

## Laura Polanyi 1882-1957: Narratives of a Life\*

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In the following hour, I would like to acquaint you with the subject of my biographical study, Laura Polanyi. If her name is known at all outside of a small circle of specialists, it is because of her internationally renowned younger brothers, the economist and anthropologist Karl Polanyi and the physicochemist and philosopher Michael Polanyi, not to mention the legion of other prominent academics and artists in her family. For anyone remotely familiar with the history and culture of turn-of-the-century Hungary, her name would also recall the circle of the periodical *Twentieth Century*, again, as a figure of secondary importance next to her high-profile brothers.

The following short summary of Laura Polanyi's contributions and achievements should provide sufficient evidence for my claim that she deserves scholarly attention in her own right. In addition, I will touch upon some of the structural and methodological problems I encountered while shaping the outlines of this biography. Some of these problems may be common to the genre, however, they were amplified by the task of making a largely Hungarian subject accessible for North American readers as well as by my own position as a Hungarian historian transplanted to North America; and as such, will hopefully be of interest for you as academics and students specialized in the study of Central Europe.

Let's begin with the facts. Laura Polanyi was born in 1882 in Vienna, the eldest child of Mihaly Pollacsek and Cecile Wohl. (The family name was later Magyarized to Polanyi.) On the father's side, the family's roots had been traced back to the North-Eastern parts of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and to the late eighteenth century; family documents reveal that the forebears of Mihaly Pollacsek were well-off renters of steam mills, distilleries and crown-lands as far back as the first half of the 19th century.<sup>[1]</sup>

Mihaly Pollacsek and his brothers followed the pattern of upwardly mobile, prosperous Jewish families and went on to become university-trained professionals; in his case, the usual pattern was somewhat modified with the unusual choice of profession: engineering, and his university of choice: the *Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule* in Zürich, Switzerland. Upon his graduation, Michael Pollacsek went on to build several railway lines in Switzerland and Austria. It was in Vienna that he met his future wife, Cecile Wohl, daughter of the enlightened rabbinic scholar, Adolf Wohl, from Vilna. Family legend has it that following her graduation from high school, Cecile was dispatched to Vienna in order to avoid her involvement in the revolutionary youth movements of her native Vilna, accompanied by a Russian friend, Anna Lvov. If that was the case, the move failed to achieve the intended result. Anna soon married Samuel Klatschko, comrade of Russian revolutionaries and supporter of Russian exiles and activists (Trotsky and Radek, among others) in Vienna. The lifelong friendship between the Polanyi and Klatschko families provided Cecile and in due course her children with an exposure to Russian revolutionary ideology, as well as personal contacts with Russian revolutionaries; again, a more than unusual experience in their social circle.<sup>[2]</sup>

In the 1890s, when Michael Pollacsek established himself as a railway contractor and moved to the Monarchy's other capital, Budapest, the family included Adolf (born in 1883), Karl-Karoly (born in 1886), Sophie-Zsofia (born in 1888) and Michael-Mihaly (born in 1891). The last sibling, Paul, was born mentally handicapped and died a few years later. In rapidly industrializing turn-of-the-century Hungary, business was booming and the Polanyi family, in their spacious flat on fashionable *Andrassy ut*, the newly-built, tree-lined boulevard, was the picture of bourgeois prosperity.

Similarly, the children's education, provided by an army of tutors and governesses until they were ready for high school, was seemingly no different from that of the environment and education of other members of the upper-middle class.

There were, however, two important differences which made the Polanyi siblings' childhood and upbringing unique. The first concerned their mothers high-profile social role and intellectual ambitions. Shortly after their settling in Budapest, Cecile Polanyi established a salon, attended by the brightest lights of the Budapest intellectual scene. She passionately "collected" the newest talents and kept discovering the newest intellectual fashions, from the modern artistic movements (she occasionally published reviews for German newspapers) to psychoanalysis (she was a self-proclaimed analyst), and from political movements (she gave a lecture on the 1905 Russian revolution) to modern pedagogy (in which she also considered herself an expert).<sup>[3]</sup> Often superficial and indiscriminate in her intellectual tastes, she was nevertheless unique among middle-class women of her generation by the sheer range and ambition of her intellectual pursuits; and as an indefatigable supporter of talents, a memorable fixture of the political and artistic avant-garde, taking its first steps in Hungary.

The entrepreneur father, on the other hand, provided much more than the financial means for his family's upper-middle-class lifestyle. He had been an exceptionally devoted father who, despite the long periods of time he spent away from his family, especially after his business had gone bankrupt in 1900, remained the major influence on the children's education until his untimely death in 1905.

Laura Polanyi attended the Lutheran boys gymnasium as a special student; one of the best high schools at the time, it accepted a disproportionate number of Jewish students in exchange for a higher tuition fee.<sup>[4]</sup> A ministerial decree of 1895 which opened the faculties of medicine and arts for women at the Budapest university, also allowed for the founding of a girls high school with the right to provide its students with the finishing exam and thus access to the faculties. From grade 5 (high schools had 8 grades at the time), Laura had been in the first group of young women who graduated from the Girls Gymnasium of the National Association for Women's Education in 1900; she enrolled at the faculty of arts of the Budapest University in history in the same year.

She was thus one of the pioneers but, at the same time, part of a small vanguard of like-minded young women, as opposed to the handful of women previously enrolled at the university who had lacked such peer support. Her rather large family and its extension, a steady and similarly large circle of friends, provided another source of support.

The family tree of the Polanyis was first reconstructed by Erzsebet Vezer and shown at the 1986 exhibition on the occasion of Karl Polanyi's centennial in Budapest.<sup>[5]</sup> Looking at the many familiar names, one was tempted to come to the conclusion that, with only a little exaggeration, and counting friends, acquaintances and love interests, the entire progressive counter-culture of turn-of-the-century Hungary could be attributed to the Polanyi family. Ervin Szabo, a cousin, became the leading socialist theoretician of the period until his untimely death in 1918. Szabo's closest friend, Oszkar Jaszi, editor of the *Twentieth Century* and leader of the Sociological Society, was a friend of the family. Another cousin, the artist Irma Seidler, was the early love of Georg Lukacs. Lukacs and other members of his Sunday Society (Karl Mannheim, Anna Lesznai, among others) frequented the Polanyi salon. Irma's sister, Emmi, married Emil Lederer, professor of economics in Heidelberg and later of the New School in New York. One of her brothers, Erno Seidler became a founding member of the Hungarian Communist Party and a minister during the short-lived Republic of Councils. Another cousin, Matild (Medi) Pollacsek married the outstanding avant-garde sculptor Mark Vedres, and the list could go on.

Likewise, a short look at the Polanyi siblings during their university years reveals an impressive cross-section of the progressive political and intellectual scene. Adolf was a member of the Socialist Students' movement in the first years of the century, under the tutelage of Ervin Szabo. Karl was to become, in 1908, the founding president of the Galileo Circle, the student organization fighting for progressive reforms in and outside of university, of which the youngest brother, Michael, was also a member. Even the youngest sister, Sophie married the socialist lawyer Egon Szecsi, also a member of the Socialist Students Circle.

Laura, on her part, was to be drawn to the emerging feminist movement. During her university years, in order to support the family, she also worked as a librarian at the Central Statistical Institute, recommended for the job by her cousin and good friend, Ervin Szabo. (Aside from his activities in socialist theory and practice, Szabo was the creator of the first and still existing modern public library system in Budapest.) Laura and Szabo co-edited, between 1902 and 1904, the *Bibliographia Economica Universalis*, a publication of the Brussels-based *Institut International de Bibliographie*.

Above all, Laura Polanyi was the darling of this small but increasingly vocal circle of young social scientists, named after the title of their periodical, the *Twentieth Century*. Mausi, as she was called by family and close friends, was admired as much for her intelligence as for her beauty. Her charmingly teasing letters to the young Szabo and Jaszi,<sup>[6]</sup> along with her photographs, show a young woman, confident in her exceptional intellectual and physical gifts and contemplating an academic career.

It must have come then as a bit of a shock and disappointment for many when in 1904 she interrupted her university studies and married the wealthy businessman Sandor Striker, 13 years her senior and an outsider to her circle. Following a few years' hiatus and the birth of two children in 1905 and 1906 - a third was to follow in 1913 -, she returned to public life with newly-found energy, again breaking with the convention according to which middle-class married women with children were not supposed to meddle in public affairs. In 1906 she joined the ranks of the emerging bourgeois feminist movement and published articles in the feminist bulletin *Woman and Society*. As an expert on educational and child

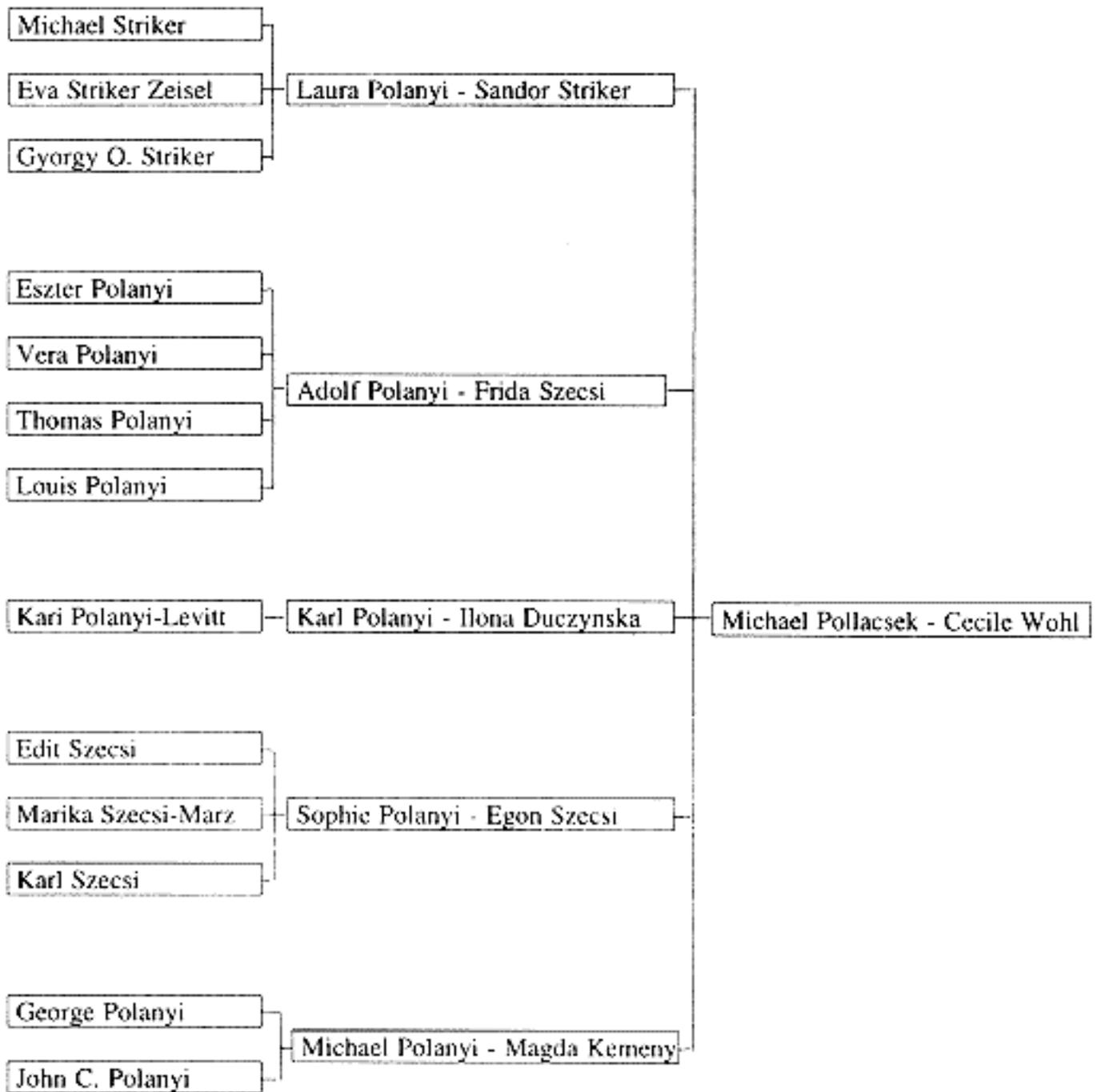
welfare issues, she was frequently invited to talk in feminist and freemason organizations and in the Sociological Society.<sup>[7]</sup> In 1909 she defended her doctoral thesis on the economic policy of Charles VI earning a Ph.D. at the Budapest University in economic history.<sup>[8]</sup> In 1911 she opened an experimental kindergarten, based on the progressive pedagogy of Dalcroze and - in her own words - the application of Freud's ideas.<sup>[9]</sup> All these activities were no doubt made possible by the financial means provided by her husband, whose business interests led to the family's move to Vienna on the eve of the First World War.

They moved back to Budapest at the end of the war, just in time for the bourgeois democratic revolution led by Count Karolyi. With many of her old friends in government, Laura was to run for a parliamentary seat on the list of Jaszi's Radical Party in the first elections based on the universal suffrage (including women), planned for April of 1919.<sup>[10]</sup> As we know, these elections never came to be, due to the fall of Karolyi's government in March 1919 and the subsequent failure of the short-lived Communist experiment, the Hungarian Republic of Councils. Disenchanted by the fiasco of their democratic principles and fleeing the resulting White terror, Laura's brothers joined the waves of immigrants, including almost everyone in their circle. Laura, mainly for family reasons, stayed on. In the 1920s and early 30s, the extended family kept homes in Budapest, Vienna and Berlin. Family members, some as active participants, some as keen observers, experienced the socialist experiment of Vienna and the artistic avant-garde of Berlin.<sup>[11]</sup> More illustrious friends were added to the list, such as the psychoanalysts Alfred Adler and Manés Sperber, along with a whole platoon of young scientists, Leo Szilard, John von Neumann and the future Nobel-prize winners Victor Weisskopf and Konrad Lorenz, among others.

During the 1920s and early 30s, the number of Laura Polanyi's public engagements drastically declined. Apart from an unpublished study on Maria Theresa's economic policy (which, according to her daughter, she originally wrote in her older son's name as *his* dissertation at the Vienna University)<sup>[12]</sup> and a short published commentary on the modern marriage,<sup>[13]</sup> there is no sign of scholarly activities and certainly nothing on the scale of the previous years.

This can be attributed as much to the general political climate (it would be an understatement to say that the interwar period in Hungary was not conducive to feminist politics and progressive pedagogical experiments) as to her increased responsibilities concerning aging family members and her growing children. In the mid-1930s, we suddenly find her in Moscow, in the company of her daughter, the designer Eva Striker, who was employed by the Soviet porcelain industry. But that is already the beginning of a new chapter in her life.

The family tree shows the second and third generations of the Polanyis. A quick survey in 1932 compared to another one from 1942, shows a complete reconfiguration of the family members concerned. When Cecile Polanyi died in September 1939 in Budapest, none of her children was able to attend her funeral. Of her five children, previously living in, respectively, Italy, Austria and Germany, four were now living in, respectively, Brazil, England and the United States, with the fifth trapped in Austria.



This dramatic change also provides a very simple explanation for the lack of Laura Polanyi`s creative or scholarly achievements from the mid 1930`s to the end of World War II; in these years her main preoccupation was rescuing her family, relatives and friends from Stalin`s Soviet Union and Hitler`s Europe. Her method, based on meticulous research of the related laws and regulations and the pooling of the extended family`s financial and intellectual resources as well as its international networks was first employed after her daughter, Eva Striker was arrested in the Soviet Union in 1936 in connection with the show-trials.

Although we have no way of confirming the actual steps she had taken, it seems that Laura Polanyi had

been instrumental in her daughter`s eventual release; no small feat, given the times and circumstances. As an unintended by-product, Eva Striker`s imprisonment served as the inspiration for her childhood friend, Arthur Koestler`s novel, *Darkness at Noon*.[\[14\]](#)

The series of subsequent dramatic events included Laura Polanyi`s own arrest by the Gestapo in Vienna in the aftermath of the Anschluss, and ended with her eventual success in helping her three children, her seventy-year-old husband, numerous nephews, nieces and friends to reach America. The one tragic failure concerned her younger sister, Sophie, who, with her husband and two of their three children, perished in concentration camps.

Her efforts have been carefully documented and preserved in the family archives, registering such farcical episodes when for instance her nephews, fleeing Italy in 1941, were stranded in Cuba, simultaneously suspected as Italian fascist spies and refused an American visa because of their Jewish religion. In such and similar cases, she invariably came up with the solution. As a historian, trained in obscure 17th-century imperial decrees, and familiar with the bureaucracy of Francis Joseph`s Monarchy, she was apparently well-armed to master even the administrative hurdles of American immigration policy.

For a short period during the war, she was also active in Hungarian democratic émigré politics, keeping her old friend Jaszi up-to-date on the usual intrigues,[\[15\]](#) publishing a few articles on historical topics in Hungarian émigré newspapers,[\[16\]](#) until it became clear that Hungary`s after-war fate would not be decided according to the democratic principles of her generation.

With her daughter and one son in New York, and another son in Chicago, she settled in a small apartment on New York`s Upper West side, surrounded by her biedermeier furniture and the portraits of the family ancestors. She was approaching 70, seemingly content with watching over her children`s successful professional lives and enjoying the company of her grandchildren.

That was also the year she became involved in her last historiographical project. The subject was the American hero Captain John Smith (of Pocahontas fame), the founder of Virginia in the 17th century, a historical figure of somewhat dubious reputation. Inspired by the ongoing debate over the reliability of Captain Smith, and his European adventures depicted in his *True Travels*, the American historian Bradford Smith was planning a new biography. American scholarship accepted the findings of an 1890 article (by Alfred Knopf, an American historian of Hungarian origin), according to which the events referred to early 17th-century Transylvania and Hungary in Smith`s *True Travels* were pure fiction, casting a shadow over Smith`s reliability in general. Bradford Smith was looking for a research assistant who would be able to read the Hungarian and Latin sources and verify the Hungarian-related place-names and events, thus, potentially, help to rehabilitate Smith`s reputation. The research assistant, recommended by Karl Polanyi, at the time Bradford Smith`s colleague at Bennington, turned out to be a distinguished, older European lady, the sixty-nine-year-old Laura Polanyi.

She delved into the project with characteristic dedication and energy, and her increasing commitment to

the subject led to a steady flow of publications. First, she wrote an independent study on Captain Smith's Hungary and Transylvania, published as the appendix of Bradford Smith's biography,[\[17\]](#) followed by a reappraisal of Knopf's article.[\[18\]](#) She translated and wrote an introductory essay to a seventeenth-century British source on Smith.[\[19\]](#) She co-wrote and published additional articles with Bradford Smith, as well as translated an Austrian historian's work concerning Styrian sources on Smith.[\[20\]](#) She even traveled to Graz, Austria, to meet the Austrian historian, accidentally during the days of the Hungarian 1956. This last outburst of her intellectual creativity sustained her for the remaining eight years of her life and provided a final, somewhat ironic twist to her professional life. The Smith-project materialized in more publications than all her previously published works put together, her expertise on the topic was widely recognized, and additional articles had been requested and planned. On her death in 1959, the short obituary of the New York Times[\[21\]](#) mentioned her merits in progressive pedagogical experiments but stressed above all her contribution to American historiography.

Assessing Laura Polanyi's life, the obvious approach would be to gather all available evidence of her various activities and, conveniently blowing them out of proportion, establish a logical sequence of her achievements. This approach, however, would hardly account for the obvious fact that, despite the achievements, this was a life of unredeemed promises and unfulfilled expectations.

While I believe that her achievements are worthy enough in themselves to deserve a detailed and appreciative account, I also propose a number of complementary approaches. The first will assess her contributions in the context of the aspirations and achievements of women in the preceding and following generations. Laura Polanyi was in many respects a pioneer but also the middle part in a trio of strikingly independent and successful women, which included her mother and daughter. While this generational view will attest to a gradual expansion of women's access to education, political rights and the professions, it will also highlight the remaining boundaries, set for women, in their respective eras.

My second approach consists of separating the various fields in which her life and efforts offer substantial lessons for scholarship. These will include first of all a study of her pedagogical activities. Education had been one of the core issues of women's emancipation from the late nineteenth century, both as a demand and as an activity, and as such, produced many exciting examples throughout Central Europe. We can follow the generational changes in the access to higher education and the professions in the concrete choices and opportunities of the Polanyi women and in their passionate involvement in various pedagogical projects.[\[22\]](#)

The family's immigration to Western Europe and North America is another topic deserving a second look. The Polanyis' path was shared by many Central European refugees and might seem as an oft-repeated story. However, because it is supported by extensive documentation, and includes prominent as well as ordinary family members, the Polanyis' case will contribute to the history of refugee intellectuals and to North American immigration history in general. One of the issues I hope to address is the extreme success of the family in immigration. Characteristic family traits such as a marked emphasis on learning rather than financial security, the insistence on high moral standards in political and public life, a sensitivity toward everything progressive and intellectually novel, and finally, a large network of friends

all over Europe; these were perhaps the most important factors in their success. They were established in the first generation and maintained mostly by the women of the successive generations.

Finally, I will draw a comparison between the view offered by traditional historical sources (of which we are lucky to have an abundant amount) and the version supported by the family's oral tradition.

In the remaining minutes I will treat you to selected pieces of my collection of "Polanyiana"; excerpts from books and articles in which Laura Polanyi or the Polanyi family are mentioned in passing. The passages selected all come from North American sources, a fact which reflects the Polanyis' prominence in American academia and should make the biographer content. The reason it is not always the case will be obvious from taking a closer look at the passages in question.

On the family's origins, the most detailed account so far has been published in Peter Drucker's memoirs, *Adventures of a Bystander*, in a chapter entitled "The Polanyis".<sup>[23]</sup> Drucker, an American economist of Austrian origin, established himself as the founding father of management theory in the United States, and became an illustrious academic as well as an advisor to the U.S. government, American government agencies and corporations. As a young man, he worked with Karl Polanyi in Vienna in the late 1920s and became fascinated by his intellectual gifts. From a reliable description of Karl Polanyi's work habits and the Polanyi-Duczynska household in 1920s Vienna, Drucker proceeds to an account of his ostensible meetings with and knowledge of other Polanyi family members, based almost entirely on his imagination. In Drucker's account, for example, Michael Pollacsek, Karl's father (who, we should remember, was born in 1848) becomes "one of the student-leaders" and "one of the most effective orators" of the 1848 Hungarian revolt, as well as a "tough guerrilla commander in the long losing civil war (?) the Hungarian insurgents waged against the Austrians and the Russians". (The language, clearly, seems to have been more influenced by journalistic reports of the Hungarian 1956 than by the actual historical facts.) But let's go back to the Polanyi-saga: Michael Pollacsek, writes Drucker, was also "reputed to be the richest commoner in Hungary around 1868" when he married Cecile, "a Russian countess and an anarchist. [...] She had been making bombs in the chemistry laboratory of the Czar's School for the Daughters of the Nobility which her brothers had then used to kill a high police official." About the Polanyi siblings' education he writes: "As soon as each of the children reached school age, he or she was taken to a castle their father bought for them. [...] There the children were educated in strict isolation, without contact with anyone, especially not with other children." No wonder, he adds, that the children turned out to be quite unusual.

The fact that Drucker got away with his version of Hungarian history or that he was never challenged on his outrageous fabrications concerning the Polanyi family is a bit surprising; after all, a copy editor should have been at hand at his reputable publisher, Harper & Row. But the question one should ask is, why would anyone concoct such nonsense? I think the answer lies in the message pressed throughout the chapter and the entire book. The Polanyis, muses Drucker, the American management guru, were all committed to find a new society: one that is free, yet not bourgeois, prosperous, yet not dominated by economics, communal yet not Marxist. And look where this naive and idealistic "quest" led them: one became a founder of Italian fascism,<sup>[24]</sup> another an obsessive talker and a broken visionary, Karl a

deeply disappointed man. As for Laura, Drucker credits her with the invention of Tito's version of socialism as well as being the decisive influence on the Israeli kibbutz movement, all accomplished in the first years of the century. After such brilliant beginnings, he adds, she had given up every intellectual interest and never wrote a line after 1905.[\[25\]](#)

Laura Fermi (wife of the Nobel-prize winner physicist Enrico Fermi, one of the leading minds behind the Manhattan project), in her 1968 book on America's *Illustrious Immigrants: The Intellectual Migration from Europe, 1930-41*[\[26\]](#) represented a different agenda. In assessing the truly formidable contributions of European refugee intellectuals to American culture and scholarship, she gave an altogether rosy tint to her account of the Polanyi's life in exile. She also credited her namesake, Laura Polanyi, with being the most brilliant among her siblings who, despite her advanced age, "accomplished the most unusual feat [...] when she came to this country".[\[27\]](#) In this account, Laura Polanyi's contributions to American scholarship had become a testament to the beneficial effects of the North American academic environment.

The American historian Lee Congdon is the author of an outstanding history of Hungarian émigré intellectuals as well as many excellent articles on Hungarian intellectual history.[\[28\]](#) As a professor of history at Virginia's James Madison University, he must have been especially motivated to find a reason for Laura Polanyi's commitment to John Smith. In an 1986 article with the wonderfully catchy title: "The Hungarian Pocahontas: Laura Polanyi Striker",[\[29\]](#) he comes up with the following explanation. Laura Polanyi was inspired by an admiration for Smith as an authentic commoner and nondoctrinal hero, but, above all, she was driven by her chance of providing the American schoolchildren with his positive example. The roots of her dedication to the subject, speculates further Congdon, are to be found in the moral and social ideals of her youth and in her failed pedagogical plans to provide young children with such heroes. Nothing short of a paradigmatic explanation would satisfy Congdon, seeking a connection between the two periods of Laura Polanyi's life and regarding her as a representative of both turn-of-the-century Hungarian culture and of the immigrant generation. I think the explanation is much more trivial than that: ready for almost any kind of intellectual work, Laura Polanyi had become increasingly involved in the Smith-project when realized the degree to which, by the combination of her professional and linguistic skills, she was perfectly suited for the task.

My final example is a magazine article entitled "All in the Family", written on the occasion of John C. Polanyi's 1986 Nobel prize in chemistry, by the well-known Canadian journalist, Robert Fulford.[\[30\]](#) John C. Polanyi is the son of Michael Polanyi, the nephew of Laura and Karl Polanyi and one of the most revered Canadian scientists. Fulford is genuinely interested in John Polanyi's exotic forebears and famous relatives and gives a lively account of the family's history. He draws on Drucker's version of Hungarian history somewhat while admitting that it may be not entirely reliable, but the better part of the article, based on an interview with John Polanyi, contains no major factual mistakes. Fulford also uses the occasion to re-introduce Karl Polanyi to the Canadian public. Karl Polanyi lived out his last years in Canada and died at Pickering, near Toronto. It was mainly because his wife, as a former member of various Communist parties, was barred from entering the U.S. and he needed a place close to the American border for easy commuting to Columbia University where he had taught economic history

from the late 1950s until his retirement. The little house in Pickering became a place of exile in exile where Polanyi and Duczynska often felt lonely and forgotten by the world; in Fulford's account, it becomes the centre of Canadian national attention, both by academia and the media. For surely, Canada could not have neglected such intellectual treasures!

And lastly, let me confess to my own "secret agenda". I believe that Laura Polanyi's intellectual gifts, moral values and political choices represent the best intentions and achievements of her generation and turn-of-the-century Central European culture as a whole. By taking advantage of the renewed interest in the Central European intellectual refugees, I hope to bring both her person and her heritage closer to North Americans. With its heroic choices and ultimate vindication, this life has every element of a great American story.

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## Notes

\* This is the text of a lecture, delivered at the Program for Gender and Culture, Central European University in Budapest, on 2 December 1997.

I am grateful to Mrs. Eva Zeisel for including me among her many ongoing projects, and taking the time to answer my inquiries as well as generously lending me family documents and photographs.

1. On the family's origins, see Erzsébet Vezér (ed.), *Irástudó Nemzedékek; A Polányi család története dokumentumokban* (Budapest 1986), pp. 5-8; Erzsébet Vezér, 'The Polanyi family', in Kari Polanyi-Levitt (ed.), *The Life and Work of Karl Polanyi* (Montreal, New York 1990), pp. 18-19, and György Litván, *Szabó Ervin, a szocializmus moralistája* (Budapest 1993), pp. 17-19 and 262.

2. Samuel Klatschko's eldest daughter, Aline, and Laura Polanyi were best friends in their youth. On the Klatschko family, see also Gy. Litván, *Op. cit.*, pp. 33-38.

3. A list of Cecile Polanyi's manuscripts indicates her wide-ranging interests: e.g. 'Kunst und Psychoanalyse', 'Die Frauenbewegung in Krieg', 'Moderner Luxus', 'Graphologie', Szechenyi National Library, Budapest, Manuscript Division, Polanyi collection (thereafter: Polanyi Collection).

4. Cf. Victor Karady, 'Jewish Over-schooling in Hungary; Its Sociological Dimensions' in Victor Karady, Wolfgang Mitter (eds.), *Education and Social Structure in Central Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Bohlaus, Köln, Wien 1990), p. 242, note 35.

5. Erzsébet Vezér (ed.), *Irástudó nemzedékek*, p. 12. A slightly revised version was published in K. Polanyi-Levitt (ed.), *The Life and Work of Karl Polanyi*, p. 264.

6. Cf. György Litván, László Szûcs (eds.), *Szabó Ervin levelezése* (Budapest 1977), Vol. 1., pp. 302-3, 394-95. Jaszi's letters to Laura Polanyi: Polanyi Collection.

7. The manuscripts of her lectures at the Sociological Society 'A házasság válságának problémája', 'Az Országos Nőképző Egyesület Leánygimnáziuma' and 'Kisgyermekünk erkölcsi nevelése' are in the Polanyi Collection. Her article, 'Néhány szó kis gyermekeinkről' appeared in *Woman and Society*, (September 1911), p. 151.
8. Her doctoral dissertation, entitled 'III. Károly gazdaságpolitikája', is in the Polanyi Collection.
9. See her 'Curriculum Vitae' from 1957 in the Polanyi Collection.
10. According to her daughter, Laura Polanyi was nominated on the list of the Bourgeois Radical Party and was the author of the electoral brochure 'What do the Radical Women want?'. Copies of the brochure are in the Polanyi Collection and among the family documents in the possession of Eva Zeisel. The information is supported by an untitled manuscript written by Laura Polanyi, also in the possession of Eva Zeisel, which appears to be the draft of an electoral speech.
11. Karl Polanyi's wife, Ilona Duczynska was a member of the Schutzbund and a participant in the 1934 civil war in Vienna. Eva Zeisel's unpublished memoirs provide a vivid description of her Berlin days and some of the illustrious artists and scientists whose company she shared.
12. 'Mária Terézia gazdaságpolitikai irányváltásainak okairól', Manuscript, Polanyi Collection.
13. 'A házasság intézményének fejlődéséről'. *Esti Kurir* (11 April 1931).
14. Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon* (London 1940). In the second volume of his memoirs, Koestler explicitly refers to Eva Zeisel's arrest and the role it played as the inspiration for his novel. A. Koestler, *The Invisible Writing* (The Danube Edition, New York 1969), pp. 61-62.
15. Laura Polanyi's letters to Oscar Jaszi on February 16, 1945 and March 11, 1945 as well as Jaszi's reply on Feb 20, 1945, are in the possession of Eva Zeisel.
16. See her article, 'Adalékok egy vitás kérdéshez; A magyar parasztság politikai rátermettsége?' (with Gyorgy Faludy's reply) in *Harc*, (January 27, 1945).
17. Laura Polanyi Striker, 'Captain John Smith's Hungary and Transylvania' in Bradford Smith, *Captain John Smith; His Life and Legend* (Philadelphia, New York, 1953), Appendix, pp. 311-347.
18. 'The Hungarian Historian, Lewis L. Knopf, on Captain John Smith's *True Travels: A Reappraisal*', *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, LXVI (January 1958), pp. 22-43.
19. 'Captain Smith in Seventeenth-Century Literature' in Henry Wharton, *The life of John Smith, English Soldier*, translated by Laura Polanyi Striker (Chapel Hill 1957), pp. 3-31.

20. Franz Pichler, 'Captain Smith in the light of Styrian sources' in *Virginia Magazine for History and Biography*, LXV (July 1957), pp. 332-354.
21. *The New York Times* (December 24, 1959)
22. In the 1910s, Cecile Polanyi organized the so-called "Lyceum for Women". According to the curricula, it was a sort of open university for middle-class women. A copy of the 1912-13 program is in Eva Zeisel's possession. Laura Polanyi's pedagogical activities had been extensively documented, including the minutes of the classes of her experimental kindergarten in 1911-12. See Polanyi Collection.
23. Drucker, Peter F., *Adventures of a Bystander*, New York 1978, pp. 123-140. The following quotes are from pp. 127-28.
24. The "Otto Pol" Drucker refers to as the older brother of Karl and Michael Polanyi and the driving force behind Mussolini's conversion from socialism to fascism, bears some similarity to Odon Por, a cousin of the Polanyi brothers. Though not entirely deserving of all the deeds Drucker attributes to him, he did move to Italy in the early years of the century and became a supporter of Mussolini. Drucker, *Op. cit.* pp. 128-29.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 130-31.
26. Laura Fermi, *Illustrious Immigrants; The Intellectual Migration from Europe 1930-41*, (Chicago and London 1968).
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 113-14.
28. Congdon, Lee, *Exile and Social Thought: Hungarian Intellectuals in Germany and Austria 1919-1933*, Princeton, New Jersey 1991.
29. Congdon, Lee, 'The Hungarian Pocahontas: Laura Polanyi Striker', *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 1986 pp. 275-80.
30. Robert Fulford, 'All in the Family', *Saturday Night*, (February 1987), pp. 9-11.

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