

INTERVIEW WITH RÓZSA PÉTER

by ISTVÁN TAMÁSSY

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[*Translator's Preface.* In addition to her pioneering work in recursion theory, Rózsa Péter (1905 – 1977) was deeply involved with precollegiate mathematics instruction in Hungary. This involvement ranged from activity in curriculum reform to textbook-writing to the years she spent on the faculty of the Teachers Training College. So it is not surprising that Péter had connections with Mihály Fazekas High School, which was well-known in Hungary for the calibre of its mathematics students. The following interview originally appeared in issue #4 of the 1970-1 “Diákszó” (“Student Word”), a newsletter of the Young Communist League’s chapter at the school. The footnotes are my additions. Many thanks are due to Béla Andrásfai for making the original available to me, and to Éva Tardos for providing helpful information and comments.]

After the 10th Congress of our Party, the situation of women came into greater prominence. I asked Rózsa Péter to respond to questions mainly concerning that situation and Fazekas High School. I hope that many people will find the interview informative.

Interviewer: Our Party passed a resolution on the political and economic position of women. What in this resolution do you consider the most important?

Rózsa Péter: Its explicit declaration that equal rights for women have appeared only on paper, and that this cannot remain so.

I: Despite 25 years of our People’s Democracy, very few women work in science, and even fewer women are leading scientists. What do you see as the cause of this, and how could this intolerable state of affairs be helped?