

Attila József

Attila József was born in 1905 in Budapest. He was brought up by his mother, who worked as a laundress, his father having abandoned the family when Attila was three years old. He studied at the University of Budapest, as well as in Vienna and Paris, and published his first poem at the age of seventeen in the prestigious literary magazine *Nyugat* (The West). A member of the communist party, Jozsef struggled throughout his life with financial hardship and poor mental health. He committed suicide in 1937.

Gently place your hand upon

My brow as though your hand belonged

To me; protect and guard me as though

Your life and mine were one with no

Distinction; love me like life because

No distance divides my heart from yours.

Translated by Stephen Capus

Stephen Capus was born in Swansea in 1955 and studied Russian at Birmingham University and the School of Slavonic and East European Studies in London. His poems, translations and reviews have appeared in various magazines including *Agenda*, *Acumen*, *Thumbscrew* and *Modern Poetry in Translation*. He currently works in academic administration at University College, London.