

BÉLA TÖRÖK

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HUNGARY AND EUROPE

Hungary and Europe

A HISTORICAL REVIEW

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by

Béla Török

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The author's outline of this book

The author regards European history, as from 1945, as a division of the Continent between two non-European powers, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. In his assessment the permanency of the loss of Eastern Europe could be a contributory factor in the final disintegration of the European Christian civilisation.

Hungary was the Central-Eastern European power who for many centuries in her struggles for the West earned the title of the "Shield of Christianity." However diminished in area and population, due to hundreds of years of defence on the Eastern fronts of Europe, Hungary still occupies a vital position in Eastern Europe, as she proved by her heroic struggle in 1956 against the Soviets, and a study of her history throws light on the neglects and failures of Western Europe, which are the underlying causes of Europe's present situation.

Behind the historical review of the Hungarian and Eastern European past one may feel the passionate plea of the captive nations for the unification of Western and Eastern Europe as being the only possible way to achieve the renaissance of the once mighty Continent.

The author Dr Béla Török

The author was born and educated in Szeged, Hungary, where, at the Francis Joseph University, he was awarded the titles of Doctor of Law, Political Science and Economics, Summa Cum Laude, in 1936.

After postgraduate studies in Berlin between the years 1937–1939 as a resident student of the government sponsored Collegium Hungaricum in Political Science and constitutional subjects and passing the Bar examinations with honours, he was appointed in 1941 as a District Court Judge in Budapest. Later he was transferred to serve as a Legal Officer in the Royal Hungarian Ministry of Justice. As a member of a section in advisory capacity in constitutional matters and as private secretary to several Ministers of Justice, he was well informed on the background of political happenings in Hungary between the years of 1941-1944.

In 1949 he and his family immigrated to Australia and he became a Fellow of the Australian Society of Accountants, was admitted as a Barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales and, at present, is practising law as a Solicitor in Sydney.

The author is well known in emigre Hungarian circles as a public writer. In his various publications he has dealt with constitutional and historical-political subjects.

To my Wife

Ica

my faithful companion in 35 years of exile

Foreword

These works are based on the book by the same author titled "Turkish Yoke, German Rule, Russian Occupation", written and published in the Hungarian language.

The title wished to emphasize some 500 years of struggle of the Hungarian nation against foreign domination since the fatal battle of Mohacs in 1526.

Hungarian history was presented there in the context of the European scene as it is the author's opinion that any hope of regaining Hungarian and true European independence requires the basic alteration of the power balance on the continent.

Now this English edition of the work has been enlarged to evaluate the historical role of Hungary and Eastern Europe within the unity of the Western civilization, which is basically a European achievement. In the view of the author the final outcome of the struggle for Hungarian and Eastern European freedom will affect the fate of the whole Continent.

The chronological data of Hungarian history up to 1920 was taken from a standard work on Hungarian history, namely 1-Jóman-Szekf ii - V volumes written in the Hungarian language.

In the Bibliography the author has listed the works perused by him and the reader may refer to those books for details. The Chronology, Notes and Index may also help the interested. Finally, warm thanks are extended by the author to his secretary, Mrs. Julie Lander, who greatly helped him in typing from a poor manuscript of the work. Also many thanks to Bela Török Jnr. who assisted his father in the supervision and correction of the English text.

The Author

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Prologue

The Second World War in its European theatre was close to its end and the Soviet and U.S.A. Armies had met at Torgau on the Elbe, signaling the ensuing divisions of Europe between the two super-powers, as those empires were to be called in the later decades of their rule over the ancient centers of the Western Christian civilization.

Militarily, this division was not a necessity. Not only the defeated Germans and their Allies, but also the Soviets were exhausted. Relatively weak resistance on certain points on the fronts halted the Russian advance.

Budapest, the Hungarian capital, in German and Hungarian cooperation withstood the onslaught of three Russian armies for one and a half months¹ and also the Oder Front stood fast for weeks, while the Western Allies were for all practical reasons invited to drive boldly to Berlin, Munich and Prague.

The British Government used all its influence in this direction, but the U.S.A. Generals professed to go slowly for security reasons and painted the picture of a German National Redoubt, a non-existent Alpine Fortress to justify their attitude, which allowed the Russians to capture Berlin and Prague and to seal the division of Europe.²

The Second World War, which started as a power struggle of European interests, gradually became a World War in the true sense. The European powers, whether the Germans and their allies or England, France, Yugoslavia and Poland, lost in fact their ability to influence the coming events and at Yalta, with the formal but weak presence of the representatives of the once mighty British Empire, had to give approval to the division of Europe between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

Since the Teheran conference, the War was transformed into a Crusade and, with the announcement of the principle of the

unconditional surrender, the European powers became helpless victims of the deal between the non-European forces of the coalition.

Russian troops of course were, in the former centuries, participants of European military and political alliances. Paris saw the Tsar's soldiers in Paris after the defeat of Napoleon. The U.S.A.'s expeditionary forces of the First World War knew the battlefields of the West. There was also agreement which obliged the victorious United Nations to create independent nations and they professed that the liberated world would embrace the whole European Continent and indeed the whole globe.

However, it would be foolish to deny that the military arrangements between the United Nations were such, that the result, the division of Europe, was foreseeable.. Stalin's insistence that the Balkan Peninsula could not be an English Theatre of War, and the military directions which clearly forbade the British 8th Army to reach the Danube, signaled the intentions of the non-European powers.³

The U.S.S.R. must be clearly regarded as a non-European Empire. European Russia, the Kiev Russia of the 9th and 10th Centuries,⁴ was lost due to the Mongol domination and their long struggle in the forest regions of Moscow with the Golden Horde transformed the Gothic West European beginnings of her history.

Orthodox Christianity was in fact reaching Moscow in the later centuries in a form which was no longer European but a religious expression of the Eastern Mediterranean form of Christianity. The efforts of Peter the Great to lead back the Russian nations into Europe had some success, but the French and German education of the higher classes was superficial in contrast to the masses where rather the Tartar-Asiatic influence left its marks.⁵ The Russian Colonial efforts which reached the shores of the Pacific Ocean accentuated the non-European trend. The participation of Tsarist Russia within the power games of the European Concert of the XIX Century camouflaged the Asiatic role.

Further to the Communist takeover, the break in the European moral, religious and political traditions destined the new regime for its new role. Genghis Khan's Mongol Empire had in the

U.S.S.R. its resurrection and the geopolitical forces guided her rulers into the footsteps of the Golden Horde and their ambition was to reach the Atlantic and bring the European Peninsula under the Rule of the Asian landmass.

On the other hand, the U.S.A. is evidently a western oriented outpost of the European civilization. The political and moral similarities with the European world however, does not constitute the United States as a European political entity.⁶ On the contrary, the history of the United States could rather be regarded as a continuing process of emancipation from its European background. The deep-rooted feelings of the New World against the British and French colorizations have been enlarged against the European colorizations generally. The Evangelists, puritan traces of the thinking of the founding Fathers, only strengthened the trends noted and the declaration of the Monroe Doctrine was the first negative expression of the feeling of American independence.

In the First World War, the U.S.A. participated only reluctantly and, after the end of the Great War, the U.S.A.'s disappointed President allowed the country to withdraw into isolation as he did not want to approve and participate in the continued colonial game of the victorious West European powers.

The resentment was so deep that only the aggressive anti-Semitic policies of the Third Reich, which was strongly opposed by an influential Jewish lobby in U.S.A., moved the U.S.A. towards intervention. Of course, the German economic moves into the South Americans and the dangers to the Chinese Market were also contributing factors to the hardening attitudes of President Roosevelt, but it appears that the U.S.A. was not entering the War to rescue the old colonial powers of Europe, but in order to secure a world position for the U.S.A.

The alliance with Russia was a natural consequence of her growth as an independent American political entity.

The security of the Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans is her concern, but Japan and Western Europe are only satellite areas from the U.S.A.'s point of view.

Volumes were written about the Yalta Agreement and still, at this time, it cannot be stated with certainty whether the division of Europe was the subject of a secret understanding, written or oral. Also, there is no proof that the forced

disintegration of the colonial empires of the "victorious" Western European powers were decided there, formally or not, however, the history of the following three decades clearly shows the result of the above effects.

The co-operation of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. in the Suez Crisis, the treatment of the Hungarian Revolution, the German and Polish uprisings, the Prague invasion and the Cuban crisis all indicate a basic understanding between the superpowers relating to the division of Europe.

When in Helsinki in 1975 the two great powers signed the declarations inducing their respective client states and satellites to confirm the same, the Grand Seal of interpretation was finally put on the Yalta Agreement.

The apparent permanency of the division of Europe breaks the unity of European history with grave consequences.

The Iron Curtain ensures that the isolation and Asiatic outlook of the Soviet Union continues and the process of emancipation of the Orthodox-Slav peoples instituted and pursued by the Tsars and by the liberation of the Balkan peoples from the Turkish Rule during the XIX Century will be reversed and the gap between Western and Eastern Europe will grow.

In addition to the loss of the Baltic States, Russia, Ukraine and the Balkans, now also part of Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, are detached from the European cultural area.

Western Europe however, without its proper Eastern European areas, shall gradually lose its former importance in a shrinking world and, without the population strength and raw materials of Eastern Europe, will become a political and economic annex of a so-called Atlantic community which is destined to be the off-shore bridgeheads of an American power complex. Without true economic and military sovereignty, Western Europe will be indefensible in times of American weakness or loss of political will and could be an easy prey of the attacking spirit of a new Golden Horde.

The situation of the European Christian civilization today closely resembles the fateful year of A.D. 476 when finally the Roman Empire was divided under the onslaught of the barbarian attacks.

Justinian's' great General Belisarius victoriously reunited the Empire 150 years later, but, in the meantime, the process of different orientation of the two parts created such a difference in racial background, moral and religious outlook and varied economic interests that the reunification could not work.⁸ Europe was born after hundreds of years of dark ages and the Byzantium became an oriental despotic power of Asia.

With a view to the significance of Eastern Europe, the writer proposes to handle his main theme, the presentation of Hungarian history, in relation to the European-Christian civilization as a whole. The political-historical searchlight must reveal the causes of the present division of Europe and has to search for the ways to facilitate the reunification of the Continent.

The reader may ask why the author has chosen Hungarian History to prove his points.

The answer could be formulated as follows:

Hungary is a small country today and its population relative to the European growth achieved in the last centuries is not significant, however, Hungary's past, due to its geographical position, has placed that country in the position that it was the center of resistance against the Asiatic-Islamic forces and with her former dependencies, the people of the Danube and Balkan regions represent also in our times the key to any resistance against non-European attacks.

Their will to reunite with Western Europe is a necessity to rescue the European-Christian civilization from the abyss of final collapse.

PART ONE

THE NATIONAL KINGDOM

St. Stephen's Realm

The origins of the Magyars are not yet fully settled. Historians generally agree that certain linguistic and geographical facts of the proven path of their migration discloses Finnish elements and so a Baltic background.

On the other hand, the Ugor inheritance poses a more complex problem. The Ugors, the warriors of the Steppe, were closely related to the group which may be called Turanian. The political power appears to have rested with those warrior tribes and this could be the reason why the foreign names of the Magyars Ungar, Hungarian, and Hongrois are still preserving the history of assimilation of their tribes into a political entity.]

The related evidence also clearly discloses the connection of the Finn - Ugors with "Turkish" peoples, - at one stage the Byzantium reflected on the Hungarians as Turks.² What the origins of these "Turks" were is not yet fully established, but the latest research indicates that the long migration of those tribes and nations may have originated from the Sumer Empire, when the rule of the City of Ur (meaning Master in Hungarian) was destroyed by Semitic forces and the original peoples of Sumer were displaced.

The early tradition of the Hungarian Kings, the Arpáds, claimed direct connection with the Huns and the great Attila was regarded by them as an honored ancestor and the Székely's of Transylvania were held as the remnants of his followers. Most probably the early Magyars were temporarily associated with the Hun-Empire.

Western historians treat Attila very harshly, picturing him as a most cruel barbarian. The facts are, however, that Rome suffered many Germanic barbarian sackings, but Leo the Great was able to make a reasonable settlement with Attila who did not proceed against the Eternal City.

The known route of migration of the tribes which assimilated to the Magyar political entity traces back the Turkish element, into the area between the Caspian and Black Seas, the Ugors, around the River Volga and the Finnish tribes to the area between the Don and the Volga. Early in 800 A.D. the emerging Magyar rule was established in the area of Kiev and the nation was in alliance with the Kazar Empire.³

The Magyars entered the Carpathian Basin around 896 A.D. and there is still an uncertainty as to how it was possible that they waged more than a hundred years of offensive undertakings against Western Europe and the Byzantium and, after their repulsion by the German Empire, they were still able to present a strong political will and could establish themselves as a Christian kingdom without any real crisis and with a substantial population base.

The answer lies in the true appreciation of the Magyar raids in Western Europe. Of course, the western chronicles emphasized the terror and suffering caused by the expeditions, but one has to realize that most of the invasions were carried out by fast-moving, but relatively small forces with restricted aims. Further, it is clear that the Hungarians were in most cases allies of certain western powers, namely the Bavarians and the North Italian Kingdoms, and the Magyar raids into France and to the shores of the Atlantic were possible only because those allies agreed to the free passage of the Magyars through their territories.

Accordingly, the nature of the policy behind the expeditions was the aim to force the neighboring western States to recognize the permanency of the rule of the Magyars in the Carpathian Basin. Also, the defeat at the River Lech was not an annihilation of a nation, but only the loss of an encounter. Some years later the Magyars were again attacking the Byzantium and were pursuing the consolidation of their rule within the Carpathian.

New studies now also show that the Avar Empire of the

Danube Valley was really constituted by a nation racially and linguistically similar to the Magyars and the victorious nation, led by the Magyar tribe of the Arpáds, quickly assimilated the Avar population of the Carpathian Basin.⁴ At the time of the settlement of the Magyars there were only sporadic Slavic settlements, mostly in northern Transdanubia and in the western part of the present Slovakia. Transylvania was largely a forest region and the Székelys were the only military frontier inhabitants in the valleys. The Vlachs (present-day Rumanians) were, at the time of the entry of the Hungarians into the Carpathians, shepherds in the valleys of the lower Danube.

The westward expeditions of the fast-moving Hungarian armies were halted by a revitalized German Reich and a stiffening defense culminated in the battle near the River Lech, where the Magyars suffered a defeat. This signal of the changing power balance of Western Europe was well understood by the ruler of Hungary, Géza, who, with great political skill, made certain moves to consolidate the position of Hungary in the Carpathian Basin and incorporate his country into the community of the European States.

Common religion, a basically similar political system, the institution of a monarchy, by grace of God and the guidance of the Church, were the bonds which could bridge the ancient cultural differences and animosities. Christianity was not foreign to Géza and the Magyars. Most probably they were subjected, for many hundreds of years, to the influence of Christianity in its orthodox form. Notwithstanding, Géza turned to Western Europe for missionaries and so laid the solid foundation for the incorporation of Hungary into the European Community. His son, Vajk, was received into the Church and, under the name of Stephen, took into his hands the reins of the country in the year of 1000 A.D. The missionary work was well advanced by this time but pockets of resistance from the pre-Christian culture still remained and Stephen's strong military arms were a prerequisite to establishing order and an acceptance

of the Christian way of life.

His reign was also marked by the first strong move by the German Reich to establish with Hungary feudal ties and the country's dependence to the Emperor.

Stephen however made a brilliant political move and his delegation asked the Pope, Sylvester the Second, for a Crown; the symbol of an independent Monarchy.

In 1000 A.D. he was crowned with this Holy gift and this Crown was destined to become the symbol of the nation's sovereignty in the centuries to come.

Stephen's long rule was not marked by military victories, but by the peaceful building of a society, having military and political institutions which would lay a firm foundation for the future.

He called into the country skilled tradesmen, military and political advisers and guests and, with the help of the Order of the Benedictines, deeply transformed the country.

Diplomatically he had good relations with the Doge of Venice, the rulers of Bavaria and the Empire and he fully completed the integration of Hungary into the Commonwealth of European powers.

St. Stephen's Europe was basically united. The active cooperation of the Holy Roman Empire of the Germans and the Church successfully maintained the peace of the continent and the reforms of Cluny boldly announced the philosophy of Augustinus to proceed towards the Civitatis Dei.

Wolfgang, Bishop of Regensburg, Bohemia's Adalbert and Venice's Gellért, were the leading influences in the life of the young King and his long rule mirrors the spirit of those leading Europeans.

Great Roman Cathedrals were built, Pannonhalma, the Hungarian Monte Cassino, was founded, every 10 villages had a Parish Church and the co-operation of the national and

church dignitaries by means of the councils of the Kings was established.

The great King's legislatures were strongly influenced by the rules of his European contemporaries, but their spirit shows the independent political wisdom of Stephen, especially evident in his letters to his son, Imre, which disclose an enlightenment towards the guests of the realms being well ahead of his time.

The peaceful building work of the King was of course only possible while during his reign the basic balance of power in Europe was not disturbed. The Arabic - Moslem drive was halted in Northern Spain. France and England gradually emerged in their struggles as separate entities and the German - Roman political and ecclesiastical axis of Central Europe secured the peace of the center of the continent. The Balkans were still in the firm hold of Byzantium. Kiev Russia began to emerge and Poland and Hungary were the outposts of the European Eastern frontier. There was, at this time, a pause in the rolling attacks of the Steppe people and the Petchegens, Uz tribes and the Kazars were not under pressure to move westward.

Contemporary sources describe the wealth of the King and an emerging Christian life which was the common bond between the new nations of Europe.

Pilgrims passed regularly through the land to visit the Holy places and, in Jerusalem, an Hungarian hospice was established to cater for the needs of the Magyar visitors.

The house of Árpád became related by marital ties with the Bavarian, Saxon and Venetian ruling families and Hungary was firmly established as a member of the Christian family of Europe.

However, the situation changed dramatically when Stephen died in 1038 A.D. and the struggle of Hungary for its independence was after that time fought on three fronts.

Defense on Three Fronts

The collaboration of Rome and the German Empire at the time of St. Stephen was helping to lay the foundation of a political trend which could be described, not only as Christian, but European in its true sense.

The instinct of imperialism of Central Europe was moderated by the religious considerations and, in Emperor Otto's spirit, the leading Central European forces made serious attempts not only to help the birth of the Eastern European Christian States, but support their struggle against the East.

Bohemia and Poland were established and maintained as vassal states, but Hungary was bound to the West rather by religious and family ties and was regarded as a trusted ally.

This situation however changed after the death of the great King. Under western influence, Stephen first nominated his son, Imre, as his successor but, as he predeceased him Peter, his nephew, son of a Venetian Doge, was to be the next King. On the other hand, the old Hungarian rule was the seniority and the conflict of the principles of succession caused much bloodshed and gave the opportunity to the German Emperors to intervene and enforce homages of the pretenders to the Throne, in pursuance of a German dream thereby to incorporate the Carpathian Basin into the Reich, resurrecting the Charlemagne traditions. However, these plans were no longer realistic. At the time of the Frank rule, Eastern Europe was only loosely occupied and ruled by various Steppe people, but, in the X and XI Centuries, firmly established Christian States like Hungary and Poland were already incorporated in the European Community and, in fact, these States represented the frontal defenses of Europe against Asia.

The German Emperors' attacks were therefore purely German imperialistic moves which basically hindered European defenses against the East.

Henry III, with his client Peter, who lost his Throne to Aba, attacked Hungary in the year 1030 A.D. and, after defeating Aba, re-established Peter as King of Hungary, but made it clear that from that time he would regard Peter as his personal vassal.

Peter's rule was short-lived. The senior Árpád Princes who lived in exile in Kiev, Poland and Prague, returned and András I was elected as a King. András also offered homages to the Emperor, but only in order to gain time to organize his armies, which was being completed by his brother Bela.

Henry III again attacked in the year of 1050, but had to withdraw. A year later the German armies advanced near to Buda, but were defeated at the battle of Vértes. In the next year Pozsony was besieged but the Germans were again repulsed.

After the struggle for succession between András and Peter, there was another German expedition in the year 1063, but, at this time, there was no imperial request to establish feudal ties with the client Prince. Salomon was regarded by the Emperor as his brother-in-law and equal and he concluded with him a formal peace treaty.

Finally, when Salomon was deposed by Géza and László, the Empire against intervened. Salomon offered homage and employed, not only German, but also Cuman troops against Géza I.

The Pope, Gregory VII, in this dispute between the pretenders to the Throne, rebuked the Empire claims of feudal ties over Hungary and emphasized the supremacy of the Church over the Christian Princes.

The Drang nach Osten of the German history from now on was concentrated in the Baltic and the Polish plains and Hungary was confronted from the West mostly by Bohemian and Austrian claims and by basically localized actions.

There was an element of luck for Hungary in that the German advances would be defeated by the year 1063, as the first waves of the Eastern invasions arrived at the borders of the country a few years later.

The Petchegens and the Uz tribes were on the move, pressed by the Cumans who were forced to move themselves due to the consolidation and expansion of the Mongol Empire.

Those tribes were allowed to settle by the Byzantium in the latter day Moldovia and in the area between the Sub-alpine Carpathians

and the Danube. The Eastern Roman Empire followed its old policy of settling those Turkish tribes in the area of their northern frontier and elevated them to the position of clients. Their presence served the role of outpost defense for the Empire and helped to control those Slavic and other nomad shepherd tribes of the Balkans whose colonization was in progress with the help of the "themes" - fortresses of Greek colonies.⁵

Part of the Petchegens tribes also was allowed to settle in Hungary and they were helpful in opposing the attacking Empire as auxiliary troops of the Magyars. However, a strong Uz attack caused concern and, in the ensuing battles, there emerged a famous warrior, later to be known as St. László, the Knight King of the Hungarian history.

On the southern border there was another serious movement of the Petchegens with regular Greek help and there were several military encounters between Hungary and the Eastern Empire.

The Croatian Kingdom was also threatened by the Byzantium and Venice was keen to re-establish her rule over the Dalmatian coast as successor of the former Latin rule.

The Croats were also pressed by the emerging Austrian rulers and it seems that those concentrated pressures forced or paved the way to an Hungarian and Croatian co-operation which was to be a permanent one for centuries to follow.

The Latin and Slavonic parties divided the unity of the Croatian Kingdom and, as a third way, the union with Hungary gained popular support and László the Knight King of Hungary was offered the Crown of Croatia.

In the year 1091, László moved into Croatia and wanted to secure the Croatian Kingdom for Almos, his nephew.

The Hungarian-Croatian union however created tensions with the papacy and also the Eastern Roman Empire counter-attacked on the Dalmatian coast.

László was the designated Commander of the first Crusade, but his successor, Kálmán, had to face the problem of guiding the troops of the Crusade on Hungarian territory. There were certain problems with the movements of the armies in the spring of 1096, but Kálmán's resolute behavior assured the safe conduct of the troops and, in October of the same year, when

Bouillon Gottfried and Baldwin, the Princes of Lothringia reached Hungary with their troops, a conference of the leaders at Pannonhalma dealt successfully with the problems of transit.

Both Laszlo and Kalman were good organizers and their legal codes proved Hungary to be one of the most advanced states of the mediaeval European society. Diplomatically they maintained close family contacts with Kiev-Russia, Poland and Bohemia and there was a correct friendly relationship with the German Empire.

The Hungarian-Norman-Italian alliance was of course clearly directed against Venice and served the Arpad Rulers' aim to secure the hegemony over the sensitive areas of Croatia and Dalmatia as a defense against the turbulent Balkan Peninsula.

Kalman was finally successful and became King of Croatia and Dalmatia. The union with Hungary was a personal union, but, in the time of the authoritarian Kingdoms, the practical administration of the whole territory was under the guidance of the monarch.

After Kálmán's death the relationship of Hungary with the Byzantium not only cooled off, but, partly due to the aggressive nature of István II, years of war broke out, but the balance of power in the Balkan Peninsula did not change much. István II died as a young man and his successor, Bela II, "the Blind", under the influence of his Serbian wife, extended the Hungarian rule more deeply into the Balkan with Bosnia and Rama being included in the list of royal titles.

After the death of the Blind King Bela his son, Géza II, became King as an eleven-year-old child and his guardian, Ban Belos, brother of the young King's mother, was the de facto ruler.

The King was seventeen years of age, when the second Crusade's armies asked permission for transit. The French King Louis V I I entered into a friendly relationship with the young Hungarian King and his friendship was certainly remembered in the marriage of Louis VII's daughter with Bela II.

The growing Hungarian power now entered a further phase and Hungary looked to Western Europe to balance her policies towards the Western Empire and the Byzantium.

The Hungarian Empire

The natural unity of the Carpathian Basin laid down the boundaries of the area which became the fatherland of the Magyars. The Hungarian tribes quickly assimilated the Avars, the remnants of the Hun peoples, and created a national state. The Carpathians were reached and the Székely's were the Eastern frontier guards. In the West, the Hungarians advanced to the River Enns and the Eastern part of the present-day Austria was incorporated by Hungary, However, under the pressure of the Holy Roman Empire, the Magyars withdrew to the River Lajta and Hungary's stance toward the West was never again offensive.

South of the Sava and the Danube, the area was very sparsely populated and an instinctive drive to the mountains of the Balkan Peninsula would have been natural. The area was, however, the frontier of the Byzantine Empire and, after the early military expeditions of the Magyars; the newly established Christian Kingdom of Hungary was keen to keep the peace with the mighty south-eastern neighbor.

With Kiev-Russia the Arpáds' relations were friendly and strong marital ties with the Ruriks and also with the Polish Kings restricted any Hungarian military actions to participate in local dynastic affairs only.

Notwithstanding the noted defensive posture of the new Kingdom, a trend set in, beginning with László 1, Kálmán and his successors, which extended the might and rule of the Hungarian Kings into the Balkan Peninsula and Croats, Serbs, Bosnians, Dalmatians and later Rumanians became associated with Hungary.

The reason for this expansion could be found in the policies of the Byzantium and the natural aspirations of the Balkan peoples.

The migration of the barbarians and their consequent attacks against the Roman Empire, not only severed Western Europe and Italy from the rest of the Empire, but Byzantium was also hard pressed on the Balkan Peninsula and, at one stage, the barbarians effectively occupied the whole Peninsula and created their own homelands there.

Then, with a revival of imperial power, Byzantium had its own "Drang nach North" and gradually incorporated the old Roman provinces again under Greek rule and the Balkan people became subjugated to Byzantium.

The restless Bulgars, Serbs, Croats and Macedonians of course looked to the north, where Hungary was representing European Christianity and was regarded as a natural ally to gain independence. On the other hand, Hungary was annoyed with the result of the Eastern Empire policy which allowed the Petchegens to settle south of the Carpathians. The tensions so created erupted into decades of long warfare and paved the way to an expansionist policy of Hungary.

Byzantium's attitude towards Hungary changed in those centuries within certain extremes. Friendship and alliance or moves to incorporate Hungary as a vassal state into the Eastern Empire were pursued by various rulers.

The Emperor, Manuel Comnenus, also made a move to establish the Byzantine rule in the Danube Valley by creating a Greek-Hungarian personal union. His plans were a chain in his great dream to reach the borders of the German Holy Roman Empire and accomplish the reunification of the areas of the former Roman Empire under his rule. He was also ready to end the ecclesiastical schism.⁶

The reasons behind these moves of course were the threat of the East. The loss of the Holy Land signals clearly the shrinking of the Asian power of Byzantium and his plans were visionary European.

However, in the approximate 800 years of separation of the once united Roman Empire, the eastern part became distinctly separate and foreign from the western part and Manuel's dream lacked the population base for the aimed revival.

In order to secure the personal basis for his plans, Manuel offered his daughter Maria's hand to the brother of the Hungarian

King, the Prince Bela, the later King Bela III. Bela went to the Court of his father-in-law and, known as Alexios in Byzantium, had the rank of despotes, and was for years regarded as heir to the Eastern Empire's throne.

István III was however following a western orientation and Manuel used the presence of Bela in Byzantium to press his claim and further military encounters occurred between Hungary and Byzantium without any significant change in the status quo.

In the year 1169 a son, called Alexios, was born to the Empress and Bela lost his status as heir to the Throne and his engagement to Maria was cancelled. As Bela's brother, István, died in 1172, the Hungarian Crown was offered to him.

Manuel by then had abandoned his plans for the reunification of the Empire and was satisfied when Bela had offered him friendship and alliance. This alliance and the rule and influence of Hungary in the associated Balkan lands enabled those people to begin their way of emancipation for an eventual independence.

The Hungarian rule was never oppressive. Local magnates were serving the people under Hungarian-Christian laws. Hungary made no attempts to assimilate those lands and people and a contemporary chronicle indignantly disowns any suggestions of national imperialism.

During the reign of Bela III, Hungary clearly emerged as one of the leading powers of Europe. In this situation, located between the two Empires, he laid the foundation of a Western European orientation of the Hungarian diplomacy.

Bela III's first wife was Anna Chatillon, of Norman-French descendency, and these family connections symbolize the King's diplomacy in seeking alliances in Western Europe.

Hungary and France were united in the Catholic Faith and new French monastic orders from Citeaux and Premontre (the white monks) revived the old traditions of the Benedictines. Hungary was also deeply interested in the Crusades and the Holy Land's fate was not only viewed with religious zeal, but the advance of the East raised genuine fears for the safety of the Kingdom.

The learned clergy of Hungary also turned towards Paris and more and more Hungarian scholars could claim Parisian background.

At the time of Bela III the country was mostly Magyar. Slovaks in the north-western Carpathians, small colonies of Germans in the Tatra and Transylvania and some movements of Vlachs (Rumanians) into the southern Carpathian areas could not affect the homogeneity of the country. During and after the various Crusades, Vallons, Germans and French perceived the great agricultural opportunities of the land and small pockets of such immigrants periodically entered Hungary. These settlers were, however, assimilated very quickly and a truly Hungarian culture began to emerge, absorbing the German, French and Italian elements of the common Christian faith.

Hungary also advanced in economic strength and was, in fact, more prosperous and more advanced than most of her neighbours. This was a consequence of the fact that the power of the Hungarian King was not as restricted by the feudal system as in Western Europe. German contemporary chronicles write in a rather envious manner that one-third of the income of the counties was reaching the Court of the King. Otto of Freisling also noted that nobody, other than the King, had the right in Hungary to issue coins or collect duties.

In the year 1185, when Bela III asked for the hand of Margit Capet, the widow of Henry (the deceased heir to the English throne) and the daughter of Louis VII, the French King and certain reports were rendered to prove the bridegroom's wealth. From this contemporary data emerges the fact that only the two Emperors were wealthier than Hungary's King and his income was equivalent to his English and French counterparts.

His ability to call up armies was significant. Without the help of the nobility, the King could employ 40-50,000 men who included well-armed Knights and auxiliary light troops.

Bela III's policy, like St. Stephen's rule, was based on peaceful consolidation, but he had his share of problems in local encounters with Venice and he also had some tensions with the German Reich. However, the western peace was quickly restored and Frederick of Barbarossa and Bela sealed their agreement by the engagement of their children.

Bela also led military action against the declining Eastern Empire. He advanced deep into the Balkan, but finally made his peace again and established new family connections with the Basilius. As from this time Hungary appears to have been the defender of the hard-pressed Byzantium.

The third Crusade brought some tension between Bela and Frederick of Barbarossa - just because Bela did not want to be a tool in any offensive against the Byzantium.

After the death of Bela III, more turbulent times followed. King Imre I was very talented, but his brother, András, was rising against him and made his rule difficult. However, Imre's early death and also the death of his five-year old son, László III, opened the way to András II's reign.

András II's role was a controversial one. His military expeditions into Halics (today's Galicia) were without political aims and the only long-lasting result which flowed from his Kingship of Halics was that the Greek-Catholic faith was organised there which was a helpful aspect to tie this Ukrainian state more firmly to the West.

András II married again in the year 1215. Jolan Courtenay was his bride and a French-Hungarian-Serbian alliance started to form.

In the meantime, Byzantium became more and more pressed and there were influential forces which hoped that a Hungarian King on the Throne of Byzantium could mobilise Central Europe against the Asiatic invaders.

The situation was materialised by an offering, which induced András II to participate in the fifth Crusade and he became in fact the senior Commander of the forces in the Holy Land. He was however, interested rather in the Throne of Byzantium and, when those plans did not eventuate, he withdrew his troops.

András II's constant warfare placed heavy burdens on the country. There was also a revolt against the foreign influences in his Court and his position became substantially weaker than his father's. There also started to show the first signs that the feudal differentiation of the former "Una Eademque Nobilitas" was gaining space in the land.

One of the consequences of this evolution was the call of the nobles to induce the King to hold a judicial assembly and, in 1222, the revolutionary attitude of the people forced the King to issue a document, called the Golden Seal, in which the privileges of the nobles were reaffirmed.

The Golden Seal was a similarly significant document as the English Magna Charta, which was given only 7 years prior to this Hungarian counterpart

and shows clearly that Hungary was also on a parallel with the West in social attitudes.

In his later years András II had conflicts with his son, Bela, but finally this was resolved with a family settlement.

The Pope Gregory IX was also involved in certain ecclesiastical disputes with András, but later this crisis was set aside. The canonisation of Elizabeth, the King's daughter, helped the Pope in his judgment of the matters.

Bela IV took over the reign of the country after the death of his father in the year 1235. The first years of his rule seemed to establish that he would be of similar stature as his grandfather.

However, destiny decided that he, alone, would have to meet the most deadly danger facing Europe, the attacks of the Golden Horde, totally without European help.

The Mongol Attack

It was a European tragedy that, at the time of the Mongol-Tartar attack which occurred in the middle of the XIII Century, the evolution of Europe as an entity was not ripe and its early form, the German-Roman Holy Empire, was about to disintegrate. The theocratic basis of the new European order began to break up with the decline of the worldly power of the Popes and the great struggle between Rome and the Emperors contributed to a process of separation within the Christian unity and the individual European national states were only beginning to develop.

On the eastern frontiers of Europe (and in this sense these were the areas of some of the emerging national states which were connected with Rome and the Empire), the struggle was proceeding with the Byzantium for the souls of the Eastern Slavs, Vlachs, Bulgarians and Serbs.

Greece itself was the nucleus of the Eastern Empire, but Byzantium, embracing the former areas of the Roman Empire in which areas some of the mentioned people were settled in the dark ages, became more and more a power of its own in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Byzantium was Christian and an heir of the tradition of the people from where Christianity was born, but, excluded from the development of Western and Central Europe, was completely alienated from Rome and Europe.

Geopolitically, however, the area over which the Eastern Empire ruled, if not fully European, represented the eastern frontier of the Roman Empire and certainly forms at least a geographical frontier defense from a European point of view.

The Crusades clearly show that the necessity to maintain a European presence in the biblical lands was instinctively accepted

by Rome and the Empire. The actions of the Crusades had religious, ideological overtones and economical aims which contributed to the emerging European will to recapture those Holy lands.

The unification of the Eastern Empire with Western Europe, the successor of Imperial Rome, is also a movement which was clearly based on sound geopolitical consideration.

Manuel's dreams to achieve the grandiose goal failed, however, as the Latin empires of Constantinople, the Armenian Kingdom, Antioch, Cyprus, and Kingdom of Jerusalem (under German-French influence) and the Venetian and Genoa efforts could only show temporary results.

The main reason for the failure of these romantic efforts was the lack of the will of those peoples to unite. The racial cultural differences between the two Empires grew so wide that the Orthodox Church emerged as the main block of resistance against a reunion with Rome and Europe.

After the establishment of the Latin rule in Constantinople the Empire of Nicaea was formed. Trabezund kept her independence and, for a time, there was an alliance between those powers and the Seidsuk Turks against the Latins.

The loss of the Balkans and Russia as partners of a European unity was confirmed only in the later centuries, but the roots of this tragedy can be found in the failure of the Crusades and other movements to reunite the two Empires.

It is understandable that, under the XIII Century conditions, Europe itself was unaware of the growth of the Mongol-Tartar power and the attack of the Mongol Golden Horde came as a complete surprise to Europe.

Certain rumors and reports of monks who penetrated Central Asia told of a Christian Kingdom of Mongolian origin. The rule of a Nestorian Mongol King, John the Presbiter, was in fact regarded as a hope of Europe against the Seldsuk Turks. No reports reached the Western World of the integration of this Kingdom into the Empire of Genghis Khan and, when the Persians and the Seidsuk Turks faced their attack, it was hoped that a Christian would be coming from the East.

Bela IV had 5 to 7 years' warning of the impending attack, as monks had been sent into the Volga area and the rising

power of the Mongols was reported. First, the Cumans suffered heavy defeats and were forced to move to the West and their Kings asked permission from Bela to settle in Hungary.

Also, in the area of the upper Volga, the peoples who did not follow the main migration of their nations, being Bulgars and Magyars, were attacked and incorporated into the Mongol Empire.

In the year of 1240, Russia was attacked and Kiev completely destroyed. The stage was set for a frontal attack against Central Europe, Hungary and the Balkans and the three armies of approximately 150,000 men under Orda, Batu and Bedsak took up attacking positions.

Orda's troops followed the Vistula, Varta and the Odera Valleys and reached Briinn and Liegnitz in the West. Poland was devastated.

Bedsak attacked Transylvania in a pincer movement. The main armies of Batu entered into the Carpathian Basin along the same route as the Magyars had, three hundred years earlier.

Bela IV could muster his royal armies only against the Mongols, as the country's nobles were divided regarding the admittance of the Asiatic Cumans into the country, and, generally, nobody realised the might of the coming storm. Bela's letters to the Pope and to the German Reich were received sympathetically, but no help was received from Venice, Austria or Bohemia.

The decisive battle was fought near the entrance of the River Sajo into the Tisza. The Mongols annihilated the royal armies and their way was open to the Danube.

Here, on the Danube front Bela tried to organise his defences. The winter set in and there was a hope that, during the gained time, help could be organised.

Bela himself was invited by Frederick, Prince of Austria, and he proceeded towards Hamburg and Vienna. Frederick, however, used the helplessness of the King to blackmail Bela and to gain grounds toward Hungary, by attacking Győr and occupying certain western townships. Consequently Bela left his Court and, through Zagreb, withdrew into Dalmatia.

The Mongol armies, during the cold spell of the winter when the Danube was frozen, broke through the front and fast-moving tartar troops, followed Bela's

route and reached the Dalmatian coast.

The destruction and defeat of Hungary was nearly complete. The fortresses, towns and villages were destroyed and part of the population survived only by hiding in marshes and deep in the forests.

Bela's diplomatic actions were of no avail.

Gregory IX, the old Pope, declared the need to help Hungary as a Crusade and urged the Dominicans to arouse the people of the German provinces, but his struggle with the Emperor remained his priority.

Frederick, the Emperor, wrote a long letter to Henry III, the English King, accusing Bela of not being properly prepared to receive the onslaught. Help was however not forthcoming from the German lands. On the contrary, French sources accused the Emperor of, in fact, inciting the Tartars to attack Hungary in the hope that he could easier attach the defeated land to his Empire as a vassal state.

Hungary, however, was saved by good fortune. Ogataj, the grand-Khan, died. All the descendants of Genghis Khan were in a hurry to return to attend the election of a new chief. Batu, the Commander of the attacking forces in Hungary, was directly involved as he was the candidate of the most powerful branches of the Genghis Khan dynasty. The Mongols evacuated the country and Bela could return to face the tremendous task of rehabilitation.

The destruction was so great that Hungarian history regards Bela IV as the man who again re-established the country as had St. Stephen I hundreds of years before.

After restoring the administration of the country, he was mainly engaged in the task of building fortresses as the Mongol invasion proved that only well prepared fortresses could halt the Mongols who were not properly equipped to wage sieges.

Bela's order was responsible for creating the fortress of Buda and this strategically well laid out bastion was, from this time on, not only capital of the country, but the symbol of Hungarian resistance against East or West.

Bela's diplomacy, after the great dreams of the Balkans and the West, turned again towards Poland and Halics. So, Bela created a frontier on the north-east which watched the developments in the Mongol Empire and the Polish and

Kiev-Russian allies were also hoping for his assistance if and when the Mongols would attack again.

The Cumans were finally settled into the land and, between the Danube and Tisza Rivers, they found a home and gradually were assimilated to the Magyars and embraced Christianity.

Frederick, the Austrian Prince, was also avenged and Styria, for a while, came under Hungarian rule.

Frederick II, the Emperor, was excommunicated by the Pope and Hungary and the Empire's connections were clarified by Innocent IX.

The Mongol Empire made various attempts to continue their westward move. In the year of 1259, after punishing the Russian Princes, the destruction of Poland and Halics was threatened. Towards Hungary their offer was an alliance which would have ensured Hungarian participation in an expected Mongolian war against Central Europe.

After receiving the offer, Bela wrote to the Pope, Alexander III, asking again for Christian Western help and indicated that if no help was forthcoming, Hungary would be forced to consider the Tartar offer as a matter of self-preservation.

The Pope then, in his reply, lectured the King in that a Christian King could not consider such a degrading connection and rather he had to choose death and destruction of his country. He promised a Crusade, but without tangible results.

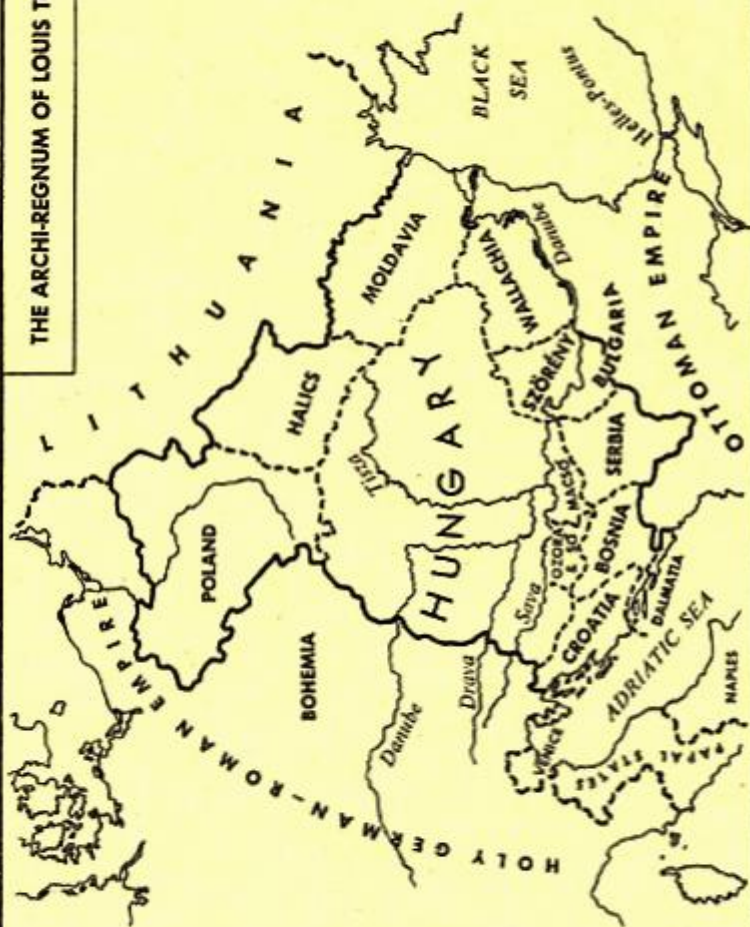
Bela then sent emissaries to the capital of the Khan and, by lengthy negotiations, gained time without committing himself or his country.

The internal difficulties of the Mongol Empire were such however, that the Western attack was never again contemplated by the Tartars in substantial forces.

So Hungary was saved, but, from a European point of view, the Mongol attack had a permanent consequence which still influences the fate of the continent.

The Great Russian people were subjugated by the Tartars and Russia remained in the bondage of the Golden Horde for many hundreds of years to come.⁷ The continuous racial and cultural association with the Mongols changed the character of the Russians and geopolitically important areas of Eastern Europe were detached from the Christian West.

THE ARCHI-REGNUM OF LOUIS THE GREAT — 1380



PART TWO

THE SHIELD OF CHRISTIANITY

The Angevins

The devastation of the country by the Mongols was severe and the settlement and final assimilation of the Cumans and the Jazigs were not wholly peaceful processes. Bloody strife, internal dissents and warfare lasted for decades. The rule of Laszlo IV, called Cuman, was marred by those events and more stable conditions began to develop only under András III. András' problems were centered around the growing powers of the Estates and the increasing might of the wealthiest families. Under his rule the evolution of the constitutional processes took further significant steps and the decrees of 1298 not only confirmed the rules of the Golden Seal of 1222, but the issue of new legislature became more and more a matter for assembly participation.

In Hungary's foreign relations the inner disturbances were reflected and no clear guidelines could be discovered. Bela IV's Empire survived the troubled times, but this was due mainly to the advantageous situation of the European scene. The Eastern Empire's power was no longer a factor, the Ottomans did not commence their march into Europe, the Tartars withdrew and the German power was involved in Western and Italian struggles. The emerging Bulgars and Serbian states were not yet expansive and the Hungarian Southern principalities, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Slavonia, Szoreny and Cumania remained relatively safe in the realm of Hungary.

When András III died in the year 1301, the male line of the long reigning national dynasty of the Arpáds became extinct. The Estates, following the emerging hereditary principles, intended to restrict their choice between suitable applicants from the group of female descendants of the great Kings. As the Hungarian Princesses married into the most powerful European dynasties during the centuries, it must be clear to the historian that national dynastic interests worked to ensure that the Hungarian Throne shall be occupied by one

of the members of their family. Venetian, French, Bohemian, Polish and German moves tried to influence the Estates and their fierce representations and the development of parties and followers of the pretenders created a period of uncertainty and strife for nearly a decade. The Pope supported Charles Robert who was a member of the Anjou-Capet dynasty. First, the Bohemian Vencel gave up the struggle for the Throne, where after, Otto the Bavarian accepted that he was unsuccessful. Finally, the French orientation with the support of Rome prevailed and Charles Robert I was elected by the National Assembly at Rákos.

His position, however, was rather insecure. The oligarchic rule of the mighty families made the rule of the King a powerless affair. The "ruler" of Transdanubia, Henry, Mate Csák of the Northern Overland (Slovakia) and Laszlo' (Transylvania) did not attend the election at all.

With the help of the Pope, however, Charles Robert was able to consolidate his position gradually and, by 1312, he had challenged the remaining forces of the oligarchy and, in the battle of Rozgony and other encounters, finally emerged as a true ruler of the country.

Towards the Balkan Peninsula however, the inner struggles of the land were detrimental and the Hungarian arms suffered defeats against the emerging new states of Wallachia and Serbia. Dalmatia and Croatia also made moves for independence, but with the result that the fortresses on the Adriatic Sea became dominions of Venice.

On the Western frontiers, Austria with Bavarian help became aggressive and, after some encounters, Charles Robert began his efforts to establish a Polish-Bohemian and Hungarian alliance, evidently in opposition to the Austrian-Bavarian concepts.

In the year 1328 the heir of the Neapolitan Kingdom died and, in the ensuing family negotiations in which Charles Robert I personally was engaged, the position of the heir to the Throne of Naples was secured to Charles Robert I's son, Andrew. This agreement was to become the root of the warfare conducted by Louis the Great on Italian soil in years to come.

In his Central European policy, the King was successful. His efforts were crowned when he was the host in Visegrád, his summer palace, to the Polish and Czech Kings and to

Henry, the Wittels Bach Prince of Bavaria. Their alliance finally secured the peace of Hungary in the West and checked the aggressive policies of Austria.²

Austria then renewed her feudal ties with the Emperor and, with German help, commenced her attack on Hungary. Charles Robert I however was promised help from the Czechs and Poles and Austria then withdrew.

The next step by the King was to establish family ties with the Polish Kingdom and this French oriented foreign policy of Charles Robert has to be regarded as an achievement.

Regarding the development from a European spectrum, it must be realised that the encirclement of the German-Roman Reich was in fact completed by the efforts of Charles Robert I. The alliance of the Hungarian Anjou with the House of Luxemburg, Poland and Brandenburg effectively closed the Drang nach Osten of the Germans, at least in the Central and South-Eastern directions. ³

From the Hungarian point of view, the defense in the West, alliance in the North, watchful guard to the East and a forward defense to the south were completely in harmony with the policy of her King. Charles Robert himself personally and his family quickly assimilated to the Magyars and was never regarded as a foreigner. His son, Louis, moreover, was really popular and was the only King who was awarded the distinction of "great."

Louis **1** took over the reign of the country in the year 1342 and his forty-years long rule was the most glorious period of Hungarian history. Personally, he was a very temperate, law-abiding knight-monarch who grew up in Magyar surroundings and his government and close followers were also Magyar knights and magnates and the country under his rule was praised by the great Italian poet as "beata Ungaria."

Louis' rule of course was based on the sound foundations laid by his father, Charles Robert, and the two Anjou Kings' achievement was that the XIV Century represents retrospectively the height of Hungarian history. The fortunate foreign policy scene was, of course, helpful in their efforts, but their personality made possible the use of the opportunities of the period.

Louis further strengthened the power of the King and the mighty oligarchic families were successfully tamed. On the other hand, the powers of the King

were never used by Louis for an autocratic rule and the constitutional developments clearly prove that Hungary was one of the European countries where the participation of the ruled was effectively ensured. In the year 1351, before the assembly of the clergy, nobles and magnates (*coetus et universitatis idemptitas praelatorum, baronum, procerum et nobilium*), the decree of the Golden Seal was again confirmed and the lawful co-operation between the King, the landed gentry and the nobles was laid down.

In his foreign policy, the King's attraction first centered on the Balkan Peninsula and his intention was to recover the losses of power and influence in the forward defences of the country and here Serbia and the Dalmatian Adriatic Coast were his targets. Louis' military expeditions in the south were successful and he recovered most of the lost territories and established the King's administration in the southern provinces.

The military encounter with Venice was rather disappointing for the King, but the subsequent negotiations with the Doge were finally satisfactory, as the co-operation of Venice in the forthcoming military expeditions against Naples was necessary.

The moves against Naples had been decided by Louis after the murder of his brother, Andrew, the designated heir to the Throne of Naples.

The question of the expeditions conducted by Louis with great expenses and bloodletting on Southern Italian soil have, since then, been criticized by historians as vain-glorious actions without national and territorial foundations. It appears that the dynastical aims were prevalent in these moves. Notwithstanding, the historian may discover in the fact of these military expeditions a turn in the Hungarian foreign policy of the Anjou. **In** the age of Charles Robert I, however, serving true Hungarian national interests, the French connection was evident and Hungary was an important chain in building up the Eastern wall against the German advances.

Louis however became, in Naples, involved in a struggle which made him an adversary, not only of the Kingdom of Naples, but also of Bohemia and France and the Pope in Avignon. Therefore it is evident that Louis then introduced a completely independent foreign policy. By the unification of Poland, Hungary and Naples he had in mind an "archiregnum" of Central-Eastern

Europe. The Crown of Naples was considered by him as being necessary to establish a rule over the Balkan Peninsula.

By the vision of an Empire, which could have effectively incorporated into the Christian-European community all the former Byzantium clients and with the co-operation of Poland and Lithuania to free Russia from the Tartar pressure, he had ambition of European dimensions and his actions cannot be regarded as a vain-glorious attempt for power.

On the other hand, it now clearly appears that the population and territorial basis of Hungary was insufficient to secure these aims.

The Italian expeditions began in the year 1347. After his victory at Capua, Louis entered Naples and avenged the murder of his brother. After an armistice, further Italian expeditions took place, but finally, by papal verdict, the conflict was ended in a compromise which barred Louis' further ambitions.

In these expeditions, the Magyar subjects of the King excelled themselves and the nobles' stay in Italy opened new vistas for the cultural development of the country. The renaissance rule of the later King Matthias was not confined to the Court, but most of the nobles participated in an Italian inspired cultural development which was rooted in the experiences of the Hungarian Knights of Louis in Italy.

The grateful King in 1351 called in the Assembly of the nobles and the constitutional achievements of Hungary and the establishment of the rights of the Estates were again confirmed. The proclaimed legislature presented a full codification of the rights and obligations of the free population and the introduction of the institution of Aviticitas, which secured the family inheritance, was well received by the nobles, as, at the same time, the equality of the nobles (*una eademque nobilitas*) was proclaimed. 4

The failure of the Naples' expeditions however now concentrated the King's policies to lesser aims, but more in the context of the traditional Hungarian policy.

Louis rendered effective help to Casimir, the Polish King against Lithuania, which country was not yet Christian, and, from time to time, raided the territories of Ladomer and Halics (Galicia).

The King had personally participated in the military expeditions to control the Lithuanians and, at one stage, he entered negotiations with the Kipcak Tartars and sealed the peace with the Khan who was considering entering into the Christian community.

After securing the northern frontiers, Louis turned again to the Balkan Peninsula and finally recovered Dalmatia. Serbia was also attacked and North Serbia again became a vassal of the Kingdom. Also, Wallachia and North Bulgaria were bound to Hungary by feudal ties.

These moves, viewed by the modern historian, could be labelled as imperialistic in their aim, but, behind the forward movements of Louis, we have to note the appearance of the Ottoman Turks on European soil. Byzantium was by now a metropolis of Constantinople together with some areas on the shores of the Aegean Sea. The area of present-day Bulgaria was under Ottoman occupation. The forward march of the Ottomans was not yet imminent, but their presence in Europe made it imperative for the Hungarian King to establish forward defense positions.

Louis' power grew when, in the year 1370, he became King of Poland. He ruled the Kingdom with the help of his mother and by his trusted Hungarian Counsellors. Consequently his rule in Poland was not popular, but the association with Hungary with a view to Poland's Eastern frontier was still welcome. Finally, Louis was satisfied that he could ensure the hereditary rights of his daughter.

In the meantime, the forward movements of the Ottomans continued and Serbia suffered a crushing defeat. Sultan Murad then organised his new vassals, Serbia, Wallachia and Bulgaria, and, in 1374, attacked the Bulgars and Serb vassals of Louis. These years represent the turning point in the history of the Christian people of the Balkan Peninsula. The Byzantium kept them in bondage for 500 years and, as the Eastern Empire became more and more Asiatic, so widened the gap between the Balkan people and the West.

The decline of the Byzantium offered some hope to regain the Balkan areas of Europe to the European community, but Central and Western Europe were disinterested and the Hungarian Empire was too weak to organise such a continental move.

Consequently, the Balkan nations first became vassals, then subject peoples of the Islamic Ottomans and had to supply the manpower for the Jannisars and later the Begs and Pashas to further the aims of the Islam.

Louis led an attack in the year 1377 against the Turks, repulsed Murad successfully and, for more than a decade, no intrusion into Hungarian controlled territory was attempted by the Ottomans. In remembrance of this victory, Louis built the Church of Maria Zell in Austria, where Cardinal Mindszenty now lies buried.

Louis personally was very interested in the arts and his efforts to establish a great library and his commissions to historians prove that he was a well educated man of his time. In the year 1367, he founded a university at Pécs which he wanted to use as a counterbalance to the influences of Prague University, established in the year 1347 and which became German in outlook.

Sigismund

Louis the Great died in the year of 1382 and his departure signals a complete change in Hungarian foreign policy. The King had only two daughters and the Estates were not happy with the prospect of a female rule and were rather reluctant to accept Maria as Queen of Hungary. The last Will of the beloved King however prevailed and it was accepted that Sigismund, the descendant of the House of Luxemburg-Arlon, who was also a Marquis of Brandenburg, be the consort of the young Queen. The Estates however worked in the direction that the consort should become a co-ruler.

The choice of Sigismund was, notwithstanding, not supported by all the influential barons and attempts were made to elect Charles of Durazzo to the Hungarian Throne, apparently to continue the French line of foreign policy. The supporters of Charles regarded Sigismund as a Czech and his connections of the German-Roman Empire as a Prince of Brandenburg evoked old hatreds.

But, the frustrations of the Naples-expeditions were also remembered and the country had to accept the fact that, notwithstanding the efforts of the Pope, the French and other western interests were unable to provide the help against the eastern dangers which were now clearly emerging on the southern border of Hungary.

Sigismund therefore was able to strengthen his position and was co-regent with Maria until her death in 1395 and, from that time, ruled Hungary until 1437.

The death of Louis also marks the separation of Poland and Hungary. The Polish nobles accepted Jadwiga (Hedvig) as their Queen, but they arranged her marriage to Jagiello of Lithuania. The Polish-Lithuanian Empire was thus born. The later connections of Hungary with

her former partners were however of a different character.

The changing position of Hungary was also evident on the southern frontiers.

In the year of 1385 the Sultan subjugated the possessions of the Serbs on the Adriatic and, by 1387, completely encircled the Serbian principality around Kosovo (Rigómezo) and this former dependency of Hungary was annihilated. As a result, the Serbians had to accept the role of a vassal of the Sultan and, in the following years, Hungary suffered attacks by the Turks accompanied and supported by the Serbs.

Sigismund had conducted three military expeditions against the Serbian area of the Ottomans. On the other hand, there were also signs of some understanding between Venice, Bosnia and Croatia who entered into some truce with the Turks and aggravated Hungary's position in the center of the southern frontiers.

It is possible that László of Naples' appearance as pretender to the Throne was as a result of the above events. He had some followers in Hungary, but Sigismund finally secured his position.

So the proud "arch i-regnum" of Louis the Great was dissolved. Hungary was standing alone and her southern frontiers were under attack and the defeat of Serbia and the advance of the Turks on the Adriatic wing raised the clouds of future perils of a dimension which Hungary did not have the strength to oppose in an offensive manner.

Sigismund had to limit his activities on the Turkish front to secure the fortresses and intervene occasionally in the affairs of the dependencies, but no longer imperialistically, 'but only giving assistance to local princes in their fights against the Turks. In the year 1395, Mircse and István, the Wallachian Princes, renewed their feudal ties with Hungary and Sigismund's military help secured the recovery of certain lost territories. The weakness of Hungary's position however became clear when the withdrawing Hungarian expeditionary forces were attacked by Vlad, another Wallachian Prince who was in the Turkish service, and, as a result of this ambush, Sigismund nearly perished.

Notwithstanding, the Hungarian national assembly called up the people of the country and asked for European help. The Pope had proclaimed

a crusade. The western powers made arrangements to send a protective flotilla of ships through the Dardanelles to the Danube and the contingents of Henry, Prince of Lancaster, French knights, Venetian and German troops were assembled and around Buda 30-40,000 crusaders awaited marching orders. Hungary provided approximately 50,000 troops.

The men moved through Transylvania, along the Danube and met Sultan Bajazid. The strength of the Sultan's armies may be estimated at 140,000 men. Notwithstanding this overwhelming strength, the Christian armies performed creditably, but their victories could not be followed up and the battle of Nikopolis (1396) was won by the Turks. Sigismund and some of the troops embarked on ships and were rescued by the flotilla at the Black Sea. The mass of the troops began their retreat and took up positions on the southern borders of Hungary.

The lesson of this lost battle was, that an offensive military action to free the whole of Europe from the Islam, was not possible notwithstanding the generous help of nearly all the European states.

Hungary had to accept that her strength was only barely sufficient for a defense and there was a need to secure alliances and assistance for the defense of Hungary.

This situation explains Sigismund's frantic moves to secure the Crowns of Central Europe and so provide sufficient defense for Hungary.

A breathing space was provided for these efforts, by the appearance of the Timur Mongols on the Eastern frontiers of the Ottomans and there occurred serious encounters between them. In the year 1402 the Ottomans lost a major battle near Ankara and the Sultan was also taken prisoner. This defeat of the Turks had ensured a relative peace on the southern frontiers of Hungary for approximately 15 years.

Sigismund's endeavors to enrich his head with central European Crowns were successful. In 1412 he became German-Roman King and, in 1420, he also acquired the Bohemian Crown. Finally, he was crowned as Emperor of the Holy German-Roman Empire.

His diplomatic efforts also led him into his active participation in ecclesiastical affairs. He was one of the conveyors of

the Constance Council. The wars against John Huss' followers had also occupied his time and attentions.

The Government of Hungary sadly missed the force of moderation of the absent monarch and the leagues of the Barons ruled oppressively.

Historians later accused Sigismund that it was only his personal ambition which led him to his efforts to secure the Bohemian and German Thrones. The writer however feels that his "neglect" of the country was not entirely selfish. He always regarded himself as Hungarian King. His early expeditions against the Turks show that he realised the danger. His western policy evidently failed, but this became clear only a hundred years later when the supreme test of the value of the German connections had to be faced.

The neglect of the Hungarian affairs caused some uprising against Sigismund and László of Naples again appeared as a pretender to the Throne.

Notwithstanding the odds, again and again he was able to secure his position and his close connections with the west also ensured that Hungary was able to participate fully in the European developments. Some of his administrative and military reforms were generally beneficial to the country.

Ironically, his long absences from the country helped the final evolution of the thesis of the Hungarian Holy Crown as long-lasting political theory.

In the beginning, St. Stephen's Crown only represented an emotional desire of the Kings and the nobles to be used for the crowning of the head of the elected Monarch. Later it became a legal requirement which sealed the election of Kings. By now, the theory had evolved that the Holy Crown was also a religious object, emanating mystical influence and representing the sovereignty of the land. The members of the Holy Crown were the King and the nobles, unified in the mystical powers of the Crown.

The theory was still potent and alive in the XX Century. When the Throne was empty after 1918 and Admiral Horthy was Governor-Regent, the Courts pronounced their verdicts using the words: "In the name of the Holy Crown". 6

The tragedy of Sigismund was that he was building up a super national empire in an age when nationalistic states made their first efforts to free themselves from the theocratic enforced European Union. He had the Crowns of Hungary, Germany, Rome, Lombardía and Bohemia, but the nations of his Empire were hostile to such an arrangement.

In Hungary he was under attack that he was a "Czech." in Bohemia he was regarded as a "Magyar" who wanted to exterminate the Czechs. In Germany he was regarded as Czech or Hungarian, but certainly as a foreigner.

He himself was very close to Hungary. in his inner quarters, he always spoke Hungarian and, according to his last Will, he was buried in Nagyvárád, near to the grave of St. László, the Knight King of Hungary.

John Hunyadi

Sigismund's Estate was not inherited by Hungary. With his death, the glory of the Imperial Crown, the wealth of Bohemia, and the Austrian connections were lost and Hungary was facing the perils of the south greatly weakened. Dalmatia was lost. Bosnia and Serbia became vassals of the Sultan, the ties with Wallachia were rather nominal and, in Moldovia, his rule was shared with Poland. The German-Central European orientation of his policy was in ruins.

He died without a male successor and the dangers of interregnums, the curse of the Hungarian dynasties, revisited the country.

The Estates under the guidance of the league of the ruling barons elected Albrecht, the Austrian Habsburg Prince, who was Sigismund's son-in-law. The Czechs revolted and the loss of Bohemia became a fact. Meanwhile Albrecht was elected by the German Princes as Emperor but was contemplating to keep his Court in Buda. However, his long absence from Hungary gave to the Estates the appearance that he was only following Sigismund's practice of foreign residence and the unrest grew. Albrecht then called the national assembly together, assured the Estates and made serious attempts to face the Turkish danger. In the previous year the Sultan had devastated southern Transylvania together with the valley of the River Maros and Albrecht's armies moved to the South again to confront the approaching Turks. There were some encounters in which the King's armies suffered heavily and defeat was only avoided by chance, as the Sultan suddenly turned his attention to Bosnia and was satisfied with the occupation of this province.

Albrecht died after two years of reign and the problems of succession again had to be faced.

Elizabeth, the widow of Albrecht, was awaiting the birth of a child, but the league of the Barons, who considered the defense of the South of utmost

importance, decided to elect a King who could fulfil the position of a Commander-in-Chief.

At Buda in the year of 1440 the Estates had made a decision and elected the ruler of Poland and Lithuania, the Jagiello Ulászló, to the Throne. The choice was an obvious one and clearly marked a disenchantment with German orientation and the Estates hoped that the co-operation with the Jagiello, who themselves were involved in battles with the Tartars and the Turks, would be fruitful to the embattled Kingdom.

Elizabeth in the meantime gave birth to a son and she proclaimed the baby, László V, as Hungarian King. The Estates, however, continued to approach the Jagiello in Cracow, who finally accepted their offer. Elizabeth however was adamant and arranged a coup d'état. Notwithstanding, the Jagiello followers won the skirmishes and finally Elizabeth left the country with her son and the Holy Crown and placed herself under the protection of the Emperor, Frederick III.

Ulászló's attention was immediately directed to the South where the Ottoman power was making further attempts to consolidate its position on the frontiers. One of the great Captains and Landlords of the South-eastern part of Hungary was John Hunyadi, a powerful baron and skilled military leader. In 1441 he had a remarkable victory over the Turks and he aroused the confidence of the King and the country. One year later against all odds he managed to defeat the Turks in Wallachia. The Wallachian Princes left the Ottomans and so Hunyadi was able to meet the Sultan in Sub Alpine Wallachia, where, at Jalomica, he had defeated the Turks convincingly.

After the victories of Hunyadi, the King made all efforts to organise the offensive defense of the country. The Pope, Eugene IV, and his Envoy Cardinal Cezarini gave all the encouragement to the King and country to organise the offensive against the Ottomans.

In the following year, 1443, Ulászló, with the command of Hunyadi, penetrated deeply into the Balkan Peninsula and the main armies liberated Sofia and there was speculation about a move against Constantinople. However, the winter set in and the armies had to withdraw into Hungarian quarters. As a result of the expedition, Serbia was free again and the defences of Hungary gained greater flexibility.

Hungary was under pressure from the Pope to organise and execute a final crusade and Ulászló was willing to follow this advice. However, Serbia opposed any such move and the Wallachian Princes also pleaded not to disturb the peace by an offensive. Their opposition was quite strong and Serbia did not allow the Alban Prince's army to cross the land to unite with Hunyadi's armies. The Hungarian Estates also voted for a period of peace to reorganize the country's defences.

Ulászló, notwithstanding these difficulties, made some diplomatic moves to secure the basis for an offensive policy and made a truce with the Emperor in the dispute between Ulászló and the pretender of the Throne, László V.

The preparation for the offensive against the Turks was proceeding when, at this time, the Sultan made a reasonable offer for peace with Serbia and Serbia's co-operation was lost. The advocates for peace gained the upper hand and Ulászló signed the Peace Treaty of Szeged with Sultan Murad 11(1444).

Soon after the Treaty was signed Ulászló came under pressure again to tear up the Treaty and attack the Turks. The Pope argued that the word given to the infidel had no binding power and the news reached the King that a strong Christian Flotilla had taken up position at Hellespontos.

There were no substantial western contingents to boost the Magyar troops and the Wallachian, Croatian and Serbian forces were uncertain in their attitude. Ulászló, notwithstanding the perils, ordered the armies to march.

The encounter with the main Turkish armies occurred at Varna. The Christian flotilla could only watch the movements of the Asian Turkish troops over the seas and the Ottomans were in overwhelming strength after the Asian troops united with the Balkan armies. The Hungarian armies were annihilated and Ulászló, with his faithful Polish and Hungarian guard, perished. Cardinal Julian also died and Hunyadi was only able to save himself. 6

The defeat and the interregnum was a real hour of peril for the country. The Estates formed a "union", elected seven captains and created a Council of Barons.

The negotiations with the Emperor and the Pope (both supported the kingship of the child, Laszlo V) went on and finally

a compromise was reached. John Hunyadi was elected as Governor-Regent in the year 1446.

Frederick III evidently accepted this solution, but the rights of László V were kept alive and the Holy Crown remained in the Emperor's possession. Nevertheless Hunyadi made a show of strength and led a punitive expedition through Austria and occupied Wiener Neustadt. The ensuing peace liberated the western towns previously occupied by the Emperor.

Before the peace was signed, Hunyadi also clarified the position of Wallachia and improved the southern frontiers' military security.

The reorganization of the country advanced well and Hunyadi made some attempt to revive the Naples connection and to seek a King from a French orientation. The negotiations with Alfonse V, the King of Aragonia, Naples and Sicily, failed, but Hunyadi made an agreement with Alfonse to organise a new offensive into the Balkans and he attacked again but, at Kosovo (where the Serbians suffered their decisive defeat) Hunyadi was also beaten and himself became a prisoner of the Serbian despot, George Barankovic. He demanded a heavy ransom but finally released Hunyadi.

Consequently, Hunyadi entered into negotiations with Bosnia, Serbia and Wallachia and, by skillful diplomacy, he succeeded in achieving relative security on the southern frontiers. He was never fully successful against Giskra, the Czech mercenary captain, and North-Western Hungary remained for a long time under Bohemian rule. 7

The negotiations with Alfonse having been unfruitful, the position of László V was again discussed with Frederick III, but the Emperor was forced to give in only after Hunyadi had organised an alliance between the Hungarian and Austrian Estates. The Emperor set free László V, but still retained the Holy Crown.

Now, László began his reign, but the government of the country remained in the hands of Hunyadi and his eldest son, Laszlo', also became one of the Barons of the land.

Constantinople fell in the year 1453 and the Ottoman threat drew nearer. Hunyadi prepared for a new offensive. He wanted to reorganize the defences of the country and incorporate the

Barons' contingents, the Serfs and the nobles' banderiums into a strong professionally led army. The act of 1454 was an attempt to achieve this aim.

The Ottomans attacked again in the same year and Serbia was devastated, but the main armies of the Sultan retreated and only an army of 32,000 men remained. Hunyadi met those forces and annihilated them.

After the shock of the fall of Constantinople, the Pope, Nicolaus V, again urged a crusade. John Capistran, the Franciscan, was his envoy. Hunyadi took up the cross and marched against Wallachia, when there the Turks attacked.

The new Pope, Callixtus III, made great efforts to organise the crusade and ordered a daily prayer in all Catholic Churches for the victory of the Christian arms.

The papal legate urged the Pope to urgently order marine attacks against the Turks and made a plea for Venetian, Florentian and German help too, as, in his opinion, the Hungarian armies were not strong enough and the Emperor and other Christian princes were unwilling to help.

Mohamed 11 attacked Belgrade with an army of 150,000 men. Three hundred guns and 200 river-boats were at his disposal.

Some Bavarian and Austrian help arrived to boost Hunyadi's Magyar armies. The fortress had a 7,000 man strong garrison under the command of Hunyadi's brother-in-law, Szilágyi. The Turks could not capture the fortress due to a heroic defense which repulsed the main attack of the Sultan. Hunyadi then arrived with his armies and re-established the fortress' connection with Hungary. The defenders finally moved out from the fortress and engaged in open battle in the fields and the encounter ended with the defeat of the Turkish forces. The Sultan's armies thereupon withdrew to Sofia.

Callixtus 111 received the news of the victory on the 6th August, 1456, and a year later, to commemorate the victory, ordered the Feast of the Transfiguration as a holy-day of obligation.

Hunyadi however died in the same year on the 11th August as a victim of the plague, which was widespread among the defenders.

Matthias Rex

John Hunyadi was the savior of Hungary in the XV Century and opened a new era in the country's history with fresh hopes of restoring the past greatness and glory of the fatherland.

His death however plunged the country into internal dissent and the rival leagues of Barons precipitated a crisis which culminated in the assassination of Ulrik Cilei, the King's uncle.

László V first swore not to avenge the crime, but he succumbed to certain pressures and executed László Hunyadi, the son of the late Governor, and took prisoner Matthias, his younger son, and exiled him to Prague. After the trial, the King left the country. He was at Prague when he suddenly died. George Podjebrad, the Czech Baron, was probably responsible for his death.

The death of the King, who died as a single man, again opened the perils of the election of a monarch.

A new powerful alliance of the Hunyadi and Garai families was formed in the interest of the kingship of Matthias and the co-operation of the Czech Governor, George Podjebrad, was secured for this purpose.

The national assembly was called together. The Barons were still negotiating, but the lesser nobles, who gathered at Rákos, marched to enforce Matthias' election, when the multitude received the news that the assembly had made the same decision.

Matthias proved to be a strong ruler. The great Barons and Matthias' uncle, Szilágyi, who all thought that the young man who had just been released from captivity would be a tool in their hands, were certainly disappointed as Matthias skillfully used his resources as King and restored the administration of the country. He made certain agreements with some of the barons

and also secured the fidelity of the lesser nobles and the National Kingdom started under favorable auspices.

The Pope Cailixtus 111 had welcomed Matthias warmly and invited him to continue the Christian struggle, following in his father's footsteps, and urged him to organise a new offensive against the Islam.

The Pope's successor, Pius II, raised these matters again and Matthias was ready to take up arms. However, the Pope's efforts were in vain. In the year 1460 at Mantua he had to accept the fact that the Christian princes were unwilling to enter into further commitments. Matthias therefore restricted his military activities to solve some local problems of the southern frontiers.

In the meantime the Sultan mopped up the remaining pockets of Christian rules in the Balkan Peninsula. The Parthenon, which was used as a Church dedicated to Mary, became a mosque. Cyprus was lost to the Arabs and Trapezund finally fell.

Then Pius II made a desperate gesture. He announced that he himself would take up arms against the Islam. He secured a peace between Matthias and Frederick; Venice was ready to declare war against the Turks as its commercial interests were seriously affected.

Matthias himself moved his armies into the Balkan and succeeded in liberating Jajca. However, the news then reached Matthias that the Pope, who had been waiting for weeks at Ancona for the arrival of the Venetian flotilla, died and the Venetians, abandoning the military expedition, returned home. Matthias, after some other encounters, also decided to withdraw as his forces were not sufficient for an offensive after the loss of the expected protection on the wings. After this time, Matthias was content with a defensive policy on the southern frontiers and, in fact, a relative peace with the Turks was assured.

Matthias' interests turned toward Central Europe and he made efforts to subdue Austria and Bohemia and he made approaches for the German-Roman Throne.

Was Matthias in this way neglecting the main European duty of Hungary to liberate the Balkan Peninsula and restore the territories of the former Greek Empire to Christianity?

Or are those historians right who assume that those western efforts of the King only served the purpose of enlarging the

resources of the Hungarian King to enable him to fulfil his mission as the shield of Christianity? 8

No satisfactory answers can be given in this controversy. Matthias' letters of course very often stressed that he was unable to organise an offensive military drive, as the Ottoman power could not be defeated with the strength of Hungary alone.

Most historians neglect to investigate the Ottoman Empire's aims in connection with this problem. However, history proved that the Ottomans in fact realised that, even though they were the successors of the Eastern Empire, they themselves did not have the military might to conquer Europe. Under the circumstances therefore, an uneasy truce between a strong Hungary and the extended Empire of the Turks was a possibility.

Matthias was right in that Hungary alone could not organise a liberation crusade and had to concentrate on keeping Hungary defensively strong.

Evidently, the Ottoman Empire also recognized that Hungary, under Matthias, had become powerful again and consequently did not attack in these decades with any substantial force. They made some raids in 1474 and 1476, but these could only be classified as border wars, conducted for the purpose of looting. On the other hand, Matthias' drive to the West and his ambitions for the most coveted Crowns of Christianity were in fact a reassurance to the Sultan that Hungary would not attack at the South. Istanbul was also in need of at least some temporary respite in order to assimilate and organise her European dependencies.

Certainly, the Holy See did its best to revive the spirit of Christianity to restore into its folds the faithful of the former Eastern Empire, but, as Matthias so often pointed out in his responses to the Pope, the Christian Community was in a state of disintegration. The idea of Europe as such shows only its beginnings and the Western countries did, in fact, begin their moves to create the overseas outposts of their future empires and turned their backs to the Eastern European struggles.

The center of Europe in fact revolted against the universality of the Christian era. The beginnings of the Reformation symbolize this revolt and mark the birth of the national states.

The western powers by now had diplomatic representations with the Porta and some sort of co-existence policy with the

new rulers of Constantinople was in process of evolution. Matthias himself pointed out to the Pope that he himself could consider a peace or alliance with Istanbul as acceptable. The Pope rebuked him in that such moves would be treacherous to the Christian cause, but, a few decades later, the Pope could not hinder the great French-Turkish alliance which, from the Eastern European point of view, became a decisive factor of their fate.

Matthias' rule was for Hungary generally advantageous. Internal order was restored and reforms of justice were ameliorating the positions of the serfs, lesser nobles and citizens of the thriving towns. Militarily, the establishment of his professional army, the Black Guard made him one of the strongest monarchs in Central Europe. His successes in Austria (Vienna was for a time within his power) and his rule in Silesia were remarkable achievements. ⁹

The heavy burdens of a strong foreign policy however caused unrest and some of the barons called into Hungary Casimir of Poland to replace Matthias, but the effort collapsed as the country strongly supported the national King.

Matthias was a true European and a renaissance prince. The constitution of the country was certainly formally respected, but his strong personality prevailed above all.

Possibly under the influence of his second wife, Beatrix of Aragon, the Italian revival of the classics and the birth of nationalism began in Hungary. The Hunyadi family had some Wallachian origin and, using this line, the learned of his Courts traced back the family origins to a Roman Consul. On the other hand, the Magyar nationalism revived the eastern origins of the nation and Attila the Hun and his achievements were glorified in their Annales. ¹⁰

The cultural life of the country reached high standards. Book printing was established at Buda earlier than in England ¹¹ and Matthias' collection of books, the still famous Corvinas, were outstanding examples of contemporary European achievements. A university was established in Buda, being the second in the country.

The towns were partly rebuilt on the lines of renaissance trends and Hungary was one of the most outstanding European countries during the time of Matthias.

Matthias was a strong ruler who demanded service and sacrifices from the population and was not a popular or beloved King. Notwithstanding, after his death, when the weak rulers and dissenting magnates destroyed the law and order in the country, a proverb was born which lasted for hundreds of years:

Matthias is dead, justice is lost.

His death in 1490 plunged the country once again into the political morass of the interregnum. He had no legitimate heir. His illegitimate son, John, born to him by a bourgeoisie of Breslau could not overcome the handicap of his origin. Matthias had an understanding with Maximilian of Austria which would have secured him the Throne, but no agreement was ever finalized for this end.

Maximilian was not acceptable to the barons, partly because his German orientation was regarded with suspicion and partly because the Estates wanted a King who would more readily accept their rule or constitution of the country.

The country then chose another Jagiello, Ulászló II. Maximilian accepted this choice, but the Austrian provinces of Matthias were to be restored to him. The House of Habsburg also took steps to secure for their family the Hungarian Throne. Ulászló's young son, the later Louis II, was married to Mary, grand-daughter of Maximilian. Louis' sister, Anne, became the wife of Maximilian's grandson, Ferdinand, who was to succeed Louis if he should die without an heir.

Ulászló II's rule was disastrous. He was a weak man who, without interference, approved any rules or actions of the barons. The feuds between the great landlords in fact disintegrated the country's defences and the peasant populations' sufferings reached serious proportions. This was of course a general Central European situation, but from Hungary's point of view, proved to be a disaster, as the loss of the power of the King invited military probes of the Sultan.

The Hungarian Primate, Thomas Bakócz, was at that time a candidate for the papal throne. A Hungarian at St. Peter's See would have signaled the will of Christianity to turn again to an offensive against the Islam.

Bakócz was not elected, but the new Pope proclaimed a fresh effort and ordered the Hungarian Primate to organise a

crusade. Nearly 100,000 men assembled under the Cross but the barons of the country remained absent and no foreign contingents arrived.

A lesser noble, George Dózsa, was appointed as Commander-In-Chief. Supplies were insufficient to feed the masses and the peasants turned against the landlords. The looting and plundering spread over the whole country and serious military efforts by the barons were needed to quell the unrest.

The revenge of the barons was enacted in the legislature and the codification of the Hungarian Law as at 1514 was dealt severely with the status of the peasants.

The weak King, social unrest and the egoistic barons caused such a deterioration of the economic and military position of the country that a major disaster appeared to be being invited.

In the year 1520 the Turks began their probing actions and some fortresses fell in Bosnia, and in Dalmatia. Suleiman II began his reign and his offensive attitude was evident as he demanded tribute from Louis. This was rejected and Suleiman took Belgrade. Thus the danger became imminent.

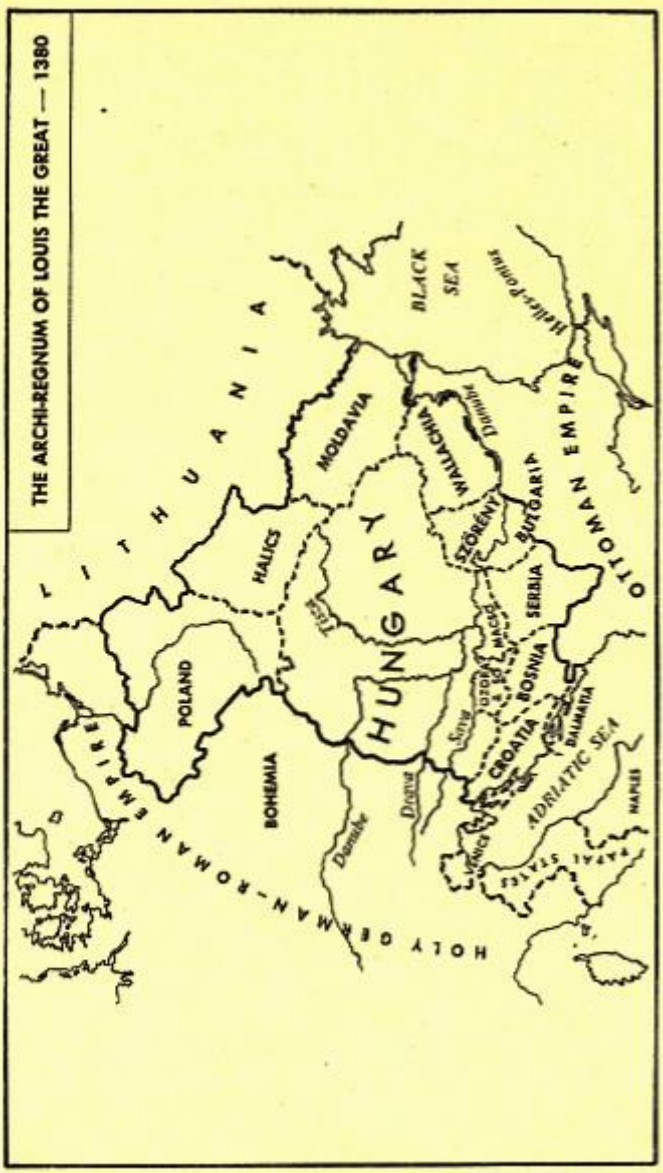
Hungarian envoys appeared before the Imperial Assembly at Worms and Nuremburg and requested assistance. However, the threatening French-German wars and the Lithuanian troubles induced Central Europe to ignore the plight of Hungary.

The Pope's efforts were also fruitless. Venice was now an ally of the Sultan and depended on the co-operation of the Ottomans to destroy the Portuguese-Indian trade. Poland-Lithuania was already engaged with the Tartars.

There came a few more years of breathing space as the Sultan turned his thrust against Rhodes in 1525, but those years were not usefully employed by the Hungarian barons, nor indeed by Europe.

The Hungarian Kingdom was in the hands of fate.

THE ARCHI-REGNUM OF LOUIS THE GREAT — 1380



PART THREE

THE TURKISH YOKE

The Battle of Mohács

On the 29th August, 1526, south of Mohács the armies of the King, Louis 11, and the assembled contingents of the magnates, 24-25,000 men strong, were to meet the might of Suleiman the Magnificent who was moving to the heart of the country, Buda, in overwhelming superiority. His armies were 120-130,000 strong. However, after the extreme sacrifice (the Christian army was completely annihilated) the way was now free for Suleiman to reach the Capital of the country - Buda. The King and his closest entourage died in the moors of Csele. The Ottoman forces burnt the fortresses in their way, sacked Buda, took thousands of slaves, but, before the winter set in, withdrew into their Balkan quarters.

The severe military defeat was very significant; however, only due to the political consequences did it become the root of a national tragedy. There are no data which could prove that the Ottoman aim was to conquer the country. The expedition was rather intended to prevent any offensive moves of the Hungarian Empire.

The Hungarian armed forces lost approximately 15,000 men, but the armies of the great magnates of John Zápolyai, Peter Perényi and Christopher Frangepán were intact and there was ample time to concentrate those forces and to repulse the Sultan in the forthcoming seasons. The death of the King however, had serious consequences.

Hungarian historians, strongly influenced by the following rule of the Habsburg family, maintained that the King and his bodyguards died accidentally in the moors due to the misfortunes of the battle.

There was however evidence which could raise at least strong suspicion that agents of the Habsburgs removed the King from the political scene. ¹

The period of the interregnum had only aggravated the apparent political weakness of the country which had deteriorated since the death of Matthias.

The Western orientation of the great King which would have secured the might of Central Europe for Hungary in its struggle against the Ottoman power was in ruins. The imperialism of the powerful Habsburg family, using their influence over the weak successors of the great King, strengthened the power of certain peers and the once united land became the fighting ground of the magnates.

In consequence the lesser nobility, sensing the dangers, passed a resolution in the year of 1505 at the Rákos Assembly: never elect a foreign King again. The nobility's manpower was further affected in that the revolt of the peasants in the year of 1514 was savagely crushed and there was no social harmony and understanding in the country which was, on the other hand, prerequisite to any national effort or crusade against the Islamic invaders.

Shortly after the lost battle of Mohács the leading families of the nation turned to John Zápolyai, the Vajda of Transylvania, who also had great estates in Northern and Eastern Hungary. 2

The assembly of Székesfehérvár, on the 10th November, 1526, elected him as King of Hungary.

Ferdinand Habsburg, however, made certain moves to hinder the election of a national King over Hungary and his aim was to incorporate the country within the boundaries of his family's realm.

The widow of Louis 11 left the capital of Buda early in September and established her court in Pozsony, near the Austrian border. Here, under Habsburg influence, was formed a Government which aimed at the election of Ferdinand as King of Hungary. Ferdinand, on his part, conferred with the most influential magnates and, at the same time, moved troops into Pozsony, Sopron and Magyaróvár, the fortresses of Western Hungary.

Under these military auspices the assembly of the nobles of Pozsony and surrounding areas declared and elected Ferdinand as a King. However, in his address to the assembly, the newly

elected King made the ominous declaration that he and his family intend to hold Hungary on a hereditary basis.

A Civil War between the followers of the two Kings broke out and the struggle lasted for fifteen years and, at the end of the contest, the country became divided into three parts.

This conflict of the Kings became the direct cause of the loss of unity and sovereignty of a once mighty land and, in the next two hundred years, Hungary slowly drifted close to national extinction.

The tragedy had its inner-political roots, but, in fact, it was the failure of Europe in the face of the great danger from the East, which enlarged the measures of the catastrophe.

The German-Roman Reich's Eastern Frontier was running on the line of Danzig, Breslau, Vienna, Trieste, Northern Italy and Switzerland. Holland and Belgium, the Low Countries, were under her influence. Through the Spanish branch of the mighty Habsburg family, she also controlled Spain and Southern Italy and, being the power of the Centre, moved to achieve a hegemony over Europe.

Against this threat, England, France, Venice and the Papal dominions formed a resistance and an alliance. The French diplomacy was also searching the areas of Eastern Europe in order to achieve the encirclement of the Reich. They stretched out feelers towards Poland, Hungary and the Turkish Empire.

Both Poland and Hungary however proved to be weak politically and militarily and were constantly engaged in struggles and wars against the Ottoman forces. On the other hand, with Western encouragement, intensified Turkish attacks against the borderlands of the Reich could have weakened the Empire and the prospect of a two-front war had raised the hopes of the French for relief on the German front.

So, the "most Catholic" French King allied himself with the Ottoman Islamic forces and, in fact, abandoned Eastern Europe to its fate.

It was evident at this time that the Christian crusading spirit was no longer alive and Central and Western Europe tacitly accepted the Ottoman Islamic rule over the Holy-Land, Byzantium and the Balkans. Furthermore, the Ottomans were not regarded

as a serious menace for Central and Western Europe. Certain trade connections eased the economic problems too, flowing from the Ottoman rule of the Eastern Mediterranean, and the idea of a peaceful co-existence between the Christian West and the Islamic East became accepted. The Orthodox Church co-operated with the conquerors and the ideological fervor of a Gothic Europe died down and the nations of the West turned their attentions to the seas.

The religious differences were used in the spirit of Machiavelli. The Catholic French King allied himself with the German Protestants and the Islamic power was also accepted as an ally and, to moderate the pains of conscience, the learned theologians confirmed that the Church and the natural law allows every form of defense.

Suleiman himself was interested in contacts with Western Europe. Basically, he regarded himself as the successor of the Eastern Roman Empire with similar geopolitical aims. The Council of the Grand-Vezier had many members of Greek, Alban and Serb origins. He also spoke a Russian dialect. One of his favorite wives, Hurren Sultana, was of Ukrainian origin and was often accompanied by Serbs and Montenegrins.

Ferdinand's aim, of course, was evidently not identical with the Reich's. However associated with the German lands, the Austrian Habsburg's orientation turned to the East and the rule over Austria, Bohemia and Hungary was predominant in their thinking. He sincerely urged the Diets of the Reich for help against the Turks, but had to subordinate his requests to the need of Western problems of the Kaiser.

But Hungary in the meantime was left alone and more and more became the battleground of rival political and military forces.

The Habsburgs imperialists immediately reacted after the lost battle of Mohacs. It is quite possible that the interregnum was, in fact, engineered by the agents of Ferdinand and it is evident that the "election at Pozsony" shows all the elements of military subjugation in certain legal camouflage.

On the other hand, when John Zápolyai sent his emissary to the French King, who was at that time representing the Western European coalition, he was told to approach the Sultan for a peace on his terms.

After two hundred years of struggle against the invading Moslems, together with the national past, the Christian conscience of the country (whose soldiers' battle cry was "Jesus, Jesus") made it nearly impossible for Zápolyai and his followers to enter into negotiations with the Court of Suleiman.

Western Europe may have weighted the political power of the Ottoman Empire as a counterbalancing force against Central Europe, but Hungary's independence and European social and economic order and her Christian soul were threatened in an affiance with the Turkish ruler.

However, facing a total annihilation, John Zápolyai and his followers made an attempt to accommodate the Eastern aggressor and to rebuke both the Turkish and German forces.

This was the purpose and aim of the 15 years of Civil War following the lost battle of Mohács.

The Struggle for Power

The conventional history regards the military and political moves of the opposing forces as being a civil war. The country was divided and Hungarian units and armies stood against each other and this description therefore is not incorrect. However, the presence of foreign imperialistic forces was the determining factor.

Ferdinand, after the proclamation of Pozsony, moved resolutely and immediately began to enlarge his geographical basis of Pozsony and Sopron. He secured military aid from the Reich, borrowed moneys, employed mercenaries and, with an army of 10,000 men, mostly Spaniards and Germans, began his military moves to conquer Hungary.

Only six months after the coronation of John at Székesfehérvár, Ferdinand succeeded and, without encountering any serious resistance, appeared to be the master of the situation. On the 3rd November, 1527, he was himself crowned as King at Székesfehérvár and John fled to Poland. The magnates now seemed to accept Ferdinand. He promised large slices of the family Estate of the Zápolyai to the converted and this partly explains his success. On the other hand, his followers' arguments had some force in that only the might of the German-Roman Empire could save the country from the Islamic invasion.

However, this hope was largely without foundation. Ferdinand himself of course would have been only too happy to secure his rule over the Hungarian realm, but his brother, Charles V. the Emperor, failed to appreciate the key position of Hungary in the struggle for the Eastern European domination. His eyes were turning to the short-term advantages of the hegemony over Western Europe and the Empire's help was limited to securing the borders of Austria in a forward position.

His advice to his brother was similar to the attitude of the Western powers *towards* the request for aid by Hungary. Ferdinand should send envoys to

to the Sultan and pray for peace. Consequently, Ferdinand sent emissaries to Istanbul in the year 1528 and asked for an armistice.

This was clearly an acknowledgement of the fact that Hungary, as a whole, was sold out to the East.

In the meantime, King John had regained his influence mostly in Transylvania and North Eastern Hungary. His policy was to obtain western aid against the Habsburg imperialists and to employ delaying tactics in his negotiations with the Sultan. His emissaries visited Rome, Venice and England, but he did not receive any political or military aid. Only in the Court of the French King did he have some success. On the 28th October, 1528, John's representatives signed a Treaty at Fontainebleau binding France for monetary and military assistance.

The above Treaty was not a valuable one, due to evident political reasons. France could not deliver the goods and direct military aid was a geographical impossibility.

King John was well aware of the situation and he also pursued a policy to arouse the Emperor's attention and he hoped in Christian solidarity. His envoys presented the country's request to the Diet of Regensburg early in the year of 1527 to provide forces against the Islamic invaders. But, when Ferdinand's German-Spanish mercenaries forced him to leave the country temporarily, he had no other choice but to accept the advice of the Pope, the Doge of Venice and the King of France and to seek peace and alliance with the Turks. The Treaty of Fontainebleau was to be a safeguard in the very delicate situation.

Suleiman offered his assistance to John early in the, year o 1528, and consequently, Rincon and Lasky, envoys of John in the West, established contact with Istanbul.

These steps have been regarded, since then, by the Hungarian historians as most controversial ones. Was not the decision to accommodate the invading Moslems contrary to the national and Christian tradition of 500 years of Hungarian history and, anyhow, was a co-operation between Hungary and Istanbul a practical possibility?

In the writer's opinion, if one considers the political situation in the context of the history of the XVI Century Europe, the

attempt was not without a real political foundation. At that time, the Turkish Empire reached its natural boundaries and, basically, the Balkan Peninsula and the borderlands of the Black Sea constituted her northern and north-eastern frontiers. Hungary was, however, the route to any attack into the Balkan Peninsula and Istanbul's political aim was only to ensure that the Carpathian Basin's rulers be on friendly terms with the Empire of the Turks. The contemporary forms of such treaties provided rights of troop movements over the other party's territory, offered material help and payments of a yearly tax. Such treaties, of course, are not alliances between powers of the same ranks, but the weaker party's concessions by which she buys her peace and the freedom of her rule.

Accordingly, when King John concluded such a treaty with Suleiman, the price of such an understanding was a limitation of the country's sovereignty. The King had to ensure certain movements of Turkish troops on his territory and had to provide food and other material help to sustain the logistic of the troop movements, but the treaty was still advantageous, as the King was not obliged to join the Sultan in any action against Central Europe and he did not undertake the payment of any kind.

Ferdinand's propaganda, of course, attacked King John and regarded the treaty as anti-European and anti-Christian. However, in the face of the weakness of the German Empire and the tensions between Western and Central Europe generally, Ferdinand himself was forced to contact Istanbul and the ensuing armistice left the west borderland of Hungary under the rule of Ferdinand, but as a vassal of the Sultan. On the other hand, Suleiman graciously declared that he regards Ferdinand and his wife, Maria, as his own son and daughter.

Under the circumstances, when Western Europe was the ally of the Porta and Central Europe was forced to sign an armistice, King John's actions and policy of co-existence were a necessity.

John's aim was of course to re-establish the national Kingdom of Hungary, neutralized between the Habsburg and Turkish powers. Such an achievement would have served the Hungarian and European interests well and it is ironical that the concept failed mainly due to ideological difficulties.

Hungary could not change alliances and commitments, notwithstanding that their leaders urged to close the era of Christian

crusades against the Islam. In fact, John himself, his Court and the whole nation could not separate themselves from their Christianity, European existence and their 500 years past and did not lay down their arms.

The nation as a whole continued its struggle. The heroic defender of the fortresses of Koszeg, Eger or Dregely, without any help and abandoned by Europe, did not surrender.

Neither the proud oligarchy nor the lesser nobility could accept the situation and they mobilized all the forces available for the unification of the country in the interest of the continuation of the struggle against the Ottomans.

Their uncompromising struggle made it impossible to achieve a Turkish-Hungarian *modus vivendi* and led to the partition of the land into three parts and very nearly to the extinction of the Magyars.

Buda Falls

The understanding between John and the Sultan assured the rule of the national King over the whole of the country. It appeared that at least the land would not be devastated time and time again by the expeditions of Suleiman and the autonomous rule of the King would give time to reorganize the affairs of the administration. On the other hand, the deal required certain matters from John. The southern fortresses could not be fortified as directing troops and equipment to the South would be regarded by Istanbul as unfriendly. The moves of Turkish troops to the border areas of Austria could not be attacked and also John had to provide troops to strengthen the Moldavian frontiers of the Turkish Empire. The King had also committed himself to supply logistic for the troop movements.

Suleiman entered the country again in the year 1529 as Commander of a large force. At Mohacs there was a meeting between John and the Sultan. The Turkish Army followed the Danube and moved closer to Vienna. This Turkish Army was in a vulnerable position. Being far away from its basic supply depots with the Hungarian troops at its rear, its annihilation would have been possible provided a strong German Empire Army would have offered a battle. However, Ferdinand, who proposed an armistice with Istanbul a year earlier, withdrew his forces and the Sultan, being in a precarious position, did not dare to continue his march and returned to his winter quarters.

The march to Vienna in fact was not a contemplated invasion of Central Europe, but a military show to secure the new status quo of South-Eastern Europe.

Ferdinand's troops had to evacuate Buda, John entered the capital and the Sultan returned the Holy Crown to the King.

John, in the ensuing years, tried to organise the country, but his Governor, Gntti, committed blunder after blunder and John's personal following shrank dramatically.

Suleiman appears to honor the spirit of the understanding and, in the year 1532, sidesteps the heart of the country and leads his armies following the River Drava in the direction of Kanizsa, Körmend and Szombathely against Austria. However, the Sultan's troops were stopped at Kőszeg. The Hungarian-Croatian garrison's steadfast resistance destroys the timetable of the invasion and the Sultan has to turn towards Graz and return again to his winter quarters.

During the heroic struggle of Kőszeg, a large imperial army of 80,000 men - Germans, Spaniards and Italians - preparing a defense of Vienna, were standing by. However, the armies maintained their purely defensive positions and their presence was a political-military show only. After the Sultan began the withdrawals, the imperial army dispersed without pursuing the enemy.

Politically it became more and more evident that Central and Western Europe had accepted the loss of South-Eastern Europe to the Turks and Hungary could not hope for an early turn of events.

This abandoned nation, however, did not give up the struggle. The peasants' suffering caused by the Turks and the German mercenaries was enormous, but instinctively they defended themselves and their peaceful life from the Moslem attacks. The nobles and magnates, on the other hand, organised a political move to force the two Kings to accept a compromise in order to achieve the unification of the country.

As John was not married, it was proposed that, after the death of John, the whole country should revert to Ferdinand. Behind this concept lay the hope that the German Reich would eventually move against the Turks.

This hope was not realistic. Charles V was unable to turn against the East. The French-Turkish alliance forced the Reich into a two-front situation and, in fact, Charles was encouraged to ask Ferdinand to approach the Turks for a peace treaty. Consequently, Ferdinand was continually in contact with the Porta and disclosed the conspiracy of the Hungarian magnates.

King John at this time appointed as his Chancellor Fráter Gyorgy, the Croatian-Italian monk, and he proved to be a good diplomat and skillful organizer of the state affairs. The western and northern parts of Hungary were under Ferdinand's control, but Buda and Eastern Hungary were subject to John's rule.

Fráter Gyorgy's diplomacy was crowned in the Peace Treaty of Várad which assured the unification of the country after the death of John. Of course, the agreement was a secret one and was only possible to be executed when and if sufficient imperial forces were assembled to confront the Turks.

Between the Courts of the Kings however, the atmosphere was one of distrust and Ferdinand leaked the secret agreement to Istanbul, hoping for the fall of John. The Turks had their armies engaged in Moldavia when the Sultan was informed about the secret clauses of the Várad Treaty and, in his rage, made threats to attack Transylvania. Ferdinand was unable to send any troops and all the diplomatic skill of Fráter Gyorgy was needed to pacify the Great Turk.

John was deeply disappointed and at this time he renews his Polish connections, married Izabella, the daughter of the Polish King, and works on a French-Polish-Hungarian alliance.

However, it was now too late. The Sultan has realised that the Hungarian friendship was not an honest one and the Magyars, unbroken in their spirit, are only waiting for the opportunity to turn against Istanbul. Therefore he makes up his mind to destroy the unity of the country and ensure the Turkish peace of the Carpathian Basin.

Indirectly the impending tragedy had its roots in the Hungarian-Christian intransigence, being unwilling to collaborate with the Porta, but finally abandoned by Europe.

In the year 1540 Transylvania revolts against John whose marriage to Izabella was a signal that he was not ready to execute the Várad Treaty. The magnates fighting for the unity of the country did not realize that the Turks were now concentrating their powers to enforce their will in the Danube Valley.

John effectively controls the revolt, but his health fails and, on his death bed, secures the Throne for his son. John Sigismund.

Fráter György, Peter Petrovics and Bálint Török, the guardians of the child King, are still hopeful that they will be able to pacify the Sultan. Suleiman at first accepts the status quo, but now demands yearly tribute from the country.

The Sultan now makes his military moves and attacks Transylvania in the year 1541 and then concentrates his forces against Buda. Roggendorff, a General of Ferdinand, attacks the fort and Fráter György is the defendant. The Turkish forces defeat the German troops, but the defendants are not liberated and have to meet the conqueror.

Suleiman receives in audience the child King, and the Court, in his quarters on the plains around Pest. During the visit the crack troops of the Sultan penetrate the fort, outwardly as sightseers, and the Great Turk then announces his will: The heart of the country, from the Lake Balaton to Buda up to the mountains of the Mátra and Bükk and including the East-Tisza area, will be incorporated into the Turkish Empire. The Rule of John Sigismund is accepted by him for Transylvania and the Partium only.

On the 2nd September, 1541, as a sinister symbol of the Turkish occupation, the Islamic priests enter the old coronation church, dedicated to the Mother of God, Maria, and their Islamic prayers signify that the United Christian Hungarian State has fallen.

The western and northern areas remain under Ferdinand's rule. The sovereignty of Royal Hungary was not only acknowledged by him, but he also ruled the remaining territories as Hungarian King. However, in his rule the aspects of national sovereignty were completely absent. In fact, those areas became the military frontier districts of the Habsburg family dominions and, by his professed hereditary rights, were annexed territories of the Holy German-Roman Empire.

Transylvania, the North-eastern parts of Hungary and Partium (areas between the River Tisza and Transylvania proper) under the Sultan's sovereignty, detached from Christian Europe, had the difficult task of organizing their autonomy and existence.

The Hungarian Kingdom, the shield of Christianity after more than 500 years of great achievements and traditions, was permanently divided. Central Europe and the Western nations

had written off Eastern Europe and their only aim was to secure with limited military and economic assistance the defense of the Austrian frontiers.

Europe's passivity was of course possible as the Ottoman Empire had no further substantial claims against Europe. The rule of Moldavia, Transylvania's status as a vassal and their occupation of the areas between Tisza and the Danube sufficiently secured its Adriatic and Balkan dependencies. Therefore, basically the Sultans accepted a co-existence with Europe.

The situation was not acceptable to the divided Hungarians. The nation was not prepared to surrender and continued her struggle for 150 years.

The Nation in Arms

A period of one and a half centuries elapsed between the fall of Buda, the partition of the country and the final liberation of Hungary. History calls it the period of Turkish occupation and the Hungarian poet refers to the "one-and-a-half Century night."

Due to contradictory moves, fast-changing situations, fierce military encounters and uneasy truces, it is hard to evaluate their history.

Heroic defences of the fortresses against the attacking Islamic power, Turkish and Hungarian alliance against the German soldateska, peace treaties, without arms being laid down, and wars, without conclusive battles, were the features of the period.

Peace or war, German "defense" or Turkish "alliance", whatever the situation, the country was suffering enormous devastation, the bleeding of the nation continued and the picture of the former great-power status of the country faded away.

The writer divides this period into four chapters.

The first part is from 1541 to 1575, when István Báthory, Prince of Transylvania, was elected as King of Poland. The most influential forces of the country still pursued the Zápolyai Fráter György concept to unify the country under Habsburg rule in the hope of an anti-Turk crusade.

As from 1575 to 1606, we see the first attempts to resurrect the sovereign Hungarian state in Transylvania and to find Western European allies to protect "Royal" Hungary living under despotic German rule.

The struggle between the two orientations takes a decisive turn, when the agreement between the Transylvanian Prince,

Sigismund Báthory, and the Emperor Rudolf, was broken and the imperial General, Basta, introduces a most cruel military rule in Transylvania.

Now, István Bocskay, the most powerful magnate who, up to this moment, has been working for the reunification of the country under Rudolf, changes colors, will become the head of an anti-imperial revolt and becomes the first great representative of the Transylvanian Concept.

As from 1606 to 1657 we witness the Transylvanian independence which culminated in the rule of Gábor Bethlen. In this period Transylvania is, in fact, Hungary. His envoys were welcome visitors, not only in Istanbul, but also in Protestant Western and Northern Europe and he could effectively secure moral and military help for the German oppressed "Royal" Hungary.

The fourth period engulfs the liberation wars and ends with the campaigns of Eugene of Savoy.

In this Chapter, we cast a look into the two first periods.

Notwithstanding the consequences of the disclosures by Ferdinand of the Várad Treaty's secret clauses to the Turks and the ensuing Turkish occupation of the Hungarian Heartland, the leading magnates still worked on the project to unify Eastern and Western Hungary and, in due course in a pincer move, attack the Ottoman forces. The Transylvanian magnates and the Chancellor of the child King, Fráter György, were ready to make all sacrifices to achieve the unification of the Christian forces. In December, 1541, Transylvania signed the Treaty of Gyula with Ferdinand and, keeping in mind the unfortunate disclosure of the secret clauses of the Várad Treaty, they made moves to prepare the military background of the expected coup d'état. The aim was to give sufficient time to Ferdinand to assemble suitable military forces on the Western frontier. Transylvania reorganized its administration and strengthened the defences of the key fortresses. As these works were in progress and it was to be expected that the negotiations and connection with Royal Hungary would sooner or later come to the attention of the Sultan, the Chancellor made every effort to build up his connections with the Yugoslav members of the Vezeer Council and did not spare taxes and bribes to assure the Turks.

Finally, in 1551 the parties considered the time was ripe and the pact was made public. Transylvania turned against the Turks and their vassals - the Wallachian rulers.

Ferdinand was however unable to conduct a proper coordinated action on the whole Western and Northern Front and did not attempt to relieve Buda. He sent only a relatively small military contingent of Germans, Spaniards and Italians into Transylvania under the command of General Castaldo.

Fráter György then realised that Transylvania was again abandoned and he made some attempts to pacify the Sultan. Castaldo and his military staff however sensed treason and they lost their heads and assassinated the Chancellor.

In the political vacuum so created, Suleiman moved in. Following French advice, Istanbul proclaimed Transylvania as an independent State and, in this manner, the partition of the Hungarian Kingdom into three parts became law. This represented the end of a united Hungarian front against the Islam. From that time only the individual fortresses offered resistance and the war became the struggle of a nation in arms. Losonc and Temesvár, Drégely under Szondy and Eger under Dobó captaincy entered into the Hungarian history as the epic struggles of a nation that knows no surrender.

Ferdinand died in 1564 and his successors, who were also Emperors of the Holy Roman Reich, beginning from the Peace of Drinople in the year 1568, secured with severally renewed "eight years" peace treaties the security of the Austrian territories, but, in fact, the Emperors abandoned the frontier-posts of the Hungarian fortresses, whose men continuously suffered heavy losses.

The organization chart of the area, which was placed under military administration and which for all practical reasons was basically the territory of Royal Hungary, clearly discloses the political background of the defense.

The Austrian territories were defended by the Croatian, Vend, Balaton and Veszprém districts and, on the other hand, the much longer frontier between Komárom, Eger and Tokaj counted as two districts only. From the very limited military allocations, the bulk of the defense supplies went to the Croatian and Vend districts, the direct defense line of Austria, and the Hungarian fortresses did not receive any supplies or men for decades.

It would be unjust to blame the Habsburg family solely for this state of affairs. Ferdinand, Miksa or Rudolf would be of course inclined to achieve rule over the country as a whole, but the Central European political situation only worsened since the Battle of Mohács. Charles V's Reich was falling to pieces and the Catholic and Protestant religious wars blinded their people to the common danger.

The religious wars started in 1546. First, the Protestant-Saxon power was defeated and Hessen also fell. On the East, the Empire was not pressed by the Turks as yearly tributes were paid to the Sultan. The death of Francis I, King of France, relieved some of the pressures, but, by the year 1552, the Empire was again involved in internal dissent. Charles V abdicated and the Reich was to be divided. At this time Ferdinand becomes the ruler of the German, Czech, Austrian and Hungarian territories and Philip, the Emperor's son, inherits Spain and Holland. Charles V enters a monastery and, with his death, also the idea of the united Christian Central Europe was buried.

The Austrian Habsburgs, unwilling to give up their Catholic posture, remained strange to the North and North-western Protestant Germans and were unable to mobilise their strength against the Islam. They had to be satisfied that the Sultans, receiving their tribute, would not attack Austria and Vienna with substantial forces.

The disintegration of Central Europe finally became a fact during the 30-years war. The Catholic Emperor was unable to force his will on the Estates, as happened in France, and, on the other hand, the Princes could not remove the Emperor and establish the rule of the Parliament, as achieved in England.

The Ottoman Empire was also in decline. In 1566 Suleiman died and his successors, Selim and Murad, had to face internal disorders and the offensive strength of Istanbul decreased.

Both the German and Turkish forces faced each other defensively in the Danube Valley and the renewed peace treaties were based on the status quo.

The Habsburg-German imperialists notwithstanding, made attempts to assimilate Royal Hungary into the Empire. Due to the cruel administration of their military laws, the Hungarian population grew desperate and the anti-German feeling also had

certain religious overtones. For decades large sections of the population opposed Luther and his followers, as they regarded these preachers as representatives of a German religion. However, when the Habsburgs became Emperors and a policy of Germanisation was pursued and the authorities started to attack the Hungarian pastors, the situation changed and the national romantic started to regard the Protestants as representatives of a "Hungarian religion".

In the year 1570 the Estates elect in the person of István Báthory a Catholic Prince of Transylvania. At this time it became evident (due to the geographical position of the land) and both the Empire and the Ottomans conceded this, that some kind of autonomy would be unavoidable in Transylvania and raised no objections against Báthory's election. Transylvania's real independence dates from the Báthory rule.

Five years later István Báthory was elected to be King of Poland and the rule over Transylvania was transferred to his brother, Christopher. Báthory wanted to use the Polish-Hungarian political alliance to strengthen Transylvania's position. However, as a Polish King, he had to pursue an offensive policy against Russia and he had to be satisfied with the relatively peaceful state of affairs in Transylvania.

Sigismund Báthory's rule, beginning in the year 1586, also marks 15 years of war against the Turkish power. The war was an unavoidable resistance against the South-Yugoslav Begs and Vezeers, who, without the support of Istanbul, conducted aggressive raids against Transylvania. Rome gave some assistance for the defense. However, Central Europe was deeply involved in national and religious strife and had no strength to send substantial forces to assist and so the liberation of the Hungarian territories was again postponed. Notwithstanding, this period of wars represents a turning point, because it proved the weakness of the Turkish Empire; peaceful conditions prevailed for the next 60 years. The resurrection of the Hungarian State could, from now on, be regarded as in progress.

The weight of the German imperialism, however, was increasingly felt. Properties of the gentry were confiscated in fiscus law suits, mercilessly following the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio*. The Counter Reformation was, in fact, only the camouflage to secure the land for the followers of the German line and the imperial Generals, Basta and their representatives, in-

stituted terror regimes. Royal Hungary revolted against this barbaric treatment and István Bocskay, a magnate of the North-Eastern part of Royal Hungary, became leader of a national uprising.

The Bocskay uprising is a turning point in the history of the German-Hungarian relationship. The nation, which was abandoned by the West and tortured by the Turks and Germans, again takes her fate in her hands.

This was now possible as the foreign political situation opened some opportunities.

The Ottoman Empire, tired and divided after long periods of warfare, was under the rule of a child Sultan and in the German Empire the 30-years war was about to erupt.

Istanbul now seeks an Hungarian alliance, not an agreement with a vassal, but on the basis of equality. Turkish and Tartar auxiliary troops were at his disposal.

Bocskay however organised a national resistance and, with his Magyar troops, liberated Transylvania and Northern Hungary.

A national assembly elected István Boeskay as King, but, being a moderate, he did not accept the Crown and negotiated a peace treaty with Rudolf in which the King-Emperor acknowledged formally the independence of Transylvania and North-East Hungary and the rights of the Protestants in the remaining areas of Royal Hungary.

Bocskay played the role of intermediary between the Emperor and Istanbul and the peace treaty of Zsitvatorok terminated the 15-years wars. These wars did not liberate the Turkish occupied territories, but started a relatively peaceful period and enabled the beginning of the regeneration of the nation.

Transylvania

During the reign of Gábor Bethlen, Transylvania grew into the position of a European power and conducted an independent foreign policy. If one reflects on the geopolitical situation of the small country, the question, whether its policy was realistic or not, could be answered.

Transylvania was nearly encircled by the Turkish Empire. She had common frontiers with Poland on the north and with the Habsburg Empire on the west. An anti-Ottoman policy was inviting a war on three fronts. Opposite the Hungarian territories under Turkish rule, the townships of Várad, Arad and Temesvár were nearly defenseless. The Székely and Saxon territories were constantly under Rumanian-Turkish threat and, in the direction of Moldavia-Rumania; Tartar presence was to be expected.

The Turkish edge of the occupation of the Hungarian Heartland was of course also threatened geopolitically by Habsburg-Transylvanian encirclement, but the history since Mohács proved that the Habsburg Empire did not conduct an offensive eastern policy and did not represent a threat to Turkish security.

Accordingly, Gábor Bethlen had to accept the status quo; the alliance with the Turks at least secured the peace and could proceed with the re-establishment of Hungary, using the Transylvanian base.

Historians of later centuries seemed to discover the birth of an independent "Transylvanian" line, a Protestant movement which would be interpreted as an opposition to the idea of a united Hungary. There is no data however which could support the theory of the intention of separatism. However, the leaders of Transylvania rightly judged that "Royal Hungary" is only a legal fiction and the western and northern territories of Hungary,

under Habsburg rule, represent only the forward frontier area of the German Reich and the Hungarian population prays for their deliverance from the military oppression of the Habsburg Generals.

For the time being however the Transylvanian leaders had to be satisfied if Transylvanian military presence could ensure the rights of the Hungarian nobles and, specifically, the rights of the Protestant population.

That was also the opinion of Cardinal Peter Pazmany, the leading personality of the Hungarian counter-reformation, who emphasized that Royal Hungary, being a frontier area, could only be defended by the German Reich.

It is interesting to note that in Transylvania the magnates supported the growth of the powers of the Prince, following the trends of similar European processes. On the other hand, the Transylvanian Prince gave assistance to the Royal Hungarian nobles against the absolutistic powers of the King.

Of course, the Estates opposed the ruler's absolute powers in their own private and feudal interests and this was detrimental from a social-political point of view. However, only the power of the Estates could resist the process of Germanisation which threatened the survival of the Magyars.

The Catholic Primate Pazmany and the Protestant, Gabor Bethlen, agreed in this assessment of the situation. This is the reason, the unity of purpose in the defense of the country whether Catholic or Protestant or leader of Royal Hungary or Transylvania, why the Hungarian counter-revolution was much milder than it was in Central Europe and the co-operation between the Christian religions in the Carpathian Basin was an early example for Europe. The co-operation of the Catholic and Protestant leaders later led to a spirit which never knew the bitter divisions as experienced in the West. 3

István Bocskay died soon after the peace of Vienna. Sigismund Rákóczi and Gabor Báthory's rules were short-lived and, with Gabor Bethlen's rule, the Golden age of Transylvania began.

He assumed full powers of a Prince and became the excellent representative of an enlightened absolute Ruler. Transylvania's economy was reorganized. Bethlen's personal Estates were great

but he also nationalized the foreign trade and so secured the necessary incomes to underpin his foreign policy pursuits. Bethlen also enforced the social peace. He himself was a Calvinist, but the Catholics and Protestants were treated with equality by the State and he also ameliorated the burden of the Serfs. Transylvania called up strong armed forces, employed mercenaries and created a sound base for a forward-looking foreign policy.⁴

In his Court at Gyulafehérvár, the artists created a true European atmosphere and the memories of Matthias' renaissance Court was alive in the smaller fatherland of Transylvania.

Five years after he assumed power, the 30-years war broke out which shook the German Holy Empire and forced her rulers into political impotence.

For Hungary this seems to be an opportunity to emancipate her from the German pressure. The Ottomans never had ambitions of drive into Central Europe and, against the Habsburg Empire; their policy was rather defensive with a look to their Mediterranean dependencies, in alliance with France.

Accordingly, it was not an impossible dream to renew the Suleiman-John Zápolyai line and to induce the Sultan to accept the independent National Hungarian State between the Western Empire and the Ottoman Rule. However, the Turkish occupation of the Hungarian Heartlands made the matters difficult, as there was little hope for a withdrawal of the Turkish forces. At this time, in fact, the transfer of possession of certain fortresses to the Turks was the price of peace.

Therefore the only possible advance in the efforts to unify the country could have been the union of Transylvania with Royal Hungary. Western and Northern Hungary however would have added only an enlarged defense line to the geopolitically defendable Transylvania. On the other hand, Royal Hungary was economically so strongly built into the life of the Habsburg territories that a separation would have caused serious hardships. A further factor was that the Hungarian Estates were not too happy to lose their rights and privileges under the absolute rule of the Transylvanian Prince. The religious problems were also to be considered. The counter-reformation was well advanced in Royal Hungary and, notwithstanding the ecumenical spirit of Transylvania, atrocities also occurred from time to time

by the Protestants as the story of the Catholic martyrs of Kassa proves.

Gábor Bethlen realised the noted difficulties and, banking on the political vacuum created by the German disunity, made diplomatic advances to secure the rule over Austrian territories and endeavored to establish direct geographical connections with Venice.

In this spirit, Bethlen took military action against the German Reich. He became a member of the Westminster League and his marriage to Catherine of Brandenburg was aimed toward diplomatic orientation to North-Western Europe. The main aim of Bethlen against the Habsburg rulers was of course to contain their imperialistic attitudes in the Danube Valley.

The military undertakings of Bethlen could not achieve his aim of the re-establishment of a united Hungarian Kingdom. He had to be satisfied that the peace of Nicholsburg secured the independence of an enlarged Transylvania and the Emperor had to guarantee the rights of the Hungarian Protestants.

The 30-years war, which destroyed the German unity, was still in full swing when Gábor Bethlen died in the year of 1626. His successor, Gyorgy Rákóczi I, intended to continue the policies of his great predecessor. However, the Estates made some attempts to curb his princely powers. Notwithstanding the difficulties, he was able, mainly due to his private wealth, to secure his position. There was another military expedition against the Germans when he was called in from Royal Hungary by the revolting Estates. The expedition ended with the peace of Linz and the Emperor again had to guarantee the rights of Royal Hungary.

In the year 1648 when the Peace of Westphalia was signed, Transylvania was one of the signatory powers. This peace treaty created a disunity of the German interests. On the other hand, it was also a beginning of new developments in Central-Eastern Europe.

The Habsburg family evidently turned away at this time from the idea of a German Reich, based on a German-Italian axis, and concentrated all their efforts to consolidate their rule over Austria, Bohemia and Hungary. This new political conception of the Habsburg family meant the end of the defensive policy

The Turkish Yoke

towards the East and their final aim was to incorporate the "liberated" Hungarian territories into their family Empire.

However, there was no possibility for an early offensive military action. Austria was exhausted in the 30-years war and, on the other hand, the Turkish power again became more active and aggressive.

Transylvania's Prince at this time was György Rákóczi II and he did not take into account the Habsburg weakness and the Turkish revival.

As Gábor Bethlen's western oriented aggressive policy geopolitically proved to be impossible, the Polish orientation was pursued: to obtain the Polish Crown and, with their help, to attack Austria from the rear. In preparation for the contemplated Polish efforts, Rákóczi subjugated Moldavia and commenced negotiations with the Cossacks. He wanted to secure the Eastern frontiers of Transylvania if his armed forces were to be employed in the North of Poland.

The subjugation of Moldavia and the Vlachs in the Alpine-Danube region south of Transylvania was also executed before this time, but in alliance with the Turks. Istanbul did not object to those moves by Transylvania during her own periods of weakness and it would have also been possible under Rákóczi, if the spirit of co-operation as existed between Bethlen and the Sultan were still alive. However, in Rákóczi's time, the rule of the Divan slipped into the hands of the Alban Begs, demanding aggressive policies, and the Ottoman Empire started to realize that, at the end of the Western religious war fares, Central Europe would initiate an offensive policy towards the East. Therefore, to secure her Black Sea frontiers, she decides to control the growing power of Transylvania and leads the Crimean Tartars against the retreating Hungarian forces, while those armies were engaged in Poland.

The Polish adventure and the lost battle against the Tartars (nearly the whole army was annihilated) represented a turning point in Hungarian history.

Turkish-Tartar military expeditions devastated Transylvania following the losses in Poland. Transylvania again became a powerless vassal of the Ottoman Empire and, without the active military assistance of the Eastern Hungarian forces, it was

not possible to achieve the result of a strong unified Hungary replacing the Turkish yoke.

If the successors of Gabor Bethlen would have preserved the Turkish-based Pax Transylvania until the beginning of the Western liberation wars, the Turks would have been forced to quickly evacuate the wedge of their occupation and the country would have been spared sufferings of 10 years duration.

The political consequences of the fall of Transylvania were also severe. Only a strong Hungarian Transylvania would have been able to mitigate the ensuing German rule in the hours of Habsburg glory.

The End of the Turkish Yoke

In the year 1658 Mohamed Köprili, grand-Vezeer, attacked Transylvania from the South-West, occupied Nagyvárad and moved against Kolozsvár. His allied Tartar forces reached the Prince's Capital, Gyulafehérvár, from the south-east. Yearly raids were devastating the land and Transylvania's independence was in ruins. Jenő and Várad were incorporated into the Turkish occupation. The Prince held only a rump territory of Transylvania and had to obey the orders of the Porta.

The tragedy of Transylvania and the forceful Turkish-Tartar attacks had also deeply affected the Western Hungarians. The destruction of Transylvania also made Royal Hungary indefensible and opened the way to Turkish attacks in the North and the West. On the other hand, it made it possible for Emperor Leopold to enforce strict military rule and, under the camouflage of defense slogans, he in fact suspended all the rights of the Estates.

Miklós Zrinyi was the leading personality of the nobles in these troubled times. He was well educated and his military philosophy carried weight in the country. It was evident to him that the Austrian Rulers were not opposing the Turkish devastations as they were hoping to liberate the lands where after the Magyar population could be subjugated to the German rule.

Zrinyi's proposition to the Estates was that Royal Hungary should transform itself to a military organization based on Spartan principles. His plans were requiring material sacrifices too great to be acceptable to the nobles.

However the desperation of the country, including the most loyal and Catholic circles, was so deep that Vienna had to make some moves. An expeditionary force was sent to relieve Várad but the Generals avoided a battle with the Turks and they were spectators to the occupation of the fortress.

The primate of Hungary, Lippay, had announced publicly that if no help was forthcoming from the West, Royal Hungary would be forced to accommodate the Turks. John Kemény, the Prince of Transylvania, then made arrangements with the Habsburgs and opened the country's frontiers to the troops of Montecucoli and Heister. The Magyars had great hopes and Transylvania had greeted the German troops as liberators.

Kemény's army and the German troops marched united to Kolozsvár. However, when reports made it clear that the substantial Turkish-Tartar forces were moving ahead from the South, the German troops deserted the Transylvanians and withdrew their forces.

The Turkish offensive then turned against Royal Hungary and, in 1663, Erseküjvár fell. The theatre of war now approached territories of the Empire and some European help was organised.

Zrinyi's strategy was offensive in its spirit, but the learned Montecucoli wanted to apply a delaying tactic and Zrinyi was forced to withdraw.

Finally, Montecucoli re-engaged the Turks in battle at the frontiers of Austria and dispersed the forces of the grand Vezier.

Notwithstanding the victorious battle, the Emperor made a 20-years peace with the Sultan. The recovered fortresses of Erseküjvár, Várad and Zerinvára again became parts of the Turkish occupation. The Emperor evacuated Transylvania and formally acknowledged the status of Transylvania as a vassal of the Ottoman Empire.

The reasons behind this unacceptable weak peace, notwithstanding the military victories, were that the Empire wanted a free hand in the East as the Spanish hereditary problems again engaged Central Europe in the West.

This was the peace of Vasvár, signed on the 27th September, 1664, in which Leopold also undertook to pay reparations to the Turks after an aggressive enemy was in fact militarily defeated.

The trend disclosed with the treaty, however, was not out of step from the policy in Hungarian-German relationship. For more than a hundred years, the fact was that the Empire and

the Turks had an understanding in the division of Hungary and this was a basis for their co-existence.

The Habsburg Empire had again abandoned the country, when militarily it was possible to follow up the victory at Szentgotthárd.

Royal Hungary then revolted against the dynasty.

Miklós Zrinyi, the hero of so many battles against the Turks and the propagator of an offensive attitude towards the Ottoman Empire, had some talks with Marquis Guitry who was Commandant of the French contingent under Montecucoli in the battle of Szentgotthárd. The Marquis had offered to Zrinyi a French-Hungarian alliance. Later Zrinyi also had meetings with Gremonville, who was Louis XIV's Ambassador in Vienna. The Ambassador then arranged a meeting with Miklós Bethlen, who represented Transylvania. Zrinyi fully realised that his plans could be successful only if Transylvania and the Ottomans were ready to assure the safety of the rears of his military boundaries and required assurances. On the 18th November, 1664, however he died in a hunting accident. Zrinyi was the only person at this time who could pursue such a grandiose plan, the alliance of France, Turkey, Transylvania and Hungary. His sudden death, under the circumstances, threw dark suspicions against the officials of the Emperor as the contemporaries had recalled the death of Gyorgy Fráter, István Bocskay and Louis II.

Vienna certainly knew about the negotiations between Zrinyi and the foreign powers as moves were made for a military solution of the Hungarian unrest.

In the year 1665 Wesselényi became the leader of the proposed uprising. He raised his voice publicly against the Treaty of Vasvár and a meeting of the main participants arranged the sending of envoys to Istanbul to clarify the Sultan's position.

The Ottoman Empire however was heavily engaged at this time in the East and had disclosed the visit of the emissaries to Vienna.

Now it appeared evident to the leaders of the conspiracy that a national uprising would be defeated. They made voluntary disclosures to the Court and placed their hope in the argument that the respect of the Hungarian Constitution and the liberation of the country from the Turkish yoke,

in the long run, would also be in the interest of the Emperor.

The Habsburg dynasty however already had made up its mind for a military solution of the Hungarian question. In the spring of 1670 German military forces placed the land under military rule and a special Court in Vienna pronounced its death sentences and Peter Zrinyi, Ferenc Frangepán and Ferenc Nádasdy were beheaded.

The German "Soldateska" looted and raped, but the main danger lay in the establishment of Courts and the leading Magyar families were to suffer heavy sentences and loss of properties which were donated immediately to Germans or collaborators. The number of prisoners grew into thousands and the youth at military age fled into Transylvania.

In the years 1673-74 the Pozsony Courts started their proceedings and a move was set in motion against the Magyar Protestants generally. Hundreds of Protestant pastors and preachers were sent to the galleys and their sufferings remained, for a long time, the symbol of the ferocity of the enemies of the Hungarian freedom. In the meantime, back in the year 1671 the Government of Vienna had discharged the Hungarian soldiers of the western fortresses, on the one hand to please the Sultan, but also with the idea to replace them with German forces.

The administration of the country was allocated to a governorship which had its headquarters in Pozsony. On their staff were 4 German and 4 Hungarian Counsellors. Ampringen, the grandmaster of the Teutonic Order, was appointed as Governor and so the military colonization of the country received its legal framework.

The suffering and defeated nation however found a new leader in the person of Imre Thököly. The young passionate magnate, the owner of rich North Hungarian Estates, quickly and successfully organised the youth who deserted the Emperor's call-up and Thököly's brilliant Hussars secured his rule over much of Royal Hungary.

Behind this uprising there was little political consideration. It was rather the result of general desperation, driven into extremes. Bocskay and Bethlen were assured by the Sultan when they moved against Vienna and Transylvania was well organised.

Transylvania however, at that time, could not assist Thököly. The Turkish forces were engaged on the Polish-Russian frontier and did not want to break their co-existence with Vienna.

On the other hand, Louis XLV was causing some trouble to the German Empire on the Western front and the forces at Leopold's disposal were not sufficient to deal with the Hungarian uprising.

This is the background of Leopold's decision, who called the national assembly together in the year 1681 in Sopron. The decrees of this diet restored the rights of the nobles and secured the religious freedom of the Protestants and these measures pacified the rebels.

In the following years however, the political situation of Europe had a dramatic turn. Kara Mustafa withdrew his attacking forces from the Polish-Russian frontier and made preparation to attack the Habsburg dominions. Most probably, his French connections had disclosed to the Sultan that an alliance under the leadership of Pope Innocent XI was emerging to negotiate a German-Polish alliance against the Ottomans. Later, Venice also offered its co-operation and, under the religious fervor, the French King also declared his neutrality. The nuncios of the Pope in Vienna also made serious efforts to ameliorate the Emperor's attitude towards Hungary in order to secure the cooperation of the country.

The anti-Moslem military expeditions' financial backing was also the work of the Pope.

Thököly was poorly informed regarding the noted happenings and intended to follow his ancestors' concept, namely to confront the Emperor with the help of Transylvania and the Sultan. In the year of 1682, he had a meeting with Ibrahim the Pasha of Buda, and he, in the name of the Sultan, approved Thököly's plans and Turkish-Magyar troops occupied Northern Hungary. After the victory at Fillek, Ibrahim solemnly handed over to Thököly the decree of the Sultan. In this at home, Istanbul formally recognized the National Kingdom of Hungary and Croatia under Thököly and, for a yearly tribute, he also promised auxiliary troops against the Emperor.

Thököly thought that at last the opportunity had arrived for the resurrection of the Hungarian Kingdom, but he failed to

appreciate that the Sultan was ready for this compromise only, because he was by now awaiting the Western counter-offensive against his south-eastern European dominions.

The decline of the Turkish Empire in the Balkan Peninsula seemed to be imminent and the Turkish alliance was no help against the German imperialists.

In the year 1683 Kara Mustafa suddenly turned against Vienna. His intention was in fact an offensive defense against the impending attacks of the Holy alliance. As required by the Agreement of Buda, certain troops of Thököly also moved to Vienna.

The Sultan commenced the siege of the township, but, on the 12th September, 1683, the relieving troops of the Polish King, John Sobieski, reached Vienna and defeated the Turks. The Ottomans were pursued well inside Hungary. 5

The great victory of the Christian armies found the Magyars bitterly divided and desperate. The nation of crusaders against the Islam that were engaged in the nearly continuous centuries of warfare, "the shield of Christianity", was attacked by Germans and Turks alike. She was foreign to the East as a result of religion and the Asiatic way of life and, on the other hand, German colonisation and military rule threatened her nationality with destruction while the Protestant Magyars also suffered from religious persecution.

Notwithstanding and sensing some hope, the so-often abandoned and betrayed Magyars were again ready to forget the past and serve faithfully in the spirit of 600 years of Christian tradition.

The great international effort inspired the nobles and the population. The nation took up arms again and the Hungarian hussars were an essential part of the ensuing battles which lasted for a decade. Thököly's army also changed colors and turned against the Sultan.

The war of liberation had three phases. As from 1683-1690, Hungary was practically free again from the Turks. On the left wing of the coalition, the Polish armies attacked Moldavia and Venice supplied the western security of the central attacks.

The great successes of the Central European forces however caused anxiety in France and, with French help, the Sultan was

able to initiate a counter-offensive and Belgrade came again into Turkish hands. The ensuing battles however only proved that the Turkish power was by now limited, the Ottomans were unable to launch further attacks and the fronts stabilized.

In the year 1697 at Zenta the Turks suffered decisive defeat. Prince Eugene of Savoy surprised the Turks' operations who were engaged in transferring their troops over the River Tisza, and dispersed the Ottomans. The victory opened the way to the Balkans.

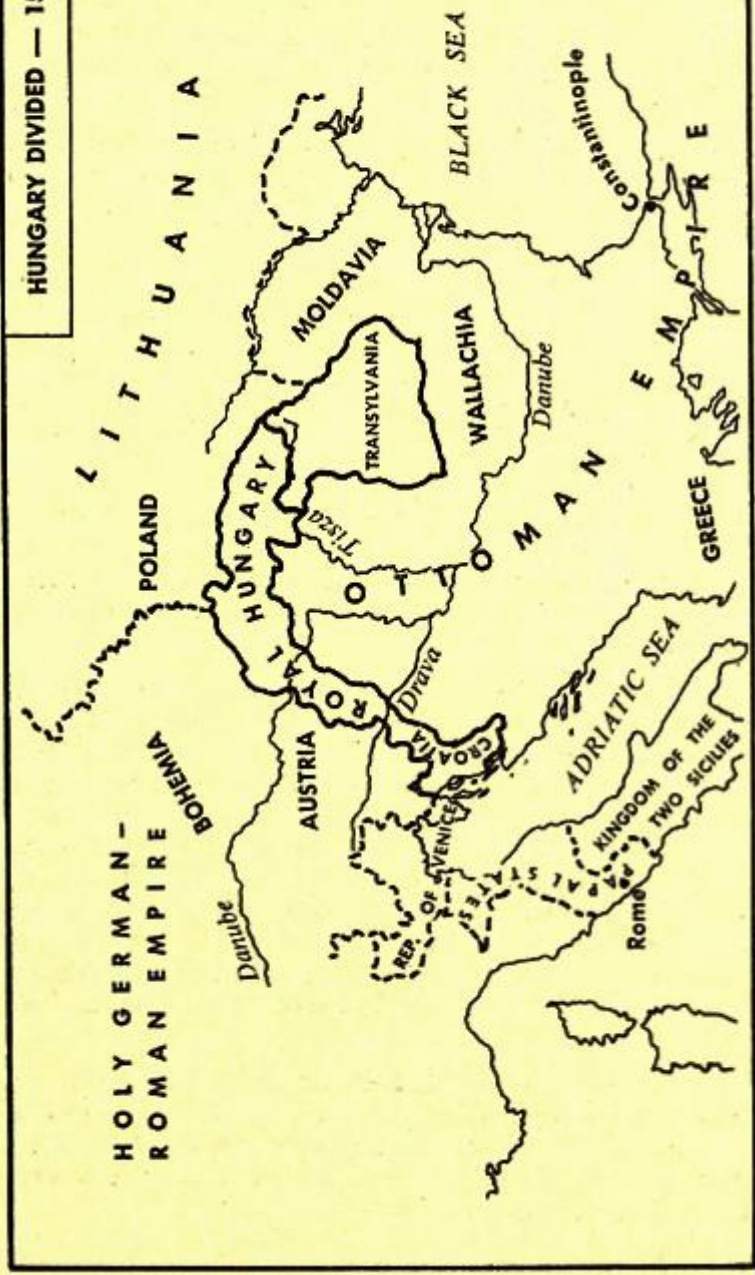
With the support of the English Ambassador, the Sultan made an offer for peace. Up to this point, the English were in alliance with the Emperor against France, but their support would not embrace the move of the Habsburg to the shores of the Mediterranean. Consequently under French-English pressure, peace negotiations were introduced and the problems of the Polish-Turkish frontiers were also included into the agenda.

The Ottoman Empire, in the ensuing peace, abandoned all their claims to Hungarian territories and only Temesvár and the triangle between the Rivers Maros and Tisza remained under their rule. The Turkish rule ceased also in the Ukraine and Dalmatia.

After the liberation of Buda in the year 1687, when the jubilation of the country was prevalent, the national assembly was called together by the King. At his request, the Estates conceded the hereditary rights of the house of Habsburg on the male line for both the Austrian and Spanish branches of the family. Further, the Estates agreed to nullify the "ius resistendi" of the Golden Seal of 1222 and the Estates lost the possibility of resisting the King on a legal basis. Notwithstanding, the decrees included the obligation of the King to safeguard the constitution. However, the interpretation of the historical, flexible Hungarian constitution was allocated to be an executive area.

In fact, Leopold and his Generals had treated the country as a conquered territory on "iure belli". Using the legal commitments of the national assembly to the House of Habsburg, the imperialist Austrian Empire made an attempt to incorporate Hungary into her sphere of power.

HUNGARY DIVIDED — 1541



PART FOUR

THE GERMAN RULE

Ferenc Rákóczi

Hungary was treated by the victorious Austrian Emperor as a conquered land and this confirmed the fears of the Bocskays, Bethlens and Thökölys. The judgment of the leaders of the nation was correct and, by now, it was evident that the independence of the country was threatened by the Habsburg imperialistic aims. The declining Ottoman power was in retreat but the nation had to face a new phase of the Austrian "Drang nach Osten."

When the Holy League, organised by the Pope, secured the co-operation of Poland and Venice, beside Austria in this last crusade, there was a hope that the liberation war, conducted by international forces, would not result in a Habsburg conquest of the country. In fact, Austria's military and financial contribution was a minor portion of the burdens. Hungary's military efforts on the other hand were quite significant, and financially, the country paid more taxes to the Emperor during the years of war than they paid to the Turks in three generations. There were no valid reasons therefore to treat the liberated country as a conquered territory.

The international forces however withdrew soon after the end of the hostilities and the Emperor, Leopold, having in mind a new south-eastern German Empire, did everything to consolidate his absolute power.

During the centuries of Turkish occupation, the independence of Transylvania was the central hope of the resurrection of the Hungarian national state, but Austria worked towards the unification of Transylvania with the Royal territories. After the liberation however, the Court skillfully used the tendencies of Transylvania to preserve their independence, with a view to the results of the counter-reformation in Hungary. Now, the Emperor was ready to accommodate the Transylvanian Protestants and, in the

classical manner of "divide et impera", Leopold issued a decree, proclaiming the administrative separation of Transylvania from the motherland and he then ruled Transylvania directly from Vienna.

On the other hand, with the military moves hardly completed, the Court began the colonisation of the southern areas, under military command, with German immigrants.

The liberated areas were in fact ownerless and Leopold established a commission to deal with the claims of the descendants of the former owners (*neo-acquisitica commissio*) and, as a result of the commission's harsh and legalistic requirements of proof, the result was that substantial lands were finally donated to non-Magyar elements.

In these actions, the aim of colonisation appears to be evident and the methods were cruel and uncompromising.

The Holy German-Roman Empire had passed its Zenith and the Habsburgs now looked to the Danube Basin as the future center of a united German dominated Empire.

The German-Roman Empire was satisfied during the earlier centuries in the friendly relationship with the Hungarian Kings and, in the period of weakness of the country, their aim was no more than to establish feudal ties. However, when the Habsburgs' Austrian line reached for the Imperial Throne, their power shrank as the north-German Protestant Princes gradually emancipated themselves and the Habsburgs created a new interpretation of the "Drang nach Osten." Their aim was to unite Bohemia, Hungary, Galicia and Dalmatia and create a south-eastern German Empire. For the unification of the area, they attempted the Catholicization and Germanisation of the population.

Cardinal Kollonic's famous saying was that "first the population had to be impoverished, secondly it had to be made Catholic and finally to have the German language imposed on them." This was the program of the military government. The population was terrorized, overtaxed and confiscations were the order of the day. Finally, the despotism was so harsh that Kollonics, himself, proposed a new system, as he admitted that the population would be right in thinking that under the Turkish yoke they were better off.

The desperation of the country was so widespread that the revolting serfs, displaced former soldiers, nobles and magnates were all only looking for a leader to organise an uprising.

A plan of a national revolution was worked out by Miklós Bercsényi and his followers. The chosen leader was Ferenc Rákóczi. He was the stepson of Imre Thököly, grandson of the executed Zrinyi, a descendant of Transylvanian Princes, landlord of large Estates, well-educated and of pleasant personality.

The young Rákóczi was unaware of the plans involving his person. He had recently married and he did not want to be involved in politics. However, as he lived in his Hungarian estates, he could not emancipate himself from the influence of his surroundings. Rákóczi was deeply religious and his spirit full with Christian charity was aroused with sympathy towards the sufferings of the serfs and, in his social thinking, he was far in advance for his age, and entertained ideas for the amelioration of the serfs' lot. The religious peace was also close to his heart. On one of his later edited medallions, Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinistic priests and pastors were shown, before the same altar, visualizing the ecumenical services of the XX Century. 1

Rákóczi was a good friend of Bercsényi, who was, in the first years of his public life, a faithful follower of the King. He was North Hungary's Royal Commissioner. The turning point in his life came when Vienna rejected the reform plans of Cardinal Kollonics. He then submitted to the urging of his fellow nobles and decided to organise the uprising.

Both Rákóczi and Bercsényi were well educated and had the experiences of travels in central and Western Europe and generally had diplomatic backgrounds. They were ready to move only after careful planning and foreign policy backing. Rákóczi, in the year 1701, wrote a private letter to Louis XIV. The Sun-King's answer was non-committal. The French were still hopeful that the throne of Spain could be secured for the Bourbons peacefully and the conflict with Austria was regarded by the King as avoidable. The messenger sold the answer of the French King to the secret police in Vienna and Rákóczi and his plans were exposed. The Emperor arrested Rákóczi and he awaited his fate at the same prison where his grandfather lost his head. However the Prussian captain of the prison helped him to escape and he found refuge at his Polish Estates.

In the spring of 1702 began the struggle of the Bourbons and Habsburgs for the possession of Spain. A French victory would have secured the hegemony of Louis XIV over Europe. England however, notwithstanding that her aims by now looked toward the establishment of her overseas Empire, could not allow a unification of Europe and acted in accordance with the policy of her "balance of power" theory. In her alliance with Austria, the English sea forces, with financial backing and with the dispatch of a 40,000 men strong expeditionary force, entered into the war.

At this stage, the political behavior of the Eastern European area became important from the French point of view and, with the help of the Polish and Scandinavian-French Ambassadors, the French-Hungarian understanding took shape. Rákóczi undertook to unleash the revolution and France promised technical troops and financial backing.

Hungary at this time, without a plan or organization, was in political turmoil. The desperate serfs and the armed groups caused local disturbances which were rather "peasant revolts", but were symptomatically of the depths of bitterness prevalent in the country.

Rákóczi finally issued his famous Manifestum in 1703. He crossed the Polish-Hungarian frontier with 3,000 men, but Tamás Esze's army was already awaiting the leader in North Hungary and thus began the national uprising of Rákóczi.

If one views the history of the Rákóczi uprising in its European context it appears that the French and Hungarian military moves were poorly coordinated. The Hungarian historian, Padányi, rightly pointed out that Villars' French General established his bridgehead over the Rhine early in February, 1703, and his armies reached the upper Danube in May. Bavaria was in alliance with France and the direct attack on Vienna was within the possibilities. The Hungarians were to join the attack from the East and the rendezvous with the French troops in Vienna was the aim.

However, the Rákóczi uprising in this year did not yet have the regular troops necessary for such an undertaking. Rákóczi's army was only a conglomeration of small cavalry units and, in the first months of the uprising, the build-up of regular technically supported troops was only just beginning. Notwithstanding the Hussars of Rákóczi made their presence felt in Austria, causing

disquiet in the wings and rear forces of the Austrians. Their offensive capacities were naturally limited and their plan for a meeting at Vienna was not a possibility in this year.

Austria was finally saved by England, because the expeditionary English forces successfully engaged those troops of Villars which were earmarked for the drive against Vienna. Later, the victory of Marlborough at Blenheim decided the war and contained the aspirations of France to achieve a hegemony over Europe. 2

Rákóczi's uprising however continued independently of the French-Austrian battle. Hungary had only limited military and political aims. These were the recognition of the Hungarian constitution by the King and the autonomy of Transylvania - and those aims could be part of a considered balance between the Bourbons and the Habsburgs, supported by England.

For these aims the eight years of struggle was worthwhile and, if dissension would have not plagued the camp of Rákóczi, they probably could have achieved a peace on better terms.

Against the above consideration, one may recall that in the years of 1704 and 1706 Rákóczi received offers of peace on better terms, then Károlyi finally accepted in 1711. However, it seems clear that Austria made those offers only under heavy military pressure and did not want to give any security to keep these promises.

Finally, it is a fact that England left the Austrian alliance in the year 1710 and Austria was in financial ruins and her military forces were exhausted. If Rákóczi would have continued his struggle until 1713 he could have been a signatory to the peace of Utrecht.

Notwithstanding, the eight years of war of Rákóczi remains a proud chapter of the Hungarian history. The Prince built up a great regular army equal to the standard of Western Europe. His uniforms, using Magyar motifs, became famous all over Europe and, in the motifs of the English, French and German Hussar uniforms of the later centuries, one remembers the years of Rákóczi's glory.

The Hungarian efforts in these eight years were overwhelming and it was really a "freedom-war" of the nation. The young Prince's call went out to the serfs and nobles, to the nation in a true sense. The faithful Jesuit educated Catholic, who was also the grandchild of the great Protestant lady Susanne Lórántffy,

dreamed about religious peace and social unity and his aim was to secure the independence of Hungary.

The uprising was well founded both financially and socially. Rákóczi's emissaries established contacts with nearly all the significant European powers and had connections with the Russian, Bavarian and Prussian Courts.

After the first four years of the struggle, the exhaustion of the country grew. The Estates, notwithstanding, proclaimed their resistance to the end and declared the Habsburg house dethroned and, from that time, Rákóczi was personally the sovereign of the country.

The internal difficulties however caused confrontations between the nobles and the serfs and the co-operation of the Catholics and Protestants lost their intensity. Finally, the Black Death enveloped the country and buried around 10 per cent of the population.

The Habsburg Generals now pleaded with the Emperor for a reasonable peace and Leopold appointed John Pálffy as Commandant of the imperial forces in Hungary. During Rákóczi's visit to Poland, the chief of the Rákóczi forces, Alexander Károlyi, entered negotiations with Pálffy and, without the approval of the Prince, an armistice was arranged and 12,000 men of Károlyi surrendered at Nagymajtény.

The ensuing peace secured the constitution of 1687. The King proclaimed general amnesty, promised to call up the national assembly and gave assurances for the rectification of the political and economic problems.

Rákóczi had not accepted the clemency. For years he was a guest in the Court of Louis XIV and, as an exile, he was watching the developments of European power politics.

In the year 1716, a war broke out between Austria and the Turks. There was some hope that, as a result of French intervention, Hungary could be established as a neutral power between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs. In order to represent his interests, Rákóczi travelled to Istanbul. However, by his arrival, it became evident that the forces of the declining Turkish Empire were no longer a proper subject for any offensive undertaking.

Prince Rákóczi and his faithful followers then settled down near Istanbul at Rodostó. He made his farewell to politics and lived out his life, close to his God, as a true example of a man who does not surrender his principles.

Hungary in the XVIII Century

In European history, this Century was the age of enlightenment in which, through the French Revolution, the rule of the Estates was finally broken and in the spirit of laissez-faire, featuring the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity, laid the foundation of modern developments.

Hungary was, however, nearly half a century behind these European achievements. During the XVII Century, the country was not only divided into three parts, but her contact with the Western world suffered and her connections with the Islam separated her from the sources of European inspirations. The ideas of the French Revolution only reached Hungary in 1825-30 and the subsequent social transformation was only executed in 1848.

In this chapter of study, we therefore evaluate the history of the years between 1711 and 1825.

The national uprising of Ferenc Rákóczi II ended in 1711. Charles III called the national assembly together between the years 1712-1729 and, during those years, the constitutional rights of the Estates were confirmed and, for decades, there was no attempt to confront them. It appears that the rulers learned from the lessons of the hard-fought years of the uprising and the Court accepted that Hungary be governed in such a way that the rights of the Estates remain untouched.

The national uprising had its greatest success when the leaders became truly representative of both the nobles and the serfs. When the jealousy of the nobles expressed itself by moves against the serfs, the military might was also weakened. This was natural, as the noble population of Hungary at that time was only approximately 28,000 families and the military strength of the nobles was not substantial. On the other hand, with a

view to the educational and social standards of the time, the serfs and other parts of the population had no capacity for political representation. Accordingly, the Habsburgs, following the axiom of divide et impera, made their deals with the Estates.

The feudal constitution was anyhow only a declaration of certain principles which were. Important in a legal sense, but were not much help to achieve the organizational requirements of the age. Accordingly, it was possible for the imperial tribunals to direct the evolutionary processes. In ecclesiastical matters, in educational areas, in foreign policy and levying excise duties, the centralized imperial offices took over the administration of the country. The imperial chancery and the Privy Council were in face the Government of the country, coordinating the affairs of the whole Empire.

The unity of the country was still threatened in the southern-frontiers military districts . and the separate Transylvanian administration remained in force. 3

The aims and practices of the Court were especially dangerous for Hungary in those military districts. The Habsburgs were openly patronizing the Iller aspirations and Croatian aims and the policy behind the military organization was not a defensive arrangement against the Turks, but a method to separate Hungary from the Turkish Empire and so to hinder any Hungarian attempt to create an independent national state in co-operation with the Turks.

The Habsburg aim of encirclement was completed when, during the dismemberment of Poland, Galicia and Bukovina came under Austrian rule.

The basic criterions of a national independence and sovereignty are the capabilities to conduct a foreign policy and to have forces to ensure the execution of those policies. The foreign policy of the Habsburg Empire was secretly conducted in the Court's offices and Hungary, as such, was not represented in the policy-making process. There were certain Hungarians employed in Vienna, but only those who were willing to co-operate in the spirit of the Austrian Empire reached prominence.

The Act of 1715:8 had established a permanent army and this was in fact a foreign force stationed in the country. One-third of the men were enlisted on a voluntary basis from the Hungarian population, but two-thirds of the force were permanently commissioned from

Austrian and Bohemian elements. The cost of the army was carried by the serfs who were also burdened with certain labor duties.

The nobles were still obliged to enter into camps in the case of war, but the weakness of this class in numbers made their contribution insignificant. Anyhow this was the age of the well-equipped professional warriors.

The tax burden for the upkeep of the permanent army (as the nobles were not contributory partners) further enlarged the gulf between the classes. From the point of view of the Habsburgs, however, it only ensured that the crusaders (Kuruc) of Rákóczi would not rise again.

Finally, the Act 1723:1, 2 and 3, which incorporated the imperial Pragmatica Sanctio into the Hungarian Statute Books, legalized the status of the Hungarian province within the Habsburg Empire.⁴ Those Hungarian nobles who were faithful to the Court (called *labanc*) have argued that it was in Hungary's interest to create legal ties with the other provinces of the Crown, as otherwise Hungary would stand opposed alone to the Turkish threat. This reasoning in the XVIII Century was without foundation. The Ottoman Empire was, for more than a hundred years, in retreat and she was only defending her Balkan possessions. There were no dangers either on the other fronts. Poland had no imperial ambition south of the Carpathians. Russia was wholly occupied in building her own state around Moscow and was engaged in struggles with Poland, Sweden and the Turks. Accordingly, from the East there was no threat and the country was neither attacked on the rear boundaries during the Rákóczi uprising.

The Hungarian Estates therefore were right, when they sensed the imperialistic aims in those proposed legislations and there was resulting unrest. The Emperor then placed German military units around Pozsony, where the national assembly had its meetings, and 24 artillery guns were aimed against the legislators. Under this duress, the approved Acts acknowledged that Hungary and the other hereditary provinces shall remain inseparable under the rule of the Habsburg-Lotharingian House and the right of the nation for a free election of their Kings shall revert to the nation, only if and when the ruling house would become extinct.

Notwithstanding the duress, the Estates acquiesced in these circumstances. The Estates had to realize that the numerically

weak nation and the financially and economically poor society could not pursue offensive policies and had to wait for future times to press their aims for political emancipation. The French orientation, mostly for geopolitical reasons, proved impractical. The Turkish Empire had no longer any power and inner reconstruction was the only way open for the nation.

The way to the peaceful evolution was possible as the dynasty also wanted Hungarian co-operation. Prince Eugene himself was a supporter of the idea of placing the center of the Habsburg Empire into the Carpathian Basin and voiced his opinion to pacify the Magyars. For the Austrians, who were exhausted as a consequence of the Spanish war, the peace was also important. The age of baroque therefore brought Hungary back into the European bloodstream.

The nation was ready to accept the new confidential relationship with the Court and, when Maria Theresa came to power, she did not accept the offer of Prussia to rise against Austria and enter again into a war for independence, notwithstanding that geopolitically the Prussian orientation was a more solid one than the French connection.

Instead of a revolution, the Estates offered their "lives and blood" for the young Queen and the positive and military help of Hungary in fact saved the Habsburgs. Consequently the Queen showed her gratitude to her Hungarians who did not desert her in her hour of need and continued a friendly policy towards the Magyars, however only within the framework of the Empire. 5

The religious, well-educated and enlightened Queen made sincere efforts to raise the living standards of the population and she confronted the Estates concerning the economic welfare of the peasants. The Queen tried to persuade the Estates to denounce their rights of tax-free status and so to help ameliorate the peasants' lot. The Estates, however, insisted in their demand that the Central Government should modify the tariffs *which* made Hungary a colony of Austria. One may understand that the Estates, lagging behind in evolution compared *with* Western Europe, were not ready for the requested sacrifice. On the other hand the Queen could not change the tariffs favoring Austria and so the actual colonial status of Hungary remained unchanged.

Joseph II, the son of Maria Theresa, was well groomed as the heir to the throne. He also travelled widely in the most

remote parts of the realm. Well educated, he was an enlightened thinker who correctly assessed the social political situation and made some intelligent moves to forestall the breeding forces of revolts which finally culminated in the French Revolution.

On the other hand he wanted to build a centralized and unified Empire. He had no pan-German ideas. However, he saw in German Austria and in the German Language the foundation and tools of the intended centralization. He wanted to establish an Empire, Catholic in religion and of a German speaking population controlled by a central Government. In this plan, the Estates of the Hungarian nobles and the national Magyar state had no role to play.

The objections of the Estates erupted in their administration of the counties and the passive resistance as a weapon of the national defense had its first organised appearance.

Joseph conducted a war with Russian alliance against the Turks and he suffered defeats and also the revolution in Belgium shook the Empire. The King of Prussia had again entertained the idea of establishing a Prussian-Hungarian alliance against Austria.

However, the events of the French Revolution made the privileged Estates in all countries jittery and the Hungarian Estates were watching the winds of change.

This probably is the reason why the Estates did not rise. However the whole country was relieved when Joseph II, on his deathbed, withdrew all of his controversial decrees. The Holy Crown was returned from Vienna to Buda. Great multitudes greeted the Holy Crown and their attitude showed the first elements of the modern nationalism of the country.

The modern Hungarian (Magyar) nationalism was, as from its beginnings, troubled by the fact that large pockets of immigrant nationalities were settled inside her frontiers.

Hungary successfully assimilated all the various nationalities, like the Cumans, Jazigs and Bulgars, in the early centuries of her statehood and the small pockets of German colonists in Transylvania and in the Tátra regions were never substantial in numbers.

However, during the heavy fighting with the advancing Turks, Croatians, Serbs and Rumanians were admitted into the country and the once overwhelmingly Magyar state was transformed in such a way that the Hungarian population remained the strongest

nationality of the country, but their absolute majority was threatened.

These problems were further accentuated during the XVIII Century. At the end of the Turkish occupation, the population of the country was reduced to approximately 4 million and Magyars numbered no more than half of the population. The Habsburg-German policy of colonisation after the decades of the "liberation" transformed the statistics so that from the 9 million of the population only 30% was Magyar. The birth rate of the Magyars was satisfactory and there were no plagues which affected special Magyar areas. This fateful decrease in the Magyar population was as a result of Vienna pursuing a German, Serb colonisation and failing to control the movements of the Rumanian shepherds through the Carpathian Alps into Transylvania.

Of course it would not be scientific to apply moves of the XVIII Century with a measure of later centuries and one has to admit that the Hungarian leaders did not foresee the consequences of such colonisation. The anti-Magyar element in the colonisation was really not so much due to the settlement of the Germans or Serbs, but the location of such settlements. The military frontier districts from the Austrian borders followed a line on the south and took up contact with Transylvania under the direct rule of the Court and resulted in the encirclement of the country.

Of course the effect of those evolutions exploded in the XIX and XX Centuries, when national-imperialisms became the leading ideology of the age.

The problem of the various nationalities within the Habsburg Empire generally became a central issue for Vienna. At first the Habsburg rulers continued the old Imperial traditions and their main aim was to establish feudal ties over the various countries of their family dominions. Later, however, when the Habsburgs lost their influence over the main areas of German settlements in the North and West of Europe, the family tried to unify her Austrian-German, Czech, Hungarian and Polish lands in the spirit of the German *Drang nach Osten*.

This policy was defeated and the death of Joseph II marked a turning point in the Hungarian-German relationship. Since then there have been no moves of an aggressive German colonisation which could have endangered the racial existence of the Magyars.

Louis Kossuth

During the years of the Napoleonic Wars the Habsburg Empire took up an independent line toward the lands of the former German-Roman Empire. The connections between Prussia and the Rhineland Federation were showing the developments which finally resulted in the establishment of the "Second Reich." Under the Habsburg rule, only the Germans of Austria, the Germans in Bohemia and the pockets of colonists in Hungary represented the German elements. The Slavs and the Hungarians were the majority of the population and Royal Hungary represented two-thirds of the territory of the Habsburg domains.

This situation was emerging in an age when linguistic nationalism became the leading ideology of Western Europe. This process of the emergence of the sovereign national states finally undermined the historical and dynastical backgrounds and the political map of Europe was rewritten.

Napoleon made some attempts to reorganize South-eastern Europe following the new linguistic principles and he also called for the revolt of Hungary. He was not successful, but the Napoleonic patronage had helped the people of Croatia and Dalmatia to lay the foundations of the Illir-south Slav movement.

This process was interrupted by the fall of Napoleon and the Holy alliance attempted to stop the clock. Notwithstanding the reactionary regimes however, the ideas of the French Revolution continued to smolder underground. The evolution and propagation of the secular languages through the channels of commerce and industry, the ideologies of the times ripened throughout Europe.

The ideas of the French Revolution had only reached Hungary around the year 1825. In this year, one of the greatest Hungarian statesmen, István Széchenyi, commenced his public life. He initiated the age of reform

which finally erupted in the uprising of 1848-49.

It is interesting to note that the reforms were advocated by men belonging to the higher classes, notwithstanding that these circles were generally alienated from the masses of the population. The lesser nobles, the citizens of the towns and the peasants had no contact with the West and could not measure up the problems and solutions. Count Széchenyi himself based his ideas on experiences gained by his Western European and English travels.

His main aim was to reform the basic economics of the backward agrarian country. The Count's agitation however appealed to the pride of the Magyars and, consequently, the country looked not only to the reforms of the economy, but also to the revision of its social, political and national status.

Széchenyi therefore was driven more and more into the background. His moderate economic proposals were now insufficient for a nation which felt that the times were ripe to claim equal rights within the Empire and it wished to establish the Magyar national state. Louis Kossuth established himself as the leader of these national and social political movements. This young lawyer demanded the acknowledgement of the legal rights of the nation and therefore the economic progress lost its priority as the main aim.

Kossuth did not want independence outside of the Habsburg realm, but his aim was to establish a constitutional Federation binding the various parts of the Empire. There were of course radical elements who toyed with the idea of a republic, but Kossuth was opposed to such trends.

The European scene was however under the strict police control of the Holy alliance, directed by Metternich, the Chancellor of Austria, and there was a firm opposition against any reforms. ⁶ There was an attempt made by some circles of the magnates to propagate certain moderate reforms, but these moves only served the purpose of distracting attention.

The struggle against the Viennese Centralism gradually became a social-political movement and, during the 1847 sitting of the National Assembly, the Court had to face the fact of the opposition making it clear that its aim was to introduce a parliamentary system of the English kind. This was however

a problem which was affecting the structure of the united monarchy and these demands meant that the nation would again have to begin her struggle for the sovereignty of the Hungarian State. There was not much hope that the King would respond favorably to the petition of the Assembly.

At this stage however the European political scene changed radically which moved events into revolutionary streams.

In the year 1848 the revolution in Paris shook Europe and the experiment of the first commune influenced both the reformers and the ruling circles and as a result a compromise solution became a possibility. On the 13th March the revolution in Vienna removed Metternich and, two days later, the university students of Pest demonstrated for the rights and demands of the Hungarian nation, proclaiming such aims in a twelve point Manifestum.

If one contrasts the happenings in Paris, Vienna and Hungary, it becomes evident that the citizens of Paris and Vienna were fighting for social aims, but Hungary's youth were the speakers for national demands. The desire for social-economic improvements accompanied their plaint, but it was the ideal of national liberty which brought together the nobles, the citizens of towns and the peasants.

Kossuth became the national leader of the movement. He was an excellent orator, good lawyer and a political genius who, in his person, was the symbol of Hungarian aspirations.

He was the author of a Petition to the Crown and the Lower House of the Assembly voted in favor of his draft. The House of the Lords first suspended its meeting and the Nador (Governor) was called back to Vienna for consultation and a dissolution of the National Assembly was proposed. Vienna however, under pressure from the Austrian upheavals, was ready for concessions. Count Louis Batthányi was appointed as Prime Minister and, in his cabinet, the leading personalities of the reform movements took up ministerial positions. The new parliamentary constitution, based on the Belgian model, was enacted and the King proclaimed the constitution on the 11th April, 1848.

The Acts of the reforms truly reflect the social, economic and nationalistic ideas of the reform movement. On the economic-

social side Hungary abandoned the mediaeval structure of the land. Universal and general responsibility for the burden of taxation, the liberation of the serfs and freedom for land-deals meant that Hungary was ready to enter the path of evolution. The feudal restrictions were abolished and the freedom of the press, assembly and religion became law.

The territorial divisions within the country came to an end. The southern military districts were incorporated into the civil administration and Transylvania was unified with the motherland. The question of the relation between Hungary and Croatia remained open, but the matter was removed from the control of Vienna.

The relation between the nation and the King became that of a constitutional monarchy. The King's executive power would be exercised by a government responsible to the parliament. The Acts of 1848 acknowledge that, in matters where the Habsburg Empire needs uniform laws, there would be common procedures, especially in the areas of foreign policy, defense and finance, but the details were left to be worked out at a later time. The omission to tackle these problems immediately was one of the weak points of the settlement.

However, the failure to solve the problems of the national minorities was to be fateful. The leaders of the nation had a good measure of understanding and goodwill and the Acts which ensured the free use of the languages of the minorities before the Courts and administrative organs were enlightened. The peaceful application of the Act may have secured the aspirations of the national minorities. Also, the Croatian question was to be solved in a magnanimous spirit and Hungary was ready to incorporate the old Slavonia into a new Croatia.

The relation of the new government with the national minorities was however poisoned by Vienna. Evidently, the reactionary circles of the Court accepted the constitution only under duress and the Habsburgs tried again to subdue the Hungarian national aspirations.

After the fall of Metternich, Kollowrat, his successor as Chancellor, became the voice of the secret privy council of the Court. He was a Slav himself and realised that the application of the Acts of 1848 would mean that Hungary, territorially and by the weight of her population, would become an equal

partner with the Austrian Germans and consequently he wanted to sabotage the new developments. Vienna also realised that the southern parts of Hungary and the Transylvanian situation presented themselves as the geopolitical bases of any anti-Magyar move. The military administration of the south, which by now had more than a hundred years' past, and the policy of Vienna towards Transylvania (formed on the principle of *divide et impera*) were the tools of the reactionary forces.

The Croats called together a National Assembly of their own on the 25th March, 1848. Vienna was represented and did not object to the reform policies of the Assembly. Croatia proclaimed its independence and pointedly their petition was sent direct to Vienna and not via the Hungarian Parliament. Austria then appointed Joseph Jellasich, a Croatian Officer of the Imperial Army, as Ban of Croatia and allied the imperial forces with the Croats to attack and subdue Hungary.

Parallel to the Croatian developments, Vienna also incited the Serbs and Hungary soon had to face Serbian guerillas, assisted by troops from Serbia.

Vienna was also behind the Slovak extremists, but the pan-Slav Congress in Prague in May, 1848, was unable to co-ordinate the Czech and Slovak aspirations. The majority of the Slovak leaders were satisfied with the scope of the reforms in Hungary and the Slovaks later became faithful warriors in the units of the Hungarian Honvéds.

The influence of Vienna could also be felt in Transylvania. The Rumanians of Transylvania did not want union with the Rumanians over the Carpathians, but seemed to prefer to live under direct Habsburg rule. The German minority also opposed the new Hungary. The "Saxons" did not want to lose their mediaeval status of autonomy of their settlements.

Nor was there complete harmony in the Magyar areas either. Some of the magnates were not happy with the democratic reforms and still held hopes of turning back the clock. Consequently, the social-economic side of the reforms together with the dissident reactionary forces weakened the chances of a national renewal.

This fateful summer of 1848 had shown aspects of a national catastrophe and the disintegration of historical Hungary appeared imminent.

In this almost hopeless situation Kossuth proved to be a true leader. He laid aside all economic, social and religious considerations and took up the national struggle. Széchenyi suffered a nervous breakdown and entered an institution. Deák, the cautious statesman, withdrew from active politics and returned to his estates. Kossuth however refused to consider personal problems and instinctively decided that, in the crucial moments of history, victory is not all important, but steadfast resistance is the source of hopes for the future. The unconditional defense of the nation's rights created a national mythos which accompanied the nation in her future struggles and ensured her survival.

The Habsburg Empire was however at this time under attack on the Italian front. The forces of united Italy gathered around the House of Savoy and, on the 18th March, 1848, Milano revolted. General Radecky withdrew his troops into the fortresses around Verona and requested reinforcements. The new Hungarian Government, notwithstanding its sympathies for the Italian cause, was ready to fulfil Hungary's obligations, but the developing troubles with Croatia, the revolts of the Serbs and the Rumanians which were all instigated by Vienna destroyed the idea of a common defense of the realm. The nation was engaged in a deadly struggle against the Habsburg-Slav alliance and the Court could not expect that Hungarian army units should march on Milano.

Kossuth had to mobilise the country militarily and to be ready economically to repulse any attack against her newly regained national identity. He carried out his program with exceptional energy and organizational talent and the results of his endeavors were significant. After his well-remembered speech before the deputies of Parliament, a 200,000 strong army was raised and a 42 million forint credit was granted and, within a period of a few months, the Honvéds were ready for battle.

The relation between the Court and the nation was on the verge of collapse. General Lamberg, the King's envoy, was assassinated by revolutionaries in Pest. On the Vienna scene, Latour the Minister for Defense was hanged by the mob.

The new Hungarian army encountered the Croats in severe battles and forced them to withdraw.

In the meantime, the Vienna reactionaries consolidated their position. Radecky had defeated the Italians and General

Windischgraetz secured Vienna and Prague. The Privy Council was ready to move into Hungary with substantial forces and annihilate the Hungarian revolt with the assistance of their Slav-Rumanian allies who would move from the rear lines of the Magyars.

The Hungarian army was then under the command of Arthur Görgey, himself a professional officer. The Hungarian army officers of the imperial forces offered their services in great numbers and, under the skilled leadership of those officers, the Honvéds became a truly professional army. Notwithstanding the political difficulties of such a move, Görgey ordered the controlled withdrawal of the troops when the Austrians entered the country. He had the courage to evacuate the capital and withdrew his troops into the area of the hilly north and set up winter quarters.

The victorious march of Windischgraetz created in Vienna a mood to show the real desires of the Court. Ferdinand V abdicated from the Throne and Franz Joseph refused to take the oath as Hungarian King. On the 4th March, 1849, the Kaiser of the Habsburg realms proclaimed a new constitution for the Empire and Hungary was treated as a conquered country and the unity of the land was to be destroyed.

Arthur Görgey and his Honvéds however began their spring offensive. Buda was liberated and the Austrian troops were forced to withdraw. Joseph Bern, the celebrated Polish General, offered his services to Kossuth. He was appointed as the Commandant of the Transylvanian forces. By the end of May, 1849, the whole country was under Kossuth's control.

Notwithstanding the glorious victories, it became evident that the war efforts had no foreign policy backing. The reactionary powers, represented by the Holy alliance, had a firm grip on continental affairs and the defeat of the French; Lombard and Czech revolts had proved that the revolutionary forces were isolated. England had regarded the Habsburg-Romanov alliance with distrust and was sympathetic to the Czech, Hungarian and Italian uprisings, but was not willing to interfere.

Therefore the dethroning of the Habsburgs announced by the National Assembly at Debrecen was unwise as it closed the ways to a compromise solution. On the other hand this was a natural reaction of the Magyars

to the recently proclaimed "constitution."

Militarily however Vienna had to concede that the forces of German-Austria, notwithstanding the Slav-Rumanian support, was proved to be too weak to deal quickly with Hungary. The Habsburgs had to summons Russia for help in order to defeat Hungary, who had by now become the symbol of resistance and revolutionary will throughout Europe.

Russia, the bastion of the European reactionary forces and also the patron of the Slavs, gave a positive answer. Under the command of Prince Paskievitz, a *200,000* strong Russian army entered the country from the East and Hungary collapsed between the overwhelming Russian-Austrian forces.

The Hungarian Honvéds surrendered to the Russians at Világos on the 13th August, 1849.

The Government of Vienna now had its bloody revenge. Louis Batthányi, the Prime Minister, was shot. On the 6th October, 1849, 13 Hungarian Generals were executed and, since that day, their deaths have been honored as a national day of remembrance.

Louis Kossuth went into exile. The number of the executed and imprisoned grew into thousands. The country was under military administration and the dream of national independence was rapidly fading away.

The Holy alliance had its victory, prolonging further the German, Italian and Hungarian struggles for national unification; but their glory was short lived. Soon they would have to revise their policies and the European policy line would change radically.

The Compromise with Austria

Louis Kossuth, after the glory of the heroic struggle of the nation for her social and national freedom, notwithstanding the defeat by the reactionary powers, became the symbol for liberty not only in Western Europe and especially in England, but also aroused interest and sympathy in the U.S.A.

His exile was marked by incessant efforts to convert the flame of understanding support into diplomatic and military actions, but the times were not ripe for such drastic changes. In the confrontations aimed for Italian unity, the Hungarian emigration's role was no more than a presence in readiness. 7

On the other hand, the transformation of the European scene made basic advances. Under the hegemony of Prussia, the German States created the Second Reich of the Germans. Russia emerged wearing her national-imperialistic costume and looked embracingly towards the Balkan Peninsula and the Dardanelles. France, slowly recovering from the bloodletting of the Napoleonic Wars, had to face the new German Reich on the Rhine and looked for allies in Eastern Europe. The Turkish Empire was in constant decline and their political crisis paved the way for the independence of the Balkan States.

The Habsburg Empire became aware of the basic changes which threatened to upset the balance of power of the reactionary forces. The Habsburgs were no longer the forward bulwark of the south-eastern European German imperialism. The Austrian Germans looked more and more towards the Reich. In Hungary only military occupation had secured their rule. The Habsburg alliance with the Slavs did not work well. After their useful role in quelling the Hungarian uprising, the nationally awakened Slav and Rumanian forces started to show tendencies towards their own desire for independence and here they had a powerful patron in Russia.

The Austrian defeat at Königsgraetz only sealed the noted changes and the Habsburgs finally conceded that only a Danube Empire was within the reach of their possibilities.

Freed from German-hegemonistic ideas, the Court turned to the federalist principles in their search for a solution. For the Germans of Austria however a truly federalist Habsburg Empire was not yet acceptable. The Hungarian, Slav and Rumanian elements were in majority towards the Germans and a complete role of minority would have pushed the Austrians into the orbit of the Reich.

Accordingly, the dualistic solution of an alliance of the Austrian-German and Hungarian interests was the only possibility. Anyhow the Austrian Germans were only reluctant participants in such an alliance, but a minority role would have been unacceptable to them. On the other hand Hungary herself was not willing to enter into a true federation of the areas' nationalities, as historical Hungary, and her territorial integrity of rule of the Carpathian Basin, was not subject for negotiations.

Accordingly, the compromise with Austria in 1867 was in fact an attempt between the emerging German and Russian giants to preserve the peace on the Danube and on the Balkans under Austrian-German and Hungarian rule.

Frank Deák was the initiator and negotiator of the settlement. Kossuth opposed the move vehemently. In his opinion, the constitutional compromise contained an element of surrender for temporary advantages. On the other hand, the nation needed a period of time for peaceful advancement and the compromise gave the country such an opportunity. The uprising of 1848-49 had a clear warning. In historical Hungary the Magyars were in minority and the supremacy of the Magyars could only be secured in the future if, in peaceful progress, the nation advanced in numbers, in social unity and economic strength.

The economic and social political reforms of 1848 were executed by the imperial administration before 1867. The Acts of the compromise secured a parliamentary system and the King became a constitutional monarch.

Of course, the criterion of national independence, the conduct of an independent foreign policy, was absent in the new arrangements. The tools of such a power, the army and the financial sovereignty became common powers of the new Empire. Corn-

pared to the past however there was a definite advance towards self-determination. Up to this time the King and his government ruled in an autocratic manner and the dynasty's interests were paramount. In the new administration Austrian-German and Hungarian interests were considered in formation of foreign policy, defense and economic structures of the new realm.

The political life of the era of the compromise was, notwithstanding, poisoned by constitutional questions. The parties had platforms which reflected the aims of 1848 or 1867 and there were forces whose aim was a total revision of the compromise in order to achieve an unlimited national independence. This opposition of course could not secure its aims within the existing order and when it attained government control its policies became frustrated.

The stubbornness of the aging monarch, Francis Joseph I. had contributed to a situation of stalemate. He was unable to make concession in many rather symbolic matters, such as the official language of army command, Magyar artillery and the use of national emblems. Some elasticity would have turned an opposition into willing collaborators.

Its political life was also burdened with the unsolved problem of the national minorities. The Hungarian Acts, regulating the use of the language of the nationalities before the administrative and judicial bodies and in the field of education, were enlightened modern pieces of legislation. The aggressive nationalisms of the individual office holders however made proper application of the Acts rather difficult. The parliamentary majority in the minority areas was subjected to pressures and there were real grievances. The Magyar electorates were however in a similar position. The independent Magyars who still regarded Kossuth as their leader were not easy to direct. This explains the reasons why a general and secret suffrage of the population was not introduced and thus the Hungarian scene was well behind the Western European evolution in the process of democratic progress.

At that time in Europe German theory based the definition of nationality on linguistic-racial background. On the other hand French literature emphasized the historical and cultural ties. Hungary had proclaimed, on French lines, the idea of the Hungarian nation as a political definition and had regarded all

the nationalities of the Carpathian Basin as full-right members of the nation. Parallel to this however, especially in the lower echelons of the administration, there were crude attempts to Magyarize and these efforts caused ill feelings between the people of mixed nationality areas.

The statistics in 1910 could show a 51 % Magyar majority in Hungary, excluding Croatia. This appears to be a substantial recovery if one considers that the Magyar element reached a low of 30% at the end of the XVIII Century. However, in fact the Magyars were no more than 45% of the total population as the administration included in the group of Magyars a Jewish minority on an enforced mother-tongue basis.

This was an optimistic assessment of the situation. The Jewish community was difficult to assimilate due partly to their religion. Added to this general consideration, one has to realize that the Hungarian Jewry was an immigrant population in its first and second generation stage. As from the early decades of the XIX Century the oppressed Jews from Galicia, Poland and Russia began their route as immigrants to the West. Hungary was extremely liberal to their plight and the country's open arm policy is proved by the fact that the original approximately 40,000 strong group numbered of a million by the XX Century. Part of the immigrants however did not finally settle in the country, but continued their route via Berlin and London to the U.S.A. Their place was filled by new waves of immigrants from the East.

The political peace of the compromise opened the country to the foreign capital and the country was economically advancing strongly. The railway network by now covered the whole land, good roads, building programs in towns, developing cultural life; theatre life, book printing and newspapers were the great achievements of the age. The purely capitalist attitude however left the industrial and agricultural proletariat without support. The emigration to the new world had increased rapidly and the great landlords (ecclesiastical or aristocratic), who resisted a land reform, greatly added to the social unbalance of the land.

At the beginning of the XX Century the competing interests of the great European powers moved rapidly into opposing alliances and their approaching war clouded the political horizon.

The historians who conducted a post-mortem over Austria-Hungary often blamed the Dual-Monarchy's alliance with

Germany for her defeat and regarded her participation in the war as a sacrifice for German interests. On the other hand, certain German historians regard the alliance with Austria-Hungary as the cause of her defeat as, in their view, this association with the moribund Austria was the final cause of the two-front war which sealed Germany's fate.

The First World War was an encounter between coalitions and the individual participants had to subordinate their interests in many aspects of the conflict to the over-riding requirements of the coalition. However their participation had their self-interest at heart. Today it is evident that the confrontation between England and Germany was caused by the fact that Germany rapidly became the leading power of the continent and also initiated strong steps to achieve her place in colonial adventures. On the other hand England felt threatened by the emergence of a strong German naval power and her balance of power policy towards the continent paved the way to a coalition with France, who pursued her policy of *revanche* against Germany. 8

France on the other hand felt incapable of opposing the continental might of Germany with only possible moderate help from Britain. Therefore feelers went out to Russia to complete the encirclement of the Reich.

Russia's participation in the anti-German coalition sealed the fate of Austria-Hungary.

In the years of the Dual-Monarchy, there were no substantial and imminent dangers on the frontiers of the new Empire. The German Reich did not show any interest toward reunion with her German brethren in Austria or the Sudetenland. The irredenta of Tirol was alive but there were some signs of consolidation in this area. However the unfriendly attitude of Rumania and Serbia with the open help of Russia clearly demonstrated that Russia in alliance with the Balkan powers could be a serious danger.

The alliance with Germany served the Dual-Monarchy with some assurance. The Russian-French alliance however destroyed the German-Russian *modus vivendi* and, for the Reich, the specter of a two-front war arose.

History may have taken a different turn if Austria-Hungary could have proclaimed her neutrality in the emerging big power conflict.

This however was impossible as the client states of Russia on the Balkan were eagerly waiting for the opportunity to achieve their national aims with Russian assistance.

In this situation Austria-Hungary's Balkan policy was rather uncertain. In some circumstances offensive attitude was taken (e.g. occupation of Bosnia Hercegovina) but, generally, it was defensive without a constructive plan. In fact she was an observer of the diplomacy of the main contenders without the slightest hope of disentangling herself.

The *casus belli* for the Great War was the assassination of the Crown Prince and his wife. The punitive military action ordered against Serbia was strongly opposed by the Hungarian Prime Minister, Count Tisza, but the Crown Council over-ruled him.

Historians are still in disagreement as to who was responsible for the General War which followed that local military move.

One feels that it may have been a miscalculation by all of the leading contenders. The structure of the Concert of Europe, which for half of a century in its dynastic and economic cooperation with a successful diplomatic arrangement survived up to 1914, and the localization of the conflict with the efforts of the responsible European leadership were probably hoped for by all the Courts. 9

Notwithstanding, the enormous mobilized people's armies were set on a path which did not allow a peaceful solution and the world was engulfed in a war which resulted in the mass slaughter of Europe's youth.

In the Great War, Hungary discharged her duties faithfully. Instinctively, the nation realised that the age of struggle against the Islam and the Reich had come to an end and the country was confronted with a new peril from the East. In 1849 she crossed swords with Russia, at that time being an ally of the social reaction, but, by 1914, the pan-Slav danger appeared close.

The central powers, forced into a two-front war, were defeated by a world coalition of overwhelming material wealth. By the end of the war however Russia was in the grip of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Western powers had to opportunity to rewrite the map of Europe, ignoring the territorial ambitions

of Russia. Western Europe accordingly could ignore the German-Russian interests, but their solutions therefore lacked the promise of permanency.

Living in the clouds of their own war-propaganda, their decision to dismember the Habsburg Empire was a foregone conclusion before the peace negotiations ever started and it was not surprising that the underlying principle of the settlement would be the linguistic-national claims.

The Versailles Treaties however discarded their own propaganda subject to the self-determination of the nations. In Paris they conducted imperialistic negotiations only and created artificial conglomerates of national minority states. Great Britain was also the loser, as France succeeded to create an artificial French Zone of interest in Eastern Europe and she could again relive her Napoleonic ambitions. However, the new Eastern and South-eastern Europe was built in a political vacuum between the dormant giants of Germany and Russia and the new order did not have much chance of surviving.

Hungary lost two-thirds of her historical possessions and, as a farce to the professed reasons for the dismemberment of the country, 3.5 million Hungarians became citizens of the newly created states. More than 2 million of those Magyars were living in the border areas and were dislodged from Hungary only to serve purely military purposes, to secure the connecting railways and roads for the new states. ¹⁰

These new entities, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Great Rumania, were national minority conglomerates, where the ruling nations were minorities.

In the resultant dismembered body of the country, Hungary was gathering all her strength of national will to restart her life as an independent state. At least for a while, notwithstanding the heavy price, the nation became her own master and she reorganized her foreign policy, economic framework and her military arms.

From the North-east however the gathering storms of the Russian social revolution cast an uneasy cloud over the efforts of the country and, after a short respite, Hungary had to face the communist-Slav imperialism.

Admiral Horthy __. 1920-1944

In the autumn months of 1918 the armies of the central powers were still holding the fronts deep in enemy territory. The economies and the political will of the population however were about to collapse. After the war, some held the view that the attitude of the social-radical forces caused the disintegration. The plain fact however was that the central powers were unable to uphold their position, pressed by the material and manpower might of the whole world. There was a lack of basic raw materials and, at least, in the towns hunger and shortage of consumer goods paralyzed the spirit of resistance.

The Habsburg Empire was about to dissolve. The exhausted central power was a helpless spectator, as the Slav and Rumanian elements of the Empire turned against the dynasty. The Czechs and Slovaks formed their union and the Serbs, Slovenes and Croats were about to unite in a south Slavic state. The Rumanians of Transylvania intended to join the Trans-Carpathian-Rumanian Kingdom.

The Hungarian leadership was paralyzed by these events which meant the disintegration of historical Hungary. In Budapest the industrial workers were on the verge of a revolt. The leaders of the left wing parties, comprised mostly of second generation Russian-Jewish immigrants, showed keen sympathy towards the Bolshevik Revolution. In their popular propaganda however they emphasized their wish of independence from Austria, an ideal which was a truly national desire, but, under the circumstances, this was the opium which camouflaged the forthcoming national tragedy of the country.

Charles IV was under heavy pressure and Count Michael Károlyi, a leader of the left wing group, was called to form a government. The government hoped that a democratic national reorganization of the country would be supported by the western powers.

They did not foresee that the 14 points of the U.S.A. President Wilson was partly a propaganda statement which was, anyhow, not accepted by Great Britain and France and in Paris the policy of imperialism would prevail.

The final decisions of the peace conferences were, in fact, formulated in the military field. Czech, Rumanian and Yugoslav troops moved ahead in Hungarian territory and the full occupation of Hungary was planned to create a *fait a'complie*. In this situation Károlyi resigned. His place was taken by Bela Kun, whose master, Lenin, ordered the transformation of Hungary into a Soviet-Republic.

A dictatorship of the proletariat was proclaimed on the 20th March, 1919, but the overwhelming majority of the nation was opposed to the revolt. The leaders of the Soviets were first or second generation Russian-Jewish immigrants and their attitude was foreign to the Hungarians. They received some support only when they took up national slogans and turned the remaining Hungarian military forces against the invading Czechs and Rumanians.

The victorious great powers however did not allow any change in their planned scenery and the red dictatorship collapsed early in August, 1919, and the communist leaders fled to Vienna and Moscow.

Charles IV had abdicated earlier, on the 16th November, 1918, and German-Austria also became a republic.

The scattered leadership of national Hungary first met at Arad, later at Szeged, and there was a group active in Vienna. A national army was formed under the leadership of Nicholas Horthy, the last Admiral of the Hungarian-Austrian sea forces. The counter-revolutionaries asked for the recognition by the Allies of a new national government of Hungary. Charles Huszár was elected as Prime Minister and a national assembly was called together, based on a universal, secret suffrage. The assembly had to solve the most urgent constitutional, economic and social problems of the country.

The national army of Horthy entered Budapest on the 16th November, 1919, and, in these months, the army secured the administration of the country. There were revolutionary actions in this process and also excesses occurred, but the left wing

propaganda which labelled the rule of the national leaders as a "white terror" was exaggerated. The excesses were limited in number and lasted only a few months, especially if one views the happenings contrasting same with the red terror of the Bolshevik Rule.

The national assembly which opened on the 10th February, 1920, did not fill the Throne, but resolved that the state form of the monarchy would be preserved. The interregnum appeared to be of longer duration and, based on historical precedents, a Governor was elected in the person of Admiral Horthy to fulfil the role of the head of state.

The Social Democrats did not participate in the elections, but the followers of this party were very much in minority in agrarian Hungary and could not have changed the results which had the result of creating an anti-communist majority, with a strong desire for social reforms. The main program of the ruling parties was for an agrarian reform, but they also wished to improve the lot of the industrial workers and the impoverished middle class.

The Government of course, under foreign pressure, had to ratify the Peace Treaty of Trianon signed on the 4th June, 1920, and had to face the resettlement of the refugees from the lost territories and had to reorganize the life of the country which had been plundered and looted by the occupation armies.

The serious situation of the country was further aggravated by the attempt of Charles IV to return to the Hungarian Throne. In the political situation, when such a move was strongly opposed by the States of the Small-Entente and the Western Powers, the return of the King was a dangerous adventure. In the new South-Eastern European scene, which was creating a system of alliances in support of the French-European hegemony, there was no place for a Habsburg ruler in Budapest.

On the other hand, the majority of Magyars were also opposed to the return of the Habsburgs. The nation's 400-year old struggle for her independence with the dynasty was not forgotten and the idea of a confederation of the Danubian States under Habsburg rule was not yet an acceptable solution for the nation. Consequently, when the Western Allies requested that Hungary shall proclaim the dethronement of the dynasty,

the national assembly was not reluctant to proclaim that the Pragmatica Sanctio, following the disintegration of the Habsburg rule in the hereditary territories, lost its validity and so the nation regained her rights to elect her King. The parliamentary minutes disclose that the majority of members accepted this solution, notwithstanding that foreign pressure was evidently present. ¹¹ The majority of the country had no wish for the return of the Habsburgs and this underlying political sentiment moved Count Stephen Bethlen into the chair of the Prime Minister for the next decade.

This conservative magnate from Transylvania had to consolidate the country under peculiar circumstances.

He had to oppose the forces of the counter-revolution. They demanded radical land reforms and welfare benefits for the family, the sick and the underprivileged, measures which would have been a considerable burden on the big Estates and on the Capital generally. The country's capital was however destroyed in the wake of the lost war's aftermath with resultant inflation and the remains of the wealth of the nation were not sufficient for a recommencement of economic activity. Any real beginning on capital expenditure depended on the availability of foreign capital and the conditions of any credit available were determined by outside forces. Count Bethlen had to convince the representatives of the bankers that the age of the revolutions was closed and then had to ensure that the radical elements did not reach their goal.

Count Bethlen solved the problem. In his negotiations with the Social Democrats, who were compromised in their co-operation with the Communists, he reached an understanding with that party. A new suffrage law, general and secret in the bigger cities, in fact secured for the Socialists some seats in the national assembly. Certain social reforms improved the lot of the industrial workers, but, in return, the Social Democrats gave up their revolutionary attitudes.

In opposition to the national radicals, Bethlen again introduced a not fully general and non-secret suffrage in country areas and, through the influence of the big estates, it was ensured that only moderate candidates reached the seats of parliament. The upper house was reconstituted and some corporate representation became the brake against radical changes. ¹²

We may today call this arrangement a guided democracy which is practiced in some of the developing countries. Hungary was often denounced for this somewhat oppressive political system, but in fact its roots were the will to protect foreign capital interests.

Loans granted by the League of Nations together with some capital from London started to move the wheels of the economy again and solved the most pressing problems of the post-war situation. A slow but peaceful process of growth was beneficial to the country but, in the long run, a heavy price had to be paid for the same. The country was unable to solve her basic social weaknesses. The land reforms were only within a moderate range. The problems of the middle-class remained unresolved. The government intended to placate the unemployed in the tertiary education level by introducing restrictions against the admittance of Jewish students to the universities, but all these measures were ineffective.

The agricultural crisis of 1929 and the following depression badly affected Hungary and the recovery was halted. There was a new beginning in 1934 but this was an artificial boom, based on general European rearmament and the times were unsuitable for radical social reforms.

The foreign policy of Bethlen was a cautious re-establishment of Hungary's Central European position. The foreign diplomatic relations were reorganized. The encirclement of Hungary by Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia was broken by new relationships with Austria and Italy. His government accepted that temporarily the wish to recreate historical Hungary had to be postponed and he reached out to create *modus vivendi* with her former enemies. Of all his efforts, the policy to secure the rights of the Hungarian minorities was his main aim.

In Hungarian-Rumanian relationships there was some talk about creating a personal union between the two countries and so to ameliorate the Transylvanian problem. There were some contacts established to arrange an economic co-operation with Czechoslovakia, but the Czech industrialists were not keen to proceed. Horthy stretched out his arms towards Yugoslavia and, in his speech commemorating the 400th Anniversary of the Battle of Mohacs; he recalled the past common struggles of the peoples of the two nations.

All these efforts were in vain. The victors felt safe and were not ready for any sacrifices. Hungary, on the other hand, could not regard the amputation of three and a half million Magyars from her political body as permanent and, based on the Charter of the League of Nations, pursued her revisionist claims. There appeared some hope for a change, as Great Britain now showed some interest toward Hungary as a tool to reduce the political supremacy of France in South-Eastern Europe. A number of members in the House of Commons formed a group which was sympathetic to the Hungarian cause and Lord Rothermere, in the Daily Mail, began a crusade with the slogan: "Justice for Hungary."

In Hungary the Press and the population over-estimated the significance of the British interest. The son of the press magnate was received with the accolades of a King and the excited masses were elated and full of hope.

The League for Revision received some foreign support and the masses were convinced that a peaceful revision of the peace treaty was imminent. The conservative Government, on its part, did not dissociate itself from the over-excited demonstrations as capitalist circles were in fact happy that the attention of the masses had turned from social problems to national claims.

Anyhow, the non-secret suffrage assured, with the help of the big landlords, the safe majorities of the Government parties. Consequently, there was always a political group available to faithfully serve the Government. The Hungarian constitution was a parliamentary one, but the real power rested in the conservative forces gathered around the Governor.

Admiral Horthy had accepted the situation. In the early years of his rule he had close contact with the leaders of the national radicals, but later he took up a very strong conservative position, defending the great landlords and the capitalists. 13

The full force of the recession of 1929 reached Hungary in the year 1932 and the conservative capitalist order was under severe stress. In a crisis situation, the Regent asked Julius Gömbös to form a cabinet. This former staff officer of the army, one of the organizers of the Szeged resistance against the Communist Regime, was the hope of the right-wingers. He presented to the parliament a program of 95 points which was a proclamation of a national and social rebirth. Notwithstanding,

Gömbös soon had to realize that he was unable to revitalize the economy based on internal resources and he was keen to assure the foreign capital that he only intended to gradually introduce his reforms.

In foreign policy he was the only statesman who dared to spell out that Hungary's sole hope to revise the position of the country in the Carpathian Basin was, if and when the European status quo was changed. The militarily educated Gömbös felt that the enemy now emerging was the Eastern Slav power and Hungary would be a natural ally of the threatened German-Latin world. He hoped for a new and strong Central Europe. He made his now famous statement in parliament, declaring that the basis of the Hungarian foreign policy must lie on the protective line of the Berlin-Rome axis. When he made this statement, the relations between Germany and Italy were rather cool and Gömbös had only some success in cementing Austrian-Italian and Hungarian co-operation. Anyhow his influence weakened and the conservative forces around the Regent were preparing for his removal from the political scene, when soon after he became critically ill and died in October, 1936.

This was the year when Germany made her first steps to dismantle the Versailles Peace Treaty and the Reich's aim was to reunite with her German brethren.

Accordingly, the European status quo was changing rapidly and for Hungary the scene opened up new hope, but also the shadow of great dangers was growing.

Internally the social problems of the nation were not solved. The few years of the after-war period were not sufficient to engage in bold programs, and consequently, the unity of the nation, the required base of any successful foreign policy, was missing.

The country, after the severe losses of the Trianon Peace Treaty, was 90% Magyar in her population, but the problems of the German and Jewish minorities were not fully settled.

The German minority was not under any foreign pressure up to 1938. The assimilation of the group was in process as the natural population increases of the German villages moved into the Hungarian towns and, in the second or third generations, their process of assimilation was complete. The scattered German villages

around Buda and in the regions of the lower Danube could not formulate a policy of unification with Germany. Notwithstanding, the Third Reich's national and social rebirth had awakened a dormant nationalism of the Hungarian-Germans. On the other hand, the anti-German propaganda claimed pan-German intentions of the Reich and the peaceful co-operation of the two nationalities suffered greatly.

The Hungarian Jewry, of course, due to the anti-Semitic propaganda of the German Reich, was fearful that the German influence would aggravate their position. The Hungarian press was in its majority under Jewish influence and they developed an anti-German stand. The Hungarian right-wing radicals, on the other hand, were defending the anti-Versailles German cause and the result of this feud was that the Government was torn between the opposing forces.

The Hungarian national radicals however were not racists. The Magyar form of National Socialism called herself Hungarism, which meant a supranational co-operation between the Magyars, Germans, Slovaks, Croatians, Serbs, Ruthenians and Rumanians of the Carpathian-Danube Fatherland.

The Christian churches, politically active as Christian socialists based on Christian principles, were seeking only social justice in their anti-Jewish stand.

The Governments were pressed by those forces to solve the "Jewish question." In Hungarian relations, this meant that the overwhelming majority of the Jewish elements in the professions, in banking, finance and commerce, should be reduced gradually, until their participation in these fields would reach 20% of the population. As the Jewish minority at the time was no more than approximately 7-8% of the population, the set of goals was not extreme.

Kálmán Darányi and later Count Paul Teleki, the Prime Ministers of the years before the Second World War, had to face, under such conditions, the developments in European politics which clearly indicated that Germany was about to break up the status quo and, in peace or by war, a new European balance of power would emerge.

Hungary was a prisoner of her own revisionist policy. The moral support of England and the bold steps of Germany to

tear up the Versailles order filled the masses with great expectations and it was not possible for Hungary to remain neutral or co-operative with the forces of the standing order. In 1938, Hitler had annexed a jubilant German-Austria and he was about to turn against Czechoslovakia.

The newly regained Hungarian independence was only two decades old and the experience of the German domination had not yet faded away in the memory of the population. However, there were signs that the XX Century imperialism of Germany would turn in the direction of the Baltic, Polish and Russian regions and there was a hope that Germany would not make territorial claims in South-Eastern Europe. Count Teleki felt that there was also a chance of preserving the country's neutrality in the approaching European conflict. However, he himself was unable to dissociate from the requirements of a revisionist policy, notwithstanding that; ironically, both Germany and Great Britain expressed their wishes that the country's revisionist program should be postponed until the end of the confrontation.

Hungary was trying to achieve her revisionist aims, using the possibilities opened up by the fluid European situation, independently, based on her own political, diplomatic and military power. As Count Teleki, the President of the League for Revision, so often said in private circles, he intended to imitate the policy of George Martinuzzi, the famous George Fráter of the Transylvanian struggles, who carefully played his cards in the Hungarian interest, trying to balance the Ottoman and German powers.

This was the "Transylvanian policy" as was known in Hungarian history, but the learned Count did not foresee that the emerging conflict would not be a French-English-German conflict only, and the role of Soviet Russia and her ally, the U.S.A., would be the decisive factor.

Thus the struggle for the restructure of historical Hungary moved the country step by step into a participation in a coalition war. On the 19th March, 1944, she again had to face for a short period the reappearance of German rule. However, it was Hungary's destiny that she would become one of the captive nations in a divided Europe under Russian-Communist occupation.

Horthy's Hungary was a short-lived period. In her 25 years, Hungary saw the hard years of reconstructions after the First World War,

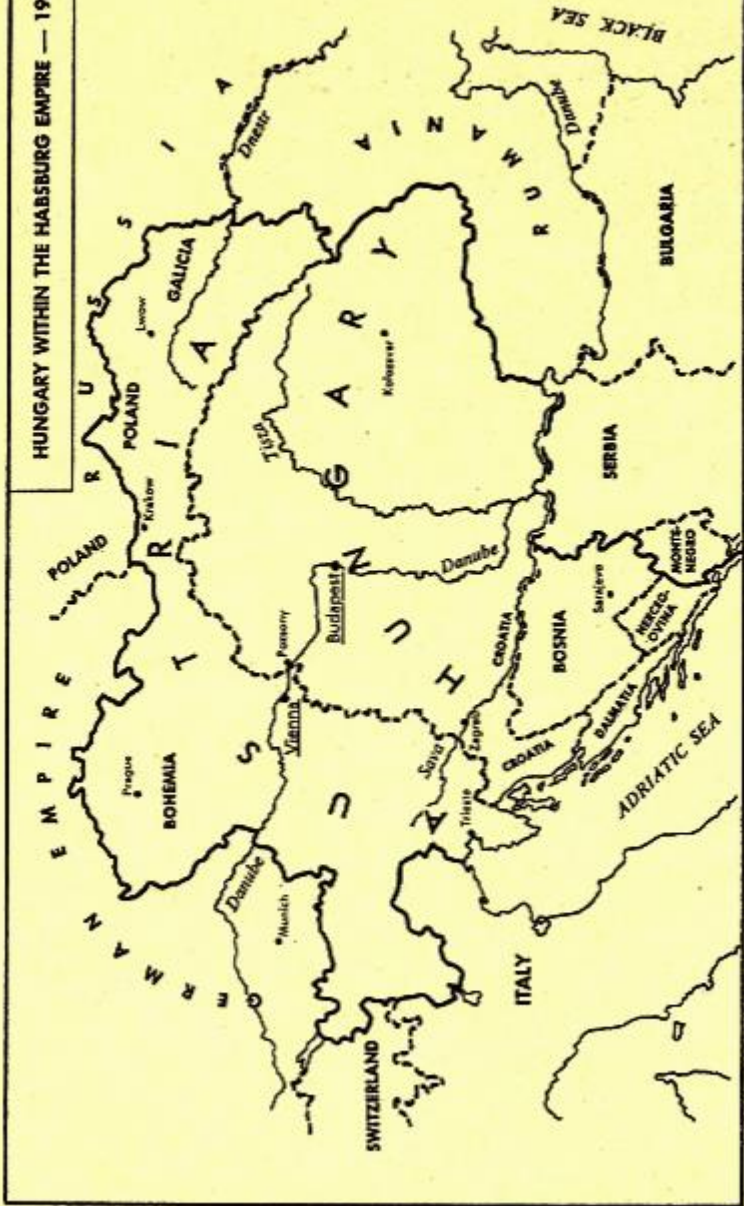
a most severe depression which disrupted the progress and finally the five years of suffering in the Second World War.

The Communist propaganda still portrays this age as the root of all the present deficiencies of their regime and these attacks are most unjust.

Horthy's Hungary, notwithstanding the noted tribulations, faithfully served the interests of the nation. Horthy restored peace after the Great War, closed the wounds of the age of revolutions and set the country's development on a solid economic basis. Hungary tried her best to repair the deficiencies of the country's social and political structure which were a legacy of the 150 years of Turkish occupation and Austrian colonial rule.

Up to 1956, the Hungarians, under the harsh Communist rule, always referred to the Horthy period as the "little peace" when comparing the same with the European Golden Age which ended in 1914 with the outbreak of the Great War. This informal plebiscite gave a correct assessment of the age of the Horthy administration.

HUNGARY WITHIN THE HABSBURG EMPIRE — 19th Century



PART FIVE

THE RUSSIAN OCCUPATION

The Revisionist Efforts

1938-1941

During the years before the Second World War Hungary, under Admiral Horthy, was involved in the struggles between the European powers, nevertheless fought for her own national aims.

After the end of the Second World War the historians of the West generally regarded the country's attitude as that of the "unwilling satellite". The Soviet interests pictured her as a fascist country, serving German interests. Both camps however missed the point. Hungary was not a blind adversary of the English-American-Russian Coalition and was not a satellite of Hitler's Empire. She entered the pre-war years of diplomacy with a strong national will to serve only Hungarian interests and the Hungarian armed forces were used only to recapture the territories, lost twenty years before, after an uninterrupted rule of 1,000 years and also in order to reunite with millions of Hungarians who were allocated to be Czech, Rumanian and Yugoslav citizens by the Treaties of Versailles and Trianon.

Since 1920 the Hungarian society (in fact without a state propaganda) created an attitude which was based on the spirit of the slogan "no, no, never", by which the people announced their will and determination, never to accept as a permanent solution the rape of their country. Hungary lost two-thirds of her territory and 3.5 million Hungarians were transferred to new states, which themselves became conglomerations of dissenting nationalities, and without the historical, geographical unity of Hungary.

The tragedy of the country was a personal experience for the hundreds of thousands of refugees who poured back into the dismembered state and schoolchildren and university students grew up in the spirit that, in due course, it would be their duty to take up the call for the liberation of their brethren.

The Hungarian Governments made all efforts to achieve the revision of the Peace Treaty peacefully within the framework of the League of Nations, but their passionate pleas were ignored.² Consequently, when Adolf Hitler appeared on the scene as a warrior against the injustices of the Versailles Treaty, he was regarded with sympathy in this respect. Whatever the political inducements, it would have been impossible for any Hungarian Government to abdicate her aims for the revision of the Peace Treaty of Trianon. To enter the camp of the forces of the status quo would not have had any social support.

Notwithstanding, against the ideology of national-socialism., considerable social forces took up opposing fronts. The capitalists and the large landlords compared the brown revolution of Hitler with the red of communism. The Hungarian peasant could not follow the military tendencies of the national-socialists. The Hungarian Jewry was willing and ready to oppose co-operation with Germany. The bulk of their press however, until the late thirties under the guidance of the Jewish editors who greatly helped in the revisionist efforts of the country, lost their influence. The memory of the Habsburg-German rule was also strongly alive in the nationalistic middle-class and they instinctively feared the revival of the pan-German tendencies. The Catholic circles, who were engaged in efforts to restore the Habsburgs on the Hungarian Throne, were deeply disappointed when Austria was united with the German Reich. ³Perhaps the industrial labor force was the sector which followed the national social development with some positive interest. The Hungarian social democrats were a spent force, but the German national-socialism had some success in propagating ideals of elevation of the industrial workers.

The revisionist policy of the Hungarian Government had a major handicap, which made it difficult for the Governments to formulate their aims. The popular demand of the masses wanted to restore Hungary within its 1914 boundaries and the restoration of historical Hungary was their aim. The country was full with refugees who came from all parts of greater Hungary and, for them, every town or district of the lost territories was a living memory of the past of their families and their lost lands. Their youthful experiences directed their personal wishes towards thoughts of liberation and return.

There was not a politician, right or left wing, who dared to announce that maybe a more modest policy would be practical.

But, to proclaim an aim to work for the return of the border areas only, however parallel with the idea of securing the cultural and human rights of the pockets of Hungarians within the new states, would have meant political oblivion.

The Hungarian society, during the era of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy, had the illusion that Greater-Hungary represented the State of the Magyars. Hungarians truly believed that the Slovaks, Rumanians, Serbs, Germans and Croats were all members of the Hungarian nation and did not want to accept the fact that the various mother-tongues may disrupt the unity of a country.

The Hungarian governments therefore had the serious political problems in the definition of aims during the political, diplomatic or military crises. Between the aim of the restoration of Greater-Hungary and the recapture of the border regions there had to be found a balance.

When the move against Czechoslovakia was instituted, the Hungarian leadership could not pursue historical claims. Germany herself wanted the return of the Sudeten-Germans only and Hungary could only claim a revision of the border areas, the reunion with one million Hungarians who were left inside Czechoslovakia for purely economic and military reasons. This was a modest aim and the acquiescence of the great European powers was requested.

During the occupation of North-Eastern Carpathia, however, Hungary did not move to unite with Magyars, as the majority of the area was Ruthenian, but took into possession a very important section of the Carpathian natural borders and, in the style of historical Hungary, she wanted to establish the geographical basis for a Hungarian-Polish co-operation.

When, in the year 1940, North Transylvania was re-annexed we witness the combination of the two principles. The Second Vienna award secured the Carpathian frontiers and the Székelys also came home. The rule over the Eastern Carpathians secured the basic principle of historical Hungary. On the other hand, certain southern areas of Transylvania, where Hungary had clear border claims under the linguistic principle, remained with Rumania. The award was an attempt to conciliate both parties and the cause of German-Italian intervention was to preserve the

peace of South-Eastern Europe, threatened by a Hungarian-Rumanian encounter.

On the other hand, in the year 1941 when Yugoslavia had fallen under German attack, the Hungarian Government took only those territories which had a majority Magyar population in the border areas. Here, Hungary refused Hitler's offer to reach for the historical borders.

Hungary as established in the 1920 Trianon Peace Treaty, had no major minority problems, and basically, she was a national state. On the other hand, the years from 1938 saw the return of territories with mixed population and one had to admit that the nation was not equipped to meet the task of organizing the state on the basis of ethnic equality. The Hungarian constitutional theory acknowledged the principle of an Empire, called after St. Stephen, in which the various nationalities were united in the abstract of the political nation, but the practical organization was not ready to serve those principles and the nationalism of the Magyars was not supra-national.

The lower administration made errors in their treatment of the nationalities and certain autonomist tendencies were not accepted by the Magyars. North-Eastern Carpathia did not receive autonomy and also there were complaints in North Transylvania. Of course, those years were clouded by the pressures of the European war and the peaceful possibilities of life were absent.

It is interesting to note that the Hungarian nationalist made an attempt to revive the old super national principles of medieval Hungary. Their plan was to reorganize Great-Hungary as a federation of autonomous territories. The underlying ideas of Cultur-autonomies they borrowed from the Estonian constitution which was popularized by I. Csekey, a Professor of the Szeged University.

Kálmán Hubay introduced a private Bill in the Parliament which would have ensured the noted aims. The national assembly however rejected the proposals as the majority feeling was that a reorganization of the state on a federal basis would destroy the historically united state of Hungary.

The supporters of the Bill were charged under State Security laws and they lost their mandates in Parliament. This violent reaction was probably a political move against the opposition;

the Government wanted to discredit the forces which were aiming for radical social reforms. But still the events proved the deep national commitments of the Hungarian society insofar as the Government was able to present such a constitutional move as a matter involving state security.

The western allies were similarly aware that the emotional nationalism of the Magyars was a factor to be reckoned with. Accordingly, in the years when the German-Hungarian cooperation was not yet strong, the U.S.A. and U.K. diplomats from time to time assured the Hungarian Government that Hungary's revisionist aspirations were followed by them with understanding and made promises that, after the war, they would ensure that justice would be done to the nation so badly treated after the First World War.

The First and Second Vienna awards were granted by Germany and Italy to Hungary and these awards resulted in the return of some border areas of Slovakia and the reunification of North Transylvania with the motherland.

The western propaganda however emphasized that the Vienna awards were not sufficiently beneficial to Hungary and they blamed Germany as being unfriendly to Hungarian interests. Encouraged by the western propaganda, the Hungarian anti-German forces took up an ultra-nationalistic line and their slogan was: "We want back all of the lost territories" (*mindent vissza*).

In the summer of 1938, the German diplomacy made their first move to create the conditions preliminary to their aim of the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. Admiral Horthy was invited to visit Germany which culminated in the launching of a battleship at Kiel in the guests' presence. During the negotiation, Hungary received an offer to participate in the planned action against Czechoslovakia and the reward would have been the return of all the territories in the north, lost in 1920. The price would have been a military alliance with the Reich. This tempting offer was rejected by the Hungarian Government. The conservative leadership of the country did not wish to participate in a European war as an adversary of Great Britain and France.

As Germany did not have Hungarian co-operation for a southern attack against Czechoslovakia, the plans of the Reich were modified and only the return of the Sudeten Germans was pursued.

Consequently, the Hungarian claims for a revision of the northern frontiers were completely ignored. The situation changed, only when, to the surprise of the Hungarian Government, it became evident that the Anglo-French alliance did not want to enter into a war to save Czechoslovakia. Horthy then arranged to visit Goring and pleaded with the later Reich's Marshall to activate the Hungarian question.

Germany was disappointed that Hungary was cool at Kisd as she hoped that the offer of the revision would secure a German-Hungarian military alliance. However, Horthy's late request was still favorably received. A peaceful solution was not yet assured and a Hungarian military co-operation promised some value in the case of a conflict.

The four-power negotiations in Munich finally paved the way also for presentation of Hungary's claims. There were some direct negotiations between Czechoslovakia and Hungary, but these were not successful. Then the parties appealed to the German and Italian Governments and, at Vienna, an award was proclaimed. As a result, the Magyars on the northern frontiers were reunited with the motherland. A former capital of historical Hungary, Pozsony, was to remain the capital of Slovakia, notwithstanding that the city had a German-Hungarian majority and that the surrounding areas were mostly Magyar in population. At this time German diplomacy regarded the movement of independence of Slovakia as one of her trump cards in her desire to proceed to dismember Czechoslovakia.

After her occupation of the Sudetenland, Germany was very close to her aims in South-Eastern Europe. The encirclement of the basin of Prague was completed and the Czech-Moravian policy had to face again the German rule. The actual military occupation of Prague was in fact not a political move. The German occupation of Bohemia was a logical military consequence of the post-Munich situation. Chamberlain returned to London and, notwithstanding his claim that peace in our time was secured, introduced rearmament and diplomatic moves was made to call a halt to any further German advance. From the point of view of Germany, this was a declaration of war and the Czech-Moravian basin, the heart of Europe, had to come under the rule of any power that intended to establish a military supremacy over the Continent.

The German diplomacy and propaganda machinery commenced preparation for this action around February, 1939, and there appeared signs that the Slovaks and the Ruthenians (Ukrainians) would declare their independence. Both Slovakia and Carpathian - Ukrainian had their roles to play in German plans. The German presence in the south of Poland was a weapon to force this country if possible into the system of German alliance. On the other hand, if Poland refused to co-operate, the Slovak-Ukrainian southern front would be militarily valuable.

Hungary was not willing to be a spectator to this process. The re-annexation of Slovakia was not her aim. The leadership seemed to accept the idea that a new Slovakia should play a similar role as did Croatia in historical Hungary. Accordingly, she was not unfriendly toward the expected Slovak move. On the other hand, the Ruthenians were politically inactive; the area was backward and sparsely populated. An independence of the area would only harbor a puppet government, probably under German guidance for anti-Polish or for Russian purposes. The Hungarian occupation of the area (for one thousand years under Hungarian rule) would on the other hand establish a common frontier with Poland and her co-operation with Hungary meant certain assurances against German or Russian imperialistic aims. However, the Hungarian Government was tactfully avoiding exposing her plans as an anti-German move and announced her intentions in Berlin.

The Hungarian decision was at cross purposes with German aims, but the German diplomacy did not object. The Hungarian military moves were coordinated with the German march into Prague and the German propaganda, which did not receive new directions, was confused. The Berlin afternoon paper, "Angriff", celebrated the announcement of the Carpathian - Ukrainian's independence, whilst the Hungarian troops were already well advanced toward the Polish frontier. ⁴ In the second edition however, the paper had to report the Hungarian moves.

At the beginning of the Second World War, Hungary maintained her neutrality. She did not support the German Reich against Poland. On the contrary, she opened the frontiers and received civil and military refugees of war. Later, notwithstanding German protests, she was helpful in arranging their emigration to the West.

The neutrality of Hungary was a German desire, and therefore, it was a possibility. Paul Teleki, the Prime Minister, visited Berlin early in May, 1939, and the common communiques stressed that the preservation of peace in South-Eastern Europe was in the interest of both countries. Germany, expecting a conflict with Western Europe, regarded it important for herself to preserve the status quo in the south-eastern regions and so secure agricultural and oil imports from this area. Hungary, on the other hand, wanted to avoid her participation in a war against England and France and she wanted to solve her territorial ambitions independently at a later time.

In this respect the foreign policy of Hungary and the Soviet Union was rather similar. Russia was expecting a long struggle between the German and French-English forces, and she was hoping that, by the end of the war, the exhausted combatants would have to acquiesce to her demands. Therefore, the Soviet Union was not willing to participate in the policy of encirclement against the Reich. On the contrary, with the German-Russian pact she freed Germany's eastern borders and encouraged the Reich's attack against Poland.

The world was expecting a long, bloody war between the opposing nations and the lightning fast "Blitzkrieg", which practically ended the warfare in the West, came as a surprise.

Russia was most perturbed, facing the possibility that the victorious Reich would now turn against the Soviet state in the anti-Bolshevik spirit of National Socialism. From the point of view of the United Kingdom, there was a danger that Roosevelt's intended entry into the War would come too late. Also, Italy assessed the situation as such that the end of the conflict appeared to be near and the Italian declaration of war was only a political act to secure her higher status if and when the peace negotiations commenced.

Hungary also felt that the time was ripe to turn against Rumania and wanted to activate her Transylvanian claims. Moscow attacked Rumania and occupied Bessarabia. The foreign minister of the Soviet Union had assured the Hungarian envoy that Moscow would regard any Hungarian action against Rumania with understanding.

Germany, at this time, may have been able to realize the grand plan of encirclement of her foes. Her moderate peace

offer was rejected and the United States took forceful measures, all aimed at an eventual entry into the war. ⁵ Russia commenced her move to the Balkan Peninsula and this was contrary to the spirit of the German-Russian pact. The Russian moves against the Baltic States also had their de-stabilizing effect.

Hungary mobilized and strong contingents of troops moved to the Rumanian border. The eruption of the Hungarian-Rumanian war would have jeopardized the agricultural and oil imports into the Reich.

The invasion of England, after Russia made her military moves in the East, was no longer possible. The German Luftwaffe continued her attacks against the United Kingdom, but, under this offensive cover, the main German forces started to regroup in the East.

In South-Eastern Europe, Rumania had accepted the protection of the German Reich and, by German request, direct negotiations between the Hungarian and Rumanian representatives took place. Germany wanted to avoid the role of an arbitrator as Rumania was now her ally. The direct negotiations however were unsuccessful. The Hungarian high command moved troops into position for an attack when, at the last moment, the Reich agreed to arbitrate. The subsequent award at Vienna divided Transylvania between Hungary and Rumania.

Hungary by now clearly saw that the war was no longer some sort of a border conflict, but the dimensions of a world war were taking shape. Therefore, she decided to conserve her forces, consolidate her position and, as far as it was possible, preserve her non-belligerent status.

Her territorial claims against Yugoslavia were postponed and the Government reached a friendly understanding with Yugoslavia in that the two countries should build up and enlarge their co-operation in order to preserve the peace of the area. Hungary and Yugoslavia agreed that their territorial disputes would only be discussed after the restoration of European peace.

Germany warmly welcomed and, in fact, proposed the Yugoslav-Hungarian understanding as, in her plans against the Soviet Union, the peace of the Balkan was of utmost importance. Germany had sufficient troops on the Rumanian-Bulgarian border to clear the Greek front. As a final political act, before

the attack against the Soviet Union Germany herself negotiated a pact with Yugoslavia.

On the other hand, Great Britain was interested in creating a substantial military theatre of war on the Balkan Peninsula. If the German forces were divided between the Russian and Balkan fronts, a German Blitzkrieg against the Soviet Union could fail and the U.S.A. would arrive in time to secure victory for England.

With the help of the British Secret Service, certain Yugoslav elements staged a coup d'état and, in fact, the resultant changed Yugoslav attitude forced Germany to attack Yugoslavia and, consequently, they had to postpone the Russian offensive by nearly six weeks.

Germany tried again to reach a military understanding with Hungary. The offer of Adolf Hitler was the return of all the lost southern lands including Croatia and an outlet to the Adriatic Sea as a reward for the participation of the Hungarian armed forces against Yugoslavia.

There were ministers in the Cabinet who felt that the offer could not be refused. However, the moderation of Count Teleki, the Prime Minister, prevailed. ⁶ The roads and railways of the country were already used by the German armies due to some agreements in connection with the Transylvanian crisis. However the Hungarian troops did not cross the southern frontiers and maintained the country's neutrality. Croatia then on the 10th April, 1941, proclaimed her independence. The resistance of the Yugoslav troops collapsed soon after and, only upon the disintegration of Yugoslavia, did Hungary move into Bácska which was anyhow of Magyar nationality. ⁷

This was the last phase of the Hungarian military efforts to recapture part of her lost territories.

At the time of the action against Czechoslovakia, Hungary was neutral and she tried to secure Western acceptance of her claims. Great Britain and France in fact did so and the reaction of the U.S.A. was also friendly.

The West's understanding of the Hungarian moves against Carpathian - Ukrainian was also assured as the establishment of the Polish-Hungarian common frontier, was a relief for the Polish ally.

The military action against Rumania was conducted parallel with the Russian moves and aroused German displeasure.

The turning point for the Hungarian diplomacy, which up to this point was skillfully balanced between the great powers, arrived when Rumania rejected the English guarantee and accepted the protection of the German Reich. This move by Rumania extended the influence of the Reich to the Black Sea and into the vicinity of the Dardanelles.

The Anti-Russian line became evident and Hungary had to accept the growing German influence in the conduct of her affairs.

Hungary became associated with the Three Power Pact and had to accept the common request of Germany and Rumania to allow troop movements on her territory disguised as training forces. The status of neutral Hungary became a "non belligerent" and the freedom of her actions contracted. At the entry of U.S.A. into the war, the Three Power Treaty obliged the country to move into the role of a combatant.

The common effort of Hungary and Yugoslavia was the last attempt by the two South-Eastern European states to preserve the peace of the area. The failure of their efforts made their territories theatres of war in the struggle between the German Reich and the Soviet Union.

The independent diplomatic and military endeavors of Hungary to achieve the revision of the Peace Treaty of Trianon ended and the next phase of the Second World War for Hungary meant the preparation for the inevitable defense against the aggressive Slavic-communist forces.

Notwithstanding, her actions resulting in partial reunification with her Magyar brethren will well be remembered in Hungarian history. The country, which again regained her independence after the tragic dismemberment of the fatherland after the First World War, instituted well planned diplomatic, political and military moves. In the process of those actions however, she always exercised moderation and carefully planned the preservation of her gains at the end of the European conflagration.

Her policy however did not succeed. Hungary could not foresee the emerging differences between Great Britain and the U.S.A. and, within the Central European political axis; she was unable to temper the savagery of the thrust of the Soviet Union towards the domination of South-Eastern Europe.

The Soviet-Slav Imperialism

At the end of August of 1939 the conclusion of the German-Russian Pact made it clear that a European war was inevitable. The Polish Government was unwilling to concede to German requirements and the United Kingdom was ready to fulfil her contractual obligations towards Poland.

From the point of view of Hungary, the German-Russian Pact contained certain possibilities and, therefore, the Hungarian Government did not oppose the new situation. A co-operation between Germany and Russia could have been a guarantee for the peace of the South-Eastern part of Europe. The Pact pointed to such a possibility. The two powers agreed to the U.S.S.R.'s claims for Bessarabia and Bukovina, regarding the territories which were formerly part of Russia, but no further Russian claims were recorded. On the other hand, the German Reich had declared that she did not have any political ambitions in South-Eastern Europe. The agreement drew a line of interest between the two powers and this closely followed the demarcation line in the spirit of the German-Russian co-operation in the time of Bismarck. South-Eastern Europe consequently had a chance to preserve the peace of the area during the 1939 war. Accordingly, Hungary tried to establish a correct relationship with her new neighbor. 8

However the German Blitzkriegs together with the possibility that the European war could come to an end with a compromise induced the Soviet Union to pursue her aims in Eastern Europe. The occupation of the Baltic States, the attack against Rumania and her partial buildup of troops in the Polish territories then forced Germany to move her troops to the East and to try to clarify the intentions of Russia. When the U.S.S.R. Foreign Minister, Molotov, visited Berlin it became evident however that the two powers' future plans were at cross purposes in South-Eastern Europe. Molotov was adamant to ensure U.S.S.R. hegemony over

Rumania and Bulgaria and her aims regarding the Dardanelles were declared. The practical result of the acceptance of such claims would have been of course a Russian rule over the Balkan Peninsula with a view to the Yugoslavs' Russian-oriented foreign policy. At the end of the Second World War, the U.S.S.R.'s hands could be discovered in the Greek-civil war and her attitude against Turkey only proved this noted situation. The German Reich accepted the neutralization of the Balkan Peninsula in the 1939 German-Russian Pact, but was unwilling to concede the Russian hegemony over South-Eastern Europe and so the preparations for the German attack against Russia took shape.

Hungary was deeply concerned by the evolving situation. The conservative Hungarian leadership opposed the Marxist-Slav grab for power, but had realised that in the case of a German defeat she could not survive against her mighty adversary. The only hope of the conservatives was their trust in the political skills of the British-U.S.A. alliance. The war, which started as a struggle against German domination of the continent, could not end in a Marxist-authoritarian Russian hegemony. So it was hoped that the policy of moderation would finally prevail when the peace of Europe was restored. 9

The resistance of Yugoslavia ceased on 17th April, 1941, and, in the next two months, the final troop concentrations of the German army were carried out. Germany had no plans for Hungary's participation in the coming operations. Germany was still disappointed that she could not induce Hungary to partake in the attacks against Yugoslavia even though she was offered the price of all her historical claims.

Notwithstanding, the troop movements using Hungary's railway network and the discussions between the staff officers made it clear to the Hungarian Government that the German-Russian war was inevitable. There were strong political and military forces in Hungary who advocated a military alliance with Germany and were ready to participate with the Reich in an anti-Bolshevik Crusade, but the conservative elements, gathered around Admiral Horthy, resisted any such wish. Hungary wanted to preserve her army intact as far as possible, to ensure her freedom of action for the times when the European conflagration came to an end and all her powers would be needed to safeguard the nation's sovereignty.

In this spirit, Hungary did not declare war on the Soviet Union after the opening of the hostilities and she only broke her diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R.

As Germany's allies, Finland and Rumania fully participated in the attack, Slovakia, Croatia and Italy declared war on the Soviet Union and promised military contingents. The German foreign office formally expressed its dissatisfaction with the cautious Hungarian response and the Government was hard-pressed by her allies for a show of solidarity.

There then occurred an air-raid against Kassa, one of the towns returned to Hungary after the first Vienna award. The bombs dropped were clearly of Russian origin, but other sources maintained that the planes were marked with the yellow cross of the axis powers. Pro-Russian elements thought that there was a German plot to force Hungary into the war, staging a "Russian-attack". After the war, former officers of the Hungarian Royal Air Force, living in exile in the West, made a very thorough investigation of the affair and German secret files were also searched. The result of this enquiry was negative and it seems that, if the bombers were not Russian, the only possibility remains that Slovak or Rumanian deserters dropped their bombs when they were trying to reach Russian lines. ¹⁰

The contradictory reports however were irrelevant from the Government's point of view. The Prime Minister, László Bárdossy, did realize that further resistance against participation in the war would be impossible. Hungary was by now formally an attached country to the Three Power Pact and her whole territory was at the disposal of the axis powers. To resist their wish would have caused unnecessary frictions.

Hungary was of course looking rather to visualize the European situation by the end of the war. In the case of final victory, for the Western powers, it was thought that her stand would be compared with Rumania's behavior when Hungary would then raise the question of Transylvania. But, Rumania was a full partner of Germany and the moderate approach of Hungary was already proved. On the other hand, in the event of Germany's victory, any further resistance to her request would have been fatal.

On this reasoning of Bárdossy, Horthy and the Cabinet were in agreement. The national assembly was convened without delay and a declaration of the Government was accepted that,

due to the air-raid on Kassa, the country was now at war with the U.S.S.R. The national assembly also approved that the Regent ordered the movement of the first motorized division and other troops over the Carpathian frontiers.

The decision was a crucial one and, in the given political situation, it was unavoidable. Bárdossy had to accept political responsibility for same. After the war he was accused of violating the constitution. His prosecution was groundless. In the Hungarian constitution, the sovereignty of the country found its expression in the national assembly. The Government was appointed by the Head of State and the co-operation of the noted three elements meant the constitutionality of any political act. The right to declare war rested with the national assembly which, in this particular case, was assured when the assembly accepted the declaration of the Government of the Regent. The minutes of the assembly also prove that the opposition was raising its fears only with regards to the political consequences of the move, but it was never maintained that the declaration would have been unconstitutional.

The Russian-Hungarian confrontation was always regarded by the Governments of the country as an unavoidable phase in a war of coalitions without particular aims. Hungary had no territorial dispute with the U.S.S.R. as did Finland and Rumania. The Government made every effort to free herself from combat commitments and was rather interested in occupation duties. The Hungarian troops were sympathetic towards the suffering of the Russian population and, due to their attitudes, there was only a minimal partisan activity in the Hungarian Sector.

On the 8th December, 1941, Japan entered into the war and consequently the U.S.A. became a belligerent opponent. The European war became a world war and the advance of Germany into Russia was halted by a severe winter.

The German Reich was again involved in a two-front war and had to face the mighty American economic power as its enemy. From 1942 onwards, it was clear that the war could not end in a German victory. The Hungarian leadership notwithstanding stood firm by her commitments and hoped that by the end of the struggle Great Britain and the U.S.A. would enforce a compromise solution in Europe. The Hungarian Government was convinced that the Anglo-American powers would not accept either a German or a Russian dominated Europe. 11

Early in 1942 Horthy asked for Bárdossy's resignation and Nicholas Kállay became the Minister President. Following German requests the 2nd army moved to the River Don. The troops were poorly equipped being without heavy artillery or tank support. There were German promises to strengthen the thin line of the front, but the awaited troops never arrived. ¹² The Soviet counter-offensive began in January, 1943, and the 2nd army after an heroic battle was annihilated in the overwhelming Russian onslaught.

Kállay felt compelled to begin sounding negotiations by intermediaries and was using peace feelers to ascertain conditions for a separate Hungarian peace.

His plans under the prevailing political situation were not realistic.

The understanding between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. grew and all the efforts of Great Britain to secure the European interests were unsuccessful. The U.S.S.R. had not forgotten the fate of Tzarist Russia and was not ready to bleed for English interests. She demanded the opening of a Continental-second front. Russia was not satisfied by the saturation bombing of German towns and requested the opening of the second front by an invasion. England made some effort to arrange the second front on the Balkan Peninsula but her plans received the Russian veto as this area was earmarked by Russia for herself as a spoil of war.

A peace of compromise between England, Russia and Germany would have secured the existence of the smaller powers too and Hungary's last hope lied in this direction. Since the Teheran understanding however the prospect of a peace of compromise faded away and the policy of the "unconditional surrender" forecasted the shadows of a foreign-dominated continent.

Kállay's restricted military policy and his diplomatic endeavors which leaked out occasionally gave Germany the impression that Hungary's participation in the war efforts was not sincere. In his internal policy there were also signs, namely his co-operation with the anti-German elements that could be regarded that the country was only a reluctant partner. The Eastern front was in steady withdrawal, the front line neared the Hungarian borders and the German High Command was anxious to receive assurances regarding the safety of the Hungarian theatre of war.

Horthy was invited by Hitler for consultations and during their meeting he had told the Regent that from now on German troops had to be stationed in Hungary. On the 19th March, 1944, before the Governor's return to his Capital, the troop movements were complete. Notwithstanding, Hitler declared that in the event of a new Government being ready to continue a co-operation with the Reich his troops would be withdrawn from Hungary.

In this very delicate situation Horthy had decided to appoint a Government of co-operation with Germany. His resignation would be of no help at all. On the other hand, for the price of further Hungarian-German co-operation, the country had preserved some of her freedom of action.

The constitution of a new Government was not an easy task. Szálasi, the national-socialist leader, did not want to accept the post as he opposed the German request to transfer the sovereignty of the country to Germany- with regards to the fate of the Jewish population. The German friendly, but conservative elements did not want to compromise their future with a grab of power in the presence of foreign troops. Finally, an old comrade of the Regent, the seriously ill General Sztójay, the Hungarian Ambassador in Berlin, took up duties as Prime Minister on Horthy's request.

Under the German occupation the leading personalities of the anti-German opposition were arrested by German security forces and the Government had to make some efforts to ensure their safety.

The German security forces began immediately to transport the Hungarian Jewry to Polish concentration camps notwithstanding the strong protest of the Churches. The deportation in country areas could not be hindered, but later, after regaining some of his powers, Horthy was successful in stopping the process of deportations in Budapest.

In August, 1944, Finland gave up the struggle and Rumania changed colors again. The struggle with the Russians now took place in the Carpathian Mountains and the sudden capitulation of Rumania opened the routes into Transylvania through the south-eastern passes.

Under these circumstances, Admiral Horthy had decided, following the advice of the Western Powers, to offer an armistice to Russia.

According to the constitution, the Head of State could not enter into such negotiations by himself. The Regent was the Commander-in-Chief, but he could act only on the advice of the Government. On the other hand, the Government was responsible to the National Assembly.

Admiral Horthy was well respected in the country after two decades of moderate and constitutional rule and he was also aware that neither the Government nor the National Assembly would approve such steps.

Notwithstanding, with the help of his closest collaborators and members of his family, he tried to communicate with the U.S.S.R. Sztójay was asked to resign and in his place General Géza Lakatos was appointed and an administrative Government formed. Horthy did not disclose his plans to the Cabinet, but, as they were all his trusted friends, he was counting on them not to desert him in this decisive moment.

The German Secret Service however found out about the impending negotiations and informed the leading political personalities of the country regarding the intended capitulation.

The National Assembly was hostile to the plans. On the 16th September, 1944, the Lakatos Government presented its credentials to the Assembly. During the ensuing debate, one member of the national-socialist party stated that, according to his information, the Governor was engaged in negotiations with the Soviet-Union. The speaker of the House then interrupted the member, called for order and, in "defense" of the Regent, made a declaration that the House cannot believe this accusation. Nicholas Horthy ruled the country for the past two decades with utmost care, serving well the constitution, and it would have been incredible if he had been engaged in such an action, in clear opposition to his rights and duties. This was the essence of the speaker's statement. 14

In these weeks, the majority of the members of both Houses of the Parliament founded a party, called the National League. The members of this League were committed to the continuation of the struggle against the U.S.S.R.

The situation was clearly a national emergency. Therefore one may appreciate that, notwithstanding the evident constitutional difficulties, Admiral Horthy tried to achieve the disengagement of the country from a war which appeared to be a lost cause. He still had faith in the political understanding

of the Western powers and his hope was that Great Britain and the U.S.A. would be the balancing forces against the Russian-Communist drive. He did not want to believe that a new Mongol attack was facing the country and that Hungary was once again alone. The country however instinctively saw the dangers ahead and was ready to continue the struggle in this almost hopeless situation.

Hitler made a last attempt to persuade Horthy that he could not hope for any preferential treatment from the West. The Führer's personal envoy had some success, but it was too late, as the Regent's proclamation to disclose the armistice negotiations was already arranged and around midday on the 15th October, 1944, the said proclamation was broadcast while the discussions with the German envoy were still in progress. **15**

The German security forces however were alerted and, in co-operation with the Hungarian national-socialist party, and actively supported by the Federation of the eastern front veterans, the capital's strategic points were secured. Horthy was taken into protective custody by S.S. troops and Ferenc Szálasi, a former Major of the army and the leader of the national-socialists, emerged as the man supported by the Germans.

The army's High Command immediately stressed that the fight against the enemy was to be continued. Negotiations were carried out with Horthy to ensure his abdication and his acceptance of the emerging new leadership. The Regent was at first non-co-operative, but, under personal duress, finally signed a document of abdication. The new leader of the nation took his oath before the Holy Crown and the National Assembly approved the constitutional changes and passed acts to regulate the new situation. In the new Government, the dominant party was that of the national-socialists, but there were also other members of the National League represented, as the basic program of the new Government was to continue the war against the U.S.S.R.

The armed forces responded positively to the call of the new leadership and the overwhelming majority of the troops took the oath as requested.

The history of the Hungarian nation is full of defeats. Since the Battle of Mohacs all her struggles ended without victory. Instinctively however, the nation always accepted that a defeat

could be turned into a mythos of rebirth if she maintained her principles and rights.

In October, 1944, the nation proved again, continuing the hopeless struggle in those bitter winter months, that her national independence was worth a defense to the last man.

The new regime saw the national radicals in power and, also due to the difficulties in everyday life because of constant air raids etc., there were some revolutionary excesses. The leading personalities of the Government were not responsible for those acts as direct control over the events was more and more difficult. However, the Government took all measures necessary to avoid mass reprisals and, in fact, succeeded in safeguarding the Jewish population of the Capital.

The military and civil evacuation of Budapest began by the end of October, 1944, and, at Christmas time, the Capital was encircled and the siege of Budapest began. The Russian armies were held at bay for many weeks in close Hungarian-German co-operation and Buda and the surrounding hills were stubbornly defended.

The counter-attack from the West failed in January, 1945, and finally, on the 11th February, 1945, the Capital fell.

The city was badly damaged in the struggle. The bridges of the Danube were destroyed and the Royal Palace was burnt out.

In the meantime, the Government was evacuated to the West and raised new divisions to face the enemy. The last battles were fought in the Trans-Danubian defense lines.

On the 4th April, 1945 - Good Friday - the last Hungarian towns and territories were lost and the age of Russian occupation began.

Hungary suffered enormously during the last six months of the war. The soldiers of the U.S.S.R. were true representatives of their own communist regime. The country was raped, looted and destroyed.

The material losses also multiplied due to the excessive military and civil evacuation which became uncontrollable as the fear of the approaching communists set hundreds of thousands on the roads.

The refugees formed their first columns in the Ukraine, whence the Russian citizens of the Ukraine turned their backs on the returning hated regime of their former countrymen. Following them were the Germans from Transylvania and the southern Swabs and the Magyars of the Tisza region and finally the Trans-Danubians. Convoys of refugee vehicles and goods trains filled with civilians streamed to the West to preserve their freedom.

The enemy entered into the Carpathian Basin at the end of August, 1944, and it took them seven months to conquer Hungary. Its timetable was interrupted and the heroic defense of the Capital proved that the nation was determined not to surrender. Hungary was again defending Europe against the red tide from the East. The Hungarian resistance gave time and territory for the Western Allies to enforce a better deal with the Russians. Due to U.S.A. attitudes, the opportunity was not taken advantage of and, in the division of Europe, the Russian interpretation of the Yalta Agreement prevailed.

Yalta in Practice

When the European conflict started in 1939 as a Polish-German encounter, there were still hopes that the conflict could be localized, as the participants were all European powers who had so much in common in the experience of past dynastic and Christian solidarity. The period of the so-called phony war strengthened this belief. The consequent German Blitzkriegs in the West raised the dangers of growing bitterness, but there were signs that Germany was genuinely seeking a compromise. ¹⁷

All these hopes were squashed however when the U.S.A. and Great Britain seemed to proclaim a new crusade against Germany and her allies, in fact, outlawing the national-socialist regimes and taking up a semi-religious position, so well symbolized in their hymn: Onward Christian Soldiers.

Their decision was that no negotiations would be entered into with the enemies and only an unconditional surrender would be accepted to end the hostilities. Their attitude of course was in contrast to Christian principles and the lessons of a European diplomatic and dynastic past.

The peace-offer of Hitler, which was moderate and negotiable, was not discussed at all by the British Cabinet and was rejected off hand. The mission of Rudolf Hess, who sincerely tried to search for a peace agreement with the British Empire before the final madness of the Second World War erupted, was not even regarded worthy of an interview. ¹⁸

A German-Russian total war became unavoidable and, besides the millions of soldiers, the Jewish population of Europe, the citizens of the towns under saturation bombing all had to pay the price for an uncompromising stand which finally prepared the scene for a deadly decline of Western-Christian civilization.

On the other hand, the propaganda of the Western Powers proclaimed the liberation of the whole world in the spirit of freedom,

equality and fraternity. A new era was promoted in which fear and poverty would be eliminated. Freedom of religion and democracy, social-economic security and a peaceful life free from imperialistic aggression were promised.

The slavery of the Soviet system, the economic and political degradation of the nations under Bolshevik rule were well known in the Western World. Notwithstanding, one has to concede that, as a counterforce to the pan-German imperialism, the Soviet Union had a proper place in their coalition. However, in historical perspective, it is hard to understand the aim and spirit of the Teheran and Yalta Agreements. In February, 1945, there was no longer a German threat and the restoration of peace was the only matter to be attended to. In this situation, without any compelling reason, Roosevelt and Stalin in fact divided the world between themselves and Churchill's weak resistance to this division was brushed aside.

Hungary was occupied by the U.S.S.R. and her political life was only an appendix of the Bolshevik rule. The country had to learn the Russian interpretation of democracy.

Early in 1945 in the town of Debrecen, when the last battles of national Hungary were still being fought in Transdanubia, the Russian military administration began to create a group which would be ready to serve the occupation forces. The agents of the Russian Communist Party organised a body and this assembly assumed the role of a legislature. A government was proclaimed and the U.S.S.R. recognized same. The formation of this assembly and government had no constitutional basis. Notwithstanding, one had to concede that the collapsed order of state had to be restored. The historical judgment of their role may really ignore the matter of constitutionality, but it is necessary to examine the spirit of their administration.

Hungary, before 1945, was not a parliamentary democracy of the nature of England's Westminster system. The Turkish rule, the German colonial oppression and the problems of the national minorities were the contributing factors to Hungary's social and political order not being of a high level. If the new leaders of the "liberated" country would have set the goal to create a true parliamentary democracy, social justice and a patriotic independent state, the whole nation would have joined in their effort to create the promised new world.

The Russian-installed regime was however only the willing tool of the sponsor to achieve the bolshevization of the country. In their defense, one can only admit that the strong political will of Russia was no match for the new leaders. Anyhow, only the so-called "not exposed" politicians and administrators could take up positions which meant the rule of a sub-standard third-grade group. The leaders of the nation were jailed or in exile. Anybody who had an independent mind and moral commitments turned his back on public life.

This situation was as a result of the terror regime conducted by the occupation forces and supported by the agents of the Bolsheviks camouflaged under a flag of war against the "war-criminals."

The spirit of Nurnberg was short-lived in the Western World. The critics of the judicial revenge pointed out that the principle of "nullum crimen, sine lege" cannot be dismantled without a destruction of the Western-Christian civilization. Consequently, the judicial processes were only instituted to judge over the criminals who committed unlawful atrocities during the war. In Hungary however, everybody was a "war criminal" who was not ready to serve the Marxist cause and had a potential for political leadership.

If the regime would have been ready to call elections based on a universal suffrage, this would have proved its sincerity. However, the electoral laws allowed only the left wing and left of center parties to participate in the elections. The country, in this election, proved her political maturity and unity against the parties serving the occupation forces when the party of the small landholders achieved an absolute majority in the Assembly.

Notwithstanding, the military Government and the Communist Party who were the agents of their Russian masters enforced the formation of a coalition government of -the main parties and, in this coalition, the Communist Party was the de facto ruler, notwithstanding that the Bolsheviks received only a small fraction of the votes.

Consequently, the Government only served Russian imperialist aims. National aspirations, the idea of defense of the territorial and political integrity of the country were not represented by this regime.

The Russians themselves called the Second World War the Great Patriotic War and Stalin in his own hour of defeat appealed

to the national sentiments of the citizens against the German imperialists. He posed as the heir of Peter the Great and the Tzars and moved the powers of the Soviet Union in the direction of the Black Sea, the Dardanelles and the Balkan Peninsula. If the agents of the Hungarian Communist Party would have had some connection with the Hungarian national aspirations, the defense of the territories of the country should have been their aim. In 1919 the Hungarian Communists had acted in this manner. In 1945 however the leaders of the new regime, most of them Russian citizens and non-Magyars, abandoned all claims of the country regarding the territories lost after the Great War. They did not raise the Transylvanian question either, however the Soviet Union knew well that the Hungarian action against Rumania was carried out in diplomatic understanding with the U.S.S.R. Rumania was, on the other hand, not a trusted ally to be rewarded for services, as she was a fully mobilized enemy of the Soviet Union during the war and during the German advance into Russia, Rumania annexed old Russian territory, to further her imperialist aims.

The constitution of the Soviet Union was based on the federation of autonomous soviet republics, representing the various nationalities of the Empire. Moscow was constantly stressing that nationalistic oppression of the minorities was a consequence of class differences and was proud of the liberal treatment of their nationalities.¹⁹ The communist agents of Moscow in Hungary however witnessed coldly the cavalry of the Magyars in Transylvania, the mass murder of Hungarians by the Tito Communists and the cold inhuman deportations of the Magyar population in Czechoslovakia. The center of their policy was the negation of the national past and the surrender of the future of the nation.

Nationalistic-revenge had its field-day in Europe, but a voice in the interest of the oppressed Magyars was regarded as fascist. The new Paris peace negotiations were orders of the victors. Nobody was counsel of Hungary and the members of the Communist delegation dutifully voiced their "mea culpae". The new rulers were clearly the slaves of the Russian-Communist masters.

This regime co-operated fully with the barbaric practice of the U.S.S.R. which moved thousands of civilians for public works into the Soviet Union under most inhuman conditions.

There were no "Geneva agreements" valid for the former prisoners-of-war, who were often transported to Russia after they received their discharge documents from western military authorities.

A radical agrarian reform would have been another measure which would have given the new regime some credentials. The distribution of the big land estates and an effort to build economic-sized peasants' holdings were aims in which left or right-wing radicals could have been united. The "democrats of Yalta" however did not want the strengthening of the peasants' lot. The Communist aim was to introduce the Russian Kolkhoz, the tool for the destruction of the peasants, the firm bastions of a free enterprise system.

The introduced agrarian reform was based on uneconomical small holdings and the new units were unable to produce sufficiently for their new owners. Consequently the regime enforced co-operatives of small landholders who now became the agricultural workers of the new units. The strict rules of the management of those co-operatives ensured a low productivity which is a common feature with the Communist regime in Russia. This system only survived for decades with the help of capitalist deliveries of wheat and other agricultural products.

The regime artificially raised inflation. The aim was to force the population to sell their remaining valuables and so achieve the general poverty, which is the basis of the Soviet man, the type of slave who bends his head for a piece of bread.

The forceful industrialization of the country was also a sheer imitation of Russian policies. Hungary was certainly 30-50 years behind the West European industrial developments as a bitter legacy of Turkish and German occupations. But to build industries which due to lack of raw materials were fragile and to direct the trade of the country exclusively to the Soviet Union was not even serving Russian economic interests. Perhaps it was the wish of the Russian military to create heavy industry in Communist Hungary which would be a springboard for a future attack against Austria and the Balkan Peninsula.

The suffering population then turned to God. Humiliated, looted and raped, the people withdrew into the churches. The image of the crucified Christ became symbolic for the nation and the Priests and Pastors received their complaints.

Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty, Primate of Hungary, became the representative of the oppressed national feelings. Around him gathered the people, notwithstanding denominational differences, who still believed in nation, faith and family. For a short while there was a hope that the Church would be the rock which would at least control the flood from the East. Pope Pius XII raised his voice against the new barbarism, but the response of the West was unsatisfactory.

On the other hand, the U.S.S.R. saw her chances to complete her military and political aims. The Russians were the behind-the-scenes instigators of the civil war in Greece. At one stage, it was hoped by the Soviets that the attitude of the French and Italian Communists would create a situation to achieve a domination of Western Europe. The solution of the German question, to serve Russian interests, was pressed vigorously. The status of the Dardanelles was questioned. The specter of a Communist hegemony over Europe cast a shadow over the destroyed continent.

In Eastern Europe the U.S.S.R. discarded the mask of democracy and gave orders to proclaim the dictatorship of the proletariat in the satellite countries.

The Dictatorship of Moscow

After the terror of the Yalta democracy, camouflaged as the punishment of an aggressor country for the participation of its citizens in the war (this in itself being branded as a war-crime), the Politburo ordered the scrapping of the democratic facade and the Asiatic-Slav Bolshevism openly took over the political scene. The executive power of the country in the shadow of the Russian arms was concentrated in the group which was called by the oppressed as the "Muscovites." This group was a distinct section of the Communist Party of Hungary whose past association with the land was rather superficial.

At the end of the Great War, when Russia was in revolutionary fever, some of the first and second generation Russian-Jewish immigrants felt great sympathy for the Bolsheviks who also promised the liberation of their people from the yoke of the pogroms-ridden Tzarist regime. As a result, the overwhelming majority of the people's commissars in Bela Kun's Communist regime were those superficially assimilated migrant elements. This communist regime lasted only for a few months and most of the involved fled to Moscow. Under the Communist rule they lived there for two decades, became Soviet citizens and the gap between them and their chosen land in immigration (Hungary) widened considerably.

The end of the Second World War however saw their return and their numbers were strengthened by displaced Jewish men who fell into the hands of the U.S.S.R. military while serving the Hungarian units in work-battalions on the Eastern Front. These people were the first garniture of the new regime. The Russian authorities could not trust the Magyars as their opposition to the Communist takeover was clearly demonstrated on the battlefields and in the first election after the war. 2

The national-radicals felt that the fact of Jewish predominance in the

Communist leadership proved their stand and stamped their regime as "Judeo-bolshevism."

Their judgment was unjust and was caused by an unproved generalization. In fact, the right wing was at fault in its judgment in the same way as the new rulers who practically outlawed the whole leadership of national-conservative Hungary. Officers of the army, gendarmerie, executive-administrative officers and the judiciary were placed on a black-list and a man-hunt was then conducted against them.

The great masses of the Jewry did not participate in the terror of the Rákósi or Kun regimes and the Hungarian national leadership could not be blamed for them not being able to oppose actively the mass deportation of part of the Jewish population, ordered and executed by the German security forces. The spiritual leaders of the Hungarian Jewry were disturbed by the terror of the Bolsheviks and warned that Jewish participation in the same would hurt the innocents. The Jewish population was in fact unhappy that the end of the war did not bring the advent of a true free enterprise system, which is their life, they being a group of traders, financiers and professional men who could not find their place in a totalitarian economy.

One had to admit that the uncommitted leaders of the Jewish population did not dare to oppose the rulers, but the same applies for the administrators of the Horthy regime who could not oppose more effectively the German demands.

The Hungarian Jewry was anyhow an immigrant population still on the move and could not be regarded as fully assimilated. Their behavior with regards to the Magyar aims and problems was not based on deep historical roots with Hungary.

The latest statistics of the Jewish population of Hungary cannot be accepted without criticism, as political propaganda and difficulties of definitions cloud the figures. However, it may be true that there were about one million Jews under Hungarian rule in the year 1940. The Germans deported approximately 400,000 Jews. However, the inflated Jewish population in the Capital basically survived the siege of Budapest. By the end of the war Hungary's Jewish population amounted to approximately 600,000. Accordingly, at least 300,000 was the number of victims of the persecutions. One

may estimate that 100,000 liberated Jews emigrated from West-German displaced person camps to the U.S.A. or Israel.

In the first years after the war the great majority of the Jewish population was full of hope that finally the democracy of the West would prevail. In 1948 however it became evident that the Bolshevik rule would become permanent and the Jewish population was ready to continue its emigration movement to the West. The first wave of the dissidents left the country in 1949 and each year significant numbers chose a new life in liberty. When the 1956 uprising temporarily opened the borders the Jewish population was ready for a mass movement and three-quarters of the refugees were Jewish. The process continued in the later years and, by the year 1975, one may estimate the Hungarian-Jewish population as 1% of the inhabitants, approximately 50 to 100,000 in numbers.

The leader of the Muscovites was Matthias Rákósi. He was of mediocre intelligence and of an appearance which did not help his political career. However, he was trusted by the Politburo and his authority was unquestioned for nearly a decade. His close collaborators, Geró, Farkas, Vass and Révai, will be long remembered by history as activists in a terror regime on Stalinist lines.

There were of course also idealists among the party officials who believed in a just, democratic and human form of social structure and were determined to build a socialist state in the interests of the Magyars. László Rajk was one of the leaders of this group. They established contact with the Yugoslavian leader, Tito, and worked on a scheme to create a south-eastern European alliance of socialist states which could counter-balance the Russian influence. Internally, they wanted to close the age of revenge and national forgiveness was on their platform.

The agents of Russian imperialism discovered their activities and the leaders of the Rajk group were hanged.

Rákósi realised that the greatest adversary of his policy, which intended to subjugate the country into the system of Russian slavery, was the Hungarian Christianity.

A thousand years of deep historical ties and traditions connected Hungary to Rome or to the Protestant religious centers in Western and Northern Europe. Therefore, after the elimination of the nationalistic political leaders, the Communists attacked the Churches.

The Christian future has its framework based on the family unit and the religious education of the children. Therefore, the most vehement attack were directed against Christian morals and religious education. In these fields the Hungarian Catholic Church had the greatest of material and spiritual backgrounds and the attack of the Bolsheviks centered against the Head of the Church, Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty, the Primate of Hungary. The First Baron of historical Hungary, based on his rights expressed in the Hungarian constitution, took up the challenge. He remembered his predecessors who died on the battlefields or suffered imprisonments if required in defense of the high principles of the Faith and declared himself ready to taste martyrdom.

The agents of Moscow however were willing to interfere with the most sacred Hungarian traditions and organised a "show-trial" against the Cardinal in order to remove him from the political scene. The "free-world" was a stunned spectator of this disgraceful process, and the captive Cardinal was physically and mentally tortured. 22

Some of the matters raised against the Cardinal were primitive. The alleged currency offences were clearly fabricated ones. The treasonable count was better prepared. At least on this count he was prosecuted for alleged acts which were really in the interest of the country only if the alleged plans were successful. The restoration of Habsburg and a federation of free Danubian States under the rule of the dynasty were of course aims which were pursued by the Church between the wars and so could be alleged against the Cardinal. The Magyars, on the other hand, still had dark memories of the Habsburg rule and this was an attempt to discredit the Church and the Cardinal and in fact was a cover-up move so that their underlying aim of the destruction of Christian Hungary would not be exposed.

The attacks also emphasized an alleged aim of the Cardinal to re-establish the Church's large land ownership lost by the Communist land reforms. The Cardinal and the Church raised their voices against the general practice of "nationalization" of all kinds of properties. But the Cardinal himself was a representative of the Christian-Socialist movement and a professed disciple of the late Bishop Ottokár Prohászka, who represented the policy of a socialist renewal of the Church in Hungary. Accordingly, his person was in fact an assurance that the Church would never have opposed a sincere social reform.

The agents of Moscow however wanted to remove from the political scene the last leading man of the nation who boldly opposed the Communist-Slav rule. They wanted to destroy national Hungary's last constitutional representative, whose presence in Esztergom as Prince of Hungary was a constant reminder of the past.

The show-trial ended. The primate was imprisoned, the Church schools were nationalized, the teaching orders dispersed and the Church life was forced underground. Religious teaching was nearly an impossibility. Secret marriage ceremonies and masses conducted in private homes were the order of the day.

The regime, using the pretext of overcrowding in the Capital and in the bigger cities, began the forced deportation of sections of the population. The last untouched members of the national leadership, mostly old and helpless people and their families, had to leave their homes very often without advanced warning or on short notice. The method of their forced journeys was cruel and they had to re-establish their lives under most degrading and crowded circumstances.

Tertiary education was allowed for those whose parents and grandparents were not associated with the middle class. The aim of this was to ensure the rule of the foreigners in the country.

The destruction of the peasants continued as prescribed by Moscow as the new rulers imitated the processes that resulted in the Russian peasants' tragedy. The co-operative agricultural units were forcefully mechanized and a great proportion of the peasant workers were not needed. So the unemployed peasants were driven into the cities and swelled the proletariat masses of the suburbs.

The new regime and the occupied country were called a republic and a "people's democracy," but this state had no elements of national sovereignty. The country was under military occupation by the Soviet Union and her right to organise her own internal administration was denied to the conquered. The Russian agents introduced a copy of the state-organs of the Soviet Union. A constitution was proclaimed which had no connection with the Hungarian past and its statutes were only Russian orders framed in the Hungarian language.

During the Second World War there was general fear in the country that Hungary would suffer the fate of the Baltic States

and would be incorporated in the Soviet Union as a further Soviet Republic. The Russians did not go so far. Evidently, in order to preserve the outside appearance of the independence of the subjugated country, in a truly neo-colonial fashion, the framework of a state was allowed to exist. Hungary was represented by diplomacy, claiming independence, and a Hungarian army and police force were also created. Notwithstanding, the controlling power of the Communist Party and the occupation forces ensured a Communist rule. Political life was also controlled by economic means. The external trade flowed mostly in the Russian direction. The country would "buy dear" and "sell cheap" to the "Great Ally." Only the necessity to acquire hard-currencies opened windows of contract with the West.

Under the bloody terror of this regime a new spirit of national resistance was born. The old differences of classes faded away and the country stubbornly resisted the conquerors. The resistance could not be an open one, but the old weapon of the Hungarian past of passive resistance against the aggressor was available. The gross national product steadily declined. The general attitude of the population was basically negative and this was evidenced by a low birth rate and an increasing number of suicides.

In the meantime, the Cold War was in full swing and Moscow had to realize that she could not force further Western withdrawals without an all-out war. Russia anyhow was still desperately short of raw materials. Her war-devastated economy was only gradually improving. In Hungary she had witnessed that the foreign leadership of the country only aggravated the problems of the occupation.

Consequently, Moscow decided to dismiss Rákósi and replace him with a man who was more closely rooted in Hungarian life. Imre Nagy was the chosen leader of Moscow and he did his best to improve conditions. Rákósi was however still a power in the background and Nagy's efforts were effectively blocked by Rákósi. Finally, in 1956 Rákósi was totally removed from the political scene. By that time however the desperation of the country was so great that a bloody outbreak became unavoidable.

The Uprising of 1956

Wars for the freedom of the nation were a dominant part of Hungarian history. The Magyars could never endure for a long time the slavery of the oppressors. The events of 1956 are however somewhat different from the freedom-wars of the past. The uprisings of Rákóczi or Kossuth were led by the nobles and were politically and militarily organised. The uprising of 1956 had, on the other hand, its roots in the industrial workers of the country and, in fact, the revolt was leaderless. A most cruel and degrading oppression which lasted for more than a decade created a desperate attitude in the population which was ready to ignore the political considerations and challenged, in a nearly suicidal manner, the superpower which was on the verge of dominating Europe.

Notwithstanding, the explosion of the revolt was a result of external political moves and was determined by the policies of the non-European powers who ruled over the destiny of the once mighty continent.

The Soviet Union, after the death of Stalin, made certain moves to consolidate her western advances. Her idea was to gain time before she decided to commence a final battle for the domination of Europe. A peace was a necessity for the Soviet Union as the acquirement; production and stockpiling of atomic weapons were a "sine qua non" for an encounter. She had to also witness the disintegration of the colonial might of the Europeans and she realised that, without a substantial naval force, Russia would not be able to challenge the maritime powers.

These are the reasons why Russia was finally prepared to compromise in the Berlin crisis and showed some flexibility on the Greek-Turkish line. She did not force a showdown in the French and Italian scene and created again an understanding

with the U.S.A. The Soviet Union therefore informally accepted the fact that she could not reach over the Yalta boundaries and, on the other hand, the U.S.A. did not further pursue the idea of the liberation of Eastern Europe and the problem of the unification of Germany was also shelved.

In Hungary the U.S.S.R. took steps to change the Stalinist leadership. The head and main personalities of the regime were in fact non-Magyar Soviet citizens and there is a story told that one of the leading Russian politicians lectured Rákosi in that his rule was evidently unacceptable to the Magyars, who had endured the rule of the Sultan and the German Emperors, but would not succumb to his Kingdom.

The Suez Crisis was in full swing in the month before the Hungarian uprising and one may see certain connections between the events noted.

Nasser made his first move to nationalize the Suez Canal. This action of course was a further step to complete the disintegration of the British and French Empires, but, for the newly created State of Israel, it meant the beginnings of an Arab encirclement and they decided to occupy the Canal in defiance of the emerging new order.

The Soviet Union was ready to act as the champion of Arab freedom and made resolute military preparations to counter the expected British-French-Israeli move.

Under the circumstances, Moscow gave positive orders to Budapest not only to change the hated leadership, but to ensure the creation of a national consensus which would have secured her right wing if a march to Suez had to be ordered.

The brain-trust of the Communist leadership then took steps to arrange certain events which would have created a national reconciliation in Hungary. On the 15th March, 1948, the Youth of Pest proclaimed their 12 points, which culminated in the Kossuth uprising. The Communists now posthumously rehabilitated the executed Rajk and his collaborators. The tertiary students of Szeged "left" the Communist union of the university. A similar action by the Budapest students was "not opposed." The Government acknowledged the autonomy of the universities and the contours of a demonstration, imitating the famous "15th of March," took shape.

As more than a hundred years ago, the university students now proclaimed again in 12 points the wishes of the nation. The text of the "demands" was obscure, leaders did not emerge and the Government had all the opportunity to manipulate the happenings.

This skillfully staged show however erupted into a national uprising.

The leaderless, oppressed masses isolated behind an iron curtain were unable to judge the political situation of the world and were seriously misled.

The voice of America, which was of course the voice of the C.I.A., indoctrinated the Hungarian listeners to believe that the Soviet Union was weak, the post-Stalinist leaders were fighting each other, the world was witnessing the fall of the Soviet might and now the oppressed people had to take up arms. Accordingly, when the Communist leaders did not take any action to counter the apparently revolutionary moves of the university students, the feeling grew that the time had arrived to defy the rule of Moscow. 23

Therefore, the new "15th of March" did not proceed according to the plans of the regime. The mass march to the square, where General Bem's stature reminded the Magyars of the glory of the fights against the Habsburgs, was still endured by the police. When however the masses decided to take over the radio station of Budapest, the political police (A.V.O.) opened fire. The first shots were discharged and during the night of the 23rd October, 1956, with the help of deserters from the Communist army, the workers and students received weapons and the fight for the radio station began.

It is not easy to appreciate the history of this revolution which lasted for only two weeks. There can be no comparison with the freedom-wars of Rákóczi or Kossuth. In those struggles the nation had time and area to organise her resistance. Military units were formed and a sound war-industry produced the tools of war. The leaders had defined aims, and sound foreign policy.

All these elements were missing in the October struggles of 1956. Hungary was militarily occupied by the Soviet Union and Russian units had their bases on strategic key points. The communication centers, the airports, railways and highways,

were controlled by the Soviet Army. The Hungarian army had Russian weapons, its ammunition reserves were low and the Hungarian army units had only few artillery, tanks or motorized elements. A war in the conventional sense could not be waged by Hungarian forces. Also, the guerilla type resistance and attacks by the armed population were only possible as the Soviet Union wanted to give a chance for a compromise solution to emerge which would have saved the political reputation of the Hungarian Communist Party.

Accordingly, the Hungarian uprising was not directed and waged against the Russian army, but it was the revolt of the people against its cruel oppressors. Of course the nation was aware that, behind the Communists, Moscow was the real enemy of Hungarian independence and freedom. Consequently, the uprising made her central aim the independence and neutrality of Hungary.

Basically however her claim for neutrality was the main reason why a compromise was not possible. The Soviet Union certainly wanted to consolidate the Hungarian political position, but toward her own interest of creating a relatively co-operative base for her further advances. Hungary could not be allowed to leave the Warsaw Pact and the Yalta-Empire of the Russians.

The gunfire began on the night of the 23rd October. Street fights developed between the security forces and the armed workers and students. The Government acted resolutely, proclaimed military law and asked for Russian help. 24

The next day it became evident that the uprising had spread and in the Capital and the bigger towns' bloody encounters disrupted public order. The Government asked for the deployment of more Russian troops. In order to appease the people, the Government was reorganized. Imre Nagy was appointed as Prime Minister and the hated Hegedűs and Gerő remained in the background. Amnesty was proclaimed and the time limit to surrender arms was again and again extended.

From the point of view of the Communists, the situation grew worse. More and more districts of the Capital and country centers came under the control of the revolutionaries. The army joined the rebels in large numbers and the Government did not dare order the deployment of the troops, generally fearing their change of colors.

Following Moscow's advice, the Government made or promised further concessions. The Russian troops were withdrawn into their barracks and the Government began negotiations with the rebels.

On the 25th October, Gerő's abdication was announced and John Kádár became his successor. Further, the radio made the announcement that the Government had begun negotiations with Russia for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops. Evidently, this announcement only desired to stress that the Russian troops would not participate in any further conflicts and would be confined to their barracks. The emerging leaders of the uprising however felt that, if pressured, the Russian troops would leave Hungary. Therefore, the speeches of the revolutionary leaders began to refer to the neutrality of the country and their wish for Hungary to become the bridge between East and West and urged the withdrawal of Hungary from the Warsaw Pact.

On the 26th October, the hard-pressed Communist Party and Government were ready for further promises. The totalitarian state would be abolished and a free election to be held. The Government accepted the demand of the people to ensure the Russian withdrawal from the country, but the Soviet Union alliance with Hungary would continue on the basis of equality. By this time however the revolutionaries insisted on the neutrality of Hungary.

On the 27th October, the Government was again reorganized. Non-Communist Ministers were also appointed, such as Bela Kovács and Zoltán Tildy. The Government was however still a Communist one and the memory of the years *1945-1947*, when the Communists ruled within the framework of Coalition Governments was still alive and the revolutionaries pressed the Government for radical changes.

The next day it became evident that the Communist Party and their Russian-supported forces had lost the battle, which was of course possible only as the regular forces of the U.S.S.R. had been withdrawn into the barracks. The population rejected any co-operation with the Yalta regime and the opportunists who, up to this point, were collaborators of the Government deserted their posts in mass and sought freedom from revenge by crossing the Austrian frontier and posing as refugees.

The revolutionaries did not have outstanding leaders, but, in the districts of the Capital and in the towns, people's revolutionary

councils were formed and a new administration attended to the preservation of public order. The revolutionaries belonged to the full specter of political colors. Disillusioned Communists, left and right wing political prisoners freed from the prisons and the concentration camps took up positions. They all had one common aim, namely to ensure the independence of the country and to achieve freedom from the social, economic and military suppression of the Soviet Union. The problem of the future constitution was not a question of the present. They hoped to settle this in freedom.

A national guard was set up and more and more public institutions co-operated with the revolutionaries.

On the 30th October, the Government was again reorganized. More liberal and conservative leaders joined ministerial ranks and certain political parties announced their re-establishment. Cardinal Mindszenty was freed and the First Baron of the land began political negotiations to clarify the position. On the same night Radio Budapest was placed under revolutionary control and was broadcasting as Free Kossuth Radio. The freedom of the press seemed to have been reborn and independent newspapers were published. Paul Maléter was appointed as Minister of Defense and Imre Nagy, the Prime Minister, made his fateful proclamation that Hungary intended to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact and requested the Soviet Union to arrange negotiations for the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the country.

This announcement was the turning point of the uprising. The Soviet Union had disengaged most of its troops in the encounter between the revolutionaries and the Communist security forces, as its aim anyhow was to create in Hungary some sort of a political consensus of the population, but was not willing to evacuate its occupation forces from the country and so lose its sphere of influence.

The rule over the Carpathian Basin is the natural base of any offensive policy against the Balkan Peninsula and, in the case of an attack of the Soviet Union from the Czech-Moravian area towards Austria and Southern Germany, the rule over Hungary was a necessary security of the rear lines. Any such Soviet attack on the left wing should see troops moving from Transdanubia into Austria and against Vienna. Accordingly, Hungary was an offensive base of the Soviet Union and could not be released from the bonds of Yalta.

In the meantime, the Suez crisis was set aside by the common ultimatums of the Soviet and the U.S.A. which secured the surrender of the British-French-Israeli policies and Russia was able to move some of her troops, mobilized for a Suez action, against Hungary.

The Government of Imre Nagy was now under revolutionary control. The new organization of the Government disclosed this fact and there were only three Communist Ministers in the Cabinet, clearly in minority. One of them, John Kádár, withdrew from the business of government and, in fact, entered into negotiation with the Soviet authorities. Subsequently, he was named as the chief of the new Government with instructions to re-establish the Communist order.

The last revolutionary Government had no illusions about the severity of the situation. Their main aim was to prove to the world that free Hungary did not want a Communist solution of the crisis.

The position of neutrality for Hungary, the basic demand of the uprising, however was unattainable against Russia. Regarding some economic and social demands, the Soviet was ready to make concessions, which the ensuing rule of John Kádár clearly proved, but neutrality of the country was not possible in 1956. The imperialism of the Soviet Union had not as yet come to its ends. The death of Stalin, the end of the Cold War and the age of "peaceful co-existence" meant only an interval in the history of Soviet imperialism.

On the 4th November, 1956, fresh Russian troops began the occupation of the country and now the Soviets attacked in force the national guards of the uprising.

The people's resistance however lasted for months. Guerilla type encounters, general strike of the workers and passive resistance of the population marked this period. Secret radio stations sent their messages to the West, praying for help, but the superpowers and their satellites were not willing to change the political balance of power in Europe which was meant to be a division of Europe between the non-European power-alliance.

From the Hungarian point of view, the revolution however was not in vain. Hungary again appeared on the political scene

as at least morally the leading East-European power. Her attitude and resistance against the oppressors created a new national mythos.

Notice was served on Moscow that Hungarians do not endure slavery and her policy must change at least economically and socially if a relatively peaceful co-operation of the country is sought.

The Kádár Regime

John Kádár was one of the few Hungarian Communists who sincerely believed that the radical socialist program would solve the deficiencies of Hungarian society. He however opposed the policies of the Muscovite dictator, Rákosi, and suffered cruel personal degradation in the jails of the Bolsheviks. Accordingly, he participated in the revolutionary Government of 1956, but the events developed fast and the powers of the Ministers were negligible and nobody could influence the end result of the uprising. This was determined by the political will of the Soviet Union.

Kádár had to obey the orders of the U.S.S.R. and the roots of his regime's power were foreign-based.

The Hungarian uprising was however of such a spiritual force that it could not be ignored in Moscow as those days and weeks exposed the Soviet Union as the most reactionary oppressive power on the political scene. It was useless to depict the ironworkers of Csepel as fascist counter-revolutionaries. Party splits occurred in the Communist Parties all over the world as some honest socialist reformers' eyes were opened and the world had to acknowledge that in the U.S.S.R. nobody could hope to witness the process of the withering away of the power of the state, but a new Asiatic-tartar Empire was exercising crude imperialism and oppression.

The U.S.S.R. had to realize that she was not a *primus inter pares* in a noble effort to build a Communist paradise, but, as heir of the rulers of the North-Eastern European and Siberian landmasses, she was a captive of the geopolitics of the area and, to ensure her security, she had to rule over European nations who were not as yet broken into the chains of slavery.

The rulers of the past-Stalin area of Russia therefore revised their general attitude toward the captive nations and introduced

milder political requirements. It is an irony that, in the lands which were subservient enough not to join the desperate Hungarian masses, the reforms were superficial, but in Hungary were significant in certain areas.

From Moscow's point of view of course the security of her Empire was the most important aspect of the revolt and in its aftermath Kádár had to accept as a prerequisite of any reform the faithful foreign policy attachment of his regime to the Yalta Empire. The basic political aim of the uprising was thus totally defeated. Hungary remained an occupied country and her diplomatic service and armed forces were only extension of the arms of the U.S.S.R.

Internally, the Kádár regime had a bloody beginning. The revenge of the disintegrated Communist State was severe and the jails and concentration camps were full and the executions swift and numerous.

The peace of the cemeteries however had to be replaced as the U.S.S.R. wanted to create some sort of consensus in her occupied colonies. She realised, as all Empire builders before her that as she was moving more boldly away from her original power center the methods of her control would have to be more refined.

Hungary's revolutionary past, which expressed itself in her past struggles against the conquerors, taught a lesson to the Soviet Union that this land could not be ruled without some concessions.

Kádár accordingly followed the wish of the Soviet Union only by gradually introducing his reforms.

In the economic fields the consequence of the reforms saw the disintegration of the Communist principles of financial management. Due to the passive resistance of the workers, the central planning for the economy had to be eliminated and decentralization of the plans was introduced. Now the individual units of production had to set their targets and certain inducements were promised for the workers if the targets were reached. In this way the profit principle was re-entering the economy in a camouflaged form. The workers would produce more goods in the hope for more reward and the Communist commentators regarded this process as the triumph of socialist-materialism.

Certain sections of the economy were declared as free areas for private initiative. The tragic rundown of the collective farms was also halted as the collective farms took their first steps back towards the co-operative systems of the former economic order.

Notwithstanding the improvements, the workers still regarded themselves underpaid and exploited. Consequently, the labor-morale was low. The production figures disclosed the sabotage of the workforce and corruption on the higher level and plain stealing on the factory floor area was quite common.

The supply of consumer goods increased due to the partial dismantling of the Communist economies and their process gave for the masses the illusion of a gradual return to pre-Communist normality.

After the occupation of Hungary the Russians clamped down the Iron Curtain and the western connections of the country were severed. Now as a concession the Midair regime partially lifted the restrictions and travelling to the West was permitted. Care was taken of course that not every member of a close family left the country at the same time and so precautionary measures were in force to hinder emigration to the West. Also, the issue of foreign currency to the travelers was restricted and the Hungarian travelers in the West had to accept the restrictions flowing from the lack of funds.

In order to allow tensions to flow into peaceful channels, the Secret Police now allowed private criticism of the regime and some comedians would make jokes about the shortcomings of the system. Arrests occurred only if criticism took place in public places or had a character of incitement.

The more liberal travel rules and the support of the travel industry generally increased contact between Hungarians and West Europeans. The severe currency restrictions on the other hand invited the people to break those rules and trafficking in foreign currency became a national pastime. The public morale generally broke down. The citizens did not feel any obligation toward the regime and the widespread feeling of the population in fact regarded the frauds against state-laws as some sort of deed in the national interest.

The political morale's breakdown was also apparent in the private lives of the citizens. The regime took some steps to

stem the disastrous consequences of the laws of free and advised abortion and encouraged more honest family ties after the excesses of the Bolshevik propaganda for free love. However, it appears that generally the population lost its idealism after the disaster of the 1956 uprising. The people had no hope for a future in the long range and the picture of a shrinking population threatened the future of the race.

The Kádár regime's efforts to re-establish morality and family ties were not successful as its policies toward the Christian churches disclosed its basic dishonesty and the young citizens of the country, who were deprived of religious-moral education, now showed their presence. The new generations more and more appeared to be materialistic, egocentrically and without hope. We observed basically the same process in the West but, in the Free World, the churches were still fulfilling their duty of preaching the Gospel and the moral effects of this declining age were not as evident in the West as under the rule of an atheist regime.

The political-national background of the churches in Hungary which elevated Cardinal Mindszenty to the role of the spiritual leader of the country was successfully eliminated by the regime.

The Vatican policy of removing the martyr Cardinal from the political scene helped to make the Hungarian Bishops be the paid servants of the State. Theoretically, the churches were allowed to fulfil their role as pastors of the faithful, but an active atheist state policy enforced that more and more generations grew up without proper religious education.

A political hopelessness prevailed in the country and the younger generations had no ideals or aims.

The complete subservience of the regime to the dictates of the Soviet Union was camouflaged by the Kádár Government in his efforts to create some sort of patriotic pride. The churches were declared as objects of the national heritage, archeological efforts were made to save the ruins of the past and the old Castle of Sigismund at Buda was restored. The names of old national heroes, such as Kossuth or Petöfi, are used as covers, but the spirit of the past, the ardent wish of Hungarian generations for an independent country, remained untouchable subjects.

In his efforts to increase the foreign currency of the impoverished land, the tourist industry was warmly supported and Hungarians in exile were welcomed at home. As a side effect of this policy, the Kádár regime hoped to neutralize the political exile

in the West. In his effort, the regime had the full support of Moscow as the propaganda of the anti-Communist refugees was embarrassing the ideological aims of the Communists.

The anti-Communist refugees in the Free World embrace Russians, Ukrainians, the Baltic nationalities, Poles and Hungarians and representatives of all the other Eastern European captive nations. Their presence in the West, comprising millions of people who were witnesses to the Bolshevik terror and Russian oppression and occupation, was an uncomfortable reminder to the victors that the slogan of "the liberation of Europe" was a farce and the enslavement of Eastern Europe was the result of the war.

The departure of those millions from their homelands was certainly politically motivated, but their emigration to the New World or Australia was an economic necessity and at large those masses were not political exiles, but immigrants. The exiled leaders of the captive nations were partly compromised in their association with Germany and, consequently, were extradited to suffer death, imprisonment and slavery or were sentenced to a silent existence in the West. Those former leaders are now very old men or have since passed away. Accordingly, the displaced persons without leaders do not represent any serious political force.

Regarding the Hungarian emigres, the scene was complicated by the disunity of the various fractions which represent exile today. The emigres of 1945 and 1956 could forge a common platform to fight for an independent, Christian and democratic Hungary, but certain collaborators with the Communist regimes who left the country for various reasons did not co-operate with the majority. The wish of the West to preserve the peace with the East and the spirit of the detente gave those minority forces more weight in the chanceries of the West than to the strongly anti-Communist elements. 26

The Kádár regime therefore skillfully appealed to those leaderless masses, inviting the displaced persons to visit their homeland and publishing magazines and newspapers in order to break down the barriers. In their radio broadcasts radiated for overseas reception and in their journals the national aspects of the home-life were stressed and the true picture of the situation remained hidden.

Besides the anti-religious attitude of the regime, the greatest gulf between the muscovite rulers and the nationalist-emigres

was that Kádár's Government completely ignored the plight of the Magyars over the borders of the State.

Especially tragic is the situation of the Magyars in Transylvania under Rumanian rule. The treatment of the Magyars by Rumania borders on the crime of genocide and Budapest endures this situation in deadly silence. In this respect it is interesting to compare the attitude of Rumania and Hungary toward the Soviet Union.

After the 1956 uprising, Hungary had to conform to the foreign policy directives of Moscow, but received some latitude regarding the introduction of socialism and, in consequence, a more liberal and economically better life of the population resulted.

Rumania's leaders, in contrast, faithfully pursue the transformation of the land into a socialist state with the result that her living standards are shockingly low in comparison with other states within the group of the captive nations. On the other hand, Rumania has evidently a free hand to persecute her minorities.

Her freedom also extends to the practice of a more flexible foreign policy. Of course, Rumania is militarily firmly secured by Moscow as the Soviet troops in Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria could stop any ill-advised adventure of the Rumanians.

There was no change in the Communist one-party system in Hungary. The state is still under the dictatorship of the party elite. The regime has however created an organization called "Patriotic Peoples Front" and the most leading and evidently non-Communist personalities like artists, bishops, actors or sportsmen have to participate in it. From time to time they announce their opinions in public matters and this stage-show is intended to confirm the country's consensus with the regime.

The activities of this Front of course are part of the efforts of the Government to create the impression of co-operation inside Hungary for the benefit of a new European political atmosphere.

The Kádár regime generally is a product of the political development in the policy of the great powers which was to be known as peaceful co-existence.

An end of detente will witness the fall of this regime of surrender.

Yalta Resealed

The roots of the alliance of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. as emerged during the negotiations during the Second World War in Teheran and thereafter at Yalta may be traced back to the experiences of President Wilson at Paris after the Great War. Professor Wilson was a learned student of political theory and his principles were those as pronounced by the founding fathers of the American constitution. Semi-religious, idealistic aims dominated his thinking. He arrived at Paris with an ardent desire to search for the truth, but was confronted by the hard politicians of French and English imperialism.

Great Britain again achieved her aims. The strongest European power was defeated, Russia was convulsing in revolutionary fever and England turned her attention again to colonial tasks. France began to build up her Eastern European connections, but did not appear at this stage as a danger from the British point of view and so the United Kingdom and France confronted the U.S.A. and did not allow much room for the President. The colonial might of Western Europe was untouched and as a result of the Great War the victors inherited the German possessions.

Wilson consequently returned somewhat disillusioned to the U.S.A. and he was awaited by a hostile congress. The American people started to realise that all the sacrifices of the U.S.A. in blood and in material wealth were used only to cement the colonial ambitions of the Europeans. Soon therefore the ideas of neutrality and isolationism took over the American political scene.

Notwithstanding, the greatest trading nation of the world, the U.S.A., had to realize in the years before the Second World War that the attack of Japan against China in the long run would exclude American trade from the area. The revitalized

Germany moved strongly into the areas of South America which continent was always regarded as a Yankee domain.

The U.S.A. therefore, under the skillful leadership of President Roosevelt, began her preparation to oppose the dangers threatening her economic interests. The crude anti-Semitic policies of the Third Reich only assisted him in his plans. Naturally, the influential Jewish lobby enthusiastically supported the President.

Patiently and gradually, the President first removed the chains of neutrality and later involved the country's material wealth in a partisan manner for the benefit of the British who were under siege and finally provoked the Germans and the Japanese into war.

Roosevelt however did not accept the sacrifices of the war for the purpose of rescuing the European powers, but his aim was for the U.S.A. to emerge as the leading power of the postwar world.

The great triumphs of Germany in 1940 however proved that neither the French nor the British were able to withstand the thrust of Germany. Consequently, the U.S.A. turned to the Soviet Union and found in her the great continental ally, whose manpower combined with the American material wealth finally assured the defeat of Germany. Roosevelt anyhow wanted to avoid that, after the War, the British Empire would be able to rewrite the map of Europe and the world and in this respect an understanding between Moscow and Washington was complete.

Stalin was also well aware of the political aims of the United Kingdom. Churchill's attempts to invade the Balkan Peninsula and to delay the continental invasion of Western Europe and in this way to secure a British-French victory were in vain. The understanding between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. did not allow a European policy. In order to avoid a separate peace between the European powers, the U.S.A. had enforced (with the backing of Stalin) the principle of the "unconditional surrender."

The war therefore had to be fought to a complete destruction of Central Europe and the division of Europe between these two non-European powers was accomplished.

Churchill saw the emerging European tragedy but his basically defeated country had no independent power to oppose her

adversaries. 27 Poland, in fact, was "written off" to the East. Rumania and Bulgaria were allocated into the Russian Sphere of influence. In Hungary the British "secured" for themselves a "25% influence", a weak and rather ridiculous rear-guard action.

After the unconditional surrender of Germany, the ensuing Potsdam Conference was a settlement of the agreement reached at Teheran and Yalta.

The latest American literature now admits that the British had been effectively showed aside. 28 Churchill had to return to Britain after the defeat of his party at the elections and the newly installed leaders were in the same position as Churchill, without power and influence. The Potsdam meeting now became a session of trade deal between the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union and Europe was completely unrepresented. Great Britain's role was of the status of an observer.

Stalin, as a man of steel, forced Truman to accept the interpretation of the Yalta Agreement to suit the U.S.S.R.'s requirements.

The question of German reparations was defined in a manner as that the U.S.A. had to foot the bill. Poland was moved deep into German lands. The permanency of these borders in an historical sense is of course at least questionable, but Russia secured a German-Polish, in fact Russian-German, border which, in a case of necessity, would ensure that her armies would reach the Atlantic. Poland remained, as in the last centuries of her history, the ball between the great powers, kicked around for their interest and pleasure. The participating powers paid lip-service to the commitment of German Unity, but in fact agreed on the division of the defeated land.

The treatment Germany received was only a step away from the requirements of the Morgenthau plan. This could not be implemented, as the result would have been a total Communist Continent. West Germany was therefore created as an economic annex of the American power.

Both the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. however were in complete agreement that a fully rebuilt, militarily and economically integrated, politically unified Germany was out of the question.

As therefore the main issue, the division of Germany, was settled, the transfer of Eastern Europe into the Russian orbit was treated as a matter of course. Without much argument, the "Big Two" settled some side issues regarding Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria and the Iron Curtain descended over Eastern Europe from Stettin to Trieste.

Churchill, who so proudly once said that he would not be the grave-digger of the British Empire, fully realised that his country had lost the war. Tears flowed down his face as he stood among the ruins of Aachen and bitterly recalled his lost chances of the possibility of a separate peace with Germany.

The surrender of the U.S.A. to the Russian interpretation of the Yalta Agreement was however not a satisfactory end-solution of the division of spheres of interests from the Russian point of view. Stalin regarded Yalta and Potsdam only as marks of achievement in his aims to secure a Communist Europe and hegemony over the world.

In a few years' time with the introduction of the Communist political system in Eastern Europe, he would feel that the time was ripe to move for further aims. The Greek Civil War, her demands regarding the Dardanelles and her policy towards Berlin signaled the U.S.S.R.'s determination to reach for the Atlantic.

On her part, the U.S.A. was willing and ready to adhere to the spirit of the Yalta-Potsdam Pact. At present, it is still impossible to find out whether or not there was a secret agreement between the U.S.A. and Russia regarding their common attitude towards the colonial problems. The disintegration of the French, British, Dutch and other European colonial empires anyhow went ahead in an apparent Russian-American understanding. In a decade the great European withdrawal was nearly complete. The thus created political, economic and military vacuums were filled by U.S.A. Capital. Russia was allowed to bolshevize China.

The European moves of the Soviet Union however arose the hostility of the U.S.A. and steps were taken to ensure that the Soviet Union adhered to the Yalta Agreement. The ensuing events were named by contemporary politicians as the "Cold-War". The airlift of Berlin, the proclamation of the Truman doctrine, the rearmament of West Germany, the NATO affiance

and the Korean and Vietnam Wars were the hallmarks of the U.S.A.'s efforts to enforce the Yalta-status quo.

The U.S.A. was however never a party to any endeavor for the liberation of Eastern Europe nor to allow the emergence of Europe as an independent power.

The Hungarian freedom-fighters could have miscalculated the forces behind the "Voice of America", inciting the people to revolt and fight, as the U.S.A. Government rightly pleaded that she was never engaged in such an activity. Her policy was to contain Russia within the boundaries of Yalta.

Also, in the Suez crisis, the U.S.A. decidedly took up opposition to the French-English move to stop the final disintegration of their Empires and the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. both ensured, with their ultimatums, that the Yalta process of dismantlement of the European overseas Empires be completed.

The end of the Cold War was immediately in sight when after Stalin's death the politburo had decided to halt temporarily the march forward as it became evident through the German, Polish and Hungarian uprisings that the Soviet Union needed some more time to consolidate the Eastern European situation.

One of the first steps in this direction was the Kennedy Krushchev Agreement. Maybe the "Cuban Crisis" was only a method of the implementation of an understanding. The atomic threat from Cuba was withdrawn and on the other hand the military bases of the U.S.A. in Turkey were dismantled.

The end of the Vietnam War on Russian terms was in fact a defeat of the U.S.A. She was skillfully maneuvered into an unwinnable guerilla war in the unfamiliar jungle terrain. The only quick military solution would have been a sea-borne invasion directly against Hanoi which would have delivered a decisive blow against the North. Any such move however would have met Russian resistance and the U.S.A. had no political will to risk a confrontation.

A Communist takeover of Portugal seemed to be imminent and the Italian scene was also under heavy pressure from the Communists. The Soviet Union was however ready for a formalization of the status quo in Europe as she needed more time to consolidate her economic and military position outside Europe as developing her power base in a future world-wide conflict.

Also China's break with the Soviet Union forced Russia to ease, at least for a time, her political pressures in the West.

Under these circumstances, the U.S.A. was ready to embrace the idea of peaceful co-existence as propagated from Moscow. The Communist status of Eastern Europe and the division of Germany were anyhow accepted pillars of their understanding. The status quo in the dispute between Israel and the Arab world was the best possible solution without a new world war. For such a peaceful co-existence, the learned Dr. Kissinger, Secretary of State of the U.S.A., worked patiently for a long period. He clearly saw that the war-weary U.S.A., without direct involvements and living in a peace of overseas-distance, had no political will to enter into a new war of liberation. His aim was only to assure formal peace in Europe under the alliance of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

Kissinger recalled the era of the Holy Alliance of the XIX Century, when the reactionary forces of Europe under the leadership of Metternich secured the peace after the bloodletting of the wars of Napoleon. He now visualized that, after the destruction of the Second World War, Russia and the U.S.A. would be able to maintain a balance of power over the continent. The great social, economic and political differences between the two partners were acknowledged and the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of the partners would have been the break to not carry too far the ideological differences.

After years of secret negotiations and meaningless declarations their understanding reached a stage which made possible the Helsinki Conference in 1975.

From the Eastern European point of view, this pact was the formal resealing of the Yalta-Potsdam Agreements. The liberation of Eastern Europe and unification of Germany and, consequently, the re-establishment of Europe as an independent power in world politics was now formally vetoed by the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

Notwithstanding, from the U.S.A.'s point of view, the execution and emerging practice of the new era was unsatisfactory. The principle of the non-interference in the internal affairs of the participants was not applied to the non-European areas, where the Communist underground, with the help of Cuban and East German client states, enhanced a steady growth of the

influence and power of the Soviets. Moscow however strictly applied the non-interference principle to any attempt to loosen the ties of her European satellite states with the Communist overlord and there were only superficial gains reflected in increased Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union and a formally milder attitude towards the churches. More economic contact with the West was however allowed as the capitalist credit in fact helped to maintain the space of worldwide Russian buildup of arms.

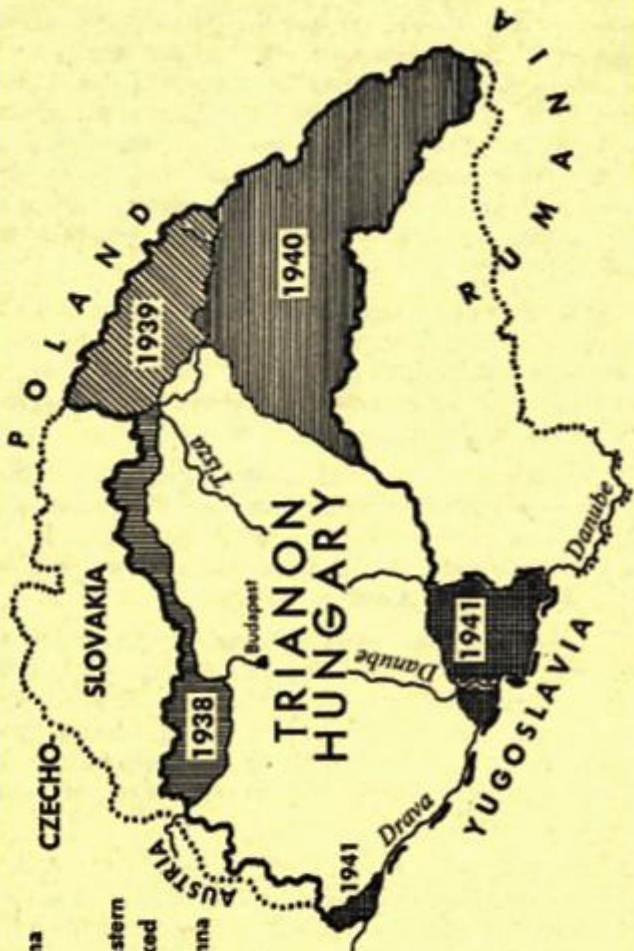
The doctrine of an impossibility of a global war in the atomic age was pronounced and the gained time assured for the Soviet Union equality with the U.S.A. of long-range mass destruction weaponry and it is questionable whether the Salt Agreements were in fact not for the advantage of Russia.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the superpowers to maintain an equilibrium and their attempts to freeze the balance of power in their internal relation, the three decades since the Second World War saw the gradual replacement of the Yalta division of the world by new power-groupings.

Gradually, the contours of a United Europe became visible. The French-German co-operation closed an age in the European power struggle and opened new possibilities. England, after the cruelest amputation of her overseas dependencies from her political body, had to give up the unrealistic dream of the "Atlantic Community" and had to assume the role of partnership in a united continent.

Eastern Europe is not yet assimilated into the Asian-tartar Empire of the rulers in Moscow. The freedom wish of Hungary, Poland, the Baltics and all the captive nations is still alive under the grey darkness of Communist slavery. There is still a chance that Europe will find herself again. Time however is running in the favor of Moscow and the defiant statement of Krushchev is not without a base: "We will bury you

TRIANON HUNGARY — 1920 AND HISTORICAL TERRITORIES RETURNED



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 1938 — 1st Vienna Award
- 
 1939 — North Eastern Carpathia Annexed
- 
 1940 — 2nd Vienna Award
- 
 1941 — Bácska Occupied

..... Border 1918
 ——— Border 1938

Epilogue

1979

The age in the European history between 1945 and 1975 probably will be noted by later historians as the division of the continent between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. The nearly exclusive possession of atomic weapons and the equally dominating material and population resources of the two partners in condominium of the world predestined their role.

The slow but unavoidable proliferations of these weapons of destruction however have started to affect the balance of power of the world. The eternal struggles between the tools of defense and attack also have begun to show shifts and a stalemate of the atomic-terror coupled with the advance of the defense tactics may diminish the decisive role of those superpowers.

Parallel with these developments and as a natural consequence of the necessity which forced both powers to rearm their clients, the contemporary observer has witnessed the slow but steady emergence of new independent powers who are more and more unwilling to play the role of a client-state.

The U.S.A. was forced to accept the role of Japan in South-East Asia. The fact is that all of Japan's aims, for which she entered the Second World War, have now been attained by her and we witness the most ironical scene where the U.S.A. is now urging the rearmament of the land of the rising sun.

China became the client of the U.S.S.R., but Russia could not contain in her sphere the emerging giant and, as from the year 1972, China began to show her independence and the times are not far away when she shall possess the industrial and military basis for a foreign policy which would follow her revisionist aims.

The dissolution of the British Empire in the Middle East helped to strengthen a renaissance of the Islam and the presence of Israel gave those in fact widely different countries a common

national aim which shall result in a unification of the Arab world. At present both the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. are fighting for the souls of the Arabs, but it appears to the writer that gradually an independent Arab world power will emerge, using their newly found economic strength of the oil industry.

Divided Europe, as the natural base for any effort to recreate the medieval European unity or the co-operation of the European dynasties as practiced in the XIX Century, and called the European Concert, is still in disarray.

Western Europe, being the economic partner of the U.S.A., could of course more easily take the first steps for European independence and the Rome Treaty of the common market is steadily developing as a base for the rebirth of Europe. Reluctantly, the United Kingdom also joined the continent and, notwithstanding the difficulties, it is now clear that the British, the off-shore islands of Europe, have to integrate with the continent.

Eastern Europe was, until 1956, an occupied territory of the Soviet Union. Only the German and Polish unrest and the violent Hungarian Revolution forced the U.S.S.R. to elevate their position to the status of client states.

Cultural and human connections of the captive nations of Eastern Europe with Western Europe were reopened, but the two parts of Europe are still developing in opposing directions.

This is still a dark age from the European point of view and, after our review of the Hungarian history in its European context; one may note the failures which finally caused the division of the once mighty continent.

Civilizations generally have three elements on which a culture evolves. Geography supplies the natural habitat of any civilization. In this respect the definition of Europe raises certain difficulties, as some learned opinion maintains that Europe is really not a continent at all, but a peninsula of the Asian landmass. However we propose to judge this question in synopsis with the second element required for the birth and development of a culture and this is the population which creates and develops any civilization. The European culture is of course the product of all the natives of the area west of the Ural and embraces Germans, Latins, Greeks, Britons, Celts, Slavs and Finno-Ugric nations. Accordingly geographical Europe, as the homeland of the civilization of the noted nations, includes, not only Western

Europe, but also embraces Eastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. The third element of any cultural achievement is the spirit or ideology which unites the people in carrying out their task for cultural development and advance.

Since Spengler, the spirit of the Western man was called the Faustian attitude which probably developed in the souls of the Europeans due to racial and geographical influences.²⁹ But Christianity, as interpreted by Monte Cassino, Chartres, Cluny or by Augsburg, Westminster, Cracow, or Pannonhalma was the unifying and binding force which helped to create the culture which was basically European. This was carried in true Faustian spirit all over the world by conquerors, traders and missionaries.

The reach for world domination by the nations of Europe was bold and nearly successful, but over optimistic.

Europe was expanding its outposts overseas, but was unable to preserve and safeguard her own geographical integrity. The birth of Europe developed during the dark ages around Rome, the Frank Kingdom, Lombardia and Central Europe. The pain of their birth, the fall of the Roman Empire, was in fact the separation of the Balkan Peninsula and the Eastern Mediterranean generally from Rome and from the new centers of Frank-German Europe. The separate development of the Eastern Empire was the root of the geographical failure of the new civilization. The Greek world, the spiritual source of the Roman and also the European culture were never recovered and, around Constantinople, a new Asiatic power was established. Christianity itself was divided into a western and eastern form, symbolizing the differences between the cultures of the west and the eastern Mediterranean. Some historians see the failure as a cause of the fall of the Roman Empire in her neglect of Europe over the Rhine and north of the Danube and it appears that history repeated itself. The greatest representatives of Christian Europe and some of the Eastern Emperors who cherished the traditions of a united Europe under the rule of Rome made efforts to hinder a final and fundamental break and division in the former unity of Roman territories. In this sense the crusades were not only religious and economic undertakings, but instinctive efforts of the thinkers and leaders of Europe to restore a proper geographical basis for the development of the new culture.

As the Eastern Empire was a Christian state, the separate and divergent development of the divided Roman inheritance

was not appreciated and the efforts to bridge the gaps were halfhearted and weak. The link with Western Europe was maintained by Hungary and her dependencies and the Genevans and Venetians were the bridge between the two worlds. The tragedy unfolded however when the Eastern Empire finally collapsed and the Turkish rule over the Balkan Peninsula into the Carpathian Basin finally moved Asia into the heartlands of Europe.

In the first five hundred years of the new Christian Europe however the guardians of a relatively peaceful development of Western Europe were the Christian kingdoms of Eastern Europe. We followed this period of history of Europe which earned Hungary the title of the "Shield of Christianity".

30

One must however stress again the failure of Europe during the rise of the Mongol Empire which left the subjugated Russian nation under Tartar rule for hundreds of years. The effect of their long enslavement was of course that the Russian development took some Mongolian Asiatic aspect and amputated this great Slavic nation from the cultural body of Europe.

Hungary had a more fortunate experience with the Mongols. The Tartar Empire withdrew from Central Europe and, in companionship with Poland and Lithuania, Hungary and her dependencies, the Croats, Serbs and the Rumanians, could present for centuries an effective defense against the advancing Turks.

However in this process, the leading political power of the area, Hungary, was substantially weakened militarily, economically and socially with the consequence that, in 1526, she could not withstand the Turkish onslaught alone.

During the 150 years of Turkish occupation and wars Hungary was the great guerilla defense territory of Europe. Western Europe however neglected her own interest insofar as she did not organise a liberation war to recapture the vital Eastern European lands.

The French-German rivalry dominated the Western scene in those centuries. France was in fact an ally of the Sultan. Great Britain was looking overseas and colonisation of the new world was the aim of the Spaniards and Portuguese. Central Europe was deeply divided in the religious wars and assistance

for Eastern Europeans was only a moderate item in the budgets of the Emperors - called "Türken - Hilfe".

Behind the self-sacrifice of Hungary and her allies, the Croats and Serbs, Europe was experiencing the renaissance of the Greek-Roman culture and cultural and artistic achievements enriched the palaces and churches of Italy, France, Germany, Spain and England.

If today an Eastern European travels in those fortunate lands and views the dates of creation of those great artistic objects, he cannot help but remember that, for Eastern Europe, these dates mean the bloodiest battles, shattering defeats and stations of cavalry of its history.

One of Europe's greatest achievements was of course the discovery and colonisation of the new world and the establishment of a global rule of the Western Europeans.

These deeds of course have true and everlasting significance and represent the glory of the Europeans. Notwithstanding, it is true that Europe over-reached herself.

Geographically, it was not possible to permanently secure those outposts of the European civilization. Under the harsh rules of nature and different climate, the European colonists were more and more separated from their ancestors and became founding fathers of new worlds. Under population pressures from the neighboring lands, those European outposts underwent basic changes and their survival as European-Christians is very questionable.

On the other hand, Europe had allowed the destruction of her Eastern possessions. The loss was in population, geographical area and resources. For a long time the fact was camouflaged, as a surplus of population was moving overseas and the colonial imports made Eastern Europe an insignificant area.

The loss of the European Colonial Empires after the Second World War however made it evident that, without her own territorial integrity and natural resources, the position and welfare of Europe would disintegrate. The Marshall plan and the consequent economic policy which based the European "rebirth" after the destruction of the Second World War on the export drive of capital goods, could not last for very long. More and

more "third world" countries would appear on the world-markets as exporters and the over industrialized European-West, without any territorial and population basis, would have to face a crisis of enormous magnitude which would affect her social order.

The unity of Europe was of course always a dream of the greatest leaders. The Christian effort, which aimed at a super-national, religiously bound community, was not able to withstand the separatist thinking of the emerging national states. In a sense the Protestant reformation was nothing more than the marriage of a true wish for the cleansing of the church with the separatist claims for national states. The movement of course had its background in the differences of attitudes between the Mediterranean forms of religion compared with a Northern European wish for individuality and simplicity. Anyhow the "Civitalis dei" was gradually replaced on the political scene and the idea of unification of Europe was taken over first by the French nation. Louis XIV was close to his aims, but Napoleon Bonaparte was the man who formulated most clearly a policy of united Europe under French hegemony.

After Waterloo, an uneasy co-operation of Russia and the Habsburg Empire maintained a political 'uniformity on the continent. England watched the developments in the spirit of her "balance of power" policy.

Then it was the turn of Prussia and the Second and Third Reichs of the Germans, when the First and Second World Wars erupted and Hitler tried to create a "Neue Europa" - Germany destined as the leading unifying force.

Now we are witnessing the efforts of Russia to reach the Atlantic and enforce the unity of the continent on her terms. The basic difference of course between the French-German efforts and the Russian aims is that Russia is not a European power and the unification, on the terms of the U.S.S.R. would mean, not the independence of Europe, but her incorporation in the Asian landmass Empire of the new Golden Horde.

After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the idea of reunification of the territories, which once enjoyed the cultural achievements of Rome as a universal empire, was alive for a relatively long period of time. The contemporary observers still see the wish of the Germans for unification and the ardent desire of Eastern Europe not to lose contact with Western

Europe, which at present is still representative of a common culture binding the nations of Europe.

However it appears that the material satisfactions of the daily life and the apparent Americanization of the continent drift Western Europe away from the ancient spirit of the Europeans. Christianity withdraws itself from public participation in the policy-making processes. The churches are making great efforts to teach the Gospel in Africa and Asia and are ready for compromises in South America. On the European scene however, whether in the West or in Eastern Europe, the splendid churches and monasteries are only historical reminders of the spirit which now no longer leads the European masses for a revival.

Without a spirit however no civilization has a future and the absence of a European spiritual zeal clearly points to a state of decline of the continent.

An economic co-operation between the Western European states, which has its counterpart in the East, may solve contemporary problems, but geographical and economic pressures will force the unification of Europe in the not too distant future.

The unification on Russian terms would of course mean the dark ages for the continent. The U.S.S.R. is clearly working in this direction. The Euro-Communist movements, the policy of "peaceful co-existence", all disclose their intent to absorb economically and politically the European peninsula. The European-Christian civilization is undoubtedly in decline. The XIX Century saw her ruling the world, but her position was shattered in the suicidal wars of the XX Century. Europe will never be able to restore her former position in the world. Her chance is only to restore her territorial integrity and so fulfil her destiny in the concert of the nations of the world.

The prerequisite condition to such an effort is for her to find her spirit again, renew her faith and develop her political will for a renaissance. 31

On the return of Eastern Europe into the European community the reorganization and development of the present achievements of the unification process of the continent must be reconsidered. Some thinkers propagate the creation of a United States of Europe, a single state with a federated constitution, but there is strong opposition against such a radical

move. De Gaulle strongly expressed the French view which finds it impossible to discard the identity of France that is still dreaming about her past gloire. But such opposition is equally virulent in Great Britain and the end of her splendid isolation from the continent is still not regarded as permanent.

Perhaps the most active promoter of the United Europe theory is West Germany, but only because it appears to be the only possibility to achieve the practical reunification of the German lands under a hoped German hegemony over the continent, sharing the leadership with the French.

Against this movement for complete unification there is a wave of new nationalisms which appears to be lacking the idea of imperialism, but shows a local-patriotism which at least requires an acceptance of autonomy territories within the larger state units. In this sense we speak about Scottish and Welsh nationalism and witness the French and Spanish problems with the Norman-Celtic remnant groups. The differences between the "Prussians" and the Bavarians are still potent and especially in Eastern Europe the fragmentation of the small national identities opposes any movements which would eliminate their desire for national expression.

These developments appear to be in strong contrast to the economic unification of the world as a whole, as practiced by the multi-national companies. They are also in opposition to the claim of the superpowers which politically and militarily reached for world hegemony in the last decades. Notwithstanding, the decline of the superpowers and the emergence of new powers indicate that the patriotic desires have sound basis and the new Europe would be rather a loose federation of states and groups of states.

Hungary's future will also be determined by her understanding of this process.

The Magyars occupied the Carpathian Basin more than one thousand years ago and most of the present nationalities of the area are immigrant-guests who were admitted into the land during the darkest hours of their own history. Notwithstanding, their presence in this formerly Greater-Hungary has to be acknowledged and their cultural, economic and military contribution in the defense and development of Hungary has to be appreciated.

Imperialist nationalism of the Carpathian Basin must be eliminated and all the pockets of nationalities should have the right to preserve their language, culture and identity.

The Carpathian Basin represents a geographical unity which cannot be destroyed. The center of the area is Magyar in its population and at least the Magyars are the strongest nation of the Basin. The Trianon Peace Treaty attempted to ignore these facts and the fall of the newly created successor-states proved that without the co-operation of Hungary the area's stability will always remain weak and open to the pressures of the Western and Eastern imperialists.

Within a united Europe of the fatherlands, Hungary must find her place in close co-operation with her fellow Danubian nations and the new relationship must preserve the peaceful development of all the participants.

CHRONOLOGY

The National Kingdom

- 896 - Árpád occupies the Carpathian Basin
- 902 - The age of the western military expeditions
- 955 - The Battle of Lech
- 959 - The Balkan military expeditions
- 970 - Géza - policy of peace
- 997 - Stephen
- 1000 - Hungary becomes a Christian Monarchy
 St. Steven - first King - 1000-1038
- 1030 - Conrad II attacks Hungary
- 1038 - Peter's kingdom - 1038-1041
- 1041 - Aba - Samuel, 1041-1044
- 1044 - Henry III attacks Hungary again
- 1046 - Uprising to restore the rule of Arpáds
- 1047 - András I, 1047-1060
- 1051 - Henry III's defeat at Vértes
- 1052 - Henry III's defeat at Pozsony
- 1060 - Bela I, 1060-1063
- 1063 - German attack
- 1063 - Salmon I, 1063-1074
- 1074 - Géza I, 1074-1077
- 1077 - László I, St. László - 1077-1095
- 1089 - Occupation of Slavonia
- 1091 - Croatia's Crown Secured
- 1095 - Kálmán I, 1095-1116
- 1096 - The Crusaders' movements through Hungary
- 1098 - Peace with Venice
- 1102 - Kálmán - King of Croatia
- 1116 - Stephen II, 1116-1131
- 1118 - Loss of Dalmatia to Venice
- 1127 - The Greek Wars, 1127-1130
- 1131 - Bela II - The Blind - 1131-1141
- 1136 - Dalmatia, Bosnia and Rama conquered
- 1141 - Géza II, 1141-1162

- 1147 - The crusade of Louis VII and Conrad III passing through Hungary
- 1150 - Manuel - Emperor of Byzantium - his anti-Hungarian moves
- 1154 - Greek wars
- 1156 - Peace with Manuel
- 1162 - Stephen III, 1162-1172
- 1170 - Manuel attacks again - Spalato, Traut lost
- 1172 - Bela III, 1172-1196
- 1177 - Hungarian troops against the Turks in Greek alliance
- 1186 - Bela III married Margaret Capet
- 1189 - Frederick of Barbarossa's Crusaders passes through Hungary
- 1196 - Imre I, 1196-1204
- 1204 - László III, 1204-1205
- 1205 - András II, 1205-1235
- 1213 - The revolt against the Queen and the German orientation
- 1215 - András married Jolan Courtenay
- 1217 - The Crusade of András II
- 1223 - The Tartars defeat the Russian-Cumanian forces
- 1235 - Bela IV, 1235-1270
- 1241 - The Mongol attack
- 1250 - Military expedition against Austria
- 1269 - Alliance with Charles, King of Naples
- 1270 - Stephen V, 1270-1272
- 1272 - László IV, 1272-1290
- 1290 - András III, 1290-1301

The Shield of Christianity

- 1301 - Charles Robert, 1301-1342
- 1310 - The crowning of Charles Robert
- 1330 - Zácb's attempt of assassination of the Royal Family
- 1333 - Charles Robert in Naples
- 1339 - The Treaty with Poland
- 1342 - Louis I, 1342-1382
- 1344 - The siege of Vilna
- 1345 - The assassination of Andrew
- 1347 - The expedition against Naples
- 1348 - The Battle at Capua
- 1351 - The Pope settles the dispute with Naples
- 1370 - Louis assumes the Polish Crown
- 1377 - Louis's great victory against the Turks
- 1387 - Sigismund becomes consort of Maria, 1387-1437
- 1389 - Serbia becomes a Turkish vassal
- 1395 - Vlad, Rumanian vassal of the Turks, attacks Sigismund's troops
- 1396 - Sigismund's crusade against the Turks

- 1398 - Expedition against the Turks
- 1399 - Expedition against the Turks
- 1400 - Sigismund in Bohemia
- 1403 - Prince Albert, Sigismund's regent
- 1410 - Sigismund was elected as German-Roman King
- 1414 - Sigismund crowned in Aachen
- 1418 - Turkish military moves around Temesvár
- 1431 - Sigismund crowned in Milano as King of Lombardy
- 1433 - Sigismund crowned as German-Roman Emperor
- 1437 - The death of Sigismund
- 1437 - Albert, 1437-1439
- 1440 - Ulászló I, 1440-1444
- 1444 - The Battle of Varna
- 1444 - Lsz16 V
- 1446 - John Hunyadi, Governor-Regent
- 1453 - László V
- 1456 - The defense of Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade)
- 1457 - The death of László V
- 1458 - Matthias I, 1458-1490
- 1469 - Matthias - King of Bohemia
- 1477 - Matthias in Austria
- 1479 - Matthias' expedition against the Turks in Bosnia
- 1490 - Ulászló II, 1490-1516
- 1505 - The National Assembly at Rákos against foreign kings
- 1514 - The crusade which became a revolt of the peasants
- 1516 - Louis II, 1516-1526
- 1519 - Verbóczy in Venice and Rome
- 1521 - Hungarian envoys in Worms
- 1526 - The Battle of Mohács

The Turkish Yoke

- 1526 - John Zápolyai and Ferdinand I
- 1528 - Both Kings negotiate with the Turks
- 1529 - The siege of Vienna
- 1535 - Truce between the Kings
- 1538 - The peace of Nagyvárád
- 1540 - The death of John Zápolyai
- 1541 - Buda falls
- 1543-1545 - The Turkish occupation of the heartlands
- 1551 - The death of George Martinuzzi
- 1564 - The death of Ferdinand
- 1564 - Maximillian, 1564-1576
- 1566 - Transylvania established as a client state
- 1575 - Stephen Báthory, Prince of Transylvania, elected as Polish King
- 1576 - Rudolph, 1576-1608

- 1586 — The death of Stephen Báthory
- 1586 — Sigismund Báthory, Prince of Transylvania
- 1586 -- Fifteen years' war against the Turks
- 1601-- Fifteen years' war against the Turks
- 1604 — Stephen Bocskay
- 1606 — The Vienna peace and death of Bocskay
- 1608 — After abdication of Rudolph, Matthias II, 1608-1619
- 1612 — The death of Rudolph
- 1613 — Gabor Bethlen, Prince of Transylvania, 1613-1629
- 1619 — Ferdinand II, 1619-1625
- 1619 — Bethlen's first attack against the Habsburgs
- 1622 — The peace of Nicholsburg
- 1623 — Bethlen's second attack against the Habsburgs
- 1624 — The peace of Vienna
- 1626 — The third attack of Bethlen and the peace of Pozsony
- 1626 — Ferdinand III, 1626-1657
- 1644 — György Rákóczi I attacks the Habsburgs, peace of Linz
- 1648 — György Rákóczi II, Prince of Transylvania, 1648-1660
- 1655 — Leopold I, 1655-1705
- 1657 — György Rákóczi II's Polish expedition
- 1658 — Turkish-Tartar attacks
- 1664 — Miklós Zrínyi counterattacks the Turks, The peace of Vasvár
- 1666 — The conspiracy of Wesselenyi
- 1671 — Death sentences against the conspirators executed
- 1682 — Imre Thököly
- 1683 — The Turkish siege of Vienna
- 1684 — The Holy alliance against the Turks
- 1686 — The liberation of Buda
- 1697 — The Battle of Zenta
- 1699 — Peace with Turkey

German Rule

- 1701 - The Rákóczi uprising, 1701-1711
- 1705 - The death of Leopold I
- 1705 - Joseph I 1705-1711
- 1707 - The National Assembly at Onod
- 1711 - The death of Joseph I
- 1711 - Charles III, 1711-1740
- 1716 - The Austrian-Turkish War
- 1723 - The Pragmatica Sanctio
- 1735 - The death of Rákóczi in exile
- 1740 - The death of Charles III
- 1740 - Maria Theresia, 1740-1780

- 1741 - Hungary supports her Queen
- 1756-63 - The seven years' war
- 1780 - The death of Maria Theresia
- 1780 - Joseph II, 1780-1790
- 1784 - Joseph orders that German to be state language
- 1790 - Joseph withdraws his controversial orders, died in the same year
- 1790 - Franz I. 1790-1830
- 1809 - Napoleon calls Hungary to revolt
- 1830 - Ferdinand V, 1830-1848
- 1837 - Louis Kossuth's arrest
- 1840 - Amnesty for Kossuth
- 1848 - The Kossuth uprising
- 1849 - Russian intervention and defeat of the revolution
- 1849-67 - The "Bach Era" - imperial military rule
- 1867 - The compromise with Austria, establishment of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy
- 1867 - The Coronation of Franz Joseph I, 1867-1917
- 1894 - The death of Louis Kossuth in exile
- 1908 - The annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina
- 1914-18 - The First World War
- 1920 - The Peace Treaty of Trianon
- 1920 - Admiral Horthy, Regent-Governor of Hungary, 1920-1944

Russian Occupation

- 1938 - 22nd August, meeting Horthy-Hitler at Kiel
2nd November, the first Vienna Award: Revision in the North
- 1939 - 15th March, occupation of North-Eastern Carpathia
- 1940 - 20th May, Hungary's partial mobilisation against Rumania 30th August, the Second Vienna Award: Transylvania divided. 28th September, by request of Rumania Hungary grants transit passage to German troops
20th November, Hungary subscribes to the Three-Power Pact 12th December, Hungary and Yugoslavia conclude a Friendship Treaty
Christmas, German troops in transit earmarked for the Greek front
- 1941 - 27th February, ratification of the Hungarian-Yugoslav Treaty 4th March, start of negotiations between the Yugoslav and German Governments
25th March, Yugoslavia subscribes to the Three-Power Pact 27th March, revolt in Yugoslavia
5th April, Yugoslavia and the U.S.S.R. enter into a friendship agreement
6th April, Germany attacks Yugoslavia
10th April, Croatia declares her independence, Yugoslavia's resistance collapses
12th April, Hungary, after the dissolution of Yugoslavia, occupies certain Magyar areas of the former state.
22nd June, German-Russian War
26th June, Russian air attack against Kassa

- 27th June, Hungary's Parliament declares that Hungary is at war with the Soviet Union
- 1942 - The Second Army takes up position at the River Don, N. Kállay the new minister-president
- 1943 - The defeat of the Second Army in the winter campaign, gradual withdrawal of the troops to the Carpathian frontier
- 1944 - 19th March, Hitler sends troops to Hungary to secure the Hungarian theatre of war
15th October, Horthy's effort to secure an armistice with Russia fails; F. Szálasi's new government continues the war
- 1944 - 24th December, the siege of Budapest begins with the encirclement of the fort and city
- 1945 - 12th February, Budapest falls
March, the battles around the Lake Balaton
4th April, the whole country became Russian-occupied territory
- 1947 - 10th February, Peace Treaty of Paris, continuation of the Trianon frontiers
31st August, faked elections. Notwithstanding the 55% majority of the non-Communist parties, the Communists take over complete power
26th December, Cardinal Mindszenty's arrest
- 1956 - The Hungarian uprising
- 1975 - The Helsinki Agreement

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8. **Csapó, E.** - Matthias Rex, Sydney, Harsona Edition, 1964, p. 21
9. **Málnási, O.** - *ibid*, pp. 45-48
10. The Vlach shepherds of the Balkans of course were not descendants of the Roman Legions. On the other hand, the Hun connection of the Magyars cannot be doubted.
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7. The Yugoslav-Hungarian friendship pact became null and void when the coup d'état removed the legitimate Yugoslav Government. The pact's

- sine qua non element was anyhow the co-operation with Germany in order to preserve the peace of the area.
8. Full diplomatic contacts were maintained with the Soviet Union and Russia returned the captured flags and insignias of the 1848-49 revolution as a symbolic gesture of goodwill.
 9. **Horthy, M.** - Memoires, *ibid*
 10. **Borsányi, J.** - Das Raetzel des Bombenangriff auf Kassau 26 June, 1941, Ung Institute Munchen, Vol. 16, 1978 (German language)
 11. **Montgomery, J.F.** - *ibid*
 12. **Irving, D.** - *ibid*, pp. 412-13. According to the writer Hitler gave order to strengthen the Hungarian-Rumanian sector at the front which he regarded as the Achilles point of the area
 13. **Hennyey, G.** - The Fate of Hungary between Ost and West, Von Hase & Koehler, Verlag, Mainz, 1975 (German language), p. 99
 14. The author of this book, as the private secretary to the Minister of Justice in the Lakatos Government, was present in the galleries during the reported sitting.
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