

One Must Also Be Hungarian

Adam Biro

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The only country in the world with a line in its national anthem as desperate as "this people has already suffered for its past *and* its future," Hungary is a nation defined by poverty, despair, and conflict. Its history, of course, took an even darker and more tragic turn during the Holocaust. But the story of the Jews in Hungary is also one of survival, heroism, and even humor—and that is the one acclaimed author Adam Biro sets out to recover in *One Must Also Be Hungarian*, an inspiring and altogether poignant look back at the lives of his family members over the past two hundred years.

A Hungarian refugee and celebrated novelist working in Paris, Biro recognizes the enormous sacrifices that his ancestors made to pave the way for his successes and the envious position he occupies as a writer in postwar Europe. Inspired, therefore, to share the story of his family members with his grandson, Biro draws some moving pictures of them here: witty and whimsical vignettes that convey not only their courageous sides, but also their inner fears, angers, jealousies, and weaknesses—traits that lend an indelible humanity to their portraiture. Spanning the turn of the nineteenth century, two destructive world wars, the dramatic rise of communism, and its equally astonishing fall, the stories here convey a particularly Jewish sense of humor and irony throughout—one that made possible their survival amid such enormous adversity possible.

Already published to much acclaim in France, *One Must Also Be Hungarian* is a wry and compulsively readable book that rescues from oblivion the stories of a long-suffering but likewise remarkable and deservedly proud people.



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