungary. Andy, on the other hand, thought about it seriously. He talked to his Mom, then I talked to his Mom, then decision was made. I was more than touched. There were about eight hundred students in the school and as it was a private school, they all had to pay a tuition fee. However there were two students in every class who were accepted on the basis of their academic achievements and had a scholarship. Andy was one of them. So there were over seven hundred kids who could have afforded to visit Hungary more easily.

Andy arrived about ten days after I returned home, in the first days of August. We spent a bit more than a fortnight together. It might sound strange that a 27-year old man can have meaningful conversations with a 15-year old, but in our case it was true. He enjoyed Hungary, although there was no air-conditioning anywhere, public transportation was slow, he had to eat strange food, and sometimes the telephone did not work. He never complained. He told me that he had decided he would not complain just because he did not find everything comfortable. I took him to soccer training

in Pécs, we traveled to Lake Balaton and to Budapest. On the last night we went to a restaurant and he asked me to order a Hungarian specialty. I can't recall what we had, but I do remember we had to steal the menu because he could not believe the food we Hungarians eat. (Pig brain for example, though it is rather a question of bad translation.)

Next time we met personally was in August 2002, when my second exchange year began, this time in Providence, Rhode Island. Andy was working in Boston then, so I asked him to pick up my wife for me at the airport. When we talked on the phone he still called my Mr. Marcz, which habit we changed soon. Anyway, he had a Saab Convertible at that time, so my wife's first American experience was to be driven in a convertible amongst huge trucks. We saw Andy a few times during that year, which became a turning point in his life. He moved back to DC, bought a house and a boat, and met his wife. They are expecting their first baby in October. I think they will visit us.

Alicia and Ben

August 2002: my wife and I are sitting on a beach at Cape Cod. School begins within two weeks, but I am not worried. What could happen that's new? I have 14 years of experience, I already taught in an American school, so teaching is going to be easy. Here we are, and we shall have a cross-country trip next summer. What more could I ask for?

In some respects I was right. We did have a great cross country trip the following summer, but the ten months between

sitting on a beach at Cape Cod and leaving for Las Vegas was not a piece of cake. This time I ended up in a so-called „inner city school”, Central Falls High School, Central Falls, RI. CF is a small immigrant community, and has been for over a hundred years. Today it is mainly immigrants from South-America who live here, with some from Europe, Asia and Cape Verde. The community is so poor that the state of Rhode Island actually had to take over the operation of the school. Furthermore, I was to teach History and Civics to kids who barely speak English, who have just left their homeland, whose parents are still abroad, and who work six hours a day. It was not easy. This time I did not have to compile a Course Rationale and outline. This time I spent the month of August reading about how to handle these kids. I made classroom rules and a discipline plan for my students: so-called „Positive Notes” that I can send home if the student has good achievements, or yellow and red card warnings if they did not behave. They liked this, because they all came from places where soccer is an important part of life. (I just checked their website and the soccer team became state and division champion in 2004.)

All in all it was a different experience to teach in CF, and I was not a „big thing” since there were many teachers from different ethnic backgrounds. It took time to find out what to do with them, how to organize a lesson in a way that they can enjoy. My wife and I spent long hours talking about these things, because she had also studied to become a teacher. However, in the US she had to find a

different kind of work. Luckily she got the work permit by September, and the search began. Luck again. She started to work for Geoff's, a famous sandwich bar that has been in the heart of Providence for over thirty years. Thirty years and still the same business in America? That is rare. The manager, Ben, hired her and she had to memorize the ingredients of the sandwiches. (There were 86 different sandwiches in Geoff's...). The “exam day” was Monday and she got the job. But let us see, how the Ben in question remembers it:

“For the first few years of this millennium I was managing a small sandwich shop, which was always in need of good help, as are most restaurants. Our menu had over eighty sandwiches, and each employee played a part making them to order, right in front of the customers, so as a simple test we asked applicants to learn the ingredients for ten to twenty of the menu items. More than capability, this assessed dedication and work ethic.

One Wednesday, I believe it was, a young Hungarian woman came into the store and said, haltingly, that she had learned some sandwiches. I'd never met a Hungarian before, although I have a few ancestors from that country, so at the time it meant little to me, aside from the obvious fact that she was a foreigner, but I was taken aback when she replied in answer to my questions, that she had learned *all* of them. She was telling the truth, and I never considered that I might not give her a job.

At that time Orsi spoke just a little English, and so our conversations were

limited, but she was pleasant to work with and worked harder than any other employee. As days rolled into months, I learned that she was here with her husband, a Fulbright exchange teacher, who happened to be teaching in a high school just a few blocks from where I lived. I met Rob a few times when he came to pick his wife up, or drop her off, and once, he asked that I and my girlfriend Alicia come to their house for dinner. This was undoubtedly the best thing that happened to me at the deli.

Dinner was fantastic, but the conversation we had was even better. We spoke a little of politics, a little of weather of course, and more importantly we spoke of life in our respective homelands, comparing the things we liked and disliked, contrasting common phrases and daily occurrences; I'd never been outside America then, and talking with these Hungarians, went home thinking about the differences, yes, but more about the similarities, imagining myself in a country where I didn't know the language, with people like my newfound friends walking the streets, and maybe even people who were something like the people I knew. Over the year that Orsi and Rob were in America, we had dinner several times at each other's houses, and Alicia and I grew to like them very much, so we were understandably sad when they left, and we were also determined to stay in touch. E-mail allowed

us to speak about their readjustment to their country, the way things looked after a time living in a very different land. The following summer, in 2004, we went to visit our friends in their country, and here I think we realized how our hospitality had been lacking, because we met their friends, their family, they showed us their towns and offered information, help with the language – and other Hungarians we met were as welcoming, without knowing us beforehand. I am to this day unable to imagine that my first trip abroad could have been any better. When the time came for us to go home, we were sad again, but pleased with our travels and even more determined to stay in contact.

This time it was our turn to look at our homes with new eyes, seeing things in a brighter light, thinking of different lives half a world away. I don't think we learned to like America less, we rather learned to like Hungary as well. And so, this year, in June, I'm taking a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) certification course, after which I hope to join Alicia, who has already been teaching English to Hungarians for several months."

So, that is it. "Seeing things in a brighter light, thinking of different lives half a world away" as Ben puts it. I wish everyone could have similar experiences.

Attempts at the Revision of the Treaty of Trianon in the Light of American Hungarian Relations in the Interwar Period

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The following paper will offer an insight into the results of my doctoral research project I carried out as a Fulbright student in the US. As part of this extensive inquiry, the essay below will assess images Hungarians fostered about the US during the interwar period with the definite purpose to underline their significance in the formation of political and diplomatic relations between the countries. These Hungarian images of America gave rise to popular illusions regarding Hungary's political expectations toward the US, especially in terms of the revision of the Treaty of Trianon, and within this scope they were to make American views of Hungary, and consequently American action favorable toward Hungary. Such image-making efforts, however, did not yield the expected results. These images had no lasting influence on the American mind, and even less on American politics toward Hungary between the two world wars.