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ANOTHER WAY. Directed by Károly Makk; written by Erzsébet Galgóczy and Károly Makk; cinematography by Péter Kornai; edited by György Sívó; music by László Dés and János Másik; designed by Tamás Vayer; produced at Mafilm; available through Facets Video from European Film Distributors. In Hungarian with English Subtitles. Running time: 100 minutes.

With Jadwiga Jankowska-Cieslak, Grazyna Szapolowska, and Jozef Kroner.

Though marketed in the US as "Another Way," the title of Károly Makk's film "Egymásra nézve" could be rendered better as "Concerning One Another" or perhaps more appropriately, "Looking at One Another." Set in Hungary in 1958, it tells the story of a romance between two journalists and of their struggles for freedom to publish and to live the truth. The new twist in this romance is that the two are women. In his article on Hungarian film in Post New Wave Cinema in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, David Paul writes that "at first glance the issues of lesbianism and censorship may strike one as unlikely twins" (192). In fact, the film shows that these issues are strikingly congruent.

Éva is politically the more outspoken and the more out of the two. At the newspaper (appropriately named Igazság "The Truth") she crusades for revealing the truth about the methods used to coerce farmers into joining the collective. Her refusal to compromise results in her losing her job. Éva is much more cautious in her affair

with Lívía, who obviously loves her, but is less willing to brave the consequences. When Lívía finally tells her husband she's leaving him, he shoots her, perhaps leaving her paralyzed for life. Lívía then rejects Éva again, and the latter is shot trying to cross the border.

Makk's film is based on Galgóczy's novella, Törvényen belül, "Within the Law," published in 1980. Both works are structured as a whodunit, or rather whydunit. Both begin with Éva's death, then reveal the plot through interviews and flashbacks. Makk's adaptation makes excellent use of the dichotomy between verbal and visual. Éva's struggle with political censorship centers on the verbal, on the spoken and published word: whether the events of 1956 are called "revolution" or "counter-revolution," for example. The lesbian topic and the romance are presented purely visually, since even Éva has trouble talking about her sexuality. Lívía and Eva first meet in the elevator on the way to the office. They glance furtively at each other, but say not a word. Later both attend an editorial meeting at the newspaper at which Eva first demonstrates her determination to extend the boundaries of what may be printed. "Why," she asks, "can we only have frank conversations in the corridors, while here everyone spouts the official line?" Meanwhile Lívía silently watches her in a compact mirror.

Lívía first learns of Éva's infatuation when Éva steals her panties. "Why did you take my panties?" she asks. Éva answers, "Not now... It's very difficult, and you won't understand... You see, there are certain feelings... Now it's hard for me... I..." The articulate journalist is speechless, but her body language speaks volumes: whenever she glances at Lívía, Lívía looks away, and vice versa.

They can't bring themselves to look each other in the eye. Language in the romantic scenes is replaced by schmaltzy music, especially the piano music played in the cafe, where much of the romance develops.

When Éva makes a pass at Lívia in the cafe, there is no dialogue, only gesture. Outside on a park bench they understand each other perfectly, though language has now become an obstacle: when Lívia murmurs "It's awful," Éva asks, "Bad?" "No," Lívia replies, "awfully good!" This potential seduction scene is interrupted by the police. The second potential scene takes place in a provincial hotel. Éva is waiting up for Lívia, but Lívia looks at her through the window, then runs for safety to a man.

Purely verbal communication, as represented by the telephone, works only against the relationship. When Lívia gets cold feet and moves to another office, Éva calls her again and again to no avail. Lívia even uses another phone to arrange a conversation with her husband for Éva to overhear. Similarly, the phone plays a negative role just before the climax: when Éva calls, Lívia's husband hangs up and eventually rips the phone out of the wall.

For the most part the cinematography is unobtrusive. Makk is more interested in showing the relationships between people than in emphasizing the film as an art object. Yet the political and the romantic are also differentiated cinematographically. In the political discussions, cuts from one talking head to another predominate. The romantic scenes are set off by a slowly panning camera, which seems to demonstrate the continuity of emotion between the two lovers, and by non-diegetic music, a kind of "love theme." In contrast, the camera in the scene of the drunken dance at the provincial smoke-

filled restaurant jerks frantically around following the dancers. Makk also uses slow motion at the first meeting and, most memorably, in the final scene, which also appears at the opening credits. A bird (possibly the owl Éva saw shortly before her death) flies over the fences and guard posts of the border, as if to prove that boundaries can be crossed after all.

In a reversal of the usual Hollywood treatment of lesbians, Makk's lesbians are made more sympathetic than those of the original story, and they do not fit any negative stereotypes. Éva is a positive hero and a martyr. Her martyrdom, however, conforms to another standard Hollywood script for gay men and lesbians. Vito Russo has shown that homosexuals in film often die a violent death, usually by murder or suicide. Éva's death is a quasi-suicide, since she may have been warned by the guards, and Lívia is shot by her husband.

The three main roles are played by Polish actors, with the result that the dubbing is sometimes annoying. Still the performances, especially of Szapolowska and Jankowska-Cieslak as Lívia and Éva, are outstanding: they manage to convey their attraction under the reluctance born of a world that frowns on their love, and we see that love grow into a triumphal defiance. In 1982 the film won the FIPRESCI critics' award at Cannes, and Jadwiga Jankowska-Cieslak received a jury prize for best actress for her performance.

The film could be used profitably in discussions of politics and censorship in Eastern Europe as well as of women's and gender issues. It is accessible, sensitive, and in general a well-made film.

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