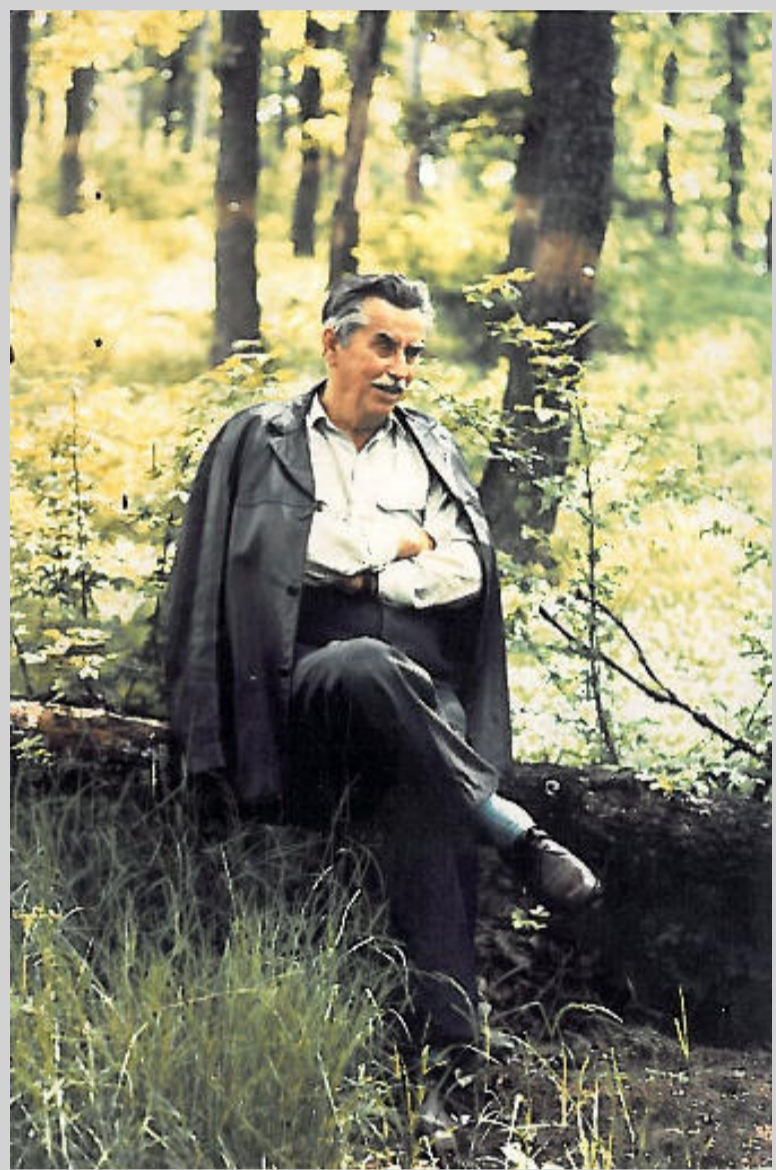
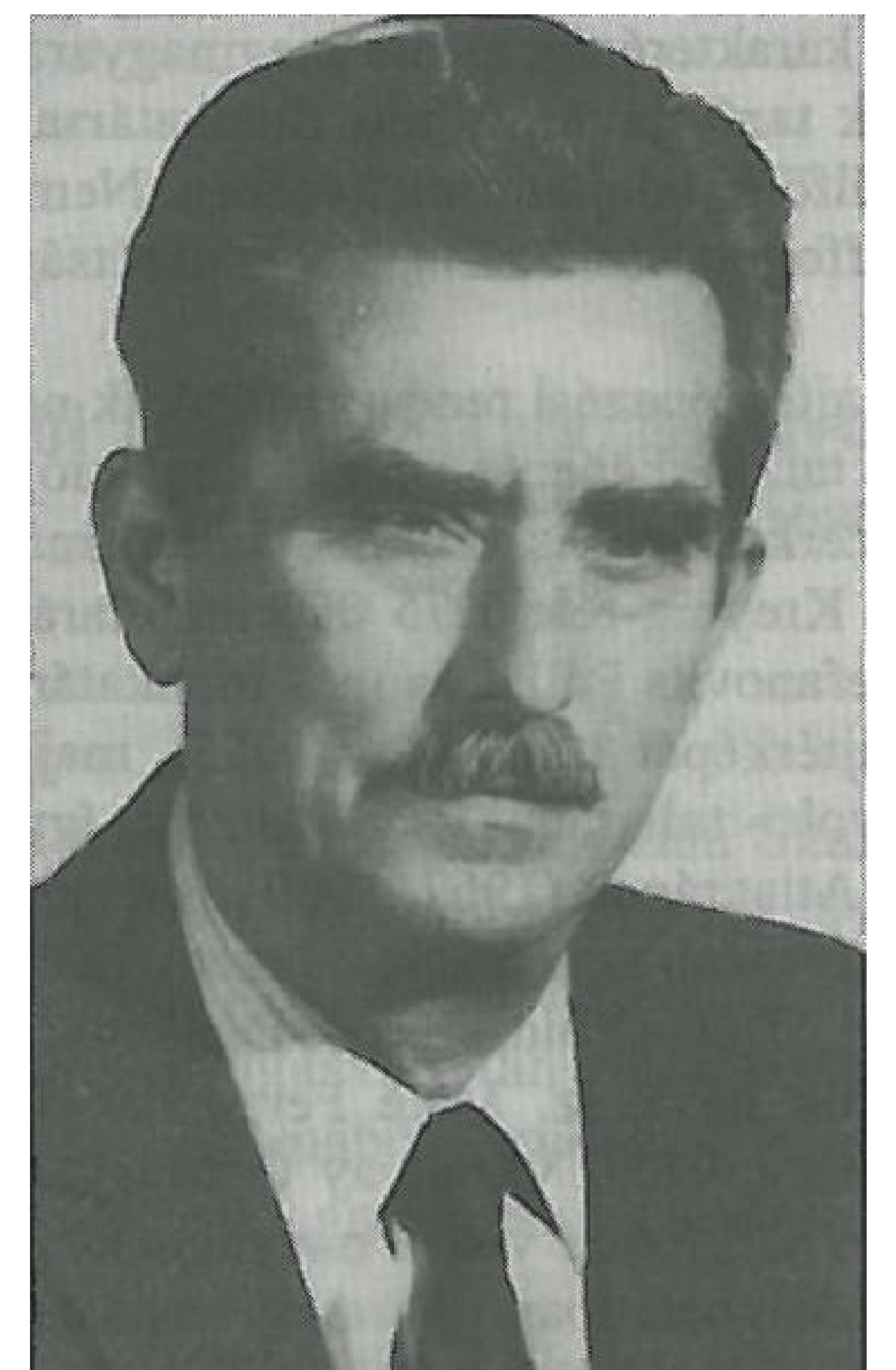


László SZŰCS

(1916–1996)

László SZŰCS was taking part in formation of the Hungarian soil classification system, then its comparison to other international classification systems, and finding the conversion possibilities. Study of the chernozem soils was his main research topic. In that he prepared the candidate of sciences thesis and defended it in 1962. His name had become internationally known afterwards. He reported his results at home and international conferences. As member of some home scientific societies, committees and the International Soil Science Society he was carrying on public activities. Honoring of the scientific achievements he was awarded with the Silver Medal of the Work Order (1967), and Memorial Medal of Péter Treitz (1975).



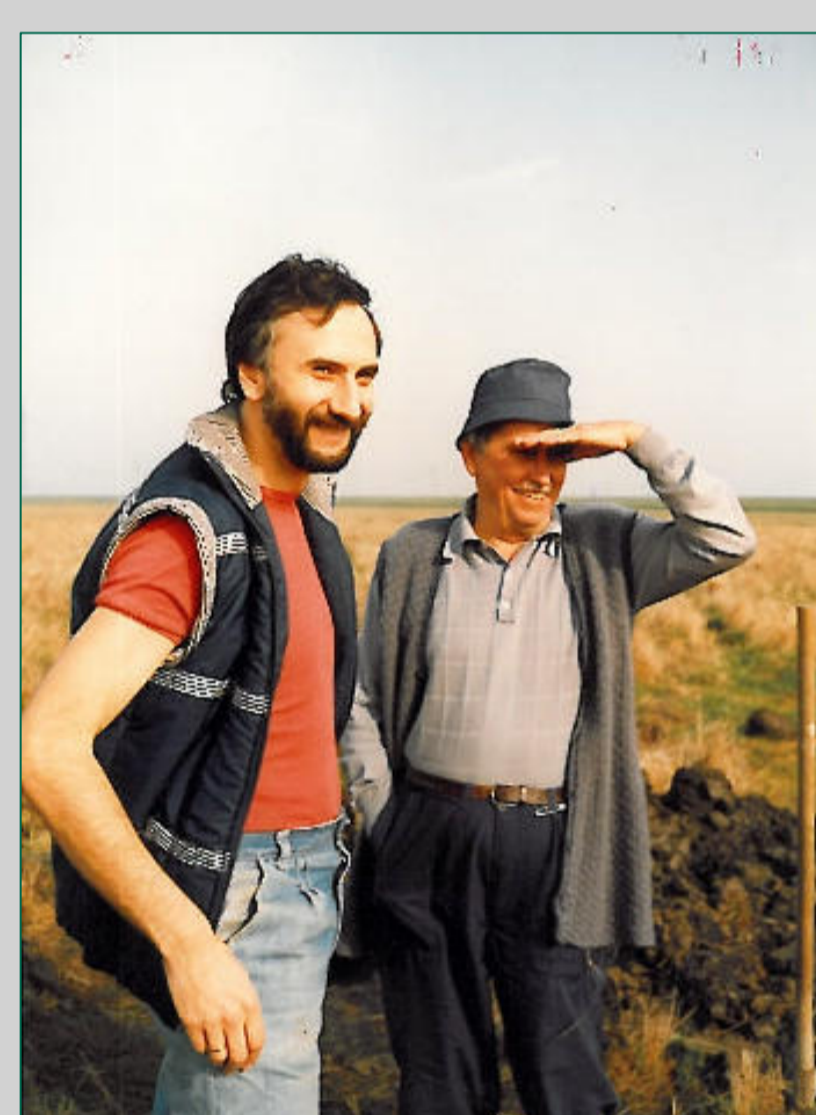
László SZŰCS was born in 5th March 1916 in Jászberény. There he finished his grammar and secondary schools. As chemist graduated from the Nature-Chemistry Branch at the Faculty of the Natural Sciences of the Royal Hungarian Pázmány Péter University in Budapest. In the first workplace he actively participated in field soil surveys, laboratory analytical and map making works of the country wide agricultural area mapping program in the 1: 25 000 scale initiated and coordinated by Lajos Kreybig. He was one of the founders of the Research Institute for Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry in 1949 surviving the Second World War and being war prisoner in the Soviet Union. He worked in the Institute till pension and as pensioner later. Dr Szűcs left a rich and significant life-work within 80 scientific papers, several book chapters, different purpose and scales soil maps, carefully edited project reports, artistically prepared soil monoliths, as well as in soil experts educated by him. He had an extreme stereographic ability for analyzing the landscape, soil and ecosystem view. He was able to remember for everything in decades what he had seen, met and experienced. His suggestive personality will remain in mind forever for that peoples who at list once made a soil survey, a field excursion, or a map editing work at the drawing table with him.

Dr. László Szűcs directed attention of his colleagues with his calm personality instead of loud behavior. With this character he had become teacher of colleagues, and visiting home as well as foreign soil scientists. His standards of values were the precision, accuracy and concreteness.

He was one of the emblematic members of the “great generation” of Kreybig’s soil mapping work. In 1941 he surveyed the sheets of Kürt, in 1942 of Tápiószele, Abony and Jászládány. Many other sheets of the Kreybig maps were edited and drawn by him as well. He prepared also the explanatory booklets of those sheets. He had deterministic role in making, editing and drawing the 1: 75 000 landscape cultivation map designed by Kreybig. With Pál Stefanovits and other colleagues he prepared the genetic soil map of Hungary in the scale of 1: 200 000 (1955), and 1: 500 000 (1960). Beside this he was the soil scientific author of different atlases such like the Climate Atlas (1960), the National Atlas (1967), and the Regional Atlas of Hungary (1974). In the last he wrote the soil scientific part of several planning-economic zones as Central-, North-Hungary, North-Lowland, South-Lowland, North-Transdanubia, South-Transdanubia districts. Together with Ferenc Máté, and with György Várallyay he constructed the bonitation map of Hungary (1975), and the new 1: 100 000 scale soil map of Hungary (1978).



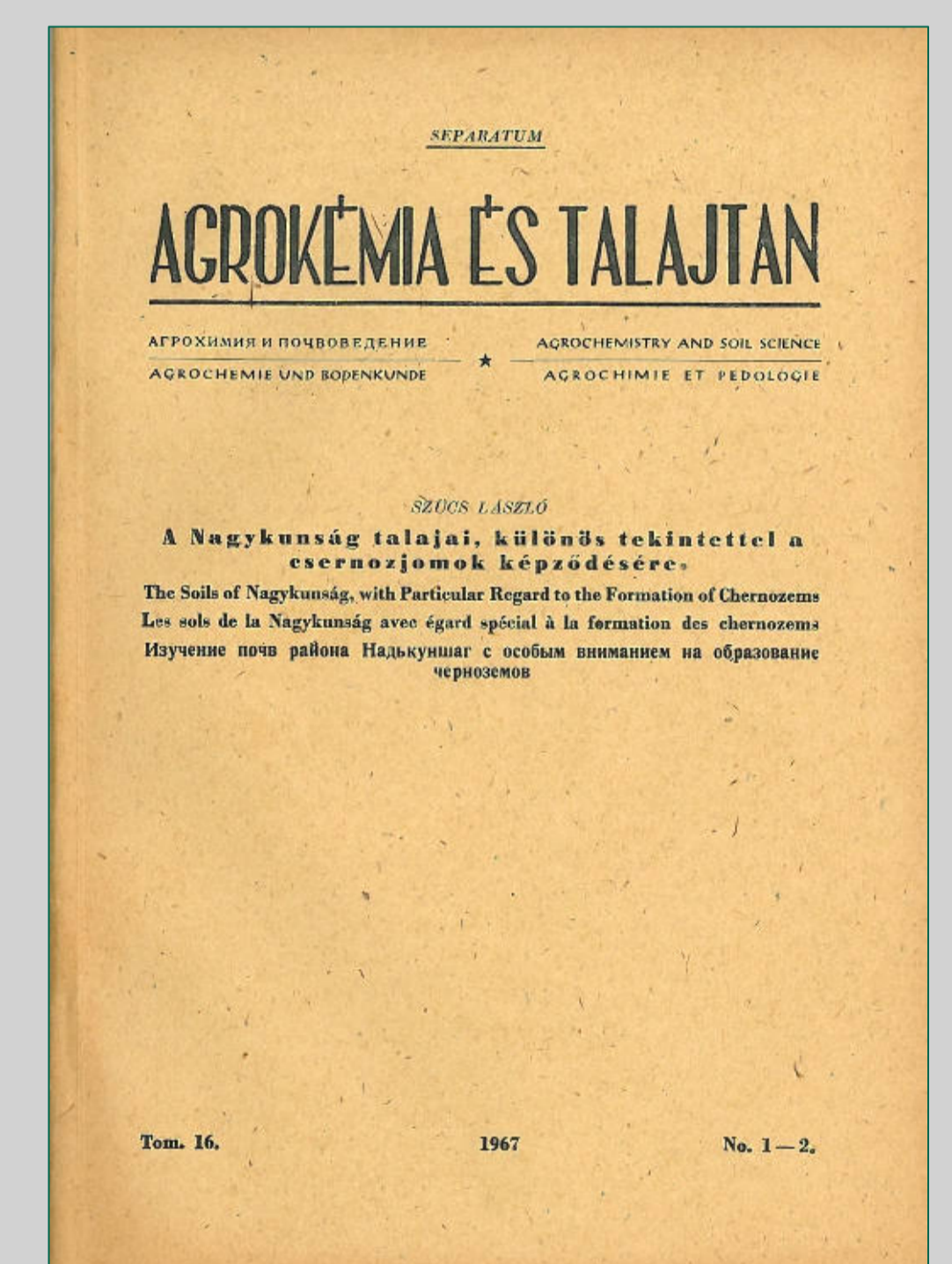
Soil monolith preparation, in the sixties



László SZŰCS with Péter ZILAHY in April, 1986

He participated in working out the methodology of farm mapping on the bases of genetic soil classification. Without his experiences in soil science, survey and mapping such maps as “Soil factors determining the agro-ecological potential of Hungary” (1980), “Soil water management categories of Hungarian soils and the map of soil water properties (1:100 000)”, and “Main substance regime types of Hungarian soils” (1981) would hardly be created. The printed Agro-topographic map was the synthesis of these maps and Dr. Szűcs considered that as the main work in his life.

He wrote excellent, informative and descriptive texts about soils in several monographs Lowland of Tisza (Tiszai Alföld), Tisza valley (Tiszavölgy), Open Alluvium of the Borsod Region (Borsodi nyílt ártér), Nagyunság, Loess terrace of Szolnok (Szolnoki löszhát), Loess terrace of the South-Trans-Tisza region (Dél-Tiszántúli löszhát), Territory along the river Maros (Marosmente), Lowland of the river Danube (Dunai Alföld), Mezőföld, Basin of the river Marcal (Marcal-medence).



The soils of Nagyunság region, formation of chernozems, 1967

In 1986 Dr. Szűcs got an invitation to prepare soil description of 230 geographical regions for the monograph of “Cadastre of Small-regions in Hungary”, but he did not accept that. Instead of acceptance he said: “My young colleague will do that because he can”. Such focusing to relevant facts was a very personal characteristic of Dr. Szűcs or Uncle Laci (Laci bácsi) for the young fellow. He promised his supervision during the work. The success of the monograph verified the right judgment of “Laci bácsi”. Address of Dr. Szűcs was “Laci bácsi” among young fellows in the Institute and he was not only honored but also loved at the same time. When a question was raised about soils by somebody the reply started with as follows: “You know small pal” then survey notebooks, handwritten reports, notebook of analytical results, published papers, books and maps come out from the office’s cabinet after each other. More and more details opened up during the answer of “Laci bácsi”. His colleagues are keeping memory of these personal-style teaching performances of László Szűcs.

Moreover, staff members and visitors of the Institute for Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry every day meet with the beautiful and expressive series of soil monoliths representing the main soil types of Hungary. The series of monoliths praises extra ordinary soil survey knowledge and artistic preparatory ability of Dr. Szűcs. Consequently everyone can establish that Dr. László Szűcs is still an active teacher of soil science.



Béla KAZÓ, László SZŰCS and Kálmán RAJKAI (in the first row) at the RISSAC

Bridging the Centuries
1909–2009

Hungary – B u d a p e s t
16–17 September, 2009

